

SLOVAK HISTORIOGRAPHY AFTER 1989: STRENGTHS, PROBLEMS, OUTLOOKS

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Here, the director of the Institute of History at the Slovak Academy of Sciences presents his insights on "what use the Slovak Academy of Sciences has made of the new freedom of research and with what kind of problems it has met". Having furnished brief information on the general development of Slovak historiography, the author proceeds to a description of the difficulties so far encountered, such as the continuing validity of interpretational and conceptual patterns ("apologetics being practically compulsory, and praise and reverence being expected with respect to the venerable age and historic uniqueness of the Slovak nation") and the legacy of the Marxist period. Awareness of these problems on the part of historians, however, opened up a rift between historical science and the popular conception of history, and Dušan Kováč describes what attempts the institute has made to bridge this gap. He reports on the difficulties with which he and his staff met, in particular attempts at placing the independent research institute of the Academy of Sciences under the auspices of the cultural society, *Matice slovenská*, which is notorious for its nationalist attitudes, thereby interfering with the institute's independent scientific activity and subordinating it once more to a particular ideological orientation. As an appendix, the contribution features excerpts from the Slovak National Council's draft law on *Matice slovenská* and the position on this bill published by the director and the staff of the Institute of History at the Slovak Academy of Sciences.