

Denominations, church policies, identity in Hungary and Slovakia after 1945

Hungarian-Slovak Committee of Historians had successfully applied for support for the extended edition of their successfully tendered work in 2005: the publication had won support for three main tasks from *INTERREG III. Hungary – Slovakia – Ukraine Neighbourhood Programme*. The main goal of the phase lasting until 31 December 2007 was to organize the international scientific conference *Denominations, church policies, identity in Hungary and Slovakia after 1945* with the Hungarian party, Center for Social Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, as the senior organizer. The three-day-long event hosted 20 professional lectures. This volume consists of edited texts of these lectures. The lectures were preceded and finished by two round table conversations: the first investigated issues of churches and identity by *Michal Barnovský* (Historický ústav SAV, Bratislava), *Jozef Hal'ko* (Cyrilometodská bohoslovecká fakulta UK Bratislava), *István Káfer* (Pázmány Péter Catholic University), *Jan Pešek* (Historický ústav SAV, Bratislava), *Jenő Szigeti* (Seventh-Day Adventist College), *István Zombori* (Móra Ferenc Museum, Szeged) and myself. The second workshop's guests were *Károly Tamás Bartal*, provost-abbot of Jászó and *Asztrik Várszegi*, senior abbot of Pannonhalma: with *Margit Balogh* as a moderator they discussed the situation and possibilities of monastic orders after 1945 in Slovakia and Hungary, as well as the hardships of a resumption.

I.

IDENTITY, TRADITION, SECULARIZATION

Jenő Gergely

Religious and national identity – the relationship between churches, denominations and the state before 1945

Churches and religions played a major role in the establishment of modern, civil nations in the Carpathian Basin. Belonging to one or more religious community was an integral part of national identity.

There were nations whose transition into a civil state was characterised mainly by a common language besides political community and common social, political interests. That was the case with Hungarians and Croats. The national identities of other nations, however, were established by a religious community and the bond with the church from the middle of 19th century on. In this nations the framework (namely, the usage of national language, autonomy within the state), which was provided by the state and the political leader-

ship in the former countries, was given by the churches with their autonomy. Such nations are the Serbs, the Romanians and the Slovaks. In the case of the Serbs and Romanians these were independent national churches, and with the Slovaks the parts of the Catholic and Evangelical churches which cared for the Slovak people. Another characteristic example is the Carpatho-Rusyn nation that got the only organisational support from the Greek Catholic church with the town of Munkács as its centre. Therefore while in Hungary and Croatia the process of becoming a political nation is connected to great politicians and thinkers, in the case of the others these leaders were men of the church. (The Serb patriarch of Karlóca, the Romanian Orthodox metropolitan of Fogaras, the Greek Catholic bishop of Munkács, and several Slovak Catholic or Lutheran ecclesiastical leaders or simple priests.)

The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was a multinational and multiconfessional state, where a sophisticated interaction of national churches and national fractions of greater Churches took place. The religiously most heterogenic nation was the Hungarian (most of them Catholic, the others Reformed, Evangelical and Unitarian). The Croatian national church was Catholic, the Serb was Orthodox. Most of the Romanians were Orthodox as well, with a Greek Catholic group in Transylvania; the greater part of Slovak people was Catholic and some of the were Evangelical. The Carpatho-Rusyn national church was Greek Catholic. The most heterogenic multinational church was the Catholic (Hungarians, Croatians, Germans, Slovaks). About half of the Greek Catholic were Romanian, and the other half Carpatho-Rusyn and Hungarian. Most of the Orthodox people were Serb, the others Romanian. The Reformed and Unitarian churches consisted only of Hungarians. A third of the Evangelical church was Slovak, another third was German and another Hungarian.

The denominations within the Hungarian state were legally equal, their financial, social and political differences were results of their past state before the bourgeois age.

