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Preface: The Rebirth of Europe, an International Conference Celebrating the Centenary of the End of World War I and the Beginning of the Paris Peace Conference

Frank Safertal

The idea of celebrating the rebirth of Europe in 1918-1919 came from the members of the Wilsonian Club in Washington DC during our 2017 Wilsonian Lecture. Members and friends of the Wilsonian Club felt that we need to celebrate the role of President Woodrow Wilson in the "six months that changed the world," a Canadian historian Margaret MacMillan called it in her popular study.[1]

During the autumn of 1918, the Central Powers began to collapse. The German government tried to obtain, unsuccessfully, a peace settlement based on the conditions contained in Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, and maintained it was on this basis that they surrendered. Following negotiations, the Allied powers and Germany signed an armistice, which came into effect on 11 November 1918, signaling the end of "the war to end all wars."

For the following six months, the Paris Peace Conference was the world's most important business. It was also a most important time for the new national states that President Wilson outlined in his Fourteen Points and later proclamations. Had the Central Powers won the war, Europe and the world would definitely look different today.

To celebrate the centenary of the end of the war and beginning of the peace negotiations, the conference "The Rebirth of Europe" was organized by a number of associations and individuals such as the Wilsonian Club and the Washington, DC chapter of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, which provided a substantial financial grant. The Polish American Congress and other organizations supported the conference with speakers and refreshments. We are grateful for the support and participation of the Embassies of Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. We are especially grateful to the Embassy of Slovakia which allowed us to use their magnificent facility for the conference.

We were able to assemble papers and contributions from nineteen leading international historians and keynote addresses from four senior diplomats, here in Washington DC. Most of those presentations are available, thanks to Professor Hugh Agnew, who collected and edited the conference papers for publication in *Kosmas*. We trust that you will enjoy the papers and presentations of the conference.

Thank you for your participation and contributions.

Frank Safertal, President
Wilsonian Club, Washington DC

[1] Margaret MacMillan, *Paris, 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2001).

From the Editor

Hugh L. Agnew

This volume of *Kosmas* contains most of the presentations given at a conference held in Washington, DC in June, 2018, to celebrate the centenary of the end of the First World War and the beginning of the Paris Peace Conference a few months later, a conference that would re-shape the map Central and Eastern Europe. Co-sponsoring the conference were the embassies of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Romania, each of them countries whose fates were deeply marked by the events commemorated by it. We are grateful that their excellencies Ambassadors Piotr Wilczek of Poland and George Cristian Maior agreed to include their presentations in this volume. We are also very pleased that so many of the other presenters submitted written versions of their remarks so that you, the reader, can get quite an accurate grasp of the subject matter of the conversations that took place there.

The contributions fell naturally into several parts. To begin with, Kenneth Janda and John Palka took rather sweeping and general approaches to the issues that the centenary of 1918 evokes: Professor Janda with his detailed study of the various peace treaties subsumed under the general rubric of "The Peace of Paris," and Professor Palka with his reflections on the long journey from the rise of national consciousness and identity, to the striving for a national state, to the desire for wider integration of that polity into the family of European nations. Other papers focused on issues concerning specific states in the region and their experiences during the First World War. The contributions of Professor Dennis Deletant and Ambassador George Cristian Maior discuss Romania's experiences during the war, and its place and contribution to Woodrow Wilson's vision of a postwar Europe, respectively.

My own contribution kicks off a section dealing with Czechoslovakia by considering what the new state inherited from the Austro-Hungarian Empire of which it had been a part for so long. There follow several papers looking at aspects of the emergence of that new state, bringing to light the contributions of specific individuals in the common cause. Kevin McNamara highlights the specific, but not always recognized, contributions of the Slovak member of the exile triumvirate that came to steer the activities of the Czechoslovak National Council, Milan R. Štefánik. The work of Masaryk, Beneš, and Štefánik would not have been successful without winning the support of the important political leaders among the Allied and Associated Powers, a task in which they had influential allies in political circles in France, Britain, and the USA. Miloslav Rechcigl provides an account of the efforts of US Congressman Adolph J. Sabath, whose support for Bohemian, later Czechoslovak, independence was crucial to the movement's success in the United States. His contribution is complemented by Anna Cooková's discussion of the contributions of Charles J. Vopička and an unnamed acquaintance from his home village in Bohemia to the successful accomplishment of Czechoslovak independence. This section is rounded off by Milada Polišenská's thorough exploration of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and the United States and the activities of the first representatives from each to the

other in the first years of Czechoslovakia's independent existence.

The remaining papers explore various aspects of Slovakia's experience, starting with the efforts of Slovak-Americans to gain an explicit commitment to their autonomy in a new common state with the Czechs through the Pittsburgh Agreement, discussed in Gregory Ference's contribution. The role played by the Pittsburgh Agreement in politics in the interwar years in Czechoslovakia is thoroughly analyzed by Matej Hanula's article. Carol Skalnik Leff explores the wider ramifications of the Czech-Slovak coexistence in a common state, as shaped by the way Czechoslovak independence was first realized, and traces its legacies down to the present. The final contribution, from Zuzana Palovic and Gabriela Bereghazyova, summarizes the experience of Slovakia through the twentieth century and looks forward to the development of "individual sovereignty" and the role that a "reverse brain drain" can have in the future development of Slovakia—and one might say, in the region as a whole.

ARTICLES

Welcoming Remarks

Piotr Wilczek

It is my pleasure to be here this afternoon during this fantastic conference as we reflect on the important events of the past and discuss their lasting effects.

I would like to start by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Embassy of the Slovak Republic for hosting us, as well as the Wilsonian Club and the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, Washington, DC branch, for organizing this conference. I am glad that my Embassy could be a co-sponsor, and I am also pleased that the Polish American Congress is a part of this important event as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is fitting that today's conference is entitled the "Rebirth of Europe," for although we are marking the centennial of independence, our countries and nations date back much further. Poles, as most Europeans, love to boast about the great history of our country. We possess centuries of culture, traditions and history. In this regard we certainly outrank the relative youth of the United States. Nevertheless modern Polish history actually beings around the time of President Wilson's tenure in the White House.

To today's casual observer, the Poland at the time of President Wilson would have been an unrecognizable entity. Then Poles were a nation without a state. They were divided by imposed rulers. When President Wilson drafted his speech to Congress about the post-war world order, Poles were literally fighting against one another in someone else's name, wearing uniforms of the empires who partitioned Poland over a century ago. An estimated two million Polish soldiers fought during the course of the war, often as conscripts dispersed throughout the grand armies. For comparison, two million soldiers is approximately the amount of men the United States deployed to France by the time of the Armistice. Of these two million Polish soldiers, close to half a million died.

Yet president's Wilson's deep understanding of history and his geopolitical wisdom compelled him to make Poland an indispensable part of his vision for Europe. **Simply put, Woodrow Wilson helped repair the mistake of history**.

The years following the rebirth of Poland were the start of a lasting friendship between the United States and Poland. A relationship based on shared values and mutual trust. Values that were first developed in combat. Although naturally much attention is paid to World War I, it is actually the years following the war which I believe helped shape the lasting Polish-American bonds**.**

On January 1, 1920—the day Babe Ruth was sold from Boston to New York and life was going back to normal here in America, the Bolsheviks were increasing their troops along the Polish border. The Polish-Bolshevik War would serve as the ultimate test of Poland's resolve to defend her newly won independence. As Poland's reborn independence was threatened by Bolshevik Russia, Americans stood ready to assist. It was American volunteer airmen who fought in the Kościuszko Squadron in defense of Poland. The pilots had no connection to Poland

except for their gratitude for Poland's support of American independence and a desire to help Poland in its struggle for freedom.

American support for Poland was not limited to the actions of volunteer airmen. Through the concerted efforts of government aid programs and private charity organizations, the American people offered much needed assistance. Thanks to the efforts of Herbert Hoover and the American Relief Administration, over one and a half million Polish children and nursing mothers were being fed daily in the months after the war. Every single day. Additionally, vital supplies including over two million pairs of shoes and coats for the harsh Polish winter, as well as medical supplies to combat disease were delivered from America. The United States was not indifferent to Poland's plight.

That same spirit of gratitude and friendship was expressed by the Poles. In one of the most touching ways, a Polish Declaration of Admiration and Friendship for the United States was signed by 5 million Poles. This act displays the affinity that Poles held for their American friends. It is no coincidence that today, in prominent places in Warsaw, one can find a Wilson Square, a Hoover Square even a Washington Boulevard—this is a reaffirmation of Polish gratitude for American goodwill.

Today Poland seeks to exemplify those very characteristics that President Wilson first extended towards our nation so many years ago, namely mutual trust and commitment.

Today, Poles and Americans once again serve shoulder to shoulder. However, now they not only serve in far-flung regions such as the Middle East, but in Poland, Romania, and throughout Europe. When our values and our alliance is threatened, we know that we cannot be apathetic, and we know we can count on the support of the United States.

Poland, like many countries represented here today, knows all too well the price of freedom. Which is why we are modernizing our armed forces and investing in the security and defense of our country, our region, and our alliance. Poland is proud to be a security contributor, with troops deployed to Latvia and Romania, because solidarity is our strength.

From serving alongside each other in military deployments, to cooperating in promoting our shared values in the international arena, the strategic partnership that Poland and the United States share is a testament to the strength of our alliance. From an economically dependent and existentially threatened state in 1918, to a thriving economy and strong NATO ally, Poland has come to fulfill the role that President Wilson set out for it, namely to be the cornerstone of European stability. I am sure President Wilson would be proud and happy to see his vision so successfully fulfilled.

I am glad that later this evening we will be able to toast President Wilson and all those who contributed to Poland's independence in 1918 during a special concert at the National Philharmonic at Strathmore dedicated to Poland's centennial of rebirth. I hope many of you will also be joining us for this incredible musical event.

Ladies and Gentlemen, given the fact that today's conference is being co-organized by several European diaspora organizations, I consider it most fitting to

say a few words about the contributions of diaspora communities in the United States to the stability and independence of our region. It was thanks to the dedication, bravery, goodwill and charity of you, and your forefathers, that our region is safe and secure today. I firmly believe that the assistance and engagement of the diaspora cannot be overstated, this was certainly the case for Poland, but I am sure the same can be said about many other countries in our region as well. On this centennial I once again express Poland's profound gratitude to those sons and daughters of Poland, or decedents thereof, who cared and continue to care for our common homeland. *Dziękuję*.

If you allow I would like to close by quoting from the preamble of this 1926 Polish Declaration of Admiration and Friendship for the United States.

> With eternal gratitude in our hearts, not only for your sacrifice in blood, but also for the various kind of aid given by you in the name of humanity during the war, and above all, for saving our children from famine and disease – we on the day of your national festival, desire to take part in your joy and to wish your country and your nation all possible prosperity.

Thank you for your attention, thank you once again to the organizers and for all who dedicated their time to being here. Through your presence you are helping us remember the past, and ensure that its lessons continue to guide us into the future.

World War I Treaties: Joys and Tears[1]

Kenneth Janda

Most Americans today know that the armistice on November 11, 1918 ended fighting between the Allied Powers and Germany. Few recall it as the *Armistice of Compiègne*, named after its place of signing. Also, few people realize that previous armistices had ended fighting with Germany's three Central Power allies—Bulgaria, Turkey (the Ottoman Empire), and Austria-Hungary. They were the *Armistice of Salonica* (September 29), stopping combat with Bulgaria; the *Armistice of Mudros* (October 30), ceasing battle with Turkey; and the *Armistice of Villa Giusti* (November 3) terminating hostilities with Austria-Hungary. Most Americans celebrate only the armistice with Germany, because Germany was the most central of the Central Powers.

An armistice is merely a formal agreement to stop fighting. For example, an armistice in 1953 stopped fighting in the Korean War. Because no peace treaty was ever signed to end that war, it continued for decades, during which the United States kept 30,000 troops in South Korea. Wars end only when belligerent nations sign peace treaties. Unlike World War II, when the Allies extracted unconditional surrenders from the Axis Powers, World War I not only ended in an armistice but with Central Powers troops occupying far more land in the Allied Powers' countries than the reverse.

Most Americans perhaps know that the *Treaty of Versailles*, signed on June 28, 1919, ended the war between the Allied Powers and Germany. Despite entering an armistice that stopped the warfare, Germany was excluded from securing the peace. Although signed in Versailles's Hall of Mirrors, the Versailles Treaty was negotiated over six grueling months at a conference in Paris by the principal remaining Allied Powers—Britain, France, Italy, and the United States. (A former ally, Russia, left the war in 1917 and signed the Brest-Litovsk Treaty with the Central Powers on March 3, 1918.)

Led by President Woodrow Wilson, the American negotiators saw their role as "honest brokers" between the special interests of their former allies.[2] The Americans tried to apply the high-minded principles in Wilson's famous "fourteen points" and the concept of "self-determination" in framing peace with Germany and with the remaining Central Powers. The Europeans were less idealistic. Like the Versailles Treaty, the subsequent treaties were also known by their signing locations in France: Saint-Germain, Neuilly, Trianon, and Sèvres. Not included in the Paris negotiations was the *Treaty of Rapallo* between Italy and the South Slavs that shaped the western border of Yugoslavia.

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[1] Originally prepared for the Conference on "The Rebirth of Europe." Embassy of the Slovak Republic, Washington, DC, June 1-2, 2018, this revision contains substantial extracts from Chapter 13, "Imperial Losses," in Kenneth Janda, *The Emperor and the Peasant: Two Men at the Start of the Great War and the End of the Habsburg Empire* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2018).

[2] Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2002), p. 123.

A new state, Czechoslovakia, was conceived even before the war ended. On October 28, 1918, the self-designated but widely recognized Czech National Council signed a declaration in Prague proclaiming the founding of Czechoslovakia. On October 29, a similar but less well-known Slovak National Council in Martin, did the same—without knowledge of the action in Prague. Also before the war ended, another new state, Yugoslavia, was decreed by Serbian, Croatian, and Slovenian leaders meeting off the Greek coast on the island of Corfu. Their Corfu Declaration of July 20, 1917 proposed a new "State of Yugoslavia" as a constitutional monarchy under the Serbian Karageorgevich dynasty.[3] Then in Zagreb on October 29, 1918, a National Council of Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes declared themselves independent from Austria-Hungary.[4]

So even before fighting stopped with Germany, two entirely new nations appeared on the scene in Central Europe. Representatives of "Czecho-Slovakia" and of "the Serb-Croat-Slovene State" were duly seated at the Paris peace conference and retroactively designated as "Principal Allied and Associated Powers."[5]

The 1919 *Treaty of Versailles*

Although the Allied Powers did not have to contend with objections from Germany in framing the Versailles Treaty, they engaged for half a year in lengthy, complex, and contentious negotiations.[6] In effect, the winners of the war argued among themselves how to impose the peace. The losing power, Germany, had no part in the treaty deliberations, was not invited until its signing, and was denied opportunity to object to its terms. Indeed, none of the Central Powers were among some thirty countries seated at the Paris conference.

The Treaty of Versailles had 80,000 words spread over 440 Articles.[7] The first thirty articles established the Covenant of the League of Nations. The League, which was President Woodrow Wilson's idea (and his obsession), was not widely welcomed by other Allied leaders. Nevertheless, Wilson insisted not only that the League's Covenant be included in the peace treaty, but that it be the first order of business. One historian listed the greatest difficulties in negotiating the treaty as:

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[3] Firstworldwar,com at http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/greaterserbia_corfudeclaration.htm.

[4] MacMillan, p. 116.

[5] Three other new nations—Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia—were also recognized in the Treaty of Versailles, but they were not seated at the conferences and were not treaty signatories.

[6] For a comprehensive account of the Versailles deliberations, see MacMillan, *Paris 1919*. Also useful is Alan Sharp, *The Versailles Settlement: Peacemaking in Paris, 1919* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991). Introductory chapters in Walter Consuelo Langsam and Otis C. Mitchell, *The World Since 1919, Eighth Edition* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), provide useful summaries.

[7] The treaty's full text is available at http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/versailles.html.

1. the wording of a League of Nations covenant;
2. the question of French security and the fate of the left bank of the Rhine;
3. the Italian and Polish claims;
4. the disposition of the erstwhile German colonies and the former possessions of the Turkish Empire; and
5. the reparation for damages that soon was to be exacted from Germany.[8]

This list included thorny topics independent of peace with Germany. Indeed, the Italian claims to territory in Austria-Hungary were said to occupy more attention than any single item at the conference.[9] The fate of former possessions of the Ottoman Empire were also unrelated to the German situation.

Most negotiations were done initially by a Supreme Council of ten members, two each from the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. This Council of Ten was soon superseded by the Council of Four: President Wilson, and the prime ministers of Britain (Lloyd George), France (Georges Clemenceau), and Italy (Vittorio Orlando).[10] On June 28, 1919, six months after the peace conference opened on January 18, the Germans were summoned at 3:00 pm to sign the lengthy treaty, which they had first seen on June 16. Its terms were harsh.

According to League of Nations statistics, the treaty cost Germany 11 percent of its population and 13 percent of its territory, including losing Alsace-Lorraine to France, the port city of Danzig to Poland, and a corridor to the sea that divided Germany into two parts.[11] Figure 1 maps Germany's territorial losses.[12]

Germany was also targeted in the treaty's Article 231, called the "war guilt" clause, which blamed Germany (and her unnamed allies) for "all the loss and damage" to the winning countries. After much discussion, the Allies fixed Germany's reparations bill at 132 billion marks (about $34 billion in 1921), even though few thought that the defeated county could pay that huge indemnity.[13] Uninvolved in the treaty negotiations and denied the chance to protest its terms, Germany nonetheless signed.

The evening of the signing, Wilson left by train for the harbor at Le Havre to return to the United States.[14] Lloyd George, Britain's prime minister, left the same

[8] Langsam and Mitchell, p. 9.
[9] Ibid., p. 10.
[10] Orlando, who did not speak English, was the least involved and left Paris in April after Wilson appealed to the Italian people against Orlando's position.
[11] League of Nations, Economic and Financial Section, *International Statistical Year-Book, 1926* (Geneva: Publications of the League of Nations, II. 42, 1927), Table 1, p. 14.
[12] Source: edmaps.com at http://www.edmaps.com/html/germany.html. Published before 1923 and thus in the public domain.
[13] Herbert Hoover said after seeing the entire treaty for the first time and discussing it with South African delegate Jan Smuts and British adviser John Maynard Keynes, "We agreed that the consequences of the proposed Treaty would ultimately bring destruction." Quoted in MacMillan, p. 467.
[14] Ibid., pp. 476-477.

night. During their deliberations on the Versailles Treaty, the Council of Ten had sketched out draft treaties concerning the other Central Powers: Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey. Wilson strived to incorporate his "fourteen points" and its implied principle of self-determination in these documents, but those values often collided with the self-interests of his allies, particularly Italy, but also with France and with Britain—especially concerning disposition of the far-flung Ottoman Empire, apart from Turkey itself. The final form of the other peace treaties was largely done by a Council of Five consisting of Chairman Clemenceau and representatives from the United States, Great Britain, France, and Italy.[15]

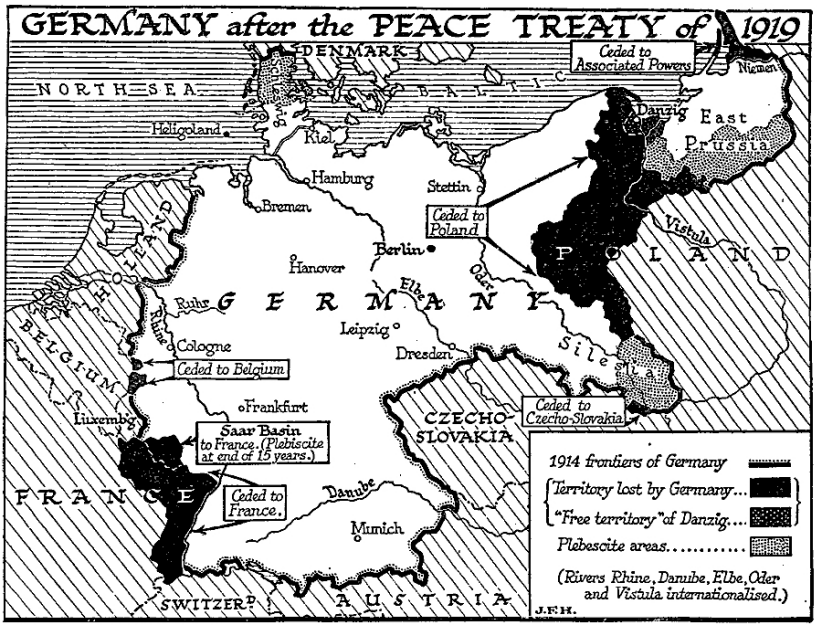

Figure 1: Germany's Territorial Losses from the 1919 Treaty of Versailles

In effect, the Versailles Treaty also revived Poland, a once proud country which had vanished as a nation, having been partitioned away over centuries by Russians, Prussians, and Habsburgs.[16] The treaty recreated Poland to its recognizable form today. League of Nations statistics said that Poland after WWI consisted of 30.7 million people spread over 388,000 square kilometers. The Versailles Treaty also recognized the existence of Czecho-Slovakia [sic] by defining Germany's borders with the new state and specifying that German nationals living there will "obtain

[15] Langsam and Mitchell, p. 19.

[16] Another treaty, the Polish Minority Treaty—called the Little Treaty of Versailles—formally established Poland as a sovereign and independent state and sought to guarantee rights of non-Polish minorities in the new state. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Treaty_of_Versailles.

Czecho-Slovak nationality *ipso facto.*"[17]

Because the United States Senate did not ratify the Treaty of Versailles, Wilson failed to realize his cherished idea, the United States joining the League of Nations. Given that the other treaties negotiated in Paris—Saint Germain, Neuilly, Trianon, and Sèvres—also invoked the Covenant of the League of Nations, the U.S. itself retained no peace treaty with any of the Central Powers, despite having been a signatory to all but the Treaty of Sèvres treaty with the Ottoman Empire. (Never having declared war against Turkey, the United States did not sign that treaty.) Later, the United States signed separate treaties with Austria (August 24), Germany (August 25), and Hungary (August 29).[18] Although the U.S. had not been at war with Bulgaria, it nevertheless signed the Neuilly Treaty "on the theory that article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations would obligate the United States to guarantee the settlements."[19] In addition to the Versailles Treaty, a cluster of four other postwar peace treaties shaped Europe's rebirth after the disastrous Great War.

The 1919 *Treaty of Saint-Germain*

The Treaty of Saint-Germain between the Allied Powers and Austria was signed on September 10, 1919 in a royal palace within the commune of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, about 19 km west of Paris. It declared that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy ceased to exist, recognized Hungary as a separate country, and foiled

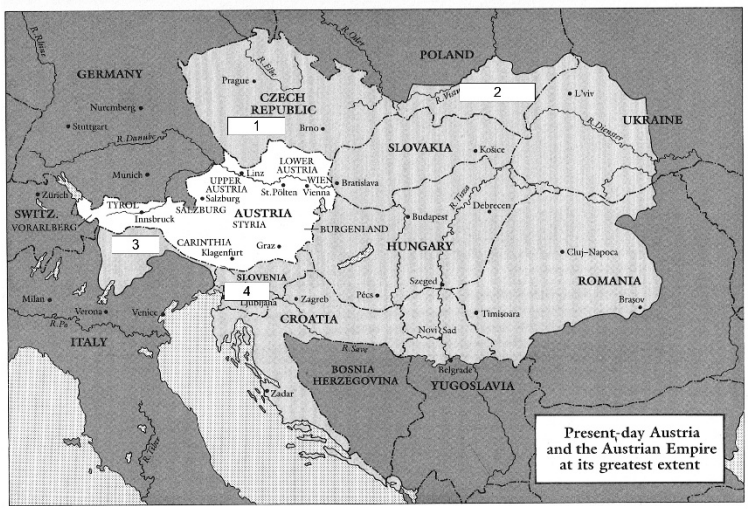

Figure 2: Austria's Territorial Losses under the Treaty of Saint-Germain

[17] Treaty of Versailles, Article 84.

[18] BYU Library, WW I Document Archive, http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Conventions_and_Treaties.

[19] Library of Congress, "United States Treaties" at https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/m-ust000002-0042.pdf.

Austria's furtive attempt to preserve its pre-war dimensions. The day after the 1918 armistice, the Austrian half of Austria-Hungary sought to reinvent itself as German Austria (*Deutsch-Oesterreich*) by declaring itself a republic and part of Germany.[20] The Treaty of Saint-Germain rescinded both acts: renaming the short-lived "German Austria" as the "Republic of Austria" and forbidding future union with Germany. It also acknowledged a new Czecho-Slovak State and a Kingdom of Serbia "under the name of the Serb-Croat-Slovene State."[21]

As shown in Figure 2,[22] Austria's Territorial Losses, the Treaty of Saint-Germain transferred sizable portions of Austrian territory to these new states, and to Poland and Italy, reducing the "former great Dual Monarchy to a mere postage-stamp spot on the map of Europe."[23] The treaty cost Austria 77 percent of its pre-war population and 72 percent of its pre-war territory. The Austrian crown lands of Bohemia, Moravia, and part of Silesia (1) became the Czech portion of Czechoslovakia. Among the other Austrian provinces, Galicia (2) went to Poland and Ukraine; South Tyrol (3) to Italy, and Slovenia (4) to the Serb-Croat-Slovene State; and. Not only did Austrians deplore their country's forbidden unification and its reduced boundaries, they doubted its ability to survive as a small state in a reconfigured Central Europe.

The 1919 *Treaty of Neuilly*

The *Treaty of Neuilly* between the Allied Powers and Bulgaria was signed on November 27, 1919 in the commune of Neuilly-sur-Seine, 6.8 km from the center of Paris. Bulgaria, which agreed to an armistice before any of the other Central Powers, had fought mainly against Serbia and Romania in the Balkans, fought little against British or French forces, and fought not at all against the United States. To outsiders, the Treaty of Neuilly imposed relatively light costs on Bulgaria, which lost only 8 percent of its territory and 9 percent of its population. Bulgaria's territorial losses are displayed in Figure 3. [24]

The four sections (1 to 4) on Bulgaria's western border lost to Serbia caused less concern than the transfer of Western Thrace (5) to Greece, which cost Bulgaria access to the Aegean Sea. Despite these relatively mild losses, the treaty was deemed Bulgaria's "second national catastrophe"—the first being its defeat in the

[20] Walter R. Roberts, "Years of Self-inflicted Disasters –Austria before Annexation in 1938," *American Diplomacy* (May, 2012), at http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/item/2012/0106/ca/roberts_austria2.html.

[21] Treaty of Saint-Germain, Preamble.

[22] Source: Map at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dissolution_of_Austria-Hungary.png by Österreich-Ungarns_Ende.png and AlphaCentauri, with modifications by P. S. Burton, under provisions of Wikipedia Commons. Numerical notations added.

[23] Charles A. Selden, "Austrian Treaty Signed in Amity," *New York Times* (September 11, 1919), p. 12

[24] Source: Wikipedia Commons, credit to author Ikonact, see https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Bulgaria_after_Treaty_of_Neuilly-sur-Seine-en.svg, with permission to adapt and distribute. Numerals added.

Second Balkan War (1913).[25]

Figure 3: Bulgaria's Territorial Losses under the Treaty of Neuilly

The 1920 *Treaty of Trianon*

The *Treaty of Trianon* between Hungary and the Allied Powers was signed on June 4, 1920 in the Grand Trianon Palace on the grounds of the Palace of Versailles. As Bulgarians regarded the Neuilly Treaty as their second worse catastrophe, so did Hungarians view the Trianon treaty as *their* greatest national catastrophe since defeat by the Turks at the Battle of Mohacs (1526).[26] Hungarians had good reason to think so. The Trianon treaty dismembered their country, stripping away 71 percent of its territory and 64 percent of its population. The portion going to the new Czech-Slovakia was formed from Slovak and Rusyn (Ruthene) lands formerly in Hungary. The dismantling of Hungary is graphically portrayed in Figure 4.[27]

Austria and Hungary each lost comparable amounts in the postwar treaties—Austria a slightly larger percentage of its territory but Hungary a larger amount in square kilometers. Excluding Russia, which had withdrawn from the war in 1917,

[25] International Encyclopedia of the First World War, at https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/historiography_1918-today_bulgaria_south_east_europe.

[26] American Hungarian Federation website, at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Demographics_of_Hungary#Post-Trianon_Hungary.

[27] Source: http://www.americanhungarianfederation.org/news_trianon.htm, American Hungarian Federation

Austria and Hungary suffered the greatest losses among the Central Powers in both territory and population.

In 1900, about half of Hungary's population of 19 million spoke Magyar—the language of the dominant ethnic group. In 1920, despite normal population increases, Hungary's population shrunk to under 8 million as a result of the Treaty of Trianon. Now 90 percent Magyar, Hungary was no longer a multi-national empire.[28] Ironically, millions of Magyars found themselves living outside of Hungary. In round numbers, over 600,000 Magyars found themselves in Czechoslovakia. Over 1,600,000 were lost to Romania, 300,000 to Serbia, and 200,000 to Ukraine.[29]

Figure 4: Hungary's Territorial Losses under the Treaty of Trianon

The 1920 *Treaty of Sèvres*

The *Treaty of Sèvres* between the Ottoman Empire and Britain, France, and Italy was signed on August 10, 1920 in the commune of Sèvres, 9.9 km from the

[28] "Demographics of Hungary," at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_ of_ Hungary #Post-Trianon_Hungary.
[29] See http://www.americanhungarianfederation.org/news_trianon.htm.

center of Paris. It reflected several "secret treaties" promising divisions of spoils after the war. The clandestine 1915 Treaty of London, for example, lured Italy into the war on the Allies' side by promising her territory in Austria-Hungary on Italy's north and across the Adriatic Sea. The treaty also promised Italy its "just share" if Turkey were divided up after the war.[30] Although not a treaty, the secret 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement between Sir Mark Sykes, representing Britain, and Georges Picot, representing France, proposed that their two countries divide the Arab-speaking areas after the war.[31] After the war, Britain and France cut Italy into the deal.

The Treaty of Sèvres unveiled the Allies' partition of the former Ottoman Empire by ceding all the empire's lands outside of Turkey to Allied signatories. A historian summarized the planned division of spoils: "Great Britain indicated Mesopotamia with southern Syria (Palestine) as the territory of her choice; France marked a French sphere in northern Syria and southeastern Anatolia; and Italy reserved southwestern Anatolia (Adalia) to her uses."[32]

As it turned out, the Treaty of Sèvres was never implemented. The Turkish nationalist leader Mustafa Kemal led a rebellion rejecting it. Instead, the Treaty of Lausanne, signed on June 24, 1923, preserved Turkey's sovereignty but allowed partitioning most of the remaining Ottoman Empire. Outside of Turkey itself, the empire's land morsels were assigned as Class A Mandates under the League of Nations to France (Syria and Lebanon) and Britain (Iraq, Palestine, and Jordan). Italy obtained a number of islands off Turkey's coast.

1920 Treaty of Rapallo

The external boundaries of the post war nation of Czechoslovakia were determined by the treaties of Versailles, Saint-Germain, and Trianon outlined at the Paris peace conference. Although representatives of "the Serb-Croat-Slovene State" were also seated at the conference, the treaties outlined there did not define boundaries of their expected state. Only its border on the north, east, and south were covered by those treaties. Its western border with Italy remained undefined, as Italy vigorously pressed its unfulfilled territorial claims. Thus political observers were "astonished" to learn that boundaries between Italy and the "Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes" were finally fixed by the separate Treaty of Rapallo, signed on November 12, 1920 in the municipality of Rapallo outside Genoa, Italy.[33] Italy successfully annexed most of its contested territories, turning large numbers of Slovenes and Croats into Italians.[34]

On October 3, 1929, the Serb, Croat, and Slovene kingdom was officially renamed Yugoslavia ("yugo" meaning "south" in Slavic languages). Serbs had such

[30] MacMillan, p. 427.
[31] Ibid., p. 374.
[32] Ferdinand Schevill, *A History of Europe from the Reformation to the Present Day* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1954), p. 738.
[33] MacMillan, p. 304.
[34] Treaty of Rapallo at http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Treaty_of_Rapallo_(1920).

a large plurality of Yugoslavia's population that the U.S. State Department said: "As Serbia was the dominant partner in this state, the U.S. Government has considered the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes and then later, Yugoslavia, as the successor government to the original Government of Serbia."[35]

By seating representatives of "the Serb-Croat-Slovene State" at the Paris peace conference, the Allied leaders had allowed for the emergence of a new nation for the southern Slavs. In so doing, the Allied leaders thought that they were fulfilling the principle of self-determination: a Slav is a Slav is a Slav, no? Instead of unifying common people in a nation, however, the Allies conjoined ethnic groups that had fought one another for decades, if not centuries. Although the Czechs and Slovaks had no history of fighting, neither did they live amongst one another. Available censuses for 1910 indicate that no measurable proportion of Czechs lived in Slovak counties and no measurable numbers of Slovaks lived in Czech regions.[36] In effect, the two ethnic groups lived side-by-side, in splendid isolation—not so the Slavic peoples who lived amongst one another in the Balkans.

The southern Slavs' new nation, Yugoslavia, endured a turbulent history from 1920 through World War II until the death of Communist leader Josip Broz Tito in 1980. After much political tension and maneuvering, Slovenia, Croatia, and Macedonia declared their independence in 1991. Vicious civil wars broke out as Serbs sought to retain control. Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence in 1992. By 2003, Yugoslavia was reduced to the Union of Serbia and Montenegro, and Montenegro split away in 2006. Today, seven nations—Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Kosovo—stand in place of the former Yugoslavia.

Envisioning Europe after the Great War

Even before the Allied Powers gathered in Paris in 1919 to sign the peace treaties ending the war, they planned to create a very different Europe. A future and more stable Europe would emerge from a wholesale restructuring of national borders. The lofty principle of self-determination of peoples inspired most anticipated border changes, but many others were motivated by the baser principle of national self-interest. That the Allied leaders raced far ahead in thinking about reshaping Europe is demonstrated in Figure 5, *The Peace Map of Europe.*

The remarkable 3' by 4' full color map "Peace Map of Europe: July 4, 1918," was published by the celebrated mapmaker Rand-McNally. France is item #1 on the map. Items #2-#5 pertained to battle lines on the Western Front. Items #6-#21

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[35] Office of the U.S. State Department Historian, at https://history.state.gov/countries/kingdom-of-yugoslavia.

[36] Gordon Brook-Shepherd, *Royal Sunset: The European Dynasties and The Great War* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987), p. 131; Felix Klezl, "Austria," in Walter F. Willcox (ed.), *International Migrations, Volume II: Interpretations* (Washington: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1931), p. 391; and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austria-Hungary#Linguistic_distribution. Zero percentages indicate negligible numbers that round to zero.

matched fairly well the final borders of 17 countries after the war—except for Austria, which does not even appear. The map has Austria joining Germany soon after the 1918 armistice, but the victorious Allies would not approve the union, thus producing a small, independent Austria. Although the map title bears the date, July 4, 1918, that date must be merely symbolic, for it depicts the "final battle line, Nov. 11, 1918." The map cites 1919 as the year of publication but appears to have been printed months before the peace treaties finalized new borders for the former Austria-Hungary.

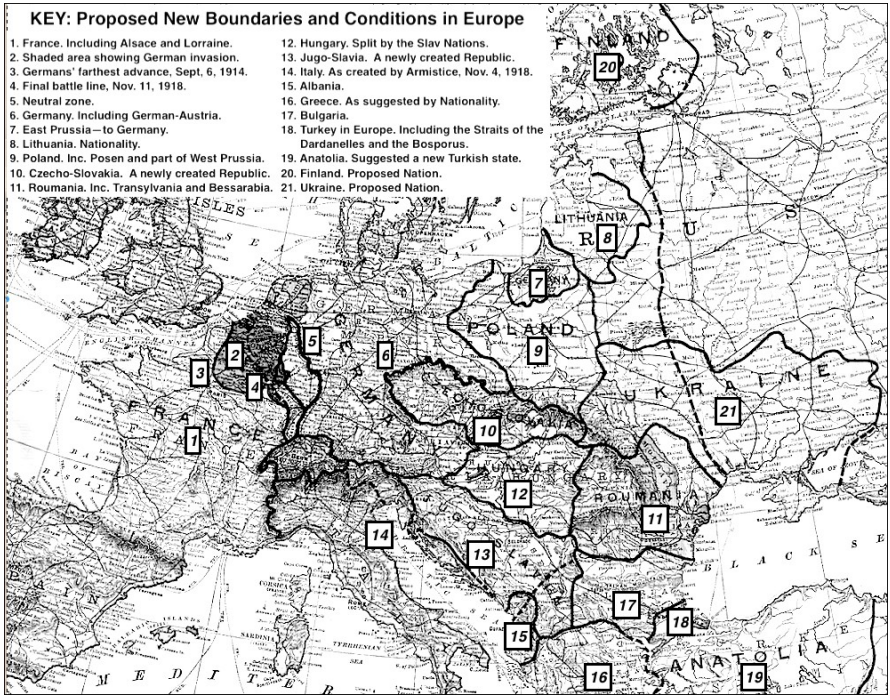

Figure 5: Peace Map of Europe, 1918

Joy and Tears

Which countries won and lost from these treaties? The statistics are presented in Figure 6, *Territorial Changes, Pre-War and Post-War*.[37] By square kilometers of territory, the new country Poland was the big winner and Russia (the USSR) the

[37] League of Nations, Economic and Financial Section, *International Statistical Year-Book, 1927* (Geneva: Publications of the League of Nations, 1928), Table 1, page 14. These data are available online from Northwestern University Library's digital collection, "League of Nations Statistical and Disarmament Documents," which contains the full text of 260 League of Nations documents. See http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/league/le0262ad.pdf.

big loser. Russia, however, lost only 2 percent of its huge landmass, whereas Austria and Hungary each lost over 70 percent of their former territories. Germany, Turkey (but not the larger Ottoman Empire), and Bulgaria each surrendered relatively little land. Little Montenegro and bigger Bosnia were incorporated into the new nation, Yugoslavia, which also absorbed Hungary's former Croatian lands. Romania was enlarged by Transylvania, taken from Hungary. Czechoslovakia was formed from Hungary's former Slovak counties and Austria's Czech and Moravian lands and a portion of Silesia northeast of Moravia.

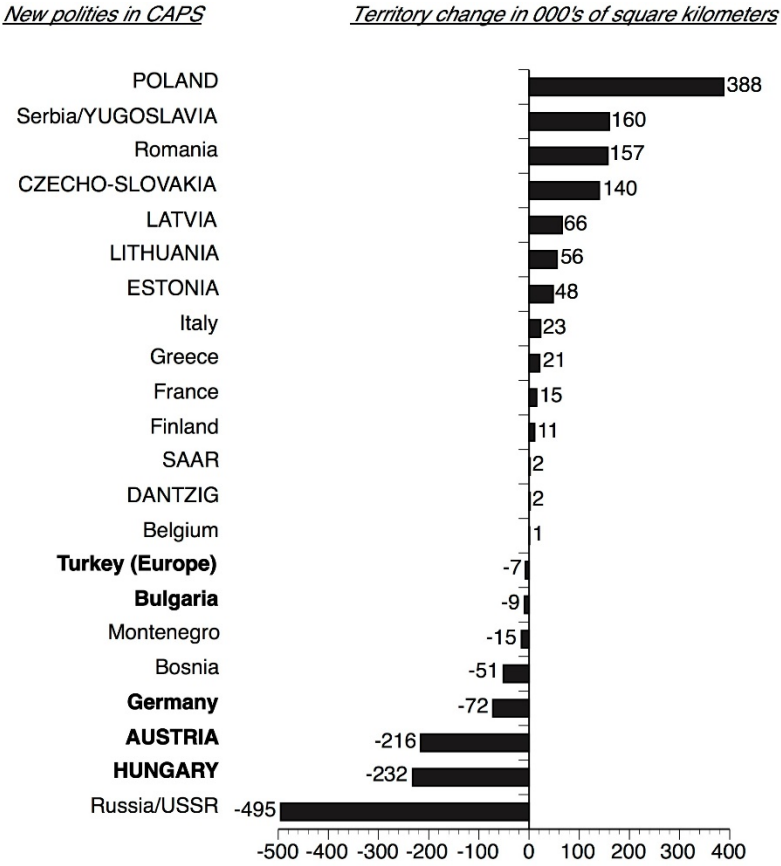

Figure 6: Territorial Changes, Pre-War and Post-War

On the population change metric, Poland gained the most and Russia lost the most once again. This time, however, Russia's loss was significant, amounting to 15 percent of its pre-war population (primarily those living in territory restored to historic Poland). The former Austro-Hungarian empire's population decreases were comparable to its territorial losses. The peace treaties took away nearly two-thirds of Hungary's 1914 population and nearly 80 percent of Austria's. All the autocratic

imperial governments—Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria—lost territory and population because of World War I.

Self-Determination v. Nationality

Self-determination of peoples was not among President Woodrow Wilson' s original Fourteen Points for ending the war, but he attempted to embrace the concept in making the peace.[38] Defined as the "the right of peoples or nations to choose how they live their collective lives and structure their communities based on their own norms, laws, and cultures,"[39] the principle was invoked after the war to create Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia from the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. Yet, neither nation exists today. The lesson from these stories is that the noble principle of self-determination is difficult to implement.

One problem with implementing self-determination was that it often conflicted with the "nationality principle," which also became popular in the optimistic remaking of Europe after the Great War. According to that principle, a country's borders should embrace only one nationality. The Czechs and Slovaks exhibited self-determination by rejecting rule by Austria-Hungary in creating Czechoslovakia. However, Czechoslovakia itself violated the nationality principle, for ethnic Germans comprised almost one-quarter of the new country's population. Similarly, the "southern Slavs" who pushed for the creation of Yugoslavia also exhibited self-determination. Initially, one could argue, Yugoslavia also conformed to the nationality principle, but that argument disintegrated as its different Slavic groups began to assert their different national identities. That happened too in Czechoslovakia, which split later into separate Czech and Slovak republics.

Hungary, on the other hand, experienced a different situation. The new and much smaller country created by the Treaty of Trianon was about 90 percent Magyar, admirably conforming to the nationality principle. However, the treaty did not implement the principle of self-determination, leaving about three million Magyars outside of Hungary, clustered in parts of Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, and other parts of the old Habsburg Empire.

Alexander Watson contended that President Wilson "made a fatal mistake in placing the 'self-determination of peoples' at the centre of his post-war vision." The slogan made effective wartime propaganda and contributed to his popularity and

[38] Wilson had declared as early as May 27, 1916, that "every people has a right to choose the sovereignty under which they should live," but he did not use the phrase "self-determination" in presenting his Fourteen Points to Congress on January 8, 1918. Three days before Wilson's address, British Prime Minister Lloyd George had mentioned "the general principle of national self-determination" in a speech to the British Trades Union. David Lloyd George, "British War Aims," Statement of January 5, 1918 to the British Trades Union League, Authorized Version as published by the British Government (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1918), at http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Prime_Minister_Lloyd_George_on_the_British_War_Aims.

[39] Jennifer E. Dalton, "Self Determination," in George Thomas Kurian (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Political Science, Volume 5* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011), p. 1530.

moral authority, but it also ensured that his post-war order would be immediately discredited in many eyes. The reason for this was simple: so mixed were the peoples of east-central Europe that not everyone could be permitted to exercise this new right. There would be winners and there would be losers, and *Realpolitik* dictated that the latter would be the two ethnic groups cowed by defeat, the Germans and the Magyars. Both peoples had just reason to feel deeply aggrieved with Wilson.[40]

Owing to self-interest and ignorance, "self-determination" was selectively applied for political purposes. As Zara Steiner wrote, "Few in 1919, or at any time after, fully appreciated the racial complexity of eastern Europe."[41] It was impossible to draw boundaries to conform to national lines." For starters, the Treaty of Saint-Germain prohibited Austria—composed of 90 percent German-speakers—from joining Germany, which most Austrians favored. The principle also stopped at Europe's eastern edge. Wilson himself could not imagine applying it to Middle Eastern territories, which were yanked from the Ottoman Empire and divided like cake among the French, British, and Italians. Wilson also failed to view the Irish seeking independence from Britain through the lens of self-determination. And the Paris peace treaties themselves winked at the principle by awarding German-speaking Alsace-Lorraine to victorious France and Austria' s ethnically German South Tyrol to victorious Italy.

Margaret MacMillan incisively questioned what Wilson meant by "autonomous development" and later, "self-determination." "Did Wilson merely mean, as sometimes appeared, an extension of democratic self-government? Did he really intend that any people who called themselves a nation should have their own state?"[42] MacMillan said that Wilson's Secretary of State, Robert Lansing (who was present at the peace conference but not a key figure) raised questions of his own:

> What, as Lansing asked, made a nation? Was it a shared citizenship, as in the United States, or a shared ethnicity, as in Ireland? If a nation was not self-governing, ought it to be? And in that case, how much self-government was enough? Could a nation, however defined, exist happily within a larger multinational state?[43]

Although Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were formed under the guise of self-determination of people, "the people" did not create these nations; international leaders did. Leaders conceived of Czechoslovakia early in the war and then created it. Backed by the Allied powers, separate leadership groups in separate cities on separate continents on separate dates proposed the creation of Czechoslovakia. The October 1915 Cleveland Agreement by Czech and Slovak leaders supported the proposal. The May 1918 Pittsburgh Pact further the call. The Czech National Council proclaimed the creation of Czechoslovakia in Prague on October 28, 1918,

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[40] Alexander Watson, *Ring of Steel* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), p. 561.
[41] Zara Steiner, "The Peace Settlement" in Hew Strachan, (ed.) *World War I: A History*. Oxford (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 291-304 at 301.
[42] MacMillan, p. 11.
[43] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

and the Slovak National Council independently proclaimed its creation on October 30 in Martin. The Serbian, Croat, and Slovene leaders also did not ask the Slavic peoples whether they wished to be bundled together in a "south Slav" nation called Yugoslavia. Years later, the various Slavic groups in Yugoslavia chose to go their separate ways, as did the Czechs and Slovaks.

