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**HUNGARIAN-SLOVAK SYNTHESSES IN THE LIFE
AND LITERARY WORKS OF JÁN SEKERKA**



The territory of today's Hungary was inhabited by Slovaks three centuries ago. Slovaks abroad also showed their originality through their artistic work, which is also represented by Lowland Slovak literature. The phenomenon of Slovak folk authors was born in the cradle of the Hungarian environment – the so-called folk writers. Their first literary attempts can be found in calendars and compatriot periodicals, which were the most accessible reading for the general public. The motherland was provided with *Čabiansky kalendár* [The Csaba calendar], where the first works of this kind began to appear in the 1930s. Folk authors, often without higher education, without good knowledge of the Slovak language, by profession mainly peasants and workers addressed their ideas using simple poetic language and uncomplicated poetic form of the general population. These authors came out of the people and created for them, and that is why they have their irreplaceable importance in literature. The work of folk authors focused on various world themes. These included the nation, life, agriculture, nature, love, the diseases of the people and work. Ján Sekerka (1904 – 1984) is one of the lowland writers from Békešská Čaba (Hungarian Békéscsaba, another phenomenon of folk authors). As a builder – technician, he was primarily engaged in collecting folk songs and their notation. On the pages of *Čabiansky kalendár* and the periodicals *Slovenská rodina* [The Slovak family] and *Evanjelický hlásnik* [The Lutheran Herald], we can find his poetic and journalistic work scattered. His work has not yet been published in any separate collection. Manuscript notes can also be found in the archives of the specialized workplace of Matica slovenská – in the Compatriot's Museum in Martin. Sekerka's work in Hungarian and Slovak is mainly focused on current social issues. He published a dictionary work – *Malá slovenská mluvnica a krátky maďarsko-slovenský slovník / Kis szlovák nyelvtan és rövid magyar-szlovák szótár* [A small Slovak grammar and a short Hungarian-Slovak dictionary], which represents the communication manual of a compatriot in the Hungarian environment. The aim of the paper is a literary historical presentation and interpretive analysis of Sekerka's (especially poetic) work with special emphasis on the Hungarian and Slovak context, taking into account the past, present and future.

Keywords: Slovak literature in Hungary, Slovak folk authors in Hungary, the phenomenon of folk writers in Hungary, Ján Sekerka

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Slovaks living abroad are considered an integral part of the Slovak nation by the current legislation of the Slovak Republic. Their (not only artistic) work has confirmed that the national cultural and social contribution of their compatriots cannot be limited only by the physical borders of the Slovak Republic. A special component of the corpus of Slovak literature consists of the literature of the Lowland Slovaks, which originated in the geographical territory of present-day Hungary, Romania and Serbia. The Slovak diaspora has lived and worked in these localities for almost three centuries. *"From this aspect the role of language and language use play an important part in the formation of personal identity, similarly, the language use and culture of the diaspora plays a crucial role in the formation of the cultural and literary identity of a nation"* [For more details see: Puskás 2014, 54 – 57].

The year 1918 resonates significantly when evaluating Slovak literature in specific geographical units. During the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the various nationalities moved freely, influenced and interacted with each other. After the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1918), three separate state formations – Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia – were established in the Lower Countries, which practically from one day to the next determined new social and political conditions for Slovaks. In no small measure, they influenced the artistic output of Slovaks, who from that moment on were given the label "living abroad". *"A citizen of one's own country, a member of one's own nation, becomes a citizen of another country as a member of a national minority"* [Andruška 2008, 3].

In the new conditions, the literature of compatriots began to be created, which, apart from its undeniable aesthetic value, completed the overall image of the Slovak Low Countries society and its culture. The pertracted themes of the works, their formal construction and the choice of artistic means created testimonies about the authors' way of life in the environment that inspired them, which they reflected in their writing and for which they created. The work of Slovak authors in non-Slovak environments has irreplaceably filled the

original mosaic of the diversity of Slovak literary production and demonstrated the lively (not only literary) Slovak life in a foreign environment.