Ivan A. Petranský

Ecclesiastical politics in Slovakia between 1945 and 1948

Two different countries were united again when the Republic of Czechoslovakia was renewed in 1945. These countries also differed in the relationship of their people with their religion and in the historical experiences they had about the work of churches. That was the source of the difference in ecclesiastical politics implemented in Slovakia and the Czech area. Between 1945 and 1948 two notable political parties formed state politics, the Communist Party of Slovakia and the Democratic Party. From 1946 on two smaller parties joined the policy making: the Party of Labour and the Party of Freedom. The author analyzes the role of these parties in the ecclesiastical politics of the era, stating that in the 1945-1948 period the legal status of churches and denominations was provided on a comparatively appropriate level by Slovak authorities. At the same time in Slovakia several measures were taken that influenced the free work of churches as well as their rights and privileges. These measures had different effects on churches – it was the widely popular Catholic church that suffered most.

Margit Balogh

„Under God’s free sky” – churches in Hungary between 1945 and 1948

In the age before 1945 Hungarian churches were in close connection with the state, almost accreted to each other. Though this interlocking mechanism was not mirrored in the law it was still present in everyday life, therefore we can call them – not in the official context – state churches. At the same time the whole society claimed themselves members of one or other church, not counting a very small group that was outside these churches. Churches were a natural part of the society; considering their fields of activity and base they were churches of the people. After 1945 the dominant social groups of the previous system were in a few decades successfully eliminated. With some simplification we can state that the ecclesiastical history of the 20th century is the story of the working and collapse of this state-folkchurch. Churches have rapidly ceased to exist as state churches („they were put out under God’s free sky”).

The essay analyzes the measures of ecclesiastical politics taken under the coalition government (1945–1949) in depth, classified in four large groups:

1. Ending the economic power of churches.
2. Narrowing public and political activities of churches.
3. Abolishing cultural and educational monopoly of churches.
4. Steps taken to enforce the freedom of religion and conscience.

As a result of the above measures christianity and religion became the number one ideological enemy, and by 1948–50 churches and their followers were labelled generally as „clerical reaction”, people who hinder the building of Socialism.

Ágnes Tóth

Relocations, churches, identity

Efforts of the evangelic church defending its non-Hungarian followers 1945–1948

Both in Slovakia and Hungary relocation of minorities was part of the new political elite’s struggle for power, the Communist parties’ aspiration for autarchy. Seeking the ways to strengthen their power the political parties utilized and redistributed economic tools robbed from minorities. Their reasoning was similar in both countries: the German and Hungarian minorities proved to be disloyal to the political nation, and betrayed it, therefore it was justified to use diverse forms of collective punishment - confiscation of possessions, mass internment, deportation, relocation - against them.

The Hungarian governments tried to manage the image of Hungarian community in Slovakia and the measures against it as one separated from the case of Germans and depict it as a different situation. However, their efforts were largely unsuccessful since they also dealt with the German minority according to the principle that there was no need of individual impeachment, therefore their argument could not be effective in legal and moral sense.

This essay analyzes the process, the consequences of the forced Slovak-Hungarian population swapping and the relocation-dissipation of Germans after World War II with the approval of the great powers from an ecclesiastical approach.

Historical churches in Hungary – Catholic, reformed, evangelical, together and separately as well – criticized the activity of the government concerning the Slovak-Hungarian population swapping and the relocation of Germans many times. They worked hard against

the measures of the authorities to protect their followers and their approach was more sophisticated than that of the government both in moral and legal way.

The forced relocations had an especially negative effect on the evangelical church with its 587 thousand followers. This church was openly three-lingual (Hungarian, German and Slovak) and by losing great numbers of its non-Hungarian followers its very structure damaged. This essay outlines theoretical statements of the evangelical church, its activities to protect German and Slovak followers and the effect the relocations had on its structure.

Josef Hal'ko

The subversive Catholic action in Czechoslovakia or the trial of the identity of Catholics in Slovakia

The author describes a case unparalleled in the history of the relationship of the Catholic church and Communist governments: a special structural attempt in the summer of 1949 when Communists in Czechoslovakia tried to generate a national church separated from Rome but connected to governmental circles, using vast financial and human resources. This attempt was an unexampled trial of the identity of Slovak followers who were mostly Catholic. The author introduces the inventory, measures and final failure of this attempt, deducting the consequence: ordinaries took their task of guarding the laws of faith and God seriously, maintaining the unity of the Czechoslovak church with Rome at all cost.