Conclusion

On June 28, 1914, Austria-Hungary's Archduke Franz Ferdinand—heir to the Habsburg throne—was assassinated in Sarajevo, Bosnia. The assassin was Gavrilo Princip, a 19 year-old ethnic Serb living in Bosnia. For that and other reasons, Austria-Hungary believed Serbia to be involved in the assassination. On July 28, Emperor Franz Josef, vowing in his war manifesto to preserve "the honor and dignity of my monarchy," issued the order to shell Serbia.[44] Russia soon mobilized to support Slavic Serbia, while Germany mobilized to support Austria-Hungary. Accordingly, France mobilized against Germany. World War I was on.

After World War II, Yugoslavia officially honored Gavrilo Princip, "for having struck a blow that led to the breakup of the empire and Bosnia's reincarnation as part of Yugoslavia.[45] In 2014, on the assassination's centennial, tourists in Sarajevo, Bosnia, found mixed messages about the assassin whose act launched World War I. The visitors were "left to decide whether he was a liberator, an anarchist killer or a terrorist motivated by sectarian and ethnic hatreds."[46] In heavily Serbian East Sarajevo, Serbs expressed their own opinion by unveiling a monument to Gavrilo Princip as a national hero.[47] Earlier, in 1938, Hitler drew cheers from ethnic Germans in Austria when he annex Austria, thereby violating the Treaty of Saint Germain that rebuffed Austria' s attempt to join Germany.

The harsh realities of the nationality principle systematically undermined World War I treaties that tried to implement the noble principle of self-determination.

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[44] "Liveblogging World War I: July 28, 1914: The Austrian Declaration of War and Manifesto," http://delong.typepad.com/sdj/2014/07/liveblogging-world-war-i-july-28–1914-the-austrian-declaration-of-war-and-manifesto.html.

[45] John F. Burns, "Revelry in Sarajevo, Where Shots Started a World War," *New York Times* (June 20, 2014), p. A4.

[46] Burns, *ibid.*

[47] "Sarajevo Serbs Unveil Monument to Gavrilo Princip, The Assassin Who Triggered WWI," at http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2014/06/28/29-jun-14-world-view-sarajevo-serbs-unveil-monument-to-gavrilo-princip-who-triggered-world-war-i/.

Independent but Not Alone:
The Long Intellectual Journey from Nationhood to Integration

John Palka

Flags are important symbols, reflecting national identity and evoking feelings of loyalty and emotional attachment to one's country. Flags are flown in special locations and on special occasions that have some national significance, but they also mark public buildings and other spaces such as classrooms. Special ceremonies mark their raising and lowering, and when not in use they are carefully folded and put away. In short, flags are significant, and codes of etiquette attend their use.

Given that flags are such important symbols, it is especially striking that when the flag of Slovakia is flown, it is almost always accompanied by the flag of the European Union. This is especially true in situations in which Slovakia is being presented as a nation—at Slovak embassies and consulates, at public events, and so forth. Isn't it remarkable? Slovakia spent a thousand years defending itself from assimilation by its larger neighbors, and now that this small nation is finally independent, it flies the flag of the European Union beside its own flag!

This is no accident. Rather, it is a direct consequence of an evolution of ideas about nationhood and about Europe as a whole. Here, I want here to defend the proposition that there has been a two century–long intellectual evolution from the struggle for national identity to a movement toward European integration, and that an exploration of this evolution will enrich our understanding of the rebirth of Europe that followed World War I.

The Flow of Ideas

Here are the steps on the journey from a focus on national identity to the formulation and implementation of the idea of a European Union that I will consider:[1]

- Exploration of national identity – Herder, late 18th century
- Pan-Slavism
- Nationalism
- Reorganization of the Habsburg Monarchy

Slav Congress in Prague, 1848; Palacký and Šafárik
United States of Great Austria – Popovici, 1906

- Belvedere Circle and assassination – Franz Ferdinand, June 28, 1914
- World War I and its aftermath, 1914-1920

Fourteen Points – Wilson, 1918
Treaties of Versailles, 1919; Saint Germain, 1919; and Trianon, 1920

[1] A lengthier list, dating back to William Penn's proposal in 1693 for a European Parliament, is available here: https://www.wdl.org/en/item/11583/.

League of Nations, 1920

- Pan-Europa Movement – Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1922
- Federation in Central Europe – Hodža, 1942
- European Coal and Steel Community, 1951
- European Economic Community, 1957
- European Union, 1993

The period between the formulation of the concept of national identity by the German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder in the late eighteenth century and the treaties that reorganized Europe following World War I in the early twentieth century was focused on the concept of the nation and the state. This is evidenced by the fact that in the immediate aftermath of World War I, vast areas of Europe were reorganized at least partly on the basis of those eight of Woodrow Wilson's celebrated fourteen points that dealt with specific territorial issues.[2] In contrast, the period starting with the establishment of the League of Nations, based on Wilson's fourteenth point, as well as the Pan-Europa Movement, was focused on European integration. This period continues to the present day, with the European Union being its greatest manifestation.

Herder

The most important early exponent of the concept of nationhood was the German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803).[3] I want to highlight three aspects of Herder's thought.

First is his concept of the *Volksgeist*, the spirit of a people. Here is a description of Herder's thinking by the philosopher Isaiah Berlin, taken from an interview entitled *Return of the Volksgeist*.[4] The group to which the notion of the Volksgeist was most often applied was the nation.

> Herder virtually invented the idea of belonging. He believed that just as people need to eat and drink, to have security and freedom of movement, so too they need to belong to a group. Deprived of this, they feel cut off, lonely, diminished, unhappy. Nostalgia, Herder said, is the noblest of all pains. To be human means to be able to feel at home somewhere, with your own kind.
>
> Each group, according to Herder, has its own Volksgeist—a set of customs and a lifestyle, a way of perceiving and behaving that is of value solely because it is their own. The whole of cultural life is shaped from within the particular stream of tradition that comes from collective historical experience shared only by members of the group.

[2] https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/President_Wilson%27s_Fourteen_Points

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Gottfried_Herder; https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/herder/

[4] http://www.digitalnpq.org/archive/2009_fall_2010_winter/05_berlin.html

The second is his emphasis on the language spoken by a nation. In Herder's own, oft-quoted words:

> Has a people anything dearer than the speech of its fathers? In its speech resides its whole thought-domain, its tradition, history, religion, and basis of life, all its heart and soul. To deprive a people of its speech is to deprive it of its one eternal good.[5]

The third is Herder's exalted view of Slavdom:

> Perhaps Herder's influence was strongest among the Slavs, whose origins he idealized and whose folk poetry he greatly admired. He frequently urged the collection of this poetry, along with old customs and traditions, that the gap between past and present might be spanned and that the Slavic nations might then ***go*** on to a glorious future. Herder's works were published in the Slavic countries in both the original German and in translation and were instrumental in stimulating Slavic patriotism. As A. Fischel says, Herder is justly called "the real father of the renaissance of the Slavic peoples," for he "was the creator of their philosophy of culture. They saw the course of their historical development up to the present with his eyes, they drew from his promises the certainty of their future high destiny."[6]

So, already at the end of the eighteenth century we have a clear articulation of the concept of nationhood, of the importance of a national language, and of Slavs as a collective force in the future of Europe. Herder's thought exerted a powerful influence on young Slav intellectuals, both because of its content and because so many of these youthful leaders went to Germany to advance their studies and, thus, came into direct contact with his thinking. They returned home inspired for their respective nations, especially those restive under the Magyar yoke.

Pan-Slavism

Pan-Slavism was an intellectual movement that played a role in the trajectory of events leading up to the rebirth of Europe in 1918, and Herder is often considered to be its most influential godfather.[7]

The origin of Pan-Slavism, which celebrates the Slavs collectively rather than as separate nations, is sometimes dated to a speech delivered in 1525 in Venice by Vinko Pribojević, a Dalmatian scholar.[8] The title of his speech is translated as "On

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[5] https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1784herder-mankind.asp.

[6] Taken from William A. Wilson, *Herder, Folklore and Romantic Nationalism*, http://mysite.du.edu/~lavita/anth_3070_13s/_docs/wilsonw_herder_folklore copy.pdf. The reference to A. Fischel is from Robert R. Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism* (1931; rpt. New York, 1966).

[7] http://ww1.habsburger.net/en/chapters/together-we-are-strong-pan-slavism-and-slavdom. For a much older but fascinatingly detailed account, see: https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2142012.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A9b923e86f569134a9a17ee82903df030

[8] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan-Slavism

the Origin and the Glory of the Slavs," and that was precisely its theme—the origin and the glory of the Slavs, *all* Slavs. It was not accurate historiography by today's standards, but the lecture made a great impression at the time and was republished several times in both Latin and Italian.

Much later, within the Habsburg Monarchy, two of the important expositors of Pan-Slavism were the Czech František Palacký (1798-1875) and the Slovak Pavel Josef Šafárik (1795-1861). Both men had the complex background that typified intellectuals of the period. Palacký was born in Moravia, educated in Lutheran schools in what is today Slovakia, and became known as the Father of the Czech Nation. His greatest written work was *Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě* (*The History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia*), but he was a Pan-Slav in spirit. He repeatedly advocated the reorganization of the Habsburg Monarchy, and later the Austro-Hungarian Empire, along national lines.[9]

Šafárik was born and initially studied in Slovakia, had his first position in Serbia, and finally settled in Prague, where he continued scholarly work until his death.[10] He was close friends with Palacký, with whom he coauthored two books on Czech literary history, both written in German. An example of his work as a Slavicist—though also written in German—is *Geschichte der slawischen Sprache und Literatur nach allen Mundarten*, (*History of the Slavic Language and Literature in All Dialects*), published in 1826. In this, Šafárik gives the first-ever comprehensive analysis of all Slavic languages. He and his Slovak compatriot Ján Kollár (1793-1852) were not only ardent proponents of Pan-Slavism and of the special cultural and linguistic closeness of Czechs and Slovaks, but also staunch defenders of the use of Czech as the literary language of Slovaks.

Then came 1848, a revolutionary year in much of Europe. Uprisings against established power structures started in Sicily and then flared up, largely independently of one another, in many other states, including France, Denmark, the Netherlands, the German states, the Italian states, Poland, and most important for our purposes, the Hapsburg Monarchy in both its Austrian and its Hungarian regions. Ordinary people fought for the abolition of serfdom, greater democracy, freedom of the press, and other liberal causes. Foremost among these causes in light of the rebirth of Europe that would come in 1918 was *national identity*.

One of the hallmark events of 1848 was the First Slav Congress, held in Prague.[11] The organizers of the congress—principally Palacký but also Šafárik, the great Slovak leader Ľudovít Štúr (1815-1856), and the Croatian Ban Josip Jelačić (1801-1859)—invited representatives from all over the Slavic world to come to Prague to share ideas. It was a major event: there were 340 delegates, including

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[9] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/František_Palacký. See also Richard Georg Plaschka, "The Political Significance of František Palacký," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Jul., 1973), pp. 35-55.

[10] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pavel_Jozef_Šafárik

[11] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prague_Slavic_Congress,_1848; https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/prague-slav-congress; https://www.ohio.edu/chastain/ac/congslav.htm

Croats, Czechs, Dalmatians, Moravians, Poles, Ruthenians, Serbs, Silesians, Slovaks, and Slovenes.

At the end of this congress, a summary manifesto was drafted by Palacký and signed by all delegates. Here is one of its major paragraphs, which I see as of special importance in the context our exploration of the intellectual antecedents of the rebirth of Europe in 1918:

> Taking our stand on the conviction that the mighty current of thought of today demands new political formations and that the State must be reconstructed, if not within new bounds at least upon new foundations, we have proposed to the Austrian Emperor, under whose constitutional rule the majority of us live, that the imperial State be converted into a federation of nations all enjoying equal rights, whereby regard would be paid not less to the different needs of these nations than to those of the united Monarchy. We see in such a federal union not only our own salvation but also liberty, enlightenment and humanity generally; and we are confident that civilised Europe would readily contribute to the realisation of that union. In any case we are determined to ensure for our nationality in Austria, by all the means available to us, a full recognition of the same rights in the State as the German and Magyar nations already enjoy, and in this we rely upon the powerful demand for all genuine rights which wells up warmly in every truly free breast.[12]

The tenth of Wilson's fourteen points explicitly addressed the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It read in part: "The people of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to *autonomous development* [emphasis added]." If Wilson had been looking for a historical foundation on which to base this point, central to the reorganization of Europe following World War I, he could hardly have done better than the words written sixty years earlier by Palacký summarizing the aspirations of the First Slav Congress!

Nationalism

It is easy to slide from a keen sense of national identity, and pride in that identity, into the sort of nationalism that breeds belligerence, contempt for other nations, persecution, war, and in extreme cases genocide. Nationalism is still a powerful force in the world, contending with integration as the dominant influence on our geopolitical future.

National identity sometimes slipped into nationalism already in the nineteenth century. Let me illustrate by means of the case that I know best: the Kingdom of Hungary, and especially the northern counties of the kingdom that later became Slovakia.

Under Hungary, this region was emphatically *not* called Slovakia. Rather, it was *Felvidék*, meaning Upper Hungary, and it played an important role in that

[12] http://spinnet.humanities.uva.nl/images/2010-12/manifesto_by_palacky_new.pdf

kingdom's history.[13] In 1526, at the Battle of Mohács on the Hungarian plain, the invading Ottoman Turks routed the Hungarian nobility, killed the king, and overran the countryside. The kingdom was reduced to a slim crescent almost entirely on the territory of today's Slovakia and Croatia. In the aftermath, for the first time a Habsburg was elected king of Hungary and the Habsburg Monarchy, including both the Kingdom of Bohemia and the Kingdom of Hungary, came into existence. The Hungarian capital was moved from its traditional location at Buda to Pozsony, today's Bratislava. For some three hundred years, from 1563 to 1860, Pozsony remained the coronation city of the kingdom even though Hungary's expansive original territory was recovered.

Here we have the issue of national identity clearly displayed. The dominant population and the ruling classes of the Kingdom of Hungary were the Magyars, a non-Slavic group that had conquered the Danubian Basin in the tenth century. The royal rulers were the German Habsburgs. Germans also formed the major part of the business class. The majority of the population of Upper Hungary were Slovaks, a Slavic group. These Slovaks had little political power, wealth, or education, but national feelings were sweeping Europe and in the nineteenth century a great Slovak National Awakening was well under way in Upper Hungary. Pozsony was a tri-lingual city—Magyar was spoken by the nobility, German by the merchants, and Slovak by the servants, peasants, and many of the craftspeople. The real center of power was in Vienna, a scant thirty miles away.

As the powerful sense of national identity rose in Europe during the mid-nineteenth century, the Magyars started to assert themselves against the Habsburgs, both against their political power and against their Germanizing linguistic and cultural influence.[14] For the first time, the Magyars introduced Magyar as the language in which the business of the Hungarian parliament was to be conducted. Previously it had been Latin or German. Magyar poetry and music flourished. In 1873 Buda and Pest were finally united into a single city. In 1896 the government staged a brilliant celebration of the 1000th anniversary of the conquest of the Danubian Basin by the Magyars. Most of the spectacular buildings in the Budapest of today were built for this celebration, as was the underground railroad system, one of the first in the world. The Millennium Exhibition drew 5 million visitors. Hungarians could be justly proud of their nation and its accomplishments.

Tragically, however, this stunning rise of Magyardom in the Kingdom of Hungary had as a concomitant a deliberate government policy of forcible assimilation of the other nationalities constituting the kingdom. In other words,

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[13] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Hungary_(1526–1867). See also, for example, Richard Frucht, *Eastern Europe*, ABC-CLIO, 2005. Relevant text at https://books.google.com/books?id=lVBB1a0rC70C&pg=PA289&lpg=PA289&dq=royal+hungary&source=bl&ots=EH801zIUTd&sig=7sEFb7lysBaL9AG3AcENoeQvWkQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi-7NayrZ3eAhVmxoMKHYAmBKoQ6AEwE3oECAAQAQ#v=onepage&q=royal%20hungary&f=false

[14] An excellent book-length treatment of Hungarian history, including this period, can be found in Paul Lendvai, *The Hungarians*, Princeton University Press, 2003.

nationalism came to the fore. The largest of these minorities were the Slovaks, but there were Croatians, Germans, Romanians, and others as well, and collectively these groups constituted slightly more than half of the kingdom's total population. De facto multiethnicity was replaced by *magyarization*, especially following the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. Magyarization entailed the forcible suppression of the identities of the minority nations in the Kingdom of Hungary and its replacement by an imposed Magyar identity. Perhaps the greatest single vehicle for this policy was the closing of Slovak-language schools and their replacement with Magyar-language schools.

It is no surprise that this policy provoked resistance movements within the minorities. For Slovaks, this was the period of the Slovak National Awakening (15) when Slovak was first successfully systematized as a literary language, when literature in this new literary language flowered, when patriots went out into the villages to gather folk songs and folk tales for publication in huge collections, and when Slovak political parties were first organized and Slovak deputies began to be elected into the Hungarian parliament.[15] It would be fair, I think, to characterize the Slovak leadership of this period as developing a newly powerful sense of national identity and the Magyar leadership as sliding from a celebration of Magyar national identity into an unfortunate Magyar nationalism.

The United States of Greater Austria

As we have seen, the idea of reorganizing Austria-Hungary along national lines long antedates the conferences following World War I. Intellectuals in Austria-Hungary thought hard about how to reorganize the monarchy and its parliament so that their own nations would gain fair treatment. The most completely developed proposal to this end was probably the work of the Romanian scholar and political leader Aurel Popovici,[16] presented in 1906 in his book *Vereinigte Staaten von Gross-Österreich* (*The United States of Greater Austria*). Popovici envisioned loyalty to the House of Habsburg, a parliament in which nations would be

[15] Peter Brock, *The Slovak National Awakening*, Toronto University Press, 1976. A fascinating account of the armed Slovak uprising of 1848, directed against the ruling Magyars, is provided by Robert William Seton-Watson, a British observer sympathetic to the Slovak cause. The uprising was a central event in the National Awakening. Seton-Watson's book, entitled *Racial Problems in Hungary* (by "racial" he meant the ethnic minorities), was published Archibald Constable & Co. in 1908. https://books.google.com/books?id=jmxMAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA95&lpg=PA95&dq=Slovak+National+Awakening&source=bl&ots=rwd3NjTB3a&sig=DAob5o1ZdaSS_wv_NNhZIwEXHNE&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiO46OktJ3eAhXxoIMKHTPeAAA4KBDoATAIegQIBBAB#v=onepage&q=Slovak%20National%20Awakening&f=false. In the text, Liptó St. Miklós is the Hungarian name for Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš. The Hodža who is repeatedly mentioned is Michal Miloslav Hodža, the uncle of my grandfather Milan Hodža whose work I discuss below.

[16] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aurel_Popovici.

represented as nations, and a substantial degree of autonomy given each state. The latter was to be expressed through state legislatures with significant powers.[17]

Popovici's plan for reorganization was by no means the first. Similar ideas had circulated at the Slav Congress in Prague more than half a century earlier, and there were others even before that. To cite just one of these earlier works, let me refer to the *Žiadosti slovenského národa* (*Requests of the Slovak Nation*) formulated independently in 1848, shortly before the Slav Congress. This included the following points:

- A parliament in which each nation would be represented in its own language (All members of parliament would learn all languages.)
- Universal voting rights
- Freedom of the press (At this time there was universal government censorship.)
- Regional parliaments
- Definition of territories
- The elimination of all domination by one nation over other nations in the Kingdom of Hungary.[18]

In response to these demands, the Hungarian government issued arrest warrants (tri-lingual, in Slovak, Magyar, and German) for the three principal authors, Michal Miloslav Hodža (my great-granduncle), Ľudovít Štúr, and Josef Miloslav Hurban. With a lot of help, the three escaped to safety in the Kingdom of Bohemia to attend the Slav Congress in Prague!

As I see it, the greatest new contribution Popovici made was to draw a detailed map of the proposed "United States," carefully adhering to national (ethnic) lines. (see Figure 1).[19] Note that the German-populated areas of Bohemia (Deutsch-Böhmen) and of Moravia (Deutsch-Mähren) were recognized as separate states, and a number of other areas with a dense German population were recognized as enclaves with lesser autonomy than the states had.

This was not simply an intellectual exercise. The last heir to the Habsburg throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, had a strong interest in such proposals, primarily as a means for reducing the power of the Magyars. He organized a group of advisors—including Popovici and my own grandfather, Milan Hodža—to serve as a think-tank to recommend how the archduke might implement a federal structure once he ascended to the throne. My grandfather had started his political life as a fiery journalist, publishing his own weekly newspaper in Budapest. During the period of the Belvedere Circle, he served in the Hungarian parliament, representing

[17] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_of_Greater_Austria.

[18] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demands_of_the_Slovak_Nation. The original text can be found in *Dokumenty slovenskej národnej identity a štátnosti I* (*Documents of Slovak National Identity and Statehood I*), published by Národné literárne centrum (*National Literary Center*) in 1998.

[19] This map, and others like it, have been reproduced many times and are readily available on the internet. I have taken this version from the link cited in note 16 above.

an electoral district located in today's Serbia. Later, he played a role in the establishment of Czechoslovakia, and ultimately he became the new country's Prime Minister, the only Slovak to hold this position during the First Republic. He held office during the turbulent years of 1935-38.[20]

Figure 1: Aurel C. Popovici's proposed map of the United States of Great Austria

The activities of the Belvedere Circle, however, came to naught. On June 28, 1914, the archduke and his wife were assassinated in Sarajevo, and within weeks Europe was plunged into World War I. After the war, restructuring took a very different turn.

The Post-World War I Treaties

The three major treaties that brought World War I to a final close severely punished Germany and reorganized Europe. Austria-Hungary was dismembered, and the Kingdom of Hungary lost 70 percent of its territory. New borders were established for many old lands, and two states were created that had never before existed: Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. (For further details, please consult the paper of Kenneth Janda in this issue of *Kosmas*.)

[20] https://books.openedition.org/ceup/2016?lang=en

In the sequence of ideas progressing from national identity to European integration, these treaties can be seen both as the last major focus on national identity and as the transition to the active contemplation of integration. Both of these great concepts are contained in Woodrow Wilson's speech to the United States Congress on January 8, 1918, formulating his famous Fourteen Points. Eight of these points focus on territorial issues, including the future status of the nations living on the territory of Austria-Hungary. The final, fourteenth, point envisions "a general association of nations" whose role would be to afford "guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike."[21] Independent states with national identities, emphatically yes. But in addition, movement toward the integration of these states into a multi-national organization that would provide them with security. This was the League of Nations, which was established in 1920 but which the U. S. Congress ultimately refused to join. Then in 1945, the League of Nations was replaced by the United Nations.

These were world-wide organizations in which sovereign states acted highly independently. In Europe itself, a higher level of integration was later accomplished by a series of multi-national organizations, a movement that has culminated in the European Union. Let us now examine the journey from the independent states envisioned in Wilson's points 6 through 13 to the thrust for integration anticipated in point 14.

The Pan-Europa Movement

One important development was the Pan-Europa Movement, which is not much known in the United States today but was quite influential in the Europe of its time. It is widely recognized as the principal intellectual predecessor of the European Union. The dominant figure behind the Pan-Europa Movement was Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894-1972).[22] Coudenhove-Kalergi's background is extraordinary. His father was a count of mixed European origin and an Austrian diplomat who spoke sixteen languages; his mother was Japanese. The Coudenhoves were a wealthy Flemish family who fled to Austria during the French Revolution. The Kalergis were a wealthy Greek family with roots traceable to Byzantine royalty. In total, there are at least seven European nationalities in his family tree.

Coudenhove-Kalergi was a great supporter of Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points and also a pacifist. In 1922 he co-founded the Pan-European Union with archduke Otto von Habsburg, with the goal of organizing Europe to stand up to Russian expansionism.[23] In 1923, Coudenhove-Kalergi wrote the Pan-Europa Manifesto.[24] In 1926, the first Congress of the Pan-European Union was convened,

[21] See footnote 2 above.
[22] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_von_Coudenhove-Kalergi.
[23] http://www.historiasiglo20.org/europe/anteceden.htm.
[24] https://eufundedproeutroll.wordpress.com/2014/06/08/eu-federalization-the-pan-european-manifesto-paneuropa/

with 2,000 delegates in attendance. Coudenhove-Kalergi was elected president of the Union, a position he held from 1926 until his death in 1972.

His vision for a united Europe was heavily influenced by the work of Aurel Popovici. The count attempted to enlist major European political leaders, but in this he did not have much success except for the great French statesman Aristide Briand. Other notable intellectuals were, however, enthusiastic, including Thomas Mann and Albert Einstein. Coudenhove-Kalergi proposed Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* as the anthem of Europe, an idea that was adopted many years later by the European Economic Community and after that by the European Union. The term "United States of Europe" started to come into use.

Over the years, Coudenhove-Kalergi and my grandfather Milan Hodža carried on an active correspondence, and many of their ideas were in close alignment. Hodža's own deliberations were summarized in his book of 1942, written in English and published in London as World War II was raging. It is called *Federation in Central Europe*.[25] In it Hodža presents a memoir-like account of his dealings with Franz Ferdinand, and also a detailed exposition of his concept of how a federation in Central Europe might be structured, starting with economic measures such as the abolition of protective tariffs and progressing toward a political structure with legislative, judiciary, and executive organs carefully defined to preserve national autonomy while strengthening the whole. This, as we will see, is the overall approach taken in the modern conception of the European Union.

Post-World War II Steps

After World War II, European leaders moved toward integration in measured steps. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivered a celebrated speech in 1946 in which he honored Coudenhove-Kalergi and the Pan-European Union and carried forward their vision:

> We must build a kind of United States of Europe…
>
> Much work, Ladies and Gentlemen, has been done upon this task by the exertions of the Pan-European Union which owes so much to Count Coudenhove-Kalergi and which commanded the services of the famous French patriot and statesman Aristide Briand.[26]

The thinking of Briand to which Churchill is referring is articulated in a memorandum Briand prepared for the League of Nations in 1929.[27]

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[25] Excerpts may be found here: https://books.openedition.org/ceup/2016?lang=en

[26] http://aei.pitt.edu/14362/1/S2-1.pdf

[27] https://www.wdl.org/en/item/11583/. For an interesting contemporaneous evaluation, see https://books.google.com/books?id=lEMEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA13&lpg=PA13&dq=Briand+and+the+United+States+of+Europe&source=bl&ots=IEO5owXi1A&sig=E0ORgO3i7XzBLURTEVeHTH_iPFk&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiD1dO53ZzeAhUl7oMKHetvBVoQ6AEwD3oECAEQAQ - v=onepage&q=Briand.

The first concrete steps toward post-war European integration were in the economic sphere. The European Coal and Steel Community was formally established in 1951. In 1957 the Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community (EEC). Its opening words make clear that it was intended as a step toward greater integration at a later time: "DETERMINED to lay the foundations of an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe…"[28]

In 1985, the EEC adopted the flag that we now recognize as the flag of the European Union and adopted the *Ode to Joy* as its anthem. More and more member states were added, until in 1993, when the EEC was transformed into the European Union by the Treaty of Maastricht, there were twelve. Today twenty-eight states are members of the European Union. It is worthwhile to contemplate at least some of the opening words of the Treaty of Maastricht:

> RESOLVED to mark a new stage in the process of European integration undertaken with the establishment of the European Communities,
>
> RECALLING the historic importance of the ending of the division of the European continent and the need to create firm bases for the construction of the future Europe,
>
> CONFIRMING their attachment to the principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and of the rule of law,
>
> DESIRING to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions…
>
> RESOLVED to achieve the strengthening and convergence of their economies and to establish an economic and monetary union including, in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty, a single and stable currency,
>
> DETERMINED to promote economic and social progress for their peoples, within the context of the accomplishment of the internal market and of reinforced cohesion and environmental protection, and to implement policies ensuring that advances in economic integration are accompanied by progress in other fields,
>
> RESOLVED to establish a citizenship common to nationals of their countries…
>
> HAVE DECIDED to establish a European Union…[29]

It is a grand vision, calling for the ever-closer integration of the independent states of Europe while respecting their distinctive histories, cultures, and economic and security interests—in short, honoring national identity while moving toward integration. In many ways, this is the pan-European realization of the dreams of those, like Palacký, Popovici, and Hodža, who worked for federalizing the Habsburg Monarchy, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and indeed the whole of Central Europe.

Here is another way of seeing the trajectory of history. In 1849, more than a century and a half ago, Victor Hugo—not a philosopher or a political leader but a great novelist—foresaw the era of today with these words: "A day will come when

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[28] https://ec.europa.eu/romania/sites/romania/files/tratatul_de_la_roma.pdf

[29] https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europaeu/files/docs/body/treaty_ on_european_ union_en.pdf

all nations on our continent will form a European brotherhood.… A day will come when we shall see … the United States of America and the United States of Europe face to face, reaching out for each other across the seas."[30]

Conclusion

Yes, the European Union is currently facing many difficulties. Yes, it is threatened by a resurgence of narrow nationalism. Nevertheless, I am hopeful. Whenever I see the flags of Slovakia and the European Union flying together, I feel that the future is bright. And I always think back to one of my favorite events, the great annual Slovak folk festival at Východná, just a few miles away from my father's home town of Liptovský Mikuláš. This festival, honoring national traditions, always has an opening parade, which is led by children carrying both the Slovak national flag and the all-European flag of the European Union. Children. The next generation! This sight, vividly embodying both the past and the future, gives me hope that the current storms will pass and that reaching out across all seas will become more than a figure of speech.

[30] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_of_Europe. For Hugo's thinking examined in a broad historical context, see Angelo Metzidakis, "Victor Hugo and the Idea of the United States of Europe," *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, vol. 23, No. 1/2, (1994-95): 72-84.

Romania in the First World War and Beyond

Dennis Deletant

For many Romanians December 1, 1918 marked the day when—to use the words of the Irish poet Seamus Heaney—"hope and history rhyme."[1] That "rhyming" was an echo of President Woodrow Wilson's address to the Congress of the United States on January 8, 1918 in which he proposed Fourteen Points as a blueprint for world peace that was to be used for peace negotiations after World War I. Among his proposals were the promise of "self-determination" for those oppressed minorities, and a world organization that would provide a system of collective security for all nations. This later point was incorporated into the Treaty of Versailles and the organization would later be known as the League of Nations.

Romania's decision to enter the First World War proved to be the crucial step in the creation of modern Romania, enlarged on the principle of self-determination. At the end of the war, Transylvania and other Romanian-inhabited regions of the Dual Monarchy and the Habsburg Crown, together with Bessarabia from the fragmenting Russian empire, were joined to the Romanian Old Kingdom. This brought into reality, for a generation, the Romanian dream of a Greater Romania.

At 9 pm on August 27, 1916 the Romanian minister in Vienna delivered a declaration of war to the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry. At the same time, units of three Romanian armies invaded Hungary at several places along the frontier. The attack ended two years of neutrality on the part of Romania in the First World War, a policy decided by the government, led by Ion Brătianu, at a meeting of the Crown Council on August 3, 1914.

The King of Romania, Carol I of Hohenzollern, had signed a secret treaty with the Triple Alliance in 1883 which stipulated that Romania would be obliged to go to war only in the event that Austria-Hungary was attacked. Romania remained neutral when the war started, arguing that Austria-Hungary itself had started the war and, consequently, Romania was under no formal obligation to join it.

On August 17, 1916, Brătianu and the diplomatic representatives of France, Britain, Russia, and Italy signed in Bucharest political and military conventions stipulating the conditions of Romania's entrance into the war. Of immediate importance was the provisions for an attack on Austria-Hungary and the recognition of the right of the Romanians of Austria-Hungary to self-determination and to union with the Kingdom of Romania. In the event of an Allied victory Romania would acquire Transylvania, up to the River Theiss (Tisza), the province of Bukovina to the River Prut, and the entire Banat region, all territory under Austro-Hungarian control. On August 27, Romania fulfilled its treaty obligation by declaring war against Austria-Hungary.

The Romanians' greatest concerns in negotiations with the Allies were to avoid being left to herself fighting on two fronts (one in Dobruja with Bulgaria and one

[1] *The Cure at Troy: After Philoctetes by Sophocles* (Lawrence Hill, Derry: Field Day, 1990), p. 77.

in Transylvania), and to obtain written guarantees of Romania's territorial gains after the war. To do this there were to be the following guarantees: a no-separate peace clause, equal status at the future peace conference, Russian military assistance against Bulgaria, an Allied offensive in the direction of Bulgaria, and the regular shipment of Allied war supplies.

The situation of the Romanians of Transylvania, ruled by Austria-Hungary, had been uppermost in the minds of most members of the Romanian government, while Italy's decision to remain neutral also influenced their thinking. Yet the formation of Greater Romania—the addition of neighbouring territories with predominant or significant Romanian populations—was Brătianu's principal long-term goal.

After some initial successes against the Austro-Hungarian army in Transylvania the Romanian army was quickly forced onto the defensive. On November 11, a German army under Erich von Falkenhayn launched a powerful offensive which turned out to be the beginning of a military catastrophe for Romania. The defeat of the Romanian army between the Argeş and Neajlov rivers to the west of Bucharest between November 30 and December 3 led to a general retreat eastward, and on December 6 German troops entered Bucharest.

One of Brătianu's first acts after the evacuation of King Ferdinand and his ministers from Bucharest to Iaşi in Moldavia was to form a government of national unity on December 24, 1916. In July and August 1917, hostilities resumed on the Moldavian front. But Romania's fate was sealed by the collapse of morale and discipline in many Russian units following the overthrow of the Russian Provisional Government and seizure of power by the Bolsheviks on November 7, and by the armistice between Russia and the Central Powers signed on December 5 at Brest-Litovsk.

Field-Marshal August von Mackensen issued an ultimatum to the Romanian government at the beginning of February 1918 to decide on war or peace within four days. A split in the cabinet of the coalition government led to its dissolution by the king who entrusted the formation of a new one to General Alexandru Averescu. The latter, under the pressure of a fresh ultimatum from the Central Power, signed a preliminary peace treaty at Buftea, outside Bucharest, on March 5.

The failure of the German offensive of July 1918 on the Western front and the subsequent steady Allied advance toward Germany, coupled with a successful Italian offensive against Austro-Hungarian forces in northern Italy, signalled the collapse of the Central Powers. In the Balkans an Allied drive northward from Salonika, which began on September 15, forced Bulgaria to sign an armistice on September 30 and Turkey on October 30. On October 12, 1918 leaders of the Romanian National Party in Transylvania declared themselves in favour of self-determination for the "Romanian nation of Hungary and Transylvania" and announced their intention to convoke a national assembly to decide the fate of Transylvania.

King Ferdinand ordered his army to re-enter the war on November 10. This last-minute action gave the Romanian government an argument that their treaty of 1916 with the Allies, and therefore its promises, remained valid.

The National Party convoked a Grand National Assembly, which met at Alba Iulia on December 1. Attended by some 100,000 persons from all parts of Transylvania, it overwhelmingly approved union with Romania. Transylvania was to remain autonomous until a constituent assembly for a united Romania could be elected and the new national state organized in accordance with liberal and democratic principles. The Romanian government recognized the union by decree on December 11.

It was as Prime Minister once more that Brătianu arrived in Paris on January 19, 1919 to participate in the Paris Peace Conference. He was taken aback by the hostility he encountered from the Western Allies. French and British politicians interpreted Romania's separate peace with the Central Powers as an abrogation of the treaty of 1916, and thus they considered themselves relieved of any responsibility for fulfilling the promises they had made to gain Romania's entrance into the war. Bratianu insisted that the treaty of 1916 with the Entente remained valid and that, consequently, Romania was entitled to receive everything promised and to be treated as a full Allied partner. He adamantly rejected the counter-arguments that Romania herself had abrogated the treaty by concluding a separate peace with the enemy. He was also determined to obtain Allied recognition of the acquisition of Bessarabia, which had not figured in the original treaty.

Britain, France, the United States, Italy and Japan had no intention of allowing Romania to take part in the peace-making as an equal. The Supreme Council made its position toward Romania clear by allowing her only two representatives to the peace conference, while granting Serbia, which had never surrendered, three. The great powers gave Romania seats on seven of the many commissions charged with investigating specific issues and preparing reports on them for use by the decision-makers. They excluded Romanian representatives from two commissions, those dealing with territorial boundaries and minorities.

Brătianu's inflexible and confrontational stance alienated the Allies. On January 31, 1919, he demanded the cession of the entire Banat in accordance with the terms of the treaty of 1916, citing history: the ancestors of the Romanians were the first to settle the region; and ethnic statistics (the Romanians were the largest nationality in the region as a whole) to justify his claim. The Allies rejected his demand and partitioned the territory between Romania and Yugoslavia.

In Transylvania, Brătianu admitted, the Magyars had not voted for union and would not because they were unwilling to accept minority status under a people they had dominated for a thousand years. Brătianu promised that the Romanian state would grant the minorities the fullest possible political freedom. The demarcation line between Hungarian and Romanian forces drawn on November 13, 1918 by General Louis Franchet d'Esperey, the commander-in-chief of Allied forces in South-eastern Europe, along the Mures River in central Transylvania did not hold. Romanian troops continued to advance, despite the prohibition issued by the Supreme Council on January 25, 1919 against the seizure of territory without its authorization. By this time the Romanian army had already advanced along a wide front to positions roughly half-way between Cluj and Oradea. The Supreme Council decided on April 1 to send General Jan Christian Smuts to Budapest to try

to reach an understanding with Bela Kun, the head of the new Hungarian government of the self-proclaimed Soviet Republic. Kun rejected the authority of the Supreme Council to enforce its own boundary on Hungary and demanded that the demarcation line along the Mures River of November 13, 1918 be reinstated and that, as a result, the Romanian army be obliged to withdraw to the east of the river. Smuts had no choice but to return to Paris on April 12, leaving the Romanian-Hungarian conflict unresolved. By the beginning of May the Romanian army had advanced well into eastern Hungary, and no serious obstacles lay in the way of a march on Budapest. But now the Allies in Paris intervened firmly to halt the Romanian advance toward the Tisza.

The Hungarian army launched an attack across the Tisza on July 20. But after an initial advance it was thrown back by a powerful Romanian counter-offensive, which began on the 24th. On the 29th the Romanians crossed the Tisza and moved rapidly toward Budapest. On August 1, Kun and his government resigned, and on the 4th the Romanian army entered the capital. The Romanian occupation authorities confiscated large quantities of industrial equipment, locomotives, and other movable goods, action which they justified as reparations for the losses Romania had suffered during the German and Austro-Hungarian occupation of 1917-18. At the beginning of 1920, Alexandru Vaida, the new Romanian prime minister, went to Paris and reached an agreement with the Allies on the evacuation of Hungary. By the end of March, it had been completed, but the Council of Ambassadors, which had taken the place of the Peace Conference, would not sign the treaty it had drawn up on Bessarabia until Romania had concluded a definitive peace with Hungary. That condition was finally met when Romania signed the Treaty of Trianon on June 4, 1920, which awarded Romania all of Transylvania and part of eastern Hungary, including the cities of Oradea and Arad.

It was not until October 28 that the Council of Ambassadors presented Take Ionescu, foreign minister in a new government headed by General Averescu, with a treaty on the union of Bessarabia with Romania. It recognized Romanian sovereignty over the territory and specified the Dniester River as the boundary between Romania and Russia. The latter's refusal to acknowledge Romanian sovereignty over the territory proved a major obstacle to the normalization of relations between the two countries throughout the inter-war period.

The peace conference settled the boundaries of Dobrudja between Romania and Bulgaria with comparative ease. The Treaty of Neuilly of November 27, 1919 left intact the frontier established by the Peace of Bucharest in 1913.

The new territorial acquisitions of Romania added 156,000 square kilometres (in 1919 Romania thus encompassed 296,000 square kilometres) and 8.5 million inhabitants (in 1919: 16,250,000) to the pre-war kingdom. But in the process of fulfilling long-cherished national aspirations the Romanians had acquired substantial minorities. In 1920 roughly 30 per cent of the population was non-Romanian, as opposed to 8 per cent before the war, according to the census of 1912. The most important minorities in the new Romania were Magyars (9.3 per cent of the total population), Jews (5.3 per cent), Ukrainians (4.7 per cent), and Germans (4.3 per cent).

That the union of Transylvania with Romania should have evoked such emotion is hardly surprising; the Romanians in the province had been amputated from their parent state, their true identity had been consistently denied, and attempts had been made to give them a new one in order to disguise their origin. After more than a century of such manipulation it was only natural that the instinctive identity of the Romanians in Transylvania with their brothers and sisters across the Carpathians should have asserted itself in 1918. And in that assertion, the justice of the Romanians' right to exercise self-determination in order to correct what they considered to be the injustice of the suppression of their identity was self-evident. But the righting of that wrong ran the risk of creating new injustices against the minorities of the newly-enlarged state created by the Paris Peace Settlement.

Britain, France and the United States regarded the creation of nation-states as a means of reducing the possibility of further conflict in Europe by satisfying nationalist aspirations. After all, had not the tension within the multi-national Habsburg Empire provided the spark which ignited the War? There was validity in the reasoning that the fewer the national minorities, the greater the chances of assuring peace. Judged in numerical terms, the Paris Peace Treaties can be deemed to have reduced by half the minority problem; whereas before 1914 approximately one-half of the peoples of Europe were minorities, after 1919 only one-quarter were. But in the process of eliminating old tensions, the postwar European territorial settlement introduced new ones, for the imperial territories from which the new nation-states were built were not ethnically homogeneous either. Different peoples shared the lands, with the result that the new states incorporated significant ethnic minorities.

The East European states had on average minorities compromising one-quarter of their populations.[2] Of the large states, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia had minorities representing respectively an estimated 52% and 57% of their total populations, while Poland and Romania incorporated minority populations of 31% and 29% according to their censuses. Czechoslovakia contained the Germans of the Sudetenland, Poland the Germans of East Prussia and the Ukrainians of Eastern Galicia, and Romania the Hungarians and Germans of Transylvania, the Jews of Moldavia, and the Ukrainians and Russians of Bukovina and Bessarabia. Herein lies a contradiction, for these states, founded on the concept of national self-determination of the majority, merited as much the description of multi-ethnic as of national. This is not to deny that the Peace Settlement achieved its goal of creating states with majority nationalities. Before 1914, not one of the empires of Central and Eastern Europe could boast of a nationality which constituted a simple majority. In the Russian Empire the Russians numbered 44%, and in the Habsburg Empire the Austrians counted for 37% and the Hungarians 48%. After 1919 new states were fashioned with simple majority nationalities, the strongest being the Hungarians and Bulgarians (almost 90%), followed by the Poles and Romanians (about 70%), and

[2] Raymond Pearson, *National Minorities in Eastern Europe, 1848-1945* (London: Macmillan, 1983, p.148.

trailing some way behind the Czechs and the Serbs (about 45%).[3] The nation-state of the dominant majority had taken the place of the empire of the dominant minority in the new post-war Europe. But in the redrawing of national frontiers new minorities were created and with them the seeds of new territorial disputes sown.

This potential for upheaval was recognized by the Great Powers who made their guarantee of new national frontiers conditional upon protection for minorities. President Woodrow Wilson made this clear in a speech of May 31, 1919 at the Preliminary Peace Conference in Paris:

> We cannot afford to guarantee territorial settlements which we do not believe to be right and we cannot agree to leave elements of disturbance unremoved which we believe will disturb the peace of the world.... If the great powers are to guarantee the peace of the world in any sense is it unjust that they should be satisfied that the proper and necessary guarantee has been given…. Nothing, I venture to say, is more likely to disturb the peace of the world than the treatment which might in certain circumstances be meted out to minorities.[4]

For the protection of racial, linguistic and religious minorities, treaties were signed with Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia and Greece guaranteeing certain rights of education and worship and participation in the state bureaucracy. Almost identical provisions were introduced into the Peace Treaties with Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary and Turkey. However, no means of enforcing the treaties was established and by the early 1930s they were effectively meaningless. While the treaties stipulated that state legislation should protect minority rights, they established no machinery for monitoring whether such provisions were acted upon at an administrative level. The League of Nations, in supervising the application of the treaties, proceeded from the assumption that governments would act in good faith in honoring their commitments.

For their part the new successor states regarded the treaties as an unwarranted infringement of their sovereignty and resented the fact that the Great Powers should make international recognition of their statehood conditional upon respect for the treaties. Moreover, they felt that they were the victims of double standards, for why, the argument went, should the Great Powers and the states of Western Europe not adopt similar minority treaties? In the absence of any general application of the principle of minority protection, the League came to be looked upon as unjust by the new states with the result that discrimination against minorities was equated by the new states as a reaffirmation of national independence and as a validation of their efforts to create cohesiveness through national integration and majority dominance. Of course, the minorities' wish to retain their identity was incompatible

[3] Ibid, p.149.

[4] Preliminary Peace Conference, Protocol No.8. Plenary Session of May 31, 1919. Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, vol.III. Paris Peace Conference 180.021/8. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1919Parisv03/d10>. Accessed 5 February 2018.

with this aim and they were therefore looked upon with suspicion by the majority; they were regarded as a potential threat to the security of the new state since they and the territory which they occupied could be in many cases disputed by covetous neighbors who had been formerly dispossessed, in Poland's case by Germany and the Soviet Union, in Romania's by Hungary and the Soviet Union. A feeling of insecurity thus offered an additional reason for the governments of the newly created states to associate the process of consolidation of the nation state with the need for absolute sovereignty in dealing with subject minorities.

