

# ***READING SLOVAKIA***

***SLOVAK LITERATURE  
IN CZECH PUBLISHING HOUSES  
1918-1939***

## ***INTRODUCTION***

**L**ooking into a subject of the relationship between Czechs and Slovaks in the field of book culture, which has not been fully addressed yet, we aim to add to the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Czechoslovakia by displaying the exhibition 'Reading Slovakia'.

The emphasis is laid on the greatest feats of 1918-1939: large publishing projects; series of books devoted to Slovak creation; important books appearing during the First Republic or instantly after it went out of existence. The focus is given on Czech publishers who would publish Slovak literature in their original versions. As a result of not having them translated from one language into another, they respected official ideology of one shared Czechoslovak language in two variants – Czech and Slovak – so helped become Czech readers acquainted with Slovak literature and culture.

Czech books had been read in Slovakia for long; however, Czech readers had not been used to reading Slovak books let alone buying them. Thus, Czech publishers and their established distribution networks helped interest in Slovak books arouse and be kept in Moravia and Bohemia.

Still they had been filling more roles. Some of the Czech publishing circles would even occupy a formative role in Slovakia, where the conservative book market found it complicated to adapt to changed conditions after 1918. In particular, it was their concern in young Slovak creation and disseminating world literature books translated into Slovak language that helped create conditions for original artistic creation. What's more, Slovak books would appear abroad owing to Czech publishers and their contacts.

**Reading Slovakia  
Slovak Literature  
in Czech Publishing Houses  
1918-1939  
© 2018**

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# NEW SITUATION IN THE BOOK MARKET

The book market began to adapt to changed conditions after the establishment of the Republic. The extent and genre diversity of *Slovacica* would increase compared to the previous period. Considered to be used when organising the new state, handbooks, anthologies, textbooks, grammar books, dictionaries and many more would come out in large quantities. Authors who had been devoting themselves to Slovakia over past decades now aimed to contribute more substantially to broaden knowledge and promote Slovak country and nation. What began to appear was reference books elucidating nature, culture and history. Czech professionals as well newly established scientific institutes tried to contribute to chart them in detail; their research findings would be gradually published in scholarly journals and books. However, Slovak *belles-lettres*, especially the most recent one, was slow to win acceptance among Czech publishers.

Larger publishing houses mainly kept focusing on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Slovak classics or the generation of middle-aged authors. Whereas mainly new editions of pre-war literature went out of print in the Publisher Jan Otto's World Library, literary historian Ferdinand Strojček (1878-1963) began to add a popular publication *Sbírka souvislé četby školní* (*The Collection of Continuous School Readings*) redacted for F. Topič by more Slovak books. Regarding readers' school age and curriculum requirements it was the previous-century literature that predominated; illustrations of folk creation appeared as well. Another edition devoted to children was published by the 'Česká grafická unie' (Czech Graphics Union). Redacted by Stanislav Klíma (1878-1944), eleven volumes of fairy tales and legends, and Czech authors' works written in Slovak were published in the *Jahody, knižnica slovenskej mládeže* (*Strawberries, Slovak Youth Edition*) between 1921 and 1923 (S. Klíma, R. Pokorný).

The first anthology of Slovak poetry *Hlas Tatry* (*Voice of Tatra*) was brought out by the Publisher 'U Topiče' as early as before the establishment of the Republic, in the spring of 1918. Edited by literary historian František Frýdecký (1891-1943) it was enthusiastically added by Jaromír Borecký (1869-1951) to a poetry edition *Hovory básníků* (*Poets' Talks*) that he would hold there. He remembered Slovak poets who had been investing hard effort in winning Czech readers over, and believed the collection would be a sort of aid: 'May the anthology – not vast, though, published in historically important times, be – by its rousing voice – a help in intellectual unification of both poetry branches into one, such an excellent and fructiferous graft.'

Provided assistance from Slovak authors, Frýdecký compiled another key anthology of poetry within next two years. The two-volume *Slovenská poezie XIX. století* (*The 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Slovak Poetry*) appeared at Otto's in 1920 and 1921. However, the period specified by the title went massively beyond that time since it also contained poets of the coming generation, such as Štefan Krčméry, Ján Smrek, E. B. Lukáč, some of whom had not been published yet. Another collected anthology of Slovak prose (entitled *Slovenská próza / Slovak Prose*) did not come out until 1931 in the series *Výbor z krásné prózy československé* (*Anthology of Beautiful Czechoslovak Prose*) co-published by the publishing houses 'Sfinx Bohumila Jandy' (1900-1982) and 'Státní nakladatelství' (National Publishing House). It was edited by Slovak literary historian and critic Pavel Bujnáček (1882-1933), who had summarized all of the remarkable Slovak prosaic feats from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century until then.

Furthermore, Frýdecký had redacted an important edition *Knižnice československá* (*The Czechoslovak Edition*) for Přemysl Plačka (1886-1997), the native of Pacov and publisher, where twelve volumes of prose and poetry went out of print between 1918 and 1919. Also that edition primarily drew on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century production (J. Botto, A. Sládkovič, J. Kalinčiak and more) likewise did other contemporary series linked to the publishing house of František Bačovský (1854-1908), more specifically his son Jindřich (1882-?). It was only one Slovak edition printed by the 'Slovenská beseda' (Slovak Popular Education Organization) between 1919 and 1920 that contained three volumes (P. Országh Hviezdoslav, M. Kukučín and S. Hurban Vojanský). Aiming to present a picture of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century domestic literature in fewer than fifty volumes, another edition entitled *Jindř. Bačovského Československá národní četba* (*Jindř. Bačovský's Czechoslovak National Reading*) contained nearly ten Slovak books (J. Kalinčiak, J. Kollár, A. Sládkovič and more). They would come out in permanent reprints, and the Publisher would re-publish them in a new edition *Odkaz národu* (*Legacy to the Nation*) even during the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

## PANEL 3 – New situation in the book market

František Frýdecký (ed.): *Hlas Tatry / Voice of Tatra*. Prague, F. Topič 1918.  
Stanislav Klíma: *Slovenské zámky / Slovak Castles*. Prague, Czech Graphics Union 1921.

Andrej Sládkovič: *Detvan*. Prague, F. Topič 1930.

Pavel Bujnáček (ed.): *Slovenská próza / Slovak Prose*. Prague, Sfinx – Státní nakladatelství (National Publishing House) 1931.

## PANEL 4 – New situation in the book market (continuation)

Samo Chalupka: *Spevy Sama Chalupku / Samo Chalupka's Song*. 2<sup>nd</sup> printing, Prague, J. Bačovský 1934.

Ján Botto: *Smrť Jánošíkova / The Death of Jánošík*. 3<sup>rd</sup> printing, Prague, J. Bačovský 1929.

Svetozár Hurban Vojanský: *Výbor povídek / Anthology of Short Stories*. Prague, F. Bačovský [1919].

Martin Kukučín: *Výbor povídek / Anthology of Short Stories*. Prague, F. Bačovský [1920].

The Slovak-Czech dictionary and extract of a short story by Kukučín with a Czech legend

Ján Kalinčiak: *Reštavrácia. Svätý duch / Country Elections. The Holy Spirit*. Prague, F. Bačovský 1940. (Re-edition of two publications coming from 1936 and 1928)

## PANEL 5 – New Situation in the book market (continuation)

The collected volumes of the *Knižnica československá / Czechoslovak Edition*, Publisher P. Plaček, the native of Pacov (1918-1919)

# **LEOPOLD MAZÁČ**

## **PUBLISHING HOUSE**

**L**eopold Mazáč (1900–1948) was the first Czech publisher to focus on newborn Slovak literature. He published over four hundred Slovak publications in a few separate editions between 1925 and 1939; In the mid-1930s, he opened the first Slovak bookshop with a lecture hall and exhibition space situated in the centre of Prague. Besides, he published a monthly called *Elán* written in Slovak language, which was among the most prestigious journals devoted to the Slovak inter-war culture.

