

The Painful Birth of Slovak Historiography in the 20th Century¹

by

M. Mark Stolárik

Twentieth-century Slovak historiography is characterized by a struggle for recognition. Since the Slovaks did not have a universally-recognized independent state of their own until 1993, the very concept of Slovak history was often challenged by various historians who were reacting to the political situation of the day. Only after a long and tortuous route through various political systems was Slovak history able to emerge as a mature and recognized discipline, although its future direction remains unclear.

In 1918 the Slovaks ceased to be a part of the Kingdom of Hungary and instead found themselves in the newly-created Czechoslovak Republic.² This turn of events necessitated a new look at Slovak history, by both the Slovaks and the Czechs. The largely-Czech founders of the new Republic (and a few of their Slovak supporters) felt that they had created a new nation-state consisting of the closely-related Czechs and Slovaks, who merely spoke two dialects of the same language but who really formed one "Czechoslovak" nation. In order intellectually to justify the existence of this new nation-state, a "Czechoslovak history" emerged.³ The first to rise to this challenge was the Czech

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² The founding of the Republic has been covered by many historians, including myself in: *The Role of American Slovaks in the Creation of Czecho-Slovakia, 1914–1918*, in: *Slovak Studies* 7 (1968), pp. 7–82. VICTOR S. MAMATEY gave a slightly different interpretation in: *The Slovaks and Carpatho-Ruthenians*, in: *The Immigrant's Influence on Wilson's Peace Policies*, ed. by JOSEPH P. O'GRADY, Lewisburg 1967, pp. 224–249. One of the best Czech perspectives is KAREL PICHlík's *Zahraniční odboj 1914–1918 bez legend [The Liberation Movement, 1914–1918, Without Legends]*, Praha 1968; a more recent treatment, although it does not cover the whole story, is GREGORY C. FERENCE: *Sixteen Months of Indecision*, Selinsgrove 1995. The best synthesis of the history of Czechoslovakia in the English language is CAROL SKALNIK LEFF's *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia: The Making and Remaking of a State, 1918–1987*, Princeton 1988.

³ RICHARD MARSINA: *Slovenské dejiny (1. K otázke ich pomenovania) [Slovak History. 1. What to Call It]*, in: *Historický časopis* 38 (1990), p. 627; ELISABETH BAKKE: *Čečo-*

František Kulhánek, a newly-appointed professor of pedagogy at the Teachers' College in Banská Bystrica. In 1920 he wrote the first history text-book for Slovak grade-school students entitled *Ludové dejiny československé* [A People's History of Czechoslovakia].⁴ This was followed in 1921 by *Dejiny československé pre najvyššiu triedu stredných škôl* [Czechoslovak History for the Highest Grade in High School], a text compiled by a team of Czech scholars led by Josef Pekař, a professor of history at Charles University in Prague. This became the standard high-school text in Slovakia until 1938.⁵ To complete the text-book cycle, another Czech professor, Václav Novotný, published *Z dejín československých* [Excerpts from Czechoslovak History] for use by Slovak high-school teachers.⁶ To give all of these quickly-produced textbooks a scholarly and theoretical justification, Václav Chaloupecký, the newly-appointed Czech professor of Czechoslovak history at the newly-created (in 1919) Czechoslovak Comenius University in Bratislava wrote an article justifying the concept of "Czechoslovak history" in the professional historical journal *Český časopis historický* [Czech Historical Journal].⁷

That a group of Czech professors wrote the history of the Slovaks in a Czechoslovak context can be readily explained. Slovakia had no professional historians in 1918. Between 1777 and 1912 there had been no university on Slovak territory – then within the Kingdom of Hungary – while Slovak history had not been taught at the University of Budapest or at the recently-founded (1912) Elizabeth University in Pressburg (Bratislava).⁸ This was not surprising as the Magyar rulers of Hungary denied the very existence of a

slovakizmus v školských učebniciach (1918–1938) [Czechoslovakism in School Texts, 1918–1938], in: *Historický časopis* 47 (1999), p. 233.

⁴ Banská Bystrica, 1920, as cited in MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 627. For more information on Kulhánek see *Slovenský biografický slovník* [Slovak Biographical Dictionary], vol. III: K–L, Martin 1989, pp. 304–305.

⁵ MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 627.

⁶ Brno 1921, as cited in *ibidem*.

⁷ 28 (1922), pp. 1–30, as cited in *ibidem*. For more on Chaloupecký see *Slovenský biografický slovník*, vol. II: E–J, Martin 1987, pp. 456–457. It is interesting to note that in JÁN MLYNÁRIK'S laudatory booklet on *Česká inteligencia Slovensku: Kapitoly z dejín českej inteligencie na Slovensku za prvej ČSR* [Czech Intellectuals in Slovakia: Excerpts from the History of Czech Intellectuals in Slovakia during the First Czechoslovak Republic], Köln 1987, Václav Chaloupecký was left out.

⁸ From 1635 to 1777 there had been a Jesuit University in the Slovak city of Trnava and from 1657 to 1777 in the city of Košice where many scholars of Slovak background had been active. As a result of the educational reforms of Empress Maria Theresia and her son Joseph, the University of Trnava was moved to Buda, and the University of Košice was downgraded to a Royal Academy of Law. In 1912 the city of Pressburg received the Elizabeth University, but it suffered from the debilitating effects of World War I. The new Czechoslovak government shut it down in 1919. For more details see: *Trnavská univerzita v slovenských dejinách* [The University of Trnava in Slovak History], comp. by VILIAM ČICAJ, Bratislava 1987; and: *Comenius University (1919–1994) Bratislava*, comp. by JÚLIA HAUTOVÁ, Bratislava 1994.

Slovak nation and, hence, Slovak history.⁹ By 1918 Slovakia could boast only well-known amateur historians Jozef Škultéty and Július Botto.¹⁰

Škultéty was something of a “Renaissance man”. Equipped with a teachers’ college education in the late 19th century, he had become a writer, editor, literary historian and critic and one of a small group of leaders of the Slovak nation headquartered in Turčiansky Sv. Martin. After World War I he became one of the the directors of the resurrected (1919) *Matica slovenská* and a professor at the newly-founded Comenius University in Bratislava.¹¹ As a leading Slovak nationalist, Škultéty immediately came into conflict with some of the political leaders of Czechoslovakia, notably the Slovak Agrarian politician Milan Hodža. In 1920 Hodža had published the very controversial *Československý rozkol* [The Czechoslovak Division] in which he regretted the codification of the Slovak language in the mid-19th century and the subsequent linguistic separation of Czechs and Slovaks.¹² Škultéty replied to Hodža’s book with his own *Stodvadsaťpäť rokov zo slovenského života, 1790–1914* [A Hundred and Twenty-Five Years of Slovak Life, 1790–1914] in which he argued that Hodža’s account was flawed, that the Slovak nation had existed long before the second codification of the Slovak language, and

⁹ In 1875 the government of Hungary closed the *Matica slovenská*, confiscated its treasury, its building and historical collections and justified its actions, in the words of Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza, because “there is no Slovak nation”. Cf. SCOTUS VIATOR (R.W. SETON-WATSON): *Racial Problems in Hungary*, London 1908, repr. New York 1972, pp. 166–167.

¹⁰ MICHAL OTČENÁŠ: *Slovenská historiografia v rokoch 1918–1945* [Slovak Historiography in the Years 1918–1945], Prešov 1994, pp. 7–8. This is not to say that the Slovaks had never before produced professional historians. The Roman Catholic priest Juraj Papánek (1738–1802) wrote the first history of the Slovaks in *Historia gentis Slavae* [History of the Slovak People], Pécs 1780; the world-famous Slovak scholar Pavol Jozef Šafárik (1795–1861) included his people in *Geschichte der slawischen Sprache und Literatur nach allen Mundarten*, Budapest 1826, and in his *Slovanské starožitnosti* [Slavonic Antiquities], 2 vols., Praha 1836–1837; and the Roman Catholic priest František V. Sasínek (1830–1914), among his dozens of historical monographs and hundreds of articles produced *Dejepis Slovákov* [A History of the Slovaks], Ružomberok 1895, and *Slováci v Uhorsku* [The Slovaks in Hungary], Martin 1904. However, these were erudite individuals writing, more-or-less, in an intellectual vacuum and under difficult circumstances. They lacked a university, a history department, or even a university library to assist them. For more on Papánek see JÁN TIBENSKÝ: J. Papánek – J. Sklenár. *Obrancovia slovenskej narodnosti v 18. storočí* [J.P. – J.S.: Defenders of the Slovak Nationality in the 18th Century], Martin 1958; for more on Šafárik, see Pavol Jozef Šafárik a slovenské národné obrodenie [P.J.Š. and the Slovak National Revival], comp. by IMRICH SEDLÁK, Martin 1989; for a surprisingly laudatory article on Sasínek see MATUŠ KUČERA: F.V. Sasínek – Founder of Modern Slovak Historiography, in: *Studia historica Slovaca* 13 (1984), pp. 201–216.

¹¹ For more on Škultéty see *Slovenský biografický slovník*, vol. V: R-S, Martin 1992, p. 475.

¹² Martin 1920. For more on Hodža see *Slovenský biografický slovník*, vol. II (cf. footnote 7), pp. 347–349.

that the Slovak national revival had actually begun in the 18th century, long before the so-called “rozkol” in the mid-19th century.¹³ Škultéty decided in the mid-1920’s that the atmosphere at Comenius University was too pro-Czechoslovak, and retreated to the Matica slovenská, where he wrote another polemic entitled *Nehaňte ľud môj* [Stop Slandering My People] directed against the philosophy of “Czechoslovakism”.¹⁴ Of more importance, he and other leaders of the Matica established several scholarly departments to study the Slovak language, culture and history which started to publish the *Sborník Matice slovenskej* [Journal of the Matica slovenská] in 1923. The *Sborník*, which published articles on Slovak history by both amateurs and professionals, became the main counterforce to the “Czechoslovakism” emanating from Comenius University.¹⁵

Meanwhile, the efforts of various Czech professors at Comenius University to foist the new philosophy of Czechoslovakism upon their students ran afoul of the first, and greatest, professional Slovak historian, Daniel Rapant. Educated in history and archival science at Charles University in Prague (Ph.D. 1923) and at the Sorbonne, Rapant cautiously challenged the concept of a “Czechoslovak nation” in the periodical *Prúdy* [Trends] in 1924¹⁶, and more aggressively in a *Festschrift* to his former professor at Charles University in 1930. Indeed, in this same article Rapant called for the establishment of a Department of Slovak History at Comenius University.¹⁷ While this would not happen during the first Czechoslovak Republic, because of the government’s policy of promoting “Czechoslovakism”, Rapant did manage to move from his position as Chief Archivist of the Bratislava Regional Archive to associate professor of History at Comenius University in 1933.¹⁸

While the Matica slovenská and Rapant challenged the concept of a “Czechoslovak” nation, the Czech professors at Comenius University, and a few of their Slovak allies, fostered it. Chaloupecký, aided by his colleagues

¹³ Martin 1920, as cited in MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 627.

