

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIEWS OF MILAN HODŽA ON THE ISSUE OF NATION AND NATIONALISM\*

Karol KOLLÁR

Institute of Philosophy, Slovak Academy of Sciences,  
Klemensova 19, 813 64 Bratislava, Slovakia

The author in his paper deals with the analysis of the conception of nationalism worked out by a representative of the Slovak intellectual and political élite – Milan Hodža – in the period of the rather closed historical stage of the process of modernization in Central Europe during the first four decades of the 20th century. The analysis proves that though M. Hodža was not the author of a comprehensive and original conception of nation and nationalism, these two mutually corresponding phenomena were permanently present in the field of his theoretical interest. They played a key-role in his theoretical as well as in political activities.

The author in his paper follows the developmental bow of M. Hodža's views related to the above mentioned issues, especially nationalism. During the pre – First World War period Hodža reflected nationalism as the destructive social pathological phenomenon, during the interwar period within the framework of a newly established state (ČSR) he understood nationalism as a significant constructive, culturally stimulating factor. On the eve of the Second World War Hodža identified nationalism as a militant, aggressive social psychological phenomenon which had to be politically rectified so that it would not take a wrong turn onto its lower destructive developmental stage.

The process of the modernization of Slovakia in the twentieth century had its undeniable and distinct specific features associated to some extent with broader geopolitical, economic, cultural and social phenomena characteristic of the region of Central Europe. Slovakia of the beginning of the twentieth century was situated (as it still is) in a multicultural, multifaith and multinational (multiethnic) region. Under these conditions, the modernizing changes of Slovakia were discontinuous, characterized by several ruptures, inorganic moments, and incoherence and/or rhapsodic moments in the partial areas of the development of Slovak society.

The analysis of ideological conceptions and works of the members of the Slovak intellectual and political elite in the period of a rather closed historical stage of the process of modernization, particularly in relation to the milestones in social and political events represents a necessary starting point for identifying and knowing the discontinuous development of thought in Slovakia, with consequences evident even at present.

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We think that, through the analysis of ideological conceptions of the representatives of the Slovak intellectual elite, it is necessary and possible to answer the question, to what extent were those theorists and thinkers creators, even initiators of the modernizing change and of the processes associated with it, or, whether they were merely recipients or imitators.

One of the most distinguished representatives of thought in Slovakia in the first half of the twentieth century was Milan Hodža (1878-1944). This Slovak politician of European stature was also a journalist, well-informed theorist, thinker with sociophilosophical orientation, and with an exceptionally broad cognitive range. Social questions reflected by him also included the problems of nation and nationalism.

Although Milan Hodža did not write any comprehensive theory of nation and nationalism, these two terms were among those permanently present in his field of view for more than four decades. Their place was exceptional not only in his journalistic and scientific activities, but also in his political activities, on which we lay particular emphasis.

The real conditions in Slovak society characterized by the feeling of hopelessness and passivity at the turn of the centuries were described by Hodža in a series of his articles. Sensitive, even empathic perception of the unbearable position of the Slovak nation led young Hodža almost necessarily to take critical standpoints and speak about the topics. As we shall see later, his attitudes were not always unequivocal, consistent and time-resistant.

M. Hodža, as an extraordinarily knowledgeable journalist, theorist and later politician, very soon realized how highly sensitive are the issues of nation and nationalism in contemporary multinational Hungary, where the Magyarization pressure was increasing.

In his article published in *Slovenské listy*, no. 10, 1898 under the title 'The state's lie', Hodža strongly criticized such tendencies of the then Hungarian government. His polemics with the idea of the great-Magyar nationalists to transform Hungary into a Magyar nation-state with all the consequences for the non-Magyar ethnic groups was very sharp.

The depressing conclusion and pessimistic outlook for his nation as well as the topical social situation led Hodža to a deeper study into and interest in the phenomena of nation and nationalism and to his effort to cope with them again and again at both theoretical and political levels and to answer questions pertaining to them.

It is interesting to pursue the development of his opinions related to these topics during his theoretically most prolific period, from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries until he became prime minister of the first Czechoslovak Republic in the mid 1930s. His theoretical activities continued during his premiership and later, after the break-up of the republic. But the centre of his active theoretical attention directed towards the areas examined by us was in the interval mentioned above.

Analysing Hodža's texts, we also have to take into account that he often reacted primarily to questions posed by the contemporary life of society in contrast to his

own political views and aims. Naturally, one cannot eliminate the use of a sort of tactic from such an approach for pragmatic and political reasons; this might be a potential source of disagreement and relative discrepancies between the attitudes in the responses to some questions including, indubitably, also the questions related to nation and nationalism.

