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JURAJ ČEČETKA AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO SLOVAK YOUTH

JURAJ ČEČETKA I JEGO WKŁAD W ROZWÓJ SŁOWACKIEJ MŁODZIEŻY

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Abstract

The theoretical study provides a brief overview of the life of the first professor in the Slovak Republic - Juraj Čečetka, and his scientific and professional contributions towards improving the living conditions of youth in the Slovak Republic. As part of the research, we set the research question: What is the contribution of the sociological and pedagogical efforts of the first Slovak professor of pedagogy, Juraj Čečetka, regarding children and youth? For the research, we used content analysis. Juraj Čečetka conducted several sociological studies regarding the living conditions of young people in the Slovak Republic and maintained a dialogue with youth through rich publishing activity.

Keywords: Juraj Čečetka, youth, pedagogy, social relations, social security

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Streszczenie

Studium teoretyczne zawiera krótki przegląd życia pierwszego profesora w Republice Słowackiej - Juraja Čečetki oraz jego wkładu naukowego i zawodowego w poprawę warunków życia młodzieży w Republice Słowackiej. W ramach badań postawione zostało pytanie badawcze: Jaki jest wkład socjologicznych i pedagogicznych wysiłków pierwszego słowackiego profesora pedagogiki, Juraja Čečetki, w odniesieniu do dzieci i młodzieży? Do badań wykorzystano analizę literatury przedmiotu. Juraj Čečetka przeprowadził kilka badań socjologicznych dotyczących warunków życia młodych ludzi w Republice Słowackiej i prowadził dialog z młodzieżą poprzez bogatą działalność wydawniczą.

Słowa kluczowe: Juraj Čečetka, młodzież, pedagogika, relacje społeczne, bezpieczeństwo społeczne

Statement of the problem in general outlook and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks

In our study, we document the professional efforts of the notable figure Juraj Čečetka, who worked with youth. During the interwar period, he was concerned with the so-called "lost generation", which sought meaning in life and identity in a world shattered by war, suffering and social changes. Subsequently, during the Second World War, he focused on youth thirsting for the ideals provided by ideology. We find parallels with today's youth, exhibiting risk factors such as loss of identity and meaning in life, social isolation, loneliness, and fear of the future. Despite processing a historical theme, we can learn from history and build upon it, selecting something from it that we can lean on in facing similar challenges today. For this reason, we consider this area to be current and justified for scientific inquiry.

Analysis of latest research where the solution of the problem was initiated

Family Relations

Juraj Čečetka (April 23, 1907 - June 24, 1983) was born as the first son to mother Izabela Čečetková and father Alexander Čečetka in the Slovak village of Polichno. Within Juraj's closer family circle were his maternal grandparents - the evangelical pastor Pavol and his wife Eva Mária - as well as his aunt, the writer Božena Slančíková (Timrava) [1]. The Family had pro-national tendencies and even founded and published the magazine *Sprig* [2]. His father, Alexander, worked as a teacher and administrator of the single-class church school in Polichno. His younger brother, Ľudovít, became a lawyer. Juraj Čečetka started a family with Mária Kamila Kociánová, who managed administrative and technical work at the Polytechnic Institute in Bratislava. Together, they raised a daughter named Renata and a son named Kamil [1].

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Social situation

The social situation shaped the environment into which Juraj Čečetka was born and lived in his childhood and early youth. The social situation shaped the environment into which Juraj Čečetka was born and lived in his childhood and early youth. It was marked by geopolitical events - ethnic struggles and the dissolution of the complex international entity of Austria-Hungary (1918), World War I (1914-1918), and the emergence of independent state entities, one of which was the Czechoslovak Republic (1918). Under the Austro-Hungarian state, the entire territory of present-day Slovakia fell. Thus, Slovaks shared a common ruler-monarch, government, legislature, financial system, and military system with the countries of Austria-Hungary. During the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Polichno fell under the Novohrad county in the Vrchár region, which was considered poor [1] but with a rich Slovak culture [3].

