

# Political Symbolism of Slovakia: Between the Cross and European Star

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**Political Symbolism of Slovakia: Between the Cross and European Star.** Focusing on political symbolism, the author analyses how the representation of Slovakia and its citizens is constructed in both national and international contexts. The images of country, nation, or state as well as various forms of their symbolic representation are created mainly by so-called „cultural elites“. The aim of this study is to identify the maintenance of and ruptures in the construction of self-images and stereotypes in the realms of political memory and mythology. The author identifies major trends, such as the effort to „people“ Slovak history with hero-martyrs and the constant prevalence of self-critical approaches to Slovak national identity building. In historical accounts, Slovaks have usually been characterised according to their plebeian origins and embedded „Christian-Catholic“ traditions and values. Successful reconstruction of political memory has been accomplished through organised collective remembering and forgetting. Within these processes, Slovaks attempt to redefine their national identity by manifesting the symbolic representation of their state in the form of official state symbols (sign, flag, or anthem); and by establishing state holidays and memorial days that manage, in a concentrated ritual way, to express the basic political values of the official regime. This study discusses the dominant topics of public discourse in the process of selecting and establishing holidays and official state symbols. The centre of these controversial interpretations lies in symbols and the parties involved in public discourse, which organise a ritualised defence of their positions through manifestations, meetings, petitions, open letters, and strikes. *Sociológia* 2005 Vol. 37 (No. 6: 529-554)

The paper analyses, against the background of political symbolism, the construction of the image of Slovakia and its citizens in national and international political discourses. The image of country, nation or state and various forms of their symbolic representations are created mainly by the elites of influence, which currently include not only politicians but also cultural and business elites, intellectuals, journalists and people presented by the mass media. The objective of this paper is to identify the continuity and possible ruptures in creation of auto-images and stereotypes in seeing oneself and others in the field of political memory and mythology that contribute to perceiving and assessing Slovakia from within as well as from the outside. They include various levels of „minority“ viewpoint on constructing national identity, together with the apologetics of efforts to historically visualise the position of Slovaks; ongoing attempts to ‘populate’ Slovak history with a controversial national Pantheon of heroes – martyrs; permanent prevalence of self-critical or even self-whipping returns to the actions of Slovaks almost in the whole history up until the present. Also one

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cannot forget to mention the sporadic occurrence of on one hand self-celebratory and on the other martyr-like interpretations of our nation’s destiny in the work of some historians, authors and intellectuals. What interconnects almost all interpretations of Slovaks’ position in remote or recent history is the continuous stress they put on their plebeian origin along with the deeply rooted ‘Christian-Catholic’ traditions and values in the life of the people. Although Slovakia today is clearly fully accepted abroad in the political sphere, the images and stereotypes we have mentioned form the background of often conflicting interpretation of Slovakia in the media and sometimes also the way of its very existence among European countries.

Slovakia is, just as almost all European and non-European countries, currently experiencing a period of critical discussions of its own history. National horizon is slowly being transcended and „gradually we see a European perspective appearing along national memory“ (Flacke, M., 2004, p. 9) Tendencies and mechanisms of constructing official state symbols after 1993 demonstrate the inertia and continuity when forming Slovakia’s image in the intentions of mentioned auto-images and stereotypes with the example of stately acknowledged „codes“<sup>2</sup>, preferred myths and symbols used for instance on bank notes and coins, when determining national holidays and memorial days and legalising state awards of the Slovak Republic.

## Political myths, symbols and rituals

To understand the substantial changes brought about by the changing of political regimes we need to pay attention to the myths, language and symbolism of the given processes. It has always taken some time for a new regime to find its own language and justification corresponding with the formulation of aims and means of achieving them. Return to one’s own past through myth re-interpretation is part of the world of symbols, which are an expression of change and confirm the onset of new circumstances; but at the same time they significantly influence and shape the regime change. Principal social changes are thus reflected in change of discourse; they are an expression of „language change and at the same time change in the language, in structures and manifestations of public discourse“ (Oushakine, S., 2000, p. 993), while it is the nature of discourse and its transformations that may have a higher informative value than the political change itself. The extent of (in)stability of the new circumstances can be assessed based on various criteria, where some are seemingly more objective than others. However, in the end this is always a way of interpreting selected aspects of the

<sup>2</sup> I use this expression according to M. Csáky who used it to define analogous or identical ethnical „codes“ that have become a unifying feature of nations in the region of Central Europe and contributed to maintaining its ethnical variability. (Csáky, M., 1999, p. 11)

political life. Academic approaches do not always match with ideologically – political assessments of local or foreign political actors, just as approaches of different theoretical schools also vary.

When analysing symbolism we cannot expect it to be a reflection of a „here and now“ situation. In the public, collective political memory works as organised forgetting and remembering and both processes are supplemented by efforts of political and intellectual elites to re-interpret the past, along with formulating new objectives and expectations. All this is taking place within the sphere of symbols and rituals, through which people perceive and understand the missions of politics<sup>3</sup>. The crisis moments of ruptures and formation of new political regimes represent a fertile ground for re-confirmation as well as re-making and modification or total transformation of political symbols, rituals and myths as an expression of fundamental values. In literature, this specific (inter)period is defined as „a moment in and out of time“ or an expression of „new temporality“.(Edles, L., 1998, p. 41)

Life of people in today's Slovakia has been affected by this „new temporality“ more often than is the European average. (Lipták, Ľ., 2002) Everyone born here in the twentieth century, by the time they reached retirement age, had experienced four to five coups, revolutions, cardinal changes of territorial, state, political and economic system. The majority of Slovak population who were in 1993 eighty or more years old had lived in seven different state entities and had their life regulated by eight different constitutions, without even moving away from the place where they were born. Out of the five regimes they experienced, only two can be considered democratic.

Political symbols, myths and rituals contained in and formed by collective memory into a representation of a nation, its mythology and traditions – all that contributes to determining the character of national as well as international discourse and influences the process of (re)constructing national identity – that is, if we agree with using 'national identity' as an analytical category at all. (Brubaker, R. – Cooper, F., 2000) A closer look on the essence of these phenomena enables us not only to understand the basic mythological and symbolical framework within which the Slovaks were trying to construct their representations, but also to understand the meaning of politics.