Hodža understood the issue of the Slovak nation and formation of the national consciousness – national identity, in connection with the political, economic, cultural and linguistic questions. With his comprehensive and modern approach he was high above his contemporaries, who often merely platonically theorized about the topic of nation.

Hodža's view that the Slovak nation should be economically independent to reach both political and national freedom, was developed and published during the whole pre-war (pre-1914) period of his theoretical and political activities.

Sovereign, active (with Hodža's special emphasis laid on this word) participation of the Slovak nation in Central European cultural and political connections was real to Hodža only if the Slovaks overcame their national passivity and fatalism often reflected in a certain form of elegiac messianism. Hodža repeatedly pointed out the reality and sought the ways out in his early articles.

Hodža's-mentioned rejection of some persistent attitudes in Slovak life as the demands of the conditions *sine qua non* of the process of the nation's self-awareness and self-realization as a modern form of human community referred fully also to S. Hurban Vajanský. Hodža actually adopted from the Štúr generation and Hlas proponents, *inter alia*, the idea of humanity as a determining and conditioning component of the movement for national revival, rights and freedom. In 1903 he wrote about it in the journal Hlas: "The idea of Slovak nationality, as evident from its residues, comes from Ľudovít Štúr. As Hegel's pupil, he acquired Herder's ideal of nationality. When, under the bright sun's rays of the awakening human consciousness the darkness of old feudalism faded away, it was thanks to humanism. Humanity was also a fighter against feudalism that removed the rule over the hard working people. And, together with the liberation of the people from feudalism, a cultural ideal was developing – because, without cultural progress, democratic progress would not be possible." ([1], 208) According to Hodža, the ideal of "humanity" in terms of Herder's ideas, gradually gave rise to the "national ideal" – the idea of the free nation.

National freedom was not regarded by Hodža or other members of the Hlas group, as the final ambition of national efforts – but only as one of the stages or means aiming at higher goal, that is, at solving a complex of current political, cultural, and social problems of Slovakia.

On the other hand, however, he knew that reaching this higher aim must not be the reason for the "nationality to drown in humanism because the treasure of humanity would disappear just in that way." ([1], 208) Hodža then maintains on the one hand that the national idea was "in the past century and still is, a driving force

of the incredible cultural progress, it was and still is a generous idea, simply saying: a progressive idea... the national idea created great literatures, it served progress.” ([1], 210) But, at the same time, it also warns that even the most humane idea can be (and it often was) under certain circumstances, perverted, internally modified to such an extent that its later metamorphosed content would be contradictory to the idea as it had earlier been understood.

The question of nation (according to Hodža, the nationality question) should have its exactly defined position in a complex of sociopolitical problems. Its importance is indisputable, according to Hodža, it must not, however, go beyond the limits of its meaning, it must not become purely academic. However, if it happens, then the altruistic generally accepted idea of patriotism can change into national egoism. Hodža, who was knowledgeable about historical sciences, realized that it was precisely uncritical, uncorrected “recognition of national identities that led to denial or underrating (of other – K. K.) national identities. Chauvinism, selfishness and oppression of others... The national idea which used to be a vehicle for a higher aim turned into in itself – national egoism denied humane ideals: behold – nationalism. And since nationality became the aim, everything next to this aim vanished, everything that strengthened humanity, the principles of social equality and of social justice faded away.” ([1], 209)

Particularly in the articles published in the first decade of the twentieth century, Hodža developed a sociologizing theory that it was largely nationalism that was the cause of social injustice and social differences in contemporary Hungarian society.

This Hodža’s view can be judged from the two points of view: firstly, we cannot agree with his reducing the causes of the problems in society to nationalism. Such a monofactorial determination of the development of the social system is simplifying and as early as at the time of its formation it was inadequate to the real situation in the Slovak milieu. There were more real reasons for the extraordinarily unfavorable situation in Slovakia and the position of the Slovak nation in the historic Kingdom of Hungary. They had, in addition to the chauvinistic stances of the ruling circles, also economic and historical roots.