¹⁴ Martin 1928. This book was translated into English and published in the United States as *Sketches from Slovak History*, Middletown 1930.

¹⁵ JÁN BOBÁK: “Doslov” [Epilogue], in: *Historický zborník* 6 (1996), p. 193. Until the language reform of 1968, “zborník” was written with an ‘s’. For the sake of historical accuracy, I have written the names of books and periodicals exactly as they originally appeared.

¹⁶ *Národ a dejiny* [The Nation and History], in: *Prúdy* 8 (1924), pp. 470–477, as cited by MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 628.

¹⁷ *Československé dejiny. Problémy a metódy* [Czechoslovak History: Problems and Methods], in: *Od pravěku k dnešku. Sb. prací z dějin československých. K 60. narozeninám Jos. Pekaře* [From Prehistory to the Present. A Collection of Works on Czechoslovak History. On the Occasion of the 60th Birthday of Josef Pekař], vol. II, Praha 1930, as cited by MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 628.

¹⁸ BELO POLLÁ: *Storočnica Daniela Rapanta* [On the Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of Daniel Rapant], in: *Historik Daniel Rapant (1897 – 1988 – 1997): Život a dielo* [The Historian Daniel Rapant (1897 – 1988 – 1997): His Life and Works], comp. by RICHARD MARSINA, Martin 1997, p. 14.

Jan Heidler, Kamil Krofta, Vladimír Klecanda, Josef Borovička, Jan Eisner and Albert Pražák, who made up the history department in the 1920's, mostly taught in this spirit. In 1922 they helped establish the periodical *Sborník Filosofickej fakulty University Komenského* [Journal of the Philosophical Faculty of Comenius University] and the monograph series *Spisy Filosofickej fakulty University Komenského* [Publications of the Philosophical Faculty of Comenius University], in which they published their views. Furthermore, in 1926 they established the "Učená spoločnosť Šafaříkova" [Šafařík Literary Society], with a historical division that published the annual *Bratislava*.¹⁹ These periodicals and organizations were the main rivals of the *Matica slovenská*, its divisions and periodicals. One of the first Slovak allies of the concept of "Czechoslovak" history was the amateur historian Július Botto²⁰ and two professionals educated at Comenius by Czech professors, the medievalists Branislav Varsík²¹ and Alexander Húščava.

Indeed, it was the publication of Húščava's *Kolonizácia Liptova do konca XIV. Storočia* [The Colonization of Liptov County to the End of the 14th Century]²², that set off the first battle between Rapant and the promoters of

¹⁹ Žiaci prof. D. Rapanta. Daniel Rapant (17. apríl 1897 – 17. apríl 1988) [Students of Professor Daniel Rapant], in: *Premeny* 25 (1988), No. 4, p. 29, esp. footnotes 3 and 4.

²⁰ Botto had made his name with Slováci. Vývin ich národného povedomia [The Slovaks: The Evolution of Their National Identity], 2 vols., Martin 1906 and 1910. He first revealed his "Czechoslovakism" in: *Obrazy z dávnej minulosti Slovákov – Rastislav, Svätopluk a Metod* [Sketches from the Distant Past of the Slovaks – Rastislav, Svätopluk and Methodius], Rimavská Sobota 1922, as cited by MICHAL OTČENÁŠ (cf. footnote 10), p. 8. Botto died in 1929.

²¹ VARSÍK enunciated his support for "Czechoslovakism" in: *O jednotnosti československých dejín* [On the Unity of Czechoslovak History], in: *Bratislava* 11 (1937), pp. 3–15. However, in the next 50 years he never again supported this concept. Cf. MARSINA (footnote 3), pp. 629–630. During and after World War II Varsík concentrated on proving that the Slovaks had inhabited Slovak territory long before the arrival of the Magyars and he wrote many monographs and articles on this subject. His best-known are: *Národnostná hranica slovensko-maďarská v ostatných dvoch storočiach* [The Ethnographic Boundary between the Slovaks and the Magyars in the Last Two Centuries], Bratislava 1940; *Osídlenie Košickej kotliny* [The Settlement of People in the Košice Region], vols. I–III, Bratislava 1964–1977; *Z osídlenia západného a stredného Slovenska v stredoveku* [The Settlement of People in Western and Central Slovakia in the Middle Ages], Bratislava 1984; and *Slovanské (slovenské) názvy riek na Slovensku a ich prevzatie Maďarmi v 10.–12. storočí* [Slavic (Slovak) Names of Rivers in Slovakia and Their Adoption by the Magyars in the 10th–12th Centuries], Bratislava 1990. For more on Varsík see *Encyklopédia Slovenska*, vol. VI, Bratislava 1982, pp. 245–246.

²² Bratislava 1930, as cited by Žiaci (cf. footnote 19), p. 31. Húščava joined the history department of Comenius University as an assistant professor in 1937 and remained there in various functions until his retirement. He taught archival science from 1950 and edited *Historické štúdie* [Historical Studies] from its inception in 1955 to his death in 1969. For more on Húščava see: *Vedecké dielo univ. prof. dr. Alexandra Húščavu* [The Scientific Achievements of Prof. Dr. A. H.], in: *Historické štúdie* 11 (1966), pp. 7–16, and: *Tridsať rokov od úmrtia prof. Alexandra Húščavu* [Thirty Years since the

Czechoslovakism at Comenius University. Húščava was a student of Václav Chaloupecký and both had argued that northern Slovakia had been uninhabited until the 14th century because there were no written records from that region before that time. Rapant countered that history was based not only on written records but also on archeological and linguistic evidence, and the latter two proved that northern Slovakia was inhabited by Slovaks as early as the Great Moravian Empire of the 9th century. In challenging Húščava, Rapant was, in fact, also challenging Chaloupecký's *Staré Slovensko* [Ancient Slovakia] (1923), which was the first professional history of the Slovaks published in Slovakia and which questioned the concept of a separate Slovak history and identity.²³

This struggle between the two contradictory concepts of "Czechoslovak" and Slovak history came to an end in 1938/39 when Czechoslovakia was dismembered by Nazi Germany and Slovakia became independent under the protection of the Third Reich. The new Slovak government, which was dominated by right-wing nationalists, expelled all pro-Czechoslovak Czech professors from Comenius University. Furthermore, it changed the institution's name to the Slovak University, it abolished the "Czechoslovak" history department and replaced it with a Slovak history department, and it promoted a grateful Daniel Rapant to full professor and made him Chairman of this new department.²⁴ In this position Rapant proceeded to educate a whole new generation of historians who studied Slovak history from a national viewpoint. Rapant was aided in his task by Branislav Varsik and Alexander Húščava, who voluntarily joined the department as associate professors after they had abandoned the "Czechoslovak" philosophy.

Meanwhile, the two historical organizations of Slovakia were reorganized, strengthened, and given new life. The old "Učená spoločnosť Šafaříkova" had spun off a "Československá historická spoločnosť" [Czechoslovak History Society] in 1935, which had held its first Congress in Prague in 1937. However, it was dissolved into the "Česká historická spoločnosť" [Czech Historical Society] in the Czech lands and its counterpart "Slovenská učená spoločnosť" [Slovak Learned Society] in 1939. In 1942 the Slovak government, which was eager to promote Slovak cultural activities, reorganized the Slovak Learned Society into a Slovak Academy of Arts and Sciences, with its own historical division. This division then published the periodical *Historica Slovaca*, which was edited by Varsik.²⁵ The Matica slovenská, meanwhile, also

Death of Prof. A. H.), in: *Historický zborník* 9 (1999), pp. 174–176. It is interesting to note that neither the 60th anniversary tribute nor the 30th anniversary of his death necrology mentions Rapant's attack upon Húščava's book.

²³ Bratislava 1923, as cited by Žiaci (cf. footnote 19), pp. 29 and 31.

²⁴ MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 630.

²⁵ LYDIA KAMENCOVÁ: Vznik Slovenskej historickej spoločnosti a prvá etapa jej činnosti (1946–1950) [The Creation of the Slovak Historical Society and the First Era of Its Existence, 1946–1950], in: *Historický časopis* 39 (1991), No. 2, pp. 183–184; and KAMENCOVÁ: Vznik a činnosť Slovenskej akadémie vied a umení, 1942–1948 [The

reorganized itself in 1942 and established a history department which started to publish its own quarterly *Historický sborník* [Historical Journal] in 1943. The director of the Matica history department (and editor of *Historický sborník*) was František Hrušovský, a graduate of Comenius University, a high-school teacher and principal, and a member of Parliament for the ruling Slovak People's Party. Acting in concert with the Slovak government's desire to banish "Czechoslovak" history from the Slovak schools, Hrušovský hastily wrote a new textbook entitled *Slovenské dejiny* [Slovak History] in 1939, which was the official text used in all Slovak grade and high schools until 1945.²⁶ The director of the historical division of the Slovak Academy of Arts and Sciences from 1943 on was František Bokes, also a graduate of Comenius University, a former high-school teacher, and also a former assistant professor at Comenius. He was given the task of writing a scholarly synthesis of Slovak history and he completed his *Dejiny Slovákov a Slovenska od najstarších čias až po prítomnosť* [A History of Slovakia and the Slovaks from Earliest Times to the Present] as volume IV of the first-ever "Slovenská vlastiveda" [Slovak Compendium of Knowledge].²⁷ Ill-prepared for such an enormous undertaking, in many instances he merely reproduced Daniel Rapant's lecture notes, for which Rapant severely reprimanded him when he reviewed his book.²⁸

At the end of World War II Czechoslovakia was resurrected by the victorious Allies and the question of Slovak versus "Czechoslovak" history reappeared. While Rapant was willing to live in a resurrected Czechoslovakia, some of his colleagues were not. Thus, Rapant became editor of the *Historický sborník* after František Hrušovský went into exile, along with many of his colleagues from the Matica slovenská.²⁹ Rapant's Czech colleagues, meanwhile, resurrected the "Československá společnost historická" in November of 1945 and asked the Slovaks to join it. Slovak historians, having lived and worked independently of the Czechs in the period 1939–1945, however, decided to establish their own "Slovenská historická spoločnosť" [Slovak Historical Society] on March 14, 1946 and elected Rapant as president. This show of Slovak independence dismayed the Czech historians and a struggle then developed over which organization would represent Czecho-

Creation and Activities of the Slovak Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1942–1948], in: *Slovenská archivistika* 27 (1992), No. 2, pp. 174–176.

²⁶ OTČENÁŠ (cf. footnote 10), p. 35.

²⁷ Bratislava 1946.

²⁸ OTČENÁŠ (cf. footnote 10), p. 34; MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 631; and JÁN TIBENSKÝ: *Profesor Daniel Rapant ako vychovateľ vedeckého dorastu* [Professor Daniel Rapant as the Educator of Professional Historians], in: *Historik Daniel Rapant* (cf. footnote 18), p. 87.