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<sup>3</sup> C. Geertz along with M. Weber argues that people are animals, caught in the spider web of meanings. This spider web in the form of culture (where politics is part thereof) was spun by the man alone. That is why culture cannot be analysed by experimental science searching for laws of its functioning – rather, interpretative science searching for meaning. What we are looking for is an explanation, interpretation of social manifestations, which at first glance seem incomprehensible. Often we need explanations of explanations, re-interpretation of meanings and symbols, re-telling of historical reminiscences and their re-classification into the present world of political symbolism and mythology. (Geertz, C., 2000, p. 15)

Interpreting current state of society, its past and future means combining rational as well as irrational narrative elements; i.e. it is a configuration of various myths and symbols. Regarding the relations between myth, ritual and symbols I just want to make a brief note: I consider myth to be a narration, a complex of ideas; ritual is a dynamic (performative) articulation of a myth while symbols as an important component of rituals are the building stones of myths. Myths are encoded in rituals, liturgies, legends and symbols. For every collective they represent the narrative form of existence justification and definition of own system of moral and values. In this sense, a myth is more of a perception and interpretation of coordinates of the collective's location, of the place of its origin and the direction in which it is moving where these truths are not historically approved. Thus, myth is neither truth nor lie; rather it is a way, explanation of the world order that the people accept as something natural. If we are to consider myth a *fiction* and regard the scientific construction of past *reality* as historianism, that will be just two different „...ways of remembering the past where both are socially justified and have functions, both change and evolve, they are both subjects of interest of experts and laymen alike“. (Mannová, E., 2005, p. 10)

Myths, rituals and symbols have a typical standardised form with a tendency to preserve the past and they give the impression that an individual has no chance to influence their form. However, the latter is not completely true. Form, symbolic meaning as well as social consequences of rituals are changing; new rituals appear and old ones vanish. People simply are not enslaved by rituals or symbols – they are their co-creators and able to change them. This is not a simple process and it has its specific characteristics of innovation and imitation. When Slovak Republic was established in 1993, it brought about several problems connected with national self-identification and re-interpretation of Slovak national history and mythology. In spite of innovations and transformations the form and shape of myths and rituals remains relatively stable as rituals succumb to changes slowly than other culture components. Consequently, myths, rituals and their symbolic meaning provide the people with a feeling of security and continuity, due to the relative stability of their forms and manifestations. Symbolical behaviour represents the basic form of interaction between political elites and public; it confirms the legitimacy of power relations and secures the authority of rulers. Symbols are used to influence emotions and inspire affection for a particular political programme. They are an expression of identification with a political line or political powers and they are the main means through which people make political processes meaningful – the meaning is then once again presented through symbols. We cease to perceive symbols „merely“ as symbols and they become our reality. (Macura, V., 1992, p. 83) Unlike the supporters of theory of rational

choice, the „symbolists“ claim that political attitudes are created through symbolical forms rather than utilitarian calculations. (Kertzer, D., 1988, p. 179) The power of symbols in political processes results from the fact that they are carriers of expressions, which are used in various types of discourse. By that I do not mean a linguistic discourse, rather its Foucault understanding in the shape of a „text“ corpus in its spoken, written, iconographic, kinetic, musical or other forms created in various contexts. Each social communication leads to the production of „texts“ that take manifold forms and manifest themselves not only through spoken or written word.

Supporters of myths that are used today often belong to the legendary „rediscovered“ historical personalities. Whether they really existed and their heroic deeds are a subject of doubts or scientific or emotional discussion of historians. It quite often happens that persons and events we „are no longer able to see“ are adapted and refined by modern mythology according to current needs<sup>4</sup>.

Formation of a new state requires paying increased attention to symbolical nation construction, formation of conscience of unity and identification with a new abstract entity that is the national state. If possible, a personified image of a state is constructed in such cases whose rituals are closely linked with national heroes who have led their people into an imaginary promise land. Worse situation occurs if a large part of the society consider their history „deserted“ as was the case with Slovakia where the evaluation of individual persons was not only lacking consensus but significantly controversial. The creation of symbolic image of the new state was not exclusively in the hands of cultural management of the new executive and all political actors participated in its formation. With regard to a persisting conflict between the perception of *political* and *ethnic* nation, urgent need to confirm or discard one of the alternatives made it onto the urgent political agenda. The essence of the controversy lay undoubtedly in the sphere of symbols and both sides of the public conflict organised ritual defence of their positions in the shape of demonstrations, citizens' gatherings, petitions in media, strikes etc.

Symbolic dimension of politics is contained in almost all facts, events and processes of political life. States with their institutional and organisational structure at first sight seem as objective events rather than symbolic forms. It is only after we look more closely and analyse their formation and functioning more deeply that we discover the extent to which they are products of myths, symbols and rituals. The so-called political reality is to a large extent a specific constellation of symbols – politicians or politician-wannabes have often

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<sup>4</sup> R. Pynsent calls this approach *active atavism*, which he defines as „deriving remote history from the present ... predominantly it is about projecting the present into the past, projecting own wishes in the present into the past which is to confirm the desirable present“. (Pynsent, R., 1996, pp. 84-85)

convinced themselves that creating a symbol or identifying with a popular myth or legendary person is an effective tool to acquire or maintain political power. The symbolical dimension of political reality is confirmed by the fact that political entities such as „party“, „state“, „government“ are usually not considered to be symbolical constructions. Quite on the contrary, the public perceives them as subjects, which really exist and are independent of people and their symbolical world. This is because it is easier for people to visualise power authority personified by president, chancellor or other representatives of legislative or executive powers, than to imagine a collective called legislative assembly.

### Political memory in Slovakia

Political memory forms an important part of collective or historic memory and „although the subject that „has“ the memory is always an individual, his memory takes its shape only within a group. Such collectives do not „possess“ any memory, but they determine the memory of their members“. (Halbwachs, M., 1985, p. 364) At the same time there is a whole range of collective and thus political memories which always take the shape of social constructions whose form depends on needs and referential framework of the given present. Past is not created in political memory through natural growth and addition of historical events and facts; it is a product of culture and political preferences of the given collective.

With regard to Slovakia it is possible to identify certain myth-creating processes and mechanisms of constructing political memory with a universal character. As research has confirmed, it is ideal to observe processes of structuring political memory and its functioning in crisis situations. Therefore I will mention the continuity, as well as construction and deconstruction of images of history and politics in Slovakia after the fall of the Communist regime. Considering the fact that political and intellectual representatives of the new regime tried to interpret not only the present and future but at the same time re-interpret the past, we will find ourselves not only in the modern era of Slovak history but also in the mythical, distant past. Following text will be marked by intersection of political level with the level of national identification as these two levels have been complementary above all during the period prior to federation dissolution as well as after the formation of autonomous Slovakia.