II.

CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS IN COMMUNIST PARTY STATES

Róbert Letz

Ecclesiastical policy of the state in Slovakia 1948–1989

In 1945 Slovakia integrated into the Czechoslovak Republic in the Communist Block. The integrating approach of the church policy of the state ignored the stronger religious feelings of the Slovak people. The united ecclesiastical policy model remained unchanged until 1989, leading to a paradoxical situation, namely that churches in Slovakia were dealt with harder than in Czech areas. The Communist Regime saw Slovak religious life as the weak point that can be exploited by „the enemy”. Therefore the conflicting interests of state and its citizens clashed significantly in the Slovak churches. Communists were hostile with every religion but Catholics were their main target. The situation was similar with several countries in the Soviet sphere but there are important similarities with the conditions in Hungary. The Communists attempted to make a deal with the Catholic church in their own way but ecclesiastical leaders rejected their ideas. The respect of the church improved because of this confrontation, but it was strongly oppressed by the state. Therefore Czechoslovakia became a warning example for Hungarian and Polish ecclesiastical leaders, who later tended to accept deals with local Communist authorities. The relationship of state and church was regularized in Czechoslovakia by the ecclesiastical laws accepted in autumn 1949, forcing churches into total economic dependence. Based on the Soviet model an independent office was established for ecclesiastical issues. 1950 was the year of a concentrated

attack against the Catholic church. Male and female monastic orders were uniformized, the Greek and the Pravoslavic church were unified by force, a lot of priests were arrested and people loyal to Communists were assigned to leading ecclesiastical posts. Resistance appeared in the form of the so called hidden church sprung from the circles of young Slovak Jesuits that ordained priests in secret. Hidden church became an important factor when the Communist regime fell in 1990. Ecclesiastical politics in Czechoslovakia was formed by central party authorities led from Moscow. Within the 40 years of Communist power in the country there was only a brief half-year when the pressure was reduced in the days of the 1968 renewal attempt. All the other times were characterized by continuous pressure and restrictions with changing intensity depending from the domestic and foreign situation. Compared to Hungary and Poland the pressure on churches were undoubtedly stronger.

Máté Gárdonyi

**Survival – cooperation – resistance
Strategies of the Catholic church in „popular democracies”**

The new world order emerging after World War II created a difficult situation for the Catholic Church, especially in East Central Europe where 50 million of its followers became subjects of the Soviet empire. Although the principles and methods of the Communist church policy were similar everywhere, there were significant differences in the possibilities of religious life which even got greater in time. The similarities in the principles of church policy in every Communist party were results of a common ideological base: the same materialist, atheist ideology started to rule all countries within the Soviet sphere very soon, that judged every religious phenomenon as an enemy that must be eliminated according to the Marxist criticism of religions. Local Communist parties were led not only by an ideological union but also by a common political goal: to implement and maintain an autarchy. Churches stood in the way of their plans, therefore the forced transition of society began everywhere with the same steps though in different order. The same scenario was introduced in every Communist state to end the economical, political, educational and social influence of churches. The differences came from various conditions: despite the common characteristics of the countries in the area, the situation of local churches during the changes of 1945 was different in every nation because of the social situation and the various sizes of religious institutional structures. An important source of differentiation was the grade of success of Communist parties in creating a collaborator fraction among priests and undermine the unity of the church. Further differences appeared in the effectiveness of the so called underground hierarchy within the various states. In the years of dictatorship not only the fate of Catholics in various countries but also the strategies used by local churches against the Communists were different. The two most discussed behaviors were radical opposition and submission to the system. The picture of ecclesiastical strategies are further colored by the intentions of the Holy See, which slightly changed with time but during the whole period were directed to make the situation of Catholics behind the Iron Curtain easier, and on the other hand, according the principle of Papal primate, to maintain or restore the close connections between the bishop of Rome and the local hierarchy. However, the strategy of the Vatican sometimes differed from the decisions of local ecclesiastical leaders and was not always understood by Catholic people. The basic motivation behind the „Ostpolitik” of the Vatican was the pastoral principle, but of course there were some considerations of international politics as well. The politicians of the Holy

See knew well that if their negotiations with Communist governments improve the situation of the East-West relationship, the diplomacy of the Vatican will also earn more respect as a serious factor in world politics.