In 1867, Hungary began to separate from Austria due to the appeal of Hungarian nationality for equal rights within the Austro-Hungarian state. The tendencies of dualization in 1868 affected the school system, which was strongly influenced by Hungarian assimilation in the territory of present-day Slovakia. Specifically, changes occurred in the language of instruction - Latin, due to the appeal of the German and Hungarian bourgeoisie, was replaced by the German language, and Hungarian became the primary language of instruction. According to the Nationality Law (1868) [4], as well as section 26 (CORPUS IURIS XXVI) and section 27 (CORPUS IURIS XXVII) of the Apponyi Educational Laws of June 2, 1907 [5], Slovak schools were Hungarianized - folk, municipal, and church schools. Slovak schools were being assimilated into Hungarian schools [6] and gradually closing Slovak schools.

Slovak education's development was restricted until World War I ended in 1918 when the Austro-Hungarian monarchy dissolved. On October 28, 1918, the joint state of Czechs and Slovaks was established - the independent Czechoslovak Republic. Čečetka referred to this period as "*historically pivotal times*" [1 p. 11]. On October 30, 1918, the Declaration of the Slovak Nation was signed in Martin - the Martin Declaration, which created conditions for nation formation [6; 7]. This event partially opened up space for developing the identity of Slovak education. However, it had to deal with the absence of existential conditions in every aspect: a lack of personnel representation, financial and material resources, legislation, organizational, and other necessities ensuring the professionalism of teaching and smooth transition between levels of education [1 p. 12]. To transform 4000 elementary schools and all secondary and higher education institutions, professors and teachers from Czechia were invited, leading to

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the widespread use of the Czechoslovak language with Czech predominance in Slovakia [7].

Youth in the interwar period

To identify the characteristic features of the generation in the interwar period, we drew inspiration from the reflections provided in the works of a person from Juraj Čečetka's close family circle - Božena Slančíková Timrava. Timrava reflects in her work the era of the First World War and the post-war period, external events and changes, and the mentality, political, and national issues [2]. Characters often face the loss of family ties, love, stability, certainty, and feelings of disillusionment in a rapidly changing era. The issues of life in the Novohrad villages during World War I were captured in her work *In the Time of War* (1917); a contrasting view of people on war is portrayed in *Heroes* (1918); the themes of patriotism and denationalization, the senselessness of war are reflected in *All for the Nation* (1926); the perception of the Jewish ethnicity by the Slovak people is reflected in *Experience* (1902) [8]. We believe that Juraj and Timrava freely communicated about the realities of the social situation and the state of youth, which could have subsequently influenced Juraj and manifested in his tendency to pay attention to this particular social group. We also acknowledge that this perspective represents only one angle of view, and several factors could have influenced Juraj Čečetka's focus on youth.

Study opportunities

Juraj Čečetka's mother tongue was Slovak, a language that the Čečetka family continued to cultivate even during Magyarization. In 1913, at the age of 6, Juraj enrolled in a single-class church elementary school in Polichno near Lučenec. His father, Alexander, educated him, which explains Juraj's strong educational foundation. In September 1917, Juraj completed the fourth grade of elementary school.

On October 28, 1917, Juraj entered a classical Hungarian gymnasium in Lučenec (later renamed the Czechoslovak State Reform Real Gymnasium), where he received education in the Hungarian language [1], switching to Czech language in the second year. During his studies at the gymnasium, the beginnings of his socio-pedagogical orientation emerged, which can be found in his pedagogically oriented fiction *Professor Tichý*, which focuses on the relationship between teacher and student. Similarly, his inclination towards career counselling emerged as he served as a counsellor within the self-educational and scouting circle. He gained exposure to educational activities through his involvement in the revivalist student movement, where he managed finances. Juraj completed his gymnasium studies by passing the school-leaving exam in Slovak language, mathematics, and French on June 26, 1925 [9 p. 103].

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Čečetka continued his studies at the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University in Prague to study the French language and become a secondary school teacher. During his philosophy studies, he came into contact with the emerging separate scientific discipline of psychology. Here, he was inspired, for example, by lectures on ethics and philosophy by František Krejčí. Vilém Foster inspired him to use psychology in counselling and clinical practice. Otakar Kádner inspired him in the field of history of pedagogy. Václav Příhoda also inspired him. His interest led him to focus on educational psychology [1]. He had the opportunity to verify educational psychology through voluntary practice at the Pedological Institute in Prague and the Psychotechnical Institute [10].