Right at the beginning it is necessary to say that myth-creating processes in majority of European nations are characterised by similar processes of national identity construction. They are based on myths regarding the 'golden age' of the nations (arriving to the motherland, period of bloom), history of rulers (kings, emperors and dukes), wars and important fights (victories and defeats), events and national heroes who served as founders, saviours or protectors of the given

ethnic or national collective. This is in effect a construction of images in national history through selection of myths, rituals and symbols that correspond with the contents of historical and political memory of the nation concerned. German historian Jan Assmann says that in order for people to remember their past and search for their relation towards it „... firstly, the past cannot disappear completely, some testimonies about it must exist; secondly, these testimonies must contain a characteristic extent of *being different* from ‘today’“. (Assmann, J., 2001, p. 33)

An important role in securing and transmitting given myths between generations is played by the power elites<sup>5</sup>. These regularly organise and actively participate in ritual commemoration of selected events, in gatherings of remembrance of national heroes, in speeches and participation alone in ceremonies of revealing statues and monuments. Political and intellectual elites use power, which enables them to ‘control’ the topics of public discussion in the media, to promote selected frameworks for interpretation of national/state history in textbooks and everyday life. In some cases (this concerns Slovakia, too) there are discrepancies between the officially promoted and often legalised ‘identity codes’ and their acceptance within culture of everyday life. In other words, some events, personalities, rituals that the given power structure considers worthy of celebrations and appreciation do not find a reflection in everyday life and the public almost ignores their symbolical dimension; while others, which the elites prefer to forget and would like them publicly forgotten, are regularly spontaneously remembered by the people.

### **Trends in interpreting the image of Slovaks**

National state with its institutional structure and its place within wider geopolitical coordinates (in our case within the European space at least) has until now been playing an important role in constructing the image of a nation. As the Slovak nation started to evolve as a modern political nation in the first half of the nineteenth century we often hear that as a consequence of absence of their own state as well as the then non-existence of state-creating elites, the Slovaks gradually struggled to create and later secure their historical memory only to distance themselves from it shortly afterwards, deconstruct it and repeatedly mythologise it.

In the political memory, which apart from mythological narrations is formed by political documents, academic papers, memoirs, literature, journalism, it is

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<sup>5</sup> R. Brubaker and F. Cooper consider the state, its formal institutions to be one of the main identifiers in constructing various types of identity. This multi-dimensionality and theoretical as well as practical inaccuracy of defining *identity* leads to them deconstructing this expression and refusing to use it as an analytical category. (Brubaker, R. – Cooper, F., 2000, p. 16)

possible to make out certain persisting trends in interpreting the representation of Slovakia and the Slovaks:

– A high degree of self-criticising or even masochistic approach to own history and sometimes even present.

This approach is connected with permanent reconstruction and re-interpretation of historical memory, which was since the establishment of The Czechoslovak Republic up until 1993 marked by the unfinished process of national emancipation of the Slovaks, usually named ‘the Slovak question’. ‘The Slovak question’ was in fact a concentrate of national and political, as well as economic, social and cultural problems; the issue of relations between Slovaks and their neighbours, in particular Czechs and Hungarians but also Russians and Germans; the question of foreign policy orientation. The complexity of problems mentioned was perceived as a question of life and death of Slovak national identity. (Chmel, R., 1997, p. 5)

We can say that the non-existence of an own state has traumatised whole generations of Slovak politicians and intellectuals. Even after the birth of Slovak Republic in 1993 the question of the character of Slovak ‘stateness’ became a frequent topic of public discourse – as rejection or continuity of Slovak state during the War, or as definition of basic ‘game rules’ in the new state entity. Although it could seem that the formation of an autonomous state will contribute to a constructive critical self-reflection of history, once again we see manifestations of the ‘historical schizophrenia’ of permanently distancing oneself from one’s own past (remote as well as recent) that is continually present in Slovak public discourse since the end of the nineteenth century. I am talking about the tendency characterised by distancing oneself from or even denying the preceding evolution era after critical events in 1918, 1939, 1945, 1948, 1968, 1989, 1993, 1998, 2004.

During the process of difficult crystallisation of Slovak national identity after 1993, against the background of fourfold transitions – apart from economic and political transitions there was the building of an independent state and the unfinished process of national integration (Szomolányi, S., 2004, p. 11) – Slovakia on one hand consciously built on some elements of national mythology of nineteenth century, but on the other hand tried to distant itself from them. Collective political memory faced a double test: firstly, it was necessary to come to terms with the fall of Communism (which in Slovakia took the form of East-German ‘nostalgia’ and pseudo-Communism) and secondly, it was necessary to construct images of Slovakia and Slovaks in the intentions of national and state self-identification or fixation of Slovak identity. Entangling of the democratic tradition between 1994 and 1998 affected both processes and once again provoked a large number of frequently exaggerated self-criticising assessments

in the sense of announcing the onset of non-liberal democracy, nationalist character of Slovak political culture, dictatorship of the majority in political life, Slovaks' national identity on the level of previous century, instinctive Slovaks' inclination toward authoritarianism and the geopolitical classification of Slovakia to the Balkans or comparing it with Belarus. The excessive sensibility of local academic, political and journalistic development analyses with respect to any deviation from imaginary or pretended and generally accepted democratic standards contributed to the creation and embedment of a stereotypical image of Slovakia as a particularly problematic case of transition to democracy and to Slovakia's disqualification from the first group of countries aspiring to membership of NATO and the EU. The mythologisation of an unlimited growth of threatening authoritarian advances personified in the person of Vladimír Mečiar led to this regime being branded semi-authoritarian which would at best lead to un-consolidated democracy, pseudo democracy or authoritarianism. Interpretations of such catastrophic scenarios of future development did not consider or outright underestimated the functioning of existing institutional framework of the developing democratic regime, along with a remarkable motivation of the electorate to catch up on the neighbours – especially Czechs and Hungarians. In spite of attempts the group around Mečiar made to change or infringe the existing democratic principles of political life, it was possible to keep the power struggle of institutions within given constitutional framework, which prevented the assertion of an authoritarian regime.