Yugoslavia created favourable conditions for the promotion of cultural and artistic activities of the Slovak diaspora by allowing the establishment of Matica slovenská (1932) and by founding the literary magazines *Svit* [The Shine] and *Nový život* [The New Life]. Slovaks in Hungary found themselves in more difficult conditions. In addition to the lack of Slovak intelligentsia, the situation was complicated by the unfavourable politics of the Horthy regime. The Slovaks living in Hungary maintained their pro-national activity with the help of the Evangelical Church. They spread cultural expressions thanks to the Evangelical Church Bookshop, which was able to distribute mass-read calendars and periodicals among the countrymen. In this way, the intelligentsia was able to concentrate at least partially and aroused interest in the Slovak printed word among the peasants as well. *Čabiansky kalendár* [The Csaba calendar] (1920–1948) was closest in content to this widely represented social stratum. It met their needs and was adapted to their demands in the choice of topics and content. Gradually, a unique group of folk writers – the so-called "writers of letters" – began to form in its pages. This phenomenon developed naturally in the broadest strata of the population (peasants, workers) out of the need to create artistic texts in the environment of the Low Countries addressed to their own social class. According to Šenkár, their work can be considered one of the initial sources of Slovak literary production in Hungary: "*The beginnings of literary production by Slovaks in Hungary date back to the period before the Second World War, and were considerable especially among the so-called folk authors*" [Šenkár 2015, 11]. Andruška gives a deeper context: "*We have come to believe that the beginnings of the literary production of Slovaks in Hungary go back to the period before the Second World War. We were led to this by the activity of folk authors, presented in the pages of Čabiansky kalendár, Slovenská rodina* [The Slovak family] and *Evanjelický hlásnik* [The Lutheran Herald], and partly the Slovak Unity, and finally by several independent books published at that time. However, in historical sources we can also find older data on the Slovak written word, especially in the Čabian area" [Andruška 2013, 29].

We find their early works published on the pages of the first periodicals of Slovaks in Hungary, which were well spread among the broad strata of the countrymen: "*It is common knowledge that for the majority of the Slovak population in the Lower Lands before 1918, the only available literature was a prayer book and a bible. The only secular literature were calendars. At first they were ordered from Slovakia. As soon as the opportunity arose, they began to publish their own. By giving up calendars, the intelligentsia was in a sense closer to the needs of the people. The editors published calendars and the people accepted them because they found themselves in them. And here, too, stemmed the desire of the peasants and workers – Slovaks in Hungary – to express their ideas in a simple language for those who could understand them*" [Bartalská 1985, 7–8]. They began to publish their works in the 1930s. They addressed the people with simple words in an unpretentious form on the topics they lived by. Connection with it was also supported by the simple form of the authors' works, which the folk authors achieved without proper education and knowledge of spelling and grammar. Writers created out of their own desire. They improved themselves independently, often supported by local bookshops, where they "under-the-counter" acquired for their own inspiration book works of Slovak classics. Through their efforts, they self-educated, expanded their knowledge and improved their own work. The editorial board of *Čabiansky kalendár* also joined in the promotion of the verse writing of the writers, inviting every Slovak to literary creation on its pages.

Ján Gerči and Ján Sekerka were among the first folk authors from the environment of Békéšská Čaba. Later, the group of folk authors expanded to other Slovak communities, and authors from Sarvaš (Szarvas) and Slovenský Komlós took part in the calendar.

Our ambition is to map the Hungarian-Slovak syntheses of the life and work of the folk author Ján Sekerka, a descendant of Slovaks who immigrated to the Low Countries, a native of Békéšská Čaba (Hungary). Already in the coordinates of the place of his birth, the first synthesis of the Hungarian environment with the Slovak origin is formed. Judging by his life's work, Sekerka was born into a conscious Slovak family. Only a little information about his life has survived. His work is scattered in the regional periodicals, calendars and the archives of Matica slovenská.