Juraj completed his four-year studies at Charles University on October 22, 1929. Juraj obtained his complete higher education only in Slovakia, at the Faculty of Philosophy of Comenius University in Bratislava [1; 11], where he attended one semester as an extraordinary art history student in the academic year 1931/1932. He successfully defended his Philosophiae Doctor dissertation on psychological estimation - *Accuracy of Estimation Based on the Origins of Motion* (*Accuracy of Estimation Based on Initial Movements) [1].

Within his professional and educational activities, Juraj Čečetka published many works, leaving behind a portfolio comprising 556 titles. His scientific work consists of works in psychology, history of education, original Slovak pedagogical theory, and sociology of education. He published in almost every discipline within the pedagogical sciences [12]. Juraj Čečetka enriched Slovak pedagogy with many valuable pedagogical views and ideas.

Aims of paper. Methods

After studying the available communications and analyzing the level of processing the topic - the personality, life, and work of Juraj Čečetka by academics in the domestic academic environment, we have chosen the focus of our theoretical research/inquiry on Juraj Čečetka's impact on children and youth. We specifically focus on the interpersonal relationships of youth in social environments, which equally represents the subject of sociology - social pedagogy, youth sociology, and sociology of education. We have formulated our research question: What is the contribution of the sociological and pedagogical efforts of the first Slovak professor of pedagogy, Juraj Čečetka, concerning children and youth?

We conducted historical research, focusing on collecting and analyzing available meanings about the personality and life's work of Juraj Čečetka. We endeavoured to substantiate historical facts through primary sources and non-primary literary sources.

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The research corpus consisted of available communications in textual form: books, monographs, collections, yearbooks, scholarly studies, scholarly articles, scholarly papers, and magazine articles. Among the key communications are: 'The Work of Juraj Čečetka and the Ideology of the Slovak State in the years 1939-1945' [13], *The Life and Work of Juraj Čečetka* [1], *Sociology in Pedagogy* [14], *Pedagogical Thinking, Education, and Schooling in Slovakia from 1918 to 1945* [15], *Slovak School and Pedagogy of the 20th Century* [9].

The main theoretical research method was content analysis, within which we utilized direct and indirect approaches and logical methods - analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, and generalization [16].

Exposition of the main material of research with complete substantiation of obtained scientific results

Professional Activities - Active Career (1929-1971)

When Čečetka completed his studies at university and entered employment, Europe was experiencing an economic crisis, mainly affecting the eastern part of Czechoslovakia, with over a million unemployed registered by 1933 [16].

In 1928, Čečetka joined the newly established Psychotechnical Institute in Bratislava [10], specifically in the central Counseling Center for Career Choice [13; 11], to focus on the pressing issue of vocational selection related to the crisis. Here, he provided services for selecting employees, career counselling for 14-year-olds, gymnasium graduates, parents, schools, and educational institutions. He dealt with educational counselling issues and problems faced by adolescents. He also conducted research in the field of career counselling. Alongside John Schultz, he published the first publication in this field - *Advisor for Choosing School and Profession* (1933) [17]. This monograph provided information on secondary and tertiary education options, an overview of the 50 most significant economic professions, personality prerequisites, work methods, and working conditions [11]. It also included environmental information - social facilities, scholarships, boarding schools, and post-graduation employment opportunities [18]. "*Only those who not only have an interest but also possess the necessary mental abilities will be satisfied with their employment*" [17 s. 127].

From 1934, he worked externally at the Educational Department of Matica slovenská in Martin, initially as a consultant and later as a specialist. Under the auspices of the Educational Department, he began to lay the Slovak foundations of pedagogical theory, with the initial goal being the "*examination of youth, their lives, work, and environment in school, family, and society*" [1 s. 17]. The second goal involved improving

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education beyond the curriculum, publishing professional publications and youth books, and organizing lectures and courses [1].