The interpretation of Slovakia as main 'trouble-maker' in the region of Central Europe is a proof of the Slovaks' ability to get themselves disqualified and afterwards struggle to get back 'into the game'. However, on the way back they encounter a barrier of stereotypes that they created themselves, symbols and myths which very easily make it into the public conscience especially abroad where people know very little about Slovakia even today, after the country's accession to NATO and EU. Easy-to-remember images of Slovakia associating it with 'a former boxer and Communist as a founding father of the state', with nationalist politicians telling Hungarians to go 'across the Danube' and threatening that Slovaks will come 'to Budapest on tanks' – all this helped to promote a non-transparent and to a large extent dubious image of Slovakia which we are only slowly able to set right.

I am by no means casting doubts on the responsibility of academic analyses to critically reflect political development and actions of the political actors. However I am convinced that a stabilisation of democratic regime and general acceptance of democratic principles of political life will lead to increased sensibility to potential infringement of 'game rules' but at the same time will not

imply immediate creation of new negative stereotypes which in the end are very difficult to uproot.

- Ironisation and sharp refusal of almost all previous political representations in the sense of a gap between 'unworthy and immoral politicians' and 'ordinary decent people'

Research has confirmed that people continue to see politics rather as 'lords' mischief' and an opportunity to 'illegally rob the state at the expense of the working people' than 'a service to the public'. The conflict between perception of 'we' and 'them' persists and although such differentiation is common in countries with long democratic traditions, too, in Slovakia it still shows certain residues of the feudal relations between 'people' and 'suzerain', existence of two worlds where politicians belong to the world of 'strange' or 'bad lords'. (Krekovičová, E., 2002, p. 165) Critical reservations about the political elite are frequently reflected in refusing to brand it with the term 'elite' which is generally associated with positive connotations; or in talking about 'significant incompetence and lacking culture' of political elites which 'do not fulfil current standards'. Contemporary evaluations (as well as those expressed later) of almost all Slovak politicians were well characterised already in 1934 by Martin Rázus: „The foundation of Slovak discontent is not lack of patriotism and affection they feel for their country, but the mistakes and errors made by those who govern, the governing Slovaks“. All generations of Slovak political representation in the course of more than 100 years were attributed with predominantly negative and disgraceful characteristics ranging from insufficient and limited ambitions, inability to see a way out, apathy, passiveness and inertia to the inability to reassert oneself, irresponsibility, corruptness, provinciality and so on.

In the future it would be desirable to introduce a more balanced view of politics and politicians where politics is gradually perceived as a service for citizens and the public. However, that will depend on the ability of political elites to convince citizens and get them support the realisation of programme objectives that serve the needs and interests of the whole society rather than their personal interests.

- Emphasising the 'Christian character of Slovaks' not only as a declared contrast to Communism, but mainly within the construction of self-image and images of others. „The fundamental feature is accepting Christianity in 829. We have accepted it a long time before this territory was named, reflecting the Slav origin of its population. Thus the face of our country got its inherent feature that made it forever similar to faces of other European countries... Along with Christianity, Slovakia accepted patterns of cultural behaviour that have enabled us to create national identity. It is not a coincidence that those Slav nations which had

refused to accept Christianity did not manage to survive in Central Europe.“ (Hrušovský, P., 2003, p. 8)

According to Ivan Kamenec, the idea of Christianity does not belong to strong stereotypes of perceiving and interpreting Slovak history. Nowadays, this stereotype is resounding strongly in the public conscience and is experiencing a period of turbulent revival. (Kamenec, I., 2000, p. 345) The Christianity stereotype, especially if we understand Christianity as a positive cultural and civilisation phenomenon, is sometimes used in a simplified manner and not always suffices as an explanation for the conflicting evolution of Slovak history. What is more, violent religious as well as power struggles between the Christian churches in Slovakia, which remain a part of Slovak history until today, further complicate the situation. In any case, we can say that Slovak political discourse in the past as well as present includes (albeit not always clearly) the confessional and Christian-Catholic dimension of Slovak mythology; and it also finds reflection in the official state symbolism.

– Long-term continuity of the myth of plebeian origin of Slovaks in the sense of common territory, language, culture, mentality above all of rural and pastoral origin. (Krekovičová, E., 2005)

What is actually meant by plebeian nation? Essentially a nation living in natural world with no influence of civilisation; not participating in public and political life, formed by arm and decrepit peasant classes. It is a nation doomed to remain uneducated, unable to contribute to 'high' culture. Its greatest contribution is the 'popular culture' of 19th century countryside, in particular folklore. It was the so-called 'šťúrovci', a group around Ľudovít Štúr, who introduced the myth of Slovaks as plebeian nation into the political memory. For them, 'Slovak nation' was the only source of 'purity', 'immaculateness' and 'originality'. The creation of Plebeian portrayal of the Slovaks was helped by previous as well and recent highlighting of popularity and simplicity, emphasising traditional Slovak poverty. The plebeian myth is loosely connected with the bandit myth around the idealised national hero, popular rebel and bandit Juro Jánošík, as well as associating 'Slovakness' with folklore. Within the bandit legend, we find encoded symbols of desire for egalitarianism, for the restitution of social injustice. Within a wider context, it makes us aware of the shift of attention towards economic and social problems without taking notice of their political substance. Tibor Pichler points out a different context of possible interpretations of 'acting like Jánošík' in social life in Slovakia, in connection with „institutionalisation as main problem of modern Slovak history“. By that he means „lacking institutional anchoring of Slovakia as a political community, which caused within social life predominance of factors of 'external' influence and pressure that combined with groundless story tale and fabulous political

thinking led ... to almost mass political alienation and ... civic unawareness and immaturity, ... to mistrust in institutions and absence of the sense of responsibility for public affairs.“ (Pichler, T., 2000, p. 131)

Mentioned myths and symbols associated with them return to national perception of Slovaks in the 19th century, without considering the role of the educated classes. However it is well known that in the past Slovaks were not only commoners, peasants, craftspeople or townspeople – they were also aristocrats (particularly yeomen), clerics, teachers, scientists, artists. Slovak society at no point in time consisted purely of plebeian classes, in spite of their predominance, which was a result of political development in Central Europe, especially in Hungary.

