



SLAVIC HORIZON

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Information magazine of Slovak Matica for the Slavic world and Slovaks abroad



**MONTENEGRO MATICA
SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED
THE MONTENEGRO CYRILLIC
PRINTING PLANT PROJECT
IN THE XV. And XVI. CENTURY**

**LUSATIAN-SERBIAN MATICA
IN 2022**

**SCIENTIFIC SEMINAR DEDICATED
TO THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE
BIRTH OF MONS. FRANTIŠEK FUGA**

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CON-
GRESSES OF THE MATICAS OF
THE SLAVIC NATIONS**

**PRESENTATION OF THE BUNEV
CULTURE PROJECT IS PART OF
THE HERITAGE OF SERBIA**

**INTERVIEW WITH MARIÁN
GEŠPER, CHAIRMAN OF THE
ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-
YEAR-OLD SLOVAK MATICA**

Editorial

Viliam Komora, member of the editorial board, secretary of Slovak Matica for issues of national minorities and foreign expatriate organizations, Slovakia	<i>Slovak Matica, Slavs and the world of the future</i>	3
---	---	---

Overview from the Slavic world

Anja Pohončowa, president of Lusatian-Serbian Matica, Germany	<i>Lusatian-Serbian Matica in 2022</i>	4
Miloslav Strehársky, Slovak Matica in Rijeka, Croatia	<i>Slovak Matica from Rijeka celebrated the 28th anniversary of its founding</i>	6
Ivan Ivanović, general secretary of Montenegro Matica, Montenegro	<i>Montenegro Matica successfully completed the Montenegrin Cyrillic printers project in the XV. and XVI. century</i>	8
Milica Majeriková-Molitoris, Association of Slovaks in Poland, Poland	<i>30 years of the Slovak printing house in Krakow</i>	10
Michal Hrivnák, novelist, Hungary	<i>One last note to discussion about the cultural heritage (not only) of Budapest's Slovaks</i>	12
Katarína Koňariková, president of the Association of Slovaks from Bulgaria, Slovakia	<i>The costumes of Slovaks from Bulgaria came to life again</i>	14
Matica Bunevska, Serbia	<i>Presentation of the Bunev culture project is part of the heritage of Serbia</i>	16
Anna Konderlová, president of Silesian Matica, branch association in Bystrice nad Olší, Czech Republic	<i>Bystrice – the largest village in the Czech Republic celebrated</i>	17
Daniela Ďurášová, Association for Education and Regional Development, Serbia	<i>Commemorative celebrations of the 180th anniversary of the codification of Slovak language in Padina and Kovačica</i>	18
Zuzana Pavelcová, director of the National Museum of Slovak Matica, Slovakia	<i>Scientific seminar dedicated to the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Mons. František Jozef Fuga</i>	19
Pavol Parenička, scientific researcher at Slovak Matica, Slovakia	<i>Exhibition project of one hundred and sixty years of Slovak Matica</i>	20

History

Peter Schvantner, secretary of Slovak Matica, Slovakia	<i>A brief history of the congresses of the Maticas of the Slavic nations</i>	22
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An interview

Pavol Madura, editor-in-chief of Slavic Horizon, scientific secretary of Slovak Matica, Slovakia	<i>Interview with Marián Gešper, chairman of the one hundred and sixty-year-old Slovak Matica</i>	28
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Giants of the Slavs

S.I., Bunev Matica, Serbia	<i>Five MPs from Subotica</i>	32
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Library of the Slavic world

Sandra Kraljová Vukšićová – Tatjana Seničaninová, Slovak Cultural Center Našice, Croatia	<i>The pilot issue of the yearbook of the Slovak Cultural Center Našice has been published</i>	33
Joseph Mark Burza, President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in the Slovak Republic, Slovakia	<i>New publication Štefan Boleslav Roman – The Uranus King</i>	34
Agáta Jendžeříková, editor-in-chief of Život magazine, Poland	<i>Život Magazine has been bringing news for 65 years</i>	35

We remember

36

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On the cover: Chairman of Slovak Matica Marián Gešper in his office in the
headquarters of Slovak Matica in Martin. In the portraits from the left: the his-
torically first vice-chairman of Slovak Matica Karol Kuzmány, the chairman of
Slovak Matica from 1919 Matúš Dula, historically the first chairman of Slovak
Matica Štefan Moyses. Source: Slovak Matica

The editors require the reduction of contributions. The authors are responsible
for the correctness of the data in individual contributions.



Viliam Komora, secretary of Slovak Matica for issues of national minorities and foreign expatriate organizations, member of the editorial board of Slavic Horizon, Slovakia

SLOVAK MATICA, SLOVAKIA AND THE WORLD OF THE FUTURE

At the thought of reevaluating the activity, tasks and mission of Slovak Matica towards the Slavs and Slavism, the title of the editorial immediately crossed my mind. Perhaps no one needs to explain that this is the title of the book by the great "Slovakian" and Slavic Ľudovít Velislav Štúr. Right now, Štúr's views on how representatives of the Slovak nation should work in the field of pan-Slavic cooperation, which is also the current concept and work of Slovak Matica, are being fulfilled. The officials of Slovak Matica, especially the chairman Marián Gešper, scientific secretary Pavol Madura and scientific worker Pavol Parenička, conceptually and systematically transform the Slavic idea into the program of Slovak Matica.

The information center of Slovak Matica, under the leadership of secretary Ján Seman, in close cooperation with the chairman Marián Gešper and the Matica's scientific workers, processed several video documents from history and the present on Slavic topics. In October 2018, less than a year after Marián Gešper was elected to the post of chairman, the Adolf Ivanovich Dobriansky Interest Union of Slovak-Rusyn of Slovak Matica mutuality was symbolically established on the grounds of the Prešov University Rectorate. The department reflects the sense of belonging between the Slovak and Ruthenian peoples. Its members are several top representatives of both our fraternal Slavic nations. The first chairman was Miroslav Kerekanič, currently the department is headed by Vladimír Protiňák, who is also the secretary of the World Congress of Ruthenians. The leadership of Slovak Matica is preparing the establishment of the scientific department of Slavic mutuality. Slovak Matica deals with Slavic topics at a professional level, so to speak, since its in-

ception. In recent years, it has held three congresses of Maticas and institutions of Slavic nations on its land. In August 2023, the fifth congress in a row will take place.

One of the tangible outputs of the fourth congress in 2019 is the Slavic Horizon, which you are reading right now. The fifth issue of Slavic Horizon is now entering its third year. Here you can see and it is obvious that its creation was conceptually and conceptually thought out and considered. If it was necessary to "fill" the first year with articles and "find" them, today enough material comes to the editorial office, but it is not possible to publish all of them. In addition, the number of pages is constantly increasing. The column Overview from the Slavic world see Slovak Matica to be the most popular, where we inform each other about the implemented activities in the field of culture, science and wider activities.

Unfortunately, Slavs know how to stand against each other, they allow themselves to get angry or be hostile towards each other. However, we believe that this is only for a while and cooperation, togetherness, peace and love will return between all our peoples. As bequeathed to us by the great "Slovakism" and Slavonicity, Ľudovít Velislav Štúr, who believed in the idea of a pan-Slavic state, the unification of Slavs and predicted a glorious future for our nations.

His idea - Slavism and the world of the future - is a task for us as a Slavic peoples. Slovak Matica and its current leadership, work team, as well as volunteer members, will help and cooperate in this for the well-being, good and prosperity of all of us Slavs. So may the benevolent Lord God help us in this.

LUSATIAN-SERBIAN MATICA IN 2022

Anja Pohončowa, president of Lusatian-Serbian Matica, Germany



Speaker of the two-day conference *Wědu šerić – Creating knowledge – Wědu šyrić*, which was organized by Lusatian-Serbian Matica together with the Serbian Institute. The focus of the event was the work of Lusatian-Serbian Matica after its revival in 1990/91. Source: Lusatian-Serbian Matica.

The year 2022 was an important jubilee year for the Lusatian Serbs in general, in which many Lusatian Serbian associations and institutions commemorated the activities of the Lusatian Serbian poet Handrije Zejler (1804 – 1872) and the Lusatian Serbian composer Korl Awgust Kocor (1822 – 1904). Lusatian-Serbian Matica organized a joint symposium with the Lusatia Institute on Friday, October 14, 2022. From a literary point of view, two lectures were initially dedicated to Handrij Zejler as the founder of Lusatian Serbian poetry and his committed work as an editor of the Lusatian Serbian weekly *Tydzenske Nowina*. Both linguistic lectures focused on Zejler's work from a gender linguistic perspective, as well as on the way of his expression in the sense of deviations from the valid written language norm. The next lecture discussed the issues of Kocor's music and its reception from a musicological point of view.

On October 15, 2022, a celebration was held in Lohs in honor of Handrij Zejler, who worked as a pastor in the city for many years. Dietrich Scholze, a member of the registry board, paid tribute to the poet's literary work. On December 3, 2022, Marko Cyzów, a member of Lusatian-Serbian Matica, commemorated his work in Berg, Kocor's birthplace.

In 2022, 175 years have passed since the foundation of Lusatian-Serbian Matica (1847). There was thus an opportunity to reflect on the history of the association, as well as on its activities since its re-establishment in 1991. On November 25 and 26, 2022, the conference *Wědu šerić – Creating knowledge – Wědu šyrić* was held in the house of Lusatian Serbs in Budyšin, which again jointly organized by Lusatian-Serbian Matica and the Serbian Institute. In fifteen lectures, the lecturers focused mainly on the recent history of the association. Among the initiators of the revival of Lusatian-Serbian Matica in 1990/91 was Jan Malink (Budyšin), who reported on the initial considerations about re-founding until the realization of the first general assembly on April

2, 1991. Furthermore, the focus of several contributions was the association's contacts in other Slavic countries, especially in Poland and the Czech Republic. The morning of the second day of the conference was focused on the central area of the association's activities and on the activities of Matica Lusatia for the preservation and development of the Lusatia-Serbian languages. On the one hand, the importance of Matica in the formation and implementation of a unified Upper Sorbian written language and the Latin alphabet for Upper and Lower Sorbian Serbian was pointed out. On the other hand, the activities of the Lower Lusatia and Upper Lusatia language commissions from 1994 to the present were presented in more detail.

The contributions in the afternoon were primarily devoted to work in individual departments, their potential and importance, which have developed very differently since the new establishment. Two final keynote addresses focused on future challenges. The central point of the subsequent discussion was the lack of young people and the image of Matica Lusatia as a scientific association. All lectures will be published in 2023.

On December 16, 2022, the library collection of Lusatian-Serbian Matica, which for the last decades was located in the scientific library of the Herder Institute for the Historical Research of Eastern and Central Europe in Marburg, was returned. These are 172 books and periodicals that were maintained by the German Foundation for Lost Art between 2016 and 2019, as part of the project *NS-Raubgutforschung in der Forschungsbibliothek des Herder-Instituts* (Research focused on a stolen publication during the Nazi regime in the research library of the Herder Institute). Examining part of the stock from the former Berlin-Dahlem publication center, it was possible to clearly identify it as belonging to Matica Lusatia. Among the restituted publications are various magazines (*Neues Lausitzisches*



Dietrich Šolta, a member of Lusatian-Serbian Matica, paid tribute to the work and literary work of the Lusatian poet Handrije Zejlers at a celebration on October 15, 2022 in Lohsa. Source: Lusatian-Serbian Matica.



After the ceremony in honor of the Serbian poet Handrije Zejler in the Lohsa church, the associations Domowina and Matica Lusatia laid flowers in front of Zejler's monument. Source: Lusatian-Serbian Matica.



On December 16, 2022, the head of the research library of the Herder Institute in Marburg, Dr. Jürgen Warmbrunn (right) hands over the remains of the library of Matica Lusatia to the president of Matica Lusatia Dr. Anja Pohončova (in the middle). The books and periodicals were subsequently handed over to Mr. Wito Bejmak, head of the Central Lusatian Serbian Library at the Serbian Institute. Since 1949, this library has housed the preserved inventory of the former library of Lusatian-Serbian Matica. Source: Lusatian-Serbian Matica.

SLOVAK MATICA FROM RIJEKA CELEBRATED THE 28TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDING

Miloslav Strehársky, Slovak Matica in Rijeka, Croatia



From the opening of the exhibition *Personalities of Croats in Slovakia*. From left: T. Badanjaková, M. Gržinićová, Z. Galbavý, K. Vukšićová, T. Seničaninová. Photo: Miloslav Strehársky

*It's Reading Room of the City Library in Rijeka, where the opening of the exhibition *Personalities of Croats in Slovakia* took place at 5 p.m. The exhibition was organized by Slovak Matica in Rijeka on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of its foundation and the 30th anniversary of the Union of Slovaks in Croatia in cooperation with the Slovak Cultural Center in Našice. The exhibition, which ran until December 24, was financially supported by the Council for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia, the City of Rijeka and the People's Reading Room of the Rijeka City Library.*

At its opening ceremony, the Slovenka singing group led by Melita Bahníková sang the song *Po nábreží koník beží*. The president of Slovak Matica in Rijeka and the representative of the Slovak national minority in the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, Miroslava Gržinićová, greeted those present and especially the guests: the deputy ambassador of the Slovak Republic in Croatia Zdenko Galbavý and his wife Tatjana, the director of the Slovak Cultural Center in Našice, Sandra Kraljová Vukšićová, the custodian of the Slovak Cultural Center in Našice's Tatjana Seničaninová, as well as representatives of minority associations. Tanja Badanjaková greeted those present on behalf of the City Library.

In her speech, director Kraljová Vukšić said: *"The exhibition was prepared by the Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia and came to Rijeka through the Slovak Cultural Center in Našice. He founded our center Union based on the principle of reciprocity - that is, when the Museum of the Culture of Croats in Slovakia was established in Devínská Nova Ves in 2006 for the needs of the Croatian minority in Slovakia, the Union of Slovaks undertook the mission of establishing a similar institution for the Slovak national minority in Croatia and vice versa. This is how the Slovak Cultural Center in Našice was founded in 2010. Subsequently, in 2016, these two institutions uniting Slovaks in Croatia concluded a Memorandum of Coop-*

eration, which was renewed this year, for the period 2022-2028. Our cooperation is mainly based on exhibitions. And when we have exhibitions from Slovakia, Slovak Matica from Rijeka shows regular interest, takes them over and presents them to its residents. The exhibition was first presented in the Slovak Cultural Center in Našice on the occasion of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Union of Slovaks. It is both a theme and the fact that it travels from Našice via Lipovlany to Rijeka, proof of active cooperation with the mother countries through our institutions and at the same time that the new homelands value the contribution of national minorities to social public life. And thirdly, that Slovaks from Croatia contribute to the mosaic of the expatriate world."

The curator of the Slovak Cultural Center in Našice, Tatjana Seničaninová, said: *"The exhibition *Personalities of Croats in Slovakia* brings visitors closer to the life and work of important representatives of the Croatian ethnic group in Slovakia. The most important personalities of Croats in Slovakia are represented at the exhibition - such as Gabriel Kolinovič Šenkvičský, who influenced the possibilities of further development and preservation of the existence of the Croatian minority in Slovak territory through their professional and personal activities. The exhibition also includes photographs of collection items from the Slovak National Museum - Museum of the Culture of Croats in Slovakia and other photographic and pictorial appendices. The exhibition itself consists of twelve panels with accompanying text in Slovak and Croatian, each of which captures the life and work of individual personalities, arranged chronologically from the beginning of the 16th to the 20th century. Primarily, personalities associated with the villages of Čunovo, Jarovce, Devínska Nová Ves and Chorvátsky Grob are presented."*



Folkloric group Slovenka, Slovak Maticain Rijeka with dance Šima-Šima. Photo: Miloslav Strehársky



Folkloric group Slovenka, Slovak Maticain Rijeka with the dance Kúrí krik. Photo: Miloslav Strehársky

Mr. Galbavý commented on the exhibition: *"The panels talk about how Croatia and Slovakia are connected."*

After viewing the exhibition, all those present moved to the headquarters of Slovak Maticain Rijeka, Slovak House, where a cultural and artistic program took place. After the singing of the Croatian and Slovak national anthems, Mrs. Miroslava Gržinićová welcomed the present guests as well as the representatives of minority associations in Rijeka and described the beginnings of Slovak Matica in Rijeka. *"With our activities, we were able to present Matica both at home and abroad. We would not have been able to do this without the support of the Union of Slovaks in Croatia, the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities in Croatia, the member of the Croatian Parliament Mr. Vladimir Bilek, the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, the City of Rijeka, the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad, but especially without our active members who are involved in groups operating in Matica: folklore, singing, children's, literary, artistic, ceramic, photography, theater, and traditional gastro group. I welcome you all to the Slovak House, which we received from the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad. Part of the house underwent a major renovation with the financial support of the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities in Croatia, the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad, the City of Rijeka and the Union of Slovaks in Croatia. The Primorsky-Gorsko-Kotar County remained deaf to our requests for help. We had days of open doors, days of Slovak culture. We welcomed the members of Slovak Matica-from Ilok, held a literary and artistic meeting, collected olives in our garden area, shredded cabbage for pickling, participated in the Porto Ethno parade, also participated in events of the*

Association of Slovaks and National Minorities, performed in Slovakia in Bratislava and Detva, where we also had a gastronomic presentation of seaside specialties. We were in Serbia, at the Klobásafest (Sausage fest) in Báčské Petrovec and at the Tortijada in Lalita, where we also presented ourselves in the cultural program."