²⁹ For Hrušovský's work abroad see *Literárny almanach Slováka v Amerike* [The Literary Almanac of "Slovak v Amerike"], Middletown 1967, pp. 161–162. For an overview of Slovak historians who fled after World War II see my *Slovak Historians in Exile in North America, 1945–1992*, in: *Human Affairs* (Bratislava) 6 (1996), No. 1, pp. 34–44.

slovakia at the International Congress of Historians. To complicate matters, František Bokes was the only Slovak historian who attended the 2nd Congress of Czechoslovak Historians in Prague in October of 1947. Still reeling from Rapant's hostile review of his book, Bokes criticized fellow-Slovak historians for not having attended this Congress, while he personally attacked Rapant. When the Slovak historians met at the 2nd Congress of their society in December of 1947, they expelled Bokes from the Slovak Historical Society, and, even though he was re-admitted in 1949, his reputation would never recover from this episode.³⁰

Not only were Slovak historians confronted with the problem of "Czechoslovakism" from the Czech side again, but the post-war government also interfered in their work. Shortly after the resurrection of Czechoslovakia, Czech historians such as Kamil Krofta and Otakar Odložilík, among others, began to write and champion "Czechoslovak" history again.³¹ At the same time Ladislav Novomeský, the Slovak communist Commissioner for Education and Culture in post-war Slovakia, called on Slovak historians to present "a clear and unified opinion on the past".³² Then, in the fall of 1947 the church historian Vendelín Jankovič, one of Rapant's former students, and secretary of the Slovak Historical Society, was arrested, charged with treason and sentenced to ten years in prison.³³ After the communist seizure of power in Czechoslovakia in February of 1948, Rapant himself was removed as president of the Slovak Historical Society. In the 1949/50 school year Rapant was dismissed as a professor of history, sent to work at the University Library and in June of 1950 the Commissioner for Education and Culture ordered all cultural organizations in Slovakia to follow "the principles of Marxism-Leninism". This effectively halted Rapant's career both as a professor and as an active historian.³⁴ Unlike most of his colleagues, the positivist Rapant rejected the Marxist conception of history and remained an uncompromising

³⁰ KAMENCOVÁ: *Vznik Slovenskej historickej spoločnosti* (cf. footnote 25), p. 184–189.

³¹ MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 630. These historians then wrote various Czechoslovak textbooks which were used until the mid-1960's, when they were supplanted by a new Czechoslovak synthesis written by the orthodox Marxists VÁCLAV HUSA and MIROSLAV KROPILÁK, entitled *Československé dejiny* [Czechoslovak History], Bratislava 1966, and this text would be used in all Slovak schools until the fall of communism in 1989. Ibidem, p. 634.

³² KAMENCOVÁ: *Vznik Slovenskej historickej spoločnosti* (cf. footnote 25), p. 187. Such an opinion has seldom existed in democratic societies.

³³ For more on Jankovič see *Životné jubileum slovenského vedca a matičiara* [An Important Jubilee in the Life of a Slovak Scientist and Member of the Matica slovenská], in: *Historický zborník* 6 (1996), pp. 177–179. Jankovič subsequently wrote many books and articles on Slovak buildings and monuments and compiled the most comprehensive *Bibliografia dejín Slovenska do roku 1965* [Bibliography of the History of Slovakia to 1965] in existence. However, the communists refused to publish it because it contained books and articles by historians and émigrés in exile.

³⁴ KAMENCOVÁ: *Vznik Slovenskej historickej spoločnosti* (cf. footnote 25), pp. 189–193; MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 631.

opponent of Marxism-Leninism to his death in 1988.³⁵ In the same year that Rapant lost his job at the Slovak University, the Slovak Historical Society ceased to exist.

In spite of the tragic end to Rapant's academic career at the height of his most productive years, Slovak historiography survived the next forty years of Communism and "Czechoslovakism". That it survived is due to its solid grounding in Rapant's many publications and the talented young historians whom he had trained during his short academic career.

Rapant's research and publications covered principally the Great Moravian Empire and the 19th century. He ventured into those fields because of the controversy generated by the "Czechoslovak" historians who claimed, among other things, that Great Moravia of the 9th century was the predecessor of 20th-century Czechoslovakia, and, therefore, was historically justified. These same historians also claimed that Slovak nationhood was a very recent (post-1840) phenomenon which could easily be superseded by Czechoslovak nationhood. Rapant, through his numerous publications, rejected both interpretations, as did most of his students. Furthermore, Rapant developed the (now) standard periodization of Slovak history: from earliest times to the Great Moravian Empire of the 9th century; from the 10th century to 1780; and from 1780 to the present.³⁶ He wrote substantial articles and monographs on the Great Moravian Empire³⁷, on the peopling of northern Slovakia³⁸, on the beginnings of Magyarization in the 18th and 19th centuries³⁹, on the peasant uprising of 1831⁴⁰, on the revolution of 1848–1849⁴¹ and on the Memorandum

³⁵ ĽUDOVÍT HARAKSIM: Rapantovo odmietanie marxizmu [Rapant's Rejection of Marxism], in: Historik Daniel Rapant (cf. footnote 18), pp. 27–33.

³⁶ RICHARD MARSINA: Tvorcovia koncepcie slovenských dejín [Creators of the Concept of Slovak History], in: *ibidem*, pp. 23–25.

³⁷ Traja synovia Svätopluka [Svätopluk's Three Sons], Bratislava 1940; Pribynov nitriansky kostolík. Pre koho bol stavaný? [Pribina's Chapel in Nitra. For Whom Was It Built?], Bratislava 1941; and Epilóg k diskusii o Metodovom sídle [Epilogue to the Discussion about the See of Methodius], in: Historický sborník (1947), Nos. 3–4, pp. 545–546.

³⁸ Starý Liptov. Kus polemiky s prof. V. Chaloupeckým [Ancient Liptov. Some Polemics with Prof. V. Chaloupecký], Bratislava 1934.

³⁹ K počiatkom maďarizácie. Diel 1. Vývoj rečovej otázky v Uhorsku v rokoch 1740–1790 [On the Beginnings of Magyarization. Vol. 1. The Evolution of the Question of Language in Hungary in the Years 1740–1790], Bratislava 1927; K počiatkom maďarizácie. Diel druhý. Prvé zákony maďarizačné 1790–1792 [On the Beginnings of Magyarization. Vol. 2. The First Laws of Magyarization, 1790–1792], Bratislava 1931; Ilegálna maďarizácia 1790–1840 [Illegal Magyarization, 1790–1840], Martin 1947.

⁴⁰ Sedliacké povstanie na východnom Slovensku roku 1831 [The Peasant Revolt in Eastern Slovakia in 1831], 3 vols., Bratislava 1953.

⁴¹ Dejiny slovenského povstania r. 1848/1849 [A History of the Slovak Uprising of 1848–1849], 6 vols., Martin 1937–1950; and Slovenské povstanie roku 1848–1849 [The Slovak Uprising, 1848–1849], 8 vols., Bratislava 1954–1972.

of the Slovak Nation in 1861.⁴² His *magnum opus* was the 14-volume History of the Slovak Uprising of 1848–49, which he published between 1937 and 1972.⁴³ The various communist governments of Czechoslovakia allowed him to publish on the Slovak Uprising of 1848–1849 because it was considered non-controversial.

Rapant's students are a virtual "Who's Who" of Slovak historiography. The most distinguished of them are (or were) the mediaevalists Peter Ratkoš⁴⁴, Alžbeta Gácsová⁴⁵, and Richard Marsina⁴⁶, the specialist on guilds and trades Anton Špiesz⁴⁷, the historian of mining and metallurgy Jozef Vlachovič⁴⁸, the urban historian Darina Lehotská⁴⁹, the 18th

⁴² Viedenské memorandum slovenské z roku 1861 [The Vienna Slovak Memorandum of 1861], Martin 1943.

⁴³ See note 40. For a complete bibliography of Rapant's publications see ADELA PERĐOCHOVÁ: Daniel Rapant: Personálna bibliografia [Daniel Rapant: A Personal Bibliography], in: Historik Daniel Rapant (cf. footnote 18), pp. 210–235.

⁴⁴ PETER RATKOŠ's major works are Povstanie baníkov na Slovensku, 1515–1526 [The Miners' Uprising in Slovakia, 1515–1526], Bratislava 1963; Pramene k dejinám Veľkej Moravy [Documentary Sources for the History of Great Moravia], Bratislava 1964; Slovensko v dobe veľkomoravskej [Slovakia in the Era of Great Moravia], Košice 1988; and Veľkomoravské legendy a povesti [Legends and Stories from Great Moravia], Bratislava 1990. For more on Ratkoš see Slovenský biografický slovník, vol. V: R–Š, Martin 1992, p. 46.

⁴⁵ Her major works are Boje slovenského ľudu proti feudálnemu útlaku a vykorisťovaniu [The Struggle of the Slovak People against Feudal Oppression and Exploitation], Bratislava 1960, and Spoločenská štruktúra Bardejova v 15. storočí a v prvej polovici 16. storočia [The Social Structure of the City of Bardejov in the 15th and in the First Half of the 16th Centuries], Bratislava 1972. More information on Gácsová can be found in Slovenský biografický slovník, vol. II (cf. footnote 7), p. 149.

⁴⁶ MARSINA's major works are Codex Diplomaticus et Epistolaris Slovaciae. Tomus I [Diplomatic and Episcopal Codexes of Slovakia, Vol. I], Bratislava 1971, and Codex Diplomaticus et Epistolaris Slovaciae. II [Diplomatic and Episcopal Codexes of Slovakia, II], Bratislava 1987; Štúdie k slovenskému diplomatúru [Additional Studies of the Slovak Diplomatic Codexes], 2 vols., Bratislava 1973 and 1989; Metodov boj [Methodius' Struggles], Bratislava 1985; cf. also footnote 3 and 18. For more on Marsina see Jubileum vedeckého pracovníka, pedagóga a organizátora slovenskej historickej vedy [Jubilee of a Scientist, Teacher and Organizer of the Slovak Historical Discipline], by VINCENT SEDLÁK, in: Historický zborník 8 (1998), pp. 183–185.

⁴⁷ His major works are Manufaktúrne obdobie na Slovensku 1725–1825 [Manufacturing in Slovakia, 1725–1825], Bratislava 1961; Remeslá, cechy a manufaktúry na Slovensku [Crafts, Guilds and Manufacturing in Slovakia], Bratislava 1983; and Dejiny Slovenska na ceste k sebauvedomeniu [A History of Slovakia on the Road to Self-Realization], Bratislava 1992. For more on Špiesz see Encyklopédia Slovenska [Encyclopedia of Slovakia], vol. V: R–Š, Bratislava 1981, pp. 723–724.

⁴⁸ He is best known for his Slovenská meď v 16. a 17. storočí [Copper Mining in Slovakia in the 16th and 17th Centuries], Bratislava 1964. As director of the Slovak National Museum in Bratislava from 1965 until his death in 1977, he sheltered many historians who had been purged from the Historical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Science after 1970. Among them were Július Mésároš and Ľudovít Haraksim, who will be discussed later. When I visited Bratislava in 1988, I met with Haraksim (whom I had

century specialist Pavel Horváth⁵⁰, the expert on science and technology Ján Tibenský⁵¹, the historian of medicine Mária Bokesová-Uherová⁵², the religious historian Vendelín Jankovič, and the archaeologist-historians Ján Dekan⁵³ and Belo Polla⁵⁴, among others.⁵⁵

befriended in 1968) at the National Museum and he provided me with this information. For more on Vlachovič see *Slovenský biografický slovník*, vol. VI: T-Ž, Martin 1994, pp. 295–296.