Jan Pešek

Protestant churches in Slovakia between 1945–1989

After World War II there were two major protestant churches working in Slovakia: The Augsburg Evangelical Church of Slovakia (Lutherans), with almost exclusively Slovak followers and the Reformed Christian Church (Calvinists) with mainly Hungarian following. Lutherans entered the renewed Slovakia with the glory of active participants in Anti-Fascist resistance and in Slovak National Uprising; politically they were closest to Democratic Party. Calvinists were in a more difficult situation since Hungarians at that time had no citizenship in Czechoslovakia (they only got it in late 1948) and the church was represented by functionaries belonging to the Slovak minority. Freedom of religion was in effect until the Communist rule began in February 1948, and the conditions were tolerable for churches. However, when the Communist system became atheist and anticlerical, it forced the functioning of churches under state guardianship and the freedom of religion existed only officially. The system got hold on churches by the so called clerical laws accepted in October 1949. These laws forced churches into submission to the power of the state and made Calvinists equal to other churches. The Communist regime undertook “personal changes” among functionaries within both churches, from centers to congregations and many were replaced with “reliable” people. The new, forced leadership was especially problematic for Lutherans, the Calvinists’ main problem was their national structure because there were no Slovak seniorates. There were reform attempts connected to the 1968 reform processes but after this initiative was suppressed, the conditions before 1968 reappeared and the old problems of churches were conserved. The state guardianship over churches ended only in late 1989 with the fall of the Communist regime.

Réka Kiss

The possibilities of protestants – theory and practice of „divide and reign”

The purpose of this essay is to introduce the policy of the Communist state towards the reformed and lutheran churches, to grasp its changing points and to survey the possible forms of reactions of the churches. In this overview I divided the era into three periods. The first years between 1945 and 1948 meant a transitional stage in the relation of the state and the churches. While the protestants were trying to find their way in a radically new political, social and cultural situation, at the same time the Communist party went on building up their apparatus of control and oppression. I describe the attempts of certain branches of the flourishing revival movements of the churches or rather some personal acts in the name of these groups to introduce the political struggles to the church life, enjoying secret support of the communist party. In this way the inner conflicts of the churches were cleverly exploited and instigated. By 1948 the communist party which eventually became the only party was successful in replacing the former leaders of the protestant churches by new ones who were willing to cooperate. The state enforced the nationalization of denominational

schools and obtained separate agreements that regulated the church-state relations according to the interests of the party.

I argue that the Communist party had already developed its protestant church policy in this early period, which had four relevant components: 1. divide the churches and turn them against each other 2. never attack the whole church simultaneously, but certain groups or persons, that are stigmatized as enemies of the democracy. 3. get the church leaders to punish the inner opposition. 4. in order to avoid the accusation of religion hunt, they preferred to bring actions for non-religious, but rather political or criminal matters that were frequently false. At the same time it served the moral discredit of the churches in the eye of the society.

After giving an overview on the church life in the years of fifties that can be characterised as the period of overt political terror, when the churches had to face extensive harassment and persecution, I examine the long period of the Kádár-era and its changing tactics in church policy. From the 1960s, preserving the system of strict control, the regime adopted a range of new methods in subjection of the churches that were more disguised and sophisticated than earlier, although these methods were proved to be more successful. The new church policy emphasised the cooperation with the church leadership, who however could have been appointed only with consent of the government.

Finally I present alternative patterns of attitudes of church leaders, including resistance, cooperation, and collaboration. I analyze the role of the official teachings: the reformed theology of service and its lutheran variation, the theology of diacony, the ways how the official protestant churches tried to justify the communist dictatorship ideologically.

