

Alica Kurhajcová

HISTORICAL MEMORY RESEARCH IN SLOVAKIA

To properly pursue the research into the concept of historical memory, it is necessary to reflect on the micro-historical approach and the concepts of historical anthropology. The research on historical memory is still a relative novelty in Slovakia, where, compared to the other countries, it does not have a long tradition behind it. We could say that, from the present perspective, it has already been twenty years since Slovak researchers were first confronted with its basic theses; however, the tradition of historical memory studies is very young. The aim of this study is to outline when and how the theme of historical memory became part of scientific works in Slovakia, and what its intellectual contribution has been.¹

I INSTITUTIONALISATION OF THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY RESEARCH

After the fall of the socialist regime, the social sciences in Slovakia were confronted with new tasks. Apart from other things, it was expected that they would critically reflect the communist regime and that they would catch up with the European scholarship.² Professional Slovak historiography became institutionalised relatively late, after

¹ Partial results of my research were published in Alica Kurhajcová, 'Teórie, metódy a interpretácia pojmov národná identita, verejný priestor a pamäť: Oslava 90. výročia narodenia Lajosa Kossutha', *Acta historica Neosoliensia*, xiii, 1–2 (2010), 243–67.

² Juraj Podoba, 'Národná identita a "Erinnerungspolitik" v slovenskej historiografii: Niekoľko kritických postrehov od "susedov"', *Historický časopis*, lii, 2 (2004), 263.

the year 1918, and later on during the 1940s (the Slovak Academy of Sciences [SAS] was established in 1942). Methodological impulses from the interwar period affected it only very slightly, and after 1948, the historiography was based on the plebeian and nationalist approach to history.³ The main areas of interest were the histories of institutions, anonymous masses, and heroic people. In spite of the ideological constraints, some historians (Belo Polla, Michal Potemra, Július Mesároš, Ján Tibenský, Ladislav Tajták) handled the Slovak national history of the nineteenth century quite skilfully. After the fall of the socialist regime, Slovak historiography entered the period of freedom of research, with no ideological pressure present anymore. However, especially after the creation of the Slovak Republic in 1993, with regard to current political needs, studies began to appear which were supposed to stiffen the young country's national identity. With the influence of political propaganda and journalism targeted at history, it became common that old myths from before the communist era were renewed and were given a Slovak etiquette.

To overcome the first obstacles, Slovak historians had to improve their knowledge of historical theory and methodology, abandon the old nationalist interpretations of the history of Slovakia⁴ that analysed it in isolation from the Austrian-Hungarian, Czechoslovak, and Central European context. They had to join the world historiography. Contrary to the 'normalised' Czechoslovakia of the 1970s and 1980s, their colleagues in Poland, Hungary or in what-was-Yugoslavia had contacts with European historians even before 1989. The advantage of the neighbouring historiographies was also their early professionalisation in the nineteenth century, the influence of positivism and other methodological schools. The Slovak historiography symbolically joined the international and Western European historiography at the International Congresses of Historical Sciences in Madrid (1990), Montreal (1995), Oslo (2000), and Amsterdam (2010).⁵ Mutual cooperation

³ Ľubomír Lipták, 'Úloha a postavenie historiografie v našej spoločnosti', *Historický časopis*, xvii (1969), 98–118.

⁴ Miroslav Michela, a young historian, mentions a 'national Canon' in his concept of the history of Slovakia; cf. Miroslav Michela, 'Pripomínanie a kanonizovanie minulosti. Úvaha na margo niektorých diskusií o dejinách Slovenska', *Forum Historiae*, ii, 1 (2008); available at <http://www.forumhistoriae.sk/FH1_2008/texty_1_2008/Michela.pdf> [Accessed 10 Sept. 2012].

⁵ Dušan Kováč, *O historiografii a spoločnosti* (Bratislava, 2010), 107, 133–4.

intensified through international conferences, seminars attended by French, Czech, Austrian, German, Polish, Hungarian colleagues, along with those from other countries.⁶

The move from teleological and causal history toward a more plural view was characteristic for the later part of the 1990s, together with the application of theories and definitions from other social sciences: ethnology, sociology, social psychology, political science, art history, linguistics, literature, cultural geography and anthropology.⁷ Elena Mannová has outlined the two-sidedness of the interdisciplinary approach: functional, on the one hand, and practical, on the other.⁸ The latter was particularly exigent for those researchers who tried to underpin the function of memory. This is not to say that the functional forms of interdisciplinarity are meaningless. To underpin cultural and other processes in time and space, however, it is necessary not only to gather data collected by different disciplines but to combine methods, theories and notions.