Ivan Kamenec talks about „a defensive and plebeian stereotype of understanding Slovak history that frequently served as a last desperate means of protection against assaults by brutal and cunning chauvinism. Gradually they became a fixed part of the so-called 'nation's memory' – and its historical traditions.“ (Kamenec, I., 2000, p. 341)

At present we see efforts to present Slovaks as a modern nation in a period of globalisation processes. However, we still encounter abuse of folklore at various political events; we see artists celebrating countryside as a 'pure, unspoiled by civilisation' place where the tired townspeople go to relax and stock up on new strength and energy. This is an artistic cliché, a surviving relict from the past that can in other forms also be found in promotional prospects of Slovak travel agencies which lure domestic and foreign visitors to 'an oasis of peace, untouched by civilisation' inhabited by 'kind-hearted people with a rich culture'.

In this respect, it will be necessary to concentrate on gradual deconstruction of national mythology in the sense of deflecting from emphasising plebeian origin of Slovaks, towards increasing the credibility and social recognition of educated classes in the society and its intellectual elites. These processes should include institutional and civic provisions for development of education and culture that are on one hand able to promote and secure democratic traditions and on the other to admit the existence of painful neuralgic spots in Slovak history.

### **Attempts at constructing Slovak national identity**

#### *Official symbols of the new state*

The state emblem, flag and anthem inseparably belong to main identification attributes of modern states. Nations with a long tradition of an own state perceive the symbolical representation of their state as stable and even if slight changes are taking place the public reacts in a sensitive manner. Such situation occurred in the spring of 2003 when the Italian government proposed to change the shade of

green used on the state flag to a deeper green. Spontaneous negative reactions of the public, mass media and intellectual elites were of such intensity that the proposal could not be implemented. Thus, state symbols are either a manifestation of historically secured continuity, or quite the opposite – newly established state entities want to introduce new/innovated official symbols, thus conveying the beginning of a new era and principal rejection off all that connects them with the previous period.

In the case of present Slovakia, it is a combination of both these approaches. When making decisions on the form of state emblem, flag and the completion of the national anthem, stressing the historical continuity of national symbols played the decisive role.

The discussion of Czech and Slovak public and experts on the need to modify state symbols was provoked by reports alleging that new federal and republic constitutions are being drawn up, even before the fall of the Communist regime at the turn of the years 1988-1989. Participants in the discussion were looking back at the various forms of state emblems of Czechoslovakia and Slovakia since 1918; they were explaining the historical relativity of the individual alternatives and the historical context of their creation.

Considering the fact that many, mainly ideological aspects of conceiving and using state symbols were not a topic for public discourse during Communism, it was greeted by both public and experts with great interest.

Although almost all arguments in favour of modification of state symbols were based on historical claims dating back to the Great Moravian era, the most pressing issue in Slovakia remained the question of symbolical representation of Slovak part of the federation in the state emblem of Czechoslovakia. This topic returned to the front pages of newspapers shortly before and after the fall of Communism with the same urgency as in 1968. Already then the immediate cause for the discussion was the dissatisfaction of citizens, historians and heraldry experts with the 1960 reform of Czechoslovak state emblem that had been callously regulated, insufficiently justified and suddenly forced onto the people.

People from both parts of federation never came to terms with this reform, which had swapped the historical symbol of Slovakia for a completely new artificial symbol, as well as allowing several inept attempts at tampering with the original Czech coat-of-arms. In Slovakia, this deformed shape of the state emblem was interpreted as an insult to national sentiments.

All more or less serious attempts to explain the historical anchoring of symbols of Slovak nation are linked with the mythology of the Great Moravian empire as an era, which A. Smith calls „the golden age“ in the process of nation-forming. This concerns mainly the symbol of the double cross, which is the subject of controversial interpretation not only in relation to Great Moravia, but also to the

Hungarian symbols. As Slovak authors struggled to prove the historical and territorial ties of the Slovak nation with the era of Great Moravia and Slav character of its population, they could not accept the interpretation that claimed that the double cross had been adopted from the Hungarian coat-of-arms and could be considered Slovak only from 1848.

The territorial connection between the double cross and today's Slovakia is also to be confirmed through interpreting coats-of-arms that have since the Middle Ages been attributed with expressing real facts. This way, the four silver (white) stripes in the „Arpad logs“ got to be interpreted as four rivers of Lower Hungary: Danube, Tisa, Drava and Sava. The three hills<sup>6</sup>, on which the double cross is standing on the other coat-of-arms, was gradually explained as symbol of Tatra, Matra and Fatra, i.e. mountain ranges on the territory of Upper Hungary. It is only natural that the efforts of Slovak authors to prove historical connections of the original Slovak symbolism and especially its *ancient distinctiveness* in the pre-Hungarian period as well as within Hungary did not provoke a response from the Hungarian side. László Kontler in his History of Hungary does not even consider similar constructions – without further comments and explanations he describes double cross as an emblem of Hungary. (Kontler, L., 2001, p. 58)

In September 1848 the intellectuals led by Ľudovít Štúr proclaimed the double cross on the three hills to be the coat-of-arms of Slovakia and Slovaks. Since then, it is considered not only territorial, but also national emblem of Slovaks. This is a period on constitution of the modern Slovak nation when issues are resolved concerning common national language, territory, political and cultural institutions or Slovaks' own armed forces, along with national symbols which would represent the nation on the outside and unite it from within.

The birth of Czechoslovakia in 1918 brought a significant change in the symbolical representation of Slovakia. In Czechoslovakia, great significance had always been attached to state symbols. The circumstances of the republic's establishment prove this. As soon as September 1918, the Czech National Council in Paris was discussing future state symbol – one of the possible solutions was basing it on the emblem of Czechoslovak legions in World War I.

In spite of all doubts about whether it is justified to use the Slovak symbol of the double cross, it was together with the Czech lion incorporated into a single unified emblem in the first Czechoslovak Republic.

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<sup>6</sup> Historian Eubomír Lipták offers a humorous interpretation of the three hills with a double cross: the three hills in the Slovak coat-of-arms depict three huge loads of problems that appeared after 1989. The first is the transition from socialism to capitalism; secondly, transition from dictatorship to democracy and third problem is the issue of statehood. The cross signifies how difficult it is to solve these problems. Its second arm suggests that the greatest problems are we ourselves. (Lipták, E., 1998, p. 5)

As far as state flag is concerned, at the time of birth of Czechoslovak Republic, two national flags were in use on its territory – the Czech white and red flag and Slovak white-blue-red flag. A committee of experts plainly refused the possibility to continue using two separate national flags and decided to create one flag for the whole state. As the Slovak national flag contained some blue colour, and due the fact that the blue colour of the three hills from the Slovak coat-of-arms made it onto the final state emblem it was desirable that the future flag would contain the colour blue along with white and red. After long discussions, a solution was accepted in the form of a blue spike on a white and red flag. Thus, colours of the country forming the core of the whole state remained dominant. Essentially, the blue spike could be „considered a simplified version of the three hills in the Slovak symbol“.