In the National Biographical Institute of the Slovak National Library in Martin, biographical data of Ján Sekerka (1904–1984) are preserved only in very fragmentary form. However, they represent one of the few comprehensive sources of his biography. Sekerka is listed as an important historical personality, cultural worker, folk artist, collector of Slovak songs, photographer of monuments of folk architecture in Békéšská Čaba and founder of the Antifascist Front for Slavs in Hungary [Archive of the National Biographical Institute of the National Library of the Slovak Republic in Martin, fund (Ján Sekerka), HA 3615/2000]. He was a



co-founder and for two years an editor of the Slovak magazine in Hungary *Slovenská rodina*. Despite the fact that his civil occupation was a construction engineer [Tušková 2021, 44], his biography clearly declares that he strongly supported and developed the Slovak question in the Hungarian environment and claimed the Slovak identity. We can also read about his personality in *Čabiansky kalendár* for 1936, where it says: "*Sekerka Ján (1904) ethnographer and musician. He was born in Csaba. After finishing folk schools and burgher school, he attended a higher construction school in Pest. He collected a large number of Csabian folk songs. He wrote and set to music several poems. He is the founder and main contributor to the magazine "Slovenská rodina" published in Csaba. He established more amateur performances*" [Szeberényi 1936, 54].

His artistic work is difficult to access. It is scattered in the various editions of *Čabiansky kalendár* and in the regional periodicals called *Slovenská rodina* and *Evanjelický hlásnik*. A few author's manuscript notes are kept in the Museum of Matica slovenská in Martin. Only one bilingual work, *Malá slovenská mluvnica and krátky maďarsko-slovenský slovník* [A small Slovak grammar and short Hungarian-Slovak dictionary] / *Kis szlovák nyelvtan és rövid magyar-szlovák szótár*, was published in book form, dated 1946 (published by the Antifascist Front of Slavs at the Puškáš and Blahul printing house in Békésskál Csaba). Despite the fact that he almost closed his work with this work, the dictionary is perhaps the most tangible synthesis of his Slovak existence in the Hungarian environment.

The brief dictionary work (88 pp.) is introduced by two poems by Karol Kuzmány, an evangelical pastor, a writer and a vice-president of Matica slovenská. Kuzmány is one of the most important personalities of the Slovaks in the 19th century. Sekerka, in the introduction of the dictionary, reached for a characteristic selection of poems with the titles *Mládeži* [For youth]/ *Az ifjúsághoz* and *Slováci, hýbme sa!* [Slovaks, let's move!] / *Szlovákok, cselekedjünk!*, with which he accentuates that he created the dictionary with the clear intention of promoting Slovakness, with an emphasis on the education of his compatriots in the Slovak language: "*If something is to perish in us, let it be our divisiveness that will perish. So that we are not like an untied bundle, a scattered hyd. Then the words of our great, immortal poets who sang of freedom will come true. / Ha már pusztulni kell bennünk valaminek, legyen az a mi szétforgácsoltságunk, amely megsemmisül. Hogy ne legyünk olyanok, mint a megoldott kéve, szerteszéledt aprójószág. Csakis azután valósulnak meg nagy és halhatatlan költőink szavai, akik a szabadságról énekeltek*" [Sekerka 1946, 2]. The dictionary is presented as an auxiliary handbook for Slovaks who need to improve their mother tongue and for those who received their education outside Slovak schools. An evaluation of the dictionary can be found in Július Dedinský's *A szlovák betű útja Békéscsabán*, where the author states that Sekerka wrote the dictionary for Hungarian-speaking people: "*Annyira rövidre fogja az anyagot, hogy csak ízelítőt ad a szlovák nyelv szabályairól. Mivel pedig a magyar ajkúak számára készült, a magyarázó szöveg mindenütt magyar nyelvű. A füzet nagyobbik fele magyar-szlovák szótári rész*" ["He is narrowing so much material that he gives only a kind of taste of the rules of the Slovak language. Because it was created for Hungarians, the explanatory text is always in Hungarian. The largest part of the dictionary is the Hungarian-Slovak dictionary part." Dedinszky 187, 94].

He introduces it with the Slovak alphabet and a list of numerals, explains the use of personal pronouns, the inflection of nouns, and offers an overview of Slovak morphology. He leaves the explanatory notes and annotations in Hungarian language to make the content comprehensible to the reader who does not speak Slovak very well.

