

The Influence of J.A. Comenius' Ideology on the Development of Slovak Pedagogy

Abstract. Pedagogical opinions of J. A. Comenius and his unique reflections on the improvement of the society represent one of the main standpoints for the development of humanist pedagogy around the world. His concept of education as well as his ideas on how to resolve many of the world's complex problems were at the time highly progressive and have influenced the society's way of thinking in Slovakia as well. The credit for the popularisation of his ideas goes to many notable personalities in Slovakia in the 19th and 20th centuries. His ideas are still tangible in the process of contemporary teaching of pedagogues, from primary schools all the way to universities.

Keywords: John Amos Comenius, educationary humanisation, stays in Slovakia, the heritage of Comenius' ideas in the early and in the second half of the 20th century, the birth of 'comeniology', the spread of Comenius' thoughts at present

On the 15th of November 2020, we commemorated the 350th anniversary of the death of John Amos Comenius (1592–1670), rightfully recognised as the most important educator of Czech and Czechoslovak contemporary history. Thanks to his revolutionary approach on education, he became a persona of equally high importance as Pestalozzi or Herbart. He prepared the road that many followed afterwards for the modernised view of teaching and ways to teach in general. John Amos Comenius was someone who was able to systematize and syntentise the Middle Age ancient pedagogy and modern pedagogy both in theory and practice¹. He was heavily involved in the reform of many scholar systems of European countries in the 17th century. His own ideology is a crucial base to today's view on education. To illustrate this point, Comenius' ideas are as important for pedagogy as the ones of René Descartes and Francis Bacon are for philosophy, or Nicolaus Copernicus' ideas are for astronomy².

¹ P. Floss, *Poselství Jana Amose Komenského současné Evropě*, Soliton, Brno 2005.

² J. Mátej a kol., *Dejiny českej a slovenskej pedagogiky*, SPN, Bratislava 1976.

J.A. Comenius was a true adventurer, the so-called globe-trotter. He was born in Moravia, and resided in Lesna in Poland, which became his second home. He used his second home to travel to other countries, such as to Sweden, England, Hungary, the Netherlands and other European countries³. He became famous in the United States as well, *where in the community of educated personalities, he became known thanks to his school books of latin language*⁴. Everywhere he came, his determination to express his ideas in the hope of changing the society was ever present: “knowledge is meant to serve to fix the conflicts between people and to make mankind happy on this earth”⁴.

The spread of Comenius’ ideas in Slovakia

The land where present-day Slovakia lies was historically an important and busy crossing, where many cultures met and shared and exchanged ideas. Great Moravian tradition is ever present in the consciousness of people even today and it endured despite a long lasting complicated position of Slavs in the Kingdom of Hungary⁵. The relationship of Czechoslovaks was strengthened for centuries thanks to geographical proximity and a bold border contact of the two parties. The initial good start of the relationship further improved after the founding of the University of Prague (1348). This is how the humanist tendencies started to spread, which changed the view of people on education. Later on, Czechoslovak relationship solidarity was again strengthened by the existence of Hussites on the Slovak territory. This is when a Hussite tradition was born, shared by the people and described by Czech author Alois Jirasek in his trilogy in the part ‘*Battle near Lucenec*’. As many historians agree⁶, the Czechs brought to the territory of the Upper Kingdom of Hungary a new, reformed religion in the articulate manner and also new socially impartial manners⁷. Various historians also confirm⁸ that there was an intense contact of the locals with the Czech people in the period after the Battle on the White mountain (1620) when the present-day territory of Czechia and Moravia became part of the ownership of the Habsburgs (1620–1918)⁹. Their motto was *Cuius regio, eius religio*, translated as ‘whose realm, their religion’. This attitude of the ruler led to the departure

³ J. Kumpera, *Jan Amos Komenský. Poutník na rozhraní věků*, Amonium servis a nakladatelství Svoboda, Ostrava 1992.

⁴ Z prác historika Jozefa Pšénáka O osobnosti Komenského in v predhovore E. Millerovej 2012 v *Spravodaji* – mimoriadnom čísle časopisu univerzity Komenského.

⁵ Š. Pasiar, *Dejiny výchovy dospelých na Slovensku*, Obzor, Bratislava 1975.

⁶ M. Brťková, a kol., *Kapitoly z dejín pedagogiky*, Pressent, Bratislava 2000.

⁷ Ibidem, s. 56.

⁸ Napr. J. Pšénák (1985), ale i M. Brťková (2000) a ďalší.