At the end, moderator Laura Mandekić read greeting telegrams from the mayor of Rijeka and from the office of the prefect of Primorje-Gorski Kotar County. This was followed by a visual presentation of the Slovak House with details of its reconstruction. After the presentation, the guests greeted our Slovak Matica. Mr. Zdenko Galbavý praised the work of our Matica. The director of the Slovak Cultural Center in Našice, Sandra Kraljová Vukšić, emphasized in her speech that Slovak Matica in Rijeka, even though it is the most remote and small in number, is very active.

The cultural program began with the performance of a children's group, which introduced itself with dance and songs *"It's raining, it's raining, it's just pouring"* and *"Tance, dance, twist"*. Margita Rekićová Grolmusová, vice-chairman of Slovak Matica in Rijeka, sang several Slovak folk songs. The program continued with the performance of the folklore group Slovenka, working under the leadership of Margita Rekićová Grolmusová and Laura Mandekićová, who performed the *Kurí Krik* and *Šima-Šima* dances.

After the end of the program, the chairperson Miroslava Gržinićová thanked everyone and invited them to another room for a small reception, where everyone had fun together until late in the evening.



Guests present. Photo: Miloslav Strehársky

MONTENEGRO MATICA SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE MONTENEGRO CYRILIC PRINTING PLANT PROJECT IN THE XV. and XVI. CENTURY

Presented phototype edition of "Praznični minej" from 1538 of the printer Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin Ivan Ivanović, general secretary of Montenegro Matica, Montenegro

Presentation of the first phototype edition "Praznični minej" from the printing house of Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin, the publication of which completes the project "Montenegro Cyrillic printers in the XV. and XVI. century" Montenegro Matica, was held in Podgorica on May 5, 2022.

In terms of craftsmanship and art, the most valuable work, which was printed in 1538 at the Vuković printing house in Venice, was published by Montenegro Matica in the orig-

inal format and in an edition of 500 numbered copies, in cooperation with the National Library of Bulgaria "St. Cyril and Methodius" from Sofia. The reprint of this famous work, the printing of which was financially supported by the Secretariat for Culture and Sports of the Capital City of Podgorica, contains the texts of the editor of the edition Dr. Marija Polimirová from the University "St. Kliment Ohridský" in Sofia and prof. dr. Božidar Šekularac in Montenegrin, Bulgarian and English.

During the presentation of the edition, the chairman of Montenegro Matica Dragan Radulović pointed out that by publishing "Praznični minej"

by Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin, they ended the project "Montenegro Cyrillic printers in the XV. and XVI. century", the implementation of which was initiated by Matica in 2019.

"For the first time, a publication from Vuković's printing house appeared before the Montenegrin scientific and cultural public. We decided on the most beautiful one, which sovereignly demonstrates the printed edition and the skills of the old masters, their dedication to the beauty of the book and the nobility of the motives with which they approached

its creation. Božidar Vuković has earned the right to be one of the most important personalities of Montenegrin culture with his work. Radulović emphasized.

After Djurdj Crnojević's visionary decision to establish the first printing house in Europe at the time in Montenegro and the subsequent fall of Montenegro to the Ottoman Empire, Božidar Vuković, Radulović recalled, kept the flame of Montenegrin Cyrillic printing in Venice, continuing

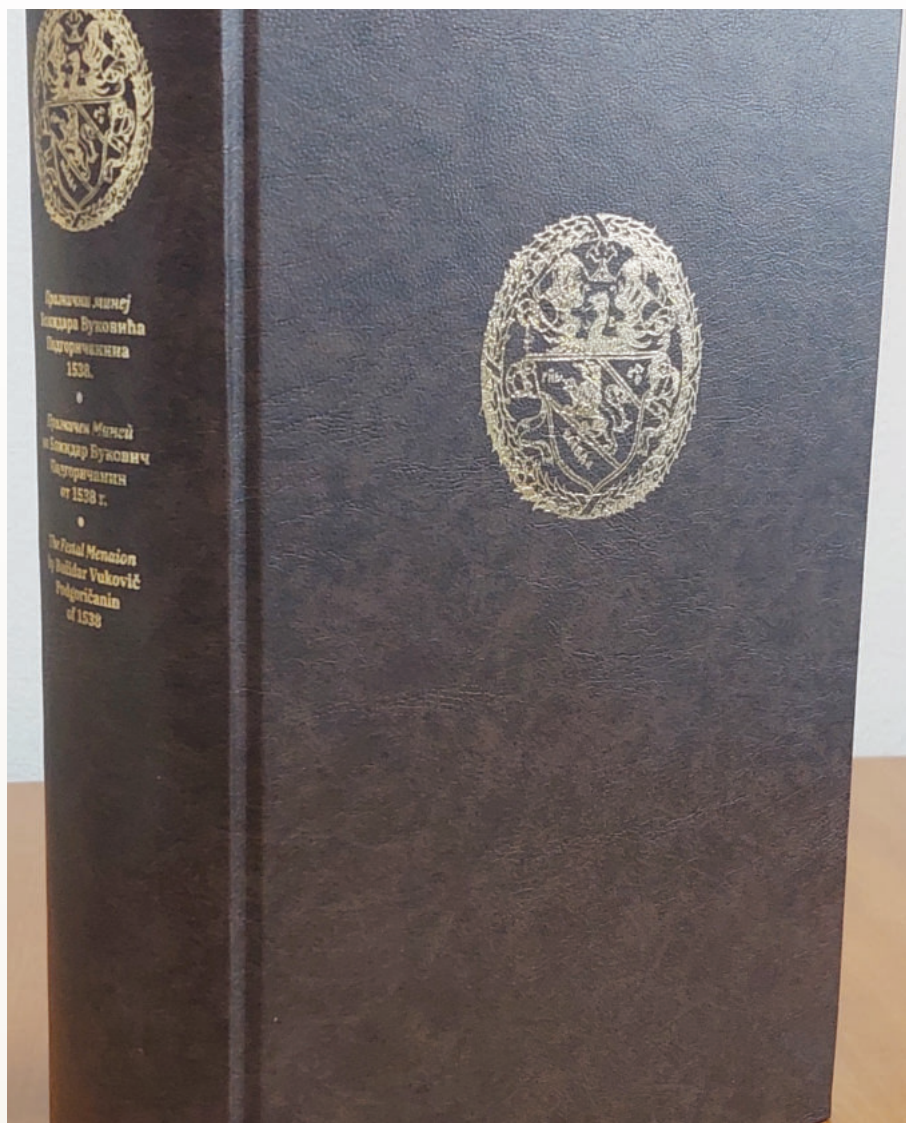
to create liturgical (church) books in Cyrillic.

"The books of Božidar Vuković, and later also of his son Vincenzo, were distributed and sold all over the countries of Orthodox Christianity, especially in the Balkans, because they fulfilled a spiritual need. So they long ago became a cultural and national asset of the highest value, not only in Montenegro, but also in the rest of the Orthodox world. Only in Bulgaria there are 43 books from the Vuković printing house and 13 Crnojević incunabula," said the chairman of Montenegro Matica.

At the end of his speech, Radulović thanked everyone who participated in this, as he said,

important project and promised, that Montenegro Matica will remain in its role and in connection with its program orientation will continue to preserve everything that is important for saving the cultural and national identity of the Montenegrin nation. *"Because that is our real source of spiritual strength and a fundamental contribution to the future."* - stated Radulović.

The Ambassador of Bulgaria in Podgorica, Meglena Plugchieva, said that the official presentation of the reprint of the "Praznični minej" edition means a great honor for





Ceremonial presentation of the "Praznični minej" edition from 1538 by the printer Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin. Source: Montenegro Matica.

her personally, but also a pleasure." *It benefits our cultural ties and the construction of a better future. There are many possibilities for extending the mutual cooperation between the two countries. In addition, our embassy has developed several projects with Montenegrin districts. Bulgaria is a friendly country and a country that wants to help Montenegro on the way to its European future,*" said the ambassador.

The Secretary for Culture and Sports of the Capital, Ana Medigović, reminded that they are proud to have financially supported the printing of the phototype edition "Praznični minej". *"'Holiday miss' represents a capital edition and is one of the most beautiful testimonies of the wealth and uniqueness of the Montenegrin publishing tradition. We are proud because in previous years, in cooperation with Matica, we implemented several programs important for Montenegrin culture and the affirmation of cultural heritage. We were pleased to support the publication of the phototype editions Psaltira s posljedomanjem and Praznični minej, which are the result of dedicated work and great cooperation of Matica Montenegrin and esteemed Bulgarian scientists and cultural institutions,"* said Medigović. She added that the Secretariat for Culture and Sports will continue and pay special attention to initiatives and projects that affirm the Montenegrin cultural heritage.

The chief editor of the phototype edition, Maria Polimirova, said that "Holiday Minej" at the time Božidar Vuković was publishing it was an essential, long-awaited and sought-after book. *It is a large format that is richly illustrated with 34 engravings. This book represents Vuković's most luxurious and expensive edition. A little more than 200 incomplete copies of this book are still preserved in the world today. There are 14 copies of the "Holiday Minej" preserved in Bulgaria, and five are in the National Library in Sofia. Their most complete and best-preserved specimen served as the basis for this phototype edition. The missing 12 pages were supplied from other copies. For this reason, we have compiled the complete Vuković's original edition, which contains 432 pages, 34 engravings and a paschal table. The original numbering of the pages of a specific specimen, manuscript - notes*

on the margin and other specifics of the original were also observed," – said Polimirova, who, as she added, hopes that the book will arouse interest and interest curious readers from Montenegro, Bulgaria and other countries.

"Praznični minej" is, as explained by the historian Božidar Šekularac, one of the seven books that Vuković printed in his printing house in Venice, which also represents the oldest printed copy in the Old Slavonic language and is considered the peak of Montenegrin printing in the 16th century. *"The most beautiful book and an example of graphic craftsmanship of that time is the Zbornik-Praznični minej"; the printing of which began on June 11, 1536 and ended on January 19, 1538. The first copies were made on parchment. Thanks to the publishers of the Matica Montenegrin and National Library, Sveti Ćirilo i Metodije' from Sofia, we received an exceptionally equipped book, the phototype edition of which is faithful to the original."* – said Šekularac and emphasized that the edition will be available to all interested readers.

The director of the National Library "Sveti Ćirilo i Metodije" from Sofia, Krasimira Aleksandrova, states that the library owns several copies of incunabula from Crnojević's printer and a larger number from Božidar Vuković's printer, including five copies of Praznični minej from 1538. She said that Montenegrin incunabula were in book circulation and served church practice in all churches in Western Bulgaria. *"Those copies are registered within the state, in various libraries. The new task of the researchers is their comprehensive study, description and digitization, which will create an opportunity for clarifying and supplementing the cultural and book ties between the Balkan peoples."* – concluded Aleksandrova.

Montenegro Matica earlier, as part of the project "Montenegrin Cyrillic printers in the XV. and XVI. storočje" held an exhibition in Sofia in cooperation with the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, with whom she also published a phototype edition of "Psaltira s posljedomanjem" from Crnojević's printing house from 1494.

30 YEARS OF THE SLOVAK PRINTING WORKS IN KRAKOW

Milica Majeriková-Molitoris, Association of Slovaks in Poland, Poland

Not far from Krakow's main square, which is occupied by tourists, about a ten-minute walk through Slavkovská and Długa ulica leads you to the smaller and quieter St. Philip Street. Among other things, it is interesting for Slovaks because it houses the Central Committee and the Gallery of Slovak Art of the Association of Slovaks in Poland. And just in the shadow of this three-story federal building, there is another small, inconspicuous building in the yard. Small and inconspicuous, and yet a large and important institution. Printing house of the Association of Slovaks in Poland.

It was exactly thirty years ago, in April 1993, when in the first Slovak printing house in Kraków, the machines began to make noise, from which the first sheets bearing witness to the joys and sorrows of the local Slovak community began to come out. The first printed material that saw the light of day here was the April, Easter issue of the compatriot magazine *Život (Life)*. - "We couldn't afford the first edition of *Život* from our own printing house," recalls the general secretary of the Association of Slovaks in Poland, Ľudomír Molitoris, who has been running the company since its beginnings.

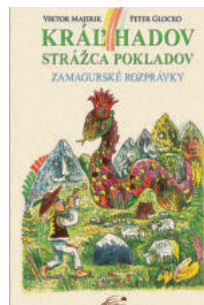
Of course, they were not easy. The first machines were acquired by the Society of Slovaks in Poland with the help of the Slovak Republic, but in order to be able to produce a full-scale printing production, it was necessary to purchase more and, in particular, to build the building of the printing house, which grew up under the hands of the Kácvín masons. Last but not least, it was also necessary to find and employ capable people and win the favor of potential clients.

In these beginnings, the Association could also rely on the Office for the Affairs of National Minorities of the Ministry of Culture and Art of the Republic of Poland. Its workers Bogumiła Bedrychowska and Ela Kulig really cared about minorities and always provided good advice and concrete help.

The first customer of the federal printing house was the monks from the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Czestochowa from Jasna Góra, while others were gradually added. The business soon built a good name, especially in artistic circles. As the writer and diplomat Anton Hykisch wrote in 2004, "In today's artistic Krakow, it is an honor to have a book or catalog printed 'at Słowaków'." It is a guarantee of quality, accuracy and efficiency." Less than a decade after the start of production, publications printed in the federal printing house began to win the first awards. At the beginning of the new millennium, in 2003, 2004 and 2011, they were awarded by the Polish Association of Book Publishers (Polskie Towarzystwo Wydawców Książek) for the most beautiful books of 2002, 2003



The best children's book of the summer of 2014, as well as the most beautiful children's book of the summer of 2015 in Slovakia, were published by the Goraling publishing house and the printing house of the Slovak Association in Poland. Source: Association of Slovaks of Poland



and 2010. These were publications that we printed for the cult Zderzak Gallery in Krakow. Cooperation with the Polish Brotherhood of Poets (Konfraternia Poetów), which brought together writers not only from Poland but also from abroad under the leadership of the well-known poet, dramatist, editor and creator of poetic mysteries Jack Lubart-Krzysica, was also very beneficial. Hundreds of poetry collections were printed at the federal printing house, and for a while we were one of the most important publishers of young poetry in Poland. Printing a collection "by the Slovaks" was a matter of prestige at that time.

The importance of the federal printing house for the development of Cracow culture was noticed by the city itself and awarded to the general secretary of the Association of Slovaks in Poland and the director of the printing house, Ľudomír Molitoris, the *Patron of Cracow Culture award* in 2003. Ten years later, another award came,

this time from Slovakia, where Ľ. Molitoris awarded by the president with the highest state award of the Slovak Republic, the *Order of the White Double Cross*. In 2015, the president of the city honored not only the director of the publishing house and printing house, but also the long-time graphic artist Ewa Koziółová with another award – the honorary badge *Honoris Gratia*, which is awarded for services to Krakow.

In addition to the printing house, a federal publishing house naturally began to emerge. The first publication that saw the light of day in it was the first issue of *Almanac Slovaks in Poland* - a collection that interprets at a professional level topics related to the Slovak community in Poland and the broader context of Slovak-Polish relations. - "In the first year of existence, we were able to publish our own professional literature. We couldn't believe it was done. It was an indescribable feeling," adds the general secretary. Subsequently, the federal publishing house published a number of professional monographs on interesting topics, among others *Słowacy w Powstaniu Warszawskim*, *Czesi w Polsce*, *Studies from the history of medieval Spiš*, *Z dziejów mniejszości słowackiej na Spiszu i Orawie w latach 1945-1957*, *Dzieje i włączenie Jurgowa*, *War on Spiš*, *Upper Orava and northern Spiš in the years 1945-1947*, *Bohater na nasze czasy*, *Secret history of upper Orava*, *Divided Kysuce*, *Atlas of the folk culture of the Slovaks in Poland*, *Zrozumieć Dursztyn*, *Canonical visitations of the Dunajec deanery in the Bishopric of Spiš from 1832*, *History of the Slovaks in Poland until 1961*, *Father Štefan Serafín Bosák*, *Orava Munich* and others. In recent years, three



The graphic artist of the federal publishing house and printing house was awarded the honor badge *Honoris Gratia* by the president of the city of Kraków. Source: Association of Slovaks of Poland

monographs of Spiš municipalities in Poland have seen the light of day here, while the *Nedeca* publication was awarded as one of the best monographs in Slovakia for the year 2022.