The break-up of Czechoslovakia in 1939 brought about changes in Czechoslovak state symbols. Within Slovakia, these were no longer used from 19th of November 1938 – the date when Slovak autonomy was announced. In place of the Czechoslovak state emblem, Slovak national symbol is starting to be used unconditionally; the white-blue-red flag replaces Czechoslovak flag. Even the Czechoslovak anthem, including its Slovak part *Nad Tatrou sa blýska* was rejected and substituted by the song *Hej, Slováci*, which was legalised as Slovak national anthem.

The excitement and celebrations that accompanied the end of Second World War were not only commemorating victory over Fascism on Slovak territory, it was also about the restoration of Czechoslovak Republic. The very first public gatherings already took place under Czechoslovak flags and standards. People were pulling out the old flags they had been storing away respectfully or sewing up new ones. It was the essence that mattered, not the form or prescribed colours. After many years, white and red flags with a blue spike in the centre re-appeared. From the very beginning, there were no doubts that the original state symbols would be restored in the re-established republic. (Novák, J., 1990, p. 88)

In spite of the fact that the Communist takeover in February 1948 changed the nature of regime in Czechoslovakia, the new government did not set about solving the problems surrounding the state symbols. Historians agree that little material on this topic exists from the post-1948 period. The question of national symbols returned to public attention in 1960 when a new state emblem was adopted in connection with the ratification of a new Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The Central Committee of the Communist Party decided it was above all necessary to change the Slovak symbol within the state emblem – the main argument was its reminiscence of Slovak Republic during WWII. Also, any kind of a cross was unsuitable for the Communist ideology. Thus Slovak national

symbol was substantially modified – a small shield on the lion's chest depicting a blue skyline of Kriváň and a golden bonfire replaced the cross on three hills. The Czech lion lost his crown (headdress), which was replaced by a golden five-pointed star over his head.

The public attitude toward the new state symbol was at best indifferent; during years to follow it was subjected to criticism (albeit not always publicly declared). As soon as the situation in the country became little more relaxed, the issue of state emblem once again became a topic of public discourse. That was the case at the end of the 1960s as well as prior to and after the collapse of Communism.

In conclusion, we may say that during the short period of existence of a common state after 1989, the issue of state symbols represented an important topic of political negotiations; it entered everyday life of the citizens and really became a subject of public discourse. The open questions were mainly the new shape of political organisation of the republic along with changes in the country's name and so-called hyphen-war, the issue of the official state language, adding new verses to Slovak national anthem, the matter of one successor state assuming the symbolical heritage of the federation and so on. It was a period, which can be characterised by giving preference to symbolical aspect of politics rather than its instrumental use in order to fulfil pragmatic economic objectives. The symbolic politics prevailed over common sense and already in March 1990, the Slovak National Council passed a constitutional act on the country's name, state emblem, state flag, state seal and state anthem of Slovak Republic.

*Some days are ordinary, some holidays...*

The searching for and finding interrupted continuity of national myths or attempts at creating new myths and traditions of Slovak nation and state were reflected also in discussions focused at finding the answer to the question which memorial dates, accepted in the common state of Czechs and Slovaks, should be preserved in the independent state, and which dates and events deserve to be holidays.

It is characteristic of almost all European countries that the majority of their holidays are rituals connected with Christianity. This has not changed in the course of centuries. Just as it did during dictatorships, it remains true in today's democratic regimes. Religious holidays thus turned into a dominance of one confession and in spite of verbal proclamations of religious tolerance and the implementation of ecumenical principles it does not seem that we can expect significant changes in this area soon. The development in Slovakia is characterised by ever more intensive enforcement of Christian principles which gives the impression that in public life, we often give in to the requirements of

rigid Catholicism. Considering the results of the 2001 census where more than two thirds of the population registered as Catholics, the public room for alternative confessions is narrowing. The Catholic church and its political representation within the party KDH is trying to introduce new themes into the public discourse; themes that serve as testing mechanisms that probe just how far it is possible to go with respect to regulating or limiting the right to abortion, defining the ways of spending free time, modifying curricula, dictating Catholic principles in a united Europe. The signing of the Basic Treaty between the Holy See and the Slovak Republic at the end of 2001 intensified the efforts of Catholic hierarchy and its supporters aimed at not allowing the abolition of any Christian holidays, let alone at the expense of introducing a new civic holiday on November 17th.

At present, the law defines three kinds of holidays: state holidays, bank holidays and memorial days. Since the last changes in November 2001 we have in Slovakia five state holidays, 10 bank holidays and seventeen memorial days. Atop the hierarchy are state holidays which should be manifestations of political values with a symbolical function to refer to the formation of the existing social order. In the case of Slovakia it is difficult to unconditionally accept the traditional division of holidays into religious, ethnical and political as their actual symbolical contents are manifold. This concerns not only bank holidays and memorial days, but as I will demonstrate in the following text, state holidays too are affected by this ambiguity.

Let us look at why and which political holidays the society is unable to accept by consensus. Interpreting their symbolical contents contributes more to increasing polarisation of the public discourse than to presenting a generally accepted understanding of the own history.

One of such events is the state holiday commemorating the declaration of Slovak National Uprising – 29th of August. (Kamenec, I., 2005) The uprising is generally considered to be one of the most important events in modern Slovak history. However, at the same time it is a subject of different interpretations and evaluations. „... because at the end of summer of 1944 the conflict was not between two nations but between two parts of contemporary Slovakia – the Fascist and the non-Fascist. In a symbolical sense, this intra-national confrontation was confirmed by the Slovak president Jozef Tiso, who after the uprising had been suppressed awarded decorations to German soldiers.“ (Černušáková, B., 1999, pp. 15-16) The Czecho-Slovak dimension of the uprising is being justified by the fact that the leaders of the resistance movement declared their loyalty to the Czechoslovak state, a symbol of democracy. The symbolical legacy of the uprising is thus today interpreted in the anti-Fascist and democratic sense and as such *it could* be a state holiday with a generally accepted symbolical content. The

supporters of the military Slovak state however cannot allow a positive assessment of the uprising because it was an open rebellion against the own country and in the end it assisted the association with Communists. The Communists on the other hand see uprising as their „property“ and during their rule did not tolerate the notion of the significant role played by non-Communists and civic democratic forces in preparation of and during the uprising.