The core of the publication is a short Hungarian-Slovak dictionary of nearly fifty pages, focusing on the core vocabulary. This section concludes with a statement by the Štúr's group poet Viliam Paulíny-Tóth: "*My Slovak language, you have beautiful sounds, you arouse the Tatras, and you give it life. / Szlovák nyelvem drága, zeng a hangod, ha fölserken a Táttra s örökké él*" [Sekerka, 1946, 55]. In the choice of the motto (and practically also in the choice of the author of the poem, whose author is V. P. Tóth – the member of Štúr's group) Sekerka again emphasises the connection with the Slovak environment and the native Slovak language.

The remaining parts of the dictionary were conceived thematically. It provides short vocabulary from specific areas of human life and social events (i.e. schools, learning institutes, nations, nationalities, colours, greetings, salutations, names of days, parts of the day, names of months in Slavic languages, festive days, holidays, parts of the year, seasons, names of celestial bodies, weather and climate, cardinal directions, geographical and place names in Slovakia and elsewhere, continents, cities and capitals, countries, parts of countries, states, geographical names, fauna, first names, Slavic first names, family, kinship, physical education, sport, music and dance). Finally, he published a selection of Slovak proverbs and sayings. If we focus on the order of the thematic headings of Slovak vocabulary, Sekerka's preference for mastery of Slovak can also be

seen here. The most distinctive Hungarian-Slovak synthesis of Ján Sekerka's life and work can be distinctive in this work.

Sekerka's intention to improve the Slovak language of his compatriots through the use of a dictionary could be seen more than a decade earlier in the pages of the compatriot social, economic and popular education magazine *Slovenská rodina* (published by the "Petőfi" printing house in Békéšská Čaba between 1934 and 1938). Already in its pilot issue he introduced a short Hungarian-Slovak dictionary, which he gradually created as a basis for a larger, synthetic dictionary work. The first issue of *Slovenská rodina* was prepared by the editor in charge, Juraj Bauko, and the editor in charge of publishing, Juraj Vician (later his function was taken over by Ján Sekerka): "*With joy and with all our sincere hearts, we welcome our Slovak people to the occasion of publishing this modest magazine of ours. We ask all Slovaks of this dear homeland of ours to accept, read and appreciate this magazine with love... (...) This activity has its aim - which our Slovak people should have a magazine in which they can read in their mother tongue about the events of the past, the present and the possibilities of the future. Many Slovaks in Hungary do not know the Hungarian language well enough to be able to use it to educate themselves, that is, to read Hungarian newspapers and informative books. The world is progressing by leaps and bounds in every respect. The peasant, the craftsman and the worker, but also every man of every occupation, must learn in order to compete. Let us rejoice that the laws and regulations in this country of ours permit us to serve our people with this magazine. (...) Well, with God's help, we are launching the first issue of this magazine in the conviction that even the authorities and superiors will not find anything objectionable in it*" [Editorial, *Slovenská rodina*, 1934, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1–2].

The first short Slovak-Hungarian dictionary was published in the final pages of the first issue of *Slovenská rodina*. He sporadically prepared it for several issues of the magazine throughout its publication. He was most active in the first year. In the summary for the year 1934 the editors of *Slovenská rodina* published the dictionary in issues 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, containing 791 words.

Sekerka's first published texts were of an educational nature. He was the first to publish the subtitle *O hudbe* [About the Music] in the fourth issue of the first edition of *Slovenská rodina* (1934, May). In it, he confessed his feeling for music, for collecting songs and their importance for the Slovak people: "*These songs – which are the true image of the Slovak soul (...) – are pearls, diamonds, and as the stars of the sky shine and call us to immerse ourselves in their beauty, so these many thousands of Slovak folk songs call us into their lap, where they promise us everything that life has perhaps denied us. (...) Well, if you look at the educated, Western nations, you can see that they preserve everything, everything that reminds them of their ancestors. And this is how they protect their folk songs. Let's do it that way too*" [Sekerka, *Slovenská rodina*, 1934, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 5-6].

In this issue he published a report from a Slovak amateur performance which was very successfully performed in Csaba. The text mainly serves an informative function. However, it also provides important information about his activities – he directed the amateur actors, conducted the mixed choir of Slovak youth and composed the music for the performance. He underlined his versatility by preparing a crossword puzzle (which he also composed for other issues of the periodical) and by composing the music for the first *Čabi-anske slovenské tango* [The Csabian Slovak tango], which was set to music by Ján Gerči – *Zavedi lodičku...* [Take the boat away...].

