



Research Group on Slavic Cultures in the Habsburg Monarchy
at the Institute of Western and Southern Slavic Studies, University of Warsaw

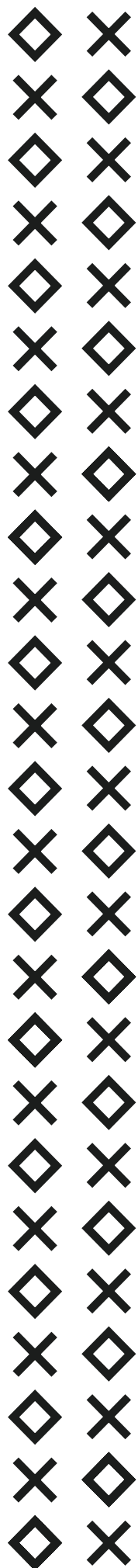
T. Manteuffel Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences

International Cultural Centre in Krakow

Invite to an international conference:

Budapest – a city of Slavs? (1781–1920)

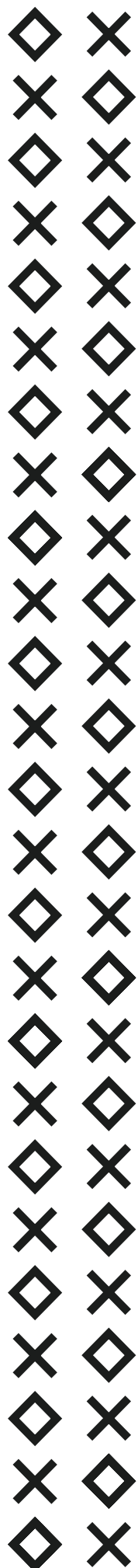
Krakow, 25–26 September 2025



Administratively united in 1873, Budapest transformed quickly into a modern urban agglomeration, entering into a symbolic struggle with the imperial Habsburg Vienna. In the space of this city, which boasts a fascinating genealogy and a historically diverse social fabric, elements of Hungarian/Magyar and non-Hungarian backgrounds, particularly Slavic, have interacted with varying degrees of intensity throughout the centuries. In the old districts of Buda and Pest, one can still find numerous reminiscences of the presence and influence of Slavs: Slovaks, Serbs, Croatians, Slovenes, Ruthenians and Poles. Many of them treated Budapest to a varying degree as their own space: a place for living and education, a ground for professional and social activity and institutional representation, or even a battlefield.

To realize the crucial role of Budapest for Slavs – for particular ethnic groups or the Slavdom as an entire supranational imagined community – it is fair to mention that for thirty years, it was home for the influential apologist of Slavdom, Ján Kollár – here his concept of Slavic reciprocity matured. Here, another enthusiast of the South Slavic community, Ljudevit Gaj, was formed. Not without reason, there is also a monument to the Polish officer Józef Bem in the city.

For Buda/Pest/Budapest was for many an important urban centre (for some – periodically the most important); we intend to seek out the possibility of perceiving Budapest as a "dialectical city" whose factual cultural meaning crystallized at the interface between the ethnic forces that appeared in it. Budapest grew out of not only ethnically Magyar fabric; its civilizational significance extends far beyond Hungarian history and collective memory. The Slavic influences woven into its history, geography, and narratives allow us to regard Budapest as a city that also reflects Slavic heritage. This uneasy co-existence of ethnic groups inhabiting this ancient triple city defined its inner structure and cultural significance. For these reasons, we are interested in perspectives on Budapest that may help unsettle historiographic clichés tightened by the Magyar discourse. One of the useful tools will be, among others, micro-historical arguments and cultural-historical and social-historical research perspectives.



We want to trace the presence of Slavs in Buda/Pest/Budapest and their impact on the form and cultural significance of the city within the time frame confined to the date of the signing of the tolerance edict by Joseph II and the Treaty of Trianon, as well as classifying our reflections into the following thematic blocks:

- The presence of Slavs in the space of Budapest – Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, Ruthenians, Poles – as well as non-Slavs; relations between ethnic groups living in Budapest.
- The city as a communication structure and media melting pot; networking of Budapest with other cities inhabited by Slavs.
- Budapest as a labor market, a forge of professional elites (administrative, political etc.), a concentration of various institutions, and a space for the visibility of social classes, minorities (ethnic, national, religious, social) and migrants.
- Budapest as a space of everyday practices and identifications for Slavs, a scene of occasional practices, mental maps, and specific urban mythologies created by Slavic inhabitants.
- Cultures of memory created in Budapest by non-Hungarian local communities, Slavic commemoration policies; transformations of the city's public space to meet the needs of different groups of its inhabitants.
- Internal vs external portrait of Budapest: the city in the eyes of permanent and seasonal residents and travelers.

The conference will result in a multi-author monograph in English, subject to a peer-review procedure.

The deadline for submitting proposals (abstract of 200-300 words and a short CV in Polish or English) is 31 May 2025 to the following address: habsburgstudies@uw.edu.pl. Conference participants will be informed about the acceptance of their papers by 30 June 2025.

**Organizing institutions:**

Research Group on Slavic Cultures in the Habsburg Monarchy

<http://uwhabzburgstudies.uw.edu.pl/>

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International Cultural Centre in Krakow

Venue:

„Pod Kruki” House,
Rynek Główny 25, Krakow

Conference languages:

Polish, English

There are no conference fees.



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