The new minorities of the post-1919 period were, in their turn, incensed with the Peace Settlement, for having been deprived of their former privileged status as part of a majority group. The Hungarians in Romania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, and the Germans in Czechoslovakia and Poland both belonged to this category. Portraying themselves as "victims of Versailles," they campaigned against the Peace Settlement and vigorously defended their ethnic identity in the face of pressures to integrate them. By placing loyalty to their ethnic group above loyalty to the state, they invited discrimination and when this inevitably occurred they appealed to their "mother states" for assistance. In the cases of the German and Hungarian minorities, such assistance was more than readily given since both Germany and Hungary considered themselves to have been grossly maltreated at Versailles and were bent on revision of the Peace Settlement. Thus, support of their minorities was soon translated by these states into encouragement of irredentism in an effort to destroy the European status quo. Not surprisingly the host states of these minorities suspected them of being "fifth columns" in the service of a hostile power and regarded it as no accident that the largest number of petitions to the League on alleged minority abuses were presented by the Germans in Upper Silesia, followed by the Hungarians in Transylvania.

Wilson discovered during negotiations in Paris that his ideal of freedom of the national group was impossible to translate in an international agreement. "The doctrine of self-determination, expressive of national freedom, Wilson soon discovered to be an untrustworthy guide, incapable of universal application."[5] Conflicting aspirations meant, for example, that the principle of self-determination, if applied in the Sudetenland, would contradict the premise of self-determination upon which the new state of Czechoslovakia had been based. In addressing this conundrum Wilson invoked the application of the principle of justice. "It must be a justice that seeks no favorites and knows no standards but the equal rights of the several peoples concerned. No special or separate interest of any single nation or any group of nations can be made the basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all."[6] Yet, as proved in Paris,

[5] Charles Seymour, 'Woodrow Wilson in Perspective', *Foreign Affairs*, January 1956. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1956-01-01/woodrow-wilson-perspective>. Accessed 5 February 2018.
[6] Ibid.

governments felt that justice to their own people required "a protection of national security that often could be achieved only at the expense of another."[7]

The idea of domination or supremacy excludes the principle of equal rights and as long as this idea survives, the majority and minority become polarized. Polarization reduces the chance of compromise, of bargaining. The latter are a feature of all successful democracies; this is the view that informed Woodrow Wilson's approach to the Paris Peace Settlement. It is one which has lost none of its validity today.

[7] Ibid.

The United States and Romania in 1918: President Wilson's strategic vision and American support for the rebirth of Europe[1]

George Cristian Maior

Introduction

The year 1918 can be considered, in many ways, the year the modern world was born. Many of the principles of today's international order and quite a lot of its key actors emerged on the world stage a century ago. For many Central and Eastern European states, it represents a year of great national achievement, following many centuries of struggle, hope and sacrifice. For Romania, it is, of course, the year of our Great Union and the fulfillment of an entire nation's democratic aspirations of self-determination and unity.

In 2018, we celebrate 100 years since that historic moment. We share this celebration with many of today's allies and partners – the Poles, the Czechs, the Slovaks, to name just a few – for whom 1918 is also one of the keystones of national history. We also share it with our American friends who, under the leadership of President Woodrow Wilson, played a crucial role in making 1918 a landmark year for so many nations.

For Romania, the Centennial anniversary of the Great Union offers a remarkable opportunity to study the origins of our most important strategic partnership today, the one with the United States of America. Examining the events unfolded a century ago reveals a remarkable degree of historical foresight and continuity, a common thread, composed of rational geopolitical calculations, shared values and people-to-people relations, connecting the two countries across a complicated century.

Diplomatic relations during the First World War. American support for Romanians' self-determination and unity

Romania and the United States established diplomatic relations in 1880, following Romania's independence in 1877. Diplomatic contacts increased in significance after 1917, when the U.S. entered the First World War. By then, the political and military disaster caused by the turmoil of the Russian Revolution had left Romania in a desperate situation, even after several seemingly impossible victories against enemy forces. For this reason, many in Romania's political elite regarded America's entry into the war as a timely salvation.

The first noteworthy political signal given by the U.S. occurred on July 3, 1917, when U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General Hugh L. Scott, addressed the Romanian

[1] Ideas included in this article have been used previously in the study *From the Great Union of 1918 to the Strategic Partnership: A Century of U.S.-Romania Relations*, prepared by George Cristian Maior for the American Romanian Academy of Arts and Science.

Parliament in Iasi. On that occasion, "he assured the Rumanians … that the United States would fight to the end of the conflict at their side and the side of their Allies."[2] Even though the general's speech did not represent an explicit commitment to support Romania's political goals, the United States' entry into the war prompted a strong mobilization from the Iasi government. This included direct appeals made by King Ferdinand, an exchange of letters with President Wilson, the appointment of the first Romanian diplomatic representative to Washington D.C., as well as actions aimed to stimulate and support the Romanian-American communities. Dr. Constantin Angelescu was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Romania to Washington D.C. (October 1, 1917-March 25, 1918). With strong support from French diplomatic representatives in Washington D.C., Dr. Angelescu—who had arrived in the American capital only at the beginning of 1918—presented his letters of credence to President Wilson on January 15, 1918. He sought to attract America's support in the difficult context marked by the catastrophic military consequences of the Bolshevik Revolution. Supporting Romania's political objectives, especially the union of Transylvania with the Kingdom of Romania, was the primary mission of the Romanian envoy.

One of President Wilson's personal messages addressed to the King of Romania, Ferdinand I, in November 1917, formulated the bases of American policy towards Romania: "I wish to assure Your Majesty that the United States will support Romania after the war to the best of its ability and that, in any final negotiations for peace, it will use its constant efforts to see to it that the integrity of Romania as a free and independent nation is adequately safeguarded."[3]

Along with Woodrow Wilson's assertion of the principle of nations' self-determination in the *14 Points* presented in the joint session of the U.S. Congress on January 8, 1918,[4] these positions of support were used consistently, during 1918 and afterward, in the effort to unify Romania.

It is worth noting that the spirit of the *14 Points* also marked the U.S. position on the unification of Bessarabia with Romania. Thus, in the suggested response sent by State Secretary Robert Lansing to President Wilson, he "proposed to inform the Rumanian government that the United States would confirm definitely any agreement reached in accordance with the will of different peoples"[5]—which represented a *de facto* recognition of the union vote approved by the National Council of Bessarabia. Even though this message was not officially transmitted at that time, it reflected the U.S. authorities' willingness to support the claims of those populations unwillingly incorporated in oppressive multinational empires.

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[2] Victor Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe. 1914-1918. A Study in Wilsonian Diplomacy and Propaganda*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 121.

[3] Ibid., p. 129

[4] *President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points*, Avalon Project, Yale Law School, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp

[5] Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe*, p. 250.

American support for Romania's national unity was fully confirmed in November 1918 through a public declaration approved by President Wilson at a cabinet meeting: "The government of the United States is not unmindful of the aspiration of the Romanian people, without as well as within the boundaries of the Kingdom. It has witnessed their struggles and sufferings and sacrifices in the cause of freedom from their enemies and their oppressors. With the spirit of national unity and the aspirations of the Romanians everywhere the government of the United States deeply sympathizes and will not neglect at the proper time to exert its influence that the just political and territorial rights of the Romanian people may be obtained and made secure from all foreign aggression."[6] These declarations were also supported by U.S. financial assistance in the form of a multimillion-dollar loan to aid Romania's war effort.

The contribution of the Romanian-American community

An important, indeed determinant part in this emerging bilateral partnership was played then (as it is now) by the Romanian-American communities in the U.S. Many of these communities had their origins in Transylvania and thus had a special attachment to the idea of national unity.

Since the beginning of the war, Americans of Romanian, Slovak, Czech, Serbian or Polish descent, emigrants belonging to nations that were part of Austria-Hungary, mobilized and coordinated their effort to support the liberation of their nations from the domination of the dual monarchy[7]. Their actions intensified after America's entry into the war.

In May 1917, with the approval of the Romanian Government, holding letters of introduction from the U.S. diplomatic representative in the Kingdom of Romania, and enjoying French diplomatic support, two Transylvanian refugees—the Greek-Catholic priest Vasile Lucaciu and lieutenant Vasile Stoica—started their journey from Iasi to the United States on a complicated route passing through Russia, Siberia and Japan. The objective of this unofficial Transylvanian mission was twofold: to encourage Romanian-Americans' activities in favor of national unity and to attract official U.S. support in this regard.

The Romanian delegation's first official meeting took place on July 2, 1917, at the Department of State, where Secretary of State Robert Lansing received them. A few days later, they had another meeting at the Department of War with Secretary Newton D. Baker.[8] After the arrival of Thomas Masaryk, the future President of Czechoslovakia, in the U.S. in May 1918, the representatives of oppressed Austro-Hungarian nations increasingly coordinated their efforts. In this context, Vasile

[6] Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe*, p. 378.
[7] Gelu Neamţu, *In America for the Union of Transilvania with Romania*, (published in Romanian - *În America pentru unirea Transilvaniei cu România*, [Dageron Impex, 1997]), p. 82
[8] Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe*, pp. 123-126.

Stoica (by now promoted to captain) became one of the most active representatives on behalf of all these allied nations.

Stoica and Father Lucaciu coordinated the establishment of the National League of Romanians in America, an organization that united all Romanian associations in the U.S. On May 13, 1918, in Cleveland, under the leadership of Dionisie Moldovan, the two previous associations of Romanians, called The Union, respectively, The League and Aid, joined into a unified organization. Later, on June 5, 1918, the delegates of more than 150 organizations of Romanians in the U.S. attended the Congress of the Romanian National League and elected Vasile Stoica as president of the League.[9]

From this position, Captain Stoica became even more active in supporting the unification aspirations of the Transylvanian Romanians. He sent memos to President Wilson and other U.S. officials, such as Secretary of Interior, Franklin Lane, met with members of Congress and had public appearances publicized in major U.S. newspapers from New York, Washington D.C., Cleveland or Philadelphia. Via frequent contacts at the Department of State and the Department of War, he promoted the project of the Romanian Legion, designed to mobilize American-Romanians who wanted to fight on the European front. Stoica's efforts also energized the Romanian-American community, which sent hundreds of letters to the White House advocating U.S. support for the freedom of the Romanians and their right to be united in one state.[10]

On September 20, 1918, as a member of the Committee representing the oppressed peoples of Austria-Hungary, Vasile Stoica was received by President Woodrow Wilson along with Thomas G. Masaryk, Ignace Paderewski, and Hinko Hinkovich. The delegates handed the U.S. President a resolution containing the wishes of the oppressed nations in Austro-Hungary, strongly supported by U.S. citizens originating in these regions. In essence, the resolution called for the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the organization of the liberated nations according to their own desires.[11] This collaboration led, on October 3, 1918, to the establishment of the "Mid-European Union" or "Central European Democratic Union" a U.S.-based organization bringing together Americans of Romanian, Czechoslovak, Yugoslav, Polish, as well as Italian, Lithuanian and Ruthenian origin. Vasile Stoica was elected vice-president of the organization. The most important event organized by the Union was the Great Assembly held at Philadelphia, the cradle of American independence and a symbol of freedom, from October 23-26, 1918. On that occasion, the Great Assembly adopted the proclamation of *Independence of the oppressed nations of Austria-Hungary*. The event brought together thousands of people from all over America (one of the original copies of this proclamation is still kept today at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, alongside some of the U.S.' most iconic historical treasures).

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[9] Neamţu, *În America pentru unirea Transilvaniei*, p. 86-89.
[10] Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe*. p. 376.
[11] Neamţu, *În America pentru unirea Transilvaniei*, p. 91.

In a stirring speech at the Great Assembly of Philadelphia, captain Stoica expressed the firm will of Romanians from the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Transylvania, Banat, and Bucovina) to unite with Romania.

In response to this strong mobilization, given that the vast majority of participants had American citizenship, President Wilson sent a clear message of support, which gave substance to U.S. policy favoring self-determination and, in the case of Romanians, their unity in one state: ”Please send my best wishes to the representatives of the oppressed nations of Central Europe and express my deep satisfaction with the fact that between us there is such an impressive and irresistible unanimity of principles.”[12]

These too often overlooked efforts, jointly undertaken by Romanians in the Old Kingdom, in Austria-Hungary and in the United State, were, in fact, a key element that ensured America’s essential support for Romania’s legitimate aspirations at the Paris Peace Conference. The particular dynamics of the Conference are already well-trodden ground for historians, and we shall not dwell on them in this article. Its aftermath, however, certified that President Wilson’s trust and support were fully justified and the U.S. had facilitated the emergence of a valuable partner and ally.

President Wilson’s strategic vision and its dividends

President Wilson effectively championed many of the things that are today regarded as the core principles of the modern international system. These included not just the self-determination of nations, but also the sovereign equality of states, regardless of size, ensuring the freedom of navigation and the removal of trade barriers. The President also foresaw creating “an association of nations … for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike”[13]—what would become, after the war, the League of Nations and, eventually, the UN. For a modern historian, this can easily be seen as a preview of the kind of world that the U.S. would aim to build in the twentieth century.

To use an American expression, Romania was an “early adopter” of these ideas. This was not unusual, considering its status as an emerging middle power in post-World War I Europe, facing a broad array of security and economic challenges. In 1919, the future Romanian foreign minister and President of the League of Nations, Nicolae Titulescu, summarized the issue very well: “In addition to victory itself, in addition to the humanitarian Charter that will represent peace in the future, in addition to the guarantees against the possible resumption of war, what small nations owe America above all is the equality under law in a new world and the material means to enforce it.”[14] In a subsequent speech, delivered in front of

[12] *The New York Times*, LXVII, nr. 22 202, November 7, 1918, p. 11, col 1. Cf. 27 Oct. 1918.

[13] President Wilson's Message to Congress, January 8, 1918 (the *14 Points*).

[14] George G. Potra, “Nicolae Titulescu in the United States and Canada. Touchstones of a politico-diplomatic itinerary“(published in Romanian “Nicolae Titulescu în Statele Unite ale

American journalists in Geneva, in 1925, Titulescu (by then already a cabinet member) further stated: "The fact that America stated countless times that its interest is a Europe that has on its own arrived at a formula of internal [continental] peace, the need to find systems to peacefully settle conflicts among nations, all these things are welcomed warmly and generously by the Romanian people…. You [the U.S.] have a concept of international commitments that absolutely coincides with our own.… When we receive, across the Ocean a powerful, but gentle reminder that an international commitment must be respected or civilization will cease to exist … we feel emboldened in the face of disorder … and we feel the need to tell you are our brothers in this worldview."[15]

In his own expressive manner, Titulescu, articulated the basic premises of a strategic vision that the U.S. and Romania share to this day: the importance of a rules-based international order, the need for an international peaceful conflict resolution system, as well as effective enforcement mechanisms for it, the key role of a peaceful and united Europe for U.S. and global security. Not coincidentally, both Wilson and Titulescu were criticized as "idealists" in their time. But they were both vindicated in the second half of the twentieth century, especially after 1989. In fact, what seemed to many like an idealist vision in 1918, had a strong underlying current of pragmatism (as one could rightly expect from a U.S. President, or a Romanian foreign minister). The U.S. realized that its own security was inextricably tied to Europe's—what we today have come to see as the Transatlantic security space, whose strongest institutional expression is NATO. Furthermore, it understood that, in order to put an end to Europe's destructive cycles of rivalry and conflict, profound geopolitical changes were needed. In 1918, these changes included liberating the Central and Eastern European nations from oppressive and dysfunctional multinational empires (effectively relics of Medieval times) and facilitate the formation of modern states, on a par with those in Western Europe, as well as encouraging peaceful cooperation across the continent. Seventy-one years later, in 1989, one could see remarkable similarities. Once more, the nations of Central and Eastern Europe broke free from oppressive (and dysfunctional) regimes and a heavy-handed hegemon. Once more, they rejoined the Western world as full-fledged members. And, once more, the United States was key in achieving this. The U.S. began to understand in 1918, and realized fully after 1989, that the countries on Europe's Eastern flank could be valuable allies, indispensable for Transatlantic security as a whole. In turn, these states understood (better than many others), that partnership with the U.S. was a cornerstone of their own security and prosperity.

After this detour into hard realism, we turn again to the seeming idealist discourse, in order to identify another part of the common vision shared by the United States and Romania—support for democracy and the rule of law. In his address to Congress requesting a declaration of war Against Germany, on April 2, 1917, President Wilson stated: "Our object … is to vindicate the principles of peace

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Americii şi Canada. Repere ale unui itinerar politico-diplomatic"), *Romanian-American Magazine*, January 2012, p. 150.

[15] Ibid., p.152-153.

and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power and to set up amongst the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles.… But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free."[16]

The U.S. would enter the global conflict not just to secure a favorable geopolitical order, but also to promote a set of rights and values. As with all of Wilson's seemingly idealistic aspirations, this too had a strong realist dimension, which he himself underlined in his 1917 speech: "A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion."[17] America would fight for democracy not just because it was the right thing to do, but because it was essential in building the peaceful and secure global system it envisaged. A rules-based international order required "a partnership of opinion," or, as we put it today, a community of values—words that we use to describe both the North-Atlantic Alliance and the EU.

The ideas expressed a century ago by President Wilson serve to underline the deep roots of the common strategic vision that the U.S. and Romania share today. Both countries regarded the post-1989 evolutions thorough similar lenses and worked towards the same primary objectives: a Europe whole and free, a robust Transatlantic link, a rules-based international order. In this context, the evolution of the bilateral relation to today's Strategic Partnership and alliance within NATO seems natural. However, this image should not obscure the enormous efforts that led to this outcome. Pursuing NATO and EU membership, developing a close partnership with the U.S., upholding a certain set of values and principles at the international level, were all conscientious and complex decisions assumed by Romania's leaders and citizens. Just as it had done almost a century before, after 1989 Romania chose the path of Western modernity. Even more so then in 1918, the post-1989 option was not just a question of *realpolitik*, but of choosing the best avenue for the development of the Romanian state and society, politically, economically and culturally. It meant an option for certain values, not just for a certain side. It also meant the full assumption of Romania's obligations as a responsible international actor, as a military ally, as a full-fledged European state, as a democracy.

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[16] Woodrow Wilson, War Messages, 65th Cong., 1st Sess. Senate Doc. No. 5, Serial No. 7264, Washington, D.C., 1917, p. 3-4.
[17] Ibid., p. 7.

In addition to its geopolitical impact, U.S. support for Romania's aspirations in 1918 had another significant contribution to the development of a close partnership a century later. It significantly consolidated the genuine sympathy and friendship between the two nations. The positive perception of America among Romanians endured even during some of the most challenging historical times of the twentieth century. In 1918, President Wilson's vision guided the United States to a series of strategic and moral choices that led to the emergence of strong new allies, to the eventual rebirth of Europe and, ultimately, to a better and safer world.

Odrakouštět se? Czechoslovakia, 1918-1938, and the Habsburg Legacy

Hugh LeCaine Agnew

At a hastily convened meeting of the Czech National Committee in Prague's Municipal House (Obecní dům) on the evening of October 28, 1918, the assembled politicians—Alois Rašín, František Soukup, Antonín Švehla, Jiří Stříbrný and Vavro Štrobár—adopted a law declaring that "the independent Czechoslovak state has entered into life."[1] That infant state, born out of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the final weeks of World War I, did not enter into life without any inheritance. Like the gifts the fates brought to the baby Růženka in the tale of Sleeping Beauty, more than one legacy was left to the Czechoslovak state from its past, for good or ill. Though the events of its birth were quickly glossed as a "revolution," the experience of Czechoslovakia and the Czechs and Slovaks in the twentieth century was clearly marked by elements rooted in their history under the Habsburgs—but does this mean we should cast the Habsburg Empire in the role of Carabosse?[2] What legacies did the new state receive, and were they blessings or banes?

The idea of a Habsburg legacy may take rather anecdotal and imprecise form. One of my Czech friends, whose employment takes him to business meetings in various European countries, insists that he always finds it easiest to understand and get along with counterparts from formerly Habsburg countries like Austria, Hungary or Slovakia. And we are all familiar with the clichéd references to railway stations and post offices built in a certain neoclassical style and painted a certain shade of pale yellow, or with the recent lament that all that unites the Visegrád Four these days is the strudel.[3] Yet it would be rash to dismiss the idea that the Habsburg past matters to the modern Czech state primarily as fodder for a largely tourist-oriented nostalgia. For example, one can find serious analyses that argue for a significant correlation between the level of success at weathering the economic transition of the decades following 1989 and the historical experience of Habsburg as opposed to Ottoman rule in the region.[4] Such an excursion into exploring path dependency is not, however, my purpose in this article. Instead I should like to consider for the next few minutes some political habits of Czechoslovakia and the Czechs that are, in my opinion, rooted in the Habsburg experience and that still matter in evaluating the present and future of the Czechs in Central Europe.

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[1] Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, *Vznik Československa 1918*, (Prague: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 1994), Document 170, pp. 332-33.

[2] Masaryk's admonition to his fellow citizens that they needed to "de-Austrianize themselves" (*odrakouštět se*) would imply such a role for the Habsburg empire.

[3] Květoslav Tomáš Krejčí, "Střední evropu spojuje už dnes jen štrúdl," *Ekonom*, March 29, 2012, <https://ekonom.ihned.cz/c1-55213470-stredni-evropu-spojuje-uz-jen-strudl>, accessed October 29, 2018.

[4] Valentina P. Dimitrova-Grajzl, "The Great Divide Revisited: Ottoman and Habsburg Legacies on Transition" (December 15, 2006). Available at Social Science Research Network, working paper series, <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=983720>, accessed October 29, 2018.

Formed in the course of the Czech National Renascence (*národní obrození*), as the cultural and political developments among the Czechs from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century are traditionally termed, these habits are: historicism, linguocentrism, populism, and Slavism. In its fascination with and manipulation of images of its past, its concern for the Czech language, its self-conscious identification with the ordinary people, and its recognition of its relationship to a wider Slavic world, the era of the *obrození* left significant legacies to the new state. But before exploring these four habits and moving on to more overtly political and institutional aspects of Czechoslovakia's Habsburg inheritance, let me begin with terminology itself.

As they described their national movement at the time, Czechs naturally reached for metaphors of awakening, rebirth, or even resurrection (*probuzení, znovuzrození, vzkříšení*). These terms (and even the modern one, *obrození*) carry two significant connotations. On the one hand, they imply that the Czech nation existed in the past, whether now sleeping or, in the worst case, dead. On the other, they imply that some act of will, some human agency, was required to awaken it to renewed life. So, again like Sleeping Beauty, the nation waited for its "awakener" (*buditel*) to restore it to life.[5] And if the nation awaits an "awakener," then this metaphor carries yet a third connotation, one of contingency. What if the awakener never arrived? What if the nation failed to respond to the awakeners' alarm? Perhaps this awareness of contingency, and not simply romantic pathos, underlies the oft quoted comment supposedly made at a gathering of Czech patriots during the early phase of the *obrození* that "if the ceiling were to collapse now, that would be the end of the Czech nation." Now, I do not mean to assert that a "Czech nation" in anything like the modern sense existed in the past, though there are numerous examples of a well-developed sense of self and other, linked often to the Czech language, in historical periods going back to the middle ages.[6] Derek Sayer has expressed things well when he writes about medieval Bohemia's relationship to the modern Czech nation that "this modern nation is not so much rooted in that medieval experience as retrospectively reconstructed out of it."[7] This act of "retrospective reconstruction" was largely the work of the awakeners and their "imagining" of the Czech nation. In the end, of course, the ceiling did not fall, and the Czech culture these patriots helped create would long show the characteristic features that marked its beginning.

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[5] On interpretations of the *obrození* up to the mid-twentieth century, see Albert Pražák, "Názory na české obrození," in his *České obrození* (Prague: Sfinx-Bohumil Janda, 1948), especially pp. 63-64.

[6] For examples, consult Peter Čornej, *Tajemství českých kronik: Cesty ke kořenům husitské tradice*, (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1987), František Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen im Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1980), and František Šmahel, *Husitská revoluce*, 4 vols., (Prague: Historický ústav Akademie věd České Republiky, 1993).

[7] Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 52.

Four Historical Habits of the *Obrození*[8]

Almost all national movements draw on the past to support their cause, establish their identity, and justify their demands in the present. In this respect the Czechs were no different from their neighbors, and thus ***historicism*** has played an important role from the earliest phase of the national movement at the end of the eighteenth century. In their historical studies published in the *Abhandlungen* of the Bohemian Society of Sciences and elsewhere, scholars such as Gelasius Dobner, František Martin Pelcl, Mikuláš Adaukt Voigt, and of course Josef Dobrovský contributed to a new, critical approach to the history of Bohemia, demonstrating in the process the historical distinctness, state-forming abilities, and cultural accomplishments of the early Czechs. They also emphasized the separate political existence of the Bohemian kingdom, reclaimed to some extent the Hussite period and its leading personalities as heroes of Czech history, and established a link between the present-day Czechs and the deeds of "their glorious ancestors."[9] Renascence historicism, however, had to wait a generation for its most powerful, lapidary expression. František Palacký, writing in his *History of the Czechs in Bohemia and Moravia*, saw the whole course and content of Czech history as "conflict and contact" with the Germanic and Latin worlds, having to do with the "struggle with Germandom, or with the acceptance and rejection of German customs and ways by the Czechs."[10] Popularized by many lesser stars in the historical galaxy, this expression of renascence historicism made its way into politics as the basis for the doctrine of Bohemia's state right (*Staatsrecht, státní právo*) in the nineteenth century national movement, and into popular literature through works such as the novels of Alois Jirásek. Set in various historical eras and accompanied by the memorable illustrations of Mikoláš Aleš, his stories (though bemoaned by generations of Czech students who had to read them in school) ironed this historical narrative into Czech popular culture even as professional historians largely abandoned it.

The Czech language, too, occupied a central position in the concerns of the nineteenth century renascence. From the pioneering defenses of the language, to the codification of literary Czech by Josef Jungmann and his disciples, to the forging of a supple, expressive and completely modern tool of artistic expression out of Czech thanks to the efforts of scores of distinguished and less distinguished authors, the Czech language was, along with history, another major focus of nationalist

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[8] In the following section I am influenced by the engaging work of Vladimír Macura, *Znamení zrodu: České národní obrození jako kulturní typ*, 2nd ed., (Jinončany: H & H, 1995).

[9] Hugh LeCaine Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renascence* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), pp. 48-50.

[10] František Palacký, *Dějiny národa českého v Čechách a v Moravě* (Prague: B. Kočí, 1908), p. 8. This is a reprint of the work whose first volume appeared in Czech in 1848. The German version, published in 1836, was titled *Geschichte von Böhmen* (History of Bohemia). Perhaps too much has been made of the semantic difference between the Czech and German titles; but the difference is worth noting.

attention. Karel Hynek Thám, in his *Obrana jazyka českého proti zlobivým jeho utrhačům* savaged the Bohemian nobility for ignoring the language, and hoped that Joseph II's reforms would give it new life.[11] If Tham's defense still reflected the idea that without the upper classes adopting the Czech language, the nation was doomed to remain a subaltern group, already in the next generation, Josef Jungmann and his friends began to express a different approach to the language and its future. In the pages of Jan Nejedlý's journal *Hlasatel český* (Czech Herald), this group of patriots identified language with the concepts of homeland (*vlast*) and patriotism. As Jungmann wrote in 1806:

> I maintain that if the Czech nation Germanized, or died out in any other way…then the name Czechia would belong to this land as little as does that Bohemia, for there have been no more Boii in it for a long time.… For if it is impossible to conceive of a homeland without a nation, and a nation without its own language, then I assert once more that no one, except he who loves the language of his nation, can pride himself on genuine love for his homeland.[12]

Thus raising the artistic and social standing of the Czech language became a patriotic duty, a necessity if Czech were to claim the status of a completely modern nation for the Czech-speaking community. And if at first this drive led to a great deal of poetry and prose by writers without talent, eventually Czech was shaped into a language capable of producing literature at a world standard. Yet, since well into the nineteenth century the use of Czech or German was likely to be a more accurate indicator of social status and education than of ethnic origin, renascence ***linguocentrism*** (as Vladimír Macura dubbed it), also connected to another feature of the renascence legacy, ***populism***.

The Czech awakeners asserted that to be a true Czech one had to speak and write (and think and dream) in the Czech language. For the majority of Bohemia's social elite, in particular the aristocracy in Bohemia and Moravia, this was not likely to be an acceptable goal, no matter how important aristocratic patronage and engagement in the public life of the Czech crownlands was to the development of society and the Czech national movement. Therefore, the common, Czech-speaking people became the center of the national movement's focus almost by necessity. Once again, Josef Jungmann provided an early expression of the decision to do without the nobility when he wrote:

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[11] Karel Hynek (Ignác) Thám, *Obrana jazyka českého proti zlobivým jeho utrhačům, též mnohým vlastencům v cvičení se v něm liknavým a nedbalým,* (Prague: Schönfeld, 1783). An English translation may be found in Balázs Trencsényi and Michal Kopeček, eds., *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeastern Europe, 1770-1945, Volume I: Late Enlightenment: Emergence of the Modern "National Idea"* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006).

[12] Josef Jungmann, "O jazyku českém. Rozmlouvání druhé," *Hlasatel český*, 1, No. 3 (1806): 326. An English translation is in Trencsényi and Kopeček, eds., *Discourses of Collective Identity: Volume 2: National Romanticism: The Formation of National Movements*, (Budapest, Central European University Press, 2007).

> The people is still Czech; as for the lords, let them speak French or Chaldaean…what of it? The people will consider them what they proclaim themselves to be—foreigners, and will love them the less, the less they are loved by them.… Every language is a peasant's language where it is at home, and since the peasant is the foremost inhabitant of the land, he could rightfully say to them: What are you gibbering over my head for? I give you what you eat: if you are people like I am, speak so I can understand you![13]

By the later nineteenth century tremendous changes in economic and social life had altered the original social stigma of using Czech in public, and the development of education had enabled the Czech national leaders to consider themselves culturally on an equal footing with their German rivals or any other European nation. Yet the more Bohemia and Moravia became urbanized and industrialized, the more stubbornly the essence of Czech identity was located in memories of a rural past. One of the strongest expressions of this identity linkage is provided by the two exhibitions of the 1890s, the Jubilee Exhibition of 1891, and the Czechoslavonic Ethnographic Exhibition of 1895. The latter was the result of the smash hit of one of the displays of the former—an evocation of peasant life called the Czech Cottage (*Česká chalupa*), which drew by far the most viewers of any single display at the 1891 exhibition. Ironically, that Jubilee Exhibition was supposed to celebrate Bohemia's industrial and manufacturing development in the one hundred years since a small display of manufactured goods had accompanied Leopold II's coronation as King of Bohemia in 1791, and yet at the same time it honored (and stimulated further celebration of and research into) the life of the peasantry that industrial and manufacturing progress was destroying.

In the political thought of Tomáš G. Masaryk, this renascence populism was closely linked to his idea of democracy. As he wrote in *Our Current Crisis* (*Naše nynější krize,* 1895):

> I demonstrated in *The Czech Question* how among us the idea of nationality gradually altered in the course of its revival development, and that in such a way that the nation constantly thought of itself more and more certainly and democratically as the people, that it thought of itself in a popular way.… For the same reasons our concept of the state has similarly altered, so that today we understand the state, as elsewhere, not only democratically, but popularly.[14]

As Sayer points out, this coupling of *demokracie* and *lidovost* reminds us of other leaders and other times—especially after the Second World War when the "people's democracies" were established throughout Eastern Central Europe, including in Czechoslovakia—suggesting that the heritage of these renascence features may also be deep-rooted and fateful. Beyond this somber example, the continuing popularity of symbols of the folk past—from wearing *kroj* for major

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[13] Ibid., p. 344.

[14] Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, *Česká otázka, snahy a tužby národního obrození: Naše nynější krize: Pad strany staročeské a počátkové směří novích,* Edice politické myšlení (Prague: Svoboda, 1990), p. 217. See also Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia,* pp. 154-157.

political festivals, especially of the First Republic, through state-subsidized folklore song-and-dance troupes under communism, to the enduring appeal of *skanzens* and folk music ensembles today, whether traditional or electrified folk-rock groups—testifies to a continuing connection between the sense of identity and the common people (*lid*).

The location of Czech identity among the common, Czech-speaking (Slavic) people provides a link to the final cultural legacy of the renascence that I want to mention, the sense of belonging to a wider world of Slavic peoples. The strength and significance of Czech renascence ***Slavism*** has fluctuated depending somewhat on specific circumstances. In the first phase of the renascence it was a commonly-invoked theme, but expressed more a Czech need for reassurance—as a small Slavic nation, the westernmost outlier of its linguistic group—that it did not face its powerful neighbors alone.[15] By the mid-nineteenth century, in contrast, Karel Havlíček Borovský expressed a strongly realistic attitude to the Czechs and their relations with other Slavs, in his article "Slav and Czech" from 1846:

> The Russian frosts and other Russian matters extinguished in me the last sparks of all-Slavic love; I had never had the slightest grain of cosmopolitanism in my makeup, and so I returned to Prague a Czech, a simple, unyielding Czech, even with a certain secret bitterness against the name Slav, which seemed to me, having become acquainted adequately with Russia and Poland, to have a whiff of irony about it.[16]

After the crushing of the 1848 revolutions, Russia's role as a prop for anti-liberal conservatism and as an ally of Austria and Germany limited the viability of appeals to Slav brotherhood such as the 1867 "Pilgrimage to Moscow" of Palacký and other Czech leaders incensed by the one-sided compromise concluded by Francis Joseph with Hungary in that year.[17] Yet cooperation with other Slavs, notably South Slavs in the Imperial *Reichsrat* in Vienna, or Slovaks and other Slavs through contacts established at the Czech university in Prague after 1882, showed another side of this Slavic consciousness. In the twentieth century, once more especially during and after World War II, Slavic brotherhood was co-opted by the Soviet Union and domestic communist ideologues, which may have lessened its appeal after 1989, but demonstrates how significant this inheritance from the Habsburg period could still be in later years.

Political-Institutional Legacies of the Habsburg Empire

The impact of the Habsburg state on these four cultural features of the national renascence was indirect, in that the national movement took place within the

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[15] Agnew, *Origins of the Czech National Renascence*, pp. 256-248.
[16] Karel Havlíček, "Slovan a Čech," *Pražské noviny*, 15 February-12 March 1846, as printed in Karel Havlíček-Borovský, *Dílo*, Vol. 2, Alexander Stich, ed., and foreword (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1986), p. 57.
[17] Sayer, *Coasts of Bohemia*, p. 112.

Habsburg Empire and its protagonists were Habsburg subjects, educated in the monarchy, who lived and pursued their activities in the monarchy. Are there also aspects of the inheritance the new infant state received in 1918 that are more directly linked to the state and its institutions? To approach this question we need to beware of the acceptance of the narrative of the nationalist critics and later opponents of the monarchy. We need not accept either the extreme trope of the Habsburg Empire as the "prison of nations" that nationalist propaganda spread, nor the somewhat more restrained view that it was an antiquated and immobile structure doomed to collapse under the body blows of World War I. It was, after all, precisely within this supposedly "immobile" and "antiquated" structure that the modern Czech national movement, Czech political parties, and a vibrant Czech associational and educational life—in short, a civil society—developed.[18]

Viewed from that perspective, then, the Habsburg legacy was significant for the development of Czechoslovakia and, arguably, the Czech Republic today. By the mid-nineteenth century, in spite of the failure of the liberal revolutions of 1848-49, the Czech-speaking community had made a good start at creating political and civic life that matched the standards of the neighborhood. Even under the neo-absolutist regime of the 1850s the emancipation of the peasantry was completed and the foundations laid for the liberal economic development of the monarchy as a whole. Both trends benefitted the Czechs greatly, and when Francis Joseph returned—however reluctantly—to a more constitutional structure for the monarchy, the field was widened even more. When the constitutional and other crises of the 1860s were settled with the establishment of the Dual Monarchy via the compromise with the Hungarian political elites and the expulsion of Austria from the uniting *kleindeutsch* Germany, Czech political and associational life entered a new phase of rapid development.

The system under which Austria-Hungary survived its final half-century was indeed cumbersome and unwieldy—as Ernest Hanisch has noted, it was simultaneously a dynastic, bureaucratic, authoritarian state (*Obrigkeitsstaat*) and also a state subject to the rule of law (*Rechtsstaat*).[19] As the state, so the administrative structures under which the Czech-speaking movements and organizations operated were also complex. There was a Cisleithanian level with the *Reichsrat* in Vienna, originally elected by the provincial diets, then by a complex curial voting system, and finally (after 1907) by universal manhood suffrage. The

[18] Pieter Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 2016), is the most recent and thorough attempt to lay out an interpretation of the monarchy free from either of these narratives. See especially pp. 430-452. Similar questions about the traditional narratives were raised by F. Gregory Campbell, "Empty Pedestals?" *Slavic Review*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (Spring, 1985), pp. 1-15. This section also draws from Gary B. Cohen, "Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914," *Central European History*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Jun., 2007), pp. 241-278.

[19] Ernst Hanisch, *Österreichische Geschichte 1890-1990. Der lange Schatten des Staates. Österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1994), 209-210.

central Cisleithanian government ran an administration via governors in the provinces and district commissioners in each district, along with ministries in Vienna. Yet the provincial diets, elected by restricted, curial franchises, but far more representative than their noble predecessors had been, also controlled local matters through a second administrative "track" that went down from diet committees to local communal representative bodies whose members were elected at the local level.

By participating in this system of local administration, the Czechs were able to take political and (significantly) budgetary control over communities ranging from Prague, whose first Czech-speaking mayor was elected in 1861, to regional and district towns throughout Bohemia and to some extent Moravia. Through local communal councils, school boards and other local bodies the population, at least in the Cisleithanian part of the monarchy, gained decades of experience at running local affairs and contesting local elections. The restricted franchise limited the extent to which direct political representation of broader levels of the population could find expression in the provincial Diets, but even there political parties representing Czech-speaking as well as German-speaking movements gained further experience in politics. At the level of the Imperial *Reichsrat*, too, the Czech movement soon found its way to political organization and participation. Boycott and obstruction were part and parcel of this political experience at both the provincial and Cisleithanian level, but the fact remains that the opportunity to develop political experience did exist.[20]

It was also within this political and institutional framework that, however haltingly and with however much internal contradiction, Czech-speaking politics broadened and developed, with the Young Czechs supplanting the Old Czechs in the aftermath of the 1890 negotiations in Vienna about a compromise with the Germans in Bohemia. The Young Czechs then saw their hegemony undermined in turn by the proliferation of political parties representing other social groups and interests, almost all expressing a Czech national consciousness, but disagreeing among themselves about tactics or specific social or economic interest issues.[21] In short, this was the political and administrative system within which the Czech movement developed the trappings of modern politics.

Finally, this was also the framework within which modern associational and civic life flourished. There, too, the activities and attitudes of organizations reflected the importance of nationalist issues to public life in these years. Yet they also reflected the multitude of activities and interests that occupied Czech speakers and their German-speaking counterparts in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. And even if to a great extent the political system and the policies of the central government did not grant these broader elements of society a direct political voice,

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[20] Lothar Höbelt, *Parliamentary Politics in a Multinational Setting: Late Imperial Austria*, Center for Austrian Studies Working Paper, 9-62 (March, 1992).

[21] The classic study in English of this development is Bruce M. Garver, *The Young Czech Party 1874-1901 and the Emergence of a Multi-Party System*, Yale Historical Publications, Miscellany, No. 111. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978).

they were nevertheless able to have a significant influence on policy in less direct ways. Historians today still remain skeptical, in general, about the various attempts at local compromise achieved in the final years of the monarchy, such as those in Moravia in 1905, the Bukovina in 1910, or Galicia and, on a very local level, Budweis/Budějovice in 1914.[22] Yet the system was at least capable of arranging such compromises and in general of permitting the penetration of wider social and political interests into the public sphere.

Undeniably, the Habsburg legacy to the infant lying in its cradle there at the Obecní dům on that October evening had negative as well as positive sides. By placing history at the center of the understanding of Czech identity, renascence historicism transformed the history of Bohemia into *Czech* history, a cultural good that rightly belonged only to the Czech-speaking element of Bohemia. By making the use of Czech the touchstone of love of homeland and nation, renascence linguocentrism had separated out the Germans (and other non-Czechs, including many Jews) of Bohemia and Moravia, preventing them from identifying with the homeland. Renascence populism and Slavism acted in similar ways. When Czechoslovakia was established in 1918, then, it was easy for Czechs to see its existence as the logical culmination of the *obrození*, which meant that for them the new state was naturally a *Czech state* and the expression of their nation's will to self-determination. This attitude, given symbolic expression in everything from postage stamps to banknotes to national holidays, made it more difficult for citizens of the new state who were not Czechs to accept Czechoslovakia as "theirs." What exactly would emblems like the Crown of St. Wenceslas, the Hussite chalice, or the silhouette of the Prague Hrad and St. Vitus's cathedral communicate to a Slovak, let alone a member of one of the peoples who were not considered state-creating (*statotvorný*)?

The political-institutional legacies Czechoslovakia inherited from Austria-Hungary could thus be double-edged. Under the Habsburgs, the Czechs had gained valuable experience in representative, multiparty politics, local self-government, and bureaucratic administration. On the other hand, their political parties (and those of their German fellow-citizens in the new Czechoslovak Republic) had more experience in parliamentary obstruction than in responsible government. The self-governing bodies and local administration changed centralism based in Vienna or Budapest for one based in Prague, while the dominant Czechoslovak political leadership remained cautious and reluctant to grant complete local autonomy to such organs since in Bohemia several of them would be purely German-speaking. And finally, the bureaucracy, though basically honest, could be slow moving and patronizing to the common citizen of whatever nationality.[23] Nevertheless it is significant, as Gary Cohen points out, that even such a staunch Czech nationalist as

[22] For example, see T. Mills Kelly, "Last Best Chance or Last Gasp? The Compromise of 1905 and Czech Politics in Moravia," *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 34 (January 2003): 279-301.

[23] Korbel, *Twentieth Century Czechoslovakia*, pp. 82-84; Robert Kann and Zdeněk David, *The Peoples of the Eastern Habsburg Lands, 1526-1918*, A History of East Central Europe, Volume 6, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), pp. 325-27.

Alois Rašín, who drafted the law that stated the new state had "entered into life," proceeded in its second paragraph to add that "all previous provincial and imperial laws and regulations remain for the time being in effect."[24] He later explained that his purpose was "to prevent any anarchic situation from developing so that our whole state administration (*celá naše správa*) would remain and continue on October 29 as if there had been no revolution at all (*jako by revoluce vůbec nebylo*)."[25] Thus it seems that the "men of the 28th of October," good Czech and Slovak nationalists all, still viewed much of the political and institutional structure developed under the Habsburgs not as alien relics of a doomed state, expressing only the interests of their exploiters and oppressors, but as their own, suitable for application in the new, Czechoslovak state. To "de-Austrianize" (*odrakouštět se*) in this sense at least—which admittedly is probably not the main sense in which Masaryk used the term—would not prove so easy.[26]

Permit me to close these thoughts on Habsburg legacies with a personal anecdote: my uncle Hugh LeCaine (for whom I am named) married later in life, and his spouse, Gertrude (Trudi) Janowská, was a refugee from Czechoslovakia. Aunt Trudi, though born in Passau, had grown up in Teplitz-Schönau/Teplice-Šanov, and after her *maturita* had joined her step-father, Arnold Walter, in Berlin. Walter was cultural correspondent for the leftist journals *Vorwärts* and *Die Weltbühne*, and the two of them were anti-Nazis. In 1933, after being severely beaten in the street and hearing that an arrest warrant had been issued for her, Trudi left Germany and found temporary refuge in Spain. During Spain's civil war, she was evacuated with other Czechoslovak nationals, and ended up at the Sorbonne in Paris, where she completed a teacher's degree in French language and literature. Leaving France as German invasion seemed imminent, she was admitted to Canada in 1940 as a refugee and she settled in Ottawa, where, being the sort of person she was, she soon had a network of contacts in high places, including Czechoslovakia's mission to Canada.[27] She told me once how, shortly after February, 1948, but before the purging of the mission, she ran into some acquaintances in the cafeteria in the National Gallery. "Why are you all looking so glum?" she asked her Czechoslovak friends. "Oh," they replied, "we were just sitting here, reminiscing about the *good old days of Habsburg oppression!*" The perspective afforded by enduring two

[24] Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, *Vznik Československa 1918*, pp. 332-33.
[25] Quoted in Cohen, "Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society," pp. 277-278.
[26] See Josef Korbel, *Twentieth-Century Czechoslovakia: The Meanings of its History*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 82-83, and Andrea Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle: The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914-1948*, (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 58, 209-212.
[27] Paul Helmer, *Growing with Canada: The Émigré Tradition in Canadian Music*, (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), pp. 185-186. See also Megan Gillis, "The Capital Builders: Arts doyenne Trudi Le Caine helped transform the capital with music, art—and skating," *Ottawa Citizen*, updated March 27, 2017, <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/the-capital-builders-arts-doyenne-trudi-le-caine-helped-transform-the-capital-with-music-art-and-skating>, accessed October 31, 2018.

twentieth-century totalitarian regimes clearly made the Habsburg legacy look less awful than it might have seemed in 1918.