They also spread enlightenment and knowledge through the theoretical-pedagogical periodical *Pedagogical Proceedings* (1934-1944) [1; 19; 20], which was the only one of its kind in Slovakia, as teachers could publish articles there without having to rely on publication in various non-pedagogical journals. It served as a means of maintaining dialogue with Slovak youth, with a dedicated section providing literary recommendations for youth. The *Slovak Path* magazine was specially designed for youth [11], and Čečetka contributed and served as editor.

In the first issue of the Pedagogical Journal, Čečetka addressed the post-war state of youth and called for the reconstruction of education to prepare young people for real-life practicality, making them employable, as "*the one-sided qualitative demands of today's workforce greatly reduce the human element to a secondary position*" [19 p. 14]. In the article *On the Social and Psychological Issues of Today's Education* [19], he dealt with the problems and education of "morally deviant youth" - (youth with behavioural problems, disorders, and deficits), analyzing the socio-psychological consequences of young people and society.

Čečetka was also active in educational outreach and encouraged active participation in social life. He communicated initiatives through the pedagogical-psychological magazine *Child* (1935-1937) [10; 21], a continuation of the magazine *Home School*. Here, he presented expert articles: *The Educational Use of Holidays* [22; 23], *How Our Youth Choose Their Professions* [24; 23], *Charity Among Children* [23], *Inherited Traits and Environmental Influence* [1; 23; 25].

During World War II (1939-1945), there was a reform and establishment of schools in the Slovak Republic's educational system - teacher academies, vocational teacher institutes, vocational schools, including those for women's occupations, apprenticeship schools, state conservatories, institutes for "*misguided youth*", auxiliary schools, and universities [9, p. 151-171], of which there was a shortage. In 1939, the Slovak state was established. Slovakia sought to strengthen its national solidarity and self-sufficiency.

For example, based on the Lomnický Manifesto of August 31, 1940 [21, p. 92], Čečetka and co-authors called for implementing Slovak national socialism in the school environment. "*We will have to focus the education of our youth primarily around the idea of the nation, to educate the nation both for its cultural, as well as social and economic life*" [26, p. 146; 21, p. 92]. Under national education, emphasis is placed on the dimension of socialization, with the goal of "*educational adaptation*

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of the individual's personality for the entire national society" [27, p. 430]. Slovakia's educational policy, despite its nationalist efforts, was under significant political influence from the strengthening Nazi Germany. The education organization was conducted according to the "Greater German model"; municipal schools were renamed four-grade selective schools [28]. From September 6, 1944, schools were nationalized, from nursery schools to universities [29]. Only common schools and church schools were permitted. Universities were reformed in allegiance to the German Reich [7]. German was primarily taught at all schools, with only some subjects taught partially in Slovak [28].

In connection with the issue of "defective youth", we encounter a discrepancy in the attitude towards human life, which needs to be corrected. Eugenics was misused during this period for ideological purposes, with roots tracing back to Spartan philosophy - to reduce "undesirable populations" and promote the birth of strong individuals. Juraj Čečetka's views reflect the influence of this harmful ideology. On the one hand, Juraj Čečetka saw pedagogy—education as a means to prevent the growth of populations with deficits in the state [27, p. 214]. "*Pedagogy, indeed, cannot directly participate in eugenic interventions, but it can at least collaborate educationally, with instruction*" [30; 31, p. 72]. It can be added that positive eugenics aims to enhance desirable traits in the population, so the approaches of positive eugenics aim to improve the human population, focusing on education, family planning, and health promotion. On the other hand, one cannot identify with the idea that "*The results of eugenic care should also have far-reaching consequences for education, facilitating educational work on the one hand and enabling generally higher educational requirements*" [30; 31, p. 72]. Such an approach fully denies the uniqueness and autonomy of the human being, contradicts the "child-centred model" of education, and represents the basis for an "outcome-oriented model" of education [32, p. 23], which we consider outdated.