⁴⁹ LEHOTSKÁ is best known for her monographs on *Dejiny Pezinka* [A History of the City of Pezinok], Bratislava 1947; for *Dejiny Modry* [A History of the City of Modra], Bratislava 1960; and for the edited volume *Dejiny Bratislavy* [A History of the City of Bratislava], Bratislava 1978. For additional information see *Encyklopédia Slovenska*, vol. III: K-M, Bratislava 1979, p. 324.

⁵⁰ He is best known for his *Poddaný ľud na Slovensku v prvej polovici 18. storočia* [Serfs in Slovakia in the First Half of the 18th Century], Bratislava 1963; and *Anton Bernolák (1762–1813): Pôvod a osudy jeho rodiny. Život a dielo* [A. B. (1762–1813): The Origins and Achievements of his Family. His Life and Work], Martin 1998. From 1955 he was the managing editor and from 1971 the editor of *Historické štúdie* [Historical Studies]. For more on Horváth see *Encyklopédia Slovenska*, vol. VI: T-Ž, Bratislava 1982, p. 712.

⁵¹ JÁN TIBENSKÝ is one of Daniel Rapant's most famous and one of his most productive students. Besides the survey histories of Slovakia that he edited or produced, which will be discussed later, he published *Juraj Fándly. Život a dielo* [J. F.: His Life and Works], Bratislava 1950; *Chvály a obrany slovenského národa* [Glorifiers and Defenders of the Slovak Nation], Bratislava 1965; P.J. Šafárik. *Život a dielo* [P.J. Š. His Life and Works], Bratislava 1975; *Dejiny vedy a techniky na Slovensku* [A History of Science and Technology in Slovakia], Bratislava 1979; and *Veľká ozdoba Uhorska. Dielo, život a doba Mateja Bela* [The Great Ornament of Hungary: The Life, Works and Era of Matej Bel], Bratislava 1984 and other books and many articles (cf. footnote 10). Because Tibenský joined the Communist Party in 1952, and also because he helped to "rehabilitate" Anton Bernolák in Slovak historiography, Rapant and Tibenský had a falling out and did not reach a reconciliation until the 1980's. Cf. TIBENSKÝ (footnote 28), pp. 93–95. For more on Tibenský see *Encyklopédia Slovenska*, vol. VI (cf. footnote 50), p. 77, and *Životné a pracovné jubileum historika Jána Tibenského* [Jubilee of the Life and Work of Ján Tibenský], by VINCENT SEDLÁK, in: *Historický zborník* 8 (1998), pp. 200–201.

⁵² She is best known for her monographs *Lekárska fakulta Trnavskej univerzity 1770–1777* [The Faculty of Medicine of Trnava University, 1770–1777], Bratislava 1962; and *Zdravotníctvo na Slovensku v období feudalizmu* [Health and Medicine in Slovakia in the Feudal Era], Bratislava 1973. For more information on her career see *Encyklopédia Slovenska*, vol. I: A-D, Bratislava 1977, p. 219.

⁵³ JÁN DEKAN is another celebrated Rapant student. He dedicated his life to archaeology and published several important books on medieval Slovak history, including *Začiatky slovenských dejín a ríša Veľkomoravská* [The Beginnings of Slovak History and Great Moravia], Bratislava 1951, and *Veľká Morava: Doba a umenie* [Great Moravia: Its Times and Art], Bratislava 1976. For more on Dekan see *Vzácné životné jubileum Jána Dekana* [Important Jubilee of Ján Dekan], in: *Historický zborník* 9 (1999), pp. 169–171.

⁵⁴ BELO POLLA was initially Daniel Rapant's managing editor of the *Historický zborník* of the Matica slovenská in the 1940's. After the communist takeover in 1948 he was jailed and forced to become an archaeologist, working first in Košice and later in Nitra. He

Meanwhile, the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February of 1948 led to another complete reorganization of the teaching and writing of Slovak history. Since no Slovak historian at that time was a Marxist, the Communists had to engage in some "social engineering" in order to produce a Marxist school of historians. They took the first step in this direction when they plucked the young and obscure Miloš Gosiorovský from the ranks of the Slovak Communist Party and in 1946–47 sent him to the newly-established School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Prague. After this he became one of the secretaries of the Slovak Communist Party. In spite of the fact that Gosiorovský had not even completed high school, in 1950 the Slovak Communist Party appointed him professor and chairman (until his death in 1978) of the re-established Department of Czechoslovak History at the Slovak University in Bratislava. Four years later the Communists re-named it the Czechoslovak Comenius University again. Gosiorovský taught modern Slovak history while Jaroslav Dubnický, an art historian and former Rapant student, taught the Middle Ages. Under such leadership the reputation of Comenius University quickly disintegrated.⁵⁶ To salvage the situation, the communist leaders of Slovakia then allowed Rapant's colleagues Branislav Varsik and Alexander Húščava, along with some of Rapant's students – Ján Dekan, Peter Ratkoš and Darina Lehotská – also to teach at Comenius, after

worked at the Slovak National Museum from 1961 to 1986, and during this time edited 26 volumes of the *Zborník Slovenského národného múzea – História* [Journal of the Slovak National Museum – History]. His most important publications are: *Zaniknutá stredoveká osada na Spiši (Zalužany)* [A Spis Village That Disappeared (Zalužany)], Bratislava 1962; *Hrady a kaštiele na východnom Slovensku* [Fortresses and Castles in Eastern Slovakia], Košice 1980; and *Archeológia na Slovensku v minulosti* [Archaeology in Slovakia in the Past], Martin 1996. For more on Polla see his *Na cestu* [Forward], in: *Historický zborník* 6 (1996), pp. 10–11; and Michal Slivka's *K osemdesiatinám PhDr. Bela Pollu, DrSc.* [On the 80th Anniversary of Dr. Belo Polla, DrSc.], in: *Historický zborník* 7 (1997), pp. 143–144.

⁵⁵ TIBENSKÝ (cf. footnote 28), p. 91.

⁵⁶ *Pedagogická encyklopédia Slovenska* [Pedagogical Encyclopedia of Slovakia], vol. 1: A–O, Bratislava 1984, p. 280; HAUTOVÁ (cf. footnote 8), p. 46, and RICHARD MARSINA: *Slovenská historiografia 1945–1990* [Slovak Historiography, 1945–1990], in: *Historický časopis* 39 (1991), Nos. 4–5, p. 372. The Slovak dissident historian J. Mlynárik pointed out that Gosiorovský had to quickly produce a book in order to try to justify his appointment as a full professor. Therefore, Gosiorovský plagiarized an article written by the Social Democrat Ján Pocisk entitled "Z dejín sociálnej demokracie na Slovensku" [A History of Social Democracy in Slovakia] and published it as his "pioneering" work *Príspevok k dejinám slovenského robotníckeho hnutia* [A Contribution to the History of the Slovak Workers' Movement], Bratislava 1951. Cf. JÁN MLYNÁRIK: *Historici v Encyklopédii Slovenska. Bilancia neostalinského kádrovania. (Štúdia k dejinám slovenskej historiografie)* [Historians in the Encyclopedia of Slovakia. The Conclusion of the Neo-Stalinist Purges. (A Contribution to the History of Slovak Historiography)], in: *Premený* 25 (1988), No. 4, p. 142.

they either joined the Communist Party or took an oath of loyalty to the communist state.⁵⁷

At about the same time the Communists reorganized the Matica slovenská and the Slovak Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 1949 the Matica slovenská was stripped of its publishing powers, including its *Historický sborník*, and by a special law of 1954 it was turned into the Slovak National Library, with very limited powers. In these same years the new Slovak Academy of Science replaced the old Slovak Academy of Arts and Sciences, the old *Studia Slovaca* stopped publication, and in 1951 the Historical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Science was created. In 1953 it started to publish *Historický časopis* [Historical Journal], which became the official journal of historians in Slovakia.⁵⁸

Behind most of these changes stood Ľudovít Holotík, who dominated Slovak Marxist historiography for the next thirty years. A graduate of the newly-established Institute of Political and Social Science in Prague (based loosely on the French "École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales"), Holotík was a committed and dedicated Marxist organizer. He was Director of the Historical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Science from 1951 to 1968 and editor of *Historický časopis* from 1953 until 1968, and again from 1970 through 1982. Even though he was much better educated and more intelligent than Miloš Gosiorovský, his unflinching dedication to Marxism eventually undid him.⁵⁹

Holotík's major error was to join his Czech Marxist colleague Václav Král in Prague in denouncing the Czech and Slovak heroes of the first Czechoslovak Republic. This was the trend in East Central Europe during the Stalinist early 1950's, which are infamous for their purge trials as ordered by the paranoid leader of the Soviet Union Josef Stalin.⁶⁰ While Král tried to destroy the reputation of the founders of the first Czechoslovak Republic,

⁵⁷ ANTON ŠPIESZ: K problematike starších dejín Slovenska [On Studying the Ancient History of Slovakia], in: *Historický časopis* 38 (1990), No. 5, p. 683.

⁵⁸ MARSINA (cf. footnote 56), p. 372; JOZEF KLAČKA: Prerastanie Slovenskej akadémie vied a umení do Slovenskej akadémie vied (1947–1953) [The Transformation of the Slovak Academy of Arts and Sciences into the Slovak Academy of Science], in: *Slovenská archivistika* 27 (1992), No. 2, pp. 179–182; and *Národná svetlica: Výber dokumentov k dejinám Matice slovenskej* [The National Beacon: Selected Documents on the History of the Matica slovenská], ed. by MICHAL ELIÁŠ and VOJTECH ŠARLUŠKA, Martin 1988, pp. 216–227.

⁵⁹ JÚLIUS MÉSÁROŠ: Reflexie a päťdesiatych a šesťdesiatych rokoch [Reflections on the 1950's and 1960's], in: *Historický časopis* 39 (1991), Nos. 4–5, p. 383; *Encyklopédia Slovenska*, vol. II: E–J, Bratislava 1978, p. 286; and JÁN MLYNÁRIK: Generál a jeho historik [The General and His Historian], in: *Most* 33 (1986), Nos. 3–4, p. 64.

⁶⁰ For a quick survey of this phenomenon see JOSEPH ROTHSCHILD and NANCY M. WINGFIELD: *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe since World War II*, New York 2000, pp. 125–127.