On the other hand, Hodža’s denial and rejection of blind nationalism (as he often called it in his articles) was associated with a sober assessment of the principles of democracy and the positive development in terms of the economic and cultural growth of the Slovak nation. Hodža valued these principles higher than the populist and nationalistic slogans. He gave priority to democracy, freedom, culture and economic growth of the Slovak nation in contrast to the flickering, secondarily produced populist nationalism. He urgently warns that “it’s time for the Slovak to get rid of the servitude to superstitions, stupidity, and poverty. Exclusive nationalism cannot be used as a weapon next to the raging nationalism, because in that way we spend all our strengths in the furious struggle and will lag a whole century behind. The young Slovak intelligentsia faces new tasks, a new type of work, because our “oldies” will not relinquish their belief in the omnipotence of bare nationalism.” ([1], 204)

Under the “oldies”, M. Hodža meant chiefly the nationalists of the town of Martin, particularly S.H. Vajanský. In his polemic article ‘Nationalism is blind’ published in Hlas in 1903, he reproached Vajanský for, inter alia, asking the jury in the lawcourt for help during the trial in Pest. Vajanský argued that he himself is a nationalist, exactly as the judges are nationalists and since he also fights against local internationalism, he appeals to the feeling of solidarity on the part of the ‘great’ Magyar nationalists. This logical paradox, a sort of attempt to square the circle in terms of the slogan – nationalists of all the countries, unite – in the Vajanský’s defence, was subjected to sharp analysis by M. Hodža.

Hodža rejects unambiguously such, even singular attempts at pseudo-unification of the Slovak and Magyar nationalists, he regards them as impossible, non-democratic, and, ultimately, negative for the Slovak nation. By contrast, in terms of his view, for example, in the same period he promoted alliance of the Slovak and other non-Magyar national political groups with democratically thinking Magyars. In defence of his idea, he writes in the article ‘Nationalism is blind’: No association of people can be immoral, if we admit the same moral laws for every human. But it is just the point where nationalism is blind – it’s useless to try to explain to a nationalist that two indignant nationalists will never reach agreement as soon as they meet, that contemporary nationalism is a step backwards throughout Europe and that the most backward part of the nation takes hold of it: in our country and everywhere.” ([1], 202)

Emphatic, reiterated, negative judgment of nationalism on both the Magyar and the Slovak side, understanding of their common irrational core and understanding of intolerance, non-constructiveness of each one-sided nationalism were characteristic of Hodža, particularly in the period before the First World War. That standpoint was at the same time part of the shaping of his own programme of national and democratic changes. His view was based on the critique of conservatism and liberalism, which, in his opinion, like national chauvinism (which was so obvious in the Hungarian ruling circles) can in no case be an ideological foundation for the Slovak national policy and are, according to him, a priori eliminated from the Slovak ideological world.

Hodža amplified his theorizing about the topic in an extensive article ‘Realism in our country’ published in Hlas in the summer of 1904. He wrote about the three trends that affected modern (contemporary) political thought: conservatism, liberalism, and socialism. All of them were gradually rejected by Hodža as inappropriate to the Slovak nation, for its social, cultural and, particularly economic growth. He argues that conservatism can only exist in a society, where an economically and socially stronger group of people has something to conserve, hence, “conservatism grows on aristocratic soil”. ([1], 222) Since the Slovaks have no aristocracy, they have nothing to conserve, they have no reason to deduce from their historical past a sort of alleged legal claims on the present.

According to Hodža, traditions of a conservative ideal, from which follows stratification of human society in to classes and the subordination of working classes, have to be rejected by the Slovak nation.

Liberalism is not a political trend suitable for the Slovaks either. Political liberalism is, as Hodža puts it, “actually merely an opposition against the ruling conservatism because, as soon as it achieves the power, it is conserved. There are no conditions for economic liberalism based on the willfulness of trade and industry in our country. ([1], 222) Hodža does not think that conservatism and liberalism can be integrated in the Slovak world of ideas. In Hodža’ opinion, socialism could be more appropriate at first sight. It could seemingly become “an asylum for the Slovak poor people – a magic of the new social order, the phantom of social equality – it lures and attracts.” ([1], 223)

Hodža says that such a vision is not realizable either, mainly because the Slovaks have not yet been able to shape themselves as a nation and they still do not have an established idea of their national foundation.

Hodža contends that it is precisely the insufficient maturity of the Slovak nation that is the cause why socialism, which is of international character, is not suitable for the Slovaks. The Slovak nation has at first to shape its identity in order to be able take part in supranational ideological movements, such as the socialist, or better to say, socio-democratic movement.