He began to publish his poetry only in the second half of the year of publication of *Slovenská rodina*. His first book (1934) entitled *Bolast', žalost'* [The pain, the sorrow] [Sekerka, *Slovenská rodina*, 1934, vol. 1, no. 6, p. 11] was published only in the sixth issue. Formally a short poem, it was dedicated to human suffering present throughout human life (birth, love, death). In the September issue of *Slovenská rodina* (1934) he published a larger seven-strophic poem – *XX. Stoletie* [The 20th Century] [Sekerka, *Slovenská rodina*, 1934, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 8]. Its content calls for the vigour of humanity and for progress. In the times in which he lives, he does not look back, but records are being broken, mankind has conquered the air and the sea. Despite the fact that every man is haunted by death from birth, he must move forward. In the October issue he publishes the poem *Mesiac* [The Moon] [Sekerka, *Slovenská rodina*, 1934, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 10]. It addresses him as a witness of human life and the whole history of mankind. In spite of the transience of human life, the moon is present as a clear constant that observes human events. He contributed to the November issue with a prose written in the Csabian dialect, *Čo son vid'ev v jarmoku?* [What did I see at the fair?] [Sekerka, *Slovenská rodina*, 1934, vol. 1, no. 9, pp. 2 – 6]. The text is imbued with the atmosphere of the events at the fair, which is intensified by the authentic speech, the replicas of the sellers, the placement of the goods and the way they are sold. There is also Sekerka's poem entitled *Jeseň* [The Autumn] [Sekerka, *Slovenská rodina*, 1934, vol. 1, no. 9, p. 8]. In a simple form, it captures the time of the coming autumn, which he contrasts



with the pleasant and love-favouring summer. He concludes the volume with two short poems, *Prošba dieťaťka* [The child's request] and *Vinš pre deti* [Wish for Children] [Sekerka, Slovenská rodina, 1934, vol. 1, no. 10, p. 12]. Both poems reflect the coming Christmas atmosphere. The poem *Prošba dieťaťka* [The child's request] is structured as a prayer (it ends with the exclamation Amen!), where the child asks Jesus for a present, in return he promises him obedience and good school results. The second poem, *Vinš pre deti* [Wish for Children], is humorous – a boy forgot his wish while carolling (he fell upside down and the wish was eaten by the dogs).

In the first volume of *Slovenská rodina* (1934) we find the most quantitatively veracious poetic output of Ján Sekerka ever. It is notable for its short and simple artistic forms, its focus on themes that reflect current events in society, and its clarity.

Sekerka was less involved in the second edition of *Slovenská rodina*. He continued to produce a Hungarian-Slovak dictionary and a dictionary of foreign words (in issues 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8). He expressed himself poetically in the March issue by publishing a light love poem, *Dievča – láska – bozk* [The girl – the love – the kiss] [Sekerka, Slovenská rodina, 1935, vol. 2, no. 3, p. 13]. In the poem he expressed the feelings of a man who is in love with a woman, fulfilling the essence of the relationship and, years later, reminiscing about his lovely youth. In another poem, *Nočný dážď* [The night rain] [Sekerka, Slovenská rodina, 1935, vol. 2, no. 7, p. 46], he discussed the power of nature during a storm and its end in the symbolism of a new hope.

In 1936, Sekerka replaced Ján Vician, who had been the editor in charge of *Slovenská rodina* during the first two editions. Since this change, Sekerka has not been involved as an author – the 1936 to 1938 editions do not contain any of his poetry, and he has finished preparing his crossword puzzles and a dictionary. As the last text in the pages of *Slovenská rodina*, he published a continuation (in issues 1 and 2) of the instructional text *Čabianska slovenčina* [The Csaba Slovak] [Sekerka, Slovenská rodina, 1936, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 2; Sekerka, Slovenská rodina, 1936, vol. 3, no. 2, p. 10], where he evaluated the development of the use of the Slovak language in Csaba. He dealt with the influence of the environment, the declining development of the use of the Slovak language, the social composition of the society and its future. He sees especially the layer of uneducated people as the bearers and maintainers of written Slovak: "*An interesting local phenomenon is that the language spoken by the "educated intelligentsia" of the town is purer in the outer parts of the town. The farmers, the peasants speak more clearly than the learned and differently than the craftsmen. We can say that the peasantry maintains the language in Čaba*" [Sekerka, Slovenská rodina, 1936, vol. 3, no. 2, p. 10].

