

Historical booklet about Slovakia



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Three important historical events from the 20th century

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Great Moravia

The Moravian Realm may have existed between 833 and the beginning of the 10th century according to the historians. The today's Czechs', Slovaks' and Moravians' ancestors lived here. Its border expanded on two coasts of Morva and onto today's Czech Republic's, Slovakia's and Hungary's area. According to a Czech-Moravian theory, Mojmir I. sovereign founded the realm. He combined the Monarch of Nitra and the Moravian Principality in 833. Saint Cirill and Saint Metod's missionary activity helped the cultural development of the realm. They came to the country to prince Rastislav's call in 863.



The realm attained its largest expansion under king Svätopluk's reign. He fought serious battles with the Franc Realm. He died in 894. His sons, Mojmir II and Svätopluk II became the rulers.

The Hungarian tribes arriving from the east conquered most of the area in the 10th century's and that was the end for Great Moravia.



History of the Slovak language

The present day Slovak language is a Slavic language and it belongs to the Indo-European language family.

The Slovak language is not an old one but its development began a long time ago, possibly in the 5th or 6th century. In those times Great Moravia was formed and people spoke the old Slavic language. It was though solely a spoken language. A written form of it did not exist. Therefore it had a lot of varieties.

In 863 Michael III the Byzantine Emperor sent brothers – Constantine and Methodus – since they spoke the South Slavic dialect to propagate Christianity in Slavonic language. Constantine created an alphabet for the Slavic language

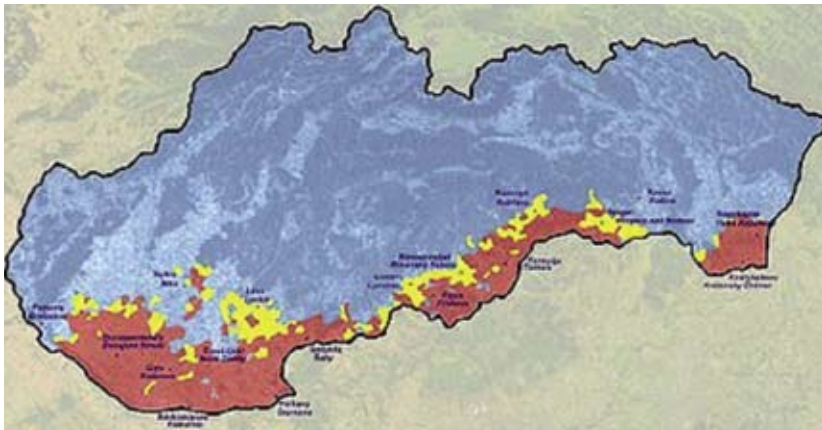
From the 10th to the 14th century Latin was a commonly accepted and used language in administration all over Europe. Those Slovaks who did not speak it used their dialect or Czech language which was and still is very similar to Slovak. In 1348 Charles University in Prague was founded and a lot of Slovakian students went to study there (instead of going to Vienna and study in Latin). In comparison to Slovak language Czech had a written form. All these facts together could have been the reason why both Czech and Slovak languages were accepted as official languages in the newly formed state Czechoslovakia in 1918.



The Hungarian minority in Slovakia

There are more ethnic groups living in Slovakia – Hungarians, Germans, Gypsies (Roma people) and others – numbering over 520,000 people all together. It is about 10 % of the state's population. The biggest minority is the Hungarians who live in the south of the country.

The Hungarian minority is a so called historical minority – the reason of their existence is not moving or immigration but historical change of state borders. Ancestors of most people living in Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Austria lived in the Austro Hungarian Monarchy for centuries. After the defeat of the monarchy's army in 1918 the empire was split and the above mentioned states were gradually formed with less respect to the nationality or language of the people living there.



Hungarians in Slovakia (census 2001) ■ 50-100% ■ 10-50% ■ 0-10%



Trianon

In World War I Hungary was a confederate state with Austria and Germany. The English and French appointed that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy would not be united. A revolution broke out on 28 October 1918. Hungary tore apart from the kingdom on 13 November and the Republic of Hungary was formed on 16 November the same year.

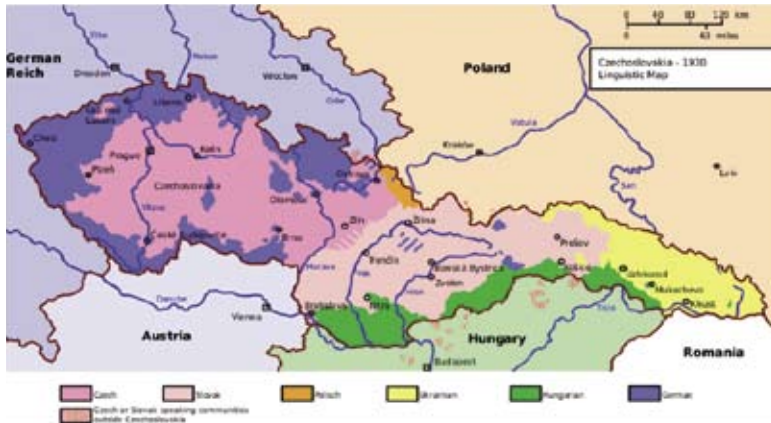
Trianon: The partition of Hungary

On 14 June 1920 two members of Simonyi-Semadam Sándor's government's signed the Contract of Trianon. The contract included the country's new frontiers, limited the staff numbers of army and prohibited the keeping of airforces and heavy weapons. The treaty of Trianon was often called as dictated peace. This meant that was compulsory for the loser.