András Fejérdy

The Socialist Block and the 2nd Vatican Synod

The announcement of the 2nd Vatican Synod was interpreted by the states of the Socialist Block as an attempt to create a united Anti-Communist Christian front. That is why at first they rejected to take part in the synod and tried to strengthen their positions in Non-Catholic international religious organizations. Later, however, it became clear that the synod has no intention to launch a public campaign against Communism, which changed the approach of the Socialist governments. A significant factor in this change was their view that an appropriately selected ecclesiastical delegation can not only improve the international image of the Eastern Block but also provide a more precise picture on the plans of the Holy See, and some influence on a positive change in Vatican politics.

Although the leaders of Socialist countries basically agreed in their approach of the issue before and during the synod, after it there was a kind of differentiation concerning the question of the practical implementation of their common principles. Poland, the Soviet Union and East Germany, the countries signifying the continuity of the Holy See's policy, found that the dialogue offered at the synod was a dangerous option. Hungary and Czechoslovakia, however, who negotiated directly with the Vatican, considered it useful. That is why these two countries, and later Hungary alone, could become an experimental area for the new Eastern policy.

Norbert Spannenberger

**How did they see us in the West? Catholic churches of East-Middle-Europe
in German press**

Through a meticulous research of relevant West-german press material the author outlines the image of Hungary and Slovakia and what issues of church politics were discussed. Proceeding in chronological order the author analyzes the main focal points of the 1945-1974 period in ecclesiastical politics. Conclusion: No wonder the Mindszenty-case became an international phenomenon, often returning in the German press for decades, and its significance was definitely noticed in European public knowledge.

III.

**CALVARY ROAD – THE SITUATION OF GREEK CATHOLICS
AND ORTHODOXES**

Michal Barnovský

The Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia after World War II

The situation of the Greek Catholic church has changed a few times after World War II. The most beneficiary conditions took place in the first years after the war and after the fall of the Communist regime. Although secularization of ecclesiastical schools and boarding schools in 1945 had a negative effect on the Greek Catholic church, it was allowed to continue its pastoral activities without limitations and for a while it even enjoyed the confidence of contemporary governmental circles. The Communist coup in February 1948 has changed this situation. The Greek Catholic church was considered as the most reactionary church even in late 1948, and later, during April-May 1950 it was absorbed into the Pravoslav church. Greek Catholic bishops were sentenced to long imprisonment in show trials. Priests who refused to convert, were interned and in 1951-52 relocated to Czech areas and Moravia.

From all the churches in Czechoslovakia it was the Catholic one that suffered the hardest measures. It was outlawed for 18 years, the state did not recognize it therefore the church was not allowed to work publicly. However, according to the ecclesiastical law it continued to work permanently. Catholic activities were only allowed officially from June 1968, as a result of the mass reform movement and the democratic process. During the so called normalization period (1968-1989) it became disfavored and strictly controlled again by state authorities. From the governmental point of view the church was „tolerated”. Only in late 1989, after the fall of the Communist regime did the absolute rehabilitation and the liberation of its religious life come.

Tamás Végheő

**Finding the way under pressure:
Greek Catholics in Hungary and Ukraine after 1945**

When studying Greek Catholics in areas of the remaining Hungary after the Trianon Treaty and areas given to the Soviet Union after World War II we have to differentiate between the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church and the diocese of Mukachevo (Munkács). While the first is the church of the Greek Catholics living in the Polish-Lithuanian state, originated from the union made in Brest in 1596, the other was established in the area of the historic diocese of Mukachevo that was created in the northeastern regions of the Hungarian kingdom and was unified with Rome in 1646. By establishing the Diocese of Hajdúdorog the Greek Catholic church of people with Hungarian language and identity seceded from the latter in 1912.

From the autumn of 1942, when Subcarpathia was occupied by the Soviet army Greek Catholics in Soviet areas were pursued and disbanded. Having completed the occupation of East Poland, Galicia and Ukraine the Soviet authorities immediately began the liquidation of the Greek Catholic church which was considered as enemy of the Soviet state. After the arrests of bishops Stalin in March 1946 ordered that a clerical assembly in Lvov must declare the breakup of the union with Rome and the canonical community, and the joining to the Patriarchate of Moscow. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic church with its 4 200 000 followers had officially ceased to exist and was forced into illegality.