Several works were published by the federal publishing house in cooperation with Slovak, Polish and Austrian universities and other scientific institutions in Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Banská Bystrica, Ružomberok, Krakow, Katowice and Vienna. Among many, let's mention, for example: *The Prefect of Piš at the turn of the Middle Ages and the Modern Age*, *The development of church administration in Slovakia*, *The history of the Slovak League in Spiš*, *The Troubled border*, *Państwo, prawo, społeczeństwo w dziejach Europy Środkowej*, *Economic policy of the Slovak state*, *Fontes rerum Slovacarum*, *War after wars*, *Chapters from the oldest Czech history*, *Cambyses II*, *Egypt and Austria IX*, *Hungarian and Polish participants in the American Revolution*, *A Slovak woman and America*, *Philosophy of passion*, *Slovak Christian philosophy of the 20th century and its perspectives*, *Ludovít Štúr – educator and creator of the concept of education*, *Labyrinths of Karol Horák*, *Janusz Trzebiatowski Znaki graficzne*, or *2 worlds of tourism in Slovakia*. A significant achievement of our publishing house was the participation in the publication of the more than a thousand-page *Dictionary of Medieval and Modern Latin in Slovakia*, which is a unique publication of its kind.

In the spirit of spreading Slovak culture in Poland for the Polish-speaking population, the federal publishing house also published several translations of the greats of Slovak literature and contemporary authors. One of the most important was the translation of the poetry of Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav *Dzieci Prometeusza – Deti Prometheus*. The bilingual publication was published in 1999, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the birth of this Slovak bard, while its presentation in the premises of the Slovak Art Gallery of the Association of Slovaks in Krakow was carried out in a grand style and was one of the biggest events that took place on the anniversary in question. Polish newspapers also wrote about her. Other translations by Slovak authors include the works of Anton Hykisch *Kochajcie królową*, Pavel Vilikovský *Wiecznie zielony*, Ivan Bukovčan *Stryczek dla dwóch, czyli rzeź domowa*, Ján Uličianský *Czarodziejski chłopiec*, Július Balc *Wróble król*, poetry selections by Vlastimil Kovalčík *Klucz słoty* and Jozef Leikert. *Rosa na duszy*, *Anthologia włoszpennej poezji słowackiej* translated by Bogdan Urbankowski, *Klasycyzująca poetica* by Milan Rúfus and others. The promotion of Slovak visual arts takes place through the publication of bilingual catalogs of Slovak artists, which are exhibited in the Slovak Art Gallery of the Association of Slovaks in Krakow.

Of course, compatriot artists were also given space in the association's publishing house - the poet and painter František Kolkovič from Jablonka, to whom we published several poetry collections and art catalogs, as well as the classical painter Lýdia Mšalová from Horná Zubrica and the representative of modern art Weronika Surmová from Krempách.

During the thirty years of existence, they were printed in the federal printing house hundreds of thousands of printed materials of all kinds, ranging from works of a humanitarian focus in the fields of literature, history, culture, philosophy, aesthetics, political science, religions or other humanitarian fields through economics, economics, art, culinary arts and sports, to scientific and educational works presenting the use of the most modern technologies. These are almost 4,000



Over the course of thirty years, nearly 4,000 book titles and thousands of magazines were printed at the Printing House of the Slovak Association in Poland. Source: Association of Slovaks in Poland

book titles and other thousands of magazines and other printed matter of Slovak, Polish, Czech, English, German, French, Russian, Ukrainian, Finnish, Chinese and Arabic provenance, which today can be found in nineteen countries on four continents.

The printing house and publishing house of the Association of Slovaks in Poland has already been indelibly written in history as a creator and spreader of education, culture, enlightenment, art, modern technologies, but also entertainment and leisure literature. It has also become an integral part of expatriate life and the multicultural color of the city of

Krakow. As the Polish poet, essayist, dramatist and philosopher Bohdan Urbankowski noted at the time in *Gazeta Polska*: "Ludomir Molitoris is one of the most important and underrated ambassadors of Slovak culture and equally underrated friends of Polish culture."

Did you know that...

- the first printed matter published by the Publishing House and Printing House of the Slovak Association in Poland was the April issue of the magazine *Život* 1993.
- so far the most extensive book published by the Publishing House and Printing House of the Slovak Association in Poland is the second edition of the Dictionary of Medieval and Modern Latin in Slovakia, which has up to 1322 pages.
- so far, the smallest books published by the Publishing House and Printing House of the Association of Slovaks in Poland are the catalogs published on the occasion of exhibitions organized in the Gallery of Slovak Art in Krakow, which have 12 pages.
- so far the largest book published by the Publishing House and Printing House of the Slovak Association in Poland is the Chronicle of Uniwersytet Jagiellońskiego for the academic year 2003/2004, it measures 32 x 24 cm.
- so far the smallest book published by the Publishing House and Printing House of the Slovak Association in Poland is the book *Ubu Król 40 portretów wg sztuki* by Alfred Jara, it measures 10.5 x 7.5 cm, and in 2004 it won the Most Beautiful Book of the Year award.
- the Publishing House and Printing House of the Association of Slovaks in Poland has already published about 2,000 titles with its own ISBN and about the same number of 2,000 titles that were published for other publishers.
- the most books in the Publishing House and Printing House of the Association of Slovaks in Poland saw the light of day in 2013, when an average of one book was published almost every day.
- Publications in Slovak, Polish, Czech, English, German, French, Russian, Ukrainian, Finnish, Chinese and Arabic were published in the Publishing House and Printing House of the Association of Slovaks in Poland.
- You can find books published by the Publishing House and Printing House of the Association of Slovaks in Poland on four continents and in nineteen countries of the world, except for Poland and Slovakia, in the Czech Republic, Austria, France, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Ukraine, the Great Britain, Israel, Turkey, Australia, USA, Canada and China.

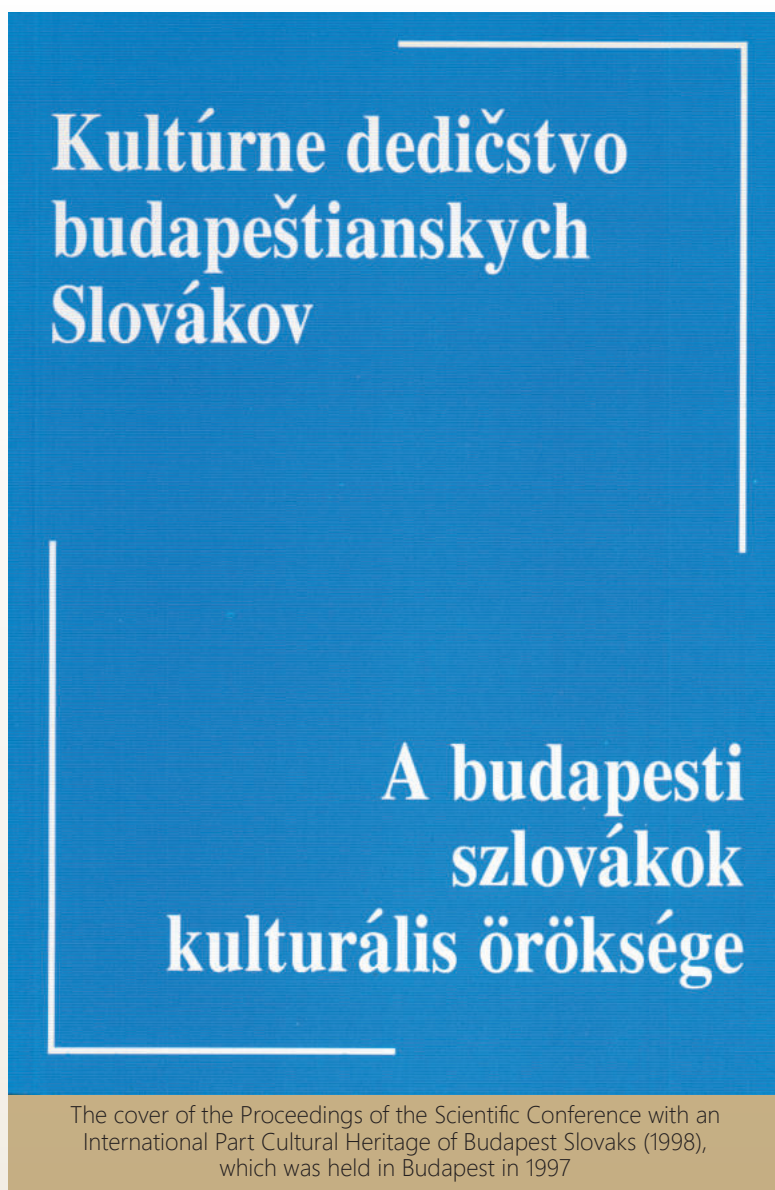
ONE LAST NOTE TO DISCUSSION ABOUT THE CULTURAL HERITAGE (NOT ONLY) OF BUDAPEST'S SLOVAKS

Michal Hrivnák, novelist, Hungary

The Slovak self-government of the 12th district in Budapest recently held a meeting on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the publication of the collection *Cultural heritage of Budapest Slovaks*. The event was graced by the presence of the president of the Slovak Self-Government in Budapest, Edita Hortiová, and Zuzana Hollósyová, the former president at the time of the birth of the publication. Despite the waste of time and especially considering our circumstances, the interest in the event exceeded expectations. What probably attracted here - almost exclusively retired people (!) - was the presence of direct participants in ancient events twenty-five years ago, such as the main actor of the event, Dr. To Anna Kováčová, perhaps nostalgia for bygone times (a person is prone to nostalgia when remembering past events, how young, bright we were...), or maybe all of

this together? Instead of an immediate answer, let's listen to the mention of our renowned culturologist Anna Kováčová and follow the course of other events of the event. Maybe then we will get closer to solving the "mystery".

A. Kováčová initially spoke about previous events. A year before the publication of the collection *Cultural Heritage of Budapest Slovaks*, the Slovak Self-Government in Budapest organized a symposium with the same name. After the establishment of the Chamber of Deputies, it was the first, more significant event with a symbolic content; it was a manifestation of awareness of its mission and indicated to a certain extent the direction of further activity of the self-government. Over the centuries, Pest-Budín has been the scene of cultural activities of Slovaks in general and the residence of numerous prominent personalities. After 1945,



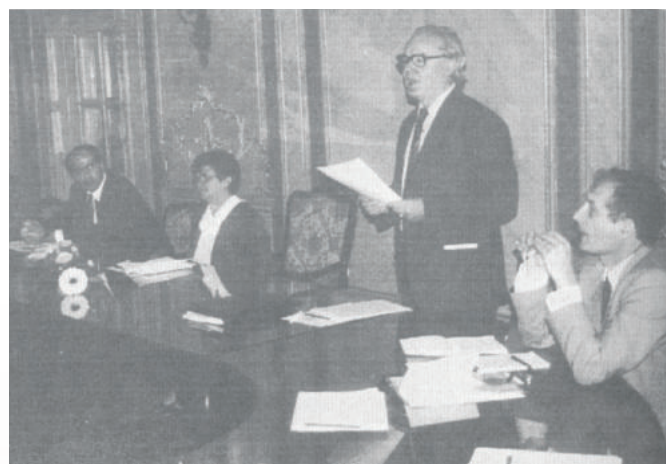
the capital of Hungary became the most important center of the social and cultural life of the Slovak nationality in Hungary, while it is still the permanent home of a significant number of members of this minority, or their descendants. The pioneering act of the mentioned conference consisted primarily in the fact that the meeting was the first of its kind, previously - contrary to the key position of the capital in the life of Slovaks in general - no forum had paid adequate attention to Budapest in Slovakia. At that time, among others, the chairman of Slovak Matica and the mayor of Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic, drew attention to the upcoming event co-operation. Renowned domestic experts on the issue (for example Kiss Gy. Csaba, L. Szarka and several young people) and experts from Slovakia (Pavol Hapák, Stanislav Bajanič and others) gave lectures at

the conference. The said publication contains, among others, their speeches.

Anna Kováčová quoted from the opening speech of Michal Hrivnák, the then chairman of the Cultural Committee of the municipality, the main organizer of the event: "... the aim of the... assembly is to make available cultural and historical knowledge related to the local Slovak nationality... The Slovak municipality in Budapest intends to create traditions on the basis of this material, among other things to cultivate a memory important personalities of local Slovaks. In this way, we want to contribute to the preservation not only of Budapest's Slovaks, but of the Slovak nationality in Hungary in general. At the same time, the conference is part of the long-term program of the Slovak self-government in Budapest, which is supposed to serve the revitalization of the



A view of the meeting hall. Source: anthology Cultural heritage of Budapest Slovaks



The Presidency of the Conference Cultural Heritage of Budapest Slovaks. Source: anthology Cultural heritage of Budapest Slovaks

minority... The organizers also intend to contribute to the intensification and expansion of scientific research in this area. The fact that there are several young researchers among the participants of the conference also points in this direction."

The lecturer analyzed the key texts of the anthology through the prism of the mentioned words. She investigated the extent to which they can actually contribute to the fulfillment of the set goals, to the shaping of the social and cultural life of Budapest's Slovaks, and to the strengthening of their national identity. She stated that the publication includes valuable materials that well present the events of Slovak Budapest from the beginning of the national revival of the Slovaks in general, the creation of their social and cultural life, and which are suitable for arousing the interest of the wider Slovak public in the past of the ancestors. At the same time, some contributions create a picture of the current state of the Slovak nationality in Budapest, of their efforts in favor of survival. The content of the materials - including the spirit of the previous symposium on this topic - influenced the shaping of social and cultural life permanently - not only of Slovaks in Budapest, but of the entire nationality. The results are impressive - numerous scientific and popular publications, memorial plaques, statues and other activities in the field of spreading scientific knowledge. These findings are also suitable for the widest possible range of Slovaks in Hungary to become familiar with them, especially the student youth and the adult population, and they could serve as a starting point for further research on Slovak Budapest. For example, the collection was used by P. Pázmány at the Faculty of Philosophy of Slavic Studies of the Catholic University as a guide for Slovakists, future researchers, and ethnographers. It's a shame that the remarkable initiative is currently not being continued, said A. Kováčová at the end.

The actors of the discussion on the paper and the subsequent free discussion reflected on the realities presented by A. Kováčová in the broader context of national existence at the turn of the century, in the context of the growing possibilities of applying national rights and from the perspective of nationality as such. Everyone agreed that thanks to favorable political and legisla-

tive changes during this period, including the creation of a system of Slovak national self-governments, their activities and the emergence of a new generation with more accessible educational opportunities (especially at the universities of the mother country), the Slovak nationality in Hungary recorded this time hitherto unheard of all-round development in various areas of social and cultural life. A significant sign of the boom was the establishment of the Research Institute, the development of the Vertigo theater, the creation of a literary life and a system of national self-governments, their activities in the field of uncovering and cultivating traditions, etc. It was a period of searching for a way. Sometimes initiatives of an individual nature, which although received the support of the given narrower collective from which they arose (literary community, local governments, etc.), but despite their wider importance, were not always integrated into the overall flow of the cultural life of the nation. Due to the lack of interest (including sometimes even the minority press), they were practically considered a local matter. Their further fate continued to depend solely on the attitude of the initiators, who, with limited possibilities, could not continue their work to an adequate extent, sometimes, for example, not even remembering the anniversary of a given significant event worth remembering. At the same time, the organizers of this event, for similar reasons, failed to include the jubilee collection *Cultural*

Heritage of Budapest Slovaks in the publishing plan of the Slovak National Self-Government among the publications intended for reissue. This case may appear to be rare, but it is apt: as if it points to attitudes where performance and contribution are not weighted in decision-making, but rather subjective aspects, group interests. Some participants in the discussion examined the overall position of national self-governments in the mentioned contexts, considered their chances of survival after the upcoming municipal elections. They pointed out the role of schools and the responsibility of youth...



A view of the meeting hall. Source: anthology Cultural heritage of Budapest Slovaks

COSTUMES OF SLOVAKS FROM BULGARIA COME TO LIFE AGAIN

Katarína Koňariková, president of the Association of Slovaks from Bulgaria, Slovakia

Slovaks from the Low Countries are a cultural phenomenon that is unique in the world. Despite their more than two hundred years of wandering through the vast Danubian-Pannonian plain, on the border of present-day Hungary, Romania and the former Yugoslavia, they preserved their mother tongue, faith and culture, which distinguished them from other nationalities with whom they came into contact.

Slovaks from Bulgaria are the southernmost branch of the Lowland Slovaks. Although they settled on the Balkan Peninsula, in the northern parts of Bulgaria, they were part of a large migration stream from the end of the 17th century, when Slovaks left their homes in Slovakia, and therefore we classify them as Lowland Slovaks.

They are the most distant from us in time and space, and therefore it is remarkable to observe what changes they accepted in cultural adaptation, what traditions and innovations they were able to accept and which they rejected. Historians agree that despite their relationship to continuity or discontinuity, their Slovakness persisted, which was shaped by the influence of the environment into a new, unique form, the uniqueness of the Slovaks from Bulgaria.