In addition to the mentioned arguments, Hodža sees another momentous and crucial point why it is not possible to simply implant and transfer foreign patterns into the Slovak world of ideas. The natural originality of the Slovak nation is an insurmountable barrier. “Nations are individualities. They accept influences from the outside and they should develop towards the general human ideal but on their own foundations... The Conservatism of the Slavs changes into backwardness, liberalism into moral desert, social ideals into anarchy.” ([1], 223)

Similarly, nationalism itself cannot be a skeleton, a bearing idea of the nation-democratic development and programme. Hodža does not assign to nationalism a function of a universal leitmotif of the future national-democratic development, but, he rather ascribes to it a sort of partial complementary function. In his approach, “exclusive nationalism is not a sufficient ideological basis for national policy. Nationalism survived only as a decorative attribute, as an epitheton ornans of a variety of economic and social aspirations” ([1], 222)

In terms of his repeatedly proclaimed democratic and realistic principles, Hodža again stresses the need to apply the synthesis of both these principles in Slovak conditions also in the nation-related issues. His response given to his critics, who attacked him for his importation of “foreign” ideas in to the Slovak setting was sharp: “there is no more impertinent insinuation than that realism is a graft, transplanted from foreign soil. There is just a piece of realism in the fact that we seek to create a programme which makes our outlooks correspond not only to the general principles of philosophy, but also to our real-life needs and conditions, and even more: to weave the thread of thinking about the past, to put the present in harmony with history, to construct a world view from ancient history, from current events, and from the character of the nation.” ([1], 228)

Hodža added an uncompromising statement to this time overpowering standpoint, topical even today: “we are democrats, and, therefore, we want democratic nationalism. Nationalism that becomes an empty slogan with respect to people and a warm bastion of chauvinism is bad”. ([1], 228) Regardless of the evident content discrepancy between the concepts of democracy and nationalism, this standpoint encompasses Hodža’s outlook on the issue of nationalism in the pre-war period itself. We feel the author’s effort to prefer the democratic principle as the central idea of the agenda of national democratic changes in the contemporary Hungarian society and especially in the ripening Slovak nation.

After the First World War, Hodža’s overtly critical tone directed evidently against any manifestations of “blind” nationalism changes qualitatively. According to Hodža, nationalism in Central Europe loses its destructive character, changing from a destructive instrument into a cultural impulse.

At the same time, it should be admitted that Hodža continued to pursue a skeptical approach to nationalism as far as it concerned discussion about its function as a certain bearer or mediator of rapprochement between nations – which, as a cultural impulse, it might be.

Given his empirical knowledge of the pre-war and the war periods, Hodža alerts to a potential threat of the formation of international suspicions under the influence of uncorrected nationalistic attitudes also between the Slavic nations. His attitude to nationalism was more velvety in his lectures on Agrarianism and Slavdom delivered in Košice (1922) and in Ljubljana (1924) in comparison with his strictly negative pre-war standpoint: “It certainly is not any accusation of nationalism, but a comment on its nature, if I say that it is precisely nationalism, if it is without balance, that is sometimes the source of considerable international misunderstandings. ([4], 48) Not nationalism as such, but its nature is the cause of patho-social phenomena. Such an anthropomorphism, improving the image of nationalism appears to be a politically pragmatic step, rather than a real scientific analysis of a social phenomenon; it was a signal of the gradual shift in Hodža’s outlooks on the issue of nationalism.

The development of Hodža’s “realistic” views on the issue of nationalism and nation also continued in new conditions. According to Hodža, nationalism in Central Europe was rapidly losing its earlier character and by solving the nationality problems of Europe through its postwar arrangement it would change from an instrument of conflict into an extensive cultural impetus.

The reality of the development in Central Europe soon showed how wrong was Milan Hodža in judging the new functions of nationalism. Towards the end of the twenties, he tried to promote the thesis that nationalism in Central Europe, particularly in the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, changed considerably after the war and that nationalism’s character and tasks were modified. In one of his articles he argues convincingly: “Its tasks are neither negative nor destructive any more; now, the tasks of nationalism are positive and constructive. Nationalism

today does not imply resentment and mistrust, but rather building, work... Nationalism is the belief that every nation has a duty, right, and opportunity to contribute to the common intellectual property of humankind with its specific values." ([4], 64)

Hodža's vision of the real transformation of nationalism from a destructive phenomenon into a new, postwar nationalism that is constructive, powerful (ardent, inventive, positive, human, and Hodža used a series of other adjectives to elucidate his new understanding in his speeches) impulse stimulating the nations of Central Europe to create new cultural intellectual and ethical values appears in a number of Hodža's articles and appearances in the 1920s and 1930s.