⁹ I. Čornejová, *Ticho pred búrkou. Náboženská situácia v českých krajinách na začiatku 17. storočia a vláda kráľa Mateja*, „Historická Revue“ roč. XXXI/II, 2020, s. 6-9.

people's mindset in Blatny Potok was not prepared just yet to accept the most advanced and progressive thoughts in pedagogy. Comenius came to Blatny Potok with a clear idea to establish *Illustris scholae idea* (Idea of Potok's bright school). The ideal that he sought after was founding of seven classroom Pansophic school. He wrote a theoretical program for this type of establishment, including the writing of school books in his writings *Schola pansophica* (School of Pansophia). He wanted to change the existing school to a Pansophic one. In reality, only the reform of the study of Latin came to life and there was an opening of only three language classes, that followed three basic latin schoolbooks. Comenius passed his draft of *The idea of od Potok's bright school* onto princess Zuzana Lorantfy and Sigismund Rakoczi right after his arrival. His school was meant to be full of light and to spread light to the outside world too. He called it bright (illustris). In his program draft, there is an idea of democratisation of education, meaning that he wanted to offer education not only to the nobles, but also to the common rural children.

He created a new scholar order and rules to abide by. Comenius also proposed a new reform of the school of Blatny Potok *Illustris Patakiniae Scholae idea*¹⁸. The contents of the reform covered both the process of how the teaching should look like in the school and how the personality of the director, teachers and children should look like as well as the daily functioning of school and timetable. Comenius explained how the teaching process should be and he did not even forget to mention the need to give children time for relaxing and fun. He intended to also seize the opportunity that was given to him and created School academy as an exemplar Pansophic school¹⁹. Next, he created school books that would ease the teaching process, such as *teaching by play or School on the stage* (*Schola ludus*), he wrote *All-knowing school* (*Schola pansophica*). The most important book in pedagogy was written in this period as well: *Visible world in pictures* (*Orbis sensualium pictus*), known shortly as *Orbis pictus*, that was meant to motivate children to study. It was the first school book with pictures in the world that was later translated into eleven world languages²⁰. Children of the national schools used this book to study for many generations not only in Europe, but around the world.

He also created many other pieces and gave speeches on many inspirational lectures and argumentative talks such as *Idea of Bright Potok's school*, *On struggles of Pansophistic study*, *How to wisely use books, main instrument of studying*, *Latin school, divided into three parts*, *On obstacles of Pansophistic study*, *Praise on the right method*, *Usefulness of the correct nomenclature of things*, *Fortius alive again or how to get rid of the laziness in schools*, *Rules of virtuousness*²¹.

¹⁸ *Slovenský bibliografický slovník*, SPN, Bratislava 1989, s. 152.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ J. Váňa a kol., *Dejiny pedagogiky*, SPN, Bratislava 1971. Taktiež D. Macháčík a kol., *Vybrané kapitoly z dejín pedagogiky*, Žilina, Edis 2007.

²¹ J. Pšenák. *Jan Amos Komenský*, Martin, Matica slovenská 1991.

The works by Potok are a reflection of Comenius' grand pedagogic and socio-politologic vision. In that time period, Comenius was finishing his most complex work – *The general briefing on correction of human matters* and during his stay in the Kingdom of Hungary he continued working on his reflections on universal correction. This is confirmed in his works such as *The secret speech of Nathan to David* and *The most secret speech*.

His idea of cultural and societal development of the Kingdom of Hungary and the other parts of Europe laid in Pansophistic education through the spread of books, establishment of modern schools and a peaceful committee of scientists. There is no doubt that Comenius influenced the whole educational system of his time period with his ideas and especially *school books*²². It is worth mentioning that despite his determination and focus, he did not manage to fulfill all of his goals as a representative of Blatny Potok's Pansophistic school. The reason was that he faced disagreement and lack of understanding from the local teachers and parents of children. Since the death of prince (1652), the conditions for realisation of his goals were only getting worse. He found himself disappointed in his political ideals and that is why he decided, reacting as well to the request of Czech exile in Poland, to come back to Lesna in Poland in 1654²³. In the period from 1650 to 1654, Comenius travelled to Slovakia four times due to his travels to Transylvania. Apart from travels for personal reasons, since he had a close relationship to many Slovak cities such as Puchov thanks to his daughter, he traveled to Blatny Potok through Skalica, Trnava, Púchov, Levoča and Prešov²⁴. He visited the Church of Brethren and was very interested in the local affairs. His relation was especially profound with cities in Eastern Slovakia. On the way to Sarospatak, Comenius was greeted by dignitaries of Prešov and Levoča. During his stay in Blatny Potok, Comenius kept in touch with the community in Prešov and was influencing the local education. The school system was not influenced only by his school books, but also new methods of teaching that were reflected in the establishment of local theater. Between the years 1650 and 1651, the inhabitants of Prešov came up with an idea to invite J. Amos Comenius to a free position of chancellor of Prešov's evagelic city university. It was mainly Juraj Curiani and Jan Santorius that were doing their best to convince Comenius to accept this offer at one of the most prestigious universities of the time in Eastern Slovakia. Because of the disapproval and objection of the Prešov's city council that was caused by anti – reformist activities, they were not successful in securing this role for Comenius. The city's municipality did not agree with him becoming a chancellor *due to their beliefs*. This resulted into Jan Mathaeides's election as chancellor instead.