Originally trading in *objets d'art*, Mazáč became engaged in publishing business while working with the 'Sváz slovenského študentstva' (Slovak Students Union) whose members would help him with peddling. In the autumn of 1924, he was asked by Michal Zibrin (1899–1968), the chairman of that Union, to help him raise fund for a Union almanac in order to earn money for needy members. Financed it anonymously, since he was not a holder of the trade licence for publishing, Mazáč insisted on launching the almanac strategically at a pre-Christmas time, therefore they searched for editor to edit the almanac in time. The redaction was assumed by poet and editor Ján Smrek. (1898–1982). The publication entitled *Slovník mladej slovenskej literatúry* (*The Encyclopaedia of Newborn Slovak Literature*) appeared at the beginning of December in five thousand copies that were soon sold out. Followed by the second and third printings, twelve thousand copies would be sold in total. Encouraged by success and coming to know competent Smrek, Mazáč gained the publishing licence next year, as well bookselling one the ensuing year.

It was those events that gave the birth to fourteen-year mutual co-operation between the publisher from Prague and the Slovak poet – prominent personality for Mazáč's Slovak activities ...

### **PANEL 6 – Leopold Mazáč**

L. Mazáč (1925)

J. Smrek (1922). I. Čietek's private archive

*Sborník mladej slovenskej literatúry. / Anthology of Newborn Slovak Literature.*  
Bratislava, Sváz slovenského študentstva (Union of Slovak Students) 1924.

M. Rozložník's Collection.

L. Mazáč and his staff in street Výtoň (a. d.). National Museum Library Archive.

# ***EDÍCIA MLADÝCH SLOVENSKÝCH AUTOROV – EMSA / EDITION OF YOUNG SLOVAK AUTHORS – EYSA***

The success of that collection suggested that a considerable portion of readers had been lacking modern Slovak literature on the market; therefore, L. Mazáč aimed his first edition right at that sphere. In conception terms, the 'Edícia mladých slovenských autorov' was a follow-up to the Almanac; however, the first publications were nowhere near as best-selling as the Almanac. What primarily made the start of the edition more difficult was the poorly developed, slowly transforming book market in Slovakia that Mazáč largely focused on. After initial four volumes (*Editino očko / transl. Edita's Eye* by G. Vámoš; *Buvi, buvi* by T. J. Gašpar; *Cválajúce dni / transl. Galloping Days* by J. Smrek; and *Dolorosa* by J. Hrušovský), the Publisher ceased its production for a while and began to concentrate on Czech *belles-lettres*, especially on works by classics. He did not restore the progressive Slovak edition until 1927, in which he would have published sixty-one volumes of the latest Slovak prose, poetry and essayistic writings by 1937, some of them in more printings.

The EYSA became the largest inter-war edition of newborn Slovak indigenous creation appearing both in Czechia and Slovakia, as well it co-formed the character of the Publishing House. Although it was the 'Matica slovenská' (*TN: scientific and cultural institution*), Martin, Slovakia, that was the leading publisher of Slovak literature, the latest works appeared just at Mazáč's. They were redacted by J. Smrek – first from Bratislava and Martin; next in the Publishing House based in Prague, street Na Výtoni 6 from 1930 onwards. In 1931, he was joined by prose writer and editor Štefan Letz (1900–1960), who was in charge of new editions *Mladosť* (*Youth*) and *Veľké knihy* (*Large Books*), result of which was the establishment of an independent Slovak editor's. While publishing the EYSA, Mazáč kept working with the 'Sväz slovenského študentstva' under whose heading he would publish the EYSA, and to which he paid commission on sold books. It amounted to over half a million Czech Korunas towards the end of 1932; that money was given to Slovak students as financial aid.

Mazáč devoted considerable attention to graphic design from the beginning. He would have his Slovak books printed on high-quality paper; the initial volumes of the EYSA appeared in a generous quarto format. Each of the books of that series was decorated with an original book cover varying with every re-edition. It was especially owing to Smrek who had been ensuring co-operation with young Slovak artists, who, as a result of that, were able to build awareness about them among readers. First, book covers were created by M. Galanda, A. Jassuscha, J. Jareš or J. Benda. In 1927, a Slovak painter living in Prague, Martin Benka (1888-1951), became the staff graphic artist who designed the red clothbound with the image of a reading girl for Mazáč's Slovak editions besides other book covers. However, the Publisher only marketed the EYSA in the better-quality light clothbound with the motive of open books and the Slovak national coat of arms. In 1933, Benka was replaced by a well-known Czech artist, A. V. Hrska (1890-1954), whereas some of the covers were designed by J. Vodrážka, L. Rambouská, J. Alexy, Š. Bednár, J. Šváb or K. Teige.

## **PANEL 7 – EMSA / EYSA I**

EYSA Volume 1: Gejza Vámoš: *Editino očko / Edita's Eye*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1925.

(Cover by M. Galanda.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Štefan Letz: *Obyvatelia dvora / Courtyard Occupants*. Prague – Bratislava,

L. Mazáč 1927. (Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection

Ján Alexy: *Grétko*. Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1928. (Cover by J. Alexy.)

M. Rozložník's Collection.

Laco Novomeský: *Otvorené okná / Open Windows*. Prague – Bratislava,

L. Mazáč 1935. (Cover by K. Teige.)

Rudolf Dilong: *Mladý svadobník / A Young Wedding Guest*. Prague – Bratislava,

L. Mazáč 1936. (Cover by Š. Bednár.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Advertisement for *Sborník* and EYSA in the *Národní noviny / National Newspaper*,

issue of 16/4 /1927.

J. Smrek and Š. Letz in Mazáč's Slovak editor's in street Výtoň (a. d.). Slovak

National Library Literary Archive.

## **PANEL 8 – EYSA II (continuation)**

Ján Smrek: *Cválajúce dni / Galloping Days*. 1<sup>st</sup> printing. Prague – Bratislava,

L. Mazáč 1925. (Cover by A. Jassuscha.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Ján Smrek: *Cválajúce dni / Galloping Days*. 2<sup>nd</sup> printing. Prague – Bratislava,

L. Mazáč 1929. (Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Ján Smrek: *Cválajúce dni / Galloping Days*. 3<sup>rd</sup> printing. Prague – Bratislava,

L. Mazáč 1934. (Cover by A. V. Hrska.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Ján Smrek: *Cválajúce dni / Galloping Days*. Rozložník – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1929.

(Edition bookbinding by unknown artist.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Martin Rázus: *Svety / Worlds*. Parts 1–4, 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> printings. Prague – Bratislava,

L. Mazáč 1931. (Covers by M. Galanda.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

# **MAZÁČOVA SLOVENSKÁ KNIŽNICA – MSK / MAZÁČ SLOVAK EDITION – MSE**

**U**nlike the EYSA, Mazáč Slovak Edition, which he began to publish in 1927, primarily contained works of Slovak classic literature. Initially, mainly well-known authors of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries went out of print (J. Kalinčiak, J. Čajak, T. Vansová, B. Slančíková-Timrava, J. Záborský), nevertheless, the Edition was slowly added by contemporary authors whose works had not accommodated the dramaturgic composition of his earlier edition. Since there was no permanent series editor, it failed to shape unambiguously and varied in quality. What even appeared was works by Czech authors, e. g. a Czecho-Slovak-loanword publication *Slovenský máj* (*Slovak May*) by J. O. Parma or a book of travels around Scandinavia *K severu* (*Towards the North*) written in Slovak by J. Dvořák. First, the edition was redacted by Peter Kompíš (1886–1945), the Slovak editor of a daily *Venkov* (*The Countryside*), whose novel *Osloboditeľ* (*The Liberator*) started the edition. Later on, he cooperated with a young literary critic, J. I. Hamaliar (1905–1931); next, it was temporarily led by J. Smrek after he had moved to Prague. Finally, the responsibility was taken by Pavol Žarnovický (1890–1965), who as a copyright owner edited a three-volume book *Populárne spisy J. L. Holubyho* (*Popular Writings of J. L. Holuby*). The graphic aspect of the edition was primarily in M. Benka's hands; some of the books were decorated by L. Rambouská, Š. Polkoráb, J. Goth and more.