Milan R. Štefánik: His Under-Appreciated Contributions to Czecho-Slovak Independence

Kevin J. McNamara

As the only wholly Slovak officer of the independence movement and government-in-exile led by Tomáš G. Masaryk, Milan R. Štefánik played as significant a role in the founding of Czecho-Slovakia as did Edvard Beneš, the aide to Masaryk who succeeded him as president of Czecho-Slovakia. Too few people know this, while Masaryk and Beneš became well-known names in diplomatic and historical circles. This is most likely a result of the fact that the worldwide reputations of Masaryk, the first president of Czecho-Slovakia, and Beneš, its first Foreign Minister, began to spread across the globe mostly after 1918, as they took power in Prague, while Štefánik was killed in a plane crash on May 4, 1919, on his final journey home.

Regardless of the reason, Štefánik deserves credit for *six major contributions* to the independence movement that finally liberated the Czechs and Slovaks in 1918.

First, the Slovak astronomer, explorer, meteorologist, aviator, diplomat, and Allied army officer was the only Slovak of stature who was able and willing to help lead the movement, lending it credibility as a genuine "Czecho-Slovak" effort.

Štefánik had earlier proven his loyalty to Masaryk, writing articles for the pro-Masaryk newspaper, *Čas*, while he studied astronomy at Charles University.[1] After earning a doctorate in 1904, he moved to Paris to work as an astronomer and meteorologist. Štefánik made France proud during his travels as a French representative across Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America—including expeditions to Tahiti, Tunisia, and Turkistan. In 1912 he became a French citizen and two years later was inducted into the Legion of Honor. As a result, the Slovak had high-level connections among French politicians and journalists.

In January 1915, Štefánik volunteered for the embryonic French Air Force. He took part in battles on the Western Front before he was transferred to Serbia, where he took on diplomatic assignments. He was nevertheless seriously injured in the crash of his aircraft in Albania on an Allied mission. Despite suffering from internal bleeding, he reached Paris in December 1915, where he underwent a major operation that saved his life, if not his health.

Štefánik got word to Beneš he had "powerful political connections in France."[2]

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[1] I relied on four sources for background on Stefanik: O. D. Koreff, *Milan Rastislav Stefanik:A Short Biography* (Cleveland, OH: Slovak League of America, 1924); Thomas D. Marzik, "Milan Rastislav Stefanik and the Creation of Czecho-Slovakia," in *The Birth of Czechoslovakia*, eds. Sharon L. Wolchik and Ivan Dubovicky (Prague, 1999), pp. 29-36; Adolf Zeman, "In the Steps of General Stefanik," trans. Ivo Reznicek, in *The Road to Resistance: How the Czech Legion Lived and Fought*, ed. Adolf Zeman, vol. 1: *From Austrian Bondage to Freedom* (Prague: Progress Publishing, 1926), pp. 19-34; and T.G. Masaryk, *The Making of a State: Memories and Observations, 1914-1918* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1927), pp. 107-109.

[2] Dr. Eduard Beneš, *My War Memoirs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 85.

Having learned of 2nd Lt. Štefánik's offer of assistance, Masaryk arrived in Paris on January 28, 1916. Looking for the Slovak, Masaryk said, "I found him lying in a Paris hospital after a severe operation."[3] Štefánik shared with Masaryk that he had earlier tried to contact the professor, soon after he went into exile, but had no luck. He also claimed to have convinced Paris to remove Czechs and Slovaks from France's lists of "enemy aliens" back in October 1914.[4] Štefánik was clearly eager to support the independence movement, without whom critics might reasonably have doubted the ability of Masaryk and Beneš to speak for the Slovaks.

Despite the fact that he was still recovering from major surgery, Štefánik's *second* major achievement was to arrange Masaryk's first meeting with the leader of a major Allied country; he quickly had him officially received by Aristide Briand, then both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of France.[5] As a minister in a prior government in late 1914, Briand advocated an Allied strike at Austria-Hungary through the Balkans to encourage Vienna's Slavic subjects to revolt. And Briand's public statement after meeting with Masaryk did not disappoint:

> We French have always entertained keen sympathies for the Czech nation, and these sympathies have been strengthened by the war. I assure you that France will not forget your aspirations, which we share, and we shall do everything in order that the Czechs may obtain their independence. We will not speak about the details now, but as far as the chief point of your claim is concerned, we are in agreement. [6]

Thus was heard on February 3, 1916, the first public Allied expression of support for the aspirations of the Czechs and Slovaks, delivered by the first Allied leader ever to meet Masaryk, and communicated to the world in an official French *communique*.

The event brought world-wide attention to the Czecho-Slovak movement, especially in Allied capitals, where the movement's aims became a frequent topic of conversation, if not yet a priority. Almost a year later, moreover, Briand inserted into a unified Allied statement of war aims a demand for "the liberation" of the Czechs and Slovaks.

The Briand meeting also opened additional doors for Masaryk, prompting the Director of British military intelligence, General George McDonogh, to ask to see him. At their March 1916 meeting, McDonogh asked Masaryk to share any French intelligence that Paris might share with him, but not with London. Thus did Masaryk's British relationship begin.

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[3] T. G. Masaryk, *The Making of a State: Memories and Observations, 1914-1918* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1927), p. 107. Indeed, Stefanik's health would suffer until his unexpected death shortly after the war.
[4] T. G. Masaryk, *The Making of a State: Memories and Observations, 1914-1918* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1927), p. 107.
[5] Dr. Eduard Beneš, *My War Memoirs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), pp. 84-86.
[6] Based on notes made by Beneš, *My War Memoirs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), n. 16, p. 502.

While Masaryk and Beneš focused on London and Paris, Štefánik was dispatched to resolve a crisis in Russia, where his *third* achievement was to single-handedly convince a sharply divided Czech and Slovak émigré community to support Masaryk's movement over efforts by a rival to align the movement with the Tsarist regime in St. Petersburg.

Josef Durich, a Czech politician, was sent to St. Petersburg to seek the support of the regime of Tsar Nicholas II and of Czech and Slovak émigrés, who made up the second largest émigré community in the world, behind the U.S. community. Like many Czechs and Slovaks, Durich yearned for Russia to liberate his people. As a result, Durich began working with the Tsar's ministers to wrench the émigré community away from Masaryk—despite the fact that Durich was representing Masaryk's Czecho-Slovak National Council in Paris, and despite the fact that Masaryk provided Durich with 6,000 French francs for his work. Durich created a separate Czecho-Slovak National Council, and no pretense was made that this organization would be independent; it served as an arm of the Tsarist government, its official business was conducted in Russian, and it was funded with Russian rubles.

Close on Durich's heels, Štefánik arrived in Russia in July 1916. As an experienced officer, unlike Durich, Štefánik won the support of Russia's generals. As an official of an Allied nation, unlike Durich, he secured an audience with the Tsar. Indeed, French leader Briand personally directed Štefánik to represent the French War Ministry, and this gave Štefánik an ally in the chief of the French military mission to Russia, General Maurice J. Janin.

Štefánik was also authorized by Paris to negotiate for the transfer to the Western Front of Czech and Slovak troops serving in the *Česká Družina*, a special unit of the Russian Imperial Army; this effort would be expanded on by Masaryk to create the legendary Czecho-Slovak Legion.

Štefánik presented documents to a confidential meeting of the émigrés that exposed Durich as an agent of Russia intent on undermining Masaryk. The émigré leaders withdrew their support of Durich and his Council.[7] The Slovak then proposed that Durich be expelled from the Paris-based National Council, to which Masaryk and Beneš agreed. Štefánik subsequently replaced Durich as Vice President of the National Council.

Štefánik then traveled to London to brief Masaryk on developments in Russia, just as the professor was packing his bags for St. Petersburg, following the Russian Revolution of February 1917. Before the professor departed in May, he asked Štefánik to visit the United States to recruit volunteers for a Czecho-Slovak unit in France—one of three such Czecho-Slovak units, the two others in Italy and Russia—and to secure support from the Wilson Administration.

After Štefánik arrived on U.S. soil on June 18, 1917, he struggled to recruit volunteers for the French Army but was much more successful in gaining American political support, his *fourth* major contribution to independence as the only non-

[7] Victor M. Fic, *Revolutionary War for Independence and the Russian* Question (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1977), pp. 50-51.

American, other than Masaryk, to conduct significant work for the movement in the United States. Indeed, he secured the support of a former U.S. president.

Štefánik had only modest success in recruiting Americans to serve in France, despite issuing a manifesto for the "national mobilization" of this army, opening a New York office, establishing a training camp in Connecticut, and launching the recruitment drive at a large public meeting in Chicago on October 14.

Unfortunately, with the U.S. declaration of war on Germany in April 1917, the U.S. Army also began drafting Americans—and it limited Štefánik to volunteers who were outside the U.S. eligibility criteria. About 30,000 ethnic Czechs and Slovaks served in the U.S. Army during the war, but the number of volunteers for France was initially 2,000-3,000, later augmented by about 4,000 Czech or Slovak POWs released by Allied Serbia.[8] This figure slowly grew throughout the war to perhaps 10,000.[9]

Yet Štefánik's American trip had a major success. He was the first of the exiled trio of Czecho-Slovak leaders to meet with any high-level U.S. official, meeting twice in July 1917 with State Department Counselor Frank L. Polk, the acting secretary of state.[10]

Disillusioned with what he perceived as a lack of support from President Wilson's Democrats, Štefánik called upon Wilson's abiding enemy, former U.S. President Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, in August 1917. A key Czech-American supporter of Masaryk, Emanuel Voska, had also approached Roosevelt for support, and "Teddy" was won over.

A hero of the Spanish-American War, former U.S. president, winner of the Nobel Prize for peace, survivor of an assassin's bullet, frequent speaker, and prolific writer, Roosevelt was a hard man to ignore, and he had from the start of the Great War urged Wilson to join the Allied war effort in an escalating series of public criticisms of Wilson.

Roosevelt listened with interest to Štefánik's espousal of the aims of the independence movement, and very quickly he became the first prominent American to endorse the Czech and Slovak demand for independence. Paraphrasing one of Wilson's best-known phrases, Roosevelt would taunt Wilson in public: "before the world could be made safe for democracy, the Habsburgs had to go."[11]

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[8] Josef Kalvoda, *The Genesis of Czechoslovakia* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1986), p. 196; and Eduard Beneš, *My War Memoirs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928), pp. 101, 134, 184.

[9] Dr. Eduard Beneš, *My War Memoirs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), pp. 276-278.

[10] Victor S. Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe, 1914-1918: A Study in Wilsonian Diplomacy and Propaganda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 131-132.

[11] Emanuel Victor Voska and Will Irwin, *Spy and Counterspy* (Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1940), pp. 198-199; Victor S. Mamatey, "The United States and Czechoslovak Independence," in *Czechoslovakia: Crossroads and Crises, 1918-88,* eds. Norman Stone and Eduard Strouhal (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p. 70; and Arthur J. May, *The Passing of the Hapsburg Monarchy, 1914-1918,* vol. 2 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966), pp. 566-571.

The *fifth* of Štefánik's major contributions was his successful efforts to convince Italy to support the independence movement. Rome hosted a "Congress of Oppressed Nationalities" in early April 1918, where Czech, Slovaks, Poles, Romanians, Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, and Italians pledged to oppose Austria-Hungary, and each agreed to seek "complete liberation and complete national unity." With Masaryk then recruiting POWs in Russia for the Czecho-Slovak Legion, the Czechs and Slovaks were represented in Rome by Beneš and Štefánik.

Another factor encouraging Rome to oppose Austria-Hungary was that Czechs were defecting from the Austro-Hungarian Army to the Italians, which was made easier by Štefánik, who had visited Italy in late 1917 to persuade Rome to create Czecho-Slovak units in the Italian Army. After the Congress, Štefánik negotiated the accord to create these units.

On April 21, 1918, Štefánik and the Italians announced the agreement between Rome and the Czecho-Slovak National Council, which gave the exile organization *de facto* diplomatic recognition. At a ceremony for Czecho-Slovak troops on May 24, 1918, Italian Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando declared, "Long live free Bohemia!" U.S. Ambassador Thomas Nelson Page made enthusiastic remarks that sounded as if Washington already recognized independence (it didn't, yet). Finally, Georges Clemenceau, the new French prime minister, publicly welcomed a delegation from the Congress and privately indicated on April 20 that he was preparing to recognize the Czecho-Slovak National Council.[12]

Following the Rome Congress, President Wilson also took a step closer to supporting independence on May 29, 1918, when he had his Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, say, "The Secretary of State desires to announce that the proceedings of the Congress of Oppressed Races of Austria-Hungary, which was held in Rome in April, have been followed with great interest by the Government of the United States, and that the nationalistic aspirations of the Czecho-Slovaks and Yugoslavs for freedom have the earnest sympathy of this Government."[13]

The legionnaires in Russia became deeply demoralized after Czecho-Slovak independence was declared October 28 and the war was declared over on November 11. Worse, a *coup* installed Russian Admiral Alexandre Kolchak as the Supreme Ruler of Russia that same November. Having helped to topple a dictatorial Austrian monarch, the legionnaires were now serving under a Russian dictator.

This led to Štefánik's *sixth* contribution to Czecho-Slovak independence. On November 17, he arrived at Vladivostok with French General Maurice Janin, under whom the legionnaires served. While Janin remained behind, Štefánik traveled deeply into Siberia to talk to legionnaires at the Red Army front. Reaching Yekaterinburg in early December 1918, he encountered many demoralized soldiers;

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[12] Eduard Beneš, *My War Memoirs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928), p. 326.

[13] Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters*, vol. 8: *Armistice, March 1-November 11, 1918* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran, 1939), p. 177; Josef Kalvoda, *The Genesis of Czechoslovakia* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1986), pp. 260-264; and Victor S. Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe, 1914-1918: A Study in Wilsonian Diplomacy and Propaganda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 257-261.

many refused to fight or move to the front. Battling injuries from which he never fully recovered, Štefánik was thin and sickly; someone else was asked to read his welcoming remarks.

On December 11 he ventured closer to the front.[14] Štefánik met with legionnaires in small groups and spoke with them for hours: "All that time," legionnaire Frantisek Koci said, "Štefánik talked to them like a brother, like a soldier, like a minister and politician; he talked to them for four hours, ignoring his fatigue, often fainting from exhaustion. He was pleading, begging, demanding, and appealing to the feelings of the soldiers so much that some apparently began to cry."[15]

What he was required to tell the men must have felt like a hammer-blow. "You must hold out here in Siberia until the end, until the victory is won," said Štefánik, visibly suffering from his combat injuries. "And this you must do relying only upon your own strength, for I can tell you authoritatively that no help from the Allies will come to this front. It is useless our discussing the rights and wrongs of the case. The fact of importance is that help will not come. Now you know just how things stand, and also the extent of the task that lies ahead."[16]

Štefánik was under no illusion his words were persuasive. As a result, Štefánik and General Janin issued orders in January 1919 officially withdrawing the legionnaires from combat. The Legion instead agreed to guard the Trans-Siberian Railway from the Ural Mountains to Irkutsk, where they would soon negotiate with the Red Army to exit Russia.

[14] Josef Broz, "After Kolchak's Coup," trans. Ivo Reznicek, in *The Road to Resistance: How the Czech Legion Lived and Fought*, ed. Adolf Zeman, vol. 4: *Anabasis* (Prague: Progress Publishing, 1928), pp. 361-363.

[15] Frantiseck Koci, "General Stefanik's visit with the Fifth Regiment in the Urals," trans. Ivo Reznicek, in *The Road to Resistance: How the Czech Legion Lived and Fought*, ed. Adolf Zeman, vol. 4: *Anabasis* (Prague: Progress Publishing, 1928), pp. 364-368.

[16] Gustav Becvar, *The Lost Legion: A Czechoslovakian Epic* (London: Stanley Paul & Co. Ltd., 1939), p. 196.

The Influence of Congressman Adolph J. Sabath on Woodrow Wilson's Creation of a New Europe

Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr

This year we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the independence of Czechs and Slovaks from Austro-Hungarian oppression and the foundation of Czechoslovakia on October 28, 1918. A number of articles and even books have been written about the American participation in the liberations movement on behalf of Czechoslovak independence and other subjugated nations within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Although the U. S. Congressman of Czech Jewish origin, Adolph J. Sabath,[1] played a key role in this participation, you won't find a word about it in these publications.

During the Administration of President Wilson, Sabath was a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the House of Representatives of U. S. Congress and during World War I he helped to unite different Central European groups in America for the Allied cause. Simultaneously, he substantially aided the movement for self-determination of small nations. His services on behalf of the Czechoslovak question, politically, as well as culturally, were especially significant. Some details, although they played a decisive role in the development of historical events leading to the declaration of the Czechoslovak independence, remained unknown and, consequently, did not get into historical literature. This is true not only about the American (Thomson[2]) and English (Seton-Watson[3]) authors, but also Czech authors (Pergler,[4] Opočenský[5]). The episode about Sabath's intervention on behalf of the sovereign independence of smaller nations from subjugation deserves preserving, before its complete oblivion—and also, because it will fill the gap in Masaryk's presentation about this historic epoch. [6]

In January 1917, in the proclamation of the Allies, reference is made to liberation of Italians, Slavs, Rumanians and Czechoslovaks from foreign domination.[7] During the first session of the 65th Congress on May 5, 1917,

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[1] "Sabath, Adolph Joachim (1866-1952)," in: *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. 1774-2005*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2005, p. 1854.

[2] S. H. Thomson, *Czechoslovakia in European History* 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1944).

[3] R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Czechs and Slovaks*. (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1965).

[4] Charles Pergler, *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*, (Philadelphia: Dorrance & Co., 1926).

[5] Jan Opočenský, *The Collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Rise of the Czechoslovak State.* (Praha: Orbis, 1928).

[6] Tomáš G. Masaryk, *The Making of a State: Memories and Observations, 1914-1918.* An English version. Arranged and prepared with an introduction by Henry Wickham Steed. (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1927); Ferdinand Peroutka, *Budování státu*. 4 vols. Praha: Lidové noviny, 1991-1992 [1933-1938]).

[7] "The Allies' Terms," *The Independent Harper's Weekly*,' 89 (January 22, 1917), pp. 131-134.

Congressman Sabath put forward a resolution on behalf of liberation and independence of the Czech Lands, to be able to attain the deserved place among the nations of the world.[8] This proclamation preceded Masaryk's arrival in the US by almost a year. Of course, the time then was not yet ripe for the realization of such a far-reaching liberation program. Yet, it is odd that Pergler did not mention a word about this resolution in his book, *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence.* That it was forgotten among the Czechs is testified to by the circumstance that Čestmír Ješina did not include it in his otherwise detailed documentary publication, *The Birth of Czechoslovakia,* published in 1968.[9]

President Wilson was very well informed about the heterogeneity of Austro-Hungary and familiar with the history of the Czech Nation, based on the information from Professor Robert J. Kerner, of Czech ancestry, who was his advisor on European affairs.[10] Nevertheless, he did not favor then the disintegration of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.[11] We can also see this from his own words, when he asked the US Congress to declare war against the Danube Empire on April 4, 1917:

> We do not wish in any way to impair or to rearrange the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is no affair of ours, what they do with their own life, either industrially or politically. We do not propose or desire to dictate to them in any way. We only desire to see that their affairs are left in their own hands, in all matters, great or small.[12]

Similarly, in London, no one wished to destroy Austro-Hungary and to Balkanize the Danube countries. Lloyd George, in the same spirit, declared in January 1918: "We agree with President Wilson that the breakup of Austro-Hungary is not among our military objectives."[13] This also defined the Allied plan for their military objectives. It was autonomy and not at all independence of nations for which the Allies strived!

In his speech, in connection with the Tenth Point of his famous 'Fourteen Points' on January 8, 1918, President Wilson still demanded, for the minority

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[8] H.J. Res. 81. Joint Resolution. For Bohemian independence. In the House of Representatives, May 5, 1917. See the facsimile text printed as Appendix 1.

[9] Čestmír Ješina, *The Birth of Czechoslovakia.* (Washington, DC.: Czechoslovak National Council of America), 1968.

[10] Miloslav, Rechcigl, Jr., "President Wilson's Advisor on European Affairs," in: *Czechs Won't Get Lost in the World, Let Alone in America*. (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2018); George J. Svoboda, "Robert J. Kerner and the US Conception of Czechoslovak Independence," in: *T. G. Masaryk (1850-1937)*. Edited by Harry Hanak. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), Vol 3. Statesman and Cultural Force, pp. 43-56.

[11] Victor S. Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe, 1914-1918: A Study in Wilsonian Diplomacy and Propaganda,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958); Václav Horčička, "The Relationship between Austria-Hungary and the United States in 1918," in: *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations*, 1 (2015), pp. 57-92.

[12] Woodrow Wilson, War Messages, 65th Cong., 1st Sess. Senate Doc. No. 5, Serial No. 7264, Washington, D.C., 1917; pp. 3-8, passim.

[13] Cited in Seton-Watson, *A History of the Czechs and Slovaks,* p.296.

nations of the Austro-Hungary, unrestricted conditions for their autonomous development.[14] Three months later. Clemenceau disclosed that, for more than a year, peace negotiations were going on from the Austro-Hungarian side. American diplomats and even President Wilson participated in these negotiations. It is understandable that these negotiations were in no way favorable for the Czechoslovak cause, since they aimed at preserving the territorial integrity of Austro-Hungary.

It was Congressman Sabath, who, on his own initiative warned President Wilson about the fact that a separate peace with Austria would not in any way shorten the war, since Germany then practically controlled all the affairs of Austria. Shortly afterwards, he handed new information to President Wilson, which he, in the meantime, obtained from Masaryk and other Czech representatives, which again drew President's attention to the fact that a separate peace treaty with Austria was in conflict with the U.S. promise in the matter of self-determination of smaller nations. Not even then, did he succeed in persuading the President about the correctness of his views. Only during the third meeting between the President and Sabath, sometime in June 1918, did President Wilson arrive at the decision to remain with the politics of self-determination in the spirit of sovereign independence for smaller Nations.

On June 19, 1918, Masaryk had his first talk with President Wilson, which Masaryk later recounted in his *Memoirs.*[15] It was the only conference between these two statesmen before the armistice was declared. On June 26, Secretary Lansing prepared a Memorandum for President Wilson, regarding the U.S. policy towards the nations of Austria-Hungarian Empire. Lansing, with whom Masaryk also held talks, was inclined to issue a proclamation "without any reservations, about the independence of Poland, independence of Czechoslovakia and independence of the Yugoslav State."[16] Shortly after, on June 28, the public was formally informed about this U.S. position.

The vaguely defined purpose of Wilson's "Tenth Point" was finally clarified. This clarification meant the recognition of independence of smaller nations and thus it bound the allies to break up the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Historians have for a long time drawn attention to Wilson's energetic assertiveness of independence of these states from the subjection of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy as the condition for final victory in the battle for independence of Czechoslovakia.

It is time for this relatively unknown episode of how Congressman Sabath prepared the ground for the independence of Czechoslovakia to gain its rightful place in Czech history. President Masaryk mentioned in his *Memoirs* that Sabath was a particularly dedicated supporter of the Czechoslovak liberation efforts but did not provide any details.

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[14] Woodrow Wilson, Address to a Joint Session of Congress on the Conditions of Peace, January 8, 1918.

[15] George J. Kovtun, *Masaryk and America. Testimony of a Relationship*. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1988.

[16] Horčička, "Austria-Hungary and the United States in 1918."

What kind of a person was Congressman Sabath?

When he died, no one in the U.S. Congress had served longer than this Czech native, Adolph J. Sabath from the 5th Congressional District in Chicago. From his first election in 1906, Sabath was reelected twenty-three times and served in the Congress until the end of his life. [17]

Adolph J. Sabath was born in Záboří, near Písek, Bohemia on April 4, 1866, as one of the eleven children of Joachim Sabath and Barbara, née Eisenschiml. His father was a butcher. Young Sabath attended a parochial school until the age of thirteen and then worked in a grocery store in nearby Horažďovice. He learned about America from the story-telling of acquaintances, which inspired him to start saving money so that he would be able to immigrate there one day. In 1881, at the tender age of fifteen, he reached Baltimore by ship. In his pocket he hardly had enough money to get to Chicago, where his cousin lived.

After arrival in America, he began to work at a sawmill, but after six weeks they let him go, since he appeared too small to them. Adolph immediately found himself work in a shoe store and at twenty-one years, when he became a U.S. citizen, he was already in charge of the store. He then decided to go into business with real estate. His gradually improving financial status enabled him to send to Bohemia for the other members of the family, while he simultaneously continued with his education.

He enrolled in Bryant and Stratton commercial school and after finishing there, he registered at the Chicago Law College. He wanted to become an attorney, mainly so that he would not have to pay high legal fees in connection with his real estate business. He soon, however, transferred to Lake Forest University which awarded him his law degree in 1891.

In 1893, he opened his law practice. He soon also entered local politics. In order that he could confront the practice of corrupt aldermen, known as 'Grey Wolves,' he decided to join an independent civil club which later developed into a Democratic political organization. He was also active in several Czech countrymen's organizations, especially in the Pilsen Sokol. In 1895, he became a Justice of the Peace and two years later was elected a political judge, a post he retained for ten years. From his engagement in that period he was credited with establishing a special court for juveniles and for introducing a parole system for first offenders.

In 1906, during the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt, Sabath was elected a member of the U.S. House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress. Right away he was made a member of the committee dealing with naturalization. In its own way, this was only natural because the electorate in his district was comprised mainly of immigrants from all sorts of nationalities, especially Czechs and Poles.

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[17] Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr., "Nestor of American Congress," in: *Czechs Won't Get Lost in the World, Let Alone in America*. (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2018).

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Sabath's work in Congress, where he spent almost half of his life, was remarkable.[18] At first, he prepared the first draft of the law in the U.S. regarding workers' compensation. With his draft of the bill in favor of railroad workers, he brought on himself the attention of President Theodore Roosevelt. In 1909, he sponsored the first retirement resolution and he was also the first Congressman to propose Federal support for American expressways.

Sabath was the chairman of the Democratic Central Committee for Cook County for 10 years and besides that he was also a permanent delegate of the Democratic National Convention, starting in 1896. During the election campaign of Woodrow Wilson, Sabath first stood in opposition, because he thought Wilson did not favor immigrants. After their personal meeting, however, he changed his mind and since then he was Wilson's admirer and friend.

In 1917, he sided with those who voted for War declaration. However, when the War ended, he tried to persuade the President not to sign a separate agreement with Austro-Hungary, because he was afraid that it would endanger the possibility of forming independent Czechoslovakia, Poland and the Balkan States. In 1917, he proposed to Congress the resolution to form the Czech State and organized a group of prominent Americans, including 27 Congressmen, to officially welcome Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk on the soil of the US. He is also credited for President Wilson's official recognition of Czechoslovakia as an independent State on September 3, 1918.

As a member of the Committee for International Relations, Sabath was a conscious internationalist. He supported the formation of League of Nations and believed in the importance of peaceful relations with Russia and consequently supported the Congressional resolution for recognition of Russia. During Hoover's Presidential administration, he also supported the efforts for broadening the commercial relation between the US and Russia. During the prohibition battles, Sabath supported the stand against the prohibition. Having been afraid of the crash of the stock market, Sabath favored the restriction of its short-time selling practice and in September 1929 he recommended that the stock market be closed.

It was also Sabath who came with the draft of the bill to form a reconstruction financial corporation, which, because of the depression, could not be realized until January 1932.

During Roosevelt's Presidential administration, Sabath supported the policy of 'New Deal,' both domestically and internationally. He supported the legislature in favor of employees and is especially credited for the approval of social security legislature. He co-sponsored Federal insurance law to protect savings deposits. During the rise of Hitler to power, he changed his anti-militaristic stand and fully supported military recruitment and substantially the enlargement of the American Navy. During the years the US was in War, Sabath urged the approval of the law

[18] Burton A. Boxerman, "Adolph Joachim Sabath in Congress: The Early Years, 1907-1932," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 66 (Autumn, 1973), pp. 327-340; Burton A., Boxerman, "Adolph Joachim Sabath in Congress: The Roosevelt and Truman Years," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 66 (Winter 1973), pp. 428-443.

to establish national lottery instead of introducing a new sales tax. He also voted for the increase in pay for Federal employees, so that they would be in the same pay category as employees in private sector.

In Franklin Roosevelt, Sabath found his idol. He urged the President to run for the third and the fourth President's terms and agreed with the Vice President Wallace proposal that Roosevelt remain permanent chairman of the peace conference after the end of the War.

After Roosevelt's death, Sabath continued in his efforts toward the same aims which Roosevelt always supported. Close before his death, Roosevelt asked Sabath to make an effort to found a permanent Commission for Fair Employment Practice. Sabath accomplished that by having Congress approve the bill in June 1945.

Truman and Sabath also collaborated closely, especially after Truman's election in 1948. When later Truman decided not to run again, Sabath decided to support Adlai Stevenson. In the same year, when Sabath was reelected for another two-year term, he died a few days later.

During his entire engagement in Congress, Sabath was a loner, who usually ate alone and, as a rule, avoided social cocktails. During his entire life, he exercised a lot. Later, however, he suffered from arthritis. He smoked several cigars daily and loved the Czech food. He spoke with a heavy foreign accent and when he was under stress, he began mixing Czech words in conversation.

With his death on November 5, 1945, not only Czech Americans, but also other immigrants from foreign countries, lost their great friend and protector.[19]

[19] United States. 83d Cong., 1st sess., 1953. House. *Memorial services held in the House of Representatives of the United States, together with remarks presented in eulogy of Adolph Joachim Sabath, late a Representative from Illinois*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953.

Appendix 1: House Resolution in Favor of Bohemian Independence, 1917

65TH CONGRESS, 1st SESSION. **H. J. RES. 81.**

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MAY 5, 1917.

Mr. SABATH introduced the following joint resolution: which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

JOINT RESOLUTION

For Bohemian independence.

Whereas the Bohemian National Alliance, speaking for five hundred and forty thousand Americans of Bohemian birth and descent, believes that at the close of the war the destiny of the weaker nations should of right be considered in the terms of peace; and because Americans of Bohemian blood, as lovers of freedom, have in great numbers helped conserve American liberty and the Union, while at this time they have voluntarily come to the assistance of our country in larger percentage than other races; and

Whereas the Bohemian struggle for national independence and safeguarding the identity of its language has been going on for centuries, in spite of Austrian terrorism and in spite of the debasing influences of a tyrannous Austrian bureaucracy; and

Whereas the President, in his great plea for America's honor before the Congress of the United States, said:

"But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to

authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

Therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That one of the conditions of peace be that Bohemia be made free and independent and be given a rightful place among the nations of the world, based upon the principle laid down by the President in his plea for an international league, that "All governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed."

SEC. 2. That it is the sense of the Congress of the United States that the Government shall insist, as a part of the treaty of peace, that Bohemia be given its freedom and independence.

Pillars for Peace: Charles J. Vopička and The Konopiště Spy: Two Men who Influenced the Rebirth of Europe

Anna Cooková

”One of the well known names in Czechoslovak America, by almost every child and certainly every adult member of our overseas colony, is the name of Mr. Charles J. Vopička.”[1] “Vopička conducted parleys for the various powers and has notably assisted in the task of building order out of chaos and destruction.”[2] “The Minister is best described as a jolly fellow well-met, a rough diamond, and a worker. He is doing wonders in the way of co-operating with the Commission in its work here and goes after things in a thoroughly American fashion and produces results.”[3] These are only a few of the choice words that described the Czech immigrant, Karel Vopička, who became known as Charles J. Vopička (see figure 1).[4] On the other hand, much less is known about the Konopiště Spy; but thanks to the research of Vopička’s great grandson, Danny Becker,[5] who refers to this “spy” as “Dolní,” we now know more about “Dolní’s” story, how he intertwines with the story of Vopička and how, though just

Figure 1: Charles J. Vopička

[1] *Zlatá Kniha Československého Chicaga 1926,* The Golden Book of Czechoslovak Chicago, published to memorialize the 50-year Jubilee of the first Czech Daily Paper in America „Svornost“ in Chicago, Editor R. Jaromír Pšenka 1926, pp. 236-237, translation by Anna Cooková of www.CzechTalk.com.

[2] E. F. Prantner, *These Help Build America*, (Chicago: The Czechoslovak Review, 1922), p. 49.

[3] Clyde Talley Earnest, Sr., *An Adventure Story, Journal of the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Red Cross Medical Mission to Roumania, July 1917 to January 1918*, MS diary available from the website American Red Cross WWI Mission, 1917, http://1917diary.net/index.htm, p. 38.

[4] Author’s artistic rendering of photo from the World’s Fair Memorial Book, 1933, p. 133.

[5] Danny Becker, *Secrets of the Balkans*, a handmade book (one of eleven), Stearns History Museum, 2012.

childhood friends from the small village of Dolní Hbity in what is today the Central Bohemian Region of the Czech Republic, their stories tell more of the backstory that led to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the beginning of the re-birth of Europe.

Charles J. Vopička

Charles J. Vopička was a Czech immigrant who settled in Chicago in 1881. Though he was born and grew up under Habsburg rule, his parents and professors instilled in him a strong Czech nationalism and a desire for an independent Czechoslovakia. Some highlights of his life up until 1913 are that he had been very active in ethnic and civic organizations, co-founded the real estate and banking firm of Vopicka & Kubin, was President and co-founder of Atlas Brewing Company in Chicago, and even had familial ties with Charles Jonáš of Racine, Wisconsin, who was a U.S. Consul in Prague from 1886 to 1889.

On September 11, 1913, President Woodrow Wilson appointed United States Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia. On his way to his post in Bucharest, he stopped to visit his homeland, family and friends. Vopička recalled his return to his homeland "... [M]y reception in Prague was glorious, and aroused in me most intense emotion. And this feeling was shared by all who welcomed me, for aside from their respect for my official position and the welcome to be accorded the representative of a country known to be the champion of liberty and justice, was the realization that one of their own blood had been sent to them. For, although I had been an American citizen thirty-three years, I was born in Bohemia and these people knew I could understand and sympathize with them."[6]

However, this visit caused a stir in some official quarters, and the American Consul in Prague, Frank Deedmeyer[7], reported via cable to then Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan,[8] in a message that is interesting enough to be quoted at length:

> "Since his [Vopička's] arrival [in Prague] he has been the guest and associate of men known to be Czechic and Panslavist political agitators. He took lodgings, and he still lodges, at a small, inferior, cheap hotel, owned by a conspicuous

[6] Charles J. Vopicka, *Secrets of the Balkans*, 19.

[7] Deedmayer was born in Germany and served as American Consul in Prague from 1913 to 1914, and then as Consul in Chemnitz, Germany in 1914: http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/declouet-degrow.html#677.49.42, http://politicalgraveyard.com/geo/ZZ/GR-consuls.html

[8] William Jennings Bryan described his visit to Bohemia in his book, *The Old World and its Ways* (St. Louis: Thompson Publishing Co., 1907), p. 396: "I visited Bohemia with a view to gathering information on the situation and was surprised to find the hostility between the German and Bohemian elements. A half century ago the German language was spoken everywhere in Bohemia, but to-day the Germans and Bohemians have separate schools and, except where business interest compels it neither learns the language of the other."

socialist Czechic politician, a member of the imperial parliament and one of the leaders in opposition to the national Austro-Hungarian government.[9]

Mr. Vopicka has appeared at a meeting of the National Bohemian Council, an organization politically very active in the movement to czechify Bohemia. This meeting was specially arranged to entertain Mr. Vopicka and to have him address the Council.

A local Panslavist political association was to have Mr. Vopicka as its guest of honor at a meeting or banquet on the 8th instant. This meeting or banquet has been postponed to some day of the present week.

At another public meeting, but non-political, arranged in his honor, the American minister declared publicly that he owed his present official position to his good Czechic friends in the United States and to certain well-known public men of the State of Illinois, all of whom he called by name.

Mr. Vopicka enjoys in Bohemia the reputation of being a leader of the Czechs and Panslavists of the United States; his environment since he arrived here has been Czechic and Panslavistic. He seems to regard his present office (and certainly the Czechic population of Bohemia regards it), as a tribute and compliment to the Czechs and Panslavists of the United States and of Europe.

To appreciate correctly the perturbations caused to the highest Austro-Hungarian functionaries in Bohemia by the course of Mr. Vopicka and by the uses which these political agitators have made of the American plenipotentiary, it is necessary to keep in view two distinct political movements to which the imperial government at Vienna and its representatives in Bohemia give constant and solicitous attention. One is the Czechic movement, in a sense national, which has for its object the total czechification of all Bohemia and also the unification of all the Czechs, whether living in Bohemia, Moravia or Hungary, under one government.

It is the settled policy of the central government and of its representatives here to confine the Czech nationalistic aspirations within well-defined bounds and to maintain an official equilibrium between the two opposing forces in Bohemia, the Czechs and the Germans. It is generally regarded here, and especially in official imperial circles, that Mr. Vopicka's course and more so the uses to which local politicians did put him, have seriously disturbed this nicely poised equilibrium.

The other political movement, international, supported by many Czechs, seeks to bring under one government the Slavic peoples of Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany and the Balkan States. This movement may be designated as the most sensitive spot in the Austro-Hungarian body politic. In the eyes of the local representatives of the imperial government, and in the eyes of this public, Mr. Vopicka's personality, have been cast into the Czechic and Panslavist scales.

Early last week when the character of some of the planned meetings for and receiptions *[sic]* to minister Vopicka came to my notice I sent the vice consul to Mr. Vopicka's private secretary, Mr. Kendrick, with instructions to suggest to the secretary in a tactful manner that upon investigation it might be found that some of

[9] *Horymír* newspaper, number 45, November 8, 1913, in Příbram states that it was Hotel Buchar. A postcard from an antique shop, a copy of which is in my private collection describes Hotel Buchar as a very elegant and upscale hotel. According to the database of abandoned buildings in the Czech Republic – Hotel Buchar is described as being owned from 1904 to 1918 by Max Buchar, who owned the first automobile in Příbram, and notes that the first gas station in Příbram was in front of his hotel.

these meetings and receptions would turn out to be political, circumstances with which the minister could not be acquainted, he not having been in Bohemia for some time. These efforts on my part were without results.

On the 8th instant I went to the imperial palace at Prage *[sic]* to call upon his Serene Highness, Prince Thun-Hohenstein, Vice-Roy in Bohemia, to request permission to act in my official capacity until the arrival of my exequatur. I met there his Serene Highness, as also other high officials of the imperial government in the administration of the Kingdom of Bohemia.

During an interview, lasting more than one hour, I became impressed with the seriousness, it might almost be said with the apprehensions, with which the course and the associations of Mr. Vopicka are viewd *[sic]* in these official circles. I was asked if I knew how long he intended to remain in Austria-Hungary, and it was stated with confidence that the American minister would not attend any Panslavist meetings here. Such meetings, it was explained to me, are often attended by students at the local universities from Russia and from the Balkan States, and that these students were liable to voice at such meetings political sentiments, reproduced afterwards in the foreign press, and this might give rise to most painful situations if a diplomatic representative of another nation were present.

The difficulty of the political situation in Bohemia was emphasized and former armed conflicts recalled between the two nationalities in this kingdom.

It has given offense that the American flag is now displayed daily on the outside of the hotel where Mr. Vopicka is lodging, a place which, as stated above, is owned by a leading socialistic member of the opposition in the national parliament, and which hotel, it is claimed, is the frequent resort and meeting place of those who oppose the policies of the national government and who are, locally, most active in the Czech and Panslavic political movements.

The circumstances that Mr. Vopicka called, soon after his arrival at Prague, upon the municipal officials, who are Czechs, and upon quasi public bodies, such as the Prague Chamber of Commerce, and that after a stay here of over one week he made known his intention to pay an official visit during the present week to his Serene Highness, the Vice-Roy of Bohemia, is animadverted upon as evidence of disrespect to his Majesty's representative, or, as a lack of knowledge of those usuages with which the youngest secretary at a Central American legation is familiar. It was intimated to me that if Mr. Vopicka persevered in his present course in Austria-Hungary, certain foreign newspapers might draw the more particular attention of the American and of the Austro-Hungarian governments to his visit here.

I was not asked by any of these officials to report on Mr. Vopicka's conduct here, to the American Government, but I came away convinced that this matter had come to an issue which called for a prompt report to the Department, if direct representations by the Vienna government to the American Embassy were to be avoided.

I am informed by Mr. Vopicka that he intends to go from Prague to Budapest and from thence to Vienna.

I assume full responsibility for all statements made in my cable dispatch and in this report. Every averment can be verified upon investigation by the American Embassy at Vienna.

> *Mr. Vopicka is just now the idol of the Czech people of Bohemia* (emphasis added).[10] If it should become known that I furnished this information to the Department, my usefulness as consul here would be at an end. Eighty five per centum of the inhabitants of the city of Prague are Czechs.
>
> I met minister Vopicka upon his arrival at the railway station in Prague and since at other places. He called at the Consulate. My relations with him have been most friendly.[11]

Deedmeyer received a telegram in response on November 11, which the Secretary of State Bryan requested him to deliver to Vopička. Vopička cabled that he left for Bucharest that same day.[12]

Though he allegedly got off to a bit of a rocky start regarding whether he was indeed "neutral," as time went on, representatives of various nations requested that he look after their affairs in this tumultuous region, as he was the representative of the leading neutral nation during World War I. At one point or another he represented the interests of the following countries, in no particular order: United States of America, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, France, Britain, Belgium, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Turkey, Italy, Japan, China, Portugal and Israel. Throughout his book, *Secrets of the Balkans, Seven Years of a Diplomatist's Life in the Storm Centre of Europe*, Vopička is careful to point out that all nations indeed saw him as a neutral force, passionate about human life, justice, and education.

Using the motto, "No Monkey Business", certainly a play on his surname *(*meaning *little monkey)*, he became a pillar for peace. An American reporter interviewed Vopička and quoted him: "'I think my neutrality is pretty well established,' he said to the 'Tribune' to-day, 'for of the seven countries I have been representing of late, five are at war with the other two.'"[13] The article then continued:

> With his motto of 'No monkey business,' the Chicagoan has probably been more useful in these times than any other diplomat in the Balkans. His line of conduct has been simple and direct, and in the most distracting times and among the most devious people in the world, simplicity and directness have carried him through. Two principles have guided him, and he voiced them to me in these words: 'They must first look up to your country, and then they must respect you.' The other principle: 'You must be firm and do justice to all, and stand by in every complication and with every nationality. '"We have tried to remember that in this

[10] Vopička continued to gain the trust and admiration of important Czech leaders and the general public. As we will later see, not only did he receive visits from Tomáš Masaryk, but even from the Czechoslovak Legionnaires serving in Russia. They entrusted him with news from the front to forward to their government in exile in Paris. See Charles J. Vopička, *Secrets of the Balkans.*

[11] Declassified State Department personnel file for Vopička, Charles J., correspondence November 10, 1913.

[12] Telegram from Vopička at Prague to Secretary of State November 11, 1913.

[13] As cited in Vopička, *Secrets of the Balkans*, p. 117.

> Legation, and that is why Germans, Russians, Jews, Portuguese, Chinese and Japanese have passed with equal confidence the flag that hangs over our doors.[14]

Among many other activities, Vopička influenced the Balkan nations to all be involved in the San Francisco World's Fair 1915, influenced Romania's involvement in World War I on the side of the allies,[15] advocated for the humane treatment of prisoners, personally went out to the front lines to encourage Russian soldiers to keep fighting, got loans for Romania and had a shipment full of grain rerouted to save her from starvation, he was the Chair of the International Commission for prison inspections, advocated for Romania's involvement in the Paris Peace Conference, and sought economic development and education for all people.

In 1921 Vopička published a book about his time in service to the United States titled *Secrets of the Balkans: Seven Years of a Diplomatist's Life in the Storm Centre of Europe* (see figure 3).[16] Regarding Vopička's assistance to Czech and Slovak people during the course of his time as American Minister, he tried to save the life of Dr. Kramář by paying a personal visit to Count Czernin, the Austro-Hungarian Minister and pleading for mercy, referring to Dr. Kramář as a "friend".[17] Vopička also sent his chauffeur to help General Štefáník escape within about an hour before the Germans arrived.[18] He met with Mr. Tomáš G. Masaryk and invited Masaryk to be his guest at the opera, during which time a French officer came to their box to warn them of a battle that was about to commence, so Vopička used his diplomatic automobile to escort Masaryk safely back to his hotel.[19] Vopička even mentions the Czecho-Slovak Legionnaires, and that "While it was not decided positively where the Czecho-Slovak army…would be sent, it was hoped that they would come to Roumania and Bessarabia…"[20] He noted that:

> Couriers were frequently sent from the Czecho-Slovak troops in Russia who passed through Jassy *[Romania]* on their way to Prague, where they delivered their reports to their government.[21] Naturally, as they had to pass through the Bolshevik lines, they had to be effectively disguised. These men would call on the Legation in Jassy, and at first it was surprising and even somewhat alarming, when

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[14] Ibid., p. 118.

[15] Helena Pakula, *The Last Romantic,* p. 256: "After a secret conference with the American Ambassador, Ferdinand ordered Premier Marghiloman to accept nothing from the enemy … later Washington sent a telegram confirming.… Ferdinand wired immediate thanks to Wilson and Marie expressed her gratitude to Vopička.… Crowds of enthusiastic citizens and military bands stationed themselves in front of the American Legation to serenade the Ambassador and cheer for the United States."

[16] *Secrets of the Balkans* was published in Czech in 1927 and in Romanian in 2012.

[17] Vopička, *Secrets of the Balkans,* p. 84.

[18] Ibid., p. 103.

[19] Ibid., p. 131.

[20] Ibid., p. 263.

[21] The Czech version of *Secrets of the Balkans* includes this sentence "Od československých vojsk v Rusku byli vysíláni často kurýrové, kteří projížděli Jassy na své cestě do Prahy, kde dodávali svoje zprávy Mafii.", 245.