In this post, we will focus on the traditional clothes on weekdays and the costumes of the Slovaks from Bulgaria, which have "diminished" the most in terms of variety and individual components. It is related to the lack of substances and the already mentioned geographical separation from the motherland. But first, as we get to the costume itself, it should be remembered that the Slovaks did not come to Bulgaria directly from Slovakia, but it was a so-called secondary colonization from the Low Countries, where they spent some time in a foreign-language and incultural environment, from which they received diverse elements.

Slovaks started coming to Bulgaria in 1884, and as Ján Michalko writes in his publication *Our People in Bulgaria* (Myjava, 1936), here you can see how quickly the costume changed. The Slovaks who came to Mrtvice (Podem) lat-



Pavel Koňarik with the horse Matt during the filming of the song Volári Volári.
Source: The author of the post

er in 1897 did not find among their natives a black buttoned lajblík, nor a širák similar to the Štrbské or Važecké, which were proof that the Slovaks came to Dolná zem from the northern parts of Slovakia. Wide white flared trousers (gate) made of hemp cloth, which were ridiculed by the Bulgarians, were also found, and therefore the Slovaks quickly replaced them with black trousers. In *the Atlas of the Traditional Culture of Slovak Minorities in Central and Southern Europe* (Nadlak, 2006), it is stated that the mentioned gate, which men wore mainly in the summer, stopped being worn altogether in the interwar period. They were replaced by narrow trousers made of home cloth and worn in summer and winter.

Instead of coats and hats, which

had nowhere to be replenished, Slovaks began to wear Bulgarian flannel, typical sheepskin coats, and on their feet instead of boots, Bulgarian boots - carvula. Even in footwear, it can be seen from where the Slovaks came to Bulgaria from the Low Countries. Richer people from Nadla wore shiny sarees (polished upper part of boots), poorer people from Kovačíc wore tights (knitted shoes). On weekdays, men wore khakis in the summer, boots in the winter, and cloth overshoes (instead of socks) in their shoes. They started wearing city shoes again in the interwar period.

The men's shirt was either hemp or cotton linen and by the time of World War I had a straight cut. The interwar period, which seems to be a turning point in men's clothing, also influenced the wearing of shirts and shirts with an urban cut began to be worn.

Women's clothing consisted of a wide gechel made of hemp cloth, sewn around the bottom with two or three ribbons and fastened along the entire length with snaps. The unfolded one represented the cloak of a cone-shaped spire. Women wore three or four such hetzels.

According to Michalek, older women mentioned that in Banat they wore forty at a time. Michalko further states that they did not wear a dress (apron) (however, it is stated in *the Atlas of Traditional Culture of Slovak Minorities in Central and Southern Europe* that women wore aprons on weekdays and holidays). An embroidered shroud is a rarity rather than a commonplace. For a long time after arriving in Bulgaria, women still wore a prusliak decorated with ribbons on the shoulders and a three-tailed scarf on it. Also with tight sleeves buttoned up to the neck and a blouse (blouse) on it. In the summer, they wore miders (lajblík) with a wide, twisted collar, canvas-lined coats, and in the winter, they were made of black cloth.

Interesting are the embroidery of Slovaks living in Bulgaria, which are mostly represented on duvets, tablecloths and wedges (towels). The most attention was paid to the duvets, as a decoration of the front room, which is why the embroideries are also in two rows. Only the guests or the bride slept in these during the wedding night. However, the embroidery on the costumes, also according to Ján Michalek, has become impoverished in terms of colors and Slovak ornaments, such as Slovak stylized apples, flowers, roses, branches. They were replaced with white lace. Slovak women also embroidered with Bulgarian embroidery, cross stitch. The revival of embroidery came at the time of the independent Slovak school (from 1923), which was a Slovak refreshment in several ways and had immense importance.

The Association of Slovaks from Bulgaria preserves the traditions that our ancestors brought back to Slovakia from Bulgaria and tries to make them known to the younger generation and the wider public. They are an important part of our cultural life and especially our heritage. In this context, we continued the work of the already mentioned teacher Ján Michalek, who became a historian of Slovaks from Bulgaria. In addition to the book *Our People in Bulgaria* capturing fifty years of their life, songs and customs, he collected a collection of songs with notation. The collection was published under the name *Ej Bugári Bugári* only in 2008 (compiled by Katarína Sedláková and Vladimír Penčev, Sofia, 2008). We selected songs from it that were set to music by Milan Veróný and Andrej Záhorec, René Bošela and Danka Sihelská sang with her sisters and members of the Society on a CD carrier in the Môlča records studio. In order to capture the culture of the Slovaks from Bulgaria also from the point of view of the described costumes, which are no longer preserved in the original, we approached Margaréta Hlbocká (Margarit-design), who is dedicated to the production of costumes, to make them for us for a clip of three selected songs - *Volári volári*, *Dobre l'm fine*, *white scorpions*. This



Helenka Koňariková and Lukáško Kráľovič in costumes during the first day of filming.
Source: The author of the post

project was realized thanks to the financial support of the SPP (Slovak Gas Industry) Foundation.

On the basis of old photographs, from where she drew the cut, and on the basis of the cross-stitch embroidery on the cover of the pillow, quilt and wedge, from where she drew the floral pattern and colors, Margaréta Hlbocká sewed replicas of five women's and five men's costumes, two of which were children's.

She sewed *geceľes* (skirts) from a straight strip of cotton with different patterns - flowers, dots, or plain colors - which we chose exactly according to specific photos. The hemlocks are pleated at the waist. White girls' skirts are decorated in the lower part with two thin decorative strips - pink and purple. In the lower part of the hem, a strip of fabric (sheet metal) is added and pre-stitched to strengthen the edge and give a better shape to the skirt. As we mentioned above, the gilets were fastened with snaps,

which we followed, but in the waist we chose to fasten with a button. Women's blouses were made of cotton. The decorated parts on the front parts are embroidered first on the strips, which were then sewn onto the parts of the blouse. The front part is also folded in 1 to 2 folds in the shoulder seam towards the armhole. The shorter sleeve is a cap, based on 4 to 6 folds in the upper part of the armhole - an optically raised sleeve. The flower on the cuff is embroidered directly on the piece (the cuff can also have decorative locks). The collar is round in shape and the flower is embroidered on it so that the embroidery flows seamlessly into the bands on the front. The girls had a hairstyle made of one braid decorated with a bow at the bottom, and the women wore a scarf tied under the chin in a single knot.

Men's shirts have a similar cut to women's blouses, the only difference is the sleeve length, which is classic. The sleeve is not tucked in the head, but smooth, and the collar is pointed in shape with a stand-up left, as we see in the men's photos. The men wore farmer's caps.

However, we did not rely only on old photographs and a few preserved embroideries when working. A valuable source of information for us were older compatriots who dressed themselves in such costumes when they were children and remembered how their mothers and grandmothers wore them, how they wove fabrics, sewed and embroidered them. According to their words, the patterns and colours we have chosen correspond to the original and have a significant explanatory value also considering that the Slovaks no longer live in Bulgaria as an enclave of the migration flow of Lowland Slovaks and their traditions and customs survive only thanks to the generations living in Slovakia.



Original embroidery on the quilt cover, which was embroidered by Katarína Jančíková born. Kováčová from Gorná Mitropolije.
Source: The author of the post

PRESENTATION OF THE BUNEV CULTURE PROJECT IS PART OF THE HERITAGE OF SERBIA

Bunev Matica, Serbia



The historical building of the Technical School of Ivan Sarić in Subotica, in which the presentation of the Bunev culture project took place, is part of the heritage of Serbia. Source: Bunev Matica

Presentation of the part of the heritage of Serbia took place at the Ivan Sarić Technical School in Subotica under the auspices of the City of Subotica and Bunev Matica. The project featured students who learn the Bunev language with elements of national culture at three secondary schools, namely the Ivan Sarić Technical School, the Lazar Nešić Polytechnic and Chemical-Technological School in Subotica.

Only recently, three short films were created with the aim of promoting the Bunevo culture, which is part of the folklore of Serbia. The teachers Jadranka Tikvicki and Melisa Vilov were based on the assumption that it is necessary for children to create a creative environment for teaching the prescribed material, and thus the idea arose to implement the project within one school year. The theme of the first year of the project was the work of the artist Ana Bešlić and the legacy of the Vojnić family.

The first film was dedicated to the Vojnić Palace. Why Vojnić Palace? Precisely because this building is one of the most beautiful buildings in the city. So they decided to bring to the public, especially young people, all the stories that are hidden behind the walls of this building. They are convinced that this is the way to shine a light on the city's cultural monuments and, moreover, to draw attention

to the fact that they require full protection. By protecting monuments, we actually protect memories of ancient times.

The second film is dedicated to the Mother and Child monument, which is located in the Aleksandrovo housing estate and was created by the sculptor Ana Bešlićová. The said work of art is revealed in the film. The authors were guided by the thesis held by the sculptor that stone, wood and bronze will tell their own stories and that this work was their story.

The third film is focused on the overall work of Ana Bešlić. At the same time, it is probably the beginning of some other project: *"It was not easy for us because we had to provide technical support for our ideas. However, the children accepted the work on the project with great enthusiasm. They very quickly realized how important similar projects are for the city, as well as for themselves. It seems to me that we have learned a number of things from our past and that was our goal"* – says Jadranka Tikvicki, project coordinator. She thanked the City of Subotica and Bunev Matica for their support. *"It is very important that such an approach to work can be manifested in all kinds of teaching processes, because when the children are satisfied, then success will not stop"* – noted Jadranka Tikvicki.

BYSTRICE CELEBRATED, THE LARGEST VILLAGE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

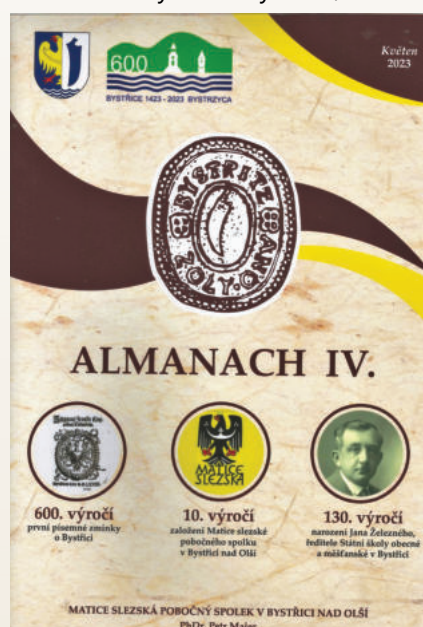
Anna Konderlová, president of Silesian Matica, branch association in Bystřice nad Olší, Czech Republic

In May 2023, we commemorated the six hundredth anniversary of the first written mention of Bystřice in the Frýdek-Místek district. Silesian Matica, a branch association in Bystřice nad Olší, actively participated in this important anniversary for the village. On the eve of the celebrations, on Sunday, April 30, a funeral mass for the victims of both world wars was held in the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, which was served by the chief chaplain of the Army of the Czech Republic, Colonel of the General Staff, Jaroslav Knichal. The main celebrations took place on May 4. Let us remind you that it was on this day in 1423 that the first mention of Bystřice appeared in the description of a document issued by Prince Boleslav I (1409 – 1431) stored in the "Zemský" archive in Opava in the Royal Office fund. However, the beginnings of the village date back to even older times, when the Principality of Těšín was ruled by Prince Přemysl I, known as Nošák, a diplomat working at the court of Emperor Charles IV. and his son Václav IV. In the course of the 14th century, the establishment of a separate village, whose name can be derived from the mountain stream flowing through its center, was closely related to the settlement of the hitherto unused, impenetrably forested Beskydy foothills. From its inception until the end of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, that is, for more than 500 years, Bystřice belonged to the direct possessions of the princes of Těšín. It was one of the most populated villages on their estate.

Bystřice Day was held on May 20 with the participation of several thousand citizens not only from Bystřice, but also from



Stand of Maticy slezské at Dni Bystřice on May 4, 2023. Photo: Petr Majer



the surrounding villages. Silesian Matica had its stand here, where visitors had the opportunity to taste the rich refreshments that Maticy members had prepared for this important day.

Silesian Matica presented its fourth Almanac here. In it, in addition to the chronology of the most important events and milestones in the life of the village over the past centuries, she evaluated the ten years of activity of

the Silesian Maticy and also the 130th anniversary of the birth of Jan Želazný, the headmaster of the Municipal and Municipal State School in Bystřice, who was an important personality of the then Silesian Maticy of People's Education in Těšín.

Jubilee meeting in the park

The May celebrations of the six hundredth anniversary of the first written mention of Bystřice continued on Thursday, May 25, with the opening of the exhibition Bystřice in History – Bieg history in the park behind the multifunctional building. At noon, leaders and workers of the municipality, representatives, heads of associations, businessmen gathered here, and the mayors of the surrounding municipalities, members of the Association of Jablunkovska municipalities also accepted the invitation. In his speech, the mayor of Bystrica, Roman Wróbel, recalled the history and present of the now largest municipality in the Czech Republic, which is presented in large-scale photographs and captures life in the village, especially in the last century, as captured by the Bystrica photographer Karol Kaleta.

MEMORIAL CELEBRATIONS OF THE 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CODIFICATION OF WRITTEN SLOVAK LANGUAGE IN PADINA AND KOVAČICA

Daniela Ďurašová, Association for Education and Regional Development, Serbia



According to the population census in Serbia from 2022, the most Slovaks live in the Kovačica district - 8,676 Slovaks. In addition to the Slovak village of Kovačica, the village of Padina is also located in this district. Supposedly the largest Slovak village in the world. The villages are located next to each other, they cooperate with each other in the fields of education, culture, spiritual life..., they commemorate the anniversaries that are so important for Slovaks. Among these is the enactment of the Slovak language.

The Evangelical parish in Hlboké came to the attention of people mainly after the arrival of Jozef Miloslav Hurban and was his place of work for the entire 45 years until his death in 1888. Councils and meetings of national people were held here, it was the scene of many historical events. The meeting of Jozef Miloslav Hurban, Michal Miloslav Hodža and Ľudovít Štúr from July 11 to 16, 1843 was memorable 180 years ago, when they agreed on the enactment of literary Slovak based on the Central Slovak dialect.

On Saturday, June 3, 2023, a conference was held in the large hall of the Local Community in Kovačica on the occasion of the 180th anniversary of the enactment of written Slovak. The participants were welcomed by Adam Jonáš, chairman of the Kovačica Municipal Office, and Anna Břešova, director of the Primary School in Kovačica. After them, Monika Podsklanová - Šuhajdová, the deputy ambassador of the Slovak Republic in Belgrade, took the floor, who delivered nice greetings.

At the conference, the intellectual personalities of the Slovaks in Serbia contributed with their contributions - extraordinary professor of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade Zuzana Čížiková, professor of Slovak language and literature Anna Hrková, retired professor of Slovak language and literature Mária Kotvášová-Jonášová, history professor Miroslav Jurica and Banát senior, priest of the church choir in Padina Slađan Daniel Srdić and professor Michaela Chrapánová from the Slovak Lyceum from Nadlak.

Juraj Šefčík, an honorary senior and pastor of the church choir in Hlboké, transported us in spirit with his stories about Štúrovci to Hlboké, to the parish, to the period, not only when the Slovak language was enacted. *"Deep in Hlboké, our Slovak language spoke. Behind the rough walls of the memorial rectory, where I currently work, if you listen carefully, this national monument built almost two centuries ago will tell many tales. A perceptive and good listener can hear conversations between Hurban, Štúr and Hodža about the codification of the Slovak literary language, but also about good cooperation and relations with the Serbian brothers and many other stories of the glorious past. Special wealth consists of paintings, old books and rare objects that are a testimony of history,"* Pastor Šefčík said at the beginning of his speech. Among other things, he clarified that the celebrations of the 180th anniversary of the enactment of written Slovak in Hlboké will be held on July 16, 2023.

The conference was enriched with their songs by the Christian hearts choir led by Ján Dišpiter and the Women's church choir led by Alžbeta Hriešičová. Daniela Ďurašová, founder of the Association for Education and Regional Development in Padina, Pavel Baláž, chairman of the local branch of Slovak Matica in Kovačica and Ján Špringel, journalist, signed up for the discussion. The event was moderated by Anička Chalupová.

After the conference and a visit to the Kovačice galleries in situ, the participants moved to Padina, which welcomed them to divine services. Banát senior and Padin parish priest Slađan Daniel Srdić

first addressed them. Juraj Šefčík, parish priest from Hlboké, also honored the services with his sermon. Martin Bajza, parish priest from Kovačice, took part in the services and performed the liturgy.