²² A. Reble. *Dejiny pedagogiky*, SPN, Bratislava 1995, s. 89.

²³ Bližšie T. Srogoň a kol. 1986, T. Kasper, D. Kasperová, op. cit.

²⁴ *Pedagogická encyklopédia Slovenska*, Bratislava 1984, s. 427.

However, the influence of Comenius persisted as Jan Mathaeides worked with schools books and methods created by Comenius²⁵. In some cities in Eastern Slovakia, such as Prešov or Levoča, Latin schools were reformed on the basis of Comenius' ideas. Later on, Elias Ladiver, Comenius' student was working at the school in Blatny Potok. In the second half of the 17th century, Comenius' work was one of the most read one among the Slovak intelligence²⁶.

The interest of Slovak scholars in Comenius manifested itself in the 17th century. In the second half of the 17th century, Comenius' pedagogical works were among the most widely read in the Slovak intelligence. The book by J. Rezik and S. Matthaedics *Gymnaziologie* provides thorough information about the expansion and hobby of his textbooks *Janua Linguarum reserata and Vestibulum* in Slovakia in the 17th century. Thanks to D. Sinapia-Hočíčka and J. Bubenka, *Orbis sensualium pictus* (Latin-German-Hungarian-Czech text) was published in Levoča in 1685 by Comenius²⁷.

It was mostly Comenius's idea of democratic thoughts with the ambition of education in the native language that was attractive for nationally oriented Slovaks. However, the teaching in native language was established only after Tereziáno-Josephine reforms. Considering the conditions in Slovakia, it was a huge progress to be able to tolerate the language of people and use it for teaching as well. Jozef II. allowed even to protestants to build churches²⁸, who could become more active in the cultural life thanks to higher tolerance. This important time period of the Enlightenment is also known as revival age. The influence of Comenius in the 18th century in Slovakia is especially noticeable in the works of G. Balašovic, J. Ambrózy, B.P. Červenák, G. Fabry, A.F. Kolár, M. Bel, S. Tešedík and others²⁹.

Among Slovak celebrities, it was *Matej Bel* (1684–1749) that was one of the first to work both theoretically and in practice on developing Comenius' humanist ideas. He improved high school of Banská Bystrica and reformed Latin evangelical school in Bratislava. Bel was a follower of pietism and a pioneer of realism in pedagogy. He, just like Comenius, paid a lot of attention to the teaching of foreign languages, with the focus on native language³⁰. He wanted the Latin language to be taught on the basis of native language. His plan was also to create an interest to learn in the older children and implement plays in the younger classes. He got close to the didactic of J.A. Comenius, although he did not use his school books. Instead, Bel wrote a new school book of Latin grammar. He contributed to the progress of the school by implementing a new school order that inclu-

²⁵ I. Kominarec, M. Repel', *Prešovské evanjelické kolégium*, Grafotlač, Prešov 2003.

²⁶ Bližšie Š. Pasiar, *Dejiny výchovy dospelých na Slovensku*, Obzor, Bratislava 1975.

²⁷ J. Rezik, S. Matthaedics, *Gymnaziológia*, SPN, Bratislava 1971, s. 42-43.

²⁸ Š. Pasiar, *Dejiny výchovy dospelých na Slovensku*, Obzor, Bratislava 1975, s. 36.

²⁹ *Pedagogická encyklopédia Slovenska*, 1/A-O, SAV, Bratislava 1984, op. cit.

³⁰ J. Váňa, *Dejiny pedagogiky pre pedagogické školy, vyššie pedagogické školy a vysoké školy pedagogické*, SPN, Bratislava 1960.

ded organisational structure of the school, teaching plan, method of teaching as well as general discipline. Similarly to Comenius, Bel also felt the importance of taking into consideration the age of children and changing the teaching methods accordingly. When it came to teaching Latin, he preferred the Dictionary of Krištof Cellario, which he translated into the Hungarian language and the Slovak language as well for the needs of young people³¹.