> Lieutenant somebody of the Czecho-Slovak army was announced, to be confronted by a ragged, dirty, unshaved individual personifying Bolshevism to the limit. But he would make a rip somewhere in his clothing and produce a little wad of paper, which, being unrolled, would prove to be credentials issued by the proper authorities, and I soon became accustomed to these unkempt visitors.[22]

The 1933 World's Fair Memorial book wrote of him that "All nations highly commended him for his efforts of sympathetic determination and ceaseless activity in obtaining better food, adequate medical attention and generally more humane treatment of war prisoners."[23] After the war, "he notably assisted in the task of building order out of chaos and destruction…."[24] His efforts to promote peace, human rights and neutrality in these war-torn countries earned him 4 medals: the Romanian Order of the Grand Cross,[25] the Serbian Order of the White Eagle,[26] the Czechoslovak War Medal,[27]and the Czechoslovak Order of the White Lion, the highest honor that Czechoslovakia could give to a non-citizen. As a representative of the United States he was not allowed to receive any gifts for his services while serving in his post, but Romania and Serbia found out that as long as he got special permission from Congress he could, so they insisted that he take the medals, and Vopička sent them to the Secretary of State to await approval. He is pictured wearing all four medals in the 1933 World's Fair book.

Charles and Victoria celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary at the Drake Hotel in 1933. This event was attended by about 650 relatives, friends, and politicians, including the then Mayor of Chicago, Anton Čermák,[28] who sat on Vopička's left hand at the event.[29] Vopička died just two and a half years later, after attending the funeral of the wife of one of his political colleagues. He died in his home at 431 Oakdale Avenue, in Chicago at 11:00 pm on Tuesday, September 3, 1935. His body rested at the funeral hall at 929 W. Belmont till Saturday, September

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[22] Vopička, *Secrets of the Balkans,* p. 263.
[23] *World's Fair Memorial Book,* 1933, p. 133.
[24] Prantner, *These Help Build America,* p. 49.
[25] In Romanian: *Steaua României Mare Cruce*, given by His Royal Highness King Ferdinand I of Romania, the highest civil honor, March, 1919.
[26] Serbian Order of the White Eagle First Class, by His Royal Highness, Prince Regent Alexander of Serbia.
[27] Czechoslovak War Medal, Presented by President Tomáš G. Masaryk, it was issued for acts of military valor during the years of the First World War. The medal was first created on November 7, 1918 and issued to Czechoslovak citizens and also, upon application, to citizens of Germany and Austria who had served in the Czechoslovak armed forces (e.g. Czechoslovak Legions) during the years of the Great War with distinction and bravery. The Czechoslovak War Cross was also, on occasion, issued to veterans of the Allied powers who had played a large role in World War I and were considered contributors to the formation of the Czechoslovak state. It was also awarded to the capital city of Serbia, Belgrade, on October 8, 1925.
[28] Mayor Anton Čermák was assassinated about one month later.
[29] According to some journal pages written by my great-grandmother, this event included a very large, and beautiful ice sculpture.

7, when his remains were taken to the Plzeňský Sokol in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood for viewing and last respects. It is said that many nations gathered to pay their respects to him, and according to *The Chicago Tribune* "Throngs attended burial rites for Chas. J. Vopicka."[30] *(September 8, 1935).* From the Plzeňský Sokol[31] at 1812 S. Ashland Avenue in Chicago, his body was then laid to rest at Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago. His Last Will and Testament gave tribute to his

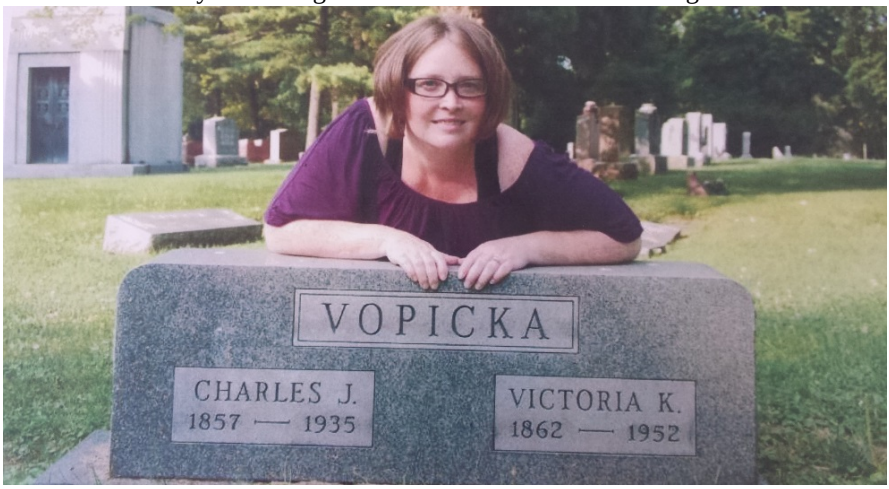

Figure 2: Headstone of Charles Vopička and his wife Victoria

generous spirit and intentions for his legacy. He wished for several thousands of dollars to be given to various Czech-American organizations throughout Chicago. Another wish was that an "old folks'" home be built in his home village of Dolní Hbity, and he included an elaborate plan for investing further monies for the upkeep of the property. He had purchased a plot in the Bohemian National Cemetery at the tip of the teardrop section 23, with the intention that a monument be built. However, his probate file took seven years to settle and in the end, there were no funds left for something so elaborate, and in place of a monument lies a humble headstone (see figure 2).[32]

The Konopiště Spy

This unknown Czech patriot was an unsung hero. Vopička wrote about a "reliable source" from whom he received, via messenger, intimate knowledge from Konopiště palace and Benešov. [33] Vopička claimed that Austria was the aggressor, not Serbia. According to declassified U. S. State department files, he also advised

[30] *The Chicago Tribune*, September 8, 1935.
[31] This very large building still stands today and has the inscription *Plzeňský Sokol* still engraved on the outside of the building above the entrance
[32] Author's personal photo.
[33] Vopička, *Secrets of the Balkans*, p. 46.

the President of the United States to get involved in the war, but also advised that should they choose to declare war on Austria, the U.S. must also declare war on Germany. This raises the question, "How did Vopička have such intimate knowledge of Konopiště palace, being so far away in the Balkans?" [34]

Danny Becker's research concludes that "unknown to anyone at the time, this Bohemian spy was a childhood friend of the U.S. Ambassador Charles J. Vopicka. He had no known contact with any childhood friends living in Bohemia. However, at various times during this story, childhood friends approached Vopicka and a warm sharing took place. Vopicka kept these experiences in private and chose not to document any names, dates or details because such things could have compromised his position as well as the position of the United States."[35]

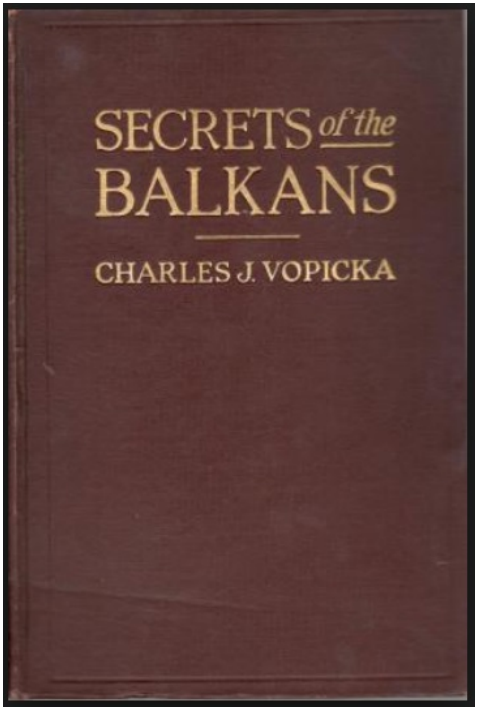

Figure 3: Cover of Charles J. Vopicka's Secrets of the Balkans

Though not an official "spy" at all and merely a worker at Konopiště palace, this informant, along with the other workers at the chateau, was informed of the visit of the German Kaiser. Knowing full well, that this was a time of secret treaties, he wished to know why the German Kaiser was visiting. In Becker's chapter entitled "Proof of Plot between Kaiser Wilhelm and Wife of Archduke Ferdinand," he writes:

"After the death of Archduke Ferdinand, Emperor Karl came to Konopiste and took away all the correspondence he found in the palace. In this he secured proof that Sophie, the wife of Archduke Ferdinand, had plotted with the Kaiser against Serbia, and had discussed plans about the war with Russia. It had been agreed that after the defeat of Serbia, it was to be made an Austrian province, and following the removal of King Peter, that the throne would be given to the eldest son of Ferdinand and Sophie. After the defeat of Russia, Ukrainia was to be made independent, with their

[34] All information about this individual, at this time, comes from Danny Becker's book *Secrets of the Balkans*, 2012, housed at Stearns History Museum in the Old St. Anne's Pass book collection. Due to a brain tumor, Danny has allowed me to share his research on his behalf.

[35] Becker, *Secrets of the Balkans*, p. 4.

second son as king. Kaiser Wilhelm approved of these plans, and the action against Serbia was begun with the intention of carrying out the designs of Archduke Ferdinand and his wife."[36]

Let's go back to 1914. Archduke Franz Ferdinand d'Este is heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne. He is married to Žofie (Sophie) Chotková. A bit of background about Žofie Chotková: her father Bohuslav Chotek had served as Austrian Ambassador in Stuttgart, Germany, in St. Petersburg, Russia, and in Brussels, Belgium. She was familiar with high society and when Archduke Franz Ferdinand fell in love with her, he married her even though their marriage was only destined to be a morganatic marriage and their children would never be heirs to the throne. Imagine the embarrassment to Žofie of not being allowed to stand near her husband, being barred from the imperial box at the theatre, or not being allowed to ride with her husband in a court carriage.[37] By 1914, their children were ten, twelve, and thirteen.

The Konopiště Spy, through a series of events, circumstances, common sense, and a desire to have an ally in Serbia for an independent Czech and Slovak state was able to pay a visit to the Head of Serbian Intelligence, Dragutin Dimitrijević, just weeks before the Archduke and his wife were to visit Sarajevo.[38]

The last meeting Archduke Franz Ferdinand had with Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany took place on June 13, 1914. "Archduke Franz Ferdinand and Kaiser Wilhelm II conferred on how best to bring Roumania closer to the Triple Alliance."[39] King Carol I of Romania was bound by secret treaty to side with Austria-Hungary if attacked, but Romania tried to remain neutral and claimed that Austria was the aggressor, not Serbia. His wife Queen Elizabeth was a staunch supporter of Germany.[40] On the other hand, the heir-apparent to the throne and later King, Ferdinand, though of German origin, claimed that being a leader of Romania made him Romanian and that he had to decide with his people. His wife, Queen Marie, the last Queen of Romania was English, and in the end Romania sided with the Allies.

June 28, 1914 was the day Sophie Chotková and Archduke Franz Ferdinand were shot and killed by a member of the Black Hand Group while visiting Sarajevo, but the Black Hand Group was not the only party involved. They were found to have links with the Head of Serbian Intelligence, Dragutin Dimitrijevic, causing the Austrians to consider the assassination a Serbian government sanctioned action.

Vopička's great-grandson, Danny Becker, took it upon himself to find out more about Vopicka's "reliable source," and by comparing a list of names of residents of Dolní Hbity to an old list of workers found at Konopiště Palace, he identified a name that was the same on both lists, and through further genealogical research

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[36] Ibid., pp. 46-47.

[37] "Sophie – The Other Victim of the Assassination," *History of Royal Women*, https://www.historyofroyalwomen.com/sophie-duchess-of-hohenberg/sophie-victim-assassination/.

[38] Becker, *Secrets of the Balkans*, p. 5.

[39] Pakula, *The Last Romantic*, p. 172.

[40] Becker, *Secrets of the Balkans*, p. 3.

found a descendant living in Serbia.[41] On November 10, 2012, he was able to meet with the great-grandson of this "Konopiště Spy" in Gjilan, Kosovo. Kosovo would have been the furthest away from Austria-Hungary, and at that time, as a result of victories in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, it was annexed to Serbia. This descendant confirmed that "my great grandparents left Bohemia and ran into Serbia to avoid capture and trial … grandfather married a Serbian woman … mother married an ethnic Albanian man." Humbly the great grandson of the Konopiště Spy says "I only agreed to meet with you because I wanted to confirm the stories about my great grandfather … people have lost their home, families have been split by war and many have died…. I have not done anything to help them … I do not need to be recognized."[42]

Regardless of whether they received appropriate recognition then or now, these two men were Pillars for Peace in their time. Charles J. Vopička, an American with Czech roots and the "Konopiště Spy," both from the small village of Dolní Hbity, Bohemia, played their unique parts in the re-birth of Europe.

[41] Ibid., p. 46-47.
[42] Ibid., p. 47.

The World of Two Legations: Establishing Czechoslovak-U.S. Diplomatic Relations and the Role of Institutional Experience

Milada Polišenská

After the First World War, the United States established diplomatic relations with the successor states of Austria-Hungary, which was the beginning of a new era diplomatic relations between the United States and Central Europe. The goal of this article is to concentrate on less researched and even unexplored aspects of beginnings of Czechoslovak-American diplomatic relations, and to contribute to the knowledge of the diplomatic ties between both countries on the occasion of the 100 year anniversary of establishment of Czechoslovakia. [1]

Czechoslovak Legation in Washington

When Masaryk arrived on the American continent—under the code name Professor Marsden—from Siberia via Japan on the steamer Empress of Asia, the first Czech who welcomed him on April 29, 1918 in Vancouver was Charles (Karel) Pergler. Pergler was born in 1882 in Bohemia, and in 1890 the Pergler family immigrated to the United States. Charles Pergler graduated in law, and from 1908 to 1917 he was a lawyer in Iowa, published articles in the Czech press in America and instructive legal brochures for Czech immigrants.[2] During World War I, he became the driving spirit in the U.S. of the movement for independence for the Czech nation.[3] Pergler was a skilled and energetic man, "perhaps the strongest political talent among American Czechs."[4] Masaryk was well informed about Pergler's activities and sent him his first telegram already from Tokyo.[5]

From the beginning, Pergler provided Masaryk important support and became one of his closest collaborators among Czech Americans. He became Masaryk's secretary in the U.S. and Masaryk lived in his house when he was in Washington

[1] Unless otherwise quoted, this article is based on the research and conclusions in: Milada Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA 1918-1968*. Volume 1, 1918-1938, *Ministerstva, legace a diplomaté.* (Praha: Libri, 2012), and Volume 2, *Priority, diplomatická praxe a politický kontext,* (Praha: Libri, 2014).

[2] After the death of the father, the family returned back to Bohemia, but in 1903 Karel Pergler returned to the United States. Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, p. 49.

[3] Pergler established the Slav Press Bureau, which later became an information department of the legation, was a succesful and determined lobbyist in the U.S. Senate, spoke in the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, was a very active public speaker, addressed Congresses in the states such as Texas, Nebraska, Iowa and others where there were large Czech communities, lectured at various universities about the oppression of the Czech nation and about its right for self-determination. He always also published his speeches and distributed them broadly. He was a signatory of the Pittsburgh Agreement. Ibid., p. 49.

[4] Jiří Kovtun, *Masarykův triumf,* (Praha: 1991), p. 88.

[5] His telegram arrived in Washington on April 17, 1918, but Pergler never received it. Later L. Harrison from the State Department inquired with the Office of the Chief Cable Censor, Department of Navy, about this cable, but without a result. Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy*, p. 49.

(see figure 1). Pergler's house was the first seat of the Czechoslovak National Council in the United States, which was chaired by Thomas Masaryk, and of which Charles Pergler became vice chairman. [6]

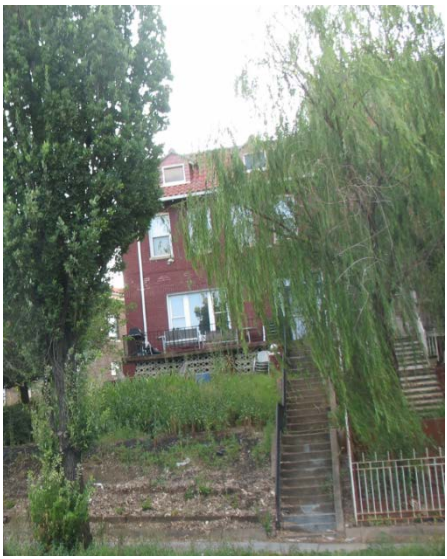

Figure 1: 3520 16th St., NW. House of Charles Pergler (author's photo)

We do not have enough space here to mention all the work Pergler did with Masaryk and for Masaryk. Briefly, Pergler was *in medias res*, he was involved very actively in all key activities, he was close to important persons and events, and he certainly was aware that they would enter into history. With his abilities and achievements, Pergler had the ambition to play a crucial role in mutual relations after Czechoslovakia's recognition. He even speculated about whether he should agree to be a Czechoslovak Minister in Washington or an American Minister in Prague.

The appointment of the first Czechoslovak Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary[7] to the United States did not happen smoothly, as we might have expected. On October 14, 1918 the Provisional Czechoslovak Government notified the Allied Powers of the accreditation of several chargés d'affaires to them.[8] Among them Charles Pergler was named as chargé d'affaires at the Czechoslovak legation in Washington, D.C.[9] The U.S. response that it was "a slight misunderstanding" meant a negative reaction.[10] The reason was that as a U. S. citizen, Pergler was not eligible for the Czechoslovak diplomatic position in Washington, and for the U.S. position in Prague he was not eligible as a Czech by birth. As a lawyer, Pergler should have

[6] The Branch of the Czechoslovak National Council in the United States was established in the spring of 1918.

[7] Diplomatic relations were established at the level of Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary, the seat was called a legation. The envoy was usually called Minister for short. Czechoslovak-U.S. relations were elevated to the ambassadorial level in 1943.

[8] There were chargés d'affaires accredited to the Allied powers already after the recognition of the provisional government, even if only the Act of October 28, 1918 on the establishment of independent Czechoslovakia gave birth *de iure* to the Czechoslovak Republic and thus also to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the new state and other states.

[9] Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, 52.

[10] Kubů, Eduard and Peter Holásek. *Příručka o navázání diplomatických styků a diplomatické zastoupení Československa a cizích zemí v Československu 1918-1985,* (Praha: FMZV, 1987), 166.

been aware of these priciples, and certainly also Beneš should have known that. Therefore, from December 13, 1918 to April 19, 1919, Pergler had the position of a Commissar of the Czechoslovak National Council in the United States, even if at that time Czechoslovakia was already recognized as an independent state, and then, almost till the end of 1919, he was a Commisar of the Czechoslovak Republic. It was not a diplomatic position in the exact meaning of the word, but there was no other official representative of Czechoslovakia in the United States, and the competences of Pergler were very large. Pergler was, however, not satisfied with this as he expected a higher level of recognition from Czechoslovakia.

Figure 2: 1734 N St., NW, First seat of the Czechoslovak Legation in Washington in 1920-1921

Pergler felt frustrated and believed he was marginalized. He hoped at least to be appointed to the Czechoslovak delegation to Paris Peace Conference, but this did not happen either. Finally, on his own initiative, he went in August 1919 to Paris and offered Edvard Beneš his help. Beneš rejected including Pergler in his team in Paris,[11] and sent him to Prague to prepare for a diplomatic assignment to Japan. In Tokyo, Pergler had soon to face an ugly revolt of the legation staff. Beneš recalled Pergler to Prague and insisted on his resignation from the ministry, which finally Pergler did, leaving afterwards for the United States. He became a very outspoken and irreconcilable critic of Edvard Beneš.[12]

The surviving documentation of the "commissariat" consists of just twenty-seven telegrams from Pergler and a few additional telegrams from military representatives

[11] Beneš later said privately that if he had accepted Pergler's involvement, his (Beneš') position of a leader of the delegation would be lost. Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, p. 250.

[12] Pergler tried a political career in Czechoslovakia and from the late 1920's associated with Jiří Stříbrný and Radola Gajda. He lost his position as a deputy in the National Assembly, was tried and finally moved permanently to the United States. In his professional life he later made an excellent career as Dean of the School of Economics and Government at National University in Washington and as a distinguished lawyer. For details see: Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, pp. 386-404.

Zdeněk Fierlinger and Vladimír Hurban.[13] The provisional beginnings of the legation were obvious. Communication—even by telegraph—was slow and postal communication did not work. Standard formats and procedures did not exist. As a commissar of Czechoslovak National Council, Pergler even did not have a letterhead, but as a Commisar of the Czechoslovak Republic he used it.

The office of the commissar served primarily as an important connecting node of correspondence between various Czech-American communities, organizations and independence activists, and Prague. Pergler thus de facto forwarded and

Figure 3: Charles Pergler, T. G. Masaryk, and Vladimír Hurban (in uniform), November 23, 1918

transmitted messages, mainly from or about Thomas Masaryk and Edvard Beneš. The very first document is a Hughesgram[14] from March 11, 1919 from the Uhro-Russian Commission to George Sepelyuk in Pennsylvania, informing about an excellent meeting with President Masaryk and asking for money. Pergler delivered information to Beneš who was at the Paris Peace Conference, to the Foreign Ministry in Prague and to other emerging Czechoslovak institutions. The first protocolar communication of a "real diplomat" Pergler performed was when he officially thanked the Department of State for condolences after the death of M. R. Štefánik. There was also a telegram from November 1919 on corruption and arrests around the Ministry of Finances and Živnobanka bank in Prague. Gradually, the communication between Pergler and Prague improved, the distribution of information became more systematic and also the connection became faster. The majority of the telegrams from this early period was related to the repatriation of

[13] All the documents are in the Archive of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Political Reports, Washington, D.C. The documents on the Pergler Case are in Pergler Personal Files.
[14] Hughesogram was a telegraphic method used particularly in the 1920's. It was named after a transmitting apparatus constructed by Hughes.

legionaires. Repatriation of Czechoslovak troops from Siberia was a priority of T. G. Masaryk and a key agenda item for the Office of the Commissar and of the Legation. From the end of August 1918, prior to recognition of the Czechoslovak Provisional Government, Zdeněk Fierlinger was considered a military attaché in Washington and was in charge of this agenda, and after him his successor Vladimír Hurban (see figures 3 and 4).

In the difficult post war period, it was possible for Czechs or Slovaks to connect with family members living in the United States only via the Foreign Ministry, and Pergler transmitted many incoming dispatches—mostly requests for financial help in need.

In contrast to the rocky road U.S. representation in Czechoslovakia followed, the beginnings of consular representation of Czechoslovakia in the United States were smooth. There was the advantage of having an experienced former Austro-Hungarian consular officer, František Kopecký, who did not return with the other consular officers to Vienna and joined the resistance abroad. He cooperated with Charles Pergler and Emanuel Voska, accompanied M. R. Štefánik and was one of the signatories of the Pittsburgh agreement.[15]

In the first months of the existence of Czechoslovakia, the State Department received a number of inquiries from various companies, banks and individuals asking what was Czechoslovakia, whether it was recognized by the United States, whether the Czechoslovaks were friends or ennemies, what agreements and treaties were in force, whether to use the name Prague or Praha, and so on. There were also requests for the text of the declaration of Czechoslovak independence. There was a logical and important question behind these requests: why did the dates of the establishment of Czechoslovakia, of its recognition, and of the establishment of diplomatic relations differ?

The United States began to use April 23, 1919 as the date of establishment of diplomatic relations, for that was when Richard Crane was appointed by the U. S. Congress an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. In 1923, the Solicitor of Department of State, in a thorough analysis of this issue came to the conclusion that the United States should consider as the date of Czechoslovakia's recognition November 14, 1918,[16] when Pergler was accredited as a political and diplomatic representative of the Czechoslovak National Council, since on the next day Czechoslovakia was granted a loan of five million dollars with the approval of

[15] Emanuel Voska (1875-1960), emigrated from Bohemia to the United States, became an energetic activist for Czechoslovak independence and supporter of T. G. Masaryk, an intelligence officer in U. S. services during the First and Second World Wars, and after the communist takeover in Czechoslovakia was arrested in 1950 and subjected to a show trial in 1954, sentenced to ten years in prison, and conditionally released, already seriously ill, shortly before his death in 1960.

[16] According to the Office of the Historian, on November 12, 1918, Assistant Secretary of State William Phillips announced that the United States recognized Charles Pergler as the Czecho-Slovak National Council's Commissioner in Washington. (https://history.state.gov/countries/czechoslovakia). Pergler handed over his credentials on December 13, 1918.

the Department of State. According to the Solicitor, it would not have been possible to justify a recognition of Czechoslovakia at a later date, such as April 23, 1919.

The Department of State provided significant help in many respects to the Czechoslovak National Council from the beginning. It was for example allowing the telegraphic communication between Thomas Masaryk and the Czechoslovak legions in Siberia, as well as with Pergler and Beneš. Only telegrams in English language *in claris* were allowed. The telegrams from the legions to Masaryk were sent via the American Consul in Vladivostok, J. K. Caldwell.

Various initiatives went even further. For example, Congressman Sabath (see the contribution by Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr. in this volume) proposed to President Wilson that Thomas Masaryk be provided an American battleship for his trip to Europe. Lansing replied that this would be not wise as the same would have to be given to the Poles and to the Yugoslavs. Lansing's main argument however was that until Masaryk had arrived in his homeland and been inaugurated as a President, he would not be a real President.[17]

Jan Masaryk (1886-1948) was the son of the Czechoslovak President, his mother was an American, and he had strong bonds to the United States and spoke brilliant English. His appointment reflected the great importance which the United States had for the young Czechoslovakia. He was not appointed a Minister and served for just less than a year, until October 1920, as a chargé d'affaires. Masaryk's appointment to Washington was provisional indeed, but from the point of view of mutual Czechoslovak-American relations this was the best solution at that time. The answer to why it was so provisional is usually that the post in London was awaiting him,[18] and that he wanted to be closer to his home and parents. It could also be possible that his father did not consider him experienced and educated enough to be able to build up a legation from the nucleus established by Pergler. Therefore Karel Halla, one of the very few officers of the former Austro-Hungarian Foreign Service who joined the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry, was sent with Masaryk to Washington. It could also be possible that Jan Masaryk just had to fill in the time until the arrival of the designated Minister, Bedřich Štěpánek, as the situation after Pergler's departure was unbearable. Masaryk finally decided not to wait for Štěpánek, he handed over the legation to Halla and left for Prague. On November 10, 1920 the legation received a telegram saying that Jan Masaryk was assigned to the legation in London and that he would not be coming back to Washington, D.C.

The legation staff under Jan Masaryk was large, but, typically for the unsettled post-war period, it differed from a standard diplomatic and consular office. Only Masaryk, Counsellor Halla and an attaché had diplomatic ranks. There was a Press Office, originally the Slav Press Bureau, established during the First World War I by Pergler, staffed by Czech/Slovak Americans.

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[17] Thomas Masaryk left the United States on November 2 1918 by the ship Carmania and reached Prague on 21 December.

[18] Jan Masaryk was not the first Czechoslovak Envoy to Great Britain. That honor fell to Štefan Osuský, later an Envoy in Paris, and after him Vojtěch Mastný, who was sent to Rome in 1925, when Jan Masaryk assumed the position in London. Originally, Charles Pergler negotiated to be an Envoy to London instead of Tokyo.

Figure 4: Jan Masaryk with Zdeněk Fierlinger, 1920s

The oldest section of the legation was the office of the military attaché, which developed out of the earlier appointment of Zdeněk Fierlinger and Vladimír Hurban to arrange the repatriation of Czechoslovak troops from Vladivostok (see figures 3 and 4). Vladimír Hurban was appointed Military Attaché sometime in the end of October-beginning of November 1919, when he replaced Zdeněk Fierlinger. He urged that the Minister—Jan Masaryk—be sent to Washington as soon as possible, as "every day is for us an irreplaceable loss."[19] Provisional beginnings were noticeable in this office as well. There were no salary contracts, and Hurban covered

[19] Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA,* volume 1, p. 255.

all the expenses from an advance of $10,000 dollars allocated until September 1920. Sometimes Hurban sent telegrams to Prague which were not factually based and were confused, as for example, that the U.S. government did not recognize the full powers of Jan Masaryk to sign obligations, which was not true. Due to Hurban's interventions, serious tensions broke out among the officers in Vladivostok, there were allegations that Hurban was using cocaine and that his behavior was sometimes extremely irritated and irrational. Masaryk finally sent him for medical treatment away from Washington.[20]

The job specifications were sometimes vague, and the officials had no experience of work in a legation. The agenda grew every day and the amount of paperwork grew with it. Mailed correspondence still almost did not exist at that time and all the communication with Prague was telegraphic.

A key item on the agenda continued to be the repatriation of legionaires from Vladivostok, and under Jan Masaryk and military attaché Vladimír Hurban this task was approaching its conclusion.[21] In this limited space we cannot describe the complexity of issues communicated between American officials in Siberia, Czechoslovaks in Siberia, the American government and the Czechoslovak legation in Washington, D.C. The United States played a crucial role as a provider of the ships, communication, supplies, material equipment and all other support for the Legions.[22] The presence of American troops in Siberia was a stabilizing factor and their premature withdrawal was seen as pacing in jeopardy the successful evacuation of the Czechoslovaks. The Americans emphasized to the legation their solemn oath promising a full evacuation of the Czechoslovaks from Siberia.

Another issue for the legation was the purchase of American cotton. Jan Masaryk was very engaged in this and it was his "diplomatic initiation," his first negotiation in his diplomatic position. He informed the Czechoslovak authorities about the willingness of American side to provide a loan for the purchase of cotton, this transaction was supported by various American institutions, such as the War Finance Corporation.

The Legation also had to deal with the Ukrainian remittances. The remittances consisted of money earned in the United States by immigrants from Subcarpathian Rus, which was now part of Czechoslovaia, and which were to be sent in a smooth, rapid, and secure way to the immigrants' relatives. Sending remittences was not based on a proper legal foundation, though, and it later caused a very unpleasant clash with the Department of State. The the affair ended with a removal of *exequatur* from the Consul General in New York, František Kopecký.

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[20] Ibid., p. 260.

[21] Hurban had an adjutant, Major Jiří Sedmík, who was sent from Washington to Vladivostok to monitor and supervise the repatriation. During the Second World War II, Major Sedmík joined the anti-Nazi resistance in the Protectorate and was executed on December 18, 1942 by the Nazis.

[22] Thomas Masaryk already discussed the loan from the United States needed for the transfer of the troops from Siberia. The loan was approved by the U.S. Congress and Government. The necessity to guarantee such a loan by a sufficient credibility of the debtor was one of motivations of the recognition of Czechoslovak National Council.

The legation maintained very intensive contacts with the American Czech communities, keeping in mind their contribution to the independence of Czechoslovakia and working toward keeping their interest and support for the newly-indpendent state.[23] The promotion of and publicity about Czechoslovakia, and efforts to counter the influence of Hungarian revisionism among the Slovaks in America and gain their favor for Czechoslovakia, was a priority item for the legation. Hurban in particular put a lot of effort into anti Hungarian propaganda in the United States and also made trouble for Andrej Hlinka and several other Slovaks who applied for a passport to the United States.

Figure 5: Bedřich Štěpánek

[23] This interest was enourmous, though. For example, at the legendary all-Sokol rally in 1920, almost half a thousand Sokols from the United States took part.

Bedřich Štěpánek became the first Czechoslovak Envoy to the United States. He was a former Austro-Hungarian consular officer. He had an excellent education, was an energetic and skilled man, and during the First World War joined the Czechoslovak resistance known as the "Maffia." After the war, he was responsible for the Foreign Ministry in Prague as a deputy of Edvard Beneš, who was at the Paris Peace Conference. From October 1919 he was chosen for Washington,[24] but as he was indispendable for the Foreign Ministry in Prague at the beginning of the Czechoslovak Foreign Service, his appointment to Washington came only on September 22, 1920. This is why, in my opinion, Jan Masaryk was sent first to this important post. Štěpánek arrived in Washington on January 5, 1921 (see figure 5).

Štěpánek started to work from the first day with full energy, he had one meeting after another, including difficult agenda items with Shipping Board and World War Foreign Debt Commission, he sent a number of despatches to Prague every day, and again there were remittances, desequestration,[25] visits and cooperation with the Czech and Slovak Americans, and monitoring of Hungarian activities in the Slovak American environment. Štěpánek established a standard system of paperwork, started regular staff meetings which he chaired well and effectively, and where the atmosphere was, according to the minutes, collegial and the work enthusiastic. It was still obvious that they started from almost nothing and there was particularly a lack of office space and the building was in bad shape.

The Minister found the legation well-staffed, even overstaffed, as there was the Press Bureau and so called expert attachés. [26] In addition to the standard posts of military, cultural and economic attaché, Czechoslovakia established a social attaché, an agricultural attaché and a technological attaché. [27]

All these attachés—Alois Štangler, Oldřich Heidrich, Rudolf Kuráž, Stanislav Špaček—who then served in Washington, later always belonged to the main pillars of the Czechoslovak-American diplomatic relationship. A modest official, Otto Dvouletý, kept the administrative management of the legation well for many years

[24] Prior to that, Beneš had considered sending Štěpánek to Paris or to Warsaw.

[25] One very difficult and significant item on the agenda was the so called desequestrations, which dealt with the release of property confiscated in the United States from former citizens of Austria-Hungary who now became citizens of Czechoslovakia. There were always several officers in charge of it.

[26] The Press Bureau was transferred by Štěpánek's successor Chvalkovský (see below) to the Consulate General in New York. He wanted also to abolish the expert attachés as non-standard diplomatic positions, but did not succeed.

[27] The first Czechoslovak economic attaché was Dr. Alois Z. Štangler, who enjoyed high respect for his knowledge and skills and was later transferred to the Foreign Ministry. Cultural attaché Dr. Oldřich Heidrich was a very enthusiastic propagator of Czech culture and deserves credit for securing stipends and scholarships for the first groups of students from Czechoslovakia to attend U. S. universities. The social attaché was Dr. Antonín Sum. The social attaché collaborated intensively with the American Czech communities, initiated fundrising activities, organized many events with the YMCA, YWCA, and the Red Cross, lectured at universities etc. The agricultural attaché was Dr. Rudolf Kuráž, also a very able expert who later transferred to the Foreign Ministry, and the same applies to the technological attaché Ing. Stanislav Špaček, who was trained as an engineer.

afterwards. From the older times, there remained only Milan Getting, who was transferred along with his Press Bureau to the Consulate.

Štěpánek however soon clashed with some of the staff members and this group grew increasingly hostile towards him. The spark that ignited the conflict was that Štěpánek, being convinced about the correctness of his decision, decreased the salaries, including his own salary, arguing, that they did not correspond to the current price level in Washington any more. The affair quickly became open and its documentation fills many boxes on the shelves of the Archives of the Foreign Ministry in Prague.

Gossip and denunciatory letters against Štěpánek appeared. Despite a promising start, overwhelmed by a responsible work which was sabotaged by some staff members, Štěpánek—challenged in his every decision, word, and step—was not able to manage the situation. The climax came when the disaffected employees began to request, behind Štěpánek's back, one after another one, to be recalled to Prague.[28]

Štěpánek left in May, 1922 for Prague, unexpectedly and without properly handing over the Legation, to achieve a rectification of the situation and his rehabilitation, and was determined to return to his position. Instead, he was subject to a very long investigation, which brought him close to a complete nervous collapse and finally, on February 13, 1923, he resigned from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There are many question marks connected with Štěpánek's case. Štěpánek afterwards left for the United States and established himself as lawyer in California, but, unlike Pergler, he slammed the door behind him and never expressed himself about anything related to Czechoslovakia or Beneš.

The legation in Washington, which had been considered a priority, was paralyzed by a mass exodus of its staff and by a scandal which certainly did not remain unnoticed by the diplomatic community. For one year it was left without a chief of mission. On top of this it should be added that Štěpánek was the first Minister after a provisional period of two years of commissars and chargés d'affaires. This was certainly not the best situation for the Czechoslovak reputation, and contrasted sharply with the appreciation of the U. S. contribution to establishing an independent Czechoslovakia.

František Chvalkovský was appointed the new Czechoslovak Minister in Washington, transferring directly from Tokyo with the chief task of stabilizing the legation. Chvalkovský presented his credentials on June 15, 1923.[29] The Legation was then reorganized and the work became systematic. I would say, that only now

[28] There were no expert attachés in this discontented group.

[29] Chvalkovský had the same task in Tokyo after Pergler was recalled to Prague and was forced to resign from the Foreign Service based on the intrigues of the legation staff. František Chvalkovský had a very successful diplomatic career until the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia. After Japan and Washington, his positions included an appointment as Envoy in Germany and in Rome. After the Munich *Diktat*, he became Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Second Republic and under the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia he was an envoy of the Protectorate in Germany. He was killed during a bombing raid in Germany in February 1945.

were the "childhood diseases" of the Czechoslovak Legation in Washington, D.C. overcome.

U. S. Legation in Prague

Richard Teller Crane (1882-1938) is probably the best known American Minister in Prague in the interwar period. On February 5, 1919 U.S. Secretary of State Lansing telegraphed from Paris to the Acting Secretary of State Frank L. Polk that it was the highest time to appoint American diplomatic representatives in Prague and in Warsaw because the other Allied powers had their qualified representatives there already, while Prague had expected the United States be the first. Polk was instructed to take necessary steps immediately.[30] The first idea was to send to Prague at least an agent to the Czechoslovak Government, a position for which Hugh Gibson was considered, but on reflection it was decided to appoint a Minister to Prague. [31]

Richard Crane had been serving since August 2, 1915 as personal secretary to Robert Lansing, but he resigned from this post on April 22, 1919. This cleared the way for Crane's appointment on the next day, April 23, as the first American Minister to Prague. Since this was a recess appointment while the Senate was adjourned, his appointment was confirmed on June 26, 1919 when he was already in Prague and his credentials had already been presented. When he received his instructions for his new position, Secretary Polk emphasized that he hoped that the bonds already connecting the United States and Czechoslovakia would be strenghtened even more now.[32]

Figure 6: Richard Teller Crane II, U. S. Minister in Prague 1919-1921

Crane had to travel to Prague via Paris, because he had to have with thim all documents for signature and for sealing by the top American representatives, and in Paris he also had to be briefed by Robert Lansing on his future competencies and tasks. He experienced the environment of the Paris Peace

[30] Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, pp. 138-140.
[31] Hugh Gibson became the first American Minister in Warsaw.
[32] Georgetown University Library Special Collections, Richard T. Crane Papers, Box 6, Folder 14, also Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, p. 139.

Conference, meeting important personalities (including his father Charles Crane, who was there at that time). Richard Crane received an avalanche of congratulations on his new position, including best wishes from Charles Pergler.

When Crane arrived in Prague on May 29, 1919, the formal process of his appointment and relocation was very fast. The welcome ceremony reflected the aureole of the "Crane-Masaryk Connection:" the luncheon was attended by President Masaryk, Jan Masaryk, Alice Masaryková and noted personalities of the independence struggle, including the British scholar Robert W. Seton-Watson.

After his arrival in Prague, the American Minister was at first accomodated in the Archbishop's Palace, but the sources do not tell us how long he lived there. It is also not easy to find out where the legation was located in the first phase of its existence. Crane most likely had his office "home" in the Archbishop's Palace where he also received visitors and legation staff. On June 11, 1919, he presented his credentials to President Masaryk.

At the time of Crane's arrival, the American Relief Administration Mission (ARA) had already been active in Czechoslovakia since February 16, 1919. The General Director of Relief in Europe was Herbert Hoover, and the head of the mission in Czechoslovakia was Lincoln Hutchinson. This mission was very popular in Czechoslovakia under the slogan "America—our nourisher." The mission was not institutionally associated with the Legation, even though in the beginning, before the legation was set up, it carried out some of the activities of a diplomatic mission, particularly in the economic area, and in reporting and intelligence. The seat of the mission was in the American consulate building.[33] The ARA mission appreciated the attitude of the Czechoslovak Government, which was as welcoming as possible and which tried to facilitate and make pleasant the stay of ARA in Czechoslovakia. The ARA terminated its work in Czechoslovakia in August 1919. Before that, Herbert Hoover arrived in Prague for a short visit and Minister Crane was very dissapointed that he was not informed in advance about his visit, because Hoover found him in bed sick.[34]

Richard Crane wrote daily notes[35] thanks to which we can follow his activities, work, social and family life, leisure time and more. It is a source of very valuable documentary information. Considering some of the most typical or important moments of Crane's life and work in Prague provides an interesting glimpse into the life of such a prominent person, and into the diplomatic circles in Prague shortly after Czechoslovak independence.

Crane's reporting was mainly on the domestic Czechoslovak political scene, parliament, governmental crisis, elections, nationalities and minorities, and economic recovery, while the topic of communism and bolshevism provided a red thread running through the reports. Crane visited Thomas Masaryk, to whom he

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[33] The U.S. Consulate had begun operating in Prague already in May 1919.

[34] Herbert Hoover visited Czechoslovakia one more time, in early March 1938, when he examined the critical situation in Central Europe. Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA,* volume 2, pp. 569-575.

[35] Georgetown University Library Special Collections, Richard T. Crane Papers, Prague Series 1919-1922.

always was given preferred access over other visitors, and he discussed with Masaryk such issues as the situation in Russia, Poland, about the German question, and about the domestic situation in Czechoslovakia. He had many discussions, particularly with Eugene C. Shoecraft,[36] but also with other officers of the legation, on loans for Czechoslovakia and on repatriation of legionaries, he talked to Edvard Beneš about the situation in Silesia and the Teschen area, Hungary, the Sudeten area and Slovakia, and Beneš lectured him in detail about these topics and supplied him with lengthy background informative materials in the hope that Crane would use them in his reports. Crane noticed very clearly the discrepancy between Beneš's international reputation and success, and his lack of popularity and support in his home country. Beneš's dependency upon Masaryk was very clear to Crane.

Crane was upset with the legation staff who had not ensured that anyone would be waiting for him at the train station, which caused him to miss the New Year reception of President Masaryk. Nevertheless, he was able to observe a military parade from the window of Prague castle, by the side of Czechoslovak President. Crane had very frequent contacts and conversations with officers of the ARA. He was also very interested in the aristocracy, whose faded glory and splendor, social and political fall, and uneasy coping with a new situation against the backdrop of the formation of a new post war Central Europe provided many incentives for observation and comments.[37] Crane loved driving his luxury Cadillac, usually in the company of Major Cosway, and he made a note about his car almost every day; he went often on trips by car in the countryside around Prague and made notes about various excursions he made with his daughter Bruce and his wife Ellen. Bruce was six years old when she came with her parents to Prague, Crane was 37 and his wife was at that time 47 years old. At the same time when Richard Crane was Minister to Prague, his brother John Oliver Crane was also in the city and worked as "English" secretary to President Masaryk. Richard Crane did not mention him in his diaries.[38]

Crane and his wife Ellen had a very active social life, which included balls, tea afternoons, and receptions at other legations in Prague, social events with politicians and with aristocrats. Ellen had her own program as a first lady of the Legation.[39]

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[36] Shoecraft had served as a secretary in the U.S. Embassy in London during the war, and then been transferred to Prague on August 13, 1919. He served in Vienna in 1920, Paris in 1921, and from 1922 in Budapest. *Register of the Department of State*, January 1, 1924 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1924), p. 187.

[37] Crane specifically mentioned Colloredo-Mansfeld, Hohenlohe, Schönborn, Lobkowicz, and Sternberk. Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, Volume 1, pp. 141-161.

[38] Charles Crane had, besides these two sons, also two daughters: Frances Crane Leatherbee, who in 1924 married Jan Masaryk (they divorced in 1931), and Josephine Bradley Crane, who was the model for Alphonse Mucha as Slavia for the first Czechoslovak one hundred crown note.

[39] Jan Masaryk was single when he served in Washington, Bedřich Štěpánek was single as well, he lived with his sister and their coexistence was gossiped about by some staff members of the Legation. The first married Minister in the U. S. was František Chvalkovský.

Crane had many working and courtesy meetings with politicians, journalists, and officials at the state, regional and district level, for example delegations in connection with plebiscite in Spiš and Orava. The addressbook of the legation contained names of many leading personalities of politics, literature (Antonín Sova, Alois Jirásek, Josef Svatopluk Machar), science (Josef Pekař, Vlastimil Kybal, Lubor Niederle), art (Ladislav Šaloun, Jožka Úprka) and many others who were on the invitation list. Crane maintained contacts and corresponded with a number of associations.

Crane often met members of American Relief Administration Mission (ARA) and other Americans in Prague or travelling through the country, first of all diplomats visiting Central Europe for various purposes. There was a certain "competition" in the popularity of the afternoon tea parties and Minister Crane always carefully recorded what success the tea party of his wife Ellen had. These tea parties were usually visited by the Americans living in Prague, General Pellé was also a frequent guest, as well as wife of the Prime Minister Vlastimil Tusar. Sometimes Edvard Beneš came, alone or with his wife Hana, but Crane himself used to prefer to go for afternoon tea to President Masaryk, who sometimes walked downhill to the U. S. Legation when it settled in the Schönborn Palace.

Crane's notes also describe the management of the work of the legation and from time to time a reorganization of the agendas; he always noted that he did "routine work with diplomatic mail," and—particularly in the beginning of his assignment in Prague—Crane commented with a certain "jealousy" that his colleague Gibson in Warsaw had two secretaries and Crane did not have any. During the first period of its existence the legation in Prague was understaffed and basic diplomatic positions were vacant. Besides the Minister, there was only Assistant First Secretary John Watawa, his assistant, probably one more assistant, secretary of the Minister, Miss McCullagh, a bookkeeper, a cipher clerk, two stenographers, a telephonist and four persons listed as interpreters or translators.