The event was enriched by a tour of the collection of more than a century old costumes of the collector Zuzana Kotvášová under the name Padinská gecela. At the Padin parish, they organized a fashion show of costumes used by women for various occasions and all seasons. On this occasion, the collector presented nineteen festive costumes. At the fashion show, the costumes of members of the Slovak Cultural and Artistic Group Slnčnica, founded by AERD Padina, were presented. Daniela Ďurašová, the author of the project, and Monika Podsklanová-Šuhajdová, deputy ambassador of the Slovak Republic in Belgrade, spoke at the beginning. Senior Slađan Daniel Srdić spoke next - costume collector Zuzana Kotvášová and Eva Taubertová told the audience an ethnographic view of costumes.

Projects dedicated to the commemorative celebrations of the 180th anniversary of the codification of written Slovak in Padina and Kovačica were developed for the Municipal Offices of the mentioned municipalities by the Association for Education and Regional Development in Padina. Thanks to the Office for Slovaks living abroad in the Slovak Republic, which supported them.

In September, a professional seminar will be held on the project of professor of history Miroslav Jurica entitled Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Padina and its impact on the spiritual, national and school evangelical life of Slovaks in Padina. The goal of the project is to preserve and make available the national cultural wealth of the archive of the Evangelical Church in Padina, i.e. articles, photographs, letters and collections documenting important events from 1840 to 1846. Also to carry out research on the archive of the Slovak Evangelical Augsburg Confession of the church congregation in Padina and its impact on the spiritual, the national and school evangelical life of Slovaks in stages, mainly around 1843. In that year, the Slovak language was codified in Hlboké. The guarantor of the professional seminar is doc. PaedDr. Július Lomenčík, PhD. A professional seminar is being prepared for pastors, teachers of the Slovak language and pupils of primary schools in Padina and Kovačica, the content of which is to talk about the influence of the Slovak language on the life of the Lowland Slovaks, what role the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg confession played in the preservation of the Slovak script. We invite Slovak Matica experts from Slovakia to the seminar. On this occasion, we will commemorate the 160th anniversary of the foundation of Slovak Matica in Slovakia. The project was developed by the Padina Association for Education and Regional Development and supported by the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad.

For several years, the association implemented the Ľudovít Štúr Summer School project with the aim of introducing children and youth to the history of the Štúr family, visiting Hlboké, and listening to interesting stories about the enactment of the Slovak language at the parish in Hlboké. Thanks to the mayor of the village in Hlboké, Miloš Čobrda, and his team, who always warmly welcomed us and then we visited Slovaks in Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland as part of the project. We have signed a co-operation agreement between Hlboké, Padina and Kovačica. Let's protect the Slovak word, faith and customs, let's not forget where the cradle of our history is located on the literary language.

SCIENTIFIC SEMINAR DEDICATED TO THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF MONS. FRANTIŠKA JOSEF FUGA

Zuzana Pavelcová, director of the National Museum of Slovak Matica, Slovakia

In 2023, the name of František Jozef Fuga (June 9, 1923, Vinné, Slovakia – November 9, 1987, Hamilton, Canada) shines in the compatriot calendar's jubilees. František Fuga (original name Figa), a native of Vinné (Michalovce district), is best known as a priest, patron of expatriate life, publisher, editor, editor, printer, agitator of Slovak life on the North American continent, third chairman of Foreign Slovak Matica and author of the draft of today's Slovak flag.

Despite his enormous pro-national merits, the Slovak public hardly knows this exile. On June 7, 2023, on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, Slovak Matica commemorated his life and work with a scientific seminar at its headquarters in Martin. Preparations for the seminar began already at the beginning of 2023, when Slovak Matica addressed the Slovak and expatriate academic community with a call for the possibility of preparing a paper for the seminar.

This professional event took place within the Verbal Spring. Marián Gešper, the chairman of Slovak Matica, welcomed the audience on the matric floor. In his speech, he particularly emphasized the contribution of Fuga to Foreign Slovak Matica and to the national mission of compatriots abroad. His words were followed up by the chairman of the Office for Slovaks living abroad - Milan Ján Pilip, who focused on the essence of the valuable contribution of expatriate communities to society. Compatriot Paul Stacho arrived from Toronto, who earned a reverent memory of Mons. Fuga in Hamilton and collaborated with Slovak Matica in the preparation of a historical document dedicated to his life and work. This document *František Jozef Fuga – apostle of the national spirit* was created in the Information Department of Slovak Matica, under the direction of the secretary of Slovak Matica, Ján Seman.

The working part of the seminar was opened by František Cupák, nephew of F. J. Fuga, who related mainly to personal memories of his uncle, his stay in Hamilton and the issue of the draft of the verbal pledge. Daniel Černý, director of the



Cultural worker and Greek Catholic priest F. J. Fuga, the third chairman of the Foreign Slovak Matica.
Source: Slovak National Library - Literary archive

Slovak Historical Institute in Rome, joined the conference online, who informed about the priestly mission of František Fuga and his tireless work among Greek Catholics. Beáta Katrebová Blehová from the Institute of the Memory of the Nation mapped the influence of Fuga in the bodies of the World Congress of Slovaks. Zuzana Pavelcová prepared a biographical contribution focusing mainly on his publishing work. Jozef Rydlo's final contribution brought his personal memories of mutual direct or indirect contacts with Mons. Fugom in the work and personal sphere.

At the end of the seminar, a broad debate was opened, in which other nephews of Fuga - Dušan and Ján, as well as guests, who added many interesting points to the topic, spoke. The ambition of Slovak Matica is to publish a special publication from the seminar, which would permanently capture the content and contribution of the event.

With a scientific seminar, Slovak Matica started a series of commemorative events in the year of the centenary of Fuga's birth. The video film is already freely available on the YouTube channel TV Matica. On the day of his birth (June 9, 2023), the Municipality of Vinné together with Slovak Matica prepared a rich program dedicated to his memory, supplemented by several accompanying events. In August, during the celebration of the 160th anniversary of the founding of the Slovak Matica, Slovak Matica is planning to unveil his bust in front of the headquarters building of the Slovak Matica in Martin.



A view of the participants of the scientific seminar on the life and work of František Fuga. Photo: Pavol Madura

EXHIBITION PROJECT OF ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY YEARS OF SLOVAK MATICA

Pavol Parenička, researcher at Slovak Matica, Slovakia

Slovak Matica, as part of the broader program of the 57th year of Slovesná jar as the oldest literary festival in Slovakia (held from June 6 to 8, 2023, traditionally in Martin), organized several successful separate events.

It was on this day of the literary and verbal marathon that it was mainly directed by the jubilant 160-year-old Slovak Matica as the oldest Slovak national cultural and scientific institution. The prepared events also reflected this important anniversary. The Archives

of Slovak Matica organized an exhibition of archival jewels entitled *160-year-old Slovak Matica*, which was thematically linked to the establishment of this institution and the period of its first operation between 1863 and 1875. Slovak Matica also hosted a ceremonial and extended meeting of the Presidium of Slovak Matica, at which with the ceremonial the chairman of Slovak Matica JUDr. Marián Gešper, PhD. Subsequently, the opening of the exhibition project *Slovak Matica – the oldest cultural institution of the Slovaks founded in 1863*, took place in the historical premises of the second residential building of Slovak Matica on Mudroňová street. The opening of the opening was moderated by the scientific secretary of Slovak Matica PhDr. Pavol Madura, who is also the manager and supervisor of this exhibition project and its documentary visualization. The exhibition was brought to life by the speech of the author of the text part of the exhibition doc. Pavol Parenička (mentioned in the second part of the article). Alexandra Chovanová, a young talented heligonist, performed both musically and as a singer at the opening.

The exhibition, which bears the name *Slovak Matica, the oldest cultural institution of Slovaks founded in 1863*, opens today, June 7, 2023, when we commemorate the 162nd anniversary of the adoption and declaration of the Memorandum of the Slovak Nation, and in less than two months, on August 4, 2023, 160 years will pass since the foundation of Slovak Matica. Both of these extraordinary events in the history of the Slovak nation of the 19th century are connected by the fact that they took place on the prime soil of Turčianský Sv. Martin as the center of eternal cultural and political movements, while the first event, which was the memorandum of the Slovak National Assembly or Congress in June 1861, directly determined the second, the founding general assembly of Slovak Matica in August 1863. The next era of our



A view of the exhibition rollups located in the headquarters building of Slovak Matica. In the background, the Gallery of Presidents of Slovak Matica from 1863 to the present. Photo: Pavol Madura

history from the beginning of the 60s to the mid-70s. of the 19th century entered Slovak history and the history of culture as a memorandum-matrix period. It is this that completes the process of the Slovak national revival, national unification movement and national emancipation efforts, during which, thanks to our actors, the Slovaks definitively took shape as a modern modern nation with its own written language, unique

culture and an autonomist political program that rigorously defined the boundaries of their territory between Tatras and the Danube, with the northern arc of the Carpathian mountains passing into south-oriented basins, valleys and lowlands. "The nation lives here! Slovaks lived, live and will live here!" – with these words, the memorandum-matrix cultural-political representation after the Slovak uprising of 1848 and 1849, again in 1861 and 1863, knocks on the doors of the Kingdom of Hungary and the Habsburg Monarchy and announces it in wider Slavic and European sessions.

The town of Turčianský Sv. Martin connects the historical memorandum meeting and the matrix events, but they are also represented by the same personalities. Among them, in the first place were the representatives of the Štúr generation, the true cultural and political elite of the nation, the best that the Slovak land ever bore, which they had ingrained in their hearts and fought for it with pen and sword. In 1843, the Štúr family began the process of codification of literary Slovak, in 1844 they founded the Tatrin cultural association, and in the revolution of 1848 they prepared and declared the first autonomist program of the Slovaks - Desires of the Slovak Nation. And then they heroically fought for him and shed blood in three military volunteer expeditions. Thirteen years later, the same people from Štúr in Martin initiated the Memorandum and two years later founded Matica. How to mention at least some of their most famous Štúr names: Ján Vratislav Francisci, Štefan Marko Daxner, Jozef Miloslav Hurban, Janko Kráľ, Andrej Krasislav Sládkovič, Samo Chalupka, Viliam Pauliny-Tóth and dozens of others, and always with them the dead spirit of the memory of Ľudovít Štúr and the physically absent Michal Miloslav Hodža.

Since 1843, the brave evangelicals of Štúr worked

closely on the nation's hereditary role with Catholic actors and intellectuals who adopted Štúr's Slovak, joined the Tatrín association and in 1848 and 1849 supported the Slovak Uprising in Hurban, in 1861 came to accept the Memorandum and in 1863 founded Matica. They were Tomáš Červeň, Martin Čulen, Ján Gotčár, Michal Chrástek, Ján Palárik, Andrej Ľudovít Radlinský, Jozef Karol Viktorin, Štefan Závodník, Gustáv Kazimír Zechenter-Laskomerský and other equally memorandum activists as registrars. At the Slovak National Assembly in June 1861 in Martin, the Permanent National Committee and the Temporary Committee for the establishment of Slovak Matica were created, with Ján Francisci elected as the head of both. And it was this scoundrel who gratefully and respectfully, and with the general consensus of both committees, engaged the Roman Catholic bishop of Banská Bystrica, Štefan Moyses, in a leadership position, like the biblical Moses, who immediately drew up the Vienna Memorandum and presented it to the monarch in Vienna in December 1861 as the head of the Slovak delegation. In August 1863, he stood at the head of Slovak Matica as its historically first chairman, and a month later, in September 1863, in this presidential capacity, he brought the matric delegation again before Emperor Francis Joseph I, who seemed to approve of this action, which he also sealed with his gift of a thousand gold coins and by receiving the founding member's diploma.

On the occasion of the premiere of this Slovak Matica exhibition, it is absolutely necessary to know the historical context of its creation, even with the help of a short historical excursion. It is only now that we can briefly return to the exhibition project itself, because it does not only approximate the austere act of its constitution, but attempts to capture the mother's past with its fateful vicissitudes up to the present in a visual summary, using artistically expert text and rich documentary images.

The exhibition project contains fourteen panel visualizations, thematically divided into three historical stages. In the first, the history of Slovak Matica is processed from its foundation in August 1863 until its forced official abolition by the Hungarian authorities in November 1875. In this context, it should be noted that the creation of Matica was initiated by two main factors, and on the one hand, it is a cultural phenomenon of the establishment of Slavic maticas in the Habsburg Monarchy as literary and publishing associations by representatives of the enslaved Slavic peoples, and on the other hand, the Slovak mother story was flanked and enhanced by the millennial celebrations of the arrival of the Slavic apostles and today's spiritual patrons of Europe St. Cyril and Methodius to our territory, which was organized in July 1863 by Bishop Štefan Moyses of Banská Bystrica, from August 1863 the first president of Slovak Matica, and Bishop Ladislav Zábojský of Spiš. Thus, they breathed into the spirit of the founding of Matica and permanently put Slavic, national and Christian orientations into its frame. The founders and first registrars and its officials Štefan Moyses, Karol Kuzmány, Ján Francisci, Jozef Miloslav Hurban, Michal Chrástek, Franko Vítázoslav Sasínek, Viliam Paulíny-Tóth, Jozef Kozáček and others understood the mission and realized the scope of Slovak Matica in wider external and narrower dimensions, that's why they built it not only as a literary and publishing association, but on a maximalist basis for the development of education with the tasks of an academy of sciences and arts, a national library, a museum and a gallery, ergo a historical monument and an organized memory of the nation. That national collective, the existence of which the contemporary Hungarian political representation denied, and therefore closed Slovak Matica in November 1875, confiscated its property, or she stole and dispersed the membership.

The second stage of the Slovak Matica exhibition project covers the years 1919 to 1968, i.e. from its revival to the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1919 under the protectorate of its president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, who was also responsible for the construction of the new residential building inaugurated in 1926, in the premises of which is installed our exhibition. In practical cultural work, Matica continued the successful project of its activities from the 19th century, while in interwar Czechoslovakia and in wartime Slovakia, Matúš Dula, Vavro Šrobár, Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav, Jozef Škultéty, Štefan Krčméry, Ján Vanovič were most deserving of the Matica's cultural mission. Jozef Cíger Hronský and other giants of Slovakia. The insurgent torch was carried and even after the communist coup after February 1948, Laco Novomeský, Vlado Clementis and other so-called were looking for a place for Slovak Matica in the wheelhouse of socialist culture. Slovak bourgeois nationalists. Alexander Dubček picked up the matrix idea during the political thaw from complete dust at the centenary of its foundation in 1963 and nurtured it during the revival process until 1968, which is also the second periodization landmark of our exhibition.

The third final thematic block approaches the last period of activity of Slovak Matica, when it was successfully brought from the mud of normalization to prominence in the period of the so-called the rebuilding of the company, including modernism from 1975 concretized in its new building on Hostihora with the institutional organism of modern memory of European importance was introduced by Vlado Mináč. After November 1989 at the end of the second millennium, known today as the wild 90s, however, Slovak Matica did not escape any crises. Unfortunately, they continued even in the first decade of the third millennium, when Slovak Matica came almost to the edge of society's interest and even to the verge of extinction of its membership. One of these many crises, and perhaps the cardinal one, began to be solved under the leadership of the historically youngest chairman of Slovak Matica Marián Gešper, while it is a question of saving membership and its generational exchange in the parent institution and member organism and patriotic education of the young generation.

At the very end, we would like to at least name the team that participated in the creation of the exhibition and the catalog of this popular science and educational project. The manager and manager of the project and its documentary visualization is the scientific secretary of Slovak Matica PhD. Pavol Madura. The author's text part of the exhibition was prepared by the cultural and matric historian Pavol Parenička, and it was reviewed by the literary methodologist Július Lomenčík, both university docents and scientific workers of the Slovak Literary Institute Slovak Matica. Its chairman JUDr. Marián Gešper, PhD. also collaborated professionally on the project. The artistic and graphic solution was implemented by Signis publishing house and PhD. Eva Čulenová, PhD. Thanks also go to the sponsors of the exhibition, Neografia a.s. and the City of Martin, which, through its mayor, prof. MUDr. Ján Danko, CSc., even in economically difficult times, often tries alone without other competent and responsible bodies to implement in practice the Law of the National Council of the Slovak Republic on the city of Martin as the center of Slovak national culture.

It is our honor to present to you and the wider public at home in Slovakia and in Slavic countries this traveling exhibition project, including a catalog, and we hope that it will become a cultivated source of information about the oldest cultural institution, Slovak Motherland, founded one hundred and sixty years ago.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONGRESSES OF THE MATICAS OF THE SLAVIC NATIONS

Mgr. Peter Schvantner, secretary of Slovak Matica, Slovakia



Participants of the first European congress of Maticas of Slavic nations in front of the headquarters building of Slovak Maticain Martin.
Source: Slovak Matica

One of the main tasks of Slovak Matica today, which resulted from its historical activity, is also the care of Slovaks living abroad, as well as cooperation with Maticas of other Slavic nations. This mission is embodied in the tradition of organizing a total of four congresses of Maticas of Slavic nations.