Twenty-four books in total would have come out in Mazáč's edition by 1933 while experiencing the highest growth in production in 1929 and 1930 when up to fourteen books appeared yearly, followed by decline in volumes to completely disappear from editorial plans in 1933: partly due to launching own editions, partly to similarly aimed and entitled series published in the competitive Publishing House Melantrich (*Melantrichova slovenská knižnice / Melantrich Slovak Edition*) from 1929.

## **PANEL 9 – MSC / MSE**

Viliam Tóth-Paulíny: *Kyčina*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1928. (Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Jonáš Záborský: *Dva dni v Chujave / Two Days in Chujava*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1930. (Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Peter Jilemnický: *Zuniaci krok / Booming Pace*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1930. (Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Terezie Vansová: *Rozsobášení a iné prózy / The Divorced and Other Prose*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1930. (Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

J. O. Parma: *Slovenský máj / Slovak May*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1929. (Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Josef Dvořák: *K severu. / Towards the North*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1930. (Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Zuzka Zguriška: *Obrázky z kopanic / Pictures from the Middle of Nowhere*. 2<sup>nd</sup> printing. Prague, L. Mazáč 1935. (Cover and illustration by L. Rambouská, Publisher's binding by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

## **PANEL 10 – Slovak Books**

L. Mazáč's publishing house catalogue. *Slovenské knihy / Slovak Books*. Prague, L. Mazáč (a. d.). National Museum Library Archive.

# ***MLADOST' AND VELKÉ KNIHY / YOUTH AND LARGE BOOKS***

**F**rom 1930 onwards, L. Mazáč tried to capture Slovak children and young adults' attention by publishing his new edition *Mladost' (Youth)*. Initially, mainly original fairy tales by Ľudmila Podjavorinská, writing also under her *nom de plume* of Teta Ludmila (Aunt Ludmila) would appear added by adventure stories and translated foreign literature or Slovak folk tales by Pavel Dobšinský later on. Led by Š. Letz from 1931, the edition had increased to thirty-one books by 1938.

What's more, Letz redacted a folk-oriented edition *Velké knihy (Large Books)*, called so because of their unusually large size and extent supposed to provide an income for loss-making books in the times of growing competition and economic crisis. The years of 1932 to 1937 saw first appearance of twenty-nine books: light, historical adventure novels by Jozef Nižnánsky and Ján Hrušovský originally published in episodes in the supplements of two newspapers *Slovenská politika (Slovak Politics)* and *Slovenský denník (Slovak Daily)*. Attractively decorated by Zdeněk Burian or Andrej Kováčik the edition contained multivolume books such as *Čachtická pani (Elisabeth Báthory)*, *Jánošík (Juraj Jánošík)*, *Dobrodružstvá Mórica Beňovského (The Adventures of Móric Beňovský)* and *Spišské tajomstvo (Spiš Mystery)*. Likewise the Slovak dailies had been enjoying increase in circulation in a former time, so was Mazáč's edition sold in large numbers with books appearing in numerous re-editions. The former two books went out of print in no fewer than six editions. Meanwhile, Mazáč had novels translated into Czech and published them beyond the *Large Books* edition, right for Czech readers.

## **PANEL 11 – Mladost' / Youth and Velké knihy / Large Books**

*Figliar Miško*. Based on German adaptation translated by Peter Prídavok.

Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1935. (Bookbinding by J. Vovka.) M. Rozložník's Collection

Jožo Nižnánsky: *Dobrodružstvá Mórica Beňovského / The Adventures of Móric Beňovský*, Book 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> printing. Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1934. (Cover by Z. Burian.)

L. Mazáč and Š. Letz probably on their way to the printing house (a. d.).  
Slovak National Library Literary Archive

# MAZÁČ SMALLER SLOVAK EDITIONS

Besides the four above-mentioned editions, Mazáč would publish three series smaller in extent. The *Osvětová knižnice* (*Enlightenment Edition*) redacted by J. Smrek began to be published in 1932. Next four years saw six literary historical, political science or historical volumes (*Rukoväť dejín slovenskej literatúry / The Enchiridion of Slovak History Literature* by D. Chrobák; *Životy slovanských apoštolov Cyrila a Metoda / Lives of Famous Saints Cyril and Methodius*, translated by J. Stanislav and more). In addition, in 1935, Mazáč began to re-publish the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Slovak writers for some time, when he and the 'Spoločnosť Slovenského domu v Prahe' (Company of the House of the Slovak Republic in Prague) co-published ten books at once in one edition named after that company (*Edícia Spoločnosti Slovenského domu / The Edition of the Company of the House of the Slovak Republic*). The series was redacted by literary historian and freelance editor Dobroslav Chrobák (1907-1951), the book design was created by Ludmila Rambouská (1899-1952). However, he completely failed to publish books translated into Slovak. No more than three books appeared in the edition *Svetové preklady* (*Translation of World Literature*) between 1935 and 1938 (*The Family Circle / Rodinný kruh* by A. Maurois translated by V. Szatmáry-Vlčková; *The Blood and Glitter / Krv a lesk* by J. Peyré and *Confession of a Murderer / Spoved' vraha* by J. Roth both translated by J. Belnay).

Mazáč's Slovak editions were added by two book series by Czech writer, pedagogue and Slovak culture propagator Karel Kálal: *Karla Kálala Spisy pro mládež* (*Karel Kálal's Writings for Young Adults*) and *Karla Kálala Spisy slovakofilské* (*Karel Kálal's Slovakophilia Writings*). Except for the edition series Mazáč published a new retrospective collection called *Slovenská prítomnosť literárna a umelecká / Slovak Literary and Art Present Time* (in Smrek's editor's), and a two-volume work *Štefánik* edited by J. Bartůšek, Š. Osuský and B. Pavlů to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Republic.

## PANEL 12 – Mazáč's smaller editions

Dobroslav Chrobák: *Rukoväť dejín slovenskej literatúry / The Enchiridion of Slovak Literature History*. Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1932. M. Rozložník's Collection.

Dobroslav Chrobák: *Rukoväť dejín slovenskej literatúry / The Enchiridion of Slovak Literature History*. 2<sup>nd</sup> printing. Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1936. M. Rozložník's Collection.

Karel Kálal: *Slovensko predválečné / Pre-War Slovakia*. 2<sup>nd</sup> printing. Prague, L. Mazáč 1930. (Cover by V. Čutta, *Karla Kálala spisy slovakofilské / Slovakophilia Writings of Karel Kálal* edition uniform bookbinding.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Karel Kálal: *Na krásném Slovensku / In Beautiful Slovakia*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1929. (*Karla Kálala Spisy pro mládež / Writings of Karel Kálal for Young Adults* edition uniform bookbinding.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Jozef Miloslav Hurban: *Gottšalk*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1935. (Cover by L. Rambouská, bookbinding by unknown artist.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

Štefan Žiranský: *Gergeľové hody*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1935. (Cover by L. Rambouská, bookbinding by unknown artist.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

*Slovenská prítomnosť literárna a umelecká / The Slovak Literary and Art Present Time*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1931. (Book jacket by J. R. Vávra and S. Kittner.) M. Rozložník's Collection.

