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#### Sommario/riassunto

This study, the first of its kind in English, presents an overview of Slovak intellectual history in the 19th century, including the debates surrounding the memorandum of 1861, the political stagnation of the 1880s, characterized by an increasingly Russophile orientation, and, finally, Czechoslovakism as the way to common independence with the Czechs. The selected portraits of six intellectuals and politicians should be seen as a prism through which Slovak intellectual history appears in its various facets. The 'narodovci' (the pioneers of national awakening) tried to strengthen th