The First European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations

Historically, the First European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations was held on March 26-28, 2007 in Martin, Slovakia. Slovak Matica called him. All Maticas operating at the time were invited, while representatives of twelve Maticas from eight European countries came to the congress. It was attended by representatives of Serbian Matica, Lusatian-Serbian Matica, Slovak Matica, Slovenian Matica, Silesian Matica, Bunev Matica, Montenegro Matica, Slovak Maticain Yugoslavia, Slovak Maticain Ukraine and the Union of Slovaks - Union of Slovak Maticas in Croatia. The task of the event was to recall the irreplaceable role of these associations in the development of individual Slavic nations, their national languages, culture and civilizational progress since the first quarter of the 19th century. The Congress discussed four basic thematic areas: Slavic Maticas as a cultural, spiritual and social phenomenon of Europe; Slavism and Slavs in Europe at the threshold of the 21st century; National integrity – a pillar of identity; Matrix cooperation in strengthening national and cultural identity. The Matrix Congress in Martin was an important international event to which even political actors justifiably paid attention. In his letter, the President of the Slovak Republic, Ivan Gašparovič, praised the role of Maticas, which "strengthens the national

spirit and helps preserve and develop the cultural heritage of individual Slavic nations. In the space of a unifying Europe, it is an irreplaceable task that not only enriches the Slavic peoples, but also the cultural environment of the whole of Europe based on the diversity of individual cultures."

The participants of the congress in a separate block discussed topics for further cooperation and finally adopted a six-point Memorandum, which states: *We, the representatives of the Maticas of the Slavic nations, at our first European congress on March 26-28, 2007 in Martin (Slovakia):*

- I. declare that we see Europe as a continent of equal cultures, languages and national identities, cooperating national homes with the irreplaceable place of the Slavs.*
- II. we support and promote the humanistic, democratic and Christian traditions of Europe, which are a pillar of the cultural, spiritual and social development of our continent in the 21st century.*
- III. we agree with the new form of democratic cooperation of Maticas and recommend to the executives of our states that historically proven Maticas become an integral part of state cultural support for decades to come.*
- IV. we invite other organizations that accept and support Slavic reciprocity and the values of European belonging to cooperate.*
- V. we express our will to meet at other European congresses of the Maticas of the Slavic nations, thus preserving and developing our cultural heritage.*
- VI. we recommend that the decisive structures of the EU accept the integration will of other Slavic nations to become valid and full-fledged members of an integrated Europe.*



Memorial from the 1st Congress of Slavic Maticas. Source: Slovak Matica

in strengthening national and cultural identity. The Matrix Congress in Martin was an important international event to which even political actors justifiably paid attention. In his letter, the President of the Slovak Republic, Ivan Gašparovič, praised the role of Maticas, which "strengthens the national

European congresses of the Maticas of the Slavic nations, thus preserving and developing our cultural heritage.

VI. we recommend that the decisive structures of the EU accept the integration will of other Slavic nations to become valid and full-fledged members of an integrated Europe.



Participants of the Second European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations. Source: Slovak Matica

Second European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations

The Second European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations was again organized by Slovak Matica. It was held on August 1, 2013 in Martin on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Slovak Matica and on the occasion of the celebration of the 1,150th anniversary of the arrival of St. Cyril and Methodius to our territory. It was attended by delegates from ten Maticas of Slavic nations, coming as at the first congress from eight European countries: Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Germany, the Czech Republic and Ukraine. The second congress was attended by representatives of Slovak Matica, Silesian Matica, Slovenian Matica, Bunev Matica, Czech Matica, Montenegro Matica, Lusatian-Serbian Matica in Germany, Serbian Matica, Slovak Matica in Transcarpathia, Slovak Maticain Serbia and representatives of the Union of Slovaks in Croatia and the Forum of Slavic Cultures.

After presenting contributions and discussing many issues, the participants of the congress adopted and announced the final Memorandum, which contained seven points: *I. We subscribe to the conclusions of the 1st European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations, adopted on March 28, 2007 in Martin (Slovakia) and confirm that: We see Europe as a continent of equal cultures, languages and national identities; we support and promote the humanistic, democratic and Christian traditions of Europe as pillars of the cultural, spiritual and social development of our continent in the 21st century; we support the new form of democratic cooperation of Matice and we recommend the governments of our states to use the historically proven national cultural institutions – Matice in the implementation of state cultural policy in the future as well.*

II. We express our will and accept the decision to organize a meeting every year, with the aim of analyzing and solving current issues of Matic cooperation. In a two-year interval, we will organize Congresses of the Maticas of Slavic Nations, which will evaluate the results of our activities and their participants will accept tasks for the coming period.

III. We are looking for opportunities for mutual information and close cooperation. We want to intensify the exchange of experiences, the exchange of literature, the exchange of exhibitions, to support the joint publication of publications, in the interest of the cultural enrichment of our nations and the nations of integrated Europe. IV. We promote the phenomenon of the Matrix of Slavic Nations, with the aim of representing and strengthening the Slavic idea in EU projects, and we present ourselves on its soil as the Matrix of Slavic Nations. V.

We will intensify our cultural action within the framework of national cultures and we will respect the values of minority and regional cultures, because ignoring them in the final consequences means impoverishing the richness and diversity of the human spirit, which in the most diverse aspects protect all the cultures and languages of the world.

VI. Every year, we entrust one of the Maticas of Slavic Nations with organizing our year-round cooperation.

VII. We purposefully orientate our activities towards the young generation, in whom we see the future of the development of national culture and the continuation of matic traditions."

Third European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations

The Third Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations was held on February 4, 2014 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. We have little information about the congress in Slovenia. It was held under the auspices of the Forum of Slavic Cultures in Ljubljana on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Slovenian Matica. The congress was organized as a cultural exchange event and probably its participants did not even accept any conclusions. The congress program included a meeting of representatives of all invited Slavic Maticas at the headquarters of the Forum of Slavic Cultures, an exhibition dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Slovenian Matica was opened, and the end was a gala evening at the Slovenian State Philharmonic. We would therefore very much like to welcome the processing of information about the Slovenian congress and publish it in the Slavic Horizon.



Participants of the third congress of Maticas of Slavic nations in Slovenia. Source: Slovak Matica



Participants of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations in the committee room of the second register building before voting on the final communiqué of the Congress in Martin on 6 June 2019. Photo: Ján Seman

The Fourth Congress of Maticas and Institutions of the Slavic Nations

So far, the last joint congress was held on June 4-7, 2019 in Martin. The congress was held on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the revival of Slovak Matica. A novelty compared to previous congresses was the invitation, in addition to Maticas, to other institutions and organizations dealing with Slavic science and culture, and therefore this congress was called the Fourth Congress of Maticas and Institutions of the Slavic Nations. The congress was attended by foreign delegations from Serbia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, the Czech Republic, Germany, Ukraine, Russia and Romania. In addition to Slovak Matica, there were representatives of Serbian Matica, Silesian Matica, Slovenian Matica, Lusatian-Serbian Matica, and Slovak Matica Regional Cultural and Educational Organization in Transcarpathia. Experts from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Union of Bulgarian Writers, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Perm University, the "History of the Motherland" Foundation from Russia, the Democratic Union of Slovaks and Czechs in Romania, the All-Slavic Union and Montenegrin-Slovak Friendship presented their activities. The participants of the congress were welcomed at the ceremonial opening in the Turčianska gallery by the honorary consul of the Republic of Serbia in Slovakia Mojmir Vrlík, the chairman of the Office for Slovaks living abroad Ján Varšo, the general bishop of the Evangelical Church in Slovakia Ivan El'ko, the rector of the Technical University in Košice Stanislav Kmet' and other guests. The head of the Municipal Office, Katarína Tomášová,

spoke for the city of Martin, where Slovak Maticas is based.

Congress delegates agreed to intensify cooperation and dialogue in the spirit of native, Christian and traditional values. The chairman of Slovak Matica Marián Gešper stated during the congress proceedings that: *"Slovak Matica develops culture and science in a similar way with other Maticas, and we also influenced statehood in our own countries in about the same way. Therefore, we want to create a permanent information body in order to inform each other about current scientific and cultural activities. The result of the congress will also be a publication with contributions."* It is positive that the aforementioned informational press body was actually created and it is Slavic Horizon, which is published by Slovak Matica.

After two days of negotiations, presentations of contributions at the conference and discussions, the participants of the congress adopted a final communiqué, which states:

In the ongoing processes of globalization, liberalization, information, internet and cyber technologies and wars, the post-industrial era and post-modernity, the Slavic Maticas and cultural institutions of the Slavic nations must continue to promote and spread traditional conservative values, especially Christianity and patriotism. Especially in the Slavic and European environment, we want to preserve the Cyrillic-Method tradition, to help establish a pan-Slavic and national identity and historical awareness, which is the essence and perspective of the Slavic civilizing mission. We develop it based on the principles of the heritage of St.

Cyril and St. Method as the patron of Europe. In this context, there is a need for continuous scientific and professional dialogue and awareness among our institutions, including penetrations into the wider media space.

For this purpose, a working group will be created under the name Information Committee of Slavic Maticas with the aim of establishing an internet newsletter. It is also necessary to establish a Slavonic section in magazines and in individual parent movements with the perspective of establishing Slavic departments and editions of Slavic libraries to support the dissemination of works by Slavic authors. In the media area, it is necessary to establish yourself with regular cultural programs in the mass media, especially television and radio.

In the field of science, it is necessary to ensure active cooperation in the field of Slavic studies and other humanities (historiography, literary science, cultural studies, ethnography, bibliography, linguistics, Slavic comparative linguistics and comparatistics), exchange of experts, scientific workers, national activists and study and familiarization stays (including doctoral studies), as well as organizing scientific conferences and professional seminars.

In the area of cultural heritage protection in connection with the registers and institutions of the Slavic nations, it is necessary to explore the possibilities of involvement in UNESCO programs and projects, including the digitization of register museum collections and their mutual informational, scientific, presentational and virtual use.

Special attention must be paid to the field of education and pedagogy, with a focus on the education of Slavic youth, while the implemented Western educational systems must be critically re-evaluated, and above all, creatively follow up and develop our own pedagogical and school traditions, historically determined by the outlined line of the civilizing mission of the Slavic peoples.

In these contexts, the negative accompanying factors of

ongoing migration to Europe cannot be ignored either. As part of their civilizing mission, Maticas and Slavic cultural and scientific institutions will continue to support their own Slavic minorities in the field of education, culture and science, which are most exposed to the processes of globalization.

So far, the program has been partially implemented.

All-Slavic Maticas congresses have future

It is positive that a total of two memorials were published in books from the four past congresses of the Maticas of the Slavic nations. It was not possible to issue the memorials from the congresses in 2013 and 2014. The conclusions of the said congresses were implemented differently. It must be said that in many cases it was primarily a matter of ascertaining the facts and challenges directed by the state and the EU, but also by the Maticas themselves. The values and challenges represented by the congresses are still up-to-date and all Slavic Maticas are trying to promote them in cultural activities. However, the practical level was fulfilled also in terms of the cooperation of individual matrixes and the conclusions of the memoranda of the congresses themselves. Although they were not held every year, as was originally intended, even with the rotation of its congress organizers, as many as three out of four congresses were hosted and organized by Slovak Matica. Nevertheless, it is a successful project and definitely has a future. The publication of the Slavic Horizon, which was created on the initiative of the so far last congress of 2019, is also proof. This is also proven by the fact that the Fifth Congress of Slavic Maticas and Institutions of the Slavic Nations is to be held on August 3 and 4, 2023 in Martin, Slovakia, on the occasion of the 160. anniversary of the foundation of Slovak Matica.



A joint photo of the participants together with the organizers at the end of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of the Slavic Nations after the excursion as part of the cultural program of the event in the Slovak Village Museum in Martin 6/6/2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Pavol Parenička for the Slovak Literary Institute of Slovak Matica (left), the chairman of Slovak Matica Marián Gešper (in the middle) and the scientific secretary of Slovak Matica Pavel Mičianik (right) at the organizer's table at the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations in the Turčianska Gallery in Martina 5. 6. 2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Sergej Michailovič Sloistov from the Russian Institute of Slavic Studies (on the left, next to him is the chairman of Slovak Matica M. Gešper) presents a joint contribution with Mikhail J. Dronov at the lecture part of the 4th Congress in Martin on 05.06.2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Speech by the chairman of Serbian Matica Dragan Stanić (left) at the lecture part of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations in Turčianska Galerija in Martin on 5 June 2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Participants and guests in the Turčianska gallery watching the lecture part of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations in Martin on June 5, 2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Anna Konderlová is representing the contribution of the president of Silesian Matica, Jana Novotna Galuszková, at the lecture part of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of the Slavic Nations in the Turčianska Gallery in Martin on June 5, 2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Contribution of researcher of the Cyrillic-Method Center of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Dim Česmedžiev, at the lecture part of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of the Slavic Nations in the Turčianska Gallery in Martin on June 5, 2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Speech by the chairman of Slovenian Matica, Aleš Gabrič, at the lecture part of the 4th congress in Martin on 5.6.2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Secretary of the All-Slavic Union from Russia Dmitrij V. Orlov with a contribution at the lecture part of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations in the Turčianska Gallery in Martin on June 5, 2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Speech by the chairman of the Association of Slovak Writers, Miroslav Bielik, as part of the lecture part of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations in the Turčianska Gallery in Martin on June 5, 2019. Photo: Ján Seman



Participants of the 4th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations listening to an explanation on an excursion as part of the cultural program in the Literary Museum in Martin on June 6, 2019. Photo: Ján Seman

INTERVIEW WITH MARIÁN GEŠPER, CHAIRMAN OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY YEARS OF SLOVAK MATICA

Pavol Madura, editor-in-chief of Slavic Horizon magazine, scientific secretary of Slovak Matica, Slovakia

JUDr. Marián Gešper, PhD. is second time elected chairman of Slovak Matica since 2017 and thus became a follower of such personalities of Slovak national culture as Štefan Moyses, Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav, Matúš Dula or Vladimír Mináč. The current chairman of Slovak Matica managed to make significant progress in rejuvenating and modernizing Slovak Matica against the background of serious attacks by some state authorities on Slovak Matica. Marián Gešper brought new topics to it, established important collaborations with personalities and institutions. Also thanks to its organizational and diplomatic skills, Matica gained Slovak support in the National Council of the Slovak Republic, and the activities of this cultural institution are resisting the attacks of pseudo-liberal activists (and what is paradoxical, this is happening in the year of the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the Slovak Republic, which was also founded by the Maticians), the attack of the state and some bodies of the central state administration. Marián Gešper is also active as a writer (*Apostles of the National Spirit* – 2017, *Chairmans of Slovak Matica* – 2019 (co-authorship), Memorial from the Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations – 2020 (compiler), and co-authored compiler of the anthology: *Clementis & Mináč: Patriots or "bourgeois nationalists"?* – 2021. He is prolific in journalistic work, he also writes studies, professional biographical articles, professional articles in the field of law, cultural and church history. He published these articles in the periodicals *Slovak national newspaper* and *Slovak views*, but also in the professional magazine *Slovakia – national spectrum*, *Bulletine of Slovak advocacy*, *Evangelical envoy from the Tatras*, etc. During his tenure, he did a lot of work to commemorate often forgotten personalities and events of national history.

Slovak Matica declared the year 2023 as the Year of Slovak Matica. In August, we will commemorate 160 years since its foundation in 1863. The history of Slovak Matica exceeds three centuries. What is Slovak Matica for the Slovak nation?

From its beginnings, the Slovak Matica has always been an imaginary multi-layered and structured living organism persistently working for the benefit of the Slovak nation, its unique cultural, scientific and social life. Its founders made a determined effort - despite the winding historical path of the Slovaks - for our nation to achieve state sovereignty in this geographically restless heart of Europe. At the same time, Slovak Matica has always been a national and democratic institution, in which the individual, as well as the collective and the nation, played an important role. Perhaps the history of Slovak Matica is an example that the importance of a person as an individual and a nation as a collective cannot be overestimated or underestimated at the same time.

As part of thinking about what Slovak Maticais, its former chairman Vladimír Mináč (last year in 2022 we commemorated the centenary of his birth) expressed it perhaps most succinctly: "*We are the historical memory of the nation, the modern organized memory of the Slovak nation.*" Baťko Mináč added that our task, against the background of a critical evaluation of our history, is to permanently form the future elite of the nation and to transfer the national, democratic and Slavic legacy to the next Slovak generations. Currently, when Slovak Matica, as well as the wider national movement, is commemorating the 160th anniversary of the founding and continuous existence of the oldest national, cultural and scientific institution of the Slovaks, it is once again an opportunity to carefully reflect on the historical processes that have taken place, and as we can see, they again threaten the Slovak nation living in Central Europe – on this imaginary bridge between the West and the East.

What specifically have you achieved for Slovak Matica as a public institution today, in the modern, digital and globalizing world of the 21st century? Not least at the time of recent state attacks and pan-European pandemic measures?