He wrote (1717) a school book called *Grammatica facilitati restituta* (Grammar in the simpler way) that was based on Cellaria. In the introduction of the book, he refuses the Latin schools books of Comenius and recommends Cellaria as the alternative. He prepared for the print school book of Cellaria called *Liber memorialis probatae et exercitate latinitatis* (1719). He also wrote a school book for the German language *Institutiones linguae germanicae* (Basics of German language), 1718 and Hungarian school book *Der ungarische Sprachmeister oder kurze Anweisung zu der ungarischen Sprachmeister* (The mastery of the Hungarian language or also a short tutorial for mastering of the Hungarian language), 1720. He also published through his own means in Levoča (1717) *Rhetoricas Veteris et Novae Praecepta* (Old and new rules of rhetoric).

He thoroughly applied Comenius' pedagogic rule of "lingual-factual parallelism of words and matters, teaching words along with discovering the objective reality". The pinnacle of his scientific career was four volume work *Notitia Hungariae novae historico-geographica* (Historical and geographical knowledge New-Age Kingdom of Hungary), 1735–1742. The work is a result of the cooperation of students, teachers and scholars from whole Kingdom of Hungary. He especially covered in his writing Slovaks as ancestors of Great Moravia.

One of the critics of conditions in the Kingdom of Hungary was also *Juraj Fándly* (1750–1811), Slovak Evangelical priest, the founder of specialised education in the Kingdom of Hungary, a progressive pedagogue, writer, polyhistor and philanthropist. He built his pedagogical and social work on premises of Comenius and German philanthropists in the spirit of the Enlightenment. Fándly wanted to raise the education of the Kingdom of Hungary to the level of other European countries. He supported the Enlightenment's reformism. Fándly, similarly to Comenius, spread the ideas of "century of light and reason" and criticized the societal issues. He saw the unfair position of poor people. He saw the solution in education of everyone. He connected the Enlightenment's pedagogy with the humanist pedagogy and ideas of changing scholastics in schools.

Samuel Tešedík (1742–1880), belonged to the people who developed ideas of Comenius in the Slovak cultural environment. He was an acclaimed reformist and just like Comenius, he obtained an offer from Catherine II to reform Russia. He expressed his ideas on the reform of education, upbringing and pedagogy in the work *Farmer in the Kingdom of Hungary, who is he and who he should become* (1780). For the needs of education, he wrote a school book *Little book for reading and for first beginnings of educating schools' children* (1780). *Daniel Lehocký* (1759–1840) also just like Comenius fought for the idea of unified edu-

³¹ J. Rezik, S. Matthaecides, *Gymnaziológia*, SPN, Bratislava 1971, s. 47.

cation for all the children, nonetheless their social background or gender. Instead of the Latin language he recommended modern languages, but in his opinion, the teaching languages should be the native language of the children. J. Kollár (1793–1852), just like Comenius, is a representative of realism in pedagogy. He highlighted the importance of real subjects in the teaching at secondary schools. He also had his critical ideas – he did not agree with the fact that the Latin language should be used in school books, which was the opinion of A.F. Kollar and of M. Bel as well³².

The mainstream of the Slovak national movement was formed in the 1930's and 1940's, especially at the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava, where the society *Spolocnosť cesko-slovanska* and *Vzajomnosť* operated. The representative of evangelical intelligence – Ľudovít Štúr (1815–1856), like J.A. Comenius, helped to spread and consolidate the ideas of humanism in society³³, by promoting education in the native language, especially in the most famous work *Narečja slovensko, alebo potreba písania v tomto nareci*.

As a proponent of using intelligible speech, he was a supporter of using the Czech language, and only later he was inclined to the idea of legalizing his own language³⁴. His personality and humanistic views became the inspiration for many followers of Štúr, to whom Comenius' views were close, especially the idea of humanism, the idea of improving a man through education, awakening of national awareness through love for native language and care about national and higher education, e.g. B.P. Cervenak³⁵. As the ideological leader of the revolutionary movement, he opposed national oppression and promoted the idea of Slavic reciprocity. From 1853, Štúr worked on the political document *Slovanstvo a svet budúcnosti*, which was published after his death³⁶.

Comenius' humanistic ideas in pedagogical practice were also spread by several teachers of the first three Slovak grammar schools in Revúca (1862–1874), in Klastor pod Znievom (1869–1874) and in Turčiansky Sv. Martin (1867–1867). Samuel Ormis considered Comenius to be the father of pedagogy and often referred to him in his work *Výchovoveda pre seminaristov a rodicov*. The period of the Slovak revival at the end of the 19th century can be boldly called the century of the *Comenius renaissance in Slovak pedagogy*³⁷. Teachers and the general public later became acquainted with Comenius' works, mainly through magazines. His work was also well received in literary art³⁸.

³² Š. Pasiar, *Dejiny výchovy dospelých na Slovensku*, Obzor, Bratislava 1975.

³³ E. Bakoš, *Ľudovít Štúr ako vychovávateľ a bojovník za slovenskú školu*, UK, Bratislava 1957.