Hodža based his thesis on a simple logical scheme: with the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the new postwar arrangement of the Central European space institutionalized in international conventions and treaties, the (national) orientation (psychology) as well as the functions and the essence of nationalism changed. Hodža also sought to support his hypothetical construction historically, pointing to the Slovak national consciousness, in which, with regard to historical experiences in its hundreds of years existence in cultural and social despotism the element of negation and destruction still survived.

In his speech delivered to the parliamentary budget committee in 1926 and published later under the title *Progress – nationalism – Slovak language*, he accentuates, this addressing it to the Slovaks: "Also our nationalism was destructive and it could not be different, since it had to turn against state formations, whose aim was to extinguish nationalism. However, nationalism now has other than destructive tasks." ([7], 309)

New assignments for nationalism follow from the new situation in postwar Central Europe, in an epoch when, according to Hodža, national ideas have already been (or are being) fulfilled. Changes take place in new conditions and in other theoretical conceptions. World War I was to Hodža, among other things, a welcome disintegration of "unnatural" state formations (the end of the era of megalotatism), where nations could not establish themselves in their basic functions. On the other hand, it was 'the melting pot', where a number of apparently constant, stable pre-war ideas were melted – the forms of liberalism, conservatism and socialism changed. Similarly, the character and function of nationalism also changed. Paradoxically enough, nationalism did not die out after the war: rather the opposite, it became stronger: "Among winners because they won, among the defeated because they were defeated. Only the poverty, following the tracks of the war forces nationalism to clip its wings." ([4], 358) Hodža added to an indisputably true and sharp politological attitude idealistic and optimistic theorizing about the positive change of nationalism.

After the catharsis of war, nationalism was getting rid of its temporary (enforced) destructive-instrumental function and changing into a constructive cultural impetus. M. Hodža develops an idea in his speeches and articles that nationalism is no longer a latent source and a potential tool of social conflict, but is becoming



a natural function of a free nation with opportunities to develop all its intellectual, moral and cultural skills which will bring new values as a contribution to human civilization – to the common property of humankind.

In 1930 he delivered a lecture entitled ‘Central European agrarian democracy’. He defined the new nationalism as the “awareness of responsibility for intensifying and implementing the nation’s unique racial skills to be used as valid contributions to a common civilization. That means, not the nationalism of negation or resistance against others, but the nationalism of construction, cultured and capable of international cooperation.” ([4], 359)

For M. Hodža the First World War was indeed a reappraisal of all values. Hodža predicts optimistic outlooks for nationalism expecting that the current and probably the dominating trend or stream “of development throughout the world is moving towards constructive cultural nationalism.” Unfortunately, history has not verified this positive hypothesis either.

Hodža took an example of the development of Slovak and Czech nationalism before and after WWI to give a theoretically acceptable justification of the reality, difficult to be accepted by him, by a sociologizing approach – why the relations between the Czechs and Slovaks in the new independent state of Czechoslovakia did not develop in the way expected and wished by him. Or, in other words, to answer the pressing question “why the relation between the Czechs and Slovaks in the free state was not immediately idyllic but critical.” ([7], 216)

According to Hodža’s hypothesis, which he named an old sociological law, every social group – in this case nation, is integrated and cemented inside by being in a setting of confrontation and/or in contact with another, antagonistically orientated group. In such cases, its inner cohesion grows. In connection with this thesis Hodža compares two processes of the development of national (group) consciousness in two national communities that were developing for a long time next to each other. On the basis of his comparative analysis, he came to the conclusion that before the establishment of an independent state (the first Czechoslovak republic), the Czech national consciousness (here he uses consciousness as a synonym of nationalism) had already been cemented and shaped by the long-lasting fight against Viennese centralism and German rule.

As far as the developmental stage is concerned, the Czech nationalism was in its end-state of development – the stage of consummation, its sign being that the national consciousness was present within the whole Czech community. On the other hand, developmental imbalance and historical asymmetry caused that “Slovak nationalism had no time to reach consummation before the final developmental stage”. Before the war, a high percentage of the two-million Slovak people had no Slovak national consciousness. That means that our national developmental process stopped in 1918 without winning all the Slovak masses for the national consciousness. The masses of the nation remained unconscious of being in a national revolt against the Magyars. Against whom should they have found themselves in revolt?