Regardless of all the negatives and adversities of the time, I can say that we have achieved the Slovak maximum

for Matica with honor. Thanks to the rebuilding of the overall media and promotional work of the information pillar and overall professionalization of the registration work, we not only reflected the attacks of the so-called neoliberal media, but mainly promoted the national idea and parent activities in modern forms. We did not deal with controversial topics, for which prepared media propagandists, pretending to be the so-called neoliberal journalists. We also avoided party politics, which was a serious warning from the past. On the contrary, we focused on unifying national themes that appealed to diverse personalities from the entire spectrum of Slovak cultural, social and political life, which was felt at our events not only in Martin, but also in the regions of Slovakia. For the first half of the election period, we managed to fulfil what the registrars demanded before 2019. The membership movement again became the center of interest of the registrar headquarters, we stopped supporting commercial artistic groups, but prioritized registrar collectives, which returned to the stages of registrar events and main activities. We rebuilt the Science Center of the Slovak Matica, where we gave a chance to the young generation of scientists, even if their number is not large as a result of state financial restrictions. Maticas science cooperated to a much greater extent with the information and membership pillar of the Slovak Matica and focused its research and presentation activities on matriarchal personalities and uncharted Slovak historical events. It was in 2020 that the restoration of the main Library in Martin was successfully started instead of the one that was taken from us by the state in 2000, and we are also publishing the successful specialist magazine *Slovakia – National Spectrum*. The Information department prepared a series of documents on Slovak history and other media activities with scientific departments and regional workplaces. And not only for the public, but also especially for schools. It often happens that only Slovak Matica did not forget important anniversaries, although some declared us duplicitous! You surely remember that it was Matica who was at the head of the defense of the uniqueness of the National Cemetery in Martin. Who knows how it would have turned out if it weren't for Matica and the members of the National Council of the Slovak Republic



whom she approached, who adopted a rational view of this issue. In this context, it should be emphasized that the Slovak Matica actively renewed cooperation with the city of Martin, with the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters, the Slovak Writers' Association, Slavic and Slovak Matikas, with churches, but also in specific projects with universities and schools in general. The aforementioned Information department professionalized its activities, which was also felt on social networks and TV Matica on YouTube, where interest in Slovak Matica grew, and at the same time made our topics more attractive both for registrars and the general public. Last but not least, we ensured the natural generational continuity of workers in Slovak Matica, which previously appeared to be a serious problem. It must be remembered that young people in particular are being purposefully denationalized by the media and liberal non-governmental organizations, and it is not obvious to get high-quality and pro-national people with education and experience in the field for Matica.

In 2017, you became the youngest chairman of Slovak Matica in history. You are halfway through your second term. Did you manage to fulfil your visions of modernizing, rejuvenating or renovating Slovak Matica?

In the first years of my term of office, it was necessary to carry out consistent changes within the institution. Above all, what I have already indicated, to professionalize the work of the institution, to give the middle and young generation a full chance to participate in the voluntary and professional components of Slovak Matica. Likewise, in national culture and science, focus on topics that unite Slovaks and do not divide them. Above all, to avoid media controversies that abused us from the so-called liberal political forces and their media. In recent years, we have focused significantly on cultural-educational, professional, and publishing activities, but we have not forgotten the support of the local branches of Slovak Matica, folklore and artistic collectives. We also managed to significantly rejuvenate Slovak Matica thanks to the previous work of the youth interest branch of Slovak Matica - Young Matica, which also created a certain

manifesto for the youth, which we extended to the matric area. I also included him in my book *Apostles of the National Spirit*. We stabilized Slovak Matica, defended it from attacks by the state, but we preserved our face and dignity, which all organizations failed to do. Last but not least, we tried to positively motivate the members and, in the name of a common goal, eliminated contradictions in the central register bodies. This enabled the matrix activists to devote them fully to the matrix work, above all not to politicize. The new blood has also significantly affected cultural activities, promotion of the institution, they use Facebook, YouTube, documentaries and feature films, promotional materials, etc. are made.

How do you see generational continuity in the institution?

In my opinion, the most important task of the leaders of Slovak Matica every historical period is to ensure generational continuity and to capture the next generations of Slovak nationalists. Unfortunately, in Slovak conditions, this vital aspect was criminally forgotten. I have always considered the education and training of the young generation of registry clerks to be the absolute priority of my work. In a difficult time, the next parent generation took over the baton, most significantly between 2017 and 2019, thus saving the continuity of the institution. The young and middle generation joined not only the leadership of the institution, the committee, but also in other register components. It did not happen by itself, the prerequisites for this go back to the turn of 2010 and 2011, when a lot of long-term programmatic efforts were devoted to give young activists a chance to assert their ideas. And this at a time when not only the youth, but the entire society is educated by the pseudo-liberal media towards materialism, self-interest and opposition to everything national. The young generation also manifests itself in local unions, in the Theater Department of the Slovak Matica, in the activities of artistic collectives, but also in the workplaces and departments of the institution. We do not mean the education of the matric youth by mentoring, but by creating a space for the youth to work creatively on their own.



National meeting of Young Matica r. 2015 in Nitrianské Rudno on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Ľudovít Štúr, Slovak Matica president Marián Gešper on the far right, then in the position of president of Young Matica. Source: Slovak Matica

How do you see the future in terms of the historical development of the Slovak nation and Slovak Matikas such?

The parent mission and idea are timeless for the Slovak nation, only the forms of its implementation change. Matica crossed the borders of states, regimes and historical periods. Logically, it is the most natural democratic and free Slovak statehood, for which registrars sacrificed so much. However, the present time is, unfortunately, just as contradictory and dangerous as the past. Therefore, maintaining a sovereign and democratic Slovak Republic requires the same perseverance as achieving it in 1993. The task of the Slovak Matica today, as in the past, is to maintain and develop the Slovak cultural heritage, to elevate the cultural and educational role of Slovak men and women, to maintain the nation's collective historical memory and foster national pride from an early age. At the same time, work consistently on the formation of a new generation of national elite for the entire spectrum of Slovak cultural, political, social and scientific life. At the same time, in all-Slovak activities, we realize this through our events, but also through member, publishing and scientific activities - volunteers and professionals. We are not in addition, as pseudo-liberal groups that are under political influence think - on the contrary, in many cases in recent years we have saved the honor of the Slovak Republic, replaced a state that flagrantly forgot not only about many national anniversaries, but also about these important topics!

In recent times, we have witnessed the aforementioned attacks on Slovak Matica, its budget and maticic science. How is something like this even possible, even in your own state department? After all, the creation of the Slovak Republic was the result of the efforts of generations of registrars. Attacks on the justification of Slovak Matica are reminiscent of the period of the 19th century, when Matica was a thorn in the side of Magyarizers.

The last two years have only been affected by the pandemic, which mercilessly affected the parent activity and the budget. Unfortunately, at the same time, the Ministry of Culture did not help us in this critical situation, but some of

its representatives were at the head of initiatives to cut corners and settle accounts with Slovak Matica once and for all, which is historically scandalous. We have to face the truth. The current attacks not only by the pseudo-liberal media on the Slovak Matica were argumentatively similar to the fifties and seventies of the 20th century, when the totalitarian Marxist regime tried to discredit and curtail the parent activity with the help of the then causative media propagandists. During this unfavorable period, on the other hand, we persistently worked on maticic cultural and scientific activities throughout Slovakia, which can be easily verified when we look at overviews of maticic activities, for example on YouTube or in the Voice of Matica magazine. In this, our haters underestimated the tenacious matriarch movement, matriarchs in general, especially their cohesion, resistance and perseverance.

The previous leadership of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic under Minister Natália Milanová even decided to reduce the amount of special-purpose state subsidy to the oldest national institution by twenty-five percent. For example, the year 2021 was one of the most complicated in the recent history of Slovak Matica in terms of financing its activities in the last ten years. Matica received the historically lowest subsidy support from the state over the last decade in the amount of 1,344,600 euros, which is a drop of twenty-three percent. Compared to 2020, the Slovak Matica budget was sharply reduced by 414,479 euros. Personnel downsizing was implemented only to the extent necessary to reduce labor costs. Redundancies and reductions in working hours, as well as reductions in wages, affected sixteen employees to varying extents. It is sad that, on the other hand, for many media events that last one to two days, the state allocates twice the amount of the Matica budget! It is a shame if we consider how much Matica has done for the Slovak Republic, national and civil society, not least for the national cultural heritage and the historical development of democratic traditions in Slovakia. On the other hand,

we succeeded in an extraordinary diplomatic turn, when we convinced a cross-section of members of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, who, unlike the state authorities, supported Slovak Matica and stabilized the state subsidy at 1.5 million by amending the law euros, in such a difficult time for Matica.

To what extent did these state restrictions limit the previous parent activities?

At the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021, we had to take the following measures: the already mentioned personnel measures – layoffs of workers, limitation of periodical publishing projects, for example *Slovak National Newspaper* switched to a biweekly, unfortunately, the oldest continuously published Slovak magazine founded by Jozef Miloslav Hurban *Slovak views* – shame on you of the current society and state – had to switch to a bimonthly magazine, which did not happen even during the First World War. We had to limit publishing book projects, limit repairs and reconstruction of real estate owned by the Slovak Matica, the economic self-administration of the larger Homes of the Slovak Matica owned by the Slovak Matica was limited.

In August, the 5th Congress of Maticas and Institutions of Slavic Nations will take place in Martin. Slovak Matica, as in previous years (with the exception of 2014), is its main organizer. What is the purpose of these congresses?

I would answer by paraphrasing our native greats. The traditions of the Slovak nation are inextricably and deeply connected with the history of the whole of Slavs. Slovak Matica is at the same time a historical preserver and a living bearer of the spirit of Slavic solidarity among the Slovaks. After all, Slovak Matica was created in a direct manifestation way during the festive, Slavic brotherhood permeated memories of the millennium of the arrival of the Slavic apostles Constantine Cyril and Methodius to our ancestors. In addition, Slovak Matica has developed over time in such a way that among all the sister institutes in Slavonia, it still preserves the primary, original meaning of the matic idea most prominently. That is why organizing the Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations is natural for Slovak Matica, only mutual communication contributes to our mutual inspiration from the current activities of the Maticas and the challenges they face. The Congress significantly helps this, as evidenced by the articles and outputs from the *Slavic Horizon*, to which almost all Maticas have contributed and thus expanded the level of knowledge about our institutions. There is a great future in that.

What do you expect from the upcoming Fifth Congress? Were the conclusions of the previous meetings fulfilled? Can you share with us new visions for further projects and cooperation?

Above all, it must be emphasized that the goals of the congresses were not political. Matices were and are non-partisan organizations in the field of culture and science, and their goals are national unification and humanistic. From the very beginning, they united their members regardless of their religious beliefs or political and ideological beliefs. In this regard, they also shaped the modern national and civil society, which is now being forgotten. It is also necessary to remind in this context. From our point of view, the mutual cooperation of Slavic cultural institutions needed a serious platform. This was also the goal of the 4th congress, as well as this year's, which will be held on August 3-4, 2023.

From the previous editions, it should be recalled that the I. European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations was held on March 26-28, 2007 in Martin, II. European Congress of Maticas of Slavic Nations was held on July 31 - August 3, 2013 also in Martin, III. Congress of Slavic Maticas in Ljubljana (Slovenia) on February 4, 2014 and the aforementioned from June 4 to 7, 2019.



The Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic Ľubica Laššáková examines the publications of Slovak Matica accompanied by its chairman Marián Gešper during her official visit to the institution in Bratislava on February 5, 2020. Source: Slovak Matica

Slovak Matica considered it an honor that in the order of IV. Congress, representatives of the Maticas of the Slavic nations came precisely to Martin - the center of Slovak national culture. In this regard, we extended the invitation, and thus the name of the congress, to include renowned institutions, organizations or universities from various partner Slavic states. Expanded intellectual and scientific cooperation has significantly enriched us. I am glad that one of the outputs, in addition to the Memorial from the Congress (2020), has managed to regularly publish a newsletter for the third year – *Slovak Horizon*, which informs about cultural, scientific and publishing news, but also about the ongoing activities of our Slavic Maticas, national organizations and scientific institutions.

Do you also have any personal projects you are working on? What are your latest plans in the field of literary creation?

I definitely have a few book prophets in mind. Unfortunately, the number of responsibilities that stood before me after the previous attacks on Matica, the defense of our oldest national and cultural institution and the economic problems from the pandemic exhausted the amount of time I could devote to this. I have relatively extensive material devoted to the narrower issue of the fate of the Slovaks, many of them were later registrars, our legionnaires who fought in the first resistance from 1914 to 1920 for the liberation of Slovakia from Austro-Hungarian tyranny and stood at the founding of the republic. I would like to continue with the next part of the Apostles' national spirit. I toyed a lot with the idea of writing a chronicle of the national movement on the forgotten Slovak Zemplín from the beginning of the 19th century until today, but that requires a lot of time.

FIVE FEMALE MPS FROM SUBOTICA

S. I., Bunev Matica, Serbia

Precisely 105 years ago, on November 25, 1918, seven courageous and educated women won the right to vote as part of the Great National Assembly of Serbs, Bunevci and other Slavs, which took place in Novi Sad. At the assembly, the deputies voted for the annexation of Báčka, Barane, Banat and Sreme to the Kingdom of Serbs. It hurts: Milica Tomić from Novi Sad, Mari K. Jovanović from Pančevo, Katica Rajčić, Olga Stanković, Anastazija Taza Manojlović, Mara Malagurski and Magdalena Mandi Sudarević all from Subotica.

However, the five Bunevi men and women from Subotica who participated in the Great National Assembly of Serbs, Bunevians and other Slavs on November 25, 1918 in Novi Sad have fallen into oblivion, little is known about their lives. They were women who devoted themselves to politics, literature and humanitarian affairs. They stood at the beginning of the women's movement in Subotica.

The most famous citizen of Subotica at that time was definitely Mara Malagurski Đorđević (1894-1971). Writer, ethnographer, recognized cultural worker in the first decades of the twentieth century, she was one of the few energetic women who led an active life. She had no children and was extremely active in the interwar period, after World War II she withdrew from public activity. Emilija Matijević Marjanov, the granddaughter of Stipan Matijević, who was Mary Đorđević Malagurski's brother, has fond memories of Mara, remembering her as a wonderful woman who loved children and always fought for her nation.

"At that time, we drank juice and ate butter and jam, a typical English breakfast. She lived in Belgrade and often visited us to see her brother. I was five years old then and I remember her as a wonderful woman, a real lady. She always taught us and when we were going to sleep, she made up fairy tales for us", recalls Emilija Matijević Marjanov with a smile.

Mara was a believer and never gave up going to church on Sunday. After the Second World War, the properties of the Đorđević and Malagurski families were confiscated, and after this, Mara, together with her husband Dragoslav Đorđević, no longer participated in the affairs of the trust. They lived modestly and Mara did not publish any more books.

"That's right. Her most famous work is *Vita Đanina*. In his works, he writes mainly about the life of Bunevci. Sometimes in a joking way, but she always claimed that Bunevci



Anastas Bocarić, Great National Assembly in Novi Sad

are tall and black and that there are no more beautiful men in the world" - says the interlocutor.

She started publishing her works in the newspaper *Neven* in 1912. At that time she was eighteen years old and signed herself under the pseudonym Nevenka. *Grgo Dorancija* published her first novel in 1925 in the magazine *Literárny sever*. She also wrote a shorter theatrical play

Bunevské customs pictures, Mother's Day, Christmas Eve, Spinners, Palenkári, Polieváči, Queens, Weddings, published in Subotica in 1927. The show was performed on the day of the ceremonial opening of the Bunev Enlightenment Matica in Subotica on January 1, 1927. She moved to Belgrade in 1929 and started working with the magazine *Misao*. It was in this magazine that she published the short story *Snaš - Vita Đanina*.

Everything she wrote until 1941 and remained in manuscripts was destroyed during the war. For example, the historical-psychological novel *Ničiji*, the historical short story

by *Pajica Kantorov*. Not even a trace of the rich ethnographic collection about Bunevci remained. She elaborated this topic in the book *Original clothing of the Bunevci and embroidery* from 1940.

However, she did not only give the short stories she created to the people of Bunev and all others who like literature, but also her deeds. Thanks to Mara Đorđević, Bunev costumes were also worn at the royal court, more precisely, Queen Marija Karađorđević received an ancient Bunev costume as a gift and wore it on the occasion of the Great All-Slavic Ball of the Circle of Serbian Sisters, which was held in Belgrade in 1943.

"Yes. She attended the royal court and later also worked as a lady of the court. She even dressed my aunt as a queen and led her to the court, the queen was also wearing Bunev costume. She did a lot for Bunevci. My whole family worked for their nation. My grandfather, Stipan Matijević, was the first to speak the Bunev language in those November days of 1918. Maybe someone else should have done it, but he wasn't allowed, my grandfather dared. He was very strict but fair and loved his children very much. I am very sorry that I did not have the opportunity to meet him", explains Emilija.