Slovenská rodina captured Sekerka's work in all its diversity. His work published in its pages presents Sekerka as a poet, informant, storyteller, creator, compiler of a dictionary and composer of music for folk songs. In the background, it presents him as a publisher and a creator of a Slovak periodical in a Hungarian environment, with the clear aim of promoting all Slovak things.

Another printed platform in the environment of Slovaks living in Hungary, where folk poets published their work, was the periodical *Evanjelický hlásnik*, with the subtitle of a church-social, intra-missionary magazine. The first four editions were published in Pitvaroš under the editorial direction of Ján Šaguly. In 1934 the editorial office was moved to Békéská Čaba and the editor and publisher was the evangelical pastor Gustáv Szeberényi. The magazine was published until 1938. Despite the fact that it was not poor in literary works, only one work signed with Ján Sekerka's name can be found on its pages – *Čajový večierok* [The Tea Party] [Sekerka, Evanjelický hlásnik, 1934, vol. 4, no. 1 – 2, p. 13]. In a short report we learn about a pleasant meeting of the Evangelical youth of Csaba, at which the Slovak Evangelical Youth Choir, under the direction of choirmaster Ján Sekerka, sang religious songs.

Čabiansky kalendár (1920 – 1948) also offered an essential space for folk poets. The work of folk poets was present from the first issue of the calendar. It was often published anonymously or under a pseudonym, which made it difficult for literary critics and scholars to further analyse. From the 1930s onwards, the editors of *Čabiansky kalendár* began to publish the identity of the authors of the poems more frequently. Here, however, from the pen of Jan Sekerka, his annotated and textured folk songs from Csaba are published more often than any other of Sekerka's works. In 1932, together with Ján Bauka, he published the verses *Amerika, zen veľiká* [America, the great country] and *Sejú mak naopak* [They are sowing poppy in reverse]... (subtitled folk song from Čaba) [Sekerka, Čabiansky kalendár, 1932, vol. 13, p. 92]. From the formal arrangement of the verses it is not clear to the reader whether in both cases the poems are a notation of the words to the songs or separate poems. *Amerika, zen veľiká* reflects the current social situation of the bread emigration to America. The simple verse, using grouped rhyme, captures the feelings of a young man who has tried working in America and has returned home to a family who warmly welcomes him. The poem/song

Sejú mak naopak [They are sowing poppy in reverse] expresses the wishes of a young bride before her marriage. Both poems treat current themes of the people in Csaba and are easy to remember due to the rhyme.

In the 1933 *Čabiansky kalendár*, they published the Folk Song to commemorate the event that Csaba was bought from the landlords in 1846, the song *Ťažko je to kameňovi...* [It's hard for the stone], song *Vôľu niman, vôľu niman* [I don't have a will, I don't have a will]... a song by Ján Pely *Otčina* [The Fatherland] [Sekerka, Čabiansky kalendár, 1933, vol. 14, 96–98, 103]. In the 1934 edition, together with Bauka, they publish songs with musical notation *Zasiala som fajaiôčku, zasiala* [I sowed a violet, I sowed], [Sekerka, Čabiansky kalendár, 1934, vol. 15, p. 72] and in 1935 the song *Frajérvočka moja...* [My girlfriend] [Sekerka, Čabiansky kalendár, 1935, vol. 16, pp. 100 – 101]. In this year he also published a separate poem *Na Kereši* [On the Kereš river] [Sekerka, Čabiansky kalendár, 1935, vol. 16, p. 72]. In a typically simple formal construction, it captures the angry reactions of fishermen and passers-by when a motorboat passes on the Kereš River. There is also an instructive article on 'polivački' – a custom by which girls used water to draw ornaments on dusty surfaces [Sekerka, Čabiansky kalendár, 1935, vol. 16, p. 120].