T.G. Masaryk and Edvard Beneš⁶¹, Holotík went after General Milan R. Štefánik. In his *Štefánikovská legenda a vznik ČSR* [The Legend of Štefánik and the Creation of Czechoslovakia], Holotík set out to prove that the greatest Slovak hero of the 20th century was a mere pawn of the Western powers, a spy for France and an unrelenting foe of the Soviet Union.⁶² As the dissident historian Ján Mlynárik⁶³ pointed out, by the time Holotík's book appeared in 1958 such 'exposés' were no longer in fashion. The paranoid Stalinism of the early 1950's had receded into the background with the death of Josef Stalin in 1953 and Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of the former dictator of the Soviet Union in 1956. Furthermore, in the 1960's, in the era or "reform" Communism in Czechoslovakia, Holotík's book was burned in public, he was attacked by the Slovak press in 1968 to the point that he had to resign as director of the Historical Institute and went "on leave" to Great Britain to "do research."⁶⁴

Meanwhile, both Gosiorovský and Holotík did do some good for Slovak historiography. In spite of their Marxist veneer, both rejected the old philosophy of "Czechoslovakism", and, however carefully, they promoted Slovak national interests. Gosiorovský quickly realized that there were no systematically-organized archives in Slovakia and he arranged for the very talented Latin scholar Michal Kušík, who was a graduate of the Slovak University, and an employee of the Land Archive in Bratislava, to be appointed Scientific Director of the newly-established Slovak Archival Management Center in Bratislava in 1954. That was the same year that the government established the Central Slovak State Archives (later re-named the Slovak National Archives). Since Kušík was a Catholic intellectual, Gosiorovský also arranged for Jozef Chreňo, a good-natured Communist to be the overall Director. The Slovak State Archives then became a haven for persecuted Catholic intellectuals, priests and even ex-Communists!⁶⁵ Meanwhile, under Kušík's leadership a

⁶¹ VÁCLAV KRÁL: *Masarykově a Benešově kontrarevoluční protisovětské politice* [Masaryk's and Beneš's Counter-revolutionary and Anti-Soviet Politics], Praha 1953.

⁶² Bratislava 1958 and 1960.

⁶³ Ján Mlynárik made a name for himself in Slovakia only in 1968 because he was educated as an historian at Charles University in Prague and from 1959 to 1969 he taught at the Academy of Music in Prague. After the Soviet-led invasion of 1968 he lost his teaching position, was reduced to performing menial labour, jailed, and expelled from the country in 1982. Slovak historians looked upon him as a "Prague Slovak", and many did not trust him. A few told me so when I met him, and them, at the 6th Congress of Slovak Historical Society in Martin in 1968. He is best known for his *Thesen zur Aussiedlung der Deutschen aus der Tschechoslowakei, 1945–1947* (1985). Needless to say, his biography does not appear in the *Encyklopédia Slovenska*. For more on Mlynárik see *Kto je kto na Slovensku 1991?* [Who's Who in Slovakia, 1991?], Bratislava 1991, p. 120.

⁶⁴ MLYNÁRIK (cf. footnote 59), pp. 62–64.

⁶⁵ PETER KARTOUS: *Rozhovor s jubilarantom* [Interview with the Jubilarian], in: *Slovenská archivistika* 30 (1995), No. 2, pp. 13–14; JOZEF CHREŇO: *Plodné roky* [Fruitful Years], *ibidem*, pp. 19–23; among the Catholic historians who sought shelter in the 1950's at

network of regional and city archives was also established and Chreňo managed to persuade his communist colleagues to budget enough funds to begin the processing of the materials held by these repositories. Once they had a handle on their collections, the directors of these archives (mostly Ph.D. historians) began to publish "Guides to their Archival Holdings", which became indispensable finding aids to historians.⁶⁶

At the Historical Institute, meanwhile, Ľudovít Holotík hired many scholars, including students of Daniel Rapant. Among the Marxist historians were Ján Dekan, Ján Tibenský, Alžbeta Gacsová, Ľubomír Lipták (a fellow-graduate of the Institute of Political and Social Science in Prague) and Miroslav Kropilák. Among the non-Marxists were František Bokes, Peter Ratkoš, Pavel Horváth and Anton Špiesz. As Holotík's budget increased, so did the number of historians he employed.⁶⁷

By 1957 the Historical Institute had grown so much, and the political situation had mellowed enough, that its employees resurrected the Slovak Historical Society and held a fourth Congress in 1959. There they enunciated their Marxist aims in line with the promulgation of the new 1960 Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic which triumphantly declared that Czechoslovakia had reached the stage of socialism.⁶⁸ The goals of the Historical Institute were the following: to study the economic and social history of Slovakia in general; to trace the evolution of the Slovak nation; to detail the Slovak national revival; to document the "progressive traditions" of the Slovak people; to reveal class conflict in the era of feudalism; to demonstrate the struggle of the proletariat against their oppressors; to look at Czech-Slovak relations; and to wage war against "bourgeois nationalism", the legacy of the People's Party and "clericalism".⁶⁹ As Ľubomír Lipták lamented during the so-called "Prague Spring" of 1968, in the 1950's Slovak historians became "priests of the new state religion", in other words, "court historians".⁷⁰ Those who were not Marxists played a game with the censors by quoting Marx and Lenin at the beginning and end of each article but, as Lipták later lamented, "in our eagerness to fool the censor, we also fooled the

the Slovak State Archives was the medievalist Richard Marsina, who joined the Historical Institute only in 1960.

⁶⁶ For an example of a guide to the Slovak archives see JOZEF KOČIŠ et al.: *Štátny archív v Bytči: Sprievodca po archívnych fondoch* [The State Archives in Bytča: A Guide to Its Archival Holdings], vol. I, Bratislava 1959.

⁶⁷ MÉSÁROŠ (cf. footnote 59), p. 383.

⁶⁸ "Ústava Československej socialistickej republiky schválená 11. júla 1960, č. 100 Zb. Národným zhromaždením" [Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Adopted on July 11, 1960 According to Law 100 of the National Assembly], in: *Ústava Československej socialistickej republiky*, Bratislava 1972, p. 73.

⁶⁹ MÉSÁROŠ (cf. footnote 59), p. 385.

⁷⁰ ĽUBOMÍR LIPTÁK: *Úloha a postavenie historiografie v našej spoločnosti* [The Role and Standing of Historiography in Our Society], in: *Historický časopis* 17 (1969), No. 1, pp. 98–117.

public".⁷¹ They fooled the public so well that, after the collapse of communism in Czechoslovakia in 1989, Anton Špiesz came to the defence of his departed colleague Peter Ratkoš and denied that he had been a Marxist!⁷²

In spite of appearances, Marxism failed to supplant Slovak nationalism. As they entered into the 1960's, many Slovak historians slowly reasserted their true beliefs and began openly to question their Marxist mandate. The first stirrings of unrest among these historians took place at conferences in Smolenice in 1964 and at Banská Bystrica in 1965. At Smolenice Slovak historians of the 20th century protested against the deformation of their history in the 1950's, particularly the degradation of the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) of 1944. The Smolenice conference was an outgrowth of the recent publication of the memoirs of Gustáv Husák, entitled *Svedectvo o Slovenskom národnom povstaní* [An Eyewitness Account of the Slovak National Uprising].⁷³ Husák was a Slovak communist leader from the 1940's who had been purged and jailed in the 1950's for "bourgeois nationalism". However, he had been rehabilitated by the new (since 1963) leader of the Slovak Communist Party, Alexander Dubček, as a part of his "socialism with a human face" movement, which would later be dubbed the "Prague Spring" by western journalists.⁷⁴ Once Husák's book was published, the Historical Institute quickly organized a conference at Smolenice castle, to deal with its implications. The conference resulted in a favourable re-interpretation of the SNP and a new series of books that defended it, including one by the Czech historian Vilém Prečan entitled *Slovenské národné povstanie: Dokumenty* [The Slovak National Uprising: Documents] (1964). This revisionism did not sit well with the Czech communist historian Václav Král who criticized Husák's book in *Kulturní tvorby* [Cultural Works] and Husák replied with another book entitled *Konfrontácia* [Confrontation] (1968).⁷⁵

Meanwhile, Slovak historians also began to revolt against the deformations of Slovak national history in general. At the 5th Congress of the Slovak

⁷¹ LUBOMÍR LIPTÁK: Poznámky o historiografii novších dejín [Reflections on the Historiography of Our More Recent History], in: *Historický časopis* 38 (1990), No. 5, p. 690. I also lamented this practice in: *Agrarian Problems in Slovakia, 1848–1918. An Historiographic Essay*, in: *Histoire sociale/Social History* 7 (May 1974), pp. 111–120.

⁷² ŠPIESZ (cf. footnote 57), p. 683.

⁷³ Bratislava 1964; revised and reprinted in 1969 and 1973.

⁷⁴ For a laudatory biography of Husák see *Encyklopédia Slovenska*, vol. II: E–J, Bratislava 1978, pp. 364–365; for Alexander Dubček's recollections of these events see *Hope Dies Last: The Autobiography of Alexander Dubček*, ed. by JIŘÍ HOCHMAN, New York 1993, pp. 86–87.

⁷⁵ JOZEF JABLONICKÝ: Obrátené hodnoty [Reversed Values], in: *Historický časopis* 38 (1990), No. 3, pp. 420–423. This article was first published in "samizdat" in 1979. In it Jablonický also pointed out that Husák's *Konfrontácia*, which had been critical of the Czechoslovak government of the 1950's, was withdrawn from the market and from all libraries during the period of "consolidation" which started in 1970, and which sought to restore the authority of the Communist Party. Jablonický had in his possession one of the very few copies that survived.

Historical Society held at Banská Bystrica in 1965, the leading historians of the day completely re-interpreted 1,100 years of Slovak history in *Slováci a ich národný vývin* [The Slovaks and Their National Development]. Starting with Peter Ratkoš, they showed that Slovak national identity began to form in the Middle Ages, that there had been ethnic friction between Slovaks and Germans and Slovaks and Magyars starting in the Middle Ages, and that the formation of a distinct Slovak nation started to crystallize in the 18th century.⁷⁶ This book was a rejection of Július Botto's contention that a distinct Slovak national identity had begun to form only in the 1840's and a reaffirmation of the stand taken on this subject by Jozef Škultéty in 1920!⁷⁷

In addition, Slovak historians in the 1960's set about rejecting the "Czechoslovakism" that had been foisted upon them in the 1950's. Not only did they have to subordinate their Slovak Historical Society to the resurrected Czechoslovak History Society in that decade, but they were forced to join with certain Czech colleagues in producing a *Přehled československých dějin* [Survey of Czechoslovak History] in 1958 and a follow-up *Československé dějiny* [Czechoslovak History] in 1961.⁷⁸ After this Slovak historians resisted producing more such "Czechoslovak" histories and set about publishing a projected four-volume synthesis of Slovak history. They managed to publish only two volumes of *Dejiny Slovenska* [A History of Slovakia], the first edited by Ján Tibenský covering from earliest times to 1848 and the second edited by Július Mésároš from 1848 to 1900.⁷⁹ The next two volumes never appeared because Ľudovít Holotík was supposed to edit them but he failed to do so for "psychological" reasons (he could not bring himself to repudiate his attack upon Štefánik in 1958).⁸⁰

Meanwhile, the almost-forgotten Daniel Rapant joined in the criticism of Marxist historiography and was rehabilitated. In a series of articles published

⁷⁶ *Slováci a ich národný vývin*. Sborník materiálov z V. sjazdu slovenských historikov v Banskej Bystrici [The Slovaks and Their National Development: Papers from the 5th Congress of Slovak Historians Held in Banská Bystrica], ed. by JÚLIUS MÉSÁROŠ, Bratislava 1969.