Officially the organization of the church continued to work with Rome as its center until the events of 1989 when a governmental order allowed the Roman Catholic church to exist again in the Soviet Union.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was reorganized as a primatial church in 1990 and has been working since then with Kiev as its center.

The Greek Catholic Church in Subcarpathia was disbanded after the assassination of bishop Tódor Romzsa in 1947. Priests who refused to join the Orthodox Church were sentenced to imprisonment and hard labour, which for many meant martyrdom. Until the governmental order in 1989 priests of the diocese of Munkachevo had worked in secret.

When the Communist rule began, Hungarian Greek Catholics shared the fate of Roman Catholics. In Hungary Communist did not follow the Soviet pattern and did not ban the work of the church. At the same time it was strictly controlled and its development successfully hindered. Forty years of Communist ecclesiastical policy caused so many wounds and damages that healing and restoration, 18 years after the change of regime is still an important task.

Stanislav Konečný

The Orthodox Church in Slovakia after World War II

The development of the Orthodox Church in Slovakia after World War II was determined mainly by the political and social changes realized during the after war decades. During the first period (1045 – 1949) the Orthodox Church was subjected to authority of Moscow Patriarch and significantly reinforced its organizational structure. At the same time it become one of the instruments of the Soviet policy. During years 1950–1954 the Orthodox Church enjoyed an enormous increase of number of its priests and lay members, because the state suppressed the Greek Catholic church violently and ordered its incorpora-

tion into the Orthodox Church. However, the entry of Catholics was frequently only formal and contributed to weakening of its dogmatic and liturgical homogeneity.

During the following years the religious situation in North-Eastern Slovakia somewhat eased, however the lack of priests and internal dissensions in the Orthodox Church roused constant dissatisfaction of members and nourished hopes for renewal of the Greek Catholic Church. The movement for legalization of the Greek Catholic Church had since year 1965 organized character and was successfully completed in year 1968. The mutual quarrels in regard to churches and parishes led during years 1968–1970 to disturbances and violent acts. At the time of, so called, normalization the aims of the state organs to inculcate an atheist ideology increased and preference for Orthodoxy was not so pronounced. The demise of the totalitarian regime after year 1989 brought further decrease of numbers of adherents to the Orthodox Church, but led to solving of property discrepancies between both churches and the Orthodox Church was ideologically cleared and fostered. The organizational unity of the Orthodox Church members in Slovakia and in Czechland maintained itself also after division of Czechoslovakia.

Milan Dujmov

Orthodoxy in Hungary after 1945

The first official orthodox ecclesiastical organization within the borders of Hungary was the Serb church established in 1695 with seven episcopates, approved by the ruler and the state. Queen Maria Theresa established another orthodox episcopate for Romanians on 12 March 1761. Following the Treaty of Trianon after World War I there was only one orthodox episcopal centre remaining in Hungary: Buda, and later Szentendre. There were millions of followers of orthodoxy earlier, now their number were reduced to a few ten thousands. The author outlines the situation of orthodoxy after the Treaty of Trianon, mentions some issues that are still not settled in canonic law, and summarizes the situation of Hungaroan orthodoxy after 1945 in detail. This religion works under several separated churches, there are Serb, Romanian, Bulgarian and Hungarian orthodox denominations, and there is the Exarchate of the Patriarch of Constantinople for Greek orthodoxes living in Beloiannis.

IV.

CHANGES IN CHURCH AND RELIGION – A LOOK IN THE RECENT PAST

András Máthé-Tóth – Csaba Máté Sarnyai

Experiences of an international survey, regarding Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine

The Aufbruch programme was co-ordinated by Paul M. Zulehner, Viennese professor of theology of pastorals and András Máté-Tóth, the Head of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Szeged.