# ***ELÁN – MĚSÍČNÍK PRO LITERATURU A UMĚNÍ / ELÁN – MONTHLY FOR LITERATURE AND ART***

**B**esides his Slovak editions, Leopold Mazáč began to produce a publishing house magazine in Slovak language in September 1930. It was subedited by J. Smrek, who had picked its title – *Elán* to refer to a term *élan vital* coined by French philosopher Henri Bergson, and was reflecting his effort to form all-embracing platform regardless of generation, aesthetics or religion. Although each of the copies contained information on Mazáč's up-to-date production, the magazine did not only serve the purpose of the Publisher, but aimed to promote Slovak literature and art. Heavily illustrated with photographs, drawings, caricatures or reproductions of original work of art, the magazine covered diverse literary contributions such as reviews, brief articles only reflections and interviews. Not only by its varied typographical style and appearance, and generous accompanying illustrations as well its newspaper size and eight-to-twelve-page extent did the *Elán* manifest its great ambitions, and implied the source of inspiration: another prestigious publishing house journal: *Rozpravy Aventina / Aventina Discourses*. It was owing to Smrek's endeavour that the monthly would be soon among the foremost Slovak cultural journals, with four thousand subscribers.

Although *Elán* had received the most enthusiastic response from Slovaks in Slovakia or living abroad, like had Mazáč's Slovak editions, it acted as important intermediary between Slovak and Czech cultural dialog because it was based in Prague. Despite taking Slovak culture autonomy's side against Czechoslovakism in existing Czech-Slovak disputes, his editor's was not all-Slovak. Besides Slovaks living in Prague and numerous contributors, also Mazáč's editors J. R. Vávra and Václav Vitinger were among his workmates, joined by artist A. V. Hrska and musicologist Emil Hula later on. However, articles penned by Czech authors were mostly translated into Slovak language.

Mazáč continued printing the *Elán* until June 1939 when he was bound to cease its publishing with the change in political circumstances. Nevertheless, he managed to preserve it, moved it to Bratislava, Slovakia, where it would become the official body of the 'Spolok slovenských spisovateľov' (Slovak Writers Society). After the first issue printed in Bratislava had come out, Mazáč sent a letter to Smrek, who was the *Elán* editor, publisher and new owner, to express joy at the restart of his former magazine: '*Elán looks extremely elegant, and I do feel extremely happy to hear it is going on.*' Mazáč helped Smrek with relief printing blocks, and Smrek would send him the monthly in return. The *Elán* was printed until February 1947 except for a brief interval and slight variations.

## **PANEL 13 – Elán**

J. G. Tajovský. *Elán*. Volume 1, 1930–1931, Issue 3. (Caricature by L. Rambouská.)  
J. Smrek, the *Elán* editor-in-chief in Prague streets (a. d.). I. Čietek's private archive.

Publisher L. Mazáč in his central office. *Elán*. Volume 1, 1930–1931, Issue 1. (Caricature by L. Rambouská.)

V. Vančura. *Rozpravy Aventina / Aventina Discourses*. Volume 5, 1929–1930, Issue 15. (Caricature by A. Hoffmeister.)

## **PANEL 14 – Elán continuation**

Advertisement for Slovaks' popular café in Prague where the magazine editors would meet. *Elán. Mesačník pre literatúru a umenie / Elán. Literature and Art Monthly*. Volume 1, 1930–1931.

*Siamese twins* by L. Fulla and M. Galanda. *Elán*. Volume 1, 1930–1931. (Drawing by J. Cincík.)

J. Smrek and M. Benka on their journey. *Elán*. Volume 1, 1930–1931. (Drawing by M. Benka.)

The 'Matica slovenská' delegation on their journey to the USA. From the left: J. Cincík, J. C. Hronský, K. Plicka. Volume 6, 1935–1936. (Caricature L. Rambouská.)

The *Elán* title cover in a new graphic design remaining for another 14 years. *Elán*. Volume 3, 1932–1933.

E. B. Lukáč. *Elán*. Volume 1, 1930–1931. (Caricature by L. Rambouská.)

# ***SLOVENSKÝ KULTURNÍ KONZULÁT / SLOVAK CULTURAL CONSULATE***

**T**he Publishing House activities expanded so enormously at the beginning of the 1930s so that there was not enough space in the existing office. Therefore, in the summer of 1933, L. Mazáč rented the ground floor and three upper floors in a late-Art-Nouveau house in street Spálená 53 situated right in the centre of Prague. The building, however, failed to meet the Publisher's requirements. He entrusted architect Josef Hesoun with its conversion. Hesoun designed enough offices and convenient store rooms, what's more, such a building to do credit to the Publisher's activities. Mazáč opened his very first bookshop on its ground floor. Despite publishing Czech books from 1926, he named the shop in Slovak language 'Slovenské kníhkupectvo' (Slovak Bookshop). Hesoun had designed a modern system of shopping windows, whose graphic emblem became the Bookshop symbol and remained in use until the here and now.

The Bookshop as Slovak in orientation used the Slovak language. The Slovak form of address became part of its logo; the invitation card to the Grand Opening event was printed in Slovak language only. The building housed exhibition space (Výstavná sieň Elánu / *Elán* Exhibition Room), and a lecture hall supposed to host regular author's evenings; that is why Mazáč's new office would be soon nicknamed the 'Slovak Cultural Consulate'.

## **PANEL 15 – Slovak Cultural Consulate**

A view of shopping windows at night (a. d.). I. Čietek's private archive  
J. Hajko and the manager of Slovenské kníhkupectvo / Slovak Bookshop F. Šmíd  
(a. d.). I. Čietek's private archive  
Š. Letz and J. Smrek in the new Slovak editor's in Spálená 53 (a. d.).  
Slovak National Library Literary Archive  
The Slovak Bookshop's logo.

## **PANEL 16 – Slovak Cultural Consulate (continuation)**

View of the Publishing House L.Mazáč used for promotion (a. d.).  
The Slovak Bookshop interior (1934). *Elán*. Volume 5, 1934–1935.  
The Slovak Bookshop interior (a.d). the author's archive

# ***SLOVAK BOOKSHOP GRAND OPENNING***

**T**he Slovak Bookshop presented Slovak literature overall. In addition to Mazáč's editions, the shop would offer publications printed by Slovak publishers. The Publisher himself had announced his intention in the press two weeks prior to its opening: *'Prague's, thereby hopefully Czech readers as too, will be provided with opportunity to follow Slovak book creation in the shopping windows of our Publishing House and via another programme. Thus, obstacles to get new Slovak books by extensive correspondence or else difficulties will be overcome in the future.'*

Attended by Minister Milan Hodža and Josef Rotnagl, the Mayor of the so-called Great Prague and long-year Chairman of the 'Československá jednota' (TN: Czech national defence association) considerably supporting the establishment of the Bookshop, the Grand Opening event was on 8th November 1934. It became an important cultural political and social event penned in the press in Czechia as well Slovakia. Also General Louis-Eugène Faucher; Charles University Vice-Chancellor Karel Domin; Prague Police President Vojtěch Dolejš, and more figures of culture and science took part in.

## **PANEL 17 – Slovak Bookshop Grand Opening event**

J. Smrek while giving his opening speech at the Slovak Bookshop Grand Opening event (8/11/1934, Centropress, Prague). Slovak National Library Literary Archive.

M. Hodža and L. Mazáč touring the Publishing House (8/11/1934). I. Čietek's private archive.

The very first note in the Slovak Bookshop's Visitor's Book in Prague. National Museum LibraryArchive.

The invitation card to the Slovak Bookshop Grand Opening event (October 1934).

The Slovak Bookshop before opening. I. Čietek's private archive.