Slovak institutions which were open to foreign cooperation and alternative approaches included the Historical Institute of the SAS; Ethnological Institute of the SAS; Institute of Slovak Literature of the SAS in Bratislava; Institute of Social Sciences of the SAS in Košice; Institute of Social and Cultural Studies, Science and Research Institute, Matej Bel University (UMB) in Banská Bystrica;⁹ and, other research centres dealing with collective identities, such as, e.g., the Society for History and Culture of Central and Eastern Europe led by Tatiana Ivantyšinová.¹⁰ Multi-author works and monographs reflected the intersection of methods applied with social sciences and history, with regard to research of memory and collective identities. This

⁶ Elena Mannová, 'Clio na slovenský spôsob. Problémy a nové prístupy historiografie na Slovensku po roku 1989', *Historický časopis*, lii, 2 (2004), 245–6.

⁷ The studies which first dealt with this cultural process (penetration of Byzantine influence into Slavic culture) took over methods and impulses from cultural (social) anthropology; cf. Alexander Avenarius, *Byzantská kultúra v slovanskom prostredí v VI. – XII. storočí. K problému recepcie a transformácie* (Bratislava, 1992).

⁸ Mannová, 'Clio na slovenský spôsob', 241–2.

⁹ In 2005–10, the Institute was part of the UMB Science and Research Institute (CVV UMB). From 2011 on, the organisational representation is the Faculty of Humanities UMB and the CVV UMB.

¹⁰ Some of their works can be mentioned, e.g., a collective monograph dealing with national and confessional identity in Slovakia and Central Europe: Tatiana Ivantyšinová (ed.), *Národ – cirkev – štát* (Bratislava, 2007).

was also reflected in conferences, and scholarly periodicals: *Historický časopis*; *Slovanské štúdie*; *Slovenský národopis*; *Human Affairs*; *Kultúrne dejiny*; *Človek a spoločnosť*; and, *Forum Historiae*.¹¹

The question ‘What history do we need?’, posed by two prominent historians: Lubomír Lipták and Roman Holec, indirectly led to a general evaluation of Slovak historiography. In 1997, Lipták¹² still found it to be dominated by political history. Ten years later, Holec witnessed a certain shift when he pointed out to a methodological chaos in the contemporary academic historiography in Slovakia. He identified two groups of historians: those who kept working on political history and those who would delve into social history, theory, and were open to interdisciplinarity.¹³

II

MEMORY: COLLECTIVE, SOCIAL, CULTURAL, OR HISTORICAL?

The changes in social sciences and historiography after 1989 influenced themes like nationalism, national movements, collective identity and collective memory. Researchers divided along notions and paradigms. According to the ethnologist Juraj Podoba, sociology, philosophy and political science were initially in a privileged position because of their previous tradition and their status of ‘new’ sciences (which was the case of sociology and political science).¹⁴ Some new sociological, socio-psychological and socio-historical works were instrumental for orientation in the problem of collective memory.¹⁵ They discussed definitions and forms of social and historical memory, and

¹¹ The latter two are Web journals: <<http://www.saske.sk/cas/>; <http://www.forumhistoriae.sk/>> [Accessed 10 Sept. 2012].

¹² Lubomír Lipták, ‘Aké dejiny potrebujeme?’, *Forum Historiae*, 1 (2007). Available at <www.forumhistoriae.sk/FH1_2007/texty_1_2007/Liptak.pdf> [Accessed 10 Sept. 2012].

¹³ Roman Holec, ‘Aké dejiny máme a aké potrebujeme? (Ad. 1-4)’, *Forum Historiae*, 1 (2007). Available at <www.forumhistoriae.sk/forum/holec.pdf> [Accessed 10 Sept. 2012].

¹⁴ Podoba, ‘Národná identita’, 264.

¹⁵ Viera Bačová (ed.), *Historická pamäť a identita* (Košice, 1996); *eadem*, *Etnická identita a historické zmeny. Štúdiá obyvateľov vybraných obcí Slovenska