They found the object of their envy in the Czechs.” ([7], 216) In this theorizing, Hodža applies the sociological maxim about social groups, extending it to the situation between the Czechs and Slovaks and the relationship between them, which, to Hodža’s surprise, was not very harmonious within the new state. He created a scheme to show the reason for this process. He differentiates between the members of the Slovak nation according to the stage of development of their national consciousness. When Hodža wrote his thesis (1930), he was convinced that “we are approaching the climax of Slovak nationalism on the numerical side because there is only a low percentage of the Slovak people who are not permeated with the Slovak national consciousness.” ([7], 217)

The period of shaping and maturing of the national consciousness served as an auxiliary criterion for rating the members of the Slovak nation on the hypothetic developmental scale of nationalism. Hodža maintained that the course of the development of national consciousness in Slovakia was specific, following from the historical circumstances. In principle, it lagged behind the Czech one, it was not fully developed by the beginning of WWI, being completely inhibited towards the end of war.

Change came in this state of “non-consummated” nationalism. The end of the Hungarian state also meant the loss of the “enemy”, who, in Hodža’s words, “whetted” Slovak nationalism. Here he comes to the conclusion, disputable from the scientific point of view: that after losing an indirect stimulus of the Slovak national consciousness, and this is the weak point of his hypothesis, “the Slovak national consciousness of the new Slovaks, not yet fully and collectively developed, had to be sharpened on another group, to which it could not find any positive relationship immediately, which they might have feared as rivals – with whom they could not merge in full harmony without a transition.” ([7], XXVIII)

Thus, two large subgroups of the members of the Slovak nation were created, and they are at different stages of Slovak nationalism. One group is composed of “those whose Slovak national consciousness was gained before the war or in a normal psychological procedure during the war. Their Slovak nationalism has already progressed or is progressing to a higher, Czechoslovak, synthesis. Those who gained Slovak national consciousness after the war out of envy of and resentment against the Czechs, have not yet reached this higher stage of the synthesis. They are still at the first stage of nationalism.” ([7], 217)

Because Slovakia has not yet completed the process of developing its national consciousness, its nationalism has to be consummated (vented, whetted – Hodža’s terminology) at present and in the new state formation of the first Czechoslovak republic. Hodža completes his sociologizing contemplations by his apologizing for the seemingly incomprehensible process of consummating nationalism in Slovakia, saying: “every national group has to get through its developmental phase of a stormy, aggressive nationalism. There is no nation in the world, or a national or regional fraction, that has not gone through this phase of its particularistic develop-

ment.” ([7], XLII) At the time of the publishing of this theory (1934) Hodža saw Slovakia still in the phase of particularistic nationalism.

Nevertheless, Hodža thinks that the situation in Slovak nationalism is gradually approaching its turning-point where nationalism suddenly starts to change positively. After the nation’s taking of a qualitatively different position in a new state, sooner or later, “the satisfied nationalism ceases to be an instrument of destruction as it used to be in the alien anti-nationality and anti-democratic state, and turns into an instrument of culture... Today, nationalism does not consist in the resentment against others, in hatred and mistrust. Today, nationalism is a feeling and being aware of the responsibility for the nation to create as many intellectual and moral achievements as possible...” ([7], 217)

It seems that Hodža in his theorizing presented as an example of his analysis of the relationship of the Slovak and the Czech nations to nationalism, having its core in the fact that Hodža, maybe unintentionally, but suggestively, put his ideas of the positive development of nation and nationalism into his theoretical constructions so as to reach the presumed effect. It is very difficult, from the sociological perspective, to admit merely a monofactorial determination of such a complex sociopsychological phenomenon as “national consciousness” – the consciousness of belonging to one’s nation. It is problematic to look only at the time of its shaping as a negative group response to external influences and then, on the basis of such a specification, to construct a hypothesis about the developmental stages of nationalism.

It seems as if Hodža, while constructing his otherwise interesting theory, did not notice, or did not want to notice, the fact that the consummation of the development of national consciousness required the presence of its integral part, which sees the fulfillment of the national idea in independent nationhood (in a nation-state).

Hodža’s approach seems to be therefore rather simplifying and it led Hodža himself to conclusions of low validity. Such an approach is paradoxical also in connection with Hodža’s understanding of the nation as a whole, which had repeatedly been presented by him as a historical sociocultural phenomenon. His reply to the question what is a nation was repeatedly “nation is not a mere mechanical collection of millions of people, but a large, complex social group, a living organism. Nation does not become extinct by the dying out of its generations or epochs. What was (and is) going on in the nation has its inner connections. Also therefore we are as we are, because our national past was as it was.” ([7], 336)

We think that the crucial factor or the basis that significantly influenced almost all Hodža’s theorizing about nations and nationalism in the interwar period, was the hypothesis, fully accepted and internalized by him, about the single nation of Czechs and Slovaks that had been artificially separated for a long time due to the external circumstances. He borrowed this hypothesis partly from T.G. Masaryk and partly he deduced it himself from historical facts, to which he often referred: “We once were one nation. It was 900 years ago... Since then we have been were sepa-

rated by foreign sovereignties and foreign cultures for centuries. Now we have a united realm: a united state.” ([4], 154)

Hodža had a fixed idea of a single nation of Czechs and Slovaks and he spoke about it as early as at the end of the nineteenth century. Then, in the first issue of the journal *Hlas*, in June 1899, he formulated a thesis that the Czechs and Slovaks should be spoken of as a united ethnographic nation.

