

SOME REMARKS ON RESEARCH INTO COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES IN SLOVAKIA, 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

Peter Macho

The author aims at sketching a perspective for Slovak social history dealing with the 19th and 20th centuries. He surveys three problem complexes, nobility research, 19th-century Slovak intelligentsia and national myths or symbols or, to put it differently, the historical memory. The author makes plain which misleading notions, due to a traditional concentration in Slovak historiography on the nation-building process, are current about "Slovak society", having existed until 1918 only as "islands of positive deviation" within Hungarian society. With a view to gaining a differentiated conception of this developing national society, Macho proposes regional studies, long-term studies into the development of separate social groups and research into changing loyalties. Even a closer look at the usage of "Hungarian" as opposed to "Magyar" might illustrate problems of identity and identification and the influence of more or less imagined, notional societal groupings.