³⁴ E. Kralčák a kol. *Ľudovít Štúr. Jazykovedné dielo*, 2. vyd. Nitra, UKF, 2015.

³⁵ *Pedagogická encyklopédia Slovenska*, op. cit., s. 424.

³⁶ Š. Pasiar, *Dejiny výchovy dospelých na Slovensku*, Obzor, Bratislava 1975.

³⁷ J. Pšenák, *Ohlasy Komenského*, 2008, <https://uniba.sk/o-univerzite/historia/j-a-komensky/zivot-a-dielo-j-a-komenskeho/ohlas-diela>.

³⁸ Among the well-known personalities of Slovak culture, it was mainly nationally oriented writers. The first poem about Comenius was written by A. Sládkovič. S.H. Vajanský, P.O. Hviezdoslav and S.B. Hroboň also paid attention to him. They wrote celebratory songs about Komenský.

The origin of comeniology as a science

A special place in the history of pedagogical theories is occupied by pedagogical works dealing with the work of Jan Amos Comenius. J.A. Comenius' extensive work, which represents approximately 200 documents, books and treatises, has later become a source of systematic research in several countries around the world. The subject of comeniology research is to collect and publish and interpret an extensive work of Comenius. Although comeniology mostly falls within the framework of the historiography of pedagogy, it is a relatively autonomous interdisciplinary field³⁹. Historians, linguists, and historians of pedagogy work in this field. At present, most experts are concentrated at the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic in Prague, but specialists on comeniology specialists work in many countries such as Germany, Norway, the USA and Japan⁴⁰. Comeniology has the strongest representation in the Czech Republic. The first modern biography of Comenius' biography was written by *František Palacký* (1829), which was published under the title *Život Jana Amose Komenskeho* in the third volume of the 3rd year of the magazine *Casopis ceskeho muzea*. When he was writing biography, he drew from Comenius' estate and had a limited number of sources, he did not have many primary sources available, as several of Comenius' works were found much later, some in the 20th century, perhaps therefore the study had only 46 pages⁴¹.

The origin of Slovak comeniology

Comenius' pedagogical realism has also given its special seal to the whole development of pedagogical thinking in Slovakia. In the second half of the 19th century, modern comeniology emerged in Slovakia as a result of the systematic scientific interest of several experts in Comenius' work. Given such a significant influence, it is not surprising that at the end of the 19th century, Slovakia had a world-class comeniologist who became one of the founders of world comeniology *Jan Radomil Kvačala* (1862–1934), who for his works on Comenius became famous not only in Europe but also in the world. He was born in Petrovec, in present-day Serbia, and from a young age, already during his studies at the Evangelical Theological Academy in Bratislava showed interest in the work of J.A. Comenius. Later in 1886, he studied at the University of Leipzig, where he wrote and defended his dissertation *Über J.A. Comenius Philosophie insbesondere Physik*, i.e.⁴². In 1892, on the 300th anniversary of the birth of J.A. Comenius, he attracted attention with the work *Johann Amos Comenius. Sein leben und seine Schriften* – John Amos Comenius' life and work (1892, Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna), in which he substan-

³⁹ J. Průcha, *Přehled pedagogiky*, 2. aktualizované vydanie, Portál, Praha 2006.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, s. 3.

⁴¹ Many works by Comenius were found much later, some of them in the 20th century.

⁴² M. Brtková a kol., *Kapitoly z dejin pedagogiky*, Pressent, Bratislava 2000.

tially expanded the knowledge about Comenius at the time. The work evoked a positive response throughout the cultural world⁴³. Kvačala's stay in Russia (1893–1920) was the most productive period of his scientific activity. The results of several years of scientific work on Comenius were processed in the collection of sources of Comenius' correspondence (Volume I in 1898, Volume II in 1902), in which he analyzed his contact with the outside world and Comenius' work in the field of restoration of human affairs – the work was titled – The Correspondence of J.A. Comenius. He published these volumes in an amended version with the addition of other material under the title *Comenius' pedagogical reform in Germany until the end of the 17th century*⁴⁴. The conclusion of the publication of source material related to Comenius and his influence on German education is *Analecta Comenius*, which was published in Berlin in 1909. In 1905, the Central Association of Czech Teachers' Unions in Moravia undertook to publish *Veskere spisy Jana Amose Komenskeho* and magazine *Archiv pro badani o zivote a spisech J.A. Komenskeho* (The Complete Writings of John Amos Comenius and the magazine Archive for research on the life and writings of J.A. Comenius). J.R. Kvačala took part in this event and from 1910, he worked as the editor-in-chief of *Veskere spisy Jana Amose Komenskeho*. From 1905, Kvačala began new research on the Italian Renaissance thinker and teacher Thomas Campanella, to whom he attributed the primacy in the question of freedom and clarity in pedagogy⁴⁵. The study *Breakthroughs in the Faith of Comenius and Miczkiewicz* (1907) is also of comparative nature⁴⁶. In 1913 he published the work on J.A. Comenius in the Slovak language which was titled *Comenius, jeho osobnost a jeho sustava vedy pedagogickej*. The series of articles, which he published in magazine *Slovenske Pohľady* was also published in books, in Slovak, Czech and German⁴⁷. Kvačala did not stop working even after returning from a 27-year stay from Russia to Slovakia. During this period he devoted himself to the influence of J.A. Comenius on contemporary world teachers such as J. Dewey, G. Richard, J. Natorp and others. Kvačala's extensive works analyzing Comenius' work have been published in many languages in many countries. Among other important Slovak teachers who followed scientific work of J. Kvačala were Slovak pedagogues such as J. Cecetka, F. Karsai, L. Bakos, J. Mikles, J. Matej, J. Schubert, A. Cuma, M. Hamada, F. Kalesny, I. Kiss, L. Bernat, J. Psenak and others. These Slovak researchers and university teachers contributed to the fact that the pedagogical heritage of J.A. Comenius was developed and promoted in Slovakia and also contributed to the fact that the spiritual heri-