Crane recorded the visits of American businessman, journalists and various delegates; he reported often on General Pellé; spoke about the importance of stipends and scholarships for talented Czech people who so far received experience only from Germany; in discussions with other Americans he paid attention to the nationalities question and already shortly after the First World War compared Czechoslovakia to a small Austria-Hungary, saying that the nationalities question—if not solved—was a major threat to the stability and even to the existence of Czechoslovakia.[40]

There is a well-known story about how Richard Crane bought a palace in Prague's Lesser Quarter from the impoverished Count Schönborn. The structure, which was in poor condition and had been rented to tenants, fascinated the Minister by its beauty. Later he sold it to the American Government, and thus the United States has today one of the most beautiful embassy buildings in the world, in the heart of lovely Malá Strana, an architectural gem. Crane began to be interested in Schönborn palace soon after he came to Prague, and already on August 14, 1919

[40] Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, p. 457-467.

Přemysl Šámal[41] informed him that the palace was still available at the price of 2.3 million crowns, and that there were other people seriously interested in the purchase. Crane considered other properties as well, but finally decided for this one. It was not just his own decision, as his wife Ellen also preferred this palace. Crane's diary documents the willingness of Jan Masaryk and Edvard Beneš to facilitate a purchase of a convenient property, the process of decision by Richard and Ellen for this palace, the development of the entire transaction, how Crane dealt with the Prague City Hall officials, care for the palace garden and many other details.

Crane witnessed the legendary all-Sokol rally of 1920 and enjoyed the enormous popularity of the United States in Czechoslovakia. He experienced a real triumph, side by side with President Masaryk sitting at the tribune of the stadium.[42] The rally went on in the spirit of a long struggle for freedom, of the most important Czech traditions and of the idea of Czechoslovak state. The rally was also an expression of gratitude to the United States and specifically to its representative Minister Richard Crane, who became a very celebrated person. The rally lasted for a whole month and was concluded on July 4, the American Independence Day. Perhaps no other American Minister or Ambassador in Prague experienced so much renown and so many ovations. A number of receptions, banquets and dinners took place, the guests of top ranks included Lord Mayors of London, Paris, Rome, Belgrade and Brussels, Ministers and many other VIPs. At the same time, Yugoslavia celebrated its National Day and there was a joint Czechoslovak-Yugoslav Sokol sport exercise. A large group of American journalists representing all important newspapers attended the rally and there were also film documentarists.

The Americans in Prague prepared their Independence Day celebration very nicely and decided to celebrate it as part of the rally, but under their own organization. They established a committee composed of the staff of the legation, the YMCA, YWCA and some other organizations. According to the plans, there was to be a soirée in Prague Municipal House with an opening address by Minister Crane, a vocal performance by Emmy Destinn, a violin concert, and a "good military brass band." President Masaryk and the Diplomatic Corps was to be invited. Next day, in Žofín, an American flag was to be raised followed by an "athletic program" and a dance. The organizational committee managed to agree on this program in one half hour, and according to the minutes everyone was eager to leave.[43]

Even if Crane expressed understanding of the situation of the young and inexperienced Czechoslovak administration, particularly in the beginning of his assignment to Prague, sometimes he was sharply critical and also gossipy. Other members of Diplomatic Corps in Prague, particularly the British Minister Clerk, expressed themselves in a similar, or even sharper, way. Crane complained about

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[41] Přemysl Šámal (1861-1941) was one of the founders of Maffia, a "man of October 1918," an inter-war politician, the Chancellor for Presidents Masaryk, Beneš and Hácha, and executed by the Nazis on March 9, 1941 for participation in the resistance movement.

[42] The stadium for an all-Sokol rally was build at Letná. Strahov Stadium was opened in 1926.

[43] Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, pp. 162-163.

the low efficiency of Czechoslovak officials, poorly defined competencies, lack of flexibility, and corruption. Crane thought, however, that until recently the Czechoslovaks (he always said Czechs) were used to sabotage everything and make problems for the monarchy in order to bring it to collapse, but that now they had to change themselves and learn a positive approach. [44]

Crane described a number of "funny" blunders of protocol committed by the Czechoslovak side, as for example placing the diplomats incorrectly at the reception table, or a serious faux pas, when the Polish President Paderewski was coming by train to Prague, the welcoming suite including President Masaryk waited for the Polish guest at the wrong train platform. The the ordinary passengers were shocked when they were greeted by a military orchestra, parade, national flags, and anthems. In the meantime, Paderewski arrived on another platform, where no one expected him and the welcome ceremony could not be reorganize quickly.[45]

Crane was outraged when the audience in the National Theatre welcomed President Masaryk more enthusiastically than Crane. He talked about this experience with the British diplomats, but disliked sometimes the contemptuous remarks of the British diplomats about the Czech environment, bad habits, and poor education of the Czechs. At the same tme, it was particularly with the British Minister and his wife, Lord and Lady Clerk, that Crane kept the most frequent contacts in Prague.

He was aware, though, that just a minimum of the foreign ministry's staff had any experience from the Austro-Hungarian diplomatic service—he said that this was unlike in Poland—and that in Prague, the Foreign Service started from the very begining. According to Crane, the only exception was Bedřich Štěpánek.[46] Crane nevertheless emphasized that everywhere he met with good will, particularly toward the United States, and that if he as an American Minister only expressed any wish, all lengthy formalities were cleared away. Crane said that the other Ministers ignored the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and went usually directly to President Masaryk.

On August 28, 1919, the Under Secretary of State Frank L. Polk sent a strictly confidential telegram to the Secretary of State Robert Lansing in Paris, asking whether Crane was reporting at least something and whether he (Polk) should shake him for his obvious inactivity. Lansing immediately responded in defence of Crane, stating that he had been sending reports indeed, but only to him—as Secretary of State. From this moment, Crane started to inform the State Department as well, but thereafter in his further communication with Polk there was a certain tension.

From the end of the First World War till 1921 at least Arthur Wood DuBois, a Special Representative of the Department of State for Duty in Central Europe worked in Europe. His headquarters were in Vienna, from where he visited other

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[44] Crane in a letter to Lansing, 21 June 1919. Crane papers, Box 5, Folder 12. Georgetown University Library Special Collections, Richard T. Crane Papers, Prague Series 1919-1922.
[45] The author of this article did not verify this story by other independent sources.
[46] Crane mentioned Štěpánek and Vladimír Radimský who was to be sent to Warsaw. Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA*, p. 164.

Central European countries. One very important issue that he was in charge of was the monitoring of smooth delivery of supplies of coal and food to Austria accross Czechoslovakia. He visited Czechoslovakia from time to time and at these occasions used to be guest of Mrs. and Mr. Crane. He was also an American delegate in the commission for Teschen. He wrote quality reports and already in 1919 pointed at Czechoslovak tendencies to strongly centralize the state which was, as DuBois said, contrary to the original agreements with the Slovaks, could cause dissatisfaction and open space for Hungarian and Bolshevik propaganda. The reports of DuBois were probably not very much to the Crane's liking as he "stepped into Crane's territory" and created the impression that Crane neglected to report on certain issues. Crane, however paid intense attention to the nationalities question in Czechoslovakia and sent Consul Young to the Carlsbad region for reconnaissance trips. Young was in Prague from spring 1919, researched the situation among Sudeten Germans and sent detailed reports about it.

The problems which Crane had to solve were often not easy. General Pellé, for example, asked him for at least six officers to help with supervising the withdrawal of Hungarians from Slovakia. Crane consulted the State Department and the request was approved. Americans investigated the looting of Béla Kun troops in Slovakia. Ensuring the delivery of supplies of food and coal to Vienna was sometimes problematic. Crane monitored the situation in Teschen, while the legation (Consul Charles S. Winans) intervened in a major affair with falsified Czechoslovak passports in Vienna, Bratislava and Košice in order to prevent illegal immigration to the United States.

Crane had a hard time after Warren Harding was elected President of the United States and he was expected, as is the tradition in the U. S. diplomatic service, to resign. He sought advice particularly from William Phillips, who served at that time as a Minister in the Netherlands and, as Assistant Secretary of State until 1920, probably contributed to Crane's appointment to Prague. Crane tried to argue that he was appointed as a career diplomat, but this would not work as he was clearly a political appointee. Finally, he accepted the situation and submitted his resignation. His last report from Prague was from October 21, 1921. He concluded his assignment in Prague by handing over his letters of recall on December 5, 1921.

The return of Richard Crane and his family to the United States was almost "grand maneuvres." They took with them furniture, servants, paintings, jewelry, Crane's beloved Cadillac and many other things. They travelled via Paris and Cannes where at that time (January 1922) the Supreme War Council meeting took place.[47] Here, Crane had a collision with his Cadillac and a car of the British legation, and had to be taken in hospital.

After his return to the United States, Richard Crane left diplomatic service and lived with his family in the Westover Plantation in Virginia. In 1926, he was awarded the Order of the White Lion, which was handed over to him by Minister Zdeněk Fierlinger. He visited Czechoslovakia one more time, in 1937, when former President Thomas Masaryk was dying. Richard Teller Crane died one year later,

[47] This session on German reparations opened the way to the Genoa Conference.

shortly after the Munich Conference, on October 3, 1938.[48] President Edvard Beneš resigned his office only a few days later (October 5, 1938).

Conclusion

For Czechoslovakia, it took until 1923 to achieve, under the Minister František Chvalkovský, a stable and standardly operating legation in Washington. Until then, its interests were represented by Charles Pergler twice as a Commissar, Jan Masaryk as a chargé d'affaires and Bedřich Štěpánek as a Minister. This whole period almost completely coincides with the appointment of the first U. S. Minister, Richard Crane, in Prague.

If we compare Crane's reporting as a whole with reporting of the other envoys, it does not differ substantially in its quality or the scope of the reported issues. The "Crane-Masaryk Connection" remained at personal level and did not influence the duties of Richard Crane as a diplomat. Crane observed and interpreted the issues to the State Department relatively accurately and objectively, despite his close relationship to Masaryks. We should neither underestimate nor overestimate the role of personal relations between Masaryk and the Crane family, of the legendary "Crane-Masaryk" connection, but it is an undisputed fact that for the establishment of Czechoslovakia and its diplomatic relations with the United States it had a very significant role.

Despite various problems in the first years of the existence of the Czechoslovak Legation in Washington, the Czechoslovaks always remembered the U. S. role in the recognition of Czechoslovak independence. However, at working meetings and negotiations, the American diplomats emphasized to the Czechoslovaks that it was necessary to get rid of thankfulness and feelings of obligations and that it was necessary to solve the issues and work on the agenda pragmatically, effectively and to the point.

The Czechoslovak Foreign Service was built starting from 1919. The majority of its diplomats had university degrees, mostly doctorates in law or philosophy, and they were proud to serve to their independent country. Despite this, the beginnings of U.S.-Czechoslovak diplomatic relations were affected by instability, lack of practical experience, exaggerated expectations and also egoism and lack of professional discipline. The beginning of diplomatic relations with the United States was not well managed. For the most part this was a result of the unsettled foreign service of young Czechoslovakia. The United States never mentioned or pointed out the various shortcomings.

In contrast, the American Legation in Prague could rely on a long tradition and the institutional experience of the American Foreign Service, on its system, structures and principles. The establishment of the Legation in Prague was not an unusual situation and it operated in a standard way from the beginning.

[48] He died of a gunshot wound while hunting on his Virginia estate. It was never conclusively established whether it was an accident or self-inflicted.

T. G. Masaryk and the Pittsburgh Declaration

Gregory C. Ference

At the urging of the "Old World" Slovaks, the Slovak League of America was founded in 1907, as a blanket organization for all Slovaks in the United States, and to coordinate efforts between the two branches of Slovaks. In the spring of 1914, the Slovak League of America began preparing a memorandum presenting the injustices suffered by the Slovaks and their demands in the Kingdom of Hungary. The final version, presenting twelve specific changes for the future of Slovakia, was ready when the First World War began in August. The developing political climate due to the war forced the League to revise the document, finally issuing it in September, with its demands collapsed into one sentence requesting autonomy for Slovaks.[1]

Prior to the war, the Slovaks in the United States represented the strongest and most politically active branch of Slovaks globally, as shown by the memorandum. With the outbreak of the war, Slovak American organizations, especially the League, found themselves in a unique position of unopposed leadership of the world Slovak national movement. The only Slovak political party in the "Old Country," the Slovak National Party, remained virtually silent in Hungary for the duration of the war. As a result, compatriots in the United States developed a drastic program ultimately resulting in the creation of an independent Czecho-Slovakia in October 1918.

Some Slovaks in America believed that the world war negated the need for the memorandum, and began to explore a number of options that lay open to them due to the conflict in Europe. For several months, people discussed and debated the various alternatives for Slovakia, including autonomy in Hungary, a federal solution based on nationality in Austria-Hungary, a Polish-Slovak union, joining imperial Russia, or a Czecho-Slovak solution. From autonomy within Austria-Hungary, the views turned toward leaving the state altogether, favoring the option with the Czechs as the best alternative for Slovak national development. In a union with either the Poles or the Russians, Slovaks felt they would eventually lose their ethnic identity by being absorbed by their far more numerous Slavic neighbors, as was being done under the intensive Magyarization or forced assimilation policies of Hungary in the years prior to World War One.

By late fall 1914, Albert Mamatey (1870-1923), president of both the Slovak League of America and the National Slovak Society, although still publicly supporting the memorandum, personally felt the best alternative was cooperation with the Czechs to establish after the war an independent Czecho-Slovak state. According to Mamatey,

> We, Slovaks, will insist on self-government regardless of which state we will become part of as a result of this war…[w]hether we belong to Russia, or old Hungary or part of the 'Czecho-Slovak

[1] *Národné noviny* (Pittsburgh, PA), 23 April 1914; 24 September 1914.

> state' that the Czechs are hoping will be created. [However] it would be best for us Slovaks to work together with our Czech brothers to create after this war some sort of 'Czecho-Slovak United States,' which would consist of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia…. Together we would form with the Czechs one federal state entity, but besides this we would have our own autonomy, into which the brother Czechs may not interfere, just as the state of Illinois or Pennsylvania cannot and may not interfere in the internal matters of the state of New York or the state of Massachusetts, etc. According to my and my friends' views, this would be the best and most fair way to solve this question.[2]

This quote shows that American democracy and the federalism of United States had influenced the opinions of Mamatey and his friends.

This common state had been advocated by American Czechs several months earlier, shortly after the war began. For example, an August 1914 issue of the Czech language journal *Osvěta americká* (American Enlightenment), published in Omaha, Nebraska, talked about an independent United States of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Slovakia.[3]

In September 1914, a group of Czechs in New York formed the American Committee for the Liberation of the Czech People. By the spring of 1915, it grew by unifying various Czech American associations, becoming in June the Bohemian National Alliance. It, too, advocated a common state with the Slovaks. However, in both instances, the inhabitants of this new country, to be created after the war, were referred to as Czechs.

In addition, in June 1915, Thomas Čapek (1861-1950), the Czech American financier, writer and philanthropist, edited the book, *Bohemia Under Hapsburg Misrule.* It contained a lofty subtitle of *A Study of the Ideals and Aspirations of the Bohemian and Slovak Peoples as They Relate to and Are Affected by the Great European War*. Out of a total of 187 pages, Slovaks and Slovakia account for only ten pages where they are referred to as mere off-shoots of the greater Czech nation artificially separated 1,000 years before by the Hungarians.[4]

Herein lay the chief obstacle to this cooperation for the realization of a common state. The Slovaks resented being denied their ethnic individuality. Instead, they were being seen as mere Hungarian branches or appendages of the Czech nation which was fighting an anti-Habsburg program. Another issue became the difference between the Bohemian National Alliance and Slovak organizations in the United States in relationship to the fate of their co-nationals in Austria-Hungary. The

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[2] *1914!* (Chicago: Valčné Tribuny, n.d.), 109-110.
[3] *Osvěta americká* (Omaha, NE), August 12, 1914.
[4] Thomas Čapek, ed., *Bohemia Under Hapsburg Misrule: A Study of the Ideals and Aspirations of the Bohemian and Slovak Peoples as They Relate to and Are Affected by the Great European War* (New York: Fleming H. Revel, 1915).

Alliance claimed no political platform, but utilized propaganda to influence the Allies to the aspirations of Czech political leaders in Bohemia and Moravia as espoused by them. Later, it supported the state-building efforts of Professor Tomáš G. Masaryk (1850-1937), whose father was Moravian Slovak and mother a Moravian Czech, who fled the empire in December 1914 to work for a Czecho-Slovak state. Masaryk noted, "Indeed, when I left Prague in 1914 I firmly intended to work for union with Slovakia." [5]

The American Slovaks, as has been shown, claimed to be the champions for the entire Slovak nation searching for a solution that would protect Slovak national rights and development as shown with the earlier memorandum. Furthermore, the Bohemian National Alliance consisted of many free-thinkers, whom the more religious Slovaks regarded with suspicion.

Despite these differences, both the American Czech and Slovak leaders realized that by working together they could and would strengthen their movement for a common state. Čapek, who remained still well respected among Slovak American circles, and Štefan Osuský (1889-1973), a Slovak American lawyer and journalist, facilitated the rapprochement or reconciliation. They worked behind the scenes to get the Bohemian National Alliance and the Slovak League to cooperate. After a steady stream correspondence, the League and Alliance agreed to a joint meeting in Cleveland on October 22, 1915, held in the Bohemian National Hall.

Five Czechs and fourteen Slovaks, led by Mamatey, attended the private working meeting. The resulting Cleveland Agreement became the first formalized document anywhere accepting an independent, common state for the Czechs and Slovaks. The accord, in particular, aimed to satisfy Slovaks concerns as mentioned previously. The opening section of the Cleveland Agreement reads:

> The " Bohemian National Alliance" in America and the " Slovak League" in America concluded—with the purposes of enabling joint cooperation and a unified course of action for the attainment of political freedom and independence of the Czech and Slovak nations—an agreement on the basis of the principles of the following " Program" and the corresponding " Organization" :
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> 1. Independence of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.
> 2. A joining of the Czech and Slovak nations in a federated union of states, with complete national autonomy for Slovakia, with its own parliament, financial, public, and state administrations, and full cultural freedom, with the full use of the Slovak language as the state language.
> 3. Voting rights: universal, - secret, - and direct.
> 4. The form of government: a personal union with a democratic state system similar to England.
> 5. These points create the basis of this mutual agreement and they can be amended, or expanded only on the basis of an

[5] Thomas G. Masaryk, *The Making of a State: Memories and Observations 1914-1918* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1927), 361. T. G. Masaryk, *Světová revoluce za války a ve válce 1914-1918: Vzpomíná a uvažuje* (Prague: Orbis, 1925), 487.

> understanding of both parties. Both the Bohemian National Alliance and the Slovak League reserve the right of possible change.

The second part of the agreement deals with the organization of the two groups' activities and does not concern us here except for the section that allowed the Bohemian National Alliance and the Slovak League to monopolize their roles as the sole spokesmen for their respective nations in the United States.[6]

With the agreement assuring complete autonomy for Slovakia, the American Slovak leaders possessed the demands for which they had been fighting about with the Czechs for months. The document guaranteed that Slovaks would not be forcibly assimilated in a common state and could freely enjoy their national identity.

Although it may seem naïve on the part of the Slovaks to trust this accord, at this time they had few other viable options. Without some expressions of cooperation with the Czechs, the Slovaks feared that when the war ended, which could occur at any moment, the peace conference would force the Slovaks to remain within Hungary. They needed some formalized document and cooperation with a larger, more influential group to prevent this from occurring.

At the time of the signing of the Cleveland Agreement, neither the Bohemian National Alliance nor the Slovak League represented all the Czechs and Slovaks in the United States, they had little influence in Europe, and none in Austria-Hungary. Yet, shortly thereafter, the signatures of the leaders of both organizations appeared on Masaryk's " Manifesto of the Czech Action Committee Abroad" calling for an independent, common state in November 1915, thereby ceding control of the national liberation movement to him.[7] In 1917 and 1918, the American organizations continued to work together in tasks such as recruiting volunteers for the Czecho-Slovak army in France, and established an American branch of Masaryk's now renamed Czecho-Slovak National Council, a quasi-government-in-exile.

Despite the cooperation, the old obstacles, especially relating to ethnicity, resurfaced. In late 1916, Masaryk sent to the British government an official communiqué in which he stated, "The Slovaks are Czechs."[8] Along with this assertion, some of the official publications of the Czecho-Slovak National Council, including *Československá Samostanost, (Czechoslovak Independence)* consistently called the common state "Greater Czechia," referred only to the Czech armies in Allied countries, and the Czech language and culture of the future state. Discussing this note to the British, Vladimir L. Hurban (1883-1949), a friend of the Masaryk family and son of the Slovak poet Svetozár M. Hurban-Vajanský (1847-1916), working in Petrograd, Russia, for Czecho-Slovak liberation, wrote to Masaryk,

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[6] František Bielik and Edo Rákoš, comp., *Slovenské vysťahovalectvo. Dokumenty I do roku 1918* (Bratislava: SAV, 1969), 363-365.

[7] Cestimir Jesina, ed., *The Birth of Czechoslovakia* (Washington D.C.: Czechoslovak Council of America, 1968), 1A-4.

[8] An Autonomist, *Slovakia's Plea for Autonomy* (Middletown, PA: Jednota, 1935), 7.

> There is not a single Slovak…who would call himself a Czech. Slovaks regard themselves as an ethnically distinct nation…. As Slovaks we hope to see the dawn of liberty for our land; we wish to unite with the Czechs in one political state, but only if our national and cultural autonomy will be safeguarded.[9]

A potential falling out between the two national groups would have dire consequences for Masaryk's quest for a state, which became even more serious when the United States entered the war in April 1917. As shown earlier, Slovak sentiment about the future fate of Slovakia could not be expressed within the empire out of fear of reprisals until very late in the war.

This contradicts Masaryk's statement, when discussing the possibility of the inclusion of the Slovaks in a state with the Czechs, that, "When I wanted to go abroad in 1914 I already counted absolutely on Slovakia."[10] Thus the key to international acceptance of Czecho-Slovak statehood lay in the United States. Masaryk needed the public support of a large group of Slovaks outside the monarchy and America provided this opportunity. A large colony of approximately 650,000 Slovaks, or one fifth of all the Slovak people, lived in the United States. Masaryk hoped that he could calm the fears of American Slovaks and win their and American approval of his program that would be followed by international recognition.

Masaryk noted, "It remained for us to win over the American people…. [W]e had to work on public opinion which up to then knew little about us and even less about the Slovaks."[11] Yet, he continued with the notion that Slovaks constituted part of the Czech nation stating, "Americans…had heard of the Czechs…but found it hard to understand that the Slovaks were comprised of our race."[12]

Masaryk arrived in the United States after traveling through Russia and Japan in May 1918. He later said that the main purpose of his trip to America, besides preparing for the up-coming peace conference, was "to strengthen the union of Czechs and Slovaks."[13] He was no stranger to the United States. Masaryk married an American, Charlotte Garrigue (1850-1923), had lectured in America in 1902 and again in 1907, and even thought about remaining in the country.[14] With the help of Masaryk's American mentor, the industrialist Charles R. Crane (1858-1939), Masaryk lobbied with American officials for the acceptance of a Czecho-Slovak state. He made such favorable impressions on the government that Secretary of State Robert Lansing (1864-1928) issued a declaration in late May stating, "The nationalistic aspirations of the Czecho-Slovaks and Yugo-Slavs for freedom have the earnest sympathy of this government."[15] Although Lansing's announcement did

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[9] Gilbert L. Oddo, *Slovakia and Its People* (New York: Speller, 1960), 162-163.
[10] Karel Čapek, *Hovory s T. G. Masarykem* (New York: Arts, 1951), 120.
[11] Ibid., 173.
[12] Ibid., 172
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., 170
[15] Jesina, 44.

much to bolster the morale of Masaryk and his followers, it did not constitute a formal recognition.

Masaryk knew he had to present some public manifestations of Slovak support to strengthen his position and to prove to Washington and the Allies that Slovaks wished to be included in an independent state with Czechs. Therefore, he had to quiet American Slovak fears.

Masaryk traveled to Pittsburgh, in a region having the highest concentration of Slovaks outside of the Kingdom of Hungary. On Thursday, Decoration Day (now Memorial Day), May 30, 1918, he was greeted enthusiastically. More than 50,000 people took part in a parade ending at the old Exposition Hall, at the Point where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers meet to form the Ohio, where Masaryk spoke. Albert Mamatey presided at the meeting, attended by an estimated 10,000 people with the auditorium filled to capacity so that the overflowing crowd surrounded the building. When Masaryk ascended the platform, he was greeted with thunderous applause.[16]

Masaryk spoke first in English and then in Czech. He said that he was proud that he was Slovak by birth. He prided himself on working many years for the cause of bringing Czechs and Slovaks closer together and that there should be no differences between them. The Czecho-Slovak National Council, with its branches in Russia and the United States, included Slovak as well as Czech representatives. He claimed that Hungarians and Austrian Germans artificially produced the problems that had arisen between the two peoples.

Masaryk then portrayed very favorably the future relationship of Slovakia with the Czech Lands: local government, education, courts, etc., in Slovakia would be held in the Slovak language while in Bohemia and Moravia it would be in Czech. He continued, the Slovaks had nothing to fear from a Czech majority in a common state. Each nationality would control its own area and everyone would have their civil liberties guaranteed. The audience received Masaryk's speech with an enthusiastic applause, and for the Slovaks, this was everything they had dreamed of and demanded.

After this mass, public meeting, the next day, Friday, May 31, a working session of the Czecho-Slovak National Council in America (CSNCA), a branch of the Czecho-Slovak National Council based in Paris, took place at the Moose Hall in downtown Pittsburgh.[17] Nine Slovaks, seven Czechs, and Masaryk attended. While it was an official CSNCA meeting, other people came and went as guests.

The meeting was interrupted late in the afternoon, and only the Slovaks and Masaryk met in a separate room to draft what became known as the Pittsburgh Declaration, Agreement, or Pact. Initially, the Slovaks wanted Masaryk to inspect

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[16] *Pittsburgh Press*, May 12, 1968.

[17] The Moose Hall, which later became the Elks Lodge, was located at 628 Penn Avenue in Pittsburgh. It was torn down in 1984 to make way for the Dominion or CNG Tower now known as EQT Plaza. A historical marker commemorating the declaration stands near the location of the old hall. Inside the tower, two large bronze medallions of Woodrow Wilson and Masaryk sit above a bronze plague depicting Czechoslovakia's coat-of-arms, a map of Czechoslovakia in 1918, a rendering of the Moose Hall, and a copy of the agreement.

and sign the Cleveland Agreement and have the Czech and Slovak groups reaffirm it. Masaryk, however, believed it to be confusing and out of date. Masaryk wrote out in pencil another agreement in Czech to replace it:[18]

Czecho-Slovak Agreement

Concluded in Pittsburgh, Pa, on 30 May 1918.

The representatives of the Slovak and Czech organizations in the United States, the Slovak League, the Bohemian National Alliance and the Federation of Czech Catholics deliberating in the presence of the chairman of the Czecho-Slovak National Council, Professor Masaryk, on the Czecho-Slovak question and on our previous declaration of program, have passed the following:

- We approve of the political program which aims at the union of the Czechs and Slovaks in an independent state composed of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.
- Slovakia will have her own administration, her own diet and her own courts.
- The Slovak language will be the official language in the schools, in public offices and in public life generally.
- The Czecho-Slovak state will be a republic, its constitution will be democratic.
- The organization of the cooperation between Czechs and Slovaks in the United States will be, according to need and the changing situation, intensified and regulated by mutual consent.
- Detailed provisions relating to the organization of the Czecho-Slovak state shall be left to the liberated Czechs and Slovaks and their duly accredited representatives.[19]

This Pittsburgh Declaration, as written by Masaryk, was approved unanimously at this small meeting of Slovaks and Masaryk. The CSNCA meeting then voted on it, with the two groups named in the minutes as the Slovak League and the Bohemian National Alliance. However, contrary to popular belief, no one signed any document. Except for this brief vote, the day-long CSNCA meeting continued covering other issues.[20]

Josef Hušek (1880-1947), one of the chief skeptics of a Czecho-Slovakia and the editor of the First Catholic Slovak Union's newspaper *Jednota* (Union), who attended the meeting, later took Masaryk's original penciled draft of the accord and had it printed in a calligraphic and lithographic design to make it seem more formal and official with the text in Slovak. He urged Mamatey to have Masaryk sign it, which he did on November 14, 1918, the day the provisional Czecho-Slovak National Assembly in Prague elected him as the first president of Czecho-Slovakia

[18] Thomas Budova, *The Slovaks and the Pittsburgh Pact* (Chicago, Obrana, 1934), 24.
[19] Bielik and Rákoš, 366-367.
[20] Budova, 27-30.

and the day after the new country's provisional constitution was adopted. Masaryk signed it as a private individual and there is no reference to any Czecho-Slovak National Council with his signature.[21]

Mamatey and the Slovak League collected the remaining signatures on it, many of whom were not present at the meeting, but who were all important figures in Czech and Slovak America: eleven Czechs and sixteen Slovaks. The Slovak League would later have elaborate lithographic copies made.[22] Naturally, the first and most important signature was that of Masaryk.

Thus Masaryk had in hand the necessary indication of Slovak approval for his state, and he persuaded the Allies that the American Slovaks, as representatives of the Slovak nation, could speak on behalf of their co-nationals in Austria-Hungary, and did so with the Pittsburgh Declaration. With this accord, added to Lansing's May declaration, and the actions of the Czech-Slovak Legions controlling the Trans-Siberian Railway and fighting the Bolsheviks in Russia, the greatest obstacles in the United States and in Allied capitals were removed for Czechoslovak independence.

In June, the American government permitted the Czecho-Slovak National Council to recruit soldiers for its army in France from Czech and Slovak immigrants who had not yet become citizens of the United States. On June 22, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924) altered Article 10 of the Fourteen Points from Slavic autonomous development within Austria-Hungary to read, "All members of the Slav race must be fully liberated from Austrian domination."[23] The following day, France became the first country to officially recognize the independence of a Czechoslovakia, with the United States following on September 3, with actual independence being achieved on October 28, 1918.

With the Pittsburgh Declaration, Slovak American fears regarding working with Masaryk faded. For example, The Slovak League of America issued the following statement:

> There are no reasons anymore for further fearing, for any prejudice, for any suspicion. Everything is now clear between us and the brother Czechs. From today on we must refrain from talking about anything which would separate us for there is nothing which separates us. Let us put forth all our strength from today on and let us work to gain the big and holy aim, which is: the liberation of Czecho-Slovakia.[24]

Whereas Hušek, editor of *Jednota*, wrote:

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[21] The Slovak League of America donated the original calligraphic, lithographed, and signed copy to the John Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh in 2007. Other copies exist.
[22] Budova, 32.
[23] Edvard Beneš, *Edvard Beneš in his own Words: Threescore Years of a Statesman, Builder and Philosopher* (NY; Czech-American National Alliance Eastern Division, 1943), 9.
[24] Budova, 25.

> Professor Masaryk is an ardent friend of the Slovaks and the Slovak language. We had our doubts about that. Today there is not a shadow of doubt. We respect him as our leader in the struggle for our liberty. We have confidence in him, we believe him and we thank God that we have a man of his character and ability at the head of our Czecho-Slovak revolution.[25]

Hušek would later regret these words.

Furthermore, from May 1918 to October 1918, money flowed to the Czecho-Slovak National Council in America, much of which came from Slovak donors. During this several month period over $483,000 came in as compared to the combined totals for 1914 to April 30, 1918 of approximately $191,500.[26]

Yet the notion that the Czechs and Slovaks constituted one people officially continued. The Czecho-Slovak National Council issued in Allied capitals on October 18, 1918, the "DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK NATION BY ITS PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT." Written largely by Masaryk, it included only a brief paragraph about Slovaks in a document about five pages long stating, "We claim the right of Bohemia to be re-united with her Slovak brethren of Slovakia, once part of our national State, later torn from our national body…."[27] The Czechs used the concept of a single Czechoslovak nation as a political necessity to receive a numerical majority over the German minority population of over three million in a future Czechoslovakia.

After the war, much controversy arose over the agreement. The provisional Czecho-Slovak National Assembly declared that all agreements made by Masaryk during the war were binding. When the assembly began drafting a permanent constitution in 1920, Prime Minister Vlastimil Tusar (1880-1924) asked Masaryk about the Pittsburgh Declaration. He replied that it was an agreement between the American Czechs and Slovaks living in the United States who had no right to interfere into the internal affairs and politics of Czechoslovakia, writing, "Czechs and Slovaks at the Pittsburgh meeting knew very well that American citizens have no right to decide about definite arrangements of the Czechoslovak state."[28]

The national legislature then went on to adopt a highly centralized state advocating the existence of a single Czechoslovak nationality. Those who approved of this stance pointed to the last article of the agreement leaving to the representatives of the liberated Czechs and Slovaks the right to decide how the state should be organized. Masaryk himself agreed with this position stating in the same letter to Tusar, "At the end of the contract itself it is stated that the detailed arrangements and regulations in the Czechoslovak State are being left to the liberated Czechs and Slovaks and their empowered leaders."[29]

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[25] *Jednota*, (Middletown, PA), August 28, 1918.
[26] Masaryk, *Making*, 94.
[27] Jesina, 94-99.
[28] An Autonomist, 8.
[29] Ibid.

The controversy continued. Masaryk later downplayed the Pittsburgh accord, which he called the "Czechoslovak Convention" writing,

> It was concluded in order to appease a small Slovak faction which was dreaming of God knows what sort of independence for Slovakia…. I signed the Convention unhesitatingly as a local understanding between American Czechs and Slovaks upon the policy they were prepared to advocate. The other signatories were mainly American citizens, only two of them being non-Americans, though further signatures were afterwards added without authorization.[30]

Furthermore, Masaryk disparaged the legitimacy of the Slovak League of America and its ability to negotiate, "[T]he 'Slovak League' was not recognized by the authorities until May 17, 1919, and until then existed only in name."[31]

As for the Slovaks, both abroad and in Czechoslovakia, many felt betrayed by the actions of Masaryk and the National Assembly. Soon two major political divisions of Slovaks appeared: the Centralists, who favored following Prague, and the Autonomists. The Autonomists, led by Father Andrej Hlinka (1864-1938), the Roman Catholic priest and leader of the Slovak People's Party or Ľudaks and supported by the Slovak League of America, argued that the agreement guaranteed autonomy for Slovakia. Referring to these Slovak Autonomists in the United States and in Czechoslovakia, Masaryk said, "Indeed, the more thoughtful Slovak leaders saw that the Slovaks would derive no benefit from territorial autonomy and that an independent Slovak movement for the liberation of Slovakia must end in a fiasco."[32]

In the interwar period, Hlinka and his Autonomist followers nonetheless continued to agitate for autonomy on the basis of the Pittsburgh Declaration. In 1926, Hušek invited Hlinka to the United States with the Slovak League of America supporting his several months visit. Hlinka would be photographed at the Moose Hall in Pittsburgh holding the calligraphic, signed Pittsburgh Declaration while sitting at the desk where Masaryk wrote it; he was surrounded by members of the Slovak League.

Later, in October 1929, Masaryk would even go further claiming in a letter to Hlinka that the Pittsburgh Agreement was a forgery, writing,

> Look at the mistakes you have made with the so-called Pittsburgh Pact. De facto you had your autonomy from the time of the revolution, and now you have all the stipulations of that pact fulfilled. But the main thing is that the document of that literal agreement is forged, it is a falsum, because at that time when the American Slovaks wanted that literal agreement, the League did not exist legally, it was not recognized by the state until in 1919. For that reason a serious politician, a statesman cannot

[30] Masaryk, *Making*, 208. Masaryk, *Světová,* 262.
[31] Ibid., 210. Ibid., 265.
[32] Ibid 209. Ibid., 263.

> and must not operate with such a paper. A falsification cannot become an act of State.[33]

The controversy went on, leading to the eventual destabilization of the republic in the late 1930s. The Autonomists, with the tacit support of Nazi Germany, continually pressed for the implementation of the agreement as one of their main objectives. On the twentieth anniversary of the pact, the Slovak League of America, now led by Hušek, sent representatives and the original lithographed signed agreement to Slovakia where they were received warmly by the Autonomists. Later that same year, after the Munich Agreement or *Diktat* in late September 1938, when Czechoslovakia lost its sovereignty, the Prague government of the Second Republic relented. It finally granted Slovakia autonomy based on the Pittsburgh Declaration with the Žilina Agreement of early October 1938.

[33] Konstantin Čulen, *Pittsburghská Dohoda* (Bratislava: Andrej, 1937), 413.

The Pittsburgh Agreement and its Role in the Political Life of Interwar Slovakia*

Matej Hanula

Important political documents have had different fortunes. Some fulfilled their roles exactly according to the intentions of their authors. On American soil we can in this context certainly mention the Declaration of Independence which set out the program for foundation of the first modern independent state on the American continent. It was transformed into reality after the victorious war against Great Britain. The Pittsburgh Agreement from May 1918 clearly has a significant place in Slovak and Czech history. It was closely related to its predecessor in the form of the Cleveland Agreement[1] and was one of the first official documents in which Slovaks (although those living on the other side of the Atlantic) declared their support for the foreign action under the leadership of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk with its program to establish an independent state consisting of the Czech lands and Slovakia after the defeat of the Central Powers in the war.

In contrast to the Declaration of Independence, the Pittsburgh Agreement played a different role in history than the one originally expected by its authors, which was to support the idea of Czechoslovak statehood. After the foundation of Czechoslovakia the agreement entered into a second life. In the republic and especially in Slovakia it was transformed into an instrument of political struggle between two basic camps of Slovak politics: autonomists and centralists. Disputes about its interpretation, its place, and its role in history influenced political as well as social life in Slovakia throughout practically the whole inter-war period. The document created in support of the program of an independent Czechoslovak state was changed into a tool for domestic political conflicts. Referring to its text, Slovak autonomists demanded autonomy for Slovakia within Czechoslovakia. Their interpretation was that it was a cornerstone of Czechoslovakia. Slovak self-government, which was in their eyes guaranteed by the signature of the future president Masaryk,[2] was also considered to be an instrument for the implementation

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[1] Already in 1915 the compatriot Czech and Slovak organizations decided to support Masaryk's program with the goal of establishing a Czechoslovak state after the assumed defeat of the Central Powers. From several possibilities, American Slovaks selected unification with the Czech lands as the best one. To make this plan official, representatives of the American Slovak League concluded an agreement on October 1915 in Cleveland with the representatives of the Czech National Association. The future common state should be established as a federation. Slovakia should have its self-government with its own legislative assembly and administration. Imrich Minár, *Americkí Slováci a Slovensko 1880-1980* (Bratislava: Bradlo, 1994), 107-110.

[2] Naturally, Masaryk signed the text of the agreement after the negotiations in Pittsburgh. Moreover, the chairman of the Slovak League Albert Mamatey brought the well-known

of the right to self-determination of the Slovak nation. This right was the basic element declared by the American president Woodrow Wilson and applied in 1918 to change the European map. In their opinion they were quite consistent. This claim cannot be made about their centralist political rivals. For various reasons, they were against Slovak autonomy in Czechoslovakia and this was the perspective from which they also comprehended the Pittsburgh Agreement. They applied various strategies towards it—highlighting its invalidity in the new state, stressing its final article which delegated the right to organize the life in the republic to the new freely elected people's representatives in Czechoslovakia, or, especially during the 1930s, stressing that all its stipulations had been fulfilled.

The Pittsburgh Agreement was in reality only a document of few short lines, concluded between Czech and Slovak compatriot associations in the United States, which was signed by Masaryk as the head of Czechoslovak foreign resistance.[3] For American Slovaks it was a reaction to the news coming from Europe that the foreign action is carried out in the name of the Czechoslovak nation.[4] They therefore once again demanded confirmation of the programme of the Cleveland agreement from 1915 by Masaryk.[5] Slovakia should have in the new state its own administration, assembly with legislative competences and law courts. The Slovak language should become the administrative language in schools, offices and public life. But the document included also the already mentioned final guideline that specific regulations about the state organization were reserved for the legal representatives of Czechs and Slovaks in the new democratic republic.

It is also quite surprising that Masaryk decided to sign this document. As I have already stated, the foreign action for the foundation of Czechoslovakia was carried out in the name of the Czechoslovak nation. The role of its protagonists was to persuade the Entente representatives that Austria-Hungary should be dissolved and replaced by nation states. Czechoslovakia as a nation state of the Czechoslovak nation was supposed to be one of them. Entente powers would hardly accept establishing Czechoslovakia as a state of two separate nations. Masaryk must have

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calligraphic copy of the document to him in Washington before he left for Europe. Masaryk signed it again as a legally elected president of the state, which even increased his commitment in the eyes of autonomists. Jan Rychlík, *1918: Rozpad Rakouska-Uherska a vznik Československa* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2018), 204.

[3] The complete text of the declaration can be found in several publications, for example Jan Rychlík, *Češi a Slováci ve 20. století. Spolupráce a konflikty 1914-1992* (Prague: Vyšehrad, and Prague: Ústav pro stadium totalitních režimů, 2012), 48.

[4] In 1916, The Slovak League sent its two representatives, Štefan Osuský and Gustáv Košík, to Europe to inform the Entente about the Slovak question and to cooperate with Masaryk's foreign action. Osuský, who served after 1918 as a Czechoslovak ambassador in Paris, was able to enforce the change of the name of the foreign resistance body from The National Council of the Czech Lands to Czechoslovak National Council. His main office was in Geneva where he organized a Press Bureau. However, he later fully accepted the resistance program with its accent of establishing Czechoslovak national state because this argument was more comprehensible and acceptable for the Entente representatives. Košík's activities were focused mostly on Slovaks in Russia. Minár, *Americkí Slováci*, 111-113.

[5] Minár, *Americkí Slováci*, 123.

known about this contradiction between the Pittsburgh Agreement and the programme of his Czechoslovak National Council. The future president was in America binding himself to something which he could not accomplish after the foundation of the state.[6] As a president, Masaryk could possibly support the autonomy of Slovakia only from his position of moral and political authority. In order to make it part of the constitution it was necessary to get support from a constitutional majority of lawmakers, and as a nonpartisan president he had no direct influence to form such a majority. Masaryk's real goal in Pittsburgh was most probably to receive the full support of the Slovak League for his programme to establish the Czechoslovak state in the decisive and final stage of the war when its ultimate success or failure was at stake. He could not allow any disputes between American Czechs and Slovaks to start. He could not risk a possible campaign against himself which could begin in the press of the Slovak League in case he did not agree with the demand for a Slovak legislative assembly. Moreover, he definitely had in his memory the campaigns against various Hungarian politicians by American Slovaks before the war.[7] Something similar would be truly against his plans and he could not allow it to happen.

Right from October 1918, the new state was really constructed as a centralist republic of an official Czechoslovak nation. The majority of Slovak political representatives was ready to accept this fact. Although apart from a few individuals,[8] they did not support the idea of a unified ethnic Czechoslovak nation and were working with the concept of specific Slovak nation like they did during the Hungarian period, at least for the moment they were ready to agree with the official Czechoslovakist theory. They entered the new state with the Martin Declaration of the Slovak Nation of October 30, 1918 in which they took away from the Budapest government the right to act in the name of Slovaks. In accordance with the spirit of the period they claimed self-determination for the Slovak nation, and quite confusingly also for the Slovak branch of the Czechoslovak nation, as a way of expressing their approval for the new republic. On the next day, Slovak politicians were in Martin also discussing the constitutional position of Slovakia in the republic. They were not able to come up with a definitive position. Prevailing voices highlighted that no later than after ten years of the new state, Slovaks should decide if they will demand self-government. [9]

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[6] Rychlík, *1918: Rozpad Rakouska-Uherska*, 205

[7] More on the campaigns against Hungarian politicians by American Slovaks see Minár, *Americkí Slováci*, 74-82.

[8] The concept of a Czechoslovak nation in the ethnic sense was supported only by a small group of Slovak politicians. They were mostly liberally oriented elites which from 1898 till 1904 were behind the liberal *Hlas* [The Voice] magazine. This group included for example Vavro Šrobár, Pavel Blaho, Anton Štefánek and Fedor Houdek who was a real Czechoslovak because he had a Czech father and a Slovak mother. However, even they clearly distinguished between Czechs and Slovaks and assumed that the true national unity would be created only after several decades of life in the common state.

[9] Marián Hronský and Miroslav Pekník, *Martinská deklarácia. Cesta slovenskej politiky k vzniku Česko-Slovenska* (Bratislava: VEDA, 2008), 272-284.

Temporary resignation from the concept of a special position of Slovakia within the republic was perceived by the majority of Slovak politicians as a necessary step which had to be made in order to emancipate Slovakia from the control of Budapest. In their eyes it could be made only by deeply grounding Slovakia in the new state. They also understood that there was a shortage of qualified Slovak intelligentsia able to fully take the country administration into their hands. This was the result of the Budapest government's policy and of the Hungarian school system. The Slovak language was used for instruction only at several elementary schools. Higher education in the Hungarian Kingdom was available only in the Hungarian language. To have a successful career in the civil service also required accepting the official policy of the Hungarian government with its concept of Hungarian nation state, which was in fact carried out as the creation of a Magyar nation state. In order to create those administrative structures Slovak leaders temporarily agreed with the creation of a strong bond between Slovakia and the Czech lands.