Let us return to the controversial assessment of symbolical legacy of Slovak national uprising. It enables us to understand the way in which interpretation of these events affects the ambivalent acceptance of this day as a holiday. Between 1951 and 1968, the 29th of August was one of the important dates of Czechoslovak Republic<sup>7</sup>. After the act on Czecho-Slovak federation was passed in June 1969, Slovak National Council legalised 29th of August as *a state holiday of Slovak Socialist Republic*. It only survived in the form of a state holiday and simultaneously a bank holiday until 1975 when the Slovak National Council abolished this state holiday and the Federal Assembly of Czechoslovak Socialist Republic once again classified it as an important date. This changed again in September 1992 when once again 29th of August was declared *a state holiday of Slovak Republic* by the Slovak National Council. Apart from pragmatic calculations of the economic losses that occur on bank holidays, we cannot ignore the difference between Czech and Slovak assessment of this date when we analyse the transformations it has undergone.

It can be said that as soon as the Slovaks felt they had more freedom to make independent decisions, they declared the anniversary of the uprising a state holiday, regardless of the fact that even within Slovak society there was a conflict regarding its important actors, causes and consequences. This is illustrated by legal acts passed by Slovak legislative assembly in 1969 as well as in 1992. Slovak members of parliament adopted such decision after the formal regulation of federative arrangement of Czechoslovakia in the first case, while in 1992 they did again even before the independence of Slovakia was officially and formally confirmed. Thus, the symbolical legacy of the uprising was permanently latently present in the Slovak political discourse, waiting for a suitable moment to be publicly articulated.

Another date, the legacy of which has been vigorously discussed in Czechoslovakia and Slovakia in the course of the 20th century, is and remains 28th of October. Its interpretation reflects the turbulence in Czecho-Slovak relations, intended Communist manipulation with organising collective forgetting but also internal Slovak-Slovak tensions. This date was considered the anniversary

<sup>7</sup> Act No. 93/1951 Coll. *On state holidays, bank holidays and memorial and important dates.*

of the birth of Czechoslovakia, and already in 1919 became a state holiday, called *Freedom Day*. The government of Slovak state abolished it by means of a government decree on 4th of July 1939, along with some other memorial days connected with Czech history. In 1951 28<sup>th</sup> of October reappeared among bank holidays, however this time under the name *Nationalisation Day*. In 1975, Communists defined it as an important date without a clear symbolical reference to its contents. Finally in 1988 it once again becomes *a state holiday, independent Czechoslovak state proclamation day*. By then, the public had for some time been demanding a return to celebrating the anniversary of the proclamation of an independent Czecho-Slovak state. This demand was also articulated in the materials of *Charta '77*. The Communist leadership was unable to ignore it in the generally tense atmosphere. However, the regime struggled to maintain control over all events linked with the 70th anniversary of the republic's proclamation, and regulate them according to own ideological aims.

After the fall of Communism 28<sup>th</sup> of October remained until 1992 a state holiday in the joint federative republic as a commemoration of *proclamation day of independent Czecho-Slovak state*. After the break-up of federation this holiday was abolished in Slovakia and up until 1999 did not even belong to memorial days. That was a true reflection of the atmosphere in Slovak political circles as well as of the situation in parliament (considering the political orientation that had a majority at the time). For the Czechs, 28<sup>th</sup> of October remained state holiday commemorating *the proclamation of an independent Czechoslovak state*. 28th of September became state holiday celebrating *Czech Statehood Day*.

Upon the dissolution of the federation, Slovak historians started a passionate discussion about whether Slovaks should celebrate 28th or 30th of October as the date of joining the Czecho-Slovak Republic. The proposal to proclaim 30th of October, the anniversary of adopting the *Declaration of Martin*, a state holiday of Slovak Republic, referred to the following construction: Czechoslovak state was created as a state of two independent nations – Czechs and Slovaks, who declared their state on the basis of their right to self-determination. That in turn suggests that Czechs created this state by their proclamation on 28th of October; and Slovaks through the declaration on 30th of October. Thus, the *Declaration of Martin* alone was a state-creating act of Slovaks and there is no reason why a unilateral act of Czech political representation should be considered a symbol of the birth of a common state. Historians Ladislav Deák and Anton Hrnko rank among the supporters of this view.

Another group of historians led by Dušan Kováč argue in favour of 28th of October and interpret the *Declaration of Martin* as a manifestation of the will of Slovak political representation to join the concept of a united Czechoslovak nation. Dušan Kováč claimed that Czechoslovak state would come into existence

even without the *Declaration of Martin* and still would be equally legitimate, because it was created as a national state of a united Czecho-Slovak nation; this concept was joined by the Slovaks (albeit mainly due to tactical reasons). On the other hand, the state would not have been formed without the *Prague Declaration* of 28th of October and that is why this date should be at least an important or memorial day in Slovakia, too.

#### *The „founding“ nature of holidays*

Back in 1993, second Mečiar's government classified 1st of September as a state holiday of a *founding* character. They can be regarded as an expression of „state-creating vanity“ of the then political representation who with no historical hindsight at all made the decision about the „noteworthiness“ of these days. We cannot say they contain political symbolism that would contribute to uniting national, civic or state community. Other modern state holidays with a *founding* nature are 1st January as *Day of Slovak Independence*, 1st of September as *Day of Slovak Constitution*. 17<sup>th</sup> of July is a memorial day, the anniversary of adopting the *Declaration of Sovereignty of Slovak Republic* which was passed by Slovak National Council in 1992. Apart from introducing these holidays, there were attempts to initiate or even „create“ rituals by means of which people would identify with the new state. However, this has not succeeded so far and all „founding“ holidays are celebrated in a rather awkward manner.

1st of January is overshadowed by traditional New Year parties with family and friends – in spite of efforts of certain official circles it has not yet been possible to create an appropriate, generally accepted ritual form of commemorating the state creation. Allocating symbolic financial resources from municipal budgets is ineffective – they are mostly used on various fireworks and pyrotechnical effects or on free refreshments on New Year's Eve. Although ritual celebrations of the birth of the republic are not being reflected in the public, several surveys have shown that respondents see 1st of January as the most important and acknowledged among state holidays. Closely second came the Day of St. Cyril and St. Methodius, followed by Anniversary of Slovak National Uprising and Day of Struggle for Freedom and Democracy<sup>8</sup>.