Čečetka drew attention to the connection between school attendance and the labour market with practical working life. For example, he mentioned Germany, where mandatory youth labour service [33] was introduced in 1935 for all young men aged 18 [13 p. 48]. He extensively discussed the youth labour service in a comprehensive article titled *Today's German Education* [34; 35] and in a chapter titled *Labor Service, National Socialist Educational Institutes*, published in the journal - *Pedagogical Digest* [36]. In the *Handbook of Pedagogy II*, under the entry *Youth Labor Service*, he described the model of the German labour service - Rural Year ("Landjahr") and the Reich Labor Service ("Reichsarbeitsdienst"). Similar forms of labour service also existed in Bulgaria and Russia [13 p. 43; 37 pp. 114-115].

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The period of the Second World War was characterized in some European countries by the interest in youth, youth engagement, and the implementation of meritorious activities by young people in society, with state care for youth. Čečetka noted, for example, the existence of youth organizations in Italy under the entry of *Skautig*, the youth organization "Komsomolcov" in Russia, and others [13 p. 43; 37 p. 202]. In Slovakia, education was oriented towards Christian and national values at all levels of education, except for the Jewish ethnicity. The Ministry of Education and National Enlightenment of the Slovak Republic adopted measures in 1941 regarding the Jewish ethnicity, and the Jewish Code limiting the civil and human rights of the ethnicity was also valid in Slovakia. Čečetka focused on completing the thousand-page work *Handbook of Pedagogy* (1943) [27; 37]. Čečetka, who was close to an organic approach in theoretical backgrounds in education and upbringing [15 p. 8], encountered the reduction of objective information by the totalitarian regime in favour of ideology.

He chose an exploratory description of the Jewish ethnicity issue - a scientific neutral standpoint. *"Regarding the ideological orientation, the religious and national aspects are emphasized... In this context, it is necessary to mention at least the exclusion of Jewish youth from Aryan schools or the limitation of education for Jewish youth only to the people's school"* [37 p. 260]. In the lexicon, it was *"only about the informative level, without a more pronounced attempt at ideologicalization"* [13 p. 42].

The regime monitored Juraj Čečetka's professional activities; subsequently, he was banned from lecturing (June 2, 1945) and banned from exercising the rights associated with an extraordinary professorship at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University, where he worked (1939-1959). The ban was lifted on October 31, 1946.

Three years after the Second World War, in 1948, the Nazi regime was replaced by a new regime - the communist totalitarian regime. The regime was characterized by egalitarianism and collectivism and demanded a unified line [38]. Like the previous regime, this regime persecuted individuals for ideological views. It is necessary to emphasize that suspicions and denunciations characterized the atmosphere of society, as officials' positions were associated with suspicion and informing. Hence, teachers and professors were in an unfavourable position. Here, it is necessary to emphasize the professionalism associated with foresight, humility, and humanity of Juraj Čečetka, thanks to which he managed to rise above the totalitarian dictate and provide consistent findings and values in the service of society through scientific work. Juraj Čečetka's authenticity and approach helped the young generation to lead a dialogue and provide information. *"In the spirit of the new social order, we were recommended to maintain closer contact with students outside the Faculty. These intentions were poorly fulfilled."*

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Since even before I had closer personal contact with the students and my interest in their lives, personal problems did not fade even after liberation. I was officially entrusted with some kind of patronage over some dormitories. ... Much more could be achieved in friendly conversations after lectures, seminars, and then in personal visits to the dormitories of those who were won over in such friendly conversations. These then influenced the circle of their friends and colleagues" [39]. Juraj Čečetka did not allow himself to be intimidated by the regime and supported students persecuted for ideological reasons [40].

About youth, Juraj Čečetka advocated for the inclusion of collective upbringing in moral education, addressing questions of student self-government. He considered the collective a more influential educational tool than the collective of adults. It is also essential in what collective a child is involved, as this represents a model and example for the child [41 p. 146]. Regarding education, there is a demand for "a reasonable balance between duties and rights, the correct division of labour between teacher and student, their cooperation should enhance students' ability to self-govern" [41 p. 162]. From 1959 to 1963, Čečetka worked at the Slovak Pedagogical Library in the methodological-bibliographic department, where they compiled publishing plans and built a network of school and teacher libraries [42].