After the establishment of the independent Czechoslovak Republic, Hodža tried to answer the question of nation as a whole again, paying particular attention to the issue of the coexistence of Czechs and Slovaks in one state. Later, Hodža contends that it is justified to apply his idea of the united political nation successfully in politics and propaganda, to Czech-Slovak relations within an independent state. In spite of the stable position of the idea of the united nation in its theories, Hodža perceived the extant reality sensitively and alerted to a number of differences between the national development of the Czechs and Slovaks. That the separated cultural and historical shaping of the Slovak nation must have had (and also has) its cultural and psychological specifics, containing the germs of some misunderstandings between the Czechs and Slovaks.

Hodža sees differences between the two nations in the different languages, but they are negligible in his opinion. It is sociopsychological differences that are substantial, developed during the long historical period of their belonging to different cultural and political formations.

Hodža's views from the period that culminated in the mid-thirties were that the Slovaks were a separate nation, but only in terms of being a historically given moral whole. That means, Hodža said in one of his lectures presented in 1934, that “the Slovaks also have to work through the developmental stages of the national constructive creativity. Therefore, Slovak literature, Slovak art and the active participation of the Slovak people in their own civilization, including the technical area, is needed; moral nationalism is an inevitable driving force for developing all their own skills, which should be beneficial to the state political whole.” ([7], XXXII)

Milan Hodža later admitted acceptance of the conception of an independent Slovak nation and Slovak nationalism, but always merely in a platonic abstract form of a “moral principle”, arguing, that the constructive Slovak nationalism is not an adversary of the state, but rather its co-builder. “At issue is the fact, not to be formulated politically because it would really lead to political separation and to talks about Slovak national sovereignty, which are simply a frivolous play with the existence of Slovakia. It means, Slovak nationalism as a moral principle, but, under any circumstances, a single political Czechoslovak nation. In practical politics it means neither centralism nor autonomy, but a state-political-national unity and regionalism with local self-administration.” ([7], XXXIII) We can deduce from what has been said above that Hodža's conception of the nation in the interwar period was, in our opinion, somewhere between the views of the proponents of the Prague centre and Slovak political autonomism. For the purpose of historical precision, we have to

mention that Hodža's political attitude was clear-cut in terms of his official defence of the common state of the Czechs and Slovaks. He did not hesitate to answer the Slovak autonomist demands in the spirit of his conviction that "there would be no Slovakia without Czechoslovakia and without Czechoslovak political unity." ([7], XXXV)

To complete the outline of the developmental arch of Hodža's views on the issues of nation and nationalism between the two wars, it should be stated that in the last period of his theorizing before World War II, Hodža abandoned his long declared conception of a single Czechoslovak nation. Instead, he inclined to the conception or theory of Slovak and Czech nationalism. Both the Slovak and the Czech nations should, of their own free will, aim at the higher synthesis which should be understood as a political or state-political Czechoslovak nation.

In the concluding part of this paper, we think it appropriate to underscore the mentioned fact that Hodža's attitude toward the issue of nation and nationalism underwent a change and the qualitative difference between that before the First World War and after it was significant. While in the period before the war his attitude to nationalism was rather rejecting, in the interwar period, Hodža re-evaluated his views on the issue of nation and nationalism. In that period, Hodža understood nationalism as a great cultural incentive, as a cultural component, as a creative force of the nation or as its function (as a feeling of responsibility for the global, cultural, moral and intellectual contribution of the nation). At the same time, however, he also understood it, and in his appearances and/or contributions he presented it, as a "political organization of ethnic forces in the folk masses." (4], 157) A rather frequent confused understanding of the problem was probably reflected by Hodža himself, which made him to try to cope with the topic in a theoretically more comprehensive way.