The process leading to the formation of a unitary state was concluded in February 1920 when the first Czechoslovak constitution was enacted. It codified Czechoslovakia as a Czechoslovak nation state and the "Czechoslovak" language was declared the official administrative language. According to a special language law passed on the same day as the constitution it had two versions—usually a Czech version in the Czech lands and a Slovak version in Slovakia.[10]

During that time, the Pittsburgh Agreement was already influencing political life in Slovakia. A copy was brought to Slovakia already in the first months of 1919. At the end of 1918 the Slovak People's Party under the leadership of the Catholic priest Andrej Hlinka renewed its activities. The party was for the first time established in 1905 after several Slovaks left the Hungarian People's Party. However, formally it still remained integral part of the main camp of Slovak politics represented by the Slovak National Party. As a separate party it was organized only in 1913, but the war and the following official declaration of passivity by Slovak politics disabled it to carry out any significant activities. The party declared the implementation of Slovak autonomy as its principal political goal. In April 1919, an American Slovak League delegation came to Slovakia and its member Jozef Hušek informed Hlinka about the text of the agreement.[11] As a result, the People's Party leader got a strong argument for his case. Now he could claim that he was promoting a programme approved by the president of the republic. In August 1919

[10] All Slovak MPs present in the building at the end voted for this constitution. They understood it as a necessary step on the way to definitive integration of Slovakia into the republic. This process ended with the signing of the Treaty of Trianon on June 4, 1920 where Hungary finally accepted its new borders with the successor states. Natália Krajčovičová, "Začleňovanie Slovenska do Československej republiky (1918-1920)," in *Slovensko v Československu 1918 – 1939*, eds. Milan Zemko and Valerián Bystrický (Bratislava: VEDA, 2004), 88-90.

[11] Konštantín Čulen, *Pittsburghská dohoda* (Bratislava: Kníhtlačiareň Andreja – Slovák, 1937), 240.

Hlinka, sponsored by Polish money and with a Polish passport, travelled to Paris[12] where he wanted to attend the Peace Conference and persuade its delegates to include Slovak autonomy in the Peace treaties. However, he was not allowed to enter the negotiations, because of the influence of the Czechoslovak delegation on the Entente representatives.[13] After his return to Czechoslovakia, Hlinka was arrested and remained in custody until the parliamentary elections in 1920. According to the law, Hlinka was released from custody when he was elected an MP in April 1920. In contrast with his party colleagues he therefore did not vote for the centralist constitution in February 1920. As a result, his aura of a true autonomist was even bigger. With Hlinka's unsuccessful Paris trip, the struggle for the interpretation of Pittsburgh Agreement in Slovak politics began.

Hušek returned to the U.S. assured that the speedy implementation of autonomy was not necessary and that the Slovaks must be patient.[14] The chairman of the American Slovak League, Albert Mamatey, also visited Slovakia at the end of 1919. His original goal was to enforce Slovak autonomy according to the Pittsburgh Agreement regulations into the Czechoslovak constitution. Upon his arrival he was assured by the Slovak centralists that the Pittsburgh Agreement principles were being fulfilled. They were able to persuade him that immediate implementation of autonomy would bring Slovakia more harm than good, using the traditional argument about Hungarian danger. In Prague Mamatey also met Masaryk, who argued against Slovak autonomy because of the lack of a Slovak intelligentsia.[15] Mamatey returned to the U.S. with assurances from the government

[12] Although Czechoslovakia and Poland were foreseen as partners by their common ally France, the reality was quite different. They had territorial disputes about the Tešín region in Silesia as well as about several municipalities in Slovakia. Warsaw was later also disappointed by the lack of support from Prague during the Polish war against the Bolshevik Russia. Poland therefore welcomed Hlinka's Paris trip as the opportunity to weaken its neighbor. The Polish government gave support to his action which was arranged by František Jehlička. Before 1914, Jehlička was a member of the Slovak national movement. After 1918 he started to work for the Budapest government and he continued in his activities through the whole inter-war period. His goal was to reintegrate Slovakia into Hungary. One of his methods was to support the autonomist movement in order to weaken the Czechoslovak state. During his Paris trip, Hlinka probably did not know about Jehlička's true intentions and when he found out about them he did not cooperate with him in later years.

[13] Jindřich Dejmek, *Edvard Beneš: Politická biografie českého demokrata. Část první: Revolucionář a diplomat (1884-1935)* (Prague: Karolinum, 2006), 261.

[14] Čulen, *Pittsburghská dohoda*, 241-242.

[15] After 1918, Masaryk did not comment about his approval of Slovak autonomy declared in the Pittsburgh Agreement very often. He usually did so only when he was directly asked. Before the constitution was enacted in 1920, he did so after the appeal by Prime Minister Vladimír Tusar. In his reply Masaryk played down the importance of the agreement when he underlined the fact that it was concluded by American citizens. He also proclaimed that it was only one of many revolutionary programs drafted during the war. He used similar arguments during the audience with the People's Party deputation at his office in December 1922 when he stressed that the agreement was written only for America and the details of the state organization should have been made by Czechs and Slovaks in the new state. In his eyes

officials that Slovakia would have special Slovak economic and school offices, that the position of Czech and Slovak languages was the identical, and that the new County administration was going to give Slovakia some level of autonomy, even though not legislative. He also asked the Prague government to dispatch its representatives to America. Their goal would be to inform their American compatriots about the true picture of the development of Slovak public life in the new republic.[16]

At the end of 1919 and the turn of 1920, when work on the Constitution was nearing completion, a Catholic priest and former County official, Ladislav Moyš, active in the national movement already before 1918, travelled to the USA with social democratic MP Ján Pocisk. The goal of this bizarre duo of priest and atheist was to win over American Slovaks for the centralist government policies and persuade them that their support for Slovak autonomy as envisioned in the Pittsburgh Agreement was no longer necessary. During their American journey, they attended meetings where resolutions against autonomy as called for in the Pittsburgh agreement were passed. Their intention was to show that American Slovaks are content with the upcoming constitution. They claimed that the new republic gave Slovaks two times more than the Pittsburgh Agreement had ever promised them.[17] They also brought with them a letter from the Unification Minister, Slovak Milan Hodža. He was assuring the American audience that Slovakia was going to have its own economic, cultural and church self-government—everything promised by the agreement apart from legislative assembly. Its role would be temporarily substituted for by the so called Country Committee formed by the representative of individual County Committees.[18] The legislative assembly should wait for times of better political and especially

they did so with the constitution. In his book *Světová revoluce* from 1925 he noted that the agreement was signed only "to satisfy a small Slovak fraction which had been dreaming about God knows what independence." He also repeated that it was only an agreement signed by American Czechs and Slovaks. Róbert Letz, *Slovenské dejiny IV. 1918-1938* (Bratislava: Literárne informačné centrum, 2010), 64-65.

[16] Minár, *Američki Slováci*, 146-147.

[17] Čulen, *Pittsburghská dohoda*, 257-259.

[18] However, this Country Committee was not created. The main reason was the fact the County administration was carried out only in Slovakia and not in the Czech lands. This form of a proclaimed Slovak administrative autonomy was not transformed into reality. M. Hodža therefore decided that the Country administration according to the Czech model should be established also in Slovakia. It became reality in July 1928. In Slovakia a Country assembly was created. The centralists started to present it as a first step towards the autonomy of Slovakia. For the public they even tried to sell it as a fulfilment of the Pittsburgh Agreement. However, the reality was different. The Country assembly did not have any legislative powers. The Slovak country president was the head of the administration in Slovakia. He was the main official of the Prague's Ministry of Interior in Slovakia and therefore part of the centralist system. More on the development of administration in Slovakia see Xénia Šuchová, "Problémy organizácie politickej správy na Slovensku v predmníchovskej republike," in *Slovensko v Československu 1918-1939*, eds. Milan Zemko and Valerián Bystrický (Bratislava: VEDA, 2004), 95-122.

international position for the Czechoslovak state. Hodža also highlighted that in comparison with the Pittsburgh Agreement, the Slovak language was used as an administrative language not only in Slovakia, but thanks to its equal status with the Czech language also in the Czech lands.[19] The mission of Moyš and Pocisk travelled across the U.S. at a convenient time when a significant part of American Slovaks was critical towards People's Party, because Hlinka received the support of another country for his journey to Paris.[20]

Naturally, the so called Slovak question remained a hot topic in Slovakia even after the Constitution was approved and the life in the new state was consolidated. This topic included the whole spectrum of political, economic, cultural and social problems and it shaped political life in Slovakia during the whole inter-war period. The most discussed question was the problem of Czechoslovakism and the position of Slovakia within the republic. The discourse about Czechoslovakism was focused on answering the question of whether Slovaks are really part of the ethnic or at least political Czechoslovak nation[21] according to the language of the constitution, or if they are separate nation with their own specific language and culture. In the second case, they could apply the right for self-determination and aspire to some level of self-government on their territory. The attitude towards this question served also as the basic principle for the classification of political parties in Slovakia. Naturally, political parties were divided into leftist and rightist subjects according to their ideology. However, in Slovakia the main division was made by their position on the Slovak question. They were divided into two groups. The first one was represented by the centralist or Czechoslovak parties with headquarters in Prague, and the second one consisted of autonomist or Slovak parties. Parties from the second group were active only in Slovakia and the main goal of their programme was the implementation of Slovak autonomy within the republic. Logically, the Pittsburgh Agreement signed by the highest authority of the state—President Masaryk—played a major role in the struggle between centralists and autonomists. In its interpretation, especially during the 1920s, both groups were starting from different positions. For the centralists, Slovakia did not have enough of its own intelligentsia and people suitable for the role of officials and therefore needed Czech help. In contrast, the autonomists declared that Slovakia needed its self-government as a protection from the Czech influence.[22] According to them, the arrival of Czech officials, teachers and political parties was also bringing liberal, freethinking and anticlerical ideas to Slovakia, ideas which were alien to the strongly religious

[19] Čulen, *Pittsburghská dohoda*, 258-259.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 250.
[21] However, the majority of centralists also understood Czechoslovak unity only as a political unity. They supported this idea mostly as an instrument for keeping the state united and stable, because for them Czechoslovakia was the best solution for Slovaks in that time period. Therefore, any challenge to its unity was not welcomed and possibly dangerous. Apart from the few individuals already mentioned their support of this concept did not mean that they accepted the ideology about a unified ethnic Czechoslovak nation like the majority of Czechs did.
[22] Čulen, *Pittsburghská dohoda*, 158.

Slovak population. The alleged result was the consequent Czechisation of the country.[23] Both camps naturally interpreted the Pittsburgh Agreement very differently. There are also clear differences in their interpretation in the 1920s and then during the 1930s.

As I have already mentioned, the Slovak People's Party was the most significant proponent of the autonomist political position in inter-war Slovakia. When demanding the implementation of Slovak autonomy with its own legislative assembly into the Czechoslovak constitution, it always used the Pittsburgh Agreement and the signature of President Masaryk as a strong argument. Although in 1925 it became the party with the strongest electoral support in Slovakia, apart from two short years at the end of 1920s when it was briefly part of the government coalition, it was always in opposition. Thanks to the unitary political system, the People's Party was only a marginal party in Czechoslovak politics with limited influence. As a result, it did not have any chance of passing autonomy legislation in the parliament. During the first Czechoslovak Republic, the party submitted three proposals, in 1922, 1930 and 1938, for a Slovak autonomy law to the Prague parliament. Neither of the first two proposals received the required support of enough deputies to be passed from the parliament committee to the session of the assembly, and therefore they were not even discussed in parliament. The second strongest Slovak autonomist party was the Slovak National Party. In contrast with the mostly Catholic-oriented People's Party, the majority of its members were Slovak Lutherans. The National Party could not help the People's Party very much in the struggle for autonomy because its support among Slovak voters was only marginal. The People's Party called the Pittsburgh Agreement the Magna Charta of the Slovak nation whose provisions must be fulfilled. The party summarized its reasons for the implementation of autonomy during the audience of its MPs and senators at the Office of the President in December 1922. They declared that they demanded autonomy because of several actions of Prague government in Slovakia which they considered to be against the Christian spirit of the Slovak nation—bringing 21 Catholic high schools in Slovakia under state control, in their eyes several other injustices against the church, placing Czechs before Slovaks in state offices in Slovakia, or the post-war economic crisis in Slovakia.[24] This claim, that the central government was not solving the problems of Slovakia, became for the party the constant reason for demanding autonomy. In other words, only the legally elected representatives of the Slovaks had the right to make decisions about Slovakia.

In 1925, a leading article in the party daily newspaper was published on the anniversary of the Pittsburgh Agreement. It claimed the right to autonomy as God's Law and demanded that every Slovak household put the photo of the Pittsburgh

[23] "Poslanci a senátori slovenskej ľudovej strany pred pánom prezidentom," *Slovenská pravda*, n. 52, 24 December 1922, 1.
[24] *Ibid*.

Agreement on the wall right next to the picture of the Madonna.[25] On the fifth anniversary the party even published a monothematic issue of its daily newspaper. Various authors reacted to the claims of their opponents that their MPs also voted for the constitution with the reminder that on that day they issued a testimonial in the constitutional and legal committee of the parliament in which they stated that they did not repudiate autonomy. They also declared the Pittsburgh Agreement to be a treaty which in their eyes sanctioned the entry of Slovaks into the common state. Here they came to a conclusion that the agreement should have automatically become part of the constitution. At the anniversary they also stressed that Slovaks fulfilled their obligation from the Agreement but Czechs did not, operating with the idea of "fake national unity."[26] Apart from other things they also expressed their hope that implementation of the Pittsburgh Agreement will would end the alleged antipathies of Slovaks against Czechs and could "strengthen their love towards the republic."[27] Since 1922, the People's Party could rely in its struggle for autonomy on the support American Slovak League, which after a temporary split finally started to openly support the autonomist movement in Slovakia.[28]

On the other hand, Slovak centralists continued with the same approach to the Pittsburgh Agreement as in the time of passing of the constitution when they issued a statement in parliament according to which the constitution secured for Slovaks "almost everything which was included in the Pittsburgh Agreement."[29] The centralist regime could rely particularly on two Slovak branches of Czechoslovak parties—the social democrats and especially the agrarian party. The second party became since 1925 clearly the best supported centralist political party in Slovakia with the largest membership. The party activities were also supported by dozens of affiliated organizations including economic, cultural, educational, gymnastic or professional organizations. Branches of other centralist parties were also active in Slovakia. These involved national democrats, national socialist, tradesman party, Czechoslovak People's Party or even the fascists, but their influence on Slovak society was very limited. They were usually able to win one or in the best case two seats in the parliament in Slovakia. Apart from those parties of course also the anti-system Communist Party and the political parties of Hungarian, German and Jewish minorities were active in Slovakia. With the exception of Communists they were not focused on the Slovak electorate.

Centralists very often spoke about the Pittsburgh Agreement and described it, following Masaryk, as a programme of mutual work of Czechs and Slovaks abroad during the war, and stated that it should not be understood as an obligation for the legally elected people's representatives.[30] They were very often trying to prove that

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[25] Andrej Hlinka, "Siedme výročie Pittsburghskej dohody,"*Slovák*, vol. 7, n. 122, 31 May 1925, 1-2.
[26]"Pittsburghská Dohoda po stránke samourčovacieho práva národov," *Slovák*, vol. 5, n. 120, 31 May 1923, 6.
[27] Ján Ferenčík, "Význam Pittsburghskej Dohody," *Slovák*, vol. 5, n. 120, 31 May 1923, 6.
[28] Minár, *Americkí Slováci*, 169.
[29] Karol Sidor, "V podstate všetko," *Slovák*, vol. 17, n. 124, 30 May 1935, 1.
[30] Čulen, *Pittsburghská dohoda*, 234.

the county administration which planned to install the so called Country Committee, where representatives of all six Slovak counties would gather, could be interpreted as the implementation of the Pittsburgh Agreement with its demand for a Slovak assembly.[31] Especially this cardinal point of the agreement was interpreted in multiple ways by the centralists. Some of them even claimed that there was no reason why the Slovaks could not consider the Prague parliament as their own assembly. The critique by autonomists that there are Czech judges and other officials working in Slovakia they usually confronted with various claims—for example that it was still better for Slovaks to listen to judgements in Czech than in the Hungarian language as had been the practice before 1918.[32] One of their most popular weapons was the claim that the legislative autonomy of Slovakia could lead the country once again under the influence of Hungary. They were also trying to turn the attention of the Slovak population to the fact that autonomy could not be considered as a medicine for all economic and social problems of Slovakia, as it was sometimes described by the autonomists. According to them, their everyday small work for Slovakia was far more significant than the bombastic slogans of the People's Party.[33]

In order to influence the opinion of American Slovaks, in 1923 the government dispatched another two-man delegation to the United States. This time it was led by the historical first Minister for Slovakia, Vavro Šrobár, who was accompanied by the Ministry of Education official, the Czech Václav Maule. Participants at the meetings with Šrobár passed resolutions which did not try to prove that the Pittsburgh Agreement provisions were being fulfilled, but that they were not valid for various reasons. Apart from other arguments they also claimed that the Slovak League did not have valid Charter in 1918 and was therefore legally non-existent or that American citizens were according to American law forbidden to intervene into affairs of other countries. The document was according to them not valid also because on the day it was signed there was a public holiday in the U.S and according to the law, treaties signed on such days are invalid or that Masaryk did not sign it as its patron, but only as a witness. In the American Slovak press supporting the government Šrobár even described the agreement as a "monstrous document."[34] The autonomist press in America and in Slovakia disproved those claims as false and cheaply fabricated quite convincingly.[35] It was clear that the goal of Šrobár's trip was to gain propagandist arguments for the domestic struggle against the autonomists and to prove that not all Slovaks in America supported the People's Party.

Explosive international situation and the new threats for the republic in the 1930s brought some new interpretations of the meaning of Pittsburgh Agreement

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[31] Ibid., 407.
[32] Karol Hušek, "Pittsburg ako všeliek slovenský," *Slovenský denník*, vol. 11, n. 125, 31 May 1928, 1.
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] "Pittsburgh odsúdil pittsburskú dohodu," *Slovenský denník*, vol. 6, n. 254, 7 November 1923, 1.
[35] "Monštrózny dokument," *Slovák*, vol. 5, n. 245, 11 November 1923, 3.

by both camps of Slovak politics. Naturally, for the autonomists it was still the cardinal argument for their autonomist programme and the Magna Charta of Slovaks. In the People's Party ranks, a young radical wing emerged. In contrast with the older generation of party representatives, they were ready to accept a new statehood platform for Slovakia, different from Czechoslovakia.[36] They viewed the Pittsburgh Agreement as an international treaty between Czechs and Slovaks. According to them, applying the self-determination principle Americans Czechs and Slovaks concluded a treaty which sanctioned the foundation of the republic and represented its basic cornerstone. As a result, all regulations of the Pittsburgh Agreement including the Slovak autonomy should have been implemented. In their view, the decision about Czechoslovakia at the Paris Peace Conference could be made only based on the text of the Pittsburgh Agreement. As a result, Slovaks could demand its implementation even at the international court of justice in the Hague.[37]

The official line of the party towards the Pittsburgh Agreement was presented at the beginning of 1938 by the deputy Martin Sokol in his parliamentary speech. He stressed that the party would never retreat from the idea of autonomy inserted in the agreement. He also summarized the older arguments about the political obligation of President Masaryk towards Slovakia which he made in Pittsburgh in 1918. He also highlighted the importance of the agreement because the Czechoslovak delegation had used it as a major argument for the incorporation of Slovak territory into the republic at the Paris Peace Conference at the end of the war. He also argued that arguments used by Czechs or Slovak centralist and by pro-Hungarian revisionists were quite similar. Both those camps, politically standing on opposite sides of the barricade, argued that the agreement concluded between American compatriots could not have any effectuality for Czechs and Slovaks in the new republic. According to Sokol, if it were true, then in fact the Czechoslovak delegation at the peace conference argued with void and noncommittal documents which nobody in Czechoslovakia believed was the truth. In his opinion, Slovaks had the same rights in the republic as did the Czechs and they were ready to stand up for them at the 20th anniversary.[38]

Changes were occurring also in the centralist camp of Slovak politics. Social democrats, the second most important centralist party active in Slovakia, were still holding the official line about the unified Czechoslovak nation. As a result, their representatives still usually downplayed the claim for autonomy in the Pittsburgh Agreement. In contrast, the position of the most important Czechoslovak party in Slovakia—the agrarian party, changed very significantly. Based on the initiative of its Slovak leader Milan Hodža[39] and the new younger generation of the party

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[36] Valerián Bystrický, "Zahraničnopolitické koncepcie politických strán na Slovensku koncom tridsiatych rokov 20. storočia," *Historický časopis* 48 (2000): 273-274.

[37] "Základná norma Československa," *Nástup*, vol. 6, 1 August 1938, 3.

[38] Parliamentary speech of deputy Martin Sokol in the Lower House of the Czechoslovak National Assembly, March 9, 1938. http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1935ns/ps/stenprot/ 137schuz/ s137001.htm

[39] Already during the 1920s Hodža several times disassociated himself from the idea of an ethnic Czechoslovak nation. At the beginning of the 1930s he came up with his original

representatives, agrarians came with the claim that Slovaks are indeed a specific nation. This nation forms only a political unit with Czechs and its expression is the common republic. Another concept supported by the agrarian party in Slovakia which was challenging the unitary state was the so called regionalism. In its Slovak version from this time period it was an effort to find solutions for the special needs of Slovakia, especially economic and social. These should have been carried out by special Slovak institutions and according to the protagonists of regionalism did not require changes to the constitution of the country.[40] In the summer of 1938 the agrarians were even ready to support the change of the position of Slovakia within the republic which could happen after the planned change of the constitution in relation to the Sudeten German crisis.[41] This plan was part of the complex proposal for changing the constitution of the country and became known as the Statute of Nationalities. Although this concept was agreed by the Czechoslovak government during the summer of 1938, it was not carried out because the Sudeten German Party did not approve it. The true goal of the party representing the German minority in Czechoslovakia was not to reach an agreement with the government but to increase the tensions in the republic, making atmosphere favourable for potential conflict with Nazi Germany.[42]

Agrarians were much more forgiving towards the Pittsburgh Agreement than their social democratic colleagues. In June 1938 they even published a leading article in their daily newspaper where they foreshadowed that the work of the Pittsburgh Agreement could be finished by extending the competences of the Slovak country assembly with some legislative powers in accordance with the Statute of nationalities.[43] Simultaneously, they were highlighting the possible danger which they saw in cooperation between the People's Party and the parties of the Hungarian and German minorities.[44] In their eyes the People's Party was ready

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concept about two nationalisms, Czech and Slovak. According to him, the synthesis of these two nationalism in the republic was created a special state or political Czechoslovak nationalism. With this concept he declared his support for the idea of a Czechoslovak political nation. In 1935 Hodža became the prime minister of Czechoslovakia and he needed a concept which would not be against the official Czechoslovak ideology of the state. He therefore formulated his view on the Slovak question which would not challenge the idea of Czechoslovak nation openly. In Central Europe, where in contrast to the West not the political, but the ethno-linguistic concept of nation dominated, it was a crucial thing. Vladimír Zuberec, "Čechoslovakizmus agrárnej strany na Slovensku v rokoch 1919-1938," *Historický časopis* 27 (1979): 518-524.

[40] Samuel Cambel, *Štátnik a národohospodár Milan Hodža 1878 – 1944* (Bratislava: VEDA, 2001), 61.

[41] Valerián Bystrický, "Národnostný štatút a štátoprávne programy na Slovensku roku 1938," in *Od autonómie k vzniku Slovenského štátu* (Bratislava: Prodama s. r. o, 2008), 86-87.

[42] Zdeněk Kárník, *České Země v éře první republiky (1918-1938). Díl třetí: O přežití a o život (1936-1938)* (Prague: LIbri, 2003), 536-543.

[43] "K dokončeniu pittsburského programu," *Slovenský deník*, vol. 21, n. 131, 5 June 1938, 1.

[44] At the end of 1937 and the turn of 1938, Hungarian opposition parties and the Sudeten German party were trying to create an autonomist front which would also involve the People's Party. Several negotiations took place among their representatives and the party

to cooperate with those against whom the Pittsburgh Agreement was aimed. Therefore, the People's Party was the one that was breaking its ranks.[45]

In general, traditional attitudes towards the Pittsburgh agreement were still dominant among Slovak agrarians. These attitudes were well represented in the detailed analysis published by a young member of the party, Jozef Lettrich, who was also a lawyer. Agrarians still stressed that the agreement was not a legally obligatory document. As a result, the claims of People's Party to enforce its implementation legally were absurd. Lettrich underlined that the text of the agreement in fact resulted from a secret and informative conference. Therefore it was not possible to make it part of the constitution. Agrarians also stressed their old opinions that the majority of its regulations had been already carried out in the republic.[46]

The long-running conflict over the interpretation of the Pittsburgh Agreement culminated in Slovakia in May and June 1938, during the visit of the Slovak League delegation. It was its 20th anniversary and the delegation brought its original to Slovakia. In contrast to the People's Party, agrarians did not stress that the delegation came to Slovakia because of the Pittsburgh Agreement anniversary, but they highlighted the 20th anniversary of the republic.[47] There is a strong contrast in accent on different events among the two parties. The Slovak agrarians in particular were trying to win over some more moderate members of the delegation for their cause. However, the majority of the delegates under the leadership of Peter Hletko supported the People's Party. They even agreed to make a significant and symbolic gesture when they decided that after crossing the borders they would not travel directly to Prague, but first they would visit the People's Party chairman Andrej Hlinka at his presbytery in Ružomberok.[48] On June 5 they presented the original of the agreement at a People's Party rally in Bratislava and gave support to its third and final proposal for autonomy which was published in the party press.[49] This proposal was submitted to the parliament only in November in a new political situation. On September 30, Czechoslovakia had accepted the Munich Agreement and ceded large bordering territories with German population to Germany. The position of the Prague government was significantly weakened. The situation had changed. Czech politicians together with Slovak centralists realized that the damaged republic needed an immediate solution of the Slovak question. As a result, this final proposal served as the basis for the Slovak autonomy law agreed by other

chairman Hlinka. However, a final agreement was not reached and the common front was not created. Letz, *Slovenské dejiny IV*, 204-205.

[45] "Čo najdú americkí Slováci?," *Slovenský deník*, vol. 21, n. 118, 20 May 1938, 1.

[46] Jozef Lettrich, "Dvaciate výročie t. zv. Pittsburghskej dohody," *Politika*, vol. 8, n. 10, 1 June 1938, 120-123.

[47] "Celé Slovensko uvíta amerických krajanov," *Slovenský deník*, vol. 21, n. 117, 19 May 1938, 1.

[48] Róbert Arpáš, *Autonómia: víťazstvo alebo prehra?. Vyvrcholenie politického zápasu HSĽS o autonómiu Slovenska* (Bratislava: VEDA, 2011), 118-119.

[49] Valerián Bystrický, *Zahraničnopolitické súvislosti vzniku Slovenského štátu 14. marca 1939* (Bratislava: VEDA, 2014), 63.

political parties active in Slovakia (with the exception of the Communists) in October and accepted by the Czechoslovak parliament in November 1938. Nevertheless, it came at a time when the first Czechoslovak republic was already wrecked and authoritarian regimes in both parts of the country were being created. It was the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Slovakia.

During the whole inter-war period a sharp struggle was going on in Slovak politics between centralists and autonomists. Disputes about the interpretation of the Pittsburgh Agreement was a significant part of this struggle. Against the background of this political struggle about a Slovak or Czechoslovak nation, another important process was simultaneously going on in Slovakia. Despite the official Czechoslovakist ideology and the unitary state, during the two decades in the democratic Czechoslovak republic, with its Slovak educational system and development of Slovak culture, the Slovaks were transformed into a modern European nation. In contrast with the situation before 1918, this nation was comprised of all social classes including numerous intelligentsia and businessmen. The Slovak language was used in schools and offices, hundreds of Slovak books and periodicals were published every year. Many Slovak economic and cultural institutions were active. In 1928, Slovakia was for the first time established as a separate administrative body. The Pittsburgh Agreement and the year 1918 therefore represent a significant milestone of Slovak history.

Slovakia and the Making of Czechoslovakia: Controversies and Legacies

Carol Skalnik Leff

Approaching this question as a political scientist, I want to look at the emergence of the independent Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 as a critical juncture which crystallized the previous informal pattern of Czech-Slovak interactions and shaped the path of future development.

Let me start with something of a paradox. Czech and Slovak cultural and educational institutions jointly prepared to celebrate and commemorate the centennial of a state that no longer exists, and that was in fact dissolved by leaders of the two federal republics in 1992. By contrast, this past February in former Yugoslavia, Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić suggested to his Croatian counterpart Kolinda Grabar Kitarović that they observe a moratorium on *any* discussion of their past.[1] Thus, 1918 as a critical juncture in Czech-Slovak relations, is one that created long-term tensions that led to the dissolution of the state but that nonetheless left the possibility of joint commemorations of its founding. In this study, I look at both the concrete legacies in political contestation over time and the way in which the foundational events have been framed and commemorated by successive regimes and their publics.

I am a political scientist, not a historian, although one who has studied the past as well as the present. In my field, the last scholarly generation began to insist, in the teeth of years of rational choice theory borrowed from economics and cross-sectional large N analysis, that history matters. This was not a revelation to me, because I never thought it didn't. The question, rather, is *how* it matters. I adopt the vocabulary of the historical turn in political science to identify 1918 and its surrounding developments as a critical juncture in Czech-Slovak relations. Giovanni Capoccia defines critical junctures as "situations of uncertainty in which decisions of important actors are causally decisive for the selection of one path of … development over other possible paths."[2] It is not at all that the issues and political tendencies existing before the establishment of the state were irrelevant, but rather that relationships that had previously been informal and then disrupted in the wartime setting were now crystallized, embedded in an institutionalized political-economic setting where need for concrete decisions clarified the rules of the game but also engendered longer term stresses on the system.

The English version of Slovak Foreign Ministry website on 1918 (Slovaks don't need to be told their history by the Foreign Ministry) makes the execution of the statehood project sound deceptively simple:

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[1] Damar Pilic, "Dear Vucic, What Should We Talk About?" *Balkan Insight* 12 February 2018, http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/blog/dear-vucic-what-would-we-talk-about-then--02-09-2018

[2] Giovanni Capoccia, Critical Junctures, *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Institutionalism* Edited by Orfeo Fioretos, Tulia G. Falleti, and Adam Sheingate (Oxford University Press, 2016), http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199662814.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199662814-e-5.

> The decision taken in Martin was preceded by the efforts of the Slovak and Czech community in America (the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Agreements); the coordination of the overseas resistance; the organization of the legia, the armed troops of Czechs and Slovaks who fought on the side of the Allies; the establishment of the Czecho-slovak National Council and, of course, the diplomatic activities of Tomáš G. Masaryk and Milan R. Štefánik.[3]

But here I want to look at three interrelated areas in which the territorial and institutional establishment of the state had long-term consequences, not because subsequent arrangements remained stable but because formalizing a common state in emergency situations required making choices without the time for consensus and left open questions. So in the first section, I will be looking at three dimensions of the choices made in 1918. The first is the way relations among ethnic groups in the new state were "securitized"—understood in terms of internal and international threat—from the outset; in this context I focus on the logic and ambiguities of "Czechoslovakism." The second emphasis is on the fact that statehood meant embedding the Czech-Slovak relationship in formal institutions, in particular the unitary state and the system of parties and elections. Finally, I look at the way these institutions, and the unresolved character of the Czech-Slovak relationships consolidated an asymmetric relationship between the Czech political leaders and the Slovak leaders they trusted, or failed to trust. This was a triadic leadership structure in which some Slovaks were embraced by Prague as trustworthy colleagues and others deeply suspected as challengers to the Czechoslovak project, or even perceived as separatists

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Securitization of Identity Issues

The first focus is on what in other contexts has been termed the "securitization" of identity issues.[4] That is to say that multi-ethnic states may find—or at least perceive—that a multi-ethnic state can threaten the internal cohesion and external relations of the country; in that case being responsive to the claims of minority groups then appears as a security threat.

The founding of Czechoslovakia created a status reversal for two substantial, and substantially unhappy minorities, Germans and Hungarians, whose position in a new Czechoslovak state did raise serious security concerns. Worse still, both groups populated sensitive border areas. It was these security concerns that helped to frame the contentious idea of Czechoslovakism that linked Czechs and Slovaks as a hybrid state-forming (*štátotvorný*) nation.

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[3] Foreign Ministry of the Slovak Republic, 1918 - Creation of the Common State of Czechs and Slovaks, Slovaks through the Centuries, https://www.mzv.sk/web/en/slovakia/slovaks-through-the-century/1918-creation-of-the-common-state-of-czechs-and-slovaks

[4] Gwendolyn Sasse, "Securitization or Securing Rights? Exploring the Conceptual Foundations of Policies towards Minorities and Migrants in Europe," *JCMS Journal of Common Market Studies*, 43:4 (November 2004): 673-693.

Masaryk made a direct link between the Czech and Slovak state project and the minority issue. Together, he said in 1916, a Czecho-Slovak alliance "would raise the Slav majority of the population to almost nine million, and be so much the stronger vis à vis the minority."[5]

The situation in 1918, of course, was fraught with uncertainty and high levels of insecurity in two related ways that were consequential for the Czech-Slovak bargain. The best scenario for the construction of a new state is of course a sustained period of negotiation in otherwise stable circumstances. This of course was not the case in 1918. In the first place, Czecho-Slovak reciprocity did not have a clear political agenda before World War I or even a coherent structure of interaction, much less a program for Czech/Slovak statehood. And the wartime context for interaction was far too constrained for any systematic deliberations about a future joint state. Communication between Czechs and Slovaks within Austria-Hungary was effectively censored during the war. Starting in the spring of 1918, newspapers from Bohemia were forbidden to circulate in Hungary and of course the local press did not report on subversive matters such as the decision-making and revolt in Prague or the exile and émigré efforts of the increasingly successful Czechoslovak National Council abroad.

Even cautious movement on a new post-war order would of course be treason in wartime, and indeed important leaders of the subsequent Czechoslovak state were imprisoned and even sentenced to death in the course of the conflict. A key contact person with the émigré independence movement, Šrobár, was jailed for his assertion of Slovak rights to self-determination in May 1918, and released only in October as the empire began to collapse. He immediately left for Prague, where he served as the Slovak point person on the Czechoslovak National Council that issued the independence declaration on October 28.[6]

The well-known fact that the Martin Declaration was issued without knowledge of the proclamation from Prague a few days earlier is emblematic of a much broader lack of contact and deliberation over the future of Czech-Slovak relations. It is further symptomatic of that disconnection that the Martin Declaration itself was slightly revised before public dissemination to take into account the developments of which the Martin signatories had not been aware.

The dire security situation immediately after independence was also a bar to measured deliberation. Although the historic boundaries of the Czech lands were a

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[5] Cited in Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia:The Making and Remaking of a State, 1918-1987* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1988), 35. The 1921 census bore out Masaryk's arithmetic. There were indeed nine million "Czechoslovaks"; the Czechs and Slovaks were not counted separately, but the regional distribution of "Czechoslovaks" in Slovakia suggests that two of the nine million were Slovaks.

[6] Eva Irmanová, *"Negotiations with Slovaks and the Struggle of the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments for Slovakia," Central and Hungarian Minority Policy in Central Europe, 1918-1938, edited by Ferenc Eiler and Dagmar Háková, (*Prague: Masarykův ústav and [Archiv] Akademie věd ČR; Budapest: MTA Etnikai-nemzeti Kisebbségkutató Intézete, 2009*), 8.*

clear basis for territorial claims, the negotiation of a Slovak boundary with Hungary was less clear in the run-up to postwar treaty negotiations. Slovensko (or Upper Hungary, or *Felvidék*) had no defined legal or political boundaries within Hungary. Moreover, the Slovak National Council had no real control over even the areas in which Slovaks were ethnically dominant. Czechoslovak troops were necessary to establish order in the newly declared state to remove Hungarian troops, counter resistance from local Hungarian officialdom and to forestall the emergence of breakaway regions. The spillover of Bela Kun's Hungarian Revolution in 1919 only intensified the threat level. As Pavol Blaho wrote to his long-time colleague, Vavro *Šrobár*, "Vavro, only iron centralism will save us!" Centralism could be underpinned with an overarching Czechoslovak identity.

It is in this securitized context that one can situate the unhappy consequences of Andrej Hlinka's unauthorized journey to the Paris Peace Conference in September and October 1919. Arriving with a cohort that subsequently remained abroad, he challenged the direction of new state's policy toward Slovakia, the failure to implement the Pittsburgh Accord's autonomy promises and the dictatorial crisis powers accorded to Vavro *Šrobár*. Czechoslovak authorities at home regarded this as a deliberate attempt to destabilize the fledgling country and interned him on his return until April 1920.

Nor is this context of crisis decision-making on the Czech-Slovak relationship unique. It launched a pattern of such deliberation on the revision of Czech-Slovak relations; consider that the *Žilina* Accords of 1938 granting Slovakia autonomy, the *Košice* Program of 1945 establishing the principle of *rovný s rovným* (equal with equal), and the federalization of the communist state in 1968 all occurred in the context of international conflict and crisis. And, not incidentally, the rapidly-achieved but often highly general understandings of each of these documents was subsequently subject to erosion or contestation.

In 1918, then, the implementation of the idea of Czech-Slovak reciprocity would take form in a threatening environment that seemed to enhance its value as an anchor to the state. This was tricky. There were fundamental ambiguities about the concept of Czechoslovakism, not only what was meant by it generally, but what individual articulators or critics of the idea meant by it in the lead-up to 1918. Embracing Czecho-Slovak reciprocity might mean a political project or an ethnic one. Proponents might regret or affirm the codification of two separate languages. Even a convinced Czecho-Slovak like Vavro *Šrobár* clearly saw Slovak as a distinct language. Different political strands of Czech and Slovak activity—religious, economic, liberal—had embraced different interlocutors across the border of the Dual Monarchy. Slovak Catholics might seek ties with Moravian Catholics, for example, but came to distrust Masaryk's progressive moral philosophy. Czech critics of the importance of Czech-Slovak engagement even saw it as a complication to a project that centered on the ethnically mixed historic lands of Bohemia and Moravia—a project that made legitimacy claims on the grounds of historically

defined territory rather than in conjunction with a pure ethnic self-determination story.[7]

And yet the preamble to the 1920 constitution pronounces in the name of "We, the Czechoslovak nation." In the context of the state-building project and its insecurities, if Czechoslovakism had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent it. As communist MP and journalist Karl Kreibich put it in 1924, "the thing needed was an immediate a priori Czechoslovak nation…created by decree."[8]

1918 was the critical year in the trajectory of the term "Czechoslovak," because it was only in the context of independent statehood that the Czechoslovak idea could begin to be translated into institutional and territorial form. Consider some of the ambiguities in the Martin Declaration itself, the key document in the formal adherence of Slovakia to the new state. The declaration opens by referring to the Slovak National Council of the "Slovak branch of a single Czechoslovak nation" (*slovenskej vetvy jednotného československého národa*); "Czecho-Slovak" is sometimes hyphenated in the document and sometimes not. But while affirming Slovaks to be "part of a linguistic and cultural-historical Czecho-Slovak nation" (*čiastka i rečovo i kultúrno-historicky jednotného česko-slovenského národa*), it is not individual Slovaks but the Slovak nation itself that is deemed part of the larger Czecho-Slovak nation, and the terms Slovak nation and Slovak people also appear half a dozen times in the brief document.[9] What does it mean that one nation is part of another? That was yet to be determined. Crystallizing such an amorphous concept into functional terms was bound to be controversial.

This was especially true because the idea of a Czechoslovak nation was at one and the same time an assertion, an aspiration and a project. The assertion in the key documents of 1918 was of course a necessary legitimating claim for a diverse range of views in an uncertain international context. Aspirationally, adherents to the concept spoke frequently of a "will to unity," a formulation that dealt neatly with the problems with more objective criteria such as shared history and language. The need to achieve and maintain a viable state "seemed to require that 'Czechoslovakism' be simultaneously regarded as an irrefutable fact (for strategic and rhetorical purposes) and as a goal to be pursued in the formulation of public policy."[10] One could characterize the project's goal as a Czech economic and cultural mission to the Slovaks that would raise Slovaks to Czech developmental levels. Slovak schools and forms of adult political socialization were a key focus in this regard. Masaryk relied on them to close the identity and development gap: "We

[7] Carol Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State* (Boulder, Co. Westview Press, 1997), 33. See also Hugh Agnew, "New States, Old Identities? The Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Historical Understandings of Statehood." *Nationalities Papers* 28, no. 4 (2000): 619-650.

[8] Karl Kreibich, "The National Question in Czechoslovakia," *Communist International*, no. 2 (1924): 59.

[9] DOKUMENT: Deklarácia slovenského národa, *Sme*, October 28 1998. https://www.sme.sk/c/2169401/dokument-deklaracia-slovenskeho-naroda.html

[10] Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia*, 135.

are founding Slovak schools. It is necessary to await the results. In one generation there will be no difference between the two branches of our national family."[11]

There could also be some ambiguity about embracing Slovak identity itself in the immediate aftermath of the November 1918 armistice. In the changed circumstances of defeat in war, Slovak as an identity formed the cornerstone of extended Hungarian maneuverings to preserve its territorial integrity in the lead-up to the peace conference decisions. Successive liberal, revolutionary and conservative Hungarian governments between 1918 and 1920 distanced themselves from the policies of the "old" Hungary, proffering various autonomy plans for the minorities and funding or supporting multiple groups that claimed to speak for the true interests of the Slovaks and that disseminated anti-Czech propaganda.[12] Hungarian leaders encouraged the emergence of the short-lived "Eastern Slovak Republic" under its protection in December 1918. Earlier in 1918, the Hungarian government had rejected the federalization plans offered by Emperor Karl; the subsequent autonomy plans were controversial within the Hungarian elite among those who resisted any move to decentralize power; for those reasons, it is not surprising that many viewed these overtures and stratagems with some skepticism.

The lure of Hungarian autonomy proposals was not ultimately a strategy that worked. However, what it did do was to confuse the political landscape, and entangle assertions of a separate Slovak identity with the tactics of Budapest. As James Mace Ward notes, when Jozef Tiso publicly embraced Slovak identity "above all" in fall 1918, the timing was such as to coincide with the reconfiguration of the Hungarian stance on its minorities, and it left unresolved what a Slovak identity would mean for the eventual choice of state.[13] Even the Slovak National Council was a body constituted with Hungarian permission as part of a larger accommodation of individual national councils.

The security concerns for the survival of the state and its territorial integrity that were part of the construction of state-forming nation and its Czechoslovakist underpinnings continued to be central to the future securitization of identity claims. Fears of Hungarian irredentist activity (at times exaggerated but very real) and of German discontent with their position in the state dogged the interwar state and shaped its behavior. The 1923 Law for the Protection of the Republic allowed for censoring and distribution restrictions on media and police monitoring of public assemblies for signs of subversion, with special attention to the expression of identity grievances. Further restrictions on propaganda and a prophylactic law on the defense of the state passed in 1936 directly targeted Sudeten Germans. The securitized German question, and the policy barriers it raised to institutional

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[11] Cited in Ibid., 138.

[12] Miroslav Michela, "Plans for Slovak Autonomy in the Policy of Hungary, 1918-1920," *Historický časopis*: Historického ústavu SAV, 2010, 58, supplement, 53-82. On the boundary negotiations, see the detailed study by Dagmar Perman, *The shaping of the Czechoslovak state: diplomatic history of the boundaries of Czechoslovakia, 1914-1920*. (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1962).

[13] James Mace Ward, *Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2013)

reconfiguration of the state, culminated of course in the Nazi dismantling of the state and the post-war expulsion of the German population.[14]

In this context, the fulfillment of any Slovak autonomist aspirations would mean the dangerous claims of "German regions to the Germans, Magyar regions to the Magyars."[15] Indeed, under the 1923 law, Slovak autonomist MPs in the National Assembly faced parliamentary immunity hearings at a rate that was proportionately three times the frequency of even the German delegates, and HSĽS public meetings were monitored by the police.[16]

Interestingly, however, Slovak claims for greater decision-making authority survived as security issues into the communist period, as the rationale for centralized authority now became entwined with the entrenchment of party rule. Hence the trial of suspect Slovak party members for "bourgeois nationalism"—a term of criticism first aired at the Slovak Communist conference in Žilina in August 1945 and criminalized in the trials of 1954, where nationalism was improbably linked with "West German revanchism" and western imperialism more generally.[17]

1918 as Critical Juncture in institutional terms

A fundamental significance of 1918 is that it paved the way to codify Czech-Slovak relations that had been informal or ambiguous into concrete institutional form. Independent statehood meant regularized political, social and economic interactions that had previously been out of the control of the Czech and Slovak actors. Institutions are "sticky"—initial patterns of choice can be persistent—which of course is the whole point of institutions; they provide stability. As Paul Pierson argues, "despite massive social, economic, and political changes over time, self-reinforcing dynamics associated with collective action processes mean that organizations have a strong tendency to persist once they are institutionalized."[18] So the choices made in the crisis period surrounding the establishment of the state did resist adaptation and created an irritant in Czech-Slovak relations thereafter.

I want to focus on two central elements of the institutional environment, the unitary state and the party system, and their interactive effects. The institutional framework that governed the new state was centralist in conception, despite émigré and internal efforts for Slovak autonomy. The Pittsburgh Agreement and its provisions for Slovak institutions has been discussed in detail in this volume, so I

[14] See the excellent studies by Benjamin Frommer, National Cleansing: Retribution against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia (Cambridge University Press 2005) and Eagle Glassheim, "National Mythologies and Ethnic Cleansing: The Expulsion of Czechoslovak Germans in 1945," *Central European History*, 33:4 (2000), 463-486.

[15] Foreign Minister Eduard Beneš, cited in Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia*, p. 137

[16] Ibid., 208-209.

[17] Most of the suspect nationalists were first shunted into government rather than party positions. Then in 1951 they were expelled from the party before indictment and subsequent trial.