# ***LECTURE HALL AND ‘ELÁN’ EXHIBITION ROOM***

**C**eremonial space, where, e.g. a lecture hall, seventy square metres in size and audience capacity of forty persons to host monthly lectures or authors’ readings of Slovak writers had been already reserved during the palace conversion in street Spálená. The first such an evening was held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1934, one month after the Grand Opening, when works by Gejza Vámoš went on view. The dramatic composition was in J. Smrek’s hands. Smrek would often invite artists, Members of Parliament or students living permanently or temporarily in Prague (e.g. R. Brtáň, L. Novomeský, J. Alexy, M. Rázus). Also guests from Slovakia (e.g. A. Mráz, T. J. Gašpar, Š. Krčméry, E. B. Lukáč, Z. Zguriška, J. Cíger-Hronský, J. Stanislav) appeared there more often than not. Lectures were often delivered along with exhibition vernissages.

*‘Were not be the Výstavná sieň Elánu, hardly anything would artistic Prague learn of the present fine art in Slovakia!’* (A. V. Hrska)

The Lecture Hall adjoined the ‘Výstavná sieň Elánu’, spatially modest, though. Located next to the Bookshop, it boasted new and modern ceiling lights. Selling exhibitions open to the public were mostly dedicated to young Slovak artists, who co-operated with J. Smrek on book cover designs for the EYSA. Besides M. Benka, whose works had gone on show to open the Exhibition Room, they comprised works by M. Galanda, Š. Bednár, Ľ. Križan, M. A. Bazovský, J. Bárťfay, J. Mudroch, C. Majerník, J. Kollár, F. Reichentál, as well by costume and scenic designer J. Ladvenica. Occasionally, exhibitions covered Czech artists engaged in Slovak themes (e.g. M. Vořechová-Vejvodová, J. Jareš, A. Roškotová, J. Votruba, F. Duša, F. Záleský). Some of the exhibitions were launched by Slovak politicians, which gave such displays cultural political importance. For instance, the exhibition featuring M. A. Bazovský going on display in November 1935 was opened by Slovak politician, diplomat and writer Juraj Slávik.

## **PANEL 18 – *Elán* Lecture Hall and Exhibition Room**

The opening exhibition devoted to M. Benka in the *Elán* Exhibition Room (November 1934). The author’s archive.

The catalogue accompanying the exhibition of works by M. A. Bazovský in the *Elán* Exhibition Room (November – December 1935).

The catalogue accompanying the exhibition of works by M. Galanda in the *Elán* Exhibition Room (January 1935).

The vernissage of the exhibition of works by M. Bazovský in the *Elán* Exhibition Room. From the left: L. Mazáč, J. Smrek, M. Bazovský, J. Slávik, M. Benka and R. Brtáň (12/11/1935, Centropress Prague). Slovak National Library Literary Archive.

The invitation card to the exhibition of works by M. Bazovský in the *Elán* Exhibition Room.

# ***MAZÁČ LITERARY COMPETITION AND FINAL SLOVAK EDITION***

**T**he first Congress of Slovak Writers was held in Trenčanské Teplice, Slovakia, in May 1936 to discuss possibilities for original Slovak literary creation. L. Mazáč attended the Congress along with other Czech delegates. Soon after its end he staged a competition for the best original Slovak novel and poetry aiming so *‘to practically and actively contribute to extend technical preconditions for a Slovak literary growth’*. The competition was judged and winners selected by two juries; the jury judging poetry consisted of I. Krasko, R. Brtáň, D. Okáli along with Š. Letz as a representative of the Publisher; prose was judged by J. Jesenský, K. Čapek, A. Mráz, and J. Smrek standing in for the Publisher. The competition results were announced in June 1938. However, only four prize winners came out of print from those prize-awarded books before 1939 (*Ján Kupecký* by Ľ. Zúbka; *Bukvica / Beechnut* by V. Beniák; *Moloch* by E. B. Lukáč; *Jerguš Lapin* by Ľ. Ondrejov) to start a new edition *Slovenská tvorba (Slovak Creation)* that would be a credit to the Publisher after the EYSA and Mazáč’s final Slovak series.

As editor J. Smrek wrote in his memoirs, the *Slovak Creation* had been the most challenging and expensive Mazáč’s series of all. Being the elite one, all of its copies were numbered; some of them even appeared as bibliophile books. Preferred volumes were Dutch leather-bound and printed on English book paper ‘Cassiobury’; paperback covers were decorated with steel-engravings. Eight titles in total appeared in that edition following 1936. Coming out prior to the awarded books were two anthologies of poems by distinguished Slovak poets Ivan Krasko and Martin Rázus, and novels *Pokušenie (Temptation)* by Margita Figuli, and *Kamarát Jašek (Friend Jašek)* by D. Chrobák.

Unfortunately, the post-Mnichov political situation ruined Mazáč’s editorial plans. Having worries about the future of his Publishing House, he ceased the production of Slovak literature; at the turn of 1938 the editor’s was officially dissolved. What Mazáč was only left was a few agreements with T. J. Gašpar, J. Hrušovský and J. Nižnánsky, which had been neither signed nor executed. Yet, he went on publishing the *Elán* until 1939 as a token of respect to the long-time cooperation. He intended to lean on cooperation with Smrek during the War and continue printing Slovak literature in Slovakia through the Slovak League based in Bratislava, whose shares he owned, and through whose mediation he had published in Slovakia in the 1930s; however, his plans would be never put in motion.

## **PANEL 19 – Mazáč Literary Competition and his final edition**

Ľudo Zúbek: *Ján Kupecký. Kniha druhá / Ján Kupecký. Book Two.*

Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1938. M. Rozložník’s Collection.

Valentín Beniák: *Bukvica / Beechnut.* Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1938.

M. Rozložník’s Collection.

Ľudo Ondrejov: *Jerguš Lapin.* Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1938. M. Rozložník’s

Collection.

Emil Boleslav Lukáč: *Moloch.* Praha – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1938. M. Rozložník’s

Collection.

Margita Figuli: *Pokušenie / Temptation.* Prague – Bratislava, L. Mazáč 1937.

M. Rozložník’s Collection.

Slovak writers coming to the Congress held in Teplice. *Elán. Mesačník pre*

*literatúru a umenie / Elán. Literature and Art Monthly.* Volume 6, 1935–1936.

The Mazáčs and the Gregors at the first Slovak Congress of Writers. *Elán.*

Volume 6, 1935–1936.

# ***DRUŽSTEVNÍ PRÁCE***

**W**hereas L. Mazáč while embarking on his publishing career regarded Slovak literature as a promising article intended to be traded mostly in Slovakia, and his edition projects possessed exceptional quality thanks to J. Smrek and other Slovak workmates, other publishers adopted an alternative approach to Slovak literature, and the character of selected books fundamentally differed, so did supposed readers. The truly unique collection among such publications was published by the ‘Družstevní práce’ (‘DP’), Prague, 1928–1938. Since the books had not been designated for a special edition, they could be thoroughly integrated into the ‘DP’s’ editorial plan. The ‘DP’ own distribution system made it possible to decrease book prices considerably as well to distribute books among Czech readers far easier than Mazáč. What’s more, some of the Slovak works were even brought abroad.

The ‘Družstevní práce’ (‘DP’) arose in 1922 as a cooperative of readers, writers and artists to publish valuable books for reasonable price, and in high-quality graphic and artistic design. The initiative to establish the ‘DP’ had been mostly pushed by publisher Václav Poláček (1898–1969), who became its first administrative director. Every member was supposed to buy four publications at a minimum every year, the membership were allowed to take part in planning editorial programme to a varying degree, though. The Cooperative’s activities and books were reported by a magazine, which had been a brief bulletin *Zpravodaj Družstevní práce* becoming a regular modern publishing house journal entitled *Panorama*, lavishly illustrated and thoroughly subedited so addressing readers beyond the Cooperative.