⁷⁷ BOTTO (cf. footnote 20). For Škultéty's views on this matter see above, pp. 162-163.

⁷⁸ *Přehled československých dějin*, 2 vols., Praha 1958; and KAREL GALÁŇ et al.: *Československé dějiny*, Bratislava. See also MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), pp. 632-634.

⁷⁹ *Dejiny Slovenska*, I: Od najstarších čias do roku 1848, Bratislava 1961, and *Dejiny Slovenska*, II: Od roku 1848 do roku 1900, Bratislava 1968. Holotík tried to claim credit for both of these volumes by listing himself as "Chief Editor". Július Mésároš started his career at the Slovak University in the 1940's as a student of sociology, but, after the Communists closed this "bourgeois" department, he was forced to become an historian of the 19th century. Cf. MÉSÁROŠ (footnote 59), p. 381. Mésároš is best known for his pioneering work *Roľnícka a národnostná otázka na Slovensku, 1848-1900* [The Agrarian and National Question in Slovakia, 1848-1900], Bratislava 1959. For more on Mésároš see: K jubileu historika PhDr. Júliusa Mésároša, DrSc [On the Jubilee of the Historian Dr. Július Mésároš, DrSc], by MILAN PODRIMAVSKÝ, in: *Historický zborník* 8 (1998), pp. 186-188.

⁸⁰ MÉSÁROŠ (cf. footnote 59), p. 386.

in *Slovenská literatúra* [Slovak Literature] and *Slovenské pohľady* [Slovak Viewpoints] in 1966 and 1967, Rapant not only attacked the Marxist deformation of Slovak history but also began a reconciliation with certain historians, notably with the 19th century expert Július Mésároš who defended Rapant against his critics in *Predvoj* [Vanguard]. Interestingly enough, the orthodox Marxist Magyar historian Erzsébet Andics reacted negatively to Rapant's articles, especially as they applied to the Marxist interpretation of the 1848–49 revolution. Then the Ambassador of Hungary in Prague backed her up and Mésároš openly criticized her (and the Ambassador) and it led to a "cause célèbre" in Czechoslovakia.⁸¹

The one area in which the Slovak Marxist and ex-Marxist historians disagreed with Rapant (and they still disagree with him) was with his charge that the Roman Catholic priest Anton Bernolák, the first codifier of the Slovak language, was a Magyarone, that is, someone who favoured the assimilation of the Slovaks by the Magyars. Rapant, a Lutheran, had published a brochure on *Maďarónstvo Bernolákovo* [Bernolák's Magyarone Leanings] in 1930, and Ján Tibenský, along with other Slovak historians of the 18th century, had cleared Bernolák of this charge.⁸²

In spite of these small disagreements, Slovak historians recommended that Rapant be "rehabilitated" and honoured for his great contribution to the creation of the first school of professional historians in Slovakia. As a result, in 1968 Rapant was formally elected to the Slovak Academy of Science and given the title "Akademik", and the government awarded him the socialist "Rada práce" [Award of Work] and the "Národná cena SSR" [National Award of the Slovak Socialist Republic].⁸³ Though Rapant once again fell into disfavour with the Communists after the Soviet-led invasion of 1968, his students published (in exile) a glowing tribute to his memory when he died in 1988 and a full *Festschrift* on the 100th anniversary of his birth in 1997.⁸⁴

Meanwhile, Slovak historians decided to start working on a new synthesis of Slovak history, but it suffered from political changes that rocked Czechoslovakia in 1968–69. As a team of historians, under the direction of Ján Tibenský, worked on the one-volume synthesis *Slovensko: Dejiny* [Slovakia: a History] (which was volume I of a new four-volume *Slovenská vlastiveda*), Holotík failed to produce his promised chapters on the 20th century. Therefore, Július Mésároš and Ľubomír Lipták, a specialist on the 20th century, stepped in and wrote the missing chapters. However, by the time the book

⁸¹ Žiaci (cf. footnote 19), pp. 33–34; Rapant's articles appeared in *Slovenská literatúra* XII (1965), No. 5, pp. 437–456 and No. 6, pp. 493–506, in: *Slovenské pohľady* LXVII (1967), No. 4, pp. 28–38; and in: *Kultúrny život* 23 (1968), No. 33, pp. 8–9. Mésároš's defense of Rapant appeared in: *Predvoj*, June 27 and August 4, 1966 and Andicsová's article appeared in: *Valóság* 1966, No. 4, as cited *ibidem*.

⁸² Žiaci (cf. footnote 19), p. 31; *Maďarónstvo Bernolákovo*, Bratislava 1930; and TIBENSKÝ (cf. footnote 28), p. 94.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, p. 94.

⁸⁴ Žiaci (cf. footnote 19), pp. 19–42; and Historik Daniel Rapant (cf. footnote 18).

reached the publisher (1970), Lipták had been purged from the Historical Institute because he had become one of the leading critics of Marxist historiography. Therefore, Lipták's chapter on the First World War appeared under the pseudonym of Ján Michalec!⁸⁵ This was not the end of the story. Because the first edition of the book sold out, a 2nd edition was prepared for publication in 1978. This time, however, the section dealing with the Soviet-led invasion of 1968 was not half-hearted, as it had been in the first edition, but rather direct: the invasion had been justified to stop "right-wing opportunist, revisionist and antisocialist groups" in Slovakia and the Czech Lands from taking over in 1968. Furthermore, whereas the 1971 edition had mentioned Gustáv Husák only in passing, the 1978 edition featured a long biography and a full-page picture of the now First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and its President!⁸⁶

Lipták's fate reflected the changing political climate of Czechoslovakia in 1968–1969 and the so-called "consolidation process" that started in 1970. In 1968 the Slovak Historical Society had held its 6th Congress in Martin and, speaker after speaker had denounced the previous Marxist interpretation of Slovak history. The keynote address was given by Lipták, the new editor of *Historický časopis*.⁸⁷ He was supported by the new Director of the Historical Institute, Július Mésároš. Ľudovít Holotík, meanwhile, had resigned both of these positions and had gone to Great Britain, ostensibly to do research. Slovak historians were caught up in the euphoria of the Dubček Era, but it lasted only until August 21, 1968, when over half a million troops of the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia and put a halt to the attempt to create "socialism with a human face".⁸⁸

⁸⁵ MÉSÁROŠ (cf. footnote 59), p. 387; and JÚLIUS MÉSÁROŠ: Zápasy o vedeckú etiku v historickom bádání v zrkadle dokumentov z obdobia konsolidácie [Struggles over Scientific Ethics in the Discipline of History as Reflected in Documents from the Era of Consolidation], in: *Historický časopis* 38 (1990), No. 5, pp. 706–708. Lipták had made his reputation with his monograph *Slovensko v 20. Storočí* [Slovakia in the 20th Century], Bratislava 1968.

⁸⁶ JÁN TIBENSKÝ et al.: *Slovensko: Dejiny* [Slovakia: a History], Bratislava 1971, esp. p. 833; and JÁN TIBENSKÝ et al.: *Slovensko: Dejiny*, Bratislava 1978, pp. 927–973. The quotation is from p. 930. Photographs of Gustáv Husák can be found on pages 931, 933, 937, 940, 965 and 971. The full-page photograph is on page 965.

⁸⁷ LIPTÁK (cf. footnote 70), pp. 100, 107. Only this paper was published before the "consolidation" process began. The rest did not appear until the fall of communism in 1989. Most were published in: *Historický časopis* 38 (1990), No. 6, pp. 844–893.

⁸⁸ I participated in the 6th Congress of the Slovak Historical Society in Martin as a graduate student from the University of Minnesota. I was in Slovakia from the end of June, 1968 to the end of August. Holotík had invited me as part of a research team headed by Professor Timothy L. Smith to study emigration from 19th-century Slovakia to the USA. I briefly met with Holotík before he left for Great Britain, then befriended his successor Július Mésároš, who helped me to get started in my research. Our research team had the unfortunate experience of witnessing the Warsaw Pact invasion and we left the country about a week later. We were supposed to have participated in a

In the aftermath of the Soviet-led invasion of 1968, the purging of the Communist Party of all reformers, and the so-called "normalization" process that started in 1970 under the leadership of Husák, the new Party boss, Slovak historians once again had to tow the Party line. The first steps in this direction were taken when Mésároš was dismissed as Director of the Historical Institute in the summer of 1970 and replaced with the orthodox Marxist Miroslav Kropilák, an old friend and colleague of Holotík.⁸⁹ Ľubomír Lipták, meanwhile, was dismissed as editor of *Historický časopis* and replaced by Holotík, who had returned to Czechoslovakia after the invasion. Holotík also became president of the Slovak Historical Society from 1970 to 1981. These new masters then purged the Historical Institute of some of its best people, including twenty historians of the 20th century. Those expelled included the veterans Július Mésároš, Ľudovít Haraksim⁹⁰, Jozef Jablonický⁹¹ and Ľubomír Lipták.⁹²

joint conference with Slovak historians in September but, "due to the unforeseen circumstances", as one of them put it, the conference was called off.

⁸⁹ Kropilák had been one of the first Marxist historians hired by Holotík and he specialized in glorifying the role of Slovak Communists in the Slovak National Uprising. MÉSÁROŠ (cf. footnote 59), p. 383; Kropilák is best-known for his *Účast' vojakov v Slovenskom národnom povstaní* [The Role of Slovak Soldiers in the Slovak National Uprising], Bratislava 1960, and *Nová cesta Slovenska* [The New Slovak Road], Bratislava 1965. For more on Kropilák see *Encyklopédia Slovenska*, vol. III: K-M, Bratislava 1979, p. 254.

⁹⁰ Haraksim specialized in the history of Slovak-Slavic relations in the 17th–19th centuries, and especially the history of Rusins in Slovakia. He is best known for *K sociálnym a kultúrnym dejinám Ukrajincov na Slovensku do roku 1867* [A Social and Cultural History of Ukrainians in Slovakia to 1867], Bratislava 1961, and is the co-author of *Slovanství v dějinách Čechů a Slováků* [Pan-Slavism in the History of the Czechs and Slovaks], Praha 1968. For more on Haraksim see *K sedemdesiatinám historika Ľudovíta Haraksima* [On the 70th Birthday of the Historian L.H.], by JÚLIUS MÉSÁROŠ in: *Historický zborník* 8 (1998), pp. 172–173.