One of the most important elements of the work in the ten former socialist countries was the public opinion poll, whose aim was the definition of the so-called complex religiousness-index. As a result of our researches we could state that the discussed countries

can be divided into three groups according to the religious dimension of their cultures. There are cultures which are religious according to the traditional criteria, these are the so-called clerically religious cultures, where culture is strongly influenced by religion both historically and at the time of the research. These countries include Poland, Rumania and Slovakia, although this latter is at the boundary of the first and the next, so-called culture-religious group. In the countries belonging to the culture-religious group the rate of people who consider themselves rather religious or very strongly religious and the people who consider themselves hardly or not at all religious, is more balanced, than in the countries of traditional, clerically religious cultures, so religious issues divide society. These countries include Hungary, Slovenia and Ukraine. We can experience for example polarized nature in Hungary when it comes to a debate of any kind of church and the state or a social debate of a political issue concerning religious freedom. In this case society divides into two parties which can produce about the same number of representatives pro and contra. Finally we can mention atheist cultures, where the "greatest denomination" belongs to the unbelievers. These include the former Eastern Germany or Bohemia. In these countries society is not divided deeply by the political issues concerning religion. This is also valid for the countries of the first category but exactly because of the strong religious saturation of society and culture.

At the time of the datasurvey in 1997-1998 these groups of countries more or less corresponded to the modernizational or culture-regional division. The criterion of modernization in religiousness is the gradual loss of importance of traditional or clerical religiousness.

We repeat the above mentioned survey after a decade with the extension to further countries with mainly orthodox religious traditions, like Bulgaria or Moldova. One of the main questions of the just starting Aufbruch 2 programme is, whether more than fifteen years after the turning point, the decrease of clerical religiousness characterizes the given country/region or not. That means, whether through the influences of modernization a process of becoming more homogenous in terms of religious aspect has started or on the contrary, the survival or possible strengthening of the clerical aspect represents an increasing withdrawal that rejects these influences of modernization.

Michaela Moravčíková
Church Policy in Slovakia after 1989

In the period between the year 1989 and the establishment of the independent Slovak Republic on 1 January 1993, foundations of a new church policy of the state as well as pillars of a new ecclesiastical-law system reflecting the democratic environment were laid in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. Churches and religious societies gained the chance to freely control their own matters, operate in the society, and the process of compensation for the property damages done to the churches in the past was initiated.

The church policy in the Slovak Republic since 1993 has been characterised by co-operation with registered churches and religious societies as a pursuit of a qualitatively new legal arrangement of the relationship with them. The Slovak Republic, in its relation to churches, comes out from the recognition of their social and legal status as public benefit corporations *sui generis* and develops co-operation with them according to the principles of partnership co-operation. It provides registered churches and religious societies with economic subsidies for their commonly beneficial activities, guarantees their legal status

and opportunities to operate in the public life. The State regards them as subjects with irreplaceable moral capacity, and so it is expected that they are going to be of a considerable help to the moral renewal of the society. The State perceives churches as an important part of the cultural and social life in the country and it assumes that the churches become significant factors of forming the spiritual and moral consciousness of the society. The relation of the Slovak Republic to the churches can be characterised as a relation of parity and mutual co-operation.

The Slovak Republic was one of the first post-communist countries that solved the problems of restitution of church property in a consistent manner. Specific attention was paid to the property settlement between the Orthodox Church and the Greek-Catholic Church. Later on, the issues of registration terms and financing of churches have become discussion topics of experts. A new arrangement of contractual relations between the Slovak Republic and the Holy See, and the Slovak Republic and the registered churches and religious societies represents a crucial landmark. It implies, in the sense of *clara pacta boni amici*, not only the pursuit of a qualitatively new level of state-church relations, but also of the ever best use of the capacity of the churches and religious societies in various spheres of society life, e.g. education, training and science, care for the sick and the poor, or pastoral care in specific surroundings.

Considering European ecclesiastical-law systems, the Slovak attitude to churches and religious societies can be characterised as a “midway approach”, between a strict separation and a “state church”. It is a co-ordination and parity relationship. There is neither a state church in Slovakia nor a church enjoying special privileges.