⁴³ As M. Brťková (2000, p. 175) describes: American Minister of Education invited a young Slovak scientist for the position of one of the vice-presidents of *The International Congress in Education* in Chicago in 1893. For this work, Evangelical Theological Faculty of the University of Vienna honored him with a doctorate in theology. In 1893, the rector of the University of Jurjev, Anton Budilovič invited him for the position of a Professor to the local Evangelical Theological University (for more information, see M. Brťková et al., 2000, p. 175).

⁴⁴ Podľa M. Brťkovej (2000) rukopisy Komenského spracoval a vydal Jurjev v roku 1903 a v 1904.

⁴⁵ M. Brťková, a kol., *Kapitoly z dejín pedagogiky*, Present, Bratislava 2000.

⁴⁶ *Slovenský biografický slovník* III, zväzok K-L, s. 323.

⁴⁷ M. Brťková a kol., *Kapitoly...*, op. cit.

tage of Comenius spread and developed in Slovakia⁴⁸. In the middle of the 20th century, J. Cecetka continued the work of Kvačala.

Juraj Cecetka (1907–1983) is considered to be one of the most prominent personalities of Slovak pedagogy. In 1929 he graduated from the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague. In the years before the Second World War, he began publishing scientific works related to pedagogy, such as *Slovenske evanjelicke patronatne gymnazium v Turcianskom Svatom Martine, Zo slovenskej pedagogiky, Prirucny pedagogicky lexikon I., II., Pedagogika and Uvod do vseobecnej pedagogiky*, which created base for modern slovak pedagogy. He later researched the sociological aspects of pedagogy. From these pedagogical journals, *Pedagogicky zbornik* presented the highest theoretical level and the journal was edited by Juraj Cecetka⁴⁹. Even during the Second World War, during the existence of the Slovak state, progressive Slovak teachers recognized the legacy of J. Amos Comenius, as evidenced by several articles published in 1942 in the magazines *Pedagogicky zbornik* and *Evanjelicky ucitel*⁵⁰.

Ján Mikleš (1911–1971) holds a special place in the context of Slovak authors. His work points out to the pedagogical traditions of the Banská Bystrica school with the spreading ideas of J.A. Comenius in Slovakia (Pšenák, *ibidem*). The first result was the scientific study: *Izak Caban, slovensky atomista. Historicke prostredie Cabanovej filozofie*. Later he expanded this issue and processed it into a monograph, which he defended in 1947 as a rigorous thesis and obtained academic title of PhDr. A year later, the work was published in the form of a book. In later years, he returns to this issue and compares the identity of the results of Caban's work with the work of J.A. Comenius. Mikleš was the first to draw attention to Jan Duchon, the promoter of material encyclopedism of the first half of the 17th century in the field of education in Slovakia, who was the first rector of Banská Bystrica grammar school from the ranks of Slovaks⁵¹. The content of the already mentioned J. Mikles' studies with his innovative approach significantly enriched Slovak comeniology⁵². Comenius's ideas also influenced the internal regulations of the first teacher training procedures. According to J. Mikleš, the laws in many places almost literally quote Comenius, even though they do not mention his name.

From a historical point of view, he appreciated the importance of these laws mainly because they expressed the „*desire of teachers for systematic education*“, encouraged teachers to consult and exchange pedagogical experience and they were the basis for expressing views on the teacher's personality. It is indisputable that Mikles with his heuristical and scientific work creatively developed all aspects as the focus of his interest was mainly on a distant history of Slovak education and pedagogy with a strong focus on comeniological

⁴⁸ J. Pšenák a kol., 2011.