Sekerka's varied works are also in the archive of the Compatriot's Museum of Matica slovenská in Martin. The most numerous legacy consists of a collection of Čaba folk songs (Hangjegyfűzet, 11 notebooks with sheet music and lyrics of Slovak songs; the first notebook contains songs by Ján Sekerka's grandmother). Sekerka made translations from Slovak into Hungarian for many of the songs. The archive preserves the Music Science in manuscript notes from 1934 – 1935. A special component are the notes of the superstitions and various ethnographic sketches from Csaba (e.g. ornaments from the "polievačky"). In a small notebook he recorded witty literal translations of Hungarian phraseologisms into Slovak (Magyar Szépirás) [The Compatriot's Museum of the Matica slovenská], fund [fund], Sekerka, Ján. Hungary].

Throughout Ján Sekerka's wide-ranging work, one can see connections between the Slovak and Hungarian worlds, which Sekerka interconnected in every possible way. His life and work form a network of syntheses that interpenetrate each other from different angles and generate a range of creative forms. In Sekerka's work, they included poems, music and song collection, informative articles, educational articles, crossword puzzles, periodical publishing, and dictionary work. In general, they constituted a means of expressing Slovakness in a foreign and international environment.

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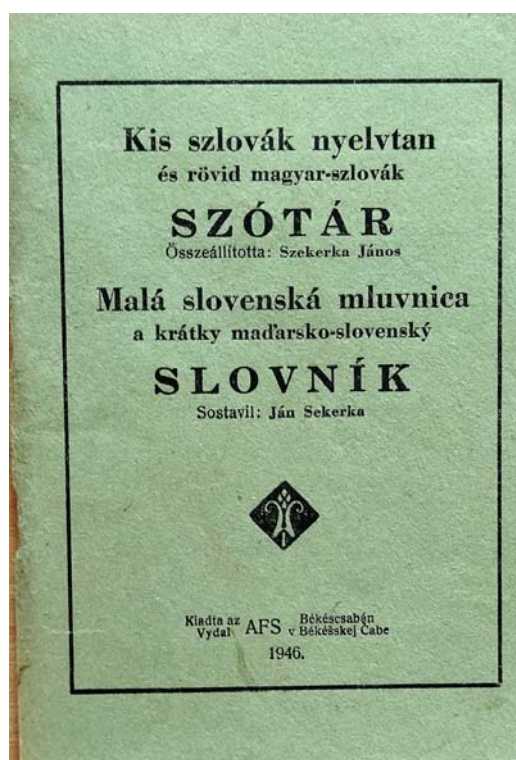
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PICTURE APPENDICES



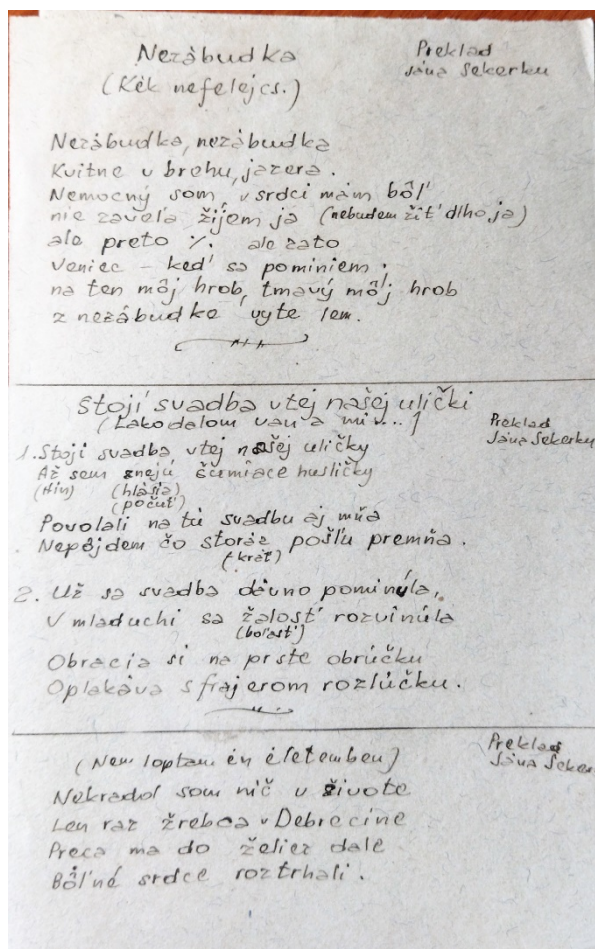
The editorial staff of the compatriot periodical Slovenská rodina [The Slovak family]: From left: Ján Gerči, Ondrej Kerepecký, Ján Sekerka, Juraj Bauko, Ján Pelý.