The first book – historical novel *Svätopluk* by Nádaši-Jégé is beyond that decisively shaped ‘Slovak’ collection. It appeared in 1928 within a representative collection *Tři knihy soudobé kultury (Three Books of Contemporary Culture)* published to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Republic along with one Czech (*Jaro generace / The Spring of Generation* by B. Klička) and one Moravian (*Kamarádi svobody /transl. Friends of Freedom* by J. Mahen) books. The national composition corresponded to a choice of printing houses and artists. The Publisher failed to find a Slovak designer for the book by Nádaši, therefore, addressed a Wallachian graphic artist, Jan Kobzáň. Although the ‘DP’ had promoted the collection, no more than a third of *Svätopluk* printings would have been sold by the end of the year. Czech readers had not got used to reading and buying Slovak books in their original version yet, and the ‘DP’ did not have strong readership in Slovakia.

Only when *Živý bič* (transl. *The Living Whip*) by Milo Urban went out of print did changes occur ...

## **PANEL 20 – Družstevní práce**

Ladislav Jégé-Nádaši: *Svätopluk*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1928.

(Cover drawing by J. Kobzáň.)

Jiří Mahen: *Kamarádi svobody / Friends of Freedom*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1928. (Cover and illustrations by E. Milén.)

Benjamin Klička: *Jaro generace / The Spring of Generation*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1928. (Cover and illustrations by J. Rambousek.)

A portrait of Jégé-Nádaši and illustration by J. Kobzáň to the novel *Svätopluk*. *Panorama*. *Kulturní zpravodaj / Cultural Bulletin*. Volume 6, 1928–1929.

## ***LANDMARK: 'THE LIVING WHIP'***

**D**espite *Svätopluk* failure, the 'Družstevní práce' decided to publish one anti-war novel by a young Slovak writer, Milo Urban, *The Living Whip* that had already come out at L. Mazáč's in 1927. It had been brought as a promising and attractive title to the 'DP' editors' attention by book seller Ladislav Šturc from Bratislava. The 'DP' agreed with Mazáč and Urban that it would be published in the prime edition series *Živé knihy (Vivid Books)* led by Peter Kříčka (1884–1949), with book covers and bindings designed by Emanuel Frinta (1896–1970), one of the skeleton artists in the Publisher's. The second edition was in Slovak language; Urban even added some passages that Mazáč had had to exclude.

Despite the book promotion in the *Panorama* and other periodicals, *The Living Whip* had not been winning the hearts of readers instantly, although it was apparently more popular than prose by Nádaši. Since one sixth of over three thousand distributed copies had not been sold, the 'DP' decided to initiate a discussion about whether to translate Slovak books into Czech, so would carry out a survey. Although the survey indicated the preference for translation, the following Slovak books came out in their original version as that mass agitation had finally aroused interest in Slovak literature. *The Living Whip* appeared in four printings; furthermore the 'DP' launched its sequence entitled *Hmlý na úsvite* (transl. *Fog at Dawn*) – again in the *Vivid Books* edition. Urban last talked in the 'DP' to Czech readers via his published reflection *Česká literatura a Slováci (Czech Literature and Slovaks)*.

Not only did the 'DP' help *The Living Whip* reach Czech readers but made the novel global. Besides, the Cooperative had it translated into Russian, German (twelve thousand copies), Swedish, Slovenian, Polish, Croatian and Hungarian languages, and addressed English, French and Italian translators. The novel by Urban was the very first Slovak book to penetrate the foreign market following 1918. The fourth printing was even reported in London *The Times*; the production of a film based on this novel was considered in Germany, however, the plan would be abandoned with a changing political situation.

### **PANEL 21 – THE LIVING WHIP**

A portrait of Milo Urban. *Panorama. Kulturní zpravodaj / Cultural Bulletin*.

Volume 7, 1929.

Milo Urban: *Živý bič / The Living Whip*. Prague, L. Mazáč 1927.

(Cover by M. Benka.) M. Rozložník's Collection

Milo Urban: *Živý bič / The Living Whip*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1929.

(Cover by E. Frinta.)

Milo Urban: *Hmlý na úsvite / Fog at Dawn*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1930.

(Bookbinding by E. Frinta and frontispiece by Š. Bednár.)

# MORE SLOVAK BOOKS

Leaving L. Mazáč, Czech teacher Peter Jilemnický writing in Slovak language joined the 'Družstevní práce' those times as too. His novels *Pole neorané* (transl. *Unploughed Field*, 1932), and *Kus cukru* (A Lump of Sugar, 1934) appeared as the fourth and fifth Slovak books in the *Vivid Books* edition, the former even had two printings. Translated into Danish, German and Russian languages, this story set in the harsh environment of Kysuce countryside, Slovakia, where the writer's works would be usually set in, was even sold abroad. Meanwhile, the 'DP' attracted another left-winged Slovak author, Fraňo Král', mainly because it was not private but cooperative in character. Despite potential, serious difficulties with censorship, the 'DP' published his social novel *Cesta zarúbaná* (transl. *Blocked Road*). Besides Slovak prose, the 'DP' acquainted their readers with Slovak poetry. In 1933, poet and editor Josef Dvořák (1901–1958) compiled an anthology of modern Slovak poetry *Tvář mladého Slovenska* (*The Face of Young Slovakia*) presenting J. Smrek, J. Nižnánsky, A. Žarnov, M. Hal'amová, J. Poničan, D. Okáli, F. Král', L. Novomestský, E. B. Lukáč and more. The latter appeared in a separate anthology of his original or translated books.

## PANEL 22 – More Slovak books

*Tvář mladého Slovenska / The Face of Young Slovakia*. Anthology of young Slovak poets. Prague, Družstevní práce 1933. (Initial sketch for the cover and bookbinding by L. Sutnar.)

*Tvář mladého Slovenska / The Face of Young Slovakia*. Anthology of young Slovak poets. Prague, Družstevní práce 1933. (Slovak – Czech Dictionary by J. Dvořák.)

Peter Jilemnický: *Kus cukru / A Lump of Sugar*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1934. (Cover by L. Sutnara.)

A portrait of Peter Jilemnický. Panorama. *Kulturní zpravodaj / Cultural Bulletin*. Volume 9, 1931–1932.

## PANEL 23 – More books - continuation

A letter from F. Král' to the Publishing House Družstevní práce dated 8 August 1933 offering a novel for the edition *Živé knihy* (*Vivid Books*)

Fraňo Král': *Cesta zarúbaná / Blocked Road*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1934. (Bookbinding and frontispiece by M. Galanda.)

A portrait of Fraňo Král'. Panorama. Volume 11, 1933.

E. B. Lukáč: *Básně / Poems*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1936.

(Cover and bookbinding by L. Sutnar.)

# ***DRUŽSTEVNÍ PRÁCE COMPETITION FOR SLOVAK NOVEL***

**L**ikewise L. Mazáč, the Publishing House staged a competition for the best Slovak novel to mark the First Congress of Slovak Writers held in 1936. The jury consisted of three Slovaks: literary critic M. Pišút, prose writer G. Vámoš and poet E. B. Lukáč and two ‘DP’s’ representatives. They awarded P. Jilemnický the first-place prize for his *Kompas v nás (Compass Inside Us)*. The second-place prize went to *Bičianka z doliny (transl. Bičianka from the Valley)* by Zuzka Zguriška and *Stretnutie (Encounter)* by F. Král’. Whereas *Stretnutie* did not come out until the end World War 2 (in the ‘Matica slovenská’) the prose by Jilemnický was published by the ‘DP’ no later but that year followed by Zguriška the ensuing year.