In general, there is to be expected that the position of churches in the society is to become an increasingly urgent issue, as related to the harmonisation of the European policies in the sphere of the state-church relations and of the regulation of the plurality of religions in the EU space, and to the search for balance of the state-church relationships. The same applies to the issue of activities of churches and religions in the public space. The solution of submitted problem circles will be based on the fundamental principles as neutrality, tolerance and parity. These determining principles mean that the state would not identify with any of the churches or religious societies. This kind of neutrality, however, does not mean the restoration of the state atheism. The State would not be obliged only to a neutral attitude towards various religious beliefs but it should also assign a milieu of positive tolerance. Finally, parity means obligation to treat equally all churches and religious societies, whereas distinction of the legal status given by the valid legislation creates a certain kind of graded parity that enables the reflection of social realities.

Mária Homišinová – Štefan Šutaj
Researching religion and church after 1989 in Slovakia

In our essay we sought to introduce empiric results concerning issues of religions acquired in the latest (2004) sociological-socio-psychological survey of Hungarians in Slovakia.

There are five thematic fields covered and analyzed: religious orientation according to sex, age and qualification; faith as a value; relationship of religion and the development of ethnic identity; freedom of religion; confidence in church. The essay is completed with the summarization of the analysis of these fields.

The sample of interviewed people consisted of Hungarians of intellectual professions, both genders were represented in roughly equal numbers. More than half of them were Roman Catholics; a fifth was follower of the Reformed Christian Church of Slovakia and a tenth of them represented the Augsburg Evangelical Church of Slovakia. 87 per cent of Hungarians declared that they are religious. There were representatives of four age groups in roughly equal numbers.

The survey shows that the most important values are family and profession, and these were followed by freedom, ethnic identity, native language and qualification. Faith as a value is on the last place in their hierarchy, although they placed its significance in the range above the average. The religious orientation of subjects did not influence the priority of faith in their lives, followers of all churches defined about the same level of significance to it, regardless of their religion.

As for the development of ethnic identity, language usage within the family was the most important factor for our subjects. The least important factor was more generations living together in families. The factor "Religious ceremonies in the language of the minority" was considered as important, influencing the state and development of ethnic identity of individuals belonging to the Hungarian minority.

The strongest skepticism was found concerning the right for protection of personal data. Furthermore, the subjects think that there are also problems with the implementation of the right for human dignity and honor. On the other hand they are quite sure that among the basic human rights freedom of religion is the one that is realized in the greatest extent. We saw a significant difference in their opinions on this right according to their religious orientation. Although Roman Catholics and members of the Reformed church were altogether satisfied with the level of religious freedom, followers of the Evangelical church were seemingly less happy with the current situation (more than 1 point less on the scale).

The questioned Hungarians do not wholly trust the listed institutions working in Slovakia. The church is what Hungarians place most of their confidence in, but even this trust is only "over average" level. As for religious orientation, the lowest level of confidence in the church is shown by members of the Reformed Christian Church. The trust in the church as an institution is the highest in Roman Catholic subjects (though the difference is only a half point on the scale).

Tibor Fedor

Financing of churches in Hungary

The relationship between the state and churches in Hungary is controlled by the IV/1990 law about the freedom of conscience and religion based on the constitution. The financing of churches is controlled basically by the CXXIV/1997 law. Every year the state budget states the amount of that year's support for churches. The author introduces the way the state supports a) the public work of churches and b) their religious activities. Important processes of estate redistribution are outlined: this reform helped Hungarian churches in acquiring thousands of religious and public estates, which was a major result in the provision of the freedom of conscience and religion from the institutional side in Hungary.

Csaba Fazekas

Reflections on ecclesiastical history writing and research workshops

This summary of a thought-provoking lecture describes the fairly satisfactory institutional background of ecclesiastical history writing in Hungary and delineates forums of publication. The author concludes that besides classic ecclesiastic history there are other ways of research getting more and more significant: essays about social church history, on the public role of churches, about the relationship of churches and the minority problem, on ecclesiastical ethnography. What is still partly missing from our written ecclesiastical history is a detailed analysis on the period between 1945 and 1990.