1964, Juraj Čečetka joined the Research Pedagogical Institute (from 1947 to 1957 under the State Pedagogical Institute), an institution focused on science and research in the Slovak Republic. At that time, the institute primarily focused on developing social psychology, sociology, and pedagogical sociology [23]. Juraj Čečetka was assigned to a secondary and vocational school research group. He focused on addressing social issues of youth and adolescents, conducting research on interpersonal relationships in various environments. The scientific research activity created works such as *On the Issue of Internal Bonds in Collectives* [43] and *Youth in Work Groups* [44].

For the general public, Juraj published popular scientific articles in the journal *Family and School*, such as *We People and Our Relationships* [45] and *Do Children Want to Be Functionaries?* [46], *To conclude our survey on relationships between people* [47], *Feelings of loneliness in adolescent youth* [48], and *Establishing relationships in kindergarten children* [23]. From 1964-1969, the scientific community addressed the generational gap issue.

Interest in interpersonal relationships and the environment led to the publication of *Sociology in Education* [14]. Here, Čečetka theoretically delineated the boundaries between the interrelated scientific disciplines of sociology and pedagogy, terminological



connections, and the interconnectedness of family and school upbringing. In the publication, he identified which scientific disciplines cover various educational institutions. He also addressed which institutions cover youth activities outside the school and family environment. Based on the publication, he laid the foundations of pedagogical sociology. "*In pedagogy, great emphasis must be placed on sociology, the science of society, because here it is not only about socializing people but also about transforming society through education*" [14, p. 5]. "*Pedagogy cannot do without knowledge of social existence!*" [14, p. 6]. In the third chapter of the publication, in defining the tasks of pedagogical sociology, he points out that it cannot be developed as an isolated scientific discipline but rather interconnected with the eminent factor - the human element, as well as with economic phenomena and economic relationships. Juraj specifies: "*the human factor must not be lost here either - it would be unnatural if sociology alienated itself from humans, individuals, and if society did not see the human being*" [14, p. 41].

In addition to the mentioned areas, Juraj also addressed emerging social problems in education in the monograph, such as the mass of students and the formation of collectives in large schools, where targeted social relationships still need to be present. "*In a multitude, an individual can easily get lost, becoming anonymous not only to others but also temporarily to oneself, because he simply assumes the relationship of others to himself as a relationship to someone anonymous*" [14, p. 65].

In the context of the lay society, there was a parallel public discussion among writers and journalists who expressed the demand for sociological research on youth, including taboo topics. As a result, alongside the active youth section of the Slovak Sociological Society at the Slovak Academy of Sciences (1964), an initiative group was established in 1966 at the central body of the unified State Youth Organization in Slovakia (ČSZM), which was designated for youth research [48, p. 36].

In addition, Čečetka conducted sociological research focused on interpersonal relationships and the environment among students of vocational schools. The research was published in *Interpersonal Relationships and Grouping of Apprenticeship Youth* [49]. In the research, he addressed the group modalities of adolescents' spontaneous group formation based on common characteristics and properties, which he captured in the chapter *Task-assembled and Spontaneous Groups of Adolescent Youth*. He found that members of smaller groups of 3-6 people are more predisposed to maintain permanent connections [49 pp. 46-56]. In the chapter *Leaders in Groups of Adolescent Youth*, he described the creation of hierarchies or leadership in adolescent youth groups. "*Youth groups in certain situations require a leader to represent the group. In addition to*

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leaders chosen by the youth, this role is mainly fulfilled by a teacher or educator. ... individuals not bound to groups are freely available to individuals and freely engage in occasional activities" [49 p. 196]. The research also provided insights into friendship and factors influencing its permanence, such as sincerity, trust, insincerity, and betrayal. The research focused on the environment and all its areas that educationally influenced the formation of youth attitudes towards science, moral attitudes, worldview, and art. He used sociometry, questionnaires, and surveys to collect meanings. The work provides valuable pedagogical insights into youth grouping in institutions (school - class, educational facilities, dormitories).