⁹¹ Jozef Jablonický, who specialized in the history of the Slovak National Uprising, rejected the Soviet-led invasion of 1968 and all attempts to re-write the history of the SNP in order to emphasize the role of the Communists in it. He was expelled from the Historical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Science in 1974 and went into active opposition to the regime. Jailed many times, he nevertheless published several attacks upon the regime in "samizdat" and remained a thorn in its side. His persistence paid off and, after the Communists were overthrown in 1989, he was made Director of the Department of Political Science of the Slovak Academy of Science and he then published all of his "samizdat" works. For more on Jablonický see: *Kto je kto na Slovensku 1991?* (cf. footnote 63), p. 74, and *MLYNÁRIK* (cf. footnote 56), pp. 144, 157. Jablonický is best known for his *Slovensko na prelome* [Slovakia at the Crossroads], Bratislava 1965, *Z ilegality do povstania* [From Illegality to the Uprising], Bratislava 1969, and for *Povstanie bez legend* [The Uprising without Legends], Bratislava 1990.

⁹² I witnessed some of these occurrences because I had returned to Slovakia for a summer of research in 1970. Even though Mésároš had officially invited me, by the time I arrived in late June he was no longer Director of the Institute. He briefly met with me in his former office, sheepishly explained what had happened, and left. Kropilák declined

The purge of historians from the Historical Institute was justified by Ľudovít Holotík in his plenary address to the 7th Congress of the Slovak Historical Society in June of 1975. After he had bragged about the achievements of Marxist historiography which had proved to his satisfaction that Slovakia was not “a non-historical nation”, as its enemies had said in the 19th century, Holotík accused past “bourgeois” historians such as Július Botto and Daniel Rapant of having ignored the period between Great Moravia and the 19th century. Indeed, he accused Rapant of having instigated the “bourgeois nationalists” among Slovak historians to “come out of hiding” at the 5th Congress of the Slovak Historical Society at Banská Bystrica in 1965 and this whole movement led to the “most important collective right-wing demonstration” at the 6th Congress in Martin in 1968. He singled out Ľubomír Lipták’s “political science and skeptical” presentation, as well as Ján Mlynárik’s “destructive, anti-Marxist” paper as the most damaging to the socialist cause. He ended by defending the Marxist approach to history as being necessary for “the building of our socialist society”, he rejected historical objectivity as a “bourgeois” concept, while he praised the “new leadership” of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, which had come to power in April of 1969 for having “put things right” in the Republic. Curiously enough, he did not mention the Soviet-led invasion of 1968. He also promised a new Marxist synthesis of Slovak history, which would stress “Czechoslovak solidarity”.⁹³ The latter promise was quite ironic because the Communist Party had forced Czech and Slovak historians to produce a new *Přehled dějin Československa* [A Survey History of Czechoslovakia] in 1980.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, Holotík repeated his charges and once again called for a new, multi-volume socialist synthesis of Slovak history at the 8th Congress of the Slovak Historical Society held in Bratislava in June of 1981.⁹⁵

Holotík’s 1981 paper turned out to be his “swan song”. That same year, some of his colleagues had discovered that Holotík had plagiarized a paper written by the purged Július Mésároš and had it published under his own name in an Austrian journal. This led to his dismissal as editor of *Historický časopis* and his forced early retirement from the Historical Institute at the age of 58. His final humiliation came in 1985 when the Historical Institute forbade him to attend the International Congress of Historians in Stuttgart. Since Holotík had attended every such Congress since 1955, he could no

to meet with me. See also LIPTÁK (cf. footnote 71), p. 690; and MLYNÁRIK (cf. footnote 56), p. 157.

⁹³ ĽUDOVÍT HOLOTÍK: Retrospektívy, stav a úlohy slovenskej historiografie [A Retrospective and the Standing and Role of Slovak Historiography], in: *Historický časopis* 24 (1976), Nos. 1–2, pp. 5–21.

⁹⁴ 2 vols., ed. by JAROSLAV PURŠ and MIROSLAV KROPILÁK, Praha 1980; and MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), p. 634.

⁹⁵ ĽUDOVÍT HOLOTÍK: Otázky koncepcie dejín Slovenska [Questions Regarding the Conception of the History of Slovakia], in: *Historický časopis* 30 (1982), No. 1, pp. 13–19.

longer suffer any more humiliations and he committed suicide by jumping from his fifth-story apartment window on November 30, 1985.⁹⁶

Holotík's death signalled the beginning of the end of Marxist historiography in Slovakia.

His less-educated colleague (and sometimes rival) Miloš Gosiorovský had died in 1978. Miroslav Kropilák, who had taken over as Director of the Historical Institute in 1970, fell into disfavor with his Marxist colleagues and was pensioned off in 1980. He was replaced by Samuel Cambel, a specialist on Soviet history and former Director of the Institute for Marxism-Leninism at the Central Committee of the Slovak Communist Party. Cambel also replaced Holotík as editor of *Historický časopis* in 1982. While Cambel was a competent bureaucrat, who would hold the reins over Slovak historians until the collapse of communism in 1989, he would add nothing substantially new to Slovak Marxist historiography.⁹⁷ His colleague Viliam Plevza, who had been Gustáv Husák's personal secretary in 1969, meanwhile, became the official court historian of Marxism, glorifying its achievements in the lavishly-illustrated two-volume *Trvalé hodnoty*⁹⁸ [Perpetual Values], which the dissident historian Jozef Jablonický sarcastically characterized as "Obrátené hodnoty" [Reversed Values].⁹⁹

Contemporary Slovak historians have evaluated forty years of Marxist history in both positive and negative terms. On the positive side the Marxists established an Historical Institute in the reorganized Slovak Academy of Science in 1951, they hired both Marxist and non-Marxist historians, and they published three major historical journals: the quarterly *Historický časopis* from 1953 (edited by Holotík until 1982), the annual *Historické štúdie* from 1955 (edited by Alexander Húščava and Pavel Horváth) and the foreign-language annual *Studia historica Slovaca* from 1963 (edited by Holotík). They also published a whole host of local and regional journals. Furthermore, in 1954 Marxist and non-Marxist historians founded and organized the Slovak National Archives, and their local and county affiliates. In 1965 they also established and edited the annual *Slovenská archivistika*.

⁹⁶ MLYNÁRIK (cf. footnote 59), p. 67; MLYNÁRIK (cf. footnote 56), pp. 148–149; Mlynárik gave the wrong date for his suicide, December 2, 1985. In his necrology, published in: *Historický časopis* 34 (1986), No. 1, pp. 159–160, no mention was made of Holotík's suicide.

⁹⁷ MLYNÁRIK (cf. footnote 56), pp. 143–144; SAMUEL CAMEL: Otázky vývoja socialistickej spoločnosti v našej marxistickej historiografii [On the Question of the Development of Socialist Society in Our Marxist Historiography], in: *Historický časopis* 30 (1982), No. 1, pp. 66–72.

⁹⁸ Bratislava 1976.

⁹⁹ JABLONICKÝ (cf. footnote 75). This article was first published in "samizdat" in 1979. In the Husák era Plevza was a professor of history at Comenius University and Director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia. For more on Plevza see MLYNÁRIK (cf. footnote 56), pp. 145–146.

Besides hundreds of specialized monographs¹⁰⁰, Marxist historiography also produced several major syntheses and encyclopedias. In addition to the already-mentioned *Dejiny Slovenska, I and II* (1961 and 1968), they produced *Slovensko: Dejiny* (1971 and 1978) and, finally, a massive six-volume *Dejiny Slovenska* [A History of Slovakia] between 1985 and 1992.¹⁰¹ The latter was Holotík's dream come true, because it was a truly Marxist synthesis of Slovak history from earliest times to 1960. These six volumes were written by the leading Marxist and non-Marxist historians of Slovakia and they contain an enormous amount of useful information about Slovak social history over the last 1,500 years.¹⁰²

This new Marxist synthesis was made possible by the publication of the first-ever *Encyklopédia Slovenska* and related encyclopedias in the 1970's and 1980's. As in the case of the historical syntheses mentioned above, the Slovak encyclopedias also had a long and tortuous birth. Ľudovít Novák, the Secretary of the Slovak Academy of Arts and Sciences had first proposed such an encyclopedia in 1943 but World War II, plus communist interference in the project after 1945, held it up until the 1950's. Then the sociologist Alexander Hirner, who was an employee of the Matica slovenská and of the publishing house "Osveta", put together a team of experts to try to prepare an *Encyklopédia Slovenska* and a *Průručný encyklopedický slovník* [A Handy Encyclopedic Dictionary]. They worked on these projects between 1953 and 1959 until State Security raided their offices, arrested the participants and jailed most of them from six to fifteen years because they had planned to mention in their work various exiles and émigrés who were considered hostile to the Republic and to socialism.¹⁰³

After the encyclopedia project was taken away from the Matica slovenská it was transferred to the Slovak Academy of Science where it languished for eighteen years. The reason for this delay was that the historians assigned to the "people" portion of the project – Miloš Gosiorovský, Miroslav Kropilák, Ľudovít Holotík and Viliam Plevza – were all committed Marxists who did not look upon their work as being a compendium of knowledge but, rather, as a teaching-tool for Marxism-Leninism. The Dubček era of the 1960's slowed

¹⁰⁰ Slovak historians have published several useful bibliographies of their work, which they misnamed "historiographies" (there is no critical analysis of the works listed), and among them are: *Bibliographie chronologique de l'historiographie slovaque. Activité des années 1960–1977*, in: *Studia historica Slovaca XI* (1980), and *A Guide to Historiography in Slovakia*, in: *Studia historica Slovaca XX* (1995).

¹⁰¹ *Dejiny Slovenska*, 6 vols., ed. by SAMUEL CAMBEL, Bratislava 1985–1992.

¹⁰² I reviewed this synthesis in: *Marxist Historians in Search of Slovak History*, in: *Slovakia 35* (1991–1992), Nos. 64–65, pp. 119–122.

¹⁰³ MLYNÁRIK (cf. footnote 56), p. 137. During my research-trip to Slovakia in the summer of 1968 I met and befriended Dr. Jozef Telgarský, the Director of the Slovak National Library at the Matica slovenská, who had recently been rehabilitated. He had worked on the encyclopedia project in the 1950's and had been one of those arrested in 1959. He recounted this whole experience to me.

them down considerably, as did the purging of the Historical Institute in the 1970's. When the six-volume encyclopedia finally appeared between 1977 and 1982, it was denounced by the dissident historians Jozef Jablonický and Ján Mlynárik as a "work of national shame". Mlynárik was especially critical of its hundreds of factual errors and of the dozens of historians and politicians left out (or slandered), because they were ideologically unsuited for inclusion.¹⁰⁴

In spite of its shortcomings, the *Encyklopédia Slovenska* contains an immense amount of information, and the project spawned a whole series of very useful reference tools for the serious researcher. Among them are the three-volume *Súpis pamiatok na Slovensku* [Compendium of Monuments in Slovakia]¹⁰⁵, the three-volume *Vlastivedný slovník obcí na Slovensku* [Encyclopedic Dictionary of Villages in Slovakia]¹⁰⁶, the two-volume *Encyklopédia slovenských spisovateľov* [Encyclopedia of Slovak Writers]¹⁰⁷, the two-volume *Pedagogická encyklopédia Slovenska* [Pedagogical Encyclopedia of Slovakia]¹⁰⁸, the six-volume *Slovenský biografický slovník* [Slovak Biographical Dictionary]¹⁰⁹ and the *Encyklopédia dramatických umení Slovenska* [Encyclopedia of Dramatic Arts in Slovakia].¹¹⁰ None of these encyclopedias existed before and they are indispensable reference tools for the serious researcher, including the historian.¹¹¹

While recognizing the tremendous quantitative output of historians during the Marxist era, certain Slovak historians have been quite critical of the quality of this output. The most critical has been the medievalist Richard Marsina, a student of Rapant and president of the Slovak Historical Society from 1991 to 1996. In a devastating critique of Marxist historiography published in 1991, Marsina admitted that a lot of history had been written during the Marxist era, but he added that, if there had been no Marxist era, a lot would have been written anyway.¹¹² On the other hand, he continued, the Marxists

¹⁰⁴ MLYNÁRIK (cf. footnote 56), pp. 138–175. The quotation is from p. 175.