In April 1932, Hodža gave a lecture entitled Modern nationalism, where he returned to this issue after almost three decades since publishing the article Nationalism is blind in its wider historical, social and political connections. His analytical view on the issue is Eurocentric. Hodža traces the development of the national idea in the recent history of Europe. He compares the situation of crystallization of the national idea in England, France, and Germany to be able to point out the specific feature of the birth of the national idea of the Slavs, which he identifies as revolt against the ruling power. Therefore, our nationalism was also of the destructive nature so often mentioned by him. Why was it just revolt, why destruction in the Slavs? Hodža has an unequivocal answer: "Since in no place, neither in Italy nor in Germany, where national idea was also born of romanticism, was oppression so penetratively integral and, simultaneously also national, social, and economic; nowhere were so many victims, such deep humiliation of dignity, not only national but also human, as in our country." ([7], 353) That is why the national idea or nationalism was generated as an adequate response to oppression, chiefly as an ideology of revolt against the existing legal and social system in the state. It had been so until

“the national problem was resolved by world war” ([7], 357), M. Hodža thought. But now, nationalism is more than a simple ideology of the revolt of the oppressed nationalities in a multinational state. By contrast, in the inter-war years, a positive transformation of the phenomenon has taken place – nationalism has become a moral commitment in the process of the fulfillment of the nation’s duties with respect to humankind (to actively contribute through its share in the development of civilization). In this construction of ideas and at the individual level “nationalism means responsibility, my responsibility for my nation to stand its ground in the contest of nations.” ([7], 357)

In the original projection of the issue of nationalism, Hodža, leaning on the theoretical works of Giuseppe Mazzini, distinguishes three historical periods: romantic, destructive and post-war, and the contemporary period of the so-called constructive nationalism.

In his theorizing about nationalism, Hodža goes further and discriminates between its forms. He speaks about three manifestations in the cultural, ideological, and – characteristically of Hodža and distinguishing him from his contemporaries in his early *Hlas* debuts – the socio-economic areas. Hodža places particular emphasis on the last two aspects of nationalism. He again claims that the struggle of the Slovaks (and the Slavs in general) for national liberation (the phase of destructive nationalism) was also a struggle for social liberation. Because the oppressors of the Slav nations were active, not only in the national area, but also in the economic and social areas. Therefore, also in terms of the principle of destructive nationalism, the nation-liberation process of the Slovaks (and of the Central European Slavs) was more complicated than that of the nations of Western Europe.

Hodža was right when he noticed that the new situation in post-war Europe, and in the succession states of Austria- Hungary in particular, did not mean the end of nationalism. But (as we have already noted), Hodža thought, or rather wanted to believe what he proclaimed – that nationalism had already gone through a qualitative modification and the socio-psychological phenomenon with several negative manifestations had really changed into a positive force. In the mid-thirties, when the repeatedly activating militant nationalism begins to be a real threat to the small nations of Central Europe, Hodža perceives it sensitively. In spite of it or just because of it, he repeats his idea about an important function of nationalism in modern human history as a whole and in the history of Central Europe, in particular; however, there is an evident effort to control this process politically or to control nationalism not to fall down to its lower, destructive developmental phase.

The history soon showed that the fear of the malign version of the possible development of the particular social phenomenon without outer and inner corrections was justified. And the following development in Central Europe did not confirm his optimistic visions of the future of nationalism. On the contrary, it was, paradoxically enough, the consequences of hypertrophied nationalism that forced him to go to live in exile, first to Switzerland, later to France. In 1939, Hodža founded the

Slovak National Council (SNC) in Paris and became its Chairman. The political aims of the SNC proclaimed by him differed in many ways from the official politics of the Czechoslovak government in exile in London. After the defeat of France, in 1941, he went to the USA, where he actively proclaimed his political project and conception about the building of a Central European federation. The core of this conception was the need to establish a new state formation from the reconstructed, as Hodža believed, democratic states – the Union of Central European countries. His visions of this federation, where also Slovakia would have guaranteed its national and economic space were summed up in his last book published in London in 1942 under the title *Federation in Central Europe*.

Using the current terminology, many of his ideas about this topic could be called prognostic. They survived their time and to some extent overpower time, and are even topical again at present. Unfortunately, the post-war arrangement of Europe, its division in terms of the Jalta treaty, the infiltration of the totalitarian system into Central Europe (which had Hodža foreseen and warned the US government just before his death in his memorandum “Europe at the Crossroad” [10]) and the Cold War that followed adjourned Hodža’s theoretical constructions and conceptions about the founding of an integrated Central Europe for half a century.

Hodža died in 1944, less than two years after the publication of his book. He worked intensively on its amendment and enlargement. The book might also be called Hodža’s political testament.

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