[18] Pierson, "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics." *The American Political Science Review* 94:2 (2000): 258-259.

will only comment briefly on its inception in May 1918, when political Czech and Slovak activists on the home front were in no position to confer or enunciate the details of a joint goal. The Pittsburgh agreement is notable in two respects. In the longer term, it marked the opening round of decades of contestation over documents, including those created in subsequent critical junctures—crisis and transitional periods (the *Žilina* Accords of 1938, the *Košice* Accords of 1945, the 1968 federal constitution). These successive agreements promised the (re)settlement of the state's institutional framework on a mutually acceptable basis, and each in turn was subsequently eroded or displaced.

In the shorter term, the disruptions and uncertainties of post-war period 1918-1920 described above created a climate of threat that undercut the case for institutional decentralization. Centralized institutional direction was first evident when the provisional government appointed Vavro Šrobár Minister with Full Powers for Slovakia (*minister s plnou mocou pre správu Slovenska*) and sent him from Prague to deal with the crisis of control over Slovak territory. (An assessment of his life work on the 150th anniversary of his birth headlined the article "the first Slovak dictator").[19] The 1920 constitution embedded central authority in the framework of a unitary state, the absence of Slovak autonomous institutions only highlighted by the constitutional provision for autonomy for Carpatho-Rusyns. Indeed, at the time, even the autonomists were uncertain whether the time was ripe for autonomy; Hlinka voted for the 1920 constitution, although many Slovak MPs canvassed the prospects for Slovak institutions in the future.

The second important institutional framework was that of the electoral system and its attendant political parties. There is nothing at all unusual, of course, about the adoption of a proportional representation system in European parliamentary politics. Its overlay on Czechoslovakia's diversity, however, created a complex partisan picture. The Czech lands had a fairly well developed party system under Austrian rule, with recognizable European party families represented. Slovak opportunities in Hungary were considerably more limited. The resultant pre-war political alignments were rather inchoate, with movement in and out of the umbrella framework of the Slovak National Party; a maximum of pre-war seven MPs (in the1906 elections) in the Hungarian parliament was not a broad base for sorting out the ideological spectrum. But the seeds of the party system were there. As in the Czech case, the parties were segmented by class, religion and ethnicity. But perhaps the most distinctive and enduring feature for Czech-Slovak relations was the regional segmentation of the national party system.

[19] "Vavro Šrobár: Prvý slovenský diktátor, ktorý pri obrane Bratislavy neváhal brať rukojemníkov," *Denník* August 10, 2017: https://dennikn.sk/844296/vavro-srobar-pri-obrane-bratislavy-nevahal-brat-rukojemnikov-pre-skandal-s-obrazmi-zvazoval-aj-samovrazdu/**.** For a full appreciation of his role in the First Republic, see Baer, Josette, *A Life Dedicated to the Republic: Vavro Šrobár's Slovak Czechoslovakism*, (Ibidem Verlag, 2014).

In political science, we now call a party system "nationalized" if the parties have a foothold of support across a country's regions.[20] What would emerge from the crucible of 1918 is something different—Slovak parties never fully merged into a statewide party system; instead, the conflicting understandings of how the state ought to represent its component identities crystallized institutionally into a durably asymmetric form. After the first elections, only the Agrarians successfully operated in Slovakia to gain Slovak votes, Slovak Agrarians having merged with the Czech party. From the 1925 elections onward, the most electorally successful party in Slovakia by far were the Slovak populists, in what would soon become the Hlinka Slovak Populist Party (HSĽS). Vocally championing autonomy for Slovakia and vehemently critical of a "Czecho-slovakism" that failed to recognize a separate Slovak identity, the party garnered between 28 and 34 percent of the votes in interwar Slovakia. Table 1 shows the alignment of statewide and regionally-based forces in Slovakia, inclusive of Magyar voters.

Table 1: State and Regional Party Strength in Slovakia (Percentage of Total Vote)

	1920	1925	1929	1935
Statewide parties	66.0	28.0	40.5	38.7
Regional parties	26.8	45.2	44.2	44.3
Communist Party	--	13.9	10.7	13.0
Other Ethnicities	3.4	11.4	2.4	2.0

Source: *La Statistique tchecoslovaque*, vol. 1: *Les Elections a L'Assemblee national en avril 1920 (Prague 1922), 344-345; vol 70: Elections a La Chambre des deputes faites en Octobre 1929, 401, Ceskoslovenska statistka, vol. 31: Volby do Poslanecke snemovy v listopadu 1925 Prague 1926), 542-543, Manuel statistique de la Republique tchechoslovaque 1936 (Prague, 1937), 269,* reproduced from Carol Skalnik Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia,* p. 71.

What is particularly significant about this regionally segmented party system is that HSĽS, the largest Slovak party, was effectively excluded from the First Republic governance, participating only in a two-year experiment in the cabinet from 1927-1929 (the so-called Gentleman's Coalition). That effort, which failed to pay significant dividends in promoting more than increased administrative autonomy, ended in political upheaval; the HSĽS withdrew from government following the treason and espionage conviction of Vojtěch (Béla) Tuka, editor of the party organ *Slovák.*

[20] Mark P. Jones, Mark P. and Scott Mainwaring, "The Nationalization of Parties and Party Systems: An Empirical Measure and an Application to the Americas," *Party Politics*, 19:2 (2003) 139-166.

Hence the strongest force in Slovak politics was perennially in opposition, as indeed were the parties chosen by voters in Slovakia generally, as Table 2 shows.

Table 2: Electoral Strength of Governmental and Opposition Parties in Slovakia (Percentage of total vote)

	1925	1929	1935
Government Parties	32.4	41.3	34.5
Opposition Parties	67.6	58.7	65.5

Source: *La Statistique tchecoslovaque*, vol. 1: *Les Elections a L'Assemblee national en avril 1920 (Prague 1922), 344-345; vol 70: Elections a La Chambre des deputes faites en Octobre 1929, 401, Ceskoslovenska statistka, vol. 31: Volby do Poslanecke snemovy v listopadu 1925 Prague 1926), 542-543, Manuel statistique de la Republique tchechoslovaque 1936 (Prague, 1937), 269,* reproduced from Carol Skalnik Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia*, p. 72.

This pattern is significant in two respects. First, it is a direct legacy of the centralist constitutional bargain that emerged from the foundational decisions of the independence period, leaving a basic issue in Czech-Slovak relations unresolved but reflected in the party system. Second, it is also a direct legacy of the democratic bargain itself: the strongest Slovak party could not govern, but it had a significant parliamentary voice and platform for articulating grievances and proposals (what was known in interwar Europe as *Gravamenpolitik* or grievance politics). In later years, the communist system provided almost a reverse image of this situation: Slovakia had a National Council and eventually a federal state, its own communist party (KSS), but no democratic voice. Only after 1989 would a more "authentic federation" allow both voice and institutions. Tellingly, it was then that the party system collapsed into two entirely separate party subsystems, one in the Czech Republic and one in the Slovak, with no overlapping parties.[21]

The Triadic elite structure

The final legacy of the critical juncture of 1918 was a longstanding triadic structure of political elite interaction that only disappeared with the disappearance of the Czechoslovak state in 1993. Although the pre-war Czech-Slovak interaction was multifaceted, the crucible of state-building had the effect of aligning political forces in a more consistent institutional form. Slovak leaders like Vavro Šrobár or Ivan Dérer, trusted by the Czechs and close to Masaryk, now cooperated in statewide governance, while the populists were largely excluded. This pattern had become quite clear in the months immediately following the independence declarations of 1918, and was embedded in the party system. Indeed in the two

[21] Leff, *Nation versus State*, 97-102.

decades of the First Republic, only three Slovak figures occupied some 60 percent of all the cabinet posts assigned to Slovaks, Šrobár, Dérer and the more independent Agrarian Milan Hodža.[22]

This triangulation persisted in the communist period, although the distinctions are somewhat more difficult to track in the closed bureaucratic politics of such regimes. Nevertheless, the trials of the "bourgeois nationalists," and the conflicts over their rehabilitation that followed, are one clear marker of whom Prague trusted and who was suspect. Even the democratization of Czechoslovak politics after 1989 saw "federal" and republic-level Slovak political elites. This triangular elite dynamic, born in the aftermath of the First World War, is of course important because it signals the unresolved character of the Czech and Slovak relationship. Who was trusted in Prague and who suspected of Slovak nationalism remained part of the elite structure, and indeed was reflected after 1989 in the disconnect between the "Federal Slovaks" and those with a firm political base in the Slovak Republic.

Commemoration and the Framing of the Founding of Czechoslovakia

The legacies and controversies of the evolving Czech-Slovak relations after 1918 are also reflected in the politics of commemoration. 1918 and the events and personages surrounding the founding of the Czechoslovak First Republic fared variously as a focus of celebration in successive twentieth-century regimes in line with regime understandings of a usable past. Demarcated as a state holiday in 1919, October 28 was the most significant such observance in the calendar of the interwar republic—indeed the only national holiday[23]—suspended in the wartime Czech protectorate and reinstated in 1945.

Commemorations of 1918 under communism were awkward. Prior to February 1948, the communists launched a comprehensive critique of the politics and policies of the First Republic, while initially maintaining a central place of honor for Masaryk himself.[24] After the seizure of power, October 28 became "Nationalization Day," harking back to the nationalization decrees of 1945. At times demoted as a state holiday, it was steadily eclipsed by the Soviet Glorious October Revolution, conveniently nearby on the calendar and now credited by the communist regime as the central impetus for the Czechoslovak independence in the first place: "Without 7 November in Russia, There Would Have Been no 28 October 1918!"[25] Faced with the birthday centenary of Masaryk himself in 1950, the regime

[22] Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia.*

[23] See especially Vratislav Doubek, "28. říjen v československé státotvorné tradici a jeho role ve veřejném mínění,"in: *Křehké vítězství : 28. říjen v paměti Hradu. Proměny československé státnosti 1918-1948 (*Praha: Mladá fronta, 2008) 49-63. http://upol.ff.cuni.cz/admin/files/Texty/Doubek/28.-rijen-v-ceskoslovenske-statotvorne-a-jeho-role-ve-verejnem-mineni.pdf.

[24] Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, (Rowman & Littlefield), 2004.

[25]Jitka Sobotková, *Komunistické slavnosti v Československu v letech 1948–1989*, doctoral dissertation, Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Palackého v Olomouci, 2011,

backed away from him as well,[26] and launched a vituperative campaign to cast him as a manipulative schemer.

By 1988, when all important anniversaries were developing as sites of regime-opposition contention, the regime reinstated October 28 as a state holiday, and some party speakers even invoked the names of the Masaryk-Beneš-Štefánik troika.[27]

The communist framing of the date's significance for Slovakia was a more focused issue. On the one hand, it was valuable to reaffirm the joint Czech-Slovak national project and in fact after the 1968 federalization, October 28 also became the "Day of the Declaration of the Czechoslovak Federation." But the First Republic was unacceptable, demonized for its Czechoslovakism. Milan Štefánik, the first Minister of War of the Czechoslovak Republic, had been a unifying symbol in the First Republic, whose early death in the plane crash of 1919 somewhat protected his memory from becoming embroiled in the interwar controversies over Slovak identity.[28] Stamps bearing his image circulated during the interwar Republic, the war-time Slovak state, and in the postwar Czechoslovak government, before his symbolic resonance disposed the Communist government to retire him as they would Masaryk; he briefly reappeared on postage stamps in 1969 before normalization took full hold. Even as the uncensored press revived appreciation of the 1918 founders during the Prague Spring, in fact, hardliners like Vasil Biľak inveighed against the "mass psychosis" of adulating Masaryk and Štefánik,[29] prefiguring their return to oblivion or excoriation after the Warsaw Pact invasion. During the communist era, then, Štefánik's statues and commemorative sites were expunged only to reappear after 1989, when both Czechs and Slovaks were again free to acknowledge his contributions to the World War I negotiations that led to

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https://theses.cz/id/3gimy8/Disertan_prce.pdf; Abrams, Bradley F., *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, (Rowman & Littlefield), 2004.

[26] David Kejik, *"Masaryk patří minulosti": 100. výročí narození TGM ve stínu rudé hvězdy*, master's thesis, Masarykova univerzita, Brno, 2015, https://is.muni.cz/th/361594/ff_m/?lang=en;so=ta.

[27] Karen Gammelgaard, "The Discursive Battle in 1988 over the Czechoslovak State Holiday 28 October," *Scando-Slavica*, 57:01 (2011), 48-67.

[28] The political dynamics of his interwar "cult," however were somewhat complex. Masaryk and Eduard Beneš promoted him as part of a legitimating triumvirate that fought for Czechoslovakia's independence, while some suggest maneuvering behind the scenes to prevent his standing from rivaling their own. Michal *Kšiňan "Jedinec v spoločnosti*. Úvaha o biografickom prístupe na príklade M. R. Štefánika", Demokracia, Spoločnosť a Politika Na Medzivojnovom Slovensku, Forum *Historiae* 2010/01, http://forumhistoriae.sk/documents/10180/11520/ksinan.pdf. In addition, his legacy was more complex because, in common in some ways with Dubcek, his death in itself became a controversy and even a conspiracy theory. In many ways a partisan retrospective reading of the man can be judged by whether the interlocutor focuses on his life or his death. See also Peter Macho, "Milan Rastislav Štefánik v hlavách a v srdciach - Fenomén národného hrdinu v historickej pamäti," (Bratislava: Historický ústav SAV, 2011**)**

[29] Cited in H. Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 243.

recognition of Czechoslovakia.[30] Both the Bratislava airport (Letisko M. R. Štefánika) and the Slovak Armed Forces Academy are now named after him.

Prime Minister Peter Pellegrini enunciated the most common theme of official post-communist commemorations when he characterized the emergence of the Czechoslovak Republic as "a unique project that allowed the Slovaks to mature into a modern nation. Based on this experience, today we can develop a separate, modern and social state built on democratic values, fully accepted in international political, economic and security structures."[31] This was the standard official theme for Slovak commemoration in the post-communist period. Note that the accent is on what Czechoslovakia contributed to the realization of democratic Slovak statehood.

At the same time, 1918 is not an entirely consensual date in Slovak politics, reflecting the legacy of contestation over Slovakia's position in the joint state. Czechs are more enthusiastic in their retrospective evaluations of the founding of Czechoslovakia than Slovaks, by a margin of 83% to 68% respectively.[32] There has been something of a partisan divide in embracing the anniversary. Active commemoration of 1918 was most prominent among the partisans of Christian Democrats and SKDU in the post-communist period.[33] Some other political tendencies were more inclined to critique the unitary conceptualization of the state and its embrace of Czecho-slovakism, and to seek to rehabilitate Andrej Hlinka, whose association with the subsequent leaders of the wartime Slovak state had created profound ambiguities about his memory. Disagreements and uncertainties about how to treat the foundation of Czechoslovakia, then, problematized it as a readily usable past. Thus, October 28 is a public holiday in the Czech Republic, where the perceived continuities with the founding of Czechoslovakia are stronger and less conflicted. In Slovakia, October 28 was *not* a public holiday, but only a "commemorative" date. Only the centenary in 2018 was designated a public holiday, and the public holiday observed was that of the Martin Declaration, October 30.

Slovak social scientists and public opinion specialists, notably from the Sociological Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and non-governmental

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[30] Štefánik, then a French citizen and army officer, forged important links with the French government that facilitated both recognition of the exile government and the founding of the Czechoslovak Legions.

[31] "Dobré vzťahy s bratmi Čechmi ostali: Kiska, Babiš, Studenková povedali, čo pre nich znamenalo Československo!" *Novy cas*, October 29, 2018, https://www.cas.sk/clanok/759081/dobre-vztahy-s-bratmi-cechmi-ostali-kiska-babis-studenkova-povedali-co-pre-nich-znamenalo-ceskoslovensko/

[32] Paulina Tabery, "Rozdělení Československa: 25 let od vzniku samostatné ČR a SR," Inštitút pre verejné otázky and *Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění* ,Press report, December 5, 2017, https://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c2/a4464/f9/po171205.pdf

[33] See Carol Skalnik Leff, Kevin Deegan-Krause and Sharon Wolchik, "I Ignored Your Revolution, but You Forgot My Anniversary: Party Competition in Slovakia and the Construction of Recollection," edited by Jan Kubik and Michael Bernhardt, *Twenty Years after Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 120.

think tank IVO (Inštitút pre verejné otázky) have periodically assessed public perceptions of the founding period and its leadership, as well as other historical figures and periods. The centenary survey, a joint endeavor with Czech research institutions, focused on all the "eight-years" and other major watersheds, which offers a sense of the relative historical resonance of the joint state.[34] When asked to assess their attitudes to a series of historical dates and periods, Slovak respondents rated the First Republic very favorably. Nonetheless, it ranked only fifth after the Slovak National Uprising, Slovak independence in 1993, the Velvet Revolution, and EU membership. Czechs ranked it second only to the Velvet Revolution. Individuals most admired also differed somewhat in the two states but also considerably overlapped. Štefánik and Alexander Dubček led the Slovak list, with Masaryk third and Milan Hodža fourth. Masaryk led the Czech list, with Štefánik and Dubček also highly placed.

However, I don't want to distort the story. Only some forty percent of both Czechs and Slovaks reported positive feelings about the break-up of the common state even as late as 2017 (half approve the emergence of the independent states themselves), and opinion polls repeatedly show Czechs and Slovaks feeling more at home with each other than with any other group. The shared history never led to violence or even dislike.

Conclusion

In drawing up a balance sheet on Slovakia's inclusion in the Czechoslovak state, most historians and social scientists would probably agree that there were offsetting benefits and liabilities, although often emphatically not on how to weigh them.

What is clear is that the wartime restrictions on communication, and the emergency conditions under which the Republic gained independence in 1918, imposed serious constraints on any consensual deliberation and decision-making. As a result, the unresolved Slovak question was institutionally embedded in a centralized state whose structure was almost immediately contested, and supported

[34] Zora Bútorová and Paulína Tabery, "Osudové osmičky vo vedomí slovenskej a českej verejnosti: udalosti, obdobia, osobnosti 20. a 21. Storočia", Inštitút pre verejné otázky and *Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění*, Press Report, June 12, 2018, http://www.ivo.sk/buxus/docs//rozne/Osudove_osmicky_tlacova_sprava_SK.pdf. The view offered by the Czech and Slovak publics should be regarded with caution in some respects. In many cases, a lower approval rating is more a reflection of lack of familiarity (those who responded Don't Know) than of active judgment. For example, since 74% percent of the public answered Don't Know when asked to assess Milan Hodža, one can reasonably assume that the name itself was unfamiliar. A 2007 study, in which respondents volunteered their most admired figures rather than responding from a list, Dubček and Štefánik still topped the list. See Zora Bútorová and Oľga Gyárfášová "Andreja Hlinku vníma verejnosť ako kontroverznú osobnosť. Za zákon o jeho zásluhách by hlasovala iba štvrtina občanov". Inštitút pre verejné otázky, October 18, 2007. http://www.ivo.sk/buxus/docs/vyskum/subor/vyskum_Hlinka.pdf

by an ambiguous Czechoslovakism that was itself the immediate target of contestation. And these complications continue to echo in the centenary. These conflictual dynamics notwithstanding, the benefits side of the ledger is equally important. Without it, the pattern of mutual amity between the two groups, the non-violent "Velvet Divorce," and the possibility of Czech and Slovak sharing of the centenary celebrations would be incomprehensible.

Slovakia: One Hundred Years, Six Regime Changes and the Transition to Individual Sovereignty

Zuzana Palovic and Gabriela Bereghazyova

A short journey into the crevices of Slovak history reveals an extraordinarily complex and condensed process of coming into national sovereignty. For Slovakia, independence unfolded in 6 steps that brought with it a trailing of all the political ideologies that the twentieth century offered. Accelerated social, economic and political development was accompanied by sharp contrasts and severe traumas.

This fast procession of changes is seldom acknowledged in academic literature as a factor underpinning the Slovak present, including its successes and challenges. Yet, understanding this cycle of evolution offers precious insights into solutions for issues, as well as avenues to success on a global scale.

The unique historical experience that formed the Slovak independence and beyond, shaped the domestic skillsets and mindsets. Approaches that define Slovakia's competitiveness and competencies, but also its blind spots that still need to be addressed.

Part 1: Slovakia, 1918-2018—A Winding Path to National Sovereignty

Six regime changes in 100 years

During the course of the last century, Slovakia has transitioned through six different state entities.

The early decades of the twentieth century saw Slovakia as a part of the Kingdom of Hungary within the multi-ethnic conglomerate of Austria-Hungary.

In 1918, the end of World War I drastically altered the map of Europe (see the contribution by Kenneth Janda in this volume). The fall of four established empires, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Tsarist Russia and the Ottoman Empire left a power vacuum in its wake. In place of the vanished empires arose several new nation states, including Czechoslovakia.

The dramatic developments and challenging politics of central Europe, ultimately led to the outbreak of World War II, which witnessed the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. The Munich Agreement of 1938 reached a decision that allowed the German annexation of the Sudetenland. The decision made by foreign powers, eventually broke the country and Czechoslovakia was split, as the first independent Slovak state emerged.

The period of the Slovak state remains a contentious and sensitive issue. On the one hand, Slovakia was a Nazi satellite state under the control of Hitler, but on the other, it had a degree of agency the Slovaks had never before experienced. Whatever the case, the first taste of so called independence was bitter and constitutes a tainted chapter in Slovak history.

The end of World War II brought a renewal of Czechoslovakia and democracy to the region. However, this intermezzo only lasted until the communist coup of 1948 several years later. The takeover of power by one party, and the transition into

totalitarianism was greatly assisted by the Kremlin. Moscow considered Czechoslovakia to be an important piece of their geopolitical quest for power.

A divided Europe underpinned the Soviet stake in the global affairs during the Cold War. The advent of communism was marked by the reversal of democracy and basic freedoms, as well as the establishment of a surveillance state and centrally planned economy.

Twenty years into the regime, the Prague Spring of 1968 ushered in a period of political relaxation and a hope of a more democratic model of communism. Alexander Dubcek's moto "socialism with a human face" could be likened to the Scandinavian model of social democracy. As the boundary between the West and the East became more porous, Czechoslovakia began to open to the West. The trend of easing the tension and renewal of freedom came to a premature end in August 1968 when the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia with half a million soldiers. The event marked the end of the reform movement and the re-installation of totalitarian rule.

It took another two decades for communism to crumble in the region and in the world. A wave of revolution swept the entire Eastern Bloc and was only solidified by the demolition of the Berlin Wall. In Czechoslovakia, the Velvet Revolution of 1989 terminated four decades of totalitarianism and oppression and brought another great change.

After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the country embarked on a process of a fast transition towards free market democracy and re-integration with the West. The nature of the transition was not only political or economic, but also social and cultural. It brought a very different set of values and standards.

Greater liberty and more breathing space brought to the surface an unfulfilled Slovak aspiration for equality and autonomy within Czechoslovakia, one that eventually manifested as independence. After 75 years of existence, Czechoslovakia came to an end. In 1993, Slovakia gained complete political, territorial and economic independence.

Slovakia was faced with multiple challenges. It had to quickly build its national institutions, learn how to stand on its own two feet as a new country and integrate into international structures. Efforts and deep reforms of the state, society and economy brought rewards when Slovakia joined the EU and NATO in 2004, followed by the Schengen Agreement in 2007 and the Eurozone in 2009. The "return to Europe and the world" marked the last of the great political transitions of the last one hundred years.

Far from just ideological changes

From Austria-Hungary to Czechoslovakia, from the Slovak state to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, from a federation to an independent Slovakia and her ascension into the European Union, these were far more than superficial formal alterations.

The speedy transformation cycle: from feudalism to social interwar democracy, and from communism to a free market democracy, to ascent into the EU and NATO,

has left an imprint. The experience of living within all regimes of the last century, is unique on global scale. It underpins Slovakia's greatest challenges, as well as its dormant potential to become a twenty-first century leader in Central Europe.

The following section will explore the evolution phases and relate them to contemporary opportunities and issues that Slovakia is experiencing today. It will also cast more light on how the path the country took in the past century continues to affect the mindset and skillsets of the nation.

Change #1 1918: The Rise of Cultural Sovereignty and Nationhood

Towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Slovakia started to build its cultural and linguistic foundations. A sense of cultural awareness and ethno-linguistic identity was foster by the founding fathers of Slovak nationhood. At the time, Slovaks were not demanding independence from Austria-Hungary, but a greater autonomy and the right to their own language, culture and expression.

This call and activity came as a response to the uncompromising Magyarization policies implemented in the Kingdom of Hungary that sought to create a unified Hungarian nation. The empire spoke multiple languages and lagged behind Western Europe economically, and the Magyars hoped that this measure would modernize the country. The operation "one state, one nation, one language" came at the cost of wiping cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity of the population.

Slovakia was a part of a kingdom that was still largely feudal, power was concentrated in the hands of a few and much of the population lived in relative poverty. The so called "Slovak National Awakening" movement was spearheaded by a relatively small group of intelligentsia that identified with Slovak, rather than the dominant Hungarian identity. It meant turning away from the ruling and land-owning classes, in favor of the rural Slovak-speaking population. Although they formed a majority of the population of the country, they had little access to power in public and private sectors. These posts were occupied by those who identified with Hungarian or German identity.

The outbreak of World War I brought an opportunity to join the Czechs and form a shared country that would champion a Czechoslovak cause. As a result, Slovaks and Slovakia saw a dramatic improvement in their status and development. However, they also had little experience with governing themselves, directing an economy and society, and it was the Czechs who took ownership and led the new republic.

This led to significant disenchantment in Slovakia where people felt cheated of initial promises of equality. Moreover, the differences between the Czech and Slovak portions of the country were stark. While the Czech lands were one of the most advanced regions of the former empire, the Slovak lands were among the most underdeveloped, which further contributed to discrepancies and grievances.

The post-World War I development of Slovakia commenced immediately. The objective was to raise the Slovak standard, and this meant not only building the economy and institutions from scratch, but also shaping the Slovak mentality,

previously governed by peasant norms, and thereby creating fertile grounds for a middle class to emerge and educating the population. The way of living and thinking that Slovaks practiced for centuries had to be altered dramatically. This was a shift from being ruled to governing themselves, from being passive objects of power to taking power into their own hands. From passivity and servility, to active citizenship and ultimate leadership within the new union.

Change #2 1939: A Fall into Fascism

The progress was terminated in 1938-39 when Czechoslovakia was forced to accept the Munich Conference demand to surrender its German-inhabited border regions to Germany (Hungary and Poland also presented territorial demands and Slovakia lost territory to each). The state was re-configured as a federation, but in March 1939 Germany invaded and absorbed the Czech portion, presenting Slovak leaders with the ultimatum to declare independence or be left to Hungary's mercies. Slovakia became a satellite state of Berlin. The change also brought an ideological transition from interwar democracy to Nazi totalitarianism. After 21 years of democracy, which was a very short time for its principles to become firmly rooted in the society, Slovakia adopted a monolithic culture of following the orders dictated to them by a foreign power.

Slovakia actively implemented anti-Semitic policies which resulted in the decimation of the Jewish community and with them the loss of enterprising skills and know-how. Creativity and freedom was curbed as Slovakia was merely expected to obediently support Germany in its war efforts. The evolution of the human capital stalled and even backtracked. Some 90,000 Slovaks Jews were taken into concentration camps; very few survived and returned after the war, which cost the country critical skills, capacities and social networks.

Change #3 1948: The Advent of Communism

As World War II was coming to an end, the region was liberated by the Red Army and fell into the Soviet sphere of influence, following the Yalta Conference. Czechoslovakia was resurrected, but it was destroyed and traumatized. The society was looking for a better political and societal model, one that would prevent a similar scenario from repeating in the future.

The short 20 years of democracy before World War II had led up to the greatest armed conflict on the planet. The war forced Czechoslovaks to face some uncomfortable questions, including whether the democratic system and democratic leaders were a right fit for the country.

Furthermore, the enforced expulsions of ethnic Germans saw some 3 million people relocated from Czechoslovakia, including 120,000 in Slovakia. These were followed by population exchanges with the Hungarians, whereby 90,000 Hungarians were relocated to Hungary. Again, Slovakia lost precious and important human capital with skills critical to governing a state and an economy. It lost much its former administrative and governing elites.

In the midst of the turmoil, Czechoslovakia was desperate for any sense of peace, stability and prosperity as well as new leadership that would protect their interests. Communism offered an alternative; even before the war, the communist party had the largest membership of any communist party outside the Soviet Union. Which is why the Czechoslovaks gave the Communist Party a plurality of votes in the first elections of 1945, opening up its path to political power.

However, the communists wanted to secure total control, and a political coup under a fig-leaf of legality was orchestrated to secure it. After February 1948, Czechoslovakia became a part of the greatest political experiment of the twentieth century. In many ways, the changeover from democracy to communism, reflected the desire of the people, for a political and societal model based on egalitarian principles.

This event brought about another profound change. The rolling out of socialism required a great shift in the collective consciousness and the organization of society. Power was centralized in the hands of a single party, and the state expected conformity in thinking, behaving and living.

Diversity of thought and expression was done away with, individual agency was punished and instead the state taught the population to be passive and to fully reliant on the government. Private property was abolished and entrepreneurial *know-how* was made obsolete, as private business were banned, stifling creativity and innovativeness. In one big stride, the country re-oriented itself from the West to the East.

During the course of four decades of communism, Czechoslovakia lost much of its intelligentsia and merchant class to purges, professional discrimination as well as emigration. Over 123,000 Czechoslovaks fled from the country between 1945 and 1989. On the other hand, the Slovak part of Czechoslovakia in particular, actually benefited from rising living standards, systematic industrialization, access to free healthcare and education, and opening of professional opportunities to a wider population due to communist modernization.

Change #4 1968: Humane socialism

In the aftermath of Stalin's death, Czechoslovakia gradually experienced a period of alleviated pressure and heightened freedom. In 1968 this process rapidly accelerated as the country pioneered a different version of communism under the new party leader, the Slovak Alexander Dubček. Dubbed the "Prague Spring" abroad, the change made room for freedom of press, greater freedom of expression, relaxation of political, social and economic conditions and a gradual opening to the West.

The invasion of Warsaw Pact troops reversed all progress achieved and saw the return to totalitarianism, and political, economic and cultural stagnation. It also marked yet another psychological trauma when, after a period of opening and positive change, came an abrupt punishment accompanied by fear, punishment, and resignation.

Change #5 1989: The Resurrection of Democracy and National Sovereignty

The generational "changing of the guard," a worsening economic situation (including environmental devastation) and the unsustainability of the communist model in Europe led to the dissolution of the Iron Curtain. In Czechoslovakia, the Velvet Revolution ended 41 years of communist one-party rule, and ushered in a free market democracy. The country had to re-learn democracy, while building a market and civic society from scratch. Above all, the population was required to once again shift itself profoundly on the mental level: from universalism to pluralism, from collectivism to individualism, from control to governance. Once again, this was not just a change of the system, but also a process of re-orienting values, interests, and aspirations from East to West.

The Velvet Revolution gave rise on January 1, 1993 to the Velvet Divorce, which saw the peaceful separation of Czechoslovakia into two separate republics, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. For the first time in a millennium, the Slovaks were in charge of their sovereign state. With no experience of free market or self-governance, the population had to shift its thinking because for the first time, Slovakia had to govern itself.

This is when the lack of experience created fertile grounds for abuse of power and allowed unhampered self-interest to take over in the public and private sectors. Slovakia slipped into the old familiar ways of authoritarianism, this time represented by Vladimir Mečiar and his autocratic approach to power. Unbridled privatization and wild capitalism turned the country into the "Black Hole" of Europe, as U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright observed in 1997. Much disillusionment with democracy and the free market ensued as the country struggled to make a decisive step forward.

Change #6 2004: A Return to Europe and Individual Sovereignty

The 1998 election of a new center-right government marked a turning point. Following the implementation of radical reforms, the country began a rapid transition that escalated in joining the EU and NATO at the turn of the millennium. With Schengen membership secured in 2006, followed by the Eurozone in 2009. Slovakia even became its fastest growing economy for a decade straight (2004-2014).

Over a quarter of a century into its national independence and 15 years into its EU membership, Slovakia has built a solid institutional infrastructure and economy. Slovakia has been consistently outperforming its neighbors. According to the World Bank, the country offers the best conditions for doing business in Central Europe (2004-2013), while the OECD places Slovakia in the top 10 most productive nations in the world.

However, the transition is not yet over as Slovakia"s struggle with corruption and international trends in human capital development attest to. A true transition to democracy does not stop at institutional and economic changes. It is becoming

necessary and obvious that what is required is to take a close look at the mentality and the way in which it needs to change to match the demands of the 21st century.

The second part of this paper will address the gaps that emerged as a result of the tectonic shifts described above, as experienced from the perspective of human capital skillsets and mindsets. It will also look at the unique advantaged the same processes instilled in Slovaks, and the necessary mentality shift still needed to complete the transition.

Part 2: Slovakia in the Twenty-First Century—Transition to Individual Sovereignty

Within the last hundred years Slovaks transitioned from being subjects of a conservative monarchy to learning how to govern themselves as the people went from being from objects to subjects, or citizens in charge of their lives. The changes outlined above were far from a smooth natural progression. Instead, most were fast and externally induced, top down, which is why they were accompanied by drastic mindset shocks.

Every ideology and system requires people to adapt to the new belief system. The feudal organization required different skillsets and mindsets from interwar democratic Czechoslovakia, to the fascist Slovak state, or the Communist Republic and democratic and independent Slovakia. The labor market demands of each system were dramatically different too.

The most adaptable and versatile layers of the society, that is to say the intelligentsia and the entrepreneurs, were systematically eroded throughout Slovakia's recent history, which has made each shift even more arduous. In the following pages, the paper focuses on the recent transition from communism to a free market democracy.

The far-reaching institutional and economic reforms that commenced in the late 1990s propelled the country into the EU and NATO and rejuvenated the economy. Slovakia has become a key manufacturing, service and logistics hub thanks to its advantageous position in the center of Europe and its skilled, cheap and reliable workforce.

The country is the largest car manufacturer in the world (per capita), while also being home to numerous multinationals, including AT&T, IBM, DELL, and HP, which employ some 70,000 people. Meanwhile, Slovakia's economy is very open and internationally dependent; over 85% of all goods produced in the country are exported out.

Behind the success is the legacy of the previous regime. At the same time it also underpins its greatest challenge and key skill shortages.

Solid hard skillsets

Communism, given its material ideology and focus on quantitative progress and growth, produced a highly skilled labor force when it came to hard skills. Hard

sciences were believed to be devoid of ideological infiltration and therefore were favored over soft sciences that encouraged individual thinking and agency.

The region still benefits from this dynamic today in terms of an abundance of highly skilled engineers and IT programmers. The former regime also focused on ingraining discipline and diligence into individuals which is why Slovakia boasts a highly reliable, resilient and dedicated work force with a much lower turnover rate than that of Western Europe and high work ethic.

This mix underpins Slovakia's success in the manufacturing and service sectors.

A lack of soft skills

However, every coin has two sides and the twenty-first century global economy demands a complex skillset that combines both hard and soft skills. This is where we arrive at the legacy of the previous regime that Slovakia struggles to shake off. Soft skills are an *Achilles heel* not just of Slovakia, but the entire former Soviet Bloc. Communism denied individualism or any expression of individuality, therefore it does not come as a surprise that soft-skills, which are personality driven, were also damaged. Self-confidence, courage, communication, critical thinking and creativity were not taught in schools.

Overall the Slovak education system focused on the needs of the newly industrialized economy, which meant the education mode was that of rote learning. Students were encouraged to memorize knowledge, but not necessary to reflect upon it, nor to cultivate their own subjective opinions. From a young age, the human capital was taught to give away its individual sovereignty in exchange for having an authority decide what was best for them. In such a model, independence was punished, and conformity was rewarded. It did not help that the prior transitions eradicated the parts of the population that were equipped with these skills.
Communism banned private enterprise and made entrepreneurial skills obsolete. Slovakia was not present on the international markets for four decades. This meant that generations of Slovaks had no experience with a free enterprise market economy, global networks, and were not taught how to run a business or operate within market competition. The centralized economy focused on the production of goods, and the major export market was the Soviet Union and other countries within the Eastern Bloc. In such an environment, there was no need to develop marketing know-how or communication skills, as all sales were preordained according to 5-year plans.

Isolated networks and redundant knowledge flows

Given the isolation of Slovakia behind the Iron Curtain, Slovaks had no contact with the West from 1948 to 1989. This translated into localized social networks that resulted in redundant knowledge flows, whereby the same information was circulated, stifling innovation.

When the great transition from communism to capitalism occurred, the mindsets did not change overnight. The same lecturers who taught Marxist-Leninist ideology started to teach students about the free market without having experience with how the free hand of the market operated.

It soon became obvious that implementing privatization and the ability to handle a merger and acquisition transaction required soft skills, including inter-cultural collaboration, individual agency and critical thinking. Today, Slovaks are experiencing the need to develop these skills again if their ventures and businesses want to scale up into the global market.

Human capital that matches the needs of a global economy is necessary to grow and groom which requires time and dedicated effort, but there is also a shortcut solution to correct the most immediate shortfall of skills.

In the twenty-first century, the globe is becoming increasingly more interconnected as cooperation across regions and cultures only increases, while the rise of the BRIC economies of Brazil, Russian, India and China, points to an increasingly multipolar existence.

In an environment of increasing robotization of work, the need for entrepreneurialism makes it vital to cultivate human capital that is flexible and can think and act independently. The Slovak economy is no exception, and the new human capital can be cultivated through the K-12 education system, implying another 13 years of education, or it can be enhanced through the brain training that international migration offers.

Brain drain and brain training

The 2004 EU accession triggered a mass East-West migration wave. Some 100,000 Slovaks left the country to become a part of, and to explore the opportunities that a unified Europe offered.

Moreover, the newly ascended Eastern Europeans skipped over the "German-speaking world" in favor of the "English one." This was natural, given the fact that Austria and Germany imposed the maximum seven-year transition period, to restrict access to their labor markets to the new EU members. Most Slovaks aimed for the United Kingdom, where they became the largest incoming migration population after the Poles.

The opening of borders also catalyzed a large student diaspora, whereby one third of Slovak university students reside abroad, the greater majority, some 20,000 in the Czech Republic. Slovakia has the largest student diaspora out of all the EU countries.

The EU accession catalyzed a significant brain drain. A decade and a half after the enlargement some 300,000 Slovaks reside abroad, approximately 10% of the country's active labor force. Before EU membership, many Slovaks travelled abroad to work illegally. Going abroad to earn money was a viable economic strategy and even professionals would accept short-term unskilled jobs abroad to export their wages and supplement their local professional salaries.

However, after the Slovak economy began to stabilize and the country adopted the Euro currency, this strategy ceased to be financially appealing. The money stopped being the sole motive for outmigration. Given the significant knowledge and skills gaps following the dissolution of communism, it is safe to say that young Slovaks also go abroad to acquire knowledge, language, and an international social network. This matches European trends, as programs such as Erasmus encourage young Europeans to live and study in each other's countries.

The pioneering work of A. M. Williams and V. Baláž (2012) argues that international migration contributes to territorial redistribution of human capital, but also the critical new learning and knowledge acquisition. Unlike explicit knowledge, tacit knowledge, otherwise known as "know-how," cannot be stored in documents or words. Tacit knowledge is stored in the minds and bodies of the people that carry it, it is also encultured and embedded in local institutions for example. Lived experience in Western democratic societies exposes international Slovaks to the virtues of democratic governance and the free enterprise economic system, as well as individualism, including agency and empowerment.

This is where they adopt soft-skills that were wiped in Slovakia by the previous regime, and begin to develop their individual unique personalities that communism suppressed in favor of collective sameness. Brain drain could thus be conceptualized as brain training.

The trajectories of contemporary migration patterns are no longer linear all over the globe. Slovaks may be leaving the country, but they are also returning in greater numbers. This facet of migration is little acknowledged by economists, but it offers attractive and feasible solutions to the current challenges Slovakia is faced with.

Returning migrants: Filling the Gap

Growth does not always need to be linear—on the contrary world history is full of quantum leaps, in societal evolution and thinking. These occur when the path dependency model to develop is surrendering in favor of new modes of thinking and doing.

According to Thomas Kuhn (1960) paradigm-shifts occur when new knowledge begins to poke holes in old knowledge, eventually triggering a revolution of thinking. This can range from the abolishing of slavery and the extension of human rights, to heart surgery or sending man to the moon. All were once taught as impossible, until they were.

Returning international Slovaks, or returnees are the bringers of the "new," in terms of critical tacit knowledge including soft-skills. They can help Slovakia scale-up and quantum leap by capitalizing on merging the local with the global. Every society has and needs its avant-gardes, the bringers of the new, or individuals that champion a different way of thinking. Likewise, young returning Slovaks are "agents" of change that facilitate the transfer of internationally competitive knowledge, global languages and social networks that are of benefit to a society and country that was geographical and social isolated for four decades.

Their knowledge not only benefits the multinational ICT sector companies that operated in Slovakia, but also home grown Slovak businesses looking to scale up into the global market. When international Slovaks return as employees, it is of advantage to the domestic labor market, but their knowledge also overspills beyond business and into the society at large.

Returnees and the employers that hire them often say they have changed. These young Slovaks have grown abroad, not just in terms of skills and knowledge, but also as individuals. Exposure to life outside of the Slovakia, has catalyzed their professional and personal development which takes the form of an enhanced sense of self-confidence and responsibility, a "can do" attitude.

The final frontier: Transition To Individual Sovereignty

As demonstrated throughout this paper, young Slovakia, with all its fumbles, flaws and shortcomings, has embarked on an exponential growth journey, culminating in its own cultural, national and political sovereignty. What began in 1848 with the Slovak National Awakening was thrust forward with the developments of the twentieth century.

The final frontier remains that of individual sovereignty, and it is not just a higher schemata philosophical thought or spiritual aspiration. On the contrary, the country cannot become an economic powerhouse without confident human capital. It needs individuals who are able to think and act out of their own agency, but can simultaneously communicate and cooperate with one another and build bridges with the world.

Contributors

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Kenneth J. McNamara is a scholar and writer, whose most recent book is *Dreams of a Great Small Nation: The Mutinous Army that Threatened a Revolution, Destroyed an Empire, Founded a Republic, and Remade the Map of Europe* (2016), telling the story of the Czechoslovak Legions. A former journalist for Calkins Media Inc. and an aide to the late U.S. Congressman R. Lawrence Coughlin, McNamara is an associate scholar of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, PA, and a former contributing editor to its quarterly journal, *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs*. He earned a B.A. in journalism and an M.A. in international politics from Temple University

John Palka is a retired professor of biology at the University of Washington with a specialty in neuroscience. He is the winner of numerous prestigious academic awards, and co-founded and co-directed the University of Washington's highly lauded Program on the Environment. A two-time refugee from his Slovak homeland—in 1939 from the Nazis and in 1949 from the Communists—Dr. Palka has retained his love for Slovakia and his fluency in the Slovak language. Since the fall of Communism in 1989, he has visited his family in Slovakia almost every year. These experiences inspired his research into the role that many generations of his family played in the national life of Slovakia, laying the foundation of his book *My Slovakia, My Family: One Family's Role in the Birth of a Nation* (2012).

Zuzana Palovič is the founder of Global Slovakia (see under the entry for Gabriela Bereghazyova above). Born in Czechoslovakia under communism, Zuzana grew up in Canada, where her family had emigrated as political refugees. She received her undergraduate education at Southern Illinois University, an M.A. at the University of Amsterdam, and a PhD, focusing on European migration, from the University of Surrey in the UK. Believing that a "mental revolution" is the final frontier of the "transition" she works with her colleagues at Global Slovakia and in her other activities to bring about the shift in individual consciousness without which shifts in social organization are impossible.

Milada Polišenská is a tenured Professor of History and International Relations. Her main specialization is the modern and contemporary history of Central and Eastern Europe with a primary focus on diplomatic history and the history of nationalism. She is the author of several scholarly books and of a number of articles and conference presentations. Her most recent monograph is *Czechoslovak Diplomacy and the Gulag, 1945-1953* (2015). She has worked for the Institute of International Relations in Prague and for the Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences. She has been Visiting Professor at universities in the United States, Taiwan, and Thailand. Winner of several major research fellowships, Professor Polšenská is a member of academic boards at several

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Piotr Wilczek, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, has a distinguished record in international affairs and as a scholar of literature and intellectual history. A graduate of the University of Silesia in Katowice, where he also earned his doctorate, he taught at that university until 2008. In 2006 he was named Professor of the Humanities by the President of Poland. In 2008, he joined the faculty of the University of Warsaw, where he established the *Collegium Artes Liberales* (College of Liberal Arts), and since 2010 has directed its doctoral program. A strong supporter of interdisciplinary approaches to education, he has himself studied and taught abroad, including as a visiting professor at Rice University, the University of Illinois, and the University of Chicago. He is an active member of the Warsaw-based non-partisan American Study Group at the Polish Institute of International Affairs, which brings together experts, journalist, and academics who comment on political and cultural developments in the United States and analyze their implications for Poland, Europe, and the trans-Atlantic alliance. Ambassador Wilczek has written or edited 22 books and more than 100 articles in English and Polish.

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Kosmas is an interdisciplinary journal devoted primarily to publishing scholarly research in all relevant fields on topics related to Czech, Slovak, or Central European affairs in general; research materials, memoirs, or creative writing (in translation or original) may also occasionally be published. Manuscripts submitted for review should normally be no longer than 25-30 pages, double spaced, with one-inch margins. We publish references in footnote format, not in-text format, and would appreciate it if submissions were formatted with footnotes. Book reviews should be from 500-700 words and should be formatted after the example of reviews printed here.

Manuscripts may be submitted in English, Slovak, Czech, French or German. Wherever possible, an English translation should accompany any manuscript in a language other than English. *Kosmas* publishes only in English.

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