

SLOVAK AND HUNGARIAN HISTORY – COMMON, DIFFERENT, AND CONFLICTING HISTORIES

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Cooperation and conflict – conflict and cooperation, these are the two fundamental dimensions of the complicated Slovak-Hungarian relationship and their historiographies in the 20th century and early 21st century.

The history of the Slovak and the Hungarian nations and state formations, where these nations form the majority, is common or nearly common. This applies to the period from the arrival on the territory in which they live today, the existence of a common state, the period of democratic or dictatorial ideologies, and the current European coexistence. Interpretations of historical events are different. Stigmatization of debaters by their ethnicity, sometimes by their nationalist visions, and even nationalism remains a permanent fact influencing the opinions of historians discussing common history.

In recent years, contacts between Slovak and Hungarian historians have intensified. We can say that more intensive forms of communication between Slovak and Hungarian historians began with the emergence of the Slovak-Hungarian Commission of Historians in 1993. The Slovak-Hungarian Commission of Historians pursued scientific conferences and regular meetings with varying degrees of success dependent on funding and other practical issues. Cooperative publications took place, joint presentations of books followed (which were published on both sides of the border), and even debates for the public were presented in Slovakia and in Hungary through cultural institutes in Bratislava and Budapest. Currently, common textbooks are being prepared, which should present the views of Slovak and Hungarian historians on the same historical events and periods. Even so, it can be said that open discussion in Slovak-Hungarian discourse remains absent. Journal discussions and polemics between representatives of different views are lacking in particular.

This publication is an attempt by Slovak historians to contribute to this debate by submitting our assessment of some of the contentious periods of our common history and Slovak-Hungarian relations. The presence of politics and ideology into historical interpretation is a characteristic feature not only of Central European history. This is a phenomenon typical for many states and many periods of time. Ruling ideologies and dominant political