Slovak volumes were mainly designed by skeleton artists E. Frinta and L. Sutnar. In addition, the ‘DP’ invited Slovak creators. The book binding for *A Lump of Sugar* by Jilemnický was designed by Koloman Sokol, for *Blocked Road* by Král’ by Mikuláš Galanda, who drew its introduction drawing as well. Beginning to cooperate with the ‘DP’ in 1931, it was Štefan Bednár who was most engaged. He created frontispieces for the fourth printing of *The Living Whip* and *Fog at Dawn*, and designed book binding for *Unploughed Field*, furthermore, he decorate the published works from that novel competition with book covers, what’s more, he generously illustrated *Bičianka from the Valley*. The ‘DP’ was among just few Czech publishers printing Slovak books in Slovakia, in the ‘Grafia’ based in Bratislava, Slovakia.

## **PANEL 24 – The DP Competition for Slovak Novel**

Czech writers at the Congress in Trenčianské Teplice (J. Kopta, H. Jelínek, K. Rypáček, A. M. Tilschová, K. Nový, P. Kříčka, J. Seifert, M. Majerová, V. Závada, J. Hora and Publisher B. M. Klika).

The DP Competition for Slovak Novel winners in front of the broadcasting company’s mic. From the left: Ľ. Zúbek, F. Král’, Z. Zguriška, P. Jilemnický (24/10/1937). I. Čietek’s private archive.

Milan Pišút, one of three Slovak members of the DP Competition jury (December 1937).

Peter Jilemnický: *Kompas v nás / Compass Inside Us*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1937. (Book jacket by Š. Bednár).

Zuzka Zguriška: *Bičianka z Doliny / Bičianka from the Valley*. Prague, Družstevní práce 1938. (Book jacket drawing and frontispiece by Š. Bednár.)

Z. Zguriška when signing her autograph in her prize-winning book *Bičianka z doliny* in the DP (a. d.).

# ***KRÁSNÁ JIZBA***

**T**he ‘Družstevní práce’ devoted attention to quality and visual aspects of their published books from the very beginning, therefore, gradually began to deal with issues concerning lifestyle. That is why the Cooperative opened a shop ‘Krásná jizba’ (*TN: meaning beautiful rustic room*) selling graphics, applied arts or decorative objects to reflect a general interest in culture of living. In addition to consultancy service, the ‘DP’ provided space for housing exhibition organized on regular basis to show paintings and drawings by distinguished contemporary Czech and Slovak artists, e. g. K. Sokol, Š. Bednár and J. Alexy.

Publishing Slovak books in the ‘DP’ had been accompanied by appeals for importance of mutual acquaintance and understanding of both nations. Despite some members’ adverse reaction, all works appeared in Slovak, and selected books were accompanied by a Slovak-Czech differential dictionary. What also proves the Publisher’s interest in Slovak culture is a delegation sent in 1935 to L’udovít Štúr’s grave in Modra, a town lying in the Little Carpathians, Slovakia, to commemorate the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. The oration was written and read by poet Jaroslav Seifert. He began his speech with words manifesting the DP’s intention to help Slovak literature to gain its deserved international reputation: *‘Družstevní práce, on whose behalf we are expressing thanks and paying our modest compliment, are coming to this grave – nay without certain rights. They were among the first to betroth both tongues of these two big branches of this state after the break. Slovak books, which they had published, not only flew across the lands of Czech language but the borders of the state carrying fame of the country and its culture worldwide.’*

## **PANEL 25 – Krásná jizba**

F. Halas and E. B. Lukáč while talking together at the Christmas exhibition of DP books in the Krásná jizba (December 1936)

The DP delegation at the grave of L. Štúr in Modra (1935).

Slovak artist Štefan Bednár (a. d.).

The invitation card to the exhibition of works by K. Sokol in the DP Krásná jizba (September 1934).

# STAN

The contemporary Slovak literature also broke into businesses outside Prague. Besides Libuše Baudyšová from the city of Hradec Králové, who, given assistance from Albert Pražák, had published the Czech translation of *Adam Šangala* by Nádaši in 1925, found her place in an editorial programme of the Publishing House Stan based in Břeclav, established at a literary journal of the same name. Encouraged by writer Josef Sekera (1897–1972), who worked as a white-collar in the State Railways, Bratislava, the journal was launched in 1929. That year saw the first appearance of books under its characteristic triangle logo. The thing that both the book production and journal content had in common was effort, stimulated by first-hand experience of Slovakia and Slovaks of many of the involved (e.g. L. N. Zvěřina and J. Dobrovolský), to deliver high quality as to its graphic aspects, and to encourage young Czech, more specifically Moravian and Slovak generations to cooperate.

The lavishly illustrated and carefully typographically arranged monthly had been permanently carrying Slovak poetry and prose contributions (e.g. an excerpt of unpublished novel *Fog at Dawn* by M. Urban), as well reflected Slovak literature. The book series contained volumes by Slovak authors (in their original versions), and works drawing inspiration from Slovakia. Going out of the print as a bibliophile book was a collection of poems *Křižovatky (Intersections)* by E. B. Lukáč, which had been published by Mazáč in his EYSA. Also, F. Král' made his book debut there. Whereas the book by Lukáč typographically designed by Sekera and illustrated by Arnošt Hrabal looked more or less traditional, poems *Čierň na palette (Black on a Palette)* by Král' were provided with a progressive design by Josef Zamazal familiar with constructivist typography. Short stories *Návrat (Homecoming)* and a theatre play *Krútnava (The Whirl)* by Emil Rusko and Julius Štefánčík came out in 1930. Readers were brought to Slovakia by two publications: a novel *Vinaři (Wine-Growers)* set in a viticultural region in the Little Carpathians, and a generous graphic album *Bratislava* by Jaroslav Dobrovský with a collection of twenty coloured wood engravings accompanied by the Introduction written in Slovak by Sekera. Likewise many contemporary and ambitious in art terms, costly projects, it was sure not to last long. The Stan journal only appeared in two volumes (1929–1930) whereas the Publishing House existed no longer than one year more.

## PANEL 26 – STAN

Emil Boleslav Lukáč: *Křižovatky / Intersections*. Břeclav, Stan 1929.  
(Frontispiece by A. Hrabal and typographical design by J. Sekera.)  
Jilemnický, Peter: *Návrat / Homecoming*. Břeclav, Stan 1930. (Cover and frontispiece by J. Dobrovolský.)  
Fraňo Král': *Čierň na palette / Black on a Palette*. Břeclav, Stan 1930.  
(Cover by J. Zamazal.)  
*Stan. Měsíčník přátel literatury a umění / Stan. Monthly of Literature and Art Friends*. Volume 1, 1929. (Cover.)  
Jaroslav Dobrovolský: Bratislava. Břeclav, Stan 1929  
(Cover and woodengraving).

# LITEVNA

Slovak literature was not published by Czechs only; for that matter, Mazáč's 'EYSA' had been published under the auspices of 'Sváz slovenských študentov', the organization that published an influential magazine entitled *Mladé Slovensko (Young Slovakia)* in 1920–1924; in 1922, another group of young artists joined in J. Alexy and G. Vámoš's circle redacted the ambitious journal *Svojeť (TN: meaning homeland)* under publishing patronage bestowed by Emil Pacovský (1879–1948).

Slovak art historian Vojtěch Tilkovský (1902–1978) established own publishing business in Prague in 1930. The 'Litevna' – literary and scientific publishing house Vojtěch Tilkovský – as he called himself in Czech, had set themselves the key aim to edit and publish the first encyclopaedia in Slovak 'that would contain statistics data, images and captions to learn everything about the world and primarily homeland'. The three-volume Slovak encyclopaedia *Slovenský slovník náučný* did go out of print after two-year intensive work led by P. Bujnák, who had been entrusted with that task by the Publisher. About seventy Czech and Slovak experts cooperating with several organizations (Učená spoločnosť v Bratislavě / Learned Society in Bratislava; 'Matica slovenská'; museums, universities, local authorities) had carried out that project. That enchiridion with rich image supplement had over a thousand pages.