Vita Đanina and other stories from the life of the Bunev family in 2012.

Mara was also a translator. Her translations of Oscar Wilde's work gained attention. She was admitted to the Writers' Association in 1956.



Mara Malagurski Đorđević (1894 – 1971).

Source: Bunev Matica

THE PILOT ISSUE OF THE YEARBOOK OF THE SLOVAK CULTURAL CENTER NAŠICE HAS BEEN PUBLISHED

Sandra Kraljová Vukšićová - Tatjana Seničaninová, Slovak Cultural Center Našice, Croatia

The first issue of the yearbook of the Slovak Cultural Center Našice was created with the intention of documenting, but also in continuity, presenting the work of the institution and informing its visitors, colleagues and the public about the activities of the previous calendar year.

The activities of the Slovak Cultural Center Našice have been documented since the beginning in two publications, which, as the name suggests, record all the important events of the past ten years. In 2016, the first publication of *the First Five Years of the Slovak Cultural Center Našice 2010 – 2015* was published. The first five are the most difficult, and in 2021 it will be followed by *the Second Five Years of the Slovak*

Cultural Center Našice 2016 – 2020. The second five years per unit.

During the preparation of the second publication about the activities of the Slovak Cultural Center Našice, the idea was born that after ten years of work, it is time to prepare a yearbook. The activities are increasing every year, so over the past year the Center has achieved significant results in cooperation, implemented and monitored a number of cultural and educational contents and events not only in Croatia, but also in the home country and neighboring countries. Although due to the specifics of the situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of activities as well as their

implementation are significantly limited, but this does not reduce the value of the realized contents in any way.

The publication documents the most important activities and events in 2021 according to the institution's areas of activity, which are also represented by the names of the chapters. The chapters document the presentation of Slovak culture in Croatia, which includes exhibition activity and various other presentation activities, research, education in the Slovak language in Croatia, international cooperation, publication activity, information and documentation activity, as well as participation, support and organization of various events. The most important ones were selected from the rich material, so recognitions and awards, as well as visual materials (posters, invitations, etc.) prepared for specific programs, were given a well-deserved place in the yearbook. The bilingual text part is supplemented with photographic material and other documents from the archive of the Slovak Cultural Center Našice.

We want this debut to find its way to readers in Croatia, in the home country and in Slovak communities around the world and to contribute to the popularization of the Slovak language and culture, as well as our institution and our collaborators.

ISSN 2975-3589

Ročenka

Slovenského kultúrneho centra Našice
za rok 2021



Godišnjak

Slovačkog centra za kulturu Našice
za 2021. godinu

Joseph Mark Burza, President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in the Slovak Republic, Slovakia

Joseph Mark Burza, President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in the Slovak Republic, Slovakia

On the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Štefan B. Roman, the Canadian-Slovak Chamber of Commerce published the representative book *Štefan Boleslav Roman – The Uranus King*. The compiler of this important publication is directly the president of the Chamber, Joseph Mark Burza, a long-time friend of the nephew of Š. B. Roman.

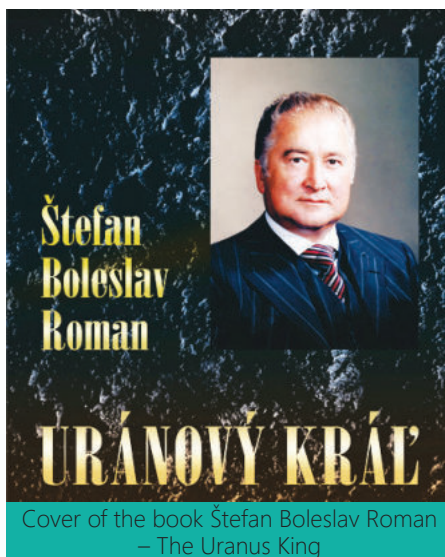
Together with Milan Rastislav Štefánik, Štefan Boleslav Roman is considered the most important Slovak of the 20th century. He was the founder and chairman of the most important organization of Slovaks in history – the World Congress of Slovaks. At the same time, he is the richest and most influential businessman of Slovak origin in history.

Roman was the owner of the largest uranium mines in the world in Elliot Lake, the owner of the largest coal mines in Canada, as well as the owner of the second largest chain of bakeries in the USA – General Baki. The legal advisor of his company Denison Mines was the later US President Richard Nixon.

Forewords to the book were written by the eldest son Stephen B. Roman, Jozef Cardinal Tomko, Greek Catholic Archbishop Cyril Vasil' and President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in the Slovak Republic Joseph M. Burza.

The individual chapters were prepared by the former general secretary of the World Congress of Slovaks Dušan Tóth, director of the Slovak Historical Institute in Rome Daniel Černý, family member of the Romanov family historian Ján Čovanec, international expert on nuclear energy Marián Naniáš, president of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in the Slovak Republic Joseph M. Burza and associate professor of history Martin Javor.

Contributions to the book were written by ex-president of the Slovak Republic Rudolf Schuster (the last Czechoslovak ambassador in Ottawa, who awarded Š. B. Roman in 1990 as the chairman of the Slovak National Council the prize of the Slovak National Council in memoriam), ex-president of the Slovak Republic Ivan Gašparovič, former Minister of Finance of Canada Otto John Jelinek, well-known television editor Countess Barbara Coudenhove-Kalergi, whose uncle Count Richard Nicolaus founded the Pan-European Union, Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic Boris Kollár, Juraj Kováč (elder son of ex-president of the Slovak Republic Michal Kováč, who in 1995 awarded Štefan Roman with the highest state award Order of the White Double Cross 1st Class in memoriam), Monica Pignal Bata (daughter of Tomáš J. Bata, who was with Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in August 1968 and they appeared together before the Canadian Parliament, as a result of which a law was passed at the end of September 1968 that allowed the legal adoption Slovaks and Czechs to Canada), Ján Čarnogurský (his father Pavol Čarnogurský was awarded by the World Congress of Slovaks), Archbishop Emeritus and Metropolitan Ján Sokol, former Minister of Finance of the Slovak Republic



Cover of the book Štefan Boleslav Roman – The Uranus King

lic Eduard Kukan, the first ambassador of the independent Slovak Republic in Ottawa Anton Hykisch, former Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic of the Republic Peter Pellegrini, Milan Kňažko, Pavol Dubček (the eldest son of Alexander Dubček, who met Štefan B. Roman), former chairman of the Slovak National Council František Mikloško, member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic Anna Záborská, nephew Branislav Roman, vice-president of the European Commission Maroš Šefčovič, Deputy Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Veronika Remišová, opera singer Miroslav Dvorský and others.

Roman's merits can be divided into three areas: 1) Entrepreneurial activity (mining of uranium, coal, oil, natural gas, oil, gold, etc.); 2) Church activity

(creation of the Greek Catholic eparchy in Canada, construction of the Transfiguration Cathedral, etc.); 3) Activities in the field of the Slovak national movement (first of all, it is the establishment, management and financing of the World Congress of Slovaks).

In 1962, as a layman, Roman participated in the Second Vatican Council. In 1963, he organized the spectacular pan-Canadian Cyril-Methodist celebrations for the thousandth anniversary of the arrival of the apostles Cyril and Methodius. In 1963, Pope John XXIII. awarded by the Order of the Commander of the Knights of St. Gregory the Great, which is the highest possible honor for laymen. Roman was responsible for the fact that in 1968 the properties of the Greek Catholic Church, which were forcibly taken from it in 1948 and assigned to the Orthodox Church, were returned. For example, he tried to make the supply of Canadian wheat to what was then Czechoslovakia conditional on the legalization of the Orthodox Church.

In 1980, he founded the first Slovak eparchy in Canada – the Eparchy of Saints Cyril and Methodius, headed by Bishop Michal Rusnák. Roman contributed significantly to the creation of the Slovak Institute of St. Cyril and Methodius in Rome.

In the Canadian city of Unionville near Toronto (now Markham), he had the monumental three-towered Cathedral of the Transfiguration built for \$25 million. This is an enlargement of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary from his native village Veľký Ruskov (a national cultural monument). On September 15, 1984, the foundation stone of the Cathedral was personally consecrated by Pope John Paul II. It was the historically first cathedral on the American continent that was consecrated directly by the Pope. The cathedral has the largest bells in all of Canada, cast by Fonderie Paccard, the same company that cast the bronze bells for the famous Notre-Dame Cathedral.

Together with his older brother Juraj (Georg), they owned the company Romandale FarSlovak Matica Ltd., which specialized in the breeding and breeding of Holstein cattle. The farm was extremely successful and Canada's Ministers of Agriculture took part in the tours. Their breeding cow was auctioned for \$1.45 million, the highest price in history, which was also entered in the Guinness Book of Records. More information can be found on the official portal www.kanada.sk.

ŽIVOT MAGAZINE HAS BEEN BRINGING NEWS FOR 65 YEARS

Agáta Jendžejčíková, editor-in-chief of Život magazine, Poland

On June 15, 2023, 65 years have passed since the magazine *Život* traveled among readers every month. Our magazine was born from the needs of the hearts of Slovaks living in the territory of Spiš and Orava, and it is primarily dedicated to them.

The end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s was spent in the spirit of struggle for the creation of a periodical written in the Slovak language. It was a tough time when the compatriots waited with hope for a positive result of their efforts. It succeeded, and since 1958 the magazine *Life* has been published regularly. The beginnings of the editorial office were written in Warsaw, where the then leadership of the Cultural and Social Society of Czechs and Slovaks made every effort to make the long-awaited magazine fulfill the hopes of the compatriot movement. It required a lot of commitment from the early organizers for this cause. One of them was the later long-time editor-in-chief Adam Chalupec, whose 100th birthday we commemorated in April 2023. For him and other enthusiasts, the long distance between Warsaw, where he was based, and the terrain on Spiš and Orava, as well as Czech resorts, was not an obstacle. A network of collaborators and correspondents was created relatively quickly, which significantly supported the work of the editorial office. Historical developments brought, at the turn of the eighties and nineties of the last century, a change in the political system from communist to democratic, and with that came big changes in the life of the editorial office. The era of editorial management by the press concern RSW "Prasa" in Warsaw has ended. After the collapse of this large press concern, the question arose of what and how to proceed? It seemed that this could also mean the demise of the periodical. However, help came from the Central Committee of the Cultural and Social Society of Czechs and Slovaks in Poland, which after lengthy negotiations took the editorial office under its wing on June 1, 1990. Along the way, however, he struggled with many problems, such as insufficient financial security, the long distance between the headquarters of the editorial office and the field, renting premises, dissatisfaction with the level of press, etc. Since



the Society had its headquarters in Krakow, where it owned a building, it was decided that the editorial office would be moved there to St. Filipa 7, where it still resides today. Dissatisfaction with the level of printing was solved by the newly established association printing house, from which the first issue of *Život* went to the readers in April 1993. And it has been 30 years since the magazine *Život* leaves the gates of the Printing House of the Slovak Association in Krakow every month. Currently, with its polygraphic, content and graphic editing, it is among the oldest periodicals published on the territory of Poland for national minorities. And it is also the only printed periodical published in the Slovak language on the territory of Poland. It conveys the Slovak printed word to many households in Orava, Spiš, Silesia and also abroad, ensuring permanent

contact with the written Slovak word for compatriots. The monthly is a peculiar witness of the times that it reflects on its pages. They feature themes from the country, cultural, social environment and associational events of the Slovak national minority living in Poland and beyond.

The magazine supports national awareness, a sense of belonging to Slovak events, is interested in Slovak teaching in schools, events in clubhouses, promotes love for the native language, folk traditions, visual arts, encourages the young generation to pass on the ancestral heritage and the resulting active participation in the country happenings.

Life would not have lasted until today if the compatriots did not support it in every possible way. The motto *Life with compatriots – Compatriots with Life* speaks most succinctly of this. An important factor is the support of the editors in their work through the care of the committees of individual local groups in Spiš, Orava and Silesia in securing subscriptions and promoting the magazine among compatriots. It is a selfless activity.

Publishing of the magazine *Život* is supported by the Association of Slovaks in Poland, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration of the Republic of Poland, and the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad in the Slovak Republic with special grants.



WE REMEMBER



SAMO TOMÁŠIK

210th birth anniversary

February 8, 1813 Gemerské Teplice, Slovakia – September 10, 1887 Chyžné, Slovakia

He worked as an evangelical priest in Chyžný in Gemer, he collaborated with the Štúrovks, especially with Sam Chalupek. He wrote poetry, historical prose, and works of local history and geography. During his trip to Berlin for university studies in November 1834, in Prague, under the impression of its Germanness, he wrote the poem *Hey, Slovaks!*, which is called *Hey, Slavs!* became the most famous anthem of the West Slavic and South Slavic nations during the revolutionary years of 1848 and 1849, during the First World War, it was also the national anthem of Poland, Yugoslavia and the Slovak Republic.

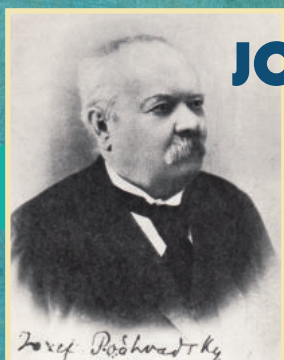
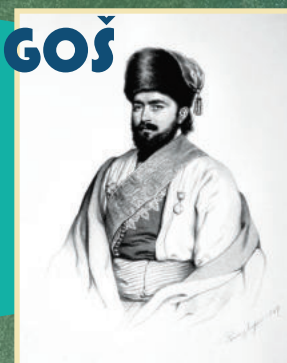
Photo source: Slovak National Library - Literary Archive

210th birth anniversary

PETAR II. PETROVIČ-NJEGOŠ

13 November 1813 Njeguši, Montenegro – 31 November 1851 Cetinje, Montenegro

He came from the Montenegrin ruling dynasty Petrovič-Njegoš. He was ranked among the most important reform politicians and bard poets in the history of Montenegro. In the years 1830 to 1851, he served as the ruler and Orthodox metropolitan of Montenegro, while he contributed to the introduction of progressive political, cultural and school reforms, he also devoted himself to the spread of enlightenment and education, thereby strengthening the national consciousness and cohesion of Montenegrins. As the national poet of Montenegro, he is considered the greatest poet writing in Serbian. *Photo source: internet*



JOZEF PRAVOSLAV PODHRADSKÝ

200th birth anniversary

19 April 1823 Skalica, Slovakia – 13 November 1915 Jagodina, Serbia, buried in Belgrade

He studied in Bratislava, where he became a member of the Štúrov movement. He worked as a professor at Serbian gymnasium in Novi Sad, Sombor and Leskovac, a librarian in St. Petersburg, Russia, and lived in Jagodina on vacation. He became the most important Štúrov dramatist in Slovak romantic literature, he wrote tragedies with the theme of the fates of the Štúrov's. He also devoted himself to the creation of poetry and prose, journalism, historical, biographical and religious writing. *Photo source: Slovak National Library – Literary Archive*

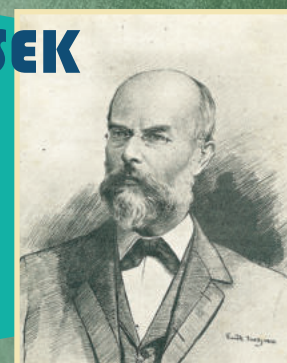
180th birth anniversary

VINCENC PRASEK

9 April 1843 Milostovice, Czech Republic – 31 December 1912 Napajedla, Czech Republic

He was an important educator, linguist, political historian, ethnographer, regionalist, writer, journalist, cultural worker and national revivalist in Moravia and Silesia. He worked as a professor at the Slavic gymnasium in Olomouc, where he was involved in Matica školska, and from 1883 to 1895 the first director of the Czech gymnasium in Opava. Initiator of the founding of Matica Opavská (1877), later its chairman, while he oriented the activity of the matric to research into the political and topographical history of Silesia. He wrote the encyclopedic work *Vlastivěda slezská*.

Photo source: Silesian Regional Museum



FRANTIŠEK JOZEF FUGA

100th birth anniversary

June 9, 1923 Vinné, Slovakia – November 9, 1987 Hamilton, Canada

He studied theology in Bratislava and Rome, from where he moved to Canada in 1954, where he worked as a Greek Catholic parish priest in Hamilton. In 1980, he was appointed vicar general of the Greek Catholic diocese of St. Cyril and Methodius. In the years 1974 to 1987, he served as the chairman of the Slovak Foreign Foundation. He initiated the creation of the flag, which became the national flag of the Slovak Republic on 1 January 1993. As a spreader of the Cyril-Method tradition, together with other Slovak Catholic church dignitaries working in exile, he was responsible for the fact that the first pope of Slavic origin, St. John Paul II. in 1980, St. Cyril and Methodius as spiritual patrons of Europe. *Photo source: Slovak National Library – Literary Archive*