Source: Krajanské múzeum Matice slovenskej [The Compatriot's Museum of Matica slovenská], fond [fund], *Aktivity osobností slovenského pôvodu v Maďarsku* [The activities of personalities of Slovak origin in Hungary].



Title page of Sekerka's dictionary – Malá slovenská mluvnica a krátky maďarsko-slovenský slovník / Kis szlovák nyelvtan és rövid magyar-szlovák szótár, [A small Slovak grammar and a short Hungarian-Slovak dictionary]. Békésska Čaba: Antifašistický font Slovanov, 1946. 88 p. In Slovak and Hungarian.

Source: Krajanské múzeum Matice slovenskej [The Compatriot's Museum of Matica slovenská], fond [fund], Presídľovanie (materiály) [Resettlement (materials)]. Maďarsko [Hungary]. Sign: MA/CH, f.1, k.1



Manuscript translations by Ján Sekerka.

Source: Krajanské múzeum Matice slovenskej [The Compatriot's Museum of Matica slovenská], fond [fund], Sekerka, Ján. Maďarsko [Szekerka, János, Hungary]. In Slovak and Hungarian. Sign: AK 1/1987, incremental no.153/2001

Зузана Павелцова

ВЕНГЕРСКО-СЛОВАЦКИЙ СИНТЕЗ В ЖИЗНИ И ТВОРЧЕСТВЕ ЯНА СЕКЕРКИ

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Словаки населяли территорию современной Венгрии уже три столетия тому назад. Свою само-бытность они проявляли через художественное творчество, которое представлено также словацкой литературой южных областей Австро-Венгрии. Феномен словацких народных авторов – т. н. *írsmačov* [писмаков] родился в колибели венгерской среды. Первые литературные попытки словацких авторов находим в календарях и периодических изданиях соотечественников, которые стали наиболее доступным чтением для народа. *Ľabiansky kalendár* [Чабиянский календарь] создал условия для того, чтобы первые произведения этого вида могли появляться в 30-ых годах 20-го века. Народные авторы, часто без высшего образования, без хорошего владения словацким языком, прежде всего крестьяне и рабочие, адресовали свои идеи широким слоям населения при помощи простого поэтического языка и несложной поэтической формы. Эти авторы вышли из народа и для народа творили, поэтому незаменимы в литературе. Их творчество ориентировано на светские темы. К ним относились: народ, жизнь, сельское хозяйство, природа, любовь, недуги народа и труд. Одним из таких авторов южных областей Австро-Венгрии был Ян Секерка (1904–1984), по происхождению из Бекешской Чабы (по-венгерски *Békéscsaba*). Оттуда происходит и феномен народных авторов. Секерка по профессии был застройщиком-техником. Также он занимался собиранием народных песен и их нотной записью. На страницах Чабиянского календаря и периодической печати *Slovenská rodina* [Словацкая семья] и *Evanjelický hlásnik* [Евангелический глашатай], разбросаны его поэтические и публицистические произведения. Его творчество не было опубликовано ни в одном отдельном сборнике. Рукописные заметки находятся в архивном фонде



специализированного отдела Матицы словацкой – в Земляческом музее в Мартине. Творчество Секерки в венгерском и словацком языках в основном отражает злободневные общественные темы. Была опубликована *Malá slovenská mluvnica a krátky maďarsko-slovenský slovník* [Малая словацкая грамматика и краткий венгерско-словацкий словарь] как руководство по коммуникации в венгероязычной среде. Целью статьи является введение в историко-литературный процесс и интерпретирующий анализ преимущественно поэтического творчества Я. Секерки с особым акцентом на венгерский и словацкий контексты через призму прошлого, настоящего и будущего.

Ключевые слова: Словацкая литература в Венгрии, словацкие народные авторы, Ян Секерка

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