Meanwhile, Tilkovský published a few works in Czech, Slovak or German languages. There was one exceptional work in his not that large production otherwise looking like random-choice one: *Slovenský literárny almanach (Slovak Literary Almanac)* redacted by D. Chrobák and Š. Letz, typographically designed by A. L. Nehasil, published in 1931. The volume presented fifty contemporary Slovak-writing authors by their biographies, illustrations of their works and portrait photographs used in an impressive photo collage by František Podešva in the book jacket. Besides, a representative collection *Slovensko Masarykovi (Slovakia to Masaryk)* compiled by Jozef Rudinský to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the first Czechoslovak president came out under 'protectorate of Slovak branch of the Czechoslovak National Council in Bratislava' in 1930, more specifically in 1931.

Thus, the Publisher completed the mission and would not print any books anymore.

## PANEL 27 – LITEVNA

*Slovenský literárny almanach / Slovak Literary Almanac*. Prague, Litevna 1931.  
(Book jacket by F. Podešva.)

*Slovenský náučný slovník / Slovak Encyclopaedia*. Prague, Litevna 1932.  
(Book jacket and bookbinding by unknown artist.)

Slovanská knihovna Mladé Slovensko / Slavonic Library Young Slovakia. *Revue slovenskej mládeže / Slovak Youth Journal*. Volume 5, 1923, Issue 5. (Cover.)

*Svojeť. Kultúrny časopis slovenský / Slovak Cultural Magazine*. Volume 1, 1922.  
(Publishing house cover of a stitched volume.)

# ***PUBLISHING HOUSE FR. BOROVÝ***

**A**fter L. Mazáč successful Slovak activities and international acclaim for *The Living Whip*, larger Czech publishers slowly began to take interest in early Slovak creation as well. However, Slovak works broke into their editorial plans rather randomly, and were probably often initiated by writers themselves.

Thus, e. g. only three Slovak works appeared in one of the oldest publishing houses Fr. Borový no earlier than after the mid-1930s. Although the Publishing House established a special edition devoted to modern poetry *Slovenské básně (Slovak poems)* in 1936 and entrusted Slovak artist L'udevít Fulla with its design, no more than one volume came out: *Pohľadnica (The Postcard)* by F. Král'. One year later, the Publisher published the third printing of a successful novel *Vítězný pád (The Victorious Fall)* by P. Jilemnický in the established prosaic edition *Žatva (meaning harvest)*, and a study *Slovenský povojnový román (Slovak Post-War Novel)* by Andrej Mráz in a professional series *Postavy a dílo (Personalities and Work)* in 1938. Whereas the discourse by Mráz appeared in standardized design by František Muzika, the Publisher entrusted Slovak artist Imro Weiner-Král' with book cover and binding for the novel by Jilemnický.

## **PANEL 28 – Fr. Borový**

Fraňo Král': *Pohľadnica / Postcard*. Prague, F. Borový 1936. (Cover by L. Fulla.)  
*Slovenské smery umělecké a kritické / Slovak Art and Critical Movements*. Volume 1, 1933–1934 (Volume cover published in the Publishing House Melantrich.)  
*Slovenské smery umělecké a kritické / Slovak Art and Critical Movements*. Volume 2, 1934–1935. (Volume cover published in the Publishing House Melantrich.)

# MELANTRICH

Launched two years after Mazáč's Slovak Edition, in 1929, the Melantrich Slovak Edition considerably differed among other large publishers. Whereas most publishers aimed especially at Czech readership, Melantrich, likewise Mazáč, largely focused on the Slovak market. Unlike Mazáč, the Melantrich initially focused on translated works that dominated the edition, primarily Russian (L. N. Tolstoy, F. M. Dostoevsky, I. S. Turgenev) and French (V. Hugo, A. Dumas) writers. However, it was also one adventure novel, *Treasure Island* by R. L. Stevenson that appeared among the 19<sup>th</sup> – century classics. The first original Slovak work in the edition – historical novel *Kliatba na Muráni (Curse at Muráň)* by Samo Tomášik – did not come out until 1933 as the twentieth volume. Next books did not bring unpublished young works either, but only 'finds from classical Slovak literature', that means prosaic creation by earlier authors (J. Záborský, J. M. Hurban, J. Kaliničiak and Š Križan).

However, Melantrich did not divert their attention away from newborn Slovak literature. In November 1933, the Publisher started the magazine of the 'Spolek slovenských spisovateľ'ov' (Society of Slovak Writers) titled *Slovenské smery umelecké a kritické (Slovak Art and Critical Movements)* subedited by Ján Jesenský and E. B. Lukáč. A literary monthly, a sort of the Melantrich *Listy pro umění a kritiku (Letters for Art and Critics)* published in Bedřich Fučík editor's at the same time, contained examples of the contemporary Slovak and world poetry, prose and essay writings, as well reviews, studies and shorter literary works. However, the cooperation between Czechs and Slovaks ceased after two volumes; the *Slovenské smery* began coming out in the Publishing House 'Eos', Bratislava, in the autumn of 1935. That year saw the last – twenty-third volume of Melantrich Slovak Edition.

The end of the magazine and its transfer to Slovakia did not result in lack of interest in contemporary Slovak creation. For that matter, in 1934, the Publisher published a novel *Odlomená haluz (transl. Broken Branch)* by G. Vámoš (in two printings) in the edition *Úroda* awarded in the Melantrich literary competition staged that year. Besides the series, another two novels had appeared by the end of the 1930s: *Svetlo v temnotách (Light in the Darkness)* by Vavro Šrobár, 1937 (under his pen-name Andrej Bielík), and *Čas nezastavíš (Time Cannot Be Stopped)* by Hana Gregorová, 1938.

The last published book expressively shows mutual warmth and respect of the Publishing House and Slovak authors. The collection of poetry *Svätý za dedinou (A Saint Beyond the Hamlet)* by Laco Novomeský appeared long after the end of Czechoslovakia, at the turn of 1939. Novomeský declined the offer from the Melantrich to print that book in Slovakia where he would leave, but got it published by the Czech Publisher. His dedication to his friend Karel Teig to whom he sent the book from Slovakia is quite moving: 'To Karel Teig to remember long chatting days in Prague, which I cast my mind back now from Bratislava, wistfully but happily, L. Novomeský.'

What happened then is another story ...

## PANEL 29 – Melantrich

Design alterations of the Melantrich Slovak Edition. Slovanská knihovna (Slavonic Library).

Robert Louis Stevenson: *Poklad na ostrove / Treasure Island*. Prague, Melantrich 1934. Slovanská knihovna (Slavonic Library).

Fyedor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky: *Zločin a trest / Crime and Punishment*. Six-part novel [Prague], Melantrich 1932. Slovanská knihovna (Slavonic Library).

Ján Kaliničiak: *Knieža liptovský. Láska a pomsta / Duke of Liptov. Love and Revenge* Prague, Melantrich 1935. Slovanská knihovna (Slavonic Library).

## PANEL 30 – Melantrich continuation

Gejza Vámoš: *Odlomená haluz / Broken Branch*. Prague, Melantrich 1934.

Slovanská knihovna (Slavonic Library).

Andrej Bielík: *Svetlo v temnotách / Light in the Darkness*. Prague, Melantrich 1937. Slovanská knihovna (Slavonic Library).

Hana Gregorová: *Čas nezastavíš / You Never Stop Time*. Prague, Melantrich, [1938]. Slovanská knihovna (Slavonic Library).

Laco Novomeský: *Svätý za dedinou / A Saint Beyond the Hamlet*.

Prague, Melantrich 1939. Slovanská knihovna (Slavonic Library).