⁴⁹ J. Mátej a kol., *Dejiny českej a slovenskej pedagogiky*, SPN, Bratislava 1976.

⁵⁰ T. Srogoň a kol., *Dejiny školstva a pedagogiky*, SPN, Bratislava 1981, s. 285.

⁵¹ P. Martuliak, *Prof. PhDr. Ján Mikleš, CSc. pedagóg, filozof, historik*, „Acta Historica Neosoliensia“, 17/2014, s. 329–334.

⁵² D. Kováčiková, E. Turanská, *Kapitoly zo všeobecnej pedagogiky a dejín školstva a pedagogiky*, Zvolen, Ústav pre výchovu a vzdelávanie pracovníkov, LVH SR. 1999, 70 s.

issues⁵³. The results of his research and translation activities are a valuable contribution to the Slovak history of education and pedagogy and Slovak comeniology.

The first document that was published in Slovakia after World War II, after 1945 in the Slovak language, was the *Labyrinth sveta a raj srdca* (1952). In 1954, Comenius' fundamental pedagogical work *Velka didaktika* was published. It was translated from Latin into the Slovak language by Miloslav Okal⁵⁴. In the period from 1956 to 1959, Slovak pedagogical publishing house in Bratislava published *Vybrané spisy II* (1956), *Vybrané spisy III* (1957) and *Vybrané spisy IV* (1958). In 1958, *Orbis sensualium pictus quadrilinguis* was published as a photolithographic preprint of his four-language edition (Latin, German, Hungarian and Czech), published in Levoča in 1685. *Orbis sensualius pictus* also became a popular textbook in Slovakia and was used for more than 150 years and during this period it was published in Levoča and Bratislava in thirteen editions.

In 1965, in the Slovak translation by E. Kettner, *Informatorium školy materskej* was published for the needs of pupils of pedagogical schools and for the education of kindergarten teachers⁵⁵. This work was published in the jubilee year of the 300th anniversary of Comenius' death (1970), translated by Jozef Mistrik, Comenius University. Due to socialist censorship, this issue contained only 11 chapters, as religious education was omitted. This was corrected only in the 1991 edition of *Informatorium školy materskej*, which was translated by M. Novacka with a preface by M. Hamada⁵⁶.

Slovakia has also participated with dignity in the world celebrations of the 400th anniversary of the birth of John Amos Comenius. This anniversary was an opportunity for balancing comeniological research and also for publishing several works by Comenius (1992). Scientific works such as *Velka didaktika*, *Vsevychova*, *Vyber z potockých spisov a reci Jana Amosa Komenskeho*, *Gentis felicitas*, *Informatorium školy materskej*, *Predpisy pre dobre organizovanu skolu* acquainted readers in Slovakia with the work and life of this great pedagogue, with his social, pedagogical views and as such had an extended influence on new generations of teachers and Slovak pedagogy⁵⁷.

University workplaces in Slovakia were represented by prominent personalities (such as František Karšai) who most significantly developed comeniology in Slovakia. Comeniological research conducted in Prešov was represented mainly by Andrej Cuma. Frantisek Karsai (1918–1975) was based for a long time at the University of Prešov. The focus of his work was on the research of a distant history of Slovak education and pedagogy, especially

⁵³ Bližšie J. Pšenák, *Ohlasy Komenského*, 2008, Available at: <https://uniba.sk/o-univerzite/historia/j-a-komensky/zivot-a-dielo-j-a-komenskeho/ohlas-diela/>.

⁵⁴ Ibidem.

⁵⁵ This short document intended for parents was published in 1632, it consists of 12 chapters and explains the importance of education in pre-school age. Unlike Plato, Comenius recommended that children under the age of 6, should be educated in family. Originally, it was not possible to publish the document in the Czech language and the document was published in Polish, German and Latin.

⁵⁶ J.A. Komenský, *Informatorium školy mateřské* (translated by M. Novacká), SPN, Bratislava 1991.

⁵⁷ See J. Pšenák, *Ohlasy Komenského*, op. cit.

of comeniological issues, Comenius' relationship to the history of Prešov and education in eastern Slovakia. He was the editor of anthologies of members of the Prešov Department of Pedagogy and anthologies of comeniological scientific events, he was a member of the editorial board of the CSAV for the publication of works by J.A. Comenius⁵⁸. He published two important monographs about Comenius and his relationship to Slovakia – the works are titled *Stupenci J.A. Komenskeho v politických a školských dejinách Prešova* (1965) and *Comenius a Slovensko* (1970). One of the important comeniologists of the Prešov school, who also played a role in the process of expansion of the knowledge base about Comenius, was Andrej Čuma (1927–1998). In his scientific work, he focused on the pedagogical heritage of J.A. Comenius in Russia, the history of Ukrainian education in Slovakia⁵⁹. He is the author of the publication *Ukrajinske školstvo v Zakarpatsku a na východnom Slovensku* (Prešov 1967), which was published in the Ukrainian language and *Jan Amos Comenius, a ruska škola* (Bratislava 1976), which was published in the Russian language⁶⁰.