Similarly 1st of September remains overshadowed by the end of the school summer holidays and the start of a new academic year. In addition, the 1992 Constitution has meanwhile been subjected to harsh criticism and in 1998 it was amended by the Parliament. In connections with proposals to introduce new holidays we often hear the opinion that with regard to undertaken as well as expected amendments to the constitution this state holiday is most suitable for

<sup>8</sup> I am thinking here of results of field research conducted within the framework of this project, but also surveys carried out by the Institutes for Sociology and Ethnology of Slovak Academy of Sciences under the title „Collective identities in present Slovakia“. (Krivý, V., 2004)

abolishment. The question is repeatedly asked if it makes sense to commemorate a document, which actually no longer exists in its original form. The opponents of this view base their argumentation on the very symbolical value of the act of adopting the first democratic constitution of an independent state.

A failed attempt to create a new tradition of a ritual nature were celebrations of Slovak Declaration of Independence (17th of July 1992) with the so-called *bonfires of sovereignty*. Representatives of political parties and various civic associations, which consider themselves initiators, and supporters of the Slovak independence proclamation organise annually in many places across Slovakia gatherings with burning bonfires. Although efforts have been made to make these events more attractive through participation of political leaders and refreshments provision, they have yet to become widely popular among the public. Igniting bonfires, as well as jumping over them, reminds of legends about Jánošík. It is associated with pastoral way of life, popular traditions of co-existence of man and nature without the negative effects of modernisation. However, values connected with the return to living in nature are preferred by a small share of the population – therefore one cannot be surprised that ritual bonfires were not spontaneously accepted by Slovaks. Similarly, attempts of some politicians to prove their courage and link with the people by means of rafting on Slovak rivers failed. The shepherd as well as the sawyer may belong to basic village culture, which symbolises the ancient traditions and purity of Slovak national culture; but at the same time they are seen as images of poverty and backwardness. They are part of the myth of plebeian Slovak nation in comparison with the so-called historical nations. Additionally, subconsciously people continue to perceive the political polarisation of the society that existed in the period prior to the dissolution of the federation; participating or not participating in similar rituals also means public political self-identification.

The substance of mentioned rituals is to confirm the myth about the founders of new state, efforts to secure within the collective mind memories of those political associations and individuals that were present at the birth of the state. Here, myth serves as a simplifying interpretation of the complex factors that caused the break-up of the federation. (Miháliková, S., 2004)

Ritual substance of holidays, along with used symbols and myths should confirm the legitimacy and strengthen the authority of either the authors of myths themselves or those historical personalities or idea, which are adopted by a certain group. Their task is to provoke emotions and enthusiasm, which cause people to feel affection for politics and make them feel they understand its objectives.

Political attitudes are to a large extent shaped under the influence of symbolical forms, not utilitarian calculations. The power of symbols in politics is due to the fact that they are the building stones of conceptualisation of origin, unsettled

destinies, beginnings and ends of suffering or heroism of national community. At the same time, holiday celebrations provide room for transferring activities from private into the public sphere – that in turn enables the penetration of politics into private life.

Structure of holidays in Slovakia proves that they are mostly religious, more specifically Catholic holidays. The data on confession as collected during the last census symbols used on money as well as decorations – all this illustrates that the symbolical image of Slovakia remains within the magic circle of preserved national traditions and confessional orientation.

## Conclusion

My aim was to demonstrate the persistence and possible ruptures in creation of auto-images and stereotypes in seeing oneself and others in the field of political memory and mythology that contribute to perceiving and assessing Slovakia from within as well as from the outside. They include various levels of „minority“ viewpoint on constructing national identity, together with the apologetics of efforts to historically visualise the position of Slovaks; ongoing attempts to ‘populate’ Slovak history with a controversial national Pantheon of heroes – martyrs; permanent prevalence of self-critical or even self-whipping returns to the actions of Slovaks almost in the whole history up until the present. Significantly lower number of authors interprets the fate of the Slovak nation in the self-celebratory sense of emphasising own qualities that helped Slovaks to ‘survive and persevere’ against all odds. This approach is part of a martyr-like stereotype of history interpretation and can be found almost in all European countries. Another essential feature of Slovaks is the permanent emphasis on their plebeian origin (Findor, A., 2005) along with the deeply rooted ‘Christian-Catholic’ traditions and values. The tendencies and mechanisms of state symbolism construction since 1993 illustrate the inertia and continuity when creating Slovakia’s image in the sense of featured auto-images and stereotypes. This is exemplified by stately accepted „codes“ and officially preferred myths and symbols (for instance the preamble of Slovak constitution, structure of state holidays and memorial days, structure of state decorations and awards).

In interpreting the image of Slovakia and Slovaks we have identified continuity of these construction procedures:

- a high degree of self-criticising or even masochistic approach to own history and sometimes even present – I am not casting doubts on the responsibility of academic analyses to critically reflect political development and actions of the political actors. However I am convinced that a stabilisation of democratic regime and general acceptance of democratic principles of political life will lead to increased sensibility to potential infringement of ‘game rules’ but at the same

time will not imply immediate creation of new negative stereotypes which in the end are very difficult to uproot both within Slovakia and abroad.

- ironisation and sharp refusal of almost all previous political representations in the sense of a gap between 'unworthy and immoral politicians' and 'ordinary decent people' – ongoing manifestation of certain residues of the feudal relations between 'people' and 'suzerain', existence of two worlds where politicians belong to the world of 'strange' or 'bad lords'.
- emphasising the 'Christian character of Slovaks' not only as a declared contrast to Communism, but mainly within the construction of self-image and images of others. If there will be no limitations to the implementation of principles of rigid Catholicism in social and political life, Slovakia may slip into the traditional historical stereotype in the form of a closed nation moving away from the Western European civilisation and culture standards with elements of national and state isolationism.
- continuity of the myth of plebeian origin of Slovaks in the sense of common territory, language, culture, mentality above all of rural and pastoral origin. An alternative could be provided through gradual deconstruction of national mythology in the sense of deflecting from emphasising plebeian origin of Slovaks, towards increasing the credibility and social recognition of educated classes in the society and its intellectual elites.

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