Čečetka also researched social situations in youth homes and the joint sharing of youth accommodations. Works such as *On the Issue of Microclimate in Youth Homes* [50], *On the Issue of Contraindications of Joint Accommodation in Youth Homes* [51], and *On Some Issues of Upbringing in Student Homes* [52] were created. Juraj also researched conflict situations in youth societies, captured in works such as *On the Conflict of Apprenticeship Youth* [53] and *Modern Nomads among Us* [54].

Juraj Čečetka proposed that attention be paid to youth in Slovakia following the model of sociology in the world, specifically in broader sociological contexts, as a distinct age group with characteristic features, lifestyle, worldview, desires, attitudes, and interests. He elaborated on this proposal in the article *On the Issue of Youth as a Social Group* [55] in the yearbook of the magazine *Youth Sociology*. He also published a study - *Notes on the Relationship between Educational Sociology and Youth Sociology* [56], explaining the definition of educational sociology, focusing on the educational process and youth sociology, focusing on youth life in all contexts.

For youth research, the Central Council of the Sociological Institute of the SAS established, effective from January 1, 1969, the Commission for Youth Sociology, whose task was to help coordinate research work in youth sociology. This initiative is captured in the article *Commission for Youth Sociology* [57]. As part of the central research - *Quo Vadere* (Where Are We Going) (1968) [58], led by the spokesman of the commission, Čečetka, together with collaborators, the group proposed the organization of youth groups according to age and interest categories, based on which changes in state policy were implemented. Čečetka advocated creating a cross-cutting government committee for youth [59 p. 36].

Together with authors Špendl, Bakoš, and Grác, Juraj Čečetka published the work *Adolescent Youth in the Family* [60]. Other sociological works were created at that time:

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Some Experiences from Sociometric Practice [61], *Social Maturity in the Social Ontogenesis of Man* (1970), and *Interpersonal Relationships and Grouping of Youth* (1973/74).

On January 1, 1972, Professor Juraj Čečetka retired early at 64 due to normalization in academic circles.

Discussion

Juraj Čečetka represents an exemplary educator who strove to maintain dialogue between youth and the state. On the one hand, through periodicals, lectures, and informal conversations with students, he informed the youth about educational and employment opportunities, their role and participation in societal affairs within the state. Similarly, he led emancipatory dialogues with the state about the social environments and entities in which the integration of the emerging generation in the state occurs. The tendency to work with youth has persisted in Slovakia to this day. Currently, in the Slovak Republic, at the national level, work with youth is regulated by the central institution - the National Institute of Education and Youth (NIVAM) and its component - the Slovak Youth Institute (Iuventa), as well as other institutions, organizations, or proactive individuals [62]. At the supra-national level, conditions allowing young people full participation in the life of an open society that shows interest in them are defined, for example, in the *White Paper of the European Commission*. [63]. In EU member states, dialogue with youth is ensured through the strategy of the European Youth Dialogue (2019-2027), which commits states to formulate policies that consider the opinions, needs, and views of young people and youth organizations. The strategy defines specific goals - the inclusion and participation of young people in democratic life in Europe, strengthening civic competencies, and a sense of belonging to society. The strategy's goals are ensured by national working groups conducting consultations and activities with young people or youth organizations [64; 65].

Conclusions

In the theoretical study, we focused on the impact of Juraj Čečetka on Slovak youth during the given period within his scientific research and educational publishing activities. The work briefly overviews Juraj Čečetka's life and eminent social situation as a starting point for study and further work. A characteristic feature can be perceived across Juraj Čečetka's scientific research activities - his sense of organization, systematization, structure, and coordination, based on which he managed to administer and lead educational and extracurricular institutions and institutions within the state and under limited working conditions. In his youth, Juraj Čečetka took up the legacy of

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John Amos Comenius: "A scientist should hold a high and responsible social position, apply new discoveries for the benefit of the people, be responsible for the morality of social relations between people, nations" [66 s. 7]. Through his work both within and outside academia, Čečetka fulfilled this legacy. Čečetka significantly contributed to the development of sociology in pedagogy, with the conducted research serving as the basis for developing the concept of social pedagogy in Slovakia.

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