Recent comeniological research conducted in Bratislava was represented by Jozef Matej (1923–1987), a notable figure in Slovak pedagogical science. He compiled the biography of J. Kvačala, the first Slovak comeniologist. He devoted himself to the history of Slovak education and pedagogy, leading a team that elaborated on the recent history of Slovak pedagogy (1976). His successor is Jozef Pšenák (born 1939), who worked at the secondary pedagogical school in Modra and he worked as a professor of the history of education and pedagogy at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University in Bratislava for a significant period of time. For a time, he also worked at the Catholic University in Ružomberok and at the end of his academic career he lectured at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Žilina in Žilina. In Ružomberok, he published the work *Slovenská škola a pedagogika 20. storočia* (2011). In the course of active pedagogical activities, he significantly contributed to the publication of several works by J.A. Comenius, wrote several speeches on the re-publication of Comenius' works, organized an important conference on the anniversary of John Amos Comenius, with the participation of representatives of comeniology from all around the world.

International scientific conferences of university workplaces in Slovakia as a place for the cultivation of comeniology and the exchange of knowledge of comeniologists. The activities of the Faculty of Arts of UPJS in Prešov, where the international conference *Jan Amos Comenius a Slovensko* took place in 1970 need to be positively evaluated. For the first time, his legacy was evaluated in relation to Slovakia. Other comeniological conferences in Prešov took place in 1972, 1975, 1980. One of the most important comeniological

⁵⁸ Pozri *Slovenský biografický slovník* III, Zväzok K–L, s. 45.

⁵⁹ E. Lukáč, *Komeniologická problematika v aktivitách prof. PhDr. A. Čumu*, CSc. „Historicko-pedagogické fórum“, internetový časopis pre dejiny pedagogiky a školské muzejníctvo. Bratislava, 1/14, (roč. III.), 2014, s. 44.

⁶⁰ *Pedagogická encyklopédia Slovenska*, op. cit., s. 143.

conferences at the Comenius University was the international conference *De rerum humanarum emendatione consultatio catholica and the legacy of Jan Amos Comenius for the third millennium* held on 13th–14th November 2000. Comenius University in Bratislava organized this scientific event on the occasion of the 330th anniversary of the death of the teacher of nations in order to analyze the various parts of *Vseobecna porada*. The contribution of the conference was a critical alignment with the response to the Czech translation of *Vseobecna porada* (1992). The consultation must be interpreted in the context of the time on the basis of knowledge of the history of philosophy in the 16th-17th centuries. The ideas expressed in the individual works of Comenius' *Porada* speak to the professional public as well as to wider Slovak public till present day. They indicate the direction, the starting points of personal and social labyrinths. International understanding and the life of people around the world in peace is a value that the entire world community strives for.

Conclusion

Comenius became known relatively quickly in the German-speaking countries, but he achieved disproportionately greater success and general recognition in the Slavic cultural framework, which persists in the consciousness of societies to the present day. The intellectual wealth of Comenius' work became a permanent part of Slovak culture. It is astonishing that the thoughts of a man born in the 16th century are still so alive and relevant. J. A. Comenius's ideas about the teaching process, the organization of school work, or education are still used in Slovak schools⁶¹. The fact that in his works there are very few ideas we can disagree with, is sufficient proof that Comenius rightly deserves the name „father of modern pedagogy“. Modern information technologies also contributed to making J.A. Comenius's work accessible to the general public. The Slovak National Library in Martin has in its archives several rare works of Comenius, which were digitized for the general public, thus several rare works of J.A. Comenius reached the general public. These new possibilities of edification help to keep alive the legacy of John Amos Comenius, and they are available to the teaching and general public. Comenius was and still is a recognized personality in Slovakia. This is also evidenced by the fact that the most significant Slovak university, which is located in Bratislava, bears his name. According to J. Karsai (1970), few of the leading Czech thinkers stand as close to Slovaks by their origins as the Teacher of the nations John Amos Comenius. At present, it is already known that his family name was Seges and his ancestors immigrated to Moravian Slovakia from Slovakia. Over the course of three centuries, Slovak educators have shown a great interest in the work of the Teacher of the nations and developed his pedagogical legacy, and up to present, they worship his ideas.

⁶¹ J. Pšenák, *Jan Amos Komenský a Slovensko. K 400...*, op. cit.