Two third of Hungary's area and one third of Hungarian population got to the neighbouring countries.



Czechoslovakia



Czechoslovakia was founded in October 1918 as one of the succeeded states of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy at the end of World War I. The ethnic composition of the new state was 51% Czechs, 16% Slovaks, 22% Germans, 5% Hungarians and 4% Rusyns.

The capital and largest city of Czechslovakia was Prague. Between 1918 and 1992 Czechslovakia existed, meanwhile many times it broke off and was founded again.

The state was in Soviet sphere of interest, therefore communists got to power in 1947.

In 1968, the Prague revolt rose up against the communist rule (called the Prague Spring) but it was quelled.

In 1989 the Velvet Revolution helped Czechslovakia become a democratic republic.

At the beginning of 90's negotiations started for splitting the country and on 1 January 1993 Slovakia was founded.



Slovakia in the European Union

Relations between the Slovak Republic and European Union are based on the European Association Agreement which was signed on 4 October 1993 and came into force on 1 February 1995. In 1995 together with Slovakia 10 countries became members of the EU.

Slovakia signed the Accession Treaty with EU on 16 April 2003. After a successful ratification of the Accession Treaty, the Slovak Republic became a member of the European Union on 1 May 2004.

Slovakia adopted the common European currency on 1 January 2009.



Juraj Jánošík

(1688 - 1713)



Jánošík was born on January 25, 1688 and most certainly grew up in the village of Terchová. He died as a young man, just 25 years old, on March 17, 1713.

Jánošík was the main character of many Slovak and Polish legends, novels, poems, and films. He was an outlaw, he robbed nobles and gave the loot to the poor. His person is very important and famous in Slovak history. His legend has been later changed

and today it speaks about a hero who takes from the rich and gives to the poor.

A lot of writers dealt with this story, it gave basis to many books born in those times. The image of Jánošík as a symbol of resistance to oppression was reinforced and became part of the Slovak and Czech high school literature curriculum. In the 20th century, many film studios began to do films about his adventurous life, too. Juraj Jánošík was a highwayman. As a fifteen years old guy, he fought with the Kuruc insurgents. He was a volunteer soldier, than recruited by the Habsburg army. Jánošík became leader of a forest robber group at the age of 23. An interesting fact is that they did not kill their victims they just stole from them. Most of they victims were rich people, merchants.

He was captured in spring of 1713 and was sentenced to death.



Ludovít Štúr

(1815 - 1856)

Ludovít Štúr was one of the most important people in Slovak history and literature. He was a universal person, a politician, a poet, a journalist, a publisher, a teacher, a philosopher and a linguist, too.

He was good at history and languages. He spoke Hungarian, German, Greek, Latin and Slovak. Štúr studied in Bratislava. He became a member of the Czech-Slav Society /it had a big influence on his later life/.

As a politician, he organized the Slovak volunteer campaigns during the 1848 revolution in the Kingdom of Hungary and he was a member of the Diet of the Kingdom of Hungary.

He was the leader of the Slovak national revival in the 19th century. The most important event in his life was that he changed the old standard Slovak language to the contemporary Slovak literary language with the help of two other very famous Slovak men, Hurban and Hodža in 1843.

Ludovít Štúr expressed his philosophy in one sentence: „My country is my being, and every hour of my life shall be devoted to it.“ It perfectly shows us what a patriot he was.



Jozef Murgaš

(1872 - 1930)

Murgas was born in central Slovakia. He was found of painting. He studied it in Budapest and later in München. He painted altarpieces in churches, where he was a priest. He collected fungi, plants, rocks and he had insectarium with 900 insects.

He went to the USA, to a new mining village where 300 Slovak families lived. He founded a school, a library, a gym, a church, a bath and a playground there. He was also interested in electronics and he began to deal more seriously with it. Two of his inventions got licenced in Washington in 1904. The first was a wireless telegraph device and the second was a way of broadcasting. Further inventions are a cordless telegraph, a detector of electromagnetic waves, a transformator and so on. He generated wireless communication between two villages in 1905. These were Scranton and Wilkes-Barre.



Murgaš went down to history with the invention of **radio**.



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