¹⁰⁵ *Súpis pamiatok na Slovensku*, 3 vols., Bratislava 1967–1969.

¹⁰⁶ *Vlastivedný slovník obcí na Slovensku*, 3 vols., Bratislava 1977–1978.

¹⁰⁷ *Encyklopédia slovenských spisovateľov*, 2 vols., Bratislava 1984.

¹⁰⁸ *Pedagogická encyklopédia Slovenska*, 2 vols., Bratislava 1984–1985.

¹⁰⁹ *Slovenský biografický slovník*, 6 vols., Martin 1986–1994.

¹¹⁰ *Encyklopédia dramatických umení Slovenska*, 2 vols., Bratislava 1989–1990.

¹¹¹ For this paper I found useful biographical information on many Slovak historians in these various encyclopedias.

¹¹² I would disagree with Marsina on this point. While it is undoubtedly true that Slovak historians would have produced "a lot" if they had not been faced with communist masters, they would probably not have produced as much as they did under Communism for the simple reason that the Communists heavily funded the arts and sciences, much more than the Slovak government is currently doing. For instance, under Communism the Slovak Academy of Science employed over 10,000 researchers. Today it has under 3,000. Similarly, under Communism the Historical Institute employed over 100 historians. Today it has fewer than 50. Cf. Z prejavu predsedu SAV Branislava Lichardusa na slávnostnom zhromaždení k 40. výročiu SAV [Address of the President

greatly deformed Slovak history in the following manner: they forced Marxism to be the basis of all history; they stressed the modern over the earlier period; they defamed certain important historical personages who did not fit into their conception of history; they favoured "Czechoslovak" over Slovak history; in some instances they equated Slovak history with Fascism; they falsified history to suit their aims; they fostered "Slavic" solidarity in order to weaken Slovak national feeling; they halted certain legitimate research or publications projects because they did not promote Marxism; they fostered "vulgar atheism" and ignored the positive contributions of Christianity to Slovak history; they deformed certain publications by excluding individuals or institutions that were incompatible with Marxism; they ignored the period from Roman times to Samo's Empire; they did not study the communist treatment of minorities; they did not allow the writing of critical or objective history; they used history in the schools to promote Marxism, internationalism and "Czechoslovakism"; and, they actively worked against the creation of a Slovak "historical nation"; instead, they tried to "de-nationalize" the Slovaks. The net result was that in 1990 there was not a single "Slovak History". Instead, there were several "Czechoslovak" histories, or histories of Slovakia (the country) but not the people.¹¹³

Not surprisingly, not all Slovak historians agreed with Marsina's analysis. Although most agreed that Marxism had deformed Slovak history, some, led by Ľubomír Lipták, felt that future historians should focus on the history of Slovakia, not on national Slovak history.¹¹⁴ Marsina denounced such histori-

of the Slovak Academy of Science, Branislav Lichardus, on the Occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the Founding of the Academy], in: *Správy slovenskej akadémie vied* 30 (1994), No. 1, p. 305; discussion with Dr. Branislav Lichardus, President of the Slovak Academy of Science and Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States, April 22, 1995, in Washington, D.C.; discussion with Dr. Dušan Kováč, Secretary of the SAV, in Washington, D.C. May 4, 1999. The government of the Slovak Socialist Republic (in existence since the federalization of Czechoslovakia in 1969) also spent enormous sums promoting Slovak history and culture, partly to promote Marxism-Leninism and partly to try to catch up with the Czechs in all fields, whether economic or cultural. That is why scholars were able to publish so many encyclopedias in the 1970's and 1980's. Marsina himself lamented the lack of funds for history and culture recently, when he complained in his presidential address that historians nowadays had to apply to various foundations in order to secure funding for their research and publications. Cf. RICHARD MARSINA: *O istých črtách terajšieho stavu slovenskej historiografie* [On Certain Aspects of the Current State of Slovak Historiography], in: *Historický časopis* 45 (1997), No. 1, p. 6.

¹¹³ MARSINA (cf. footnote 3), pp. 375–379. Although less vehemently, MĚSÁROŠ agreed with Marsina's analysis (cf. footnote 59), p. 387; as did HARAKSIM in: *Úlohy Slovenskej historickej spoločnosti pri spracovaní našich dejín* [The Role of the Slovak Historical Society in the Writing of Our History], in: *Historický časopis* 38 (1990), No. 5, pp. 685–689.

¹¹⁴ Lipták had made this suggestion at the 6th Congress of the Slovak Historical Society in Martin in 1968 and he repeated this stand after the fall of communism in 1990. Cf. LIPTÁK (footnote 70), p. 112; and LIPTÁK (footnote 71), p. 691.

ans as “cosmopolitans”, who were no better than Marxists, because the latter had stressed “internationalism”. Indeed, Marsina led a group of Slovak nationalist historians in resurrecting the History Department of the Matica slovenská in 1992 (of which Marsina was elected president) and in re-establishing its *Historický zborník* in 1996.¹¹⁵

Meanwhile, followers of these two schools have published competing versions of Slovak history. The émigré historian Milan S. Ďurica, who was heavily influenced by the work of fellow-émigré František Hrušovský (he died in 1956), returned to Slovakia after 50 years of exile and wrote a chronological *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov* [A History of Slovakia and the Slovaks], in which he stressed Slovak national history.¹¹⁶ Dušan Kováč, the successor of Cambel as Director of the Historical Institute from 1990 to 1999, on the other hand, in his *Dejiny Slovenska*, wrote about the territory of Slovakia and its peoples in a European context.¹¹⁷ This division puts Slovak historians squarely within the historiography of East Central Europe, where the division between national and international history is also evident, with most of the historians in these countries stressing national history.¹¹⁸

It should be apparent, therefore, that Slovak historiography in the 20th century has been characterized by a struggle for legitimacy. In the first Czechoslovak Republic Slovak history entered into its infancy and had to face

¹¹⁵ RICHARD MARSINA: Správa o činnosti Historického odboru Matice slovenskej, 11.12.1992–10.12.1994 [Report on the Activities of the Historical Division of the Matica slovenská, 11.12.1992–10.12.1994], and Na úvod [Forward], in: *Historický zborník* 6 (1996), pp. 161–165 and 12–14.

¹¹⁶ MILAN S. ĎURICA: *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov v chronologickom prehľade* [A Chronological Survey History of Slovakia and the Slovaks], Košice 1995.

¹¹⁷ DUŠAN KOVÁČ: *Dejiny Slovenska* [A History of Slovakia], Praha 1998. The publication of this book in Prague did not win the author many accolades in Slovakia.

¹¹⁸ In 1992 the American Historical Review 97 (No. 4, October) published a special issue on the “Historiography of the Countries of Eastern Europe” with PIOTR WANDYCZ writing on Poland (1011–1025); JIŘÍ KOŘALKA on Czechoslovakia (1026–1040); ISTVÁN DEÁK on Hungary (1041–1063); KEITH HITCHINS on Romania (1064–1083); IVO BANAC on Yugoslavia (1084–1104) and MARIA TODOROVA on Bulgaria (1105–1117). According to these authors, historians in every country surveyed (except what is now the Czech Republic) wrote national history. The Czechs, according to Jiří Kořalka, stopped writing national history in the 1890’s. However, Kořalka’s article was severely criticized by both Czech and Slovak historians (AHR 98, No. 2, April, [1993], pp. 650–651) and it was partly contradicted by JAN RYCHLÍK in: *České, slovenské, československé dějiny – vztahy a souvislosti* [Czech, Slovak and Czechoslovak History – Relations and Continuities], in: *Československo 1918–1938: Osudy demokracie ve Střední Evropě, I. Sborník mezinárodní vědecké konference* [Czechoslovakia, 1918–1938: The Fate of Democracy in Central Europe, I. Papers from an International Scholarly Conference], Praha 1999, pp. 163–169. In this article Rychlík pointed out that, as far as most Czech historians of the 20th century were concerned, Slovak history was a mere add-on to Czech history after 1918. After the breakup of Czechoslovakia in 1993, Czech historians returned to writing Czech history again, although within the context of the Habsburg Monarchy and Europe.

the rival ideology of "Czechoslovakism". In the decade between 1939 and 1948 Slovak history came of age, was legitimized and started to thrive. The communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948 derailed it once again and Slovak historians had to face the twin threats of Marxism and watered-down "Czechoslovakism". While the 1950's was truly a "dark age" for Slovak historiography, the 1960's provided some relief in the so-called "Prague Spring". Warsaw Pact tanks in 1968 ended this brief flirtation with freedom and Slovak historiography was again constricted into the straight-jacket of Marxism. Only with the ultimate collapse of communism in 1989 and with political independence for Slovakia in 1993 did Slovak historiography emerge into the light of freedom and the right to debate in which direction it would go. It should not surprise us that historians have suggested more than one route. That, after all, is how history functions in democratic societies. Historians have to be free to recount the past as they see it. That Slovak historians are now doing so is a sure sign that Slovak historiography has finally matured.

Summary

The painful birth of Slovak historiography in the 20th century

Slovak history as a separate and legitimate subject of study had to struggle for recognition in the 20th century. The cause of this struggle was political. While the Slovaks were still a part of the Kingdom of Hungary, they had no High Schools or Universities under their control where they could study or teach the history of their people. In the new Czechoslovak Republic, which was founded in 1918, the ruling Czechs tried to impose a Czechoslovak interpretation upon Slovak history but they were opposed by Slovakia's first professional historian, Daniel Rapant. In the period 1938–1948, when the Slovaks had more control over their political and intellectual development, Slovak history began to flourish. After the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948 a Marxist and mildly Czechoslovak interpretation was forced upon Slovak historians by the ruling Communist Party. In the 1960's, however, as the "Prague Spring" loosened political control over historians, Slovak history struggled to reassert itself. Before it could fully do so the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia and put an end to all reforms, including the freedom of historians to write history without political or ideological constraints. Only with the collapse of Communism in 1989 and the creation of an independent Slovak Republic in 1993 did historians in Slovakia find themselves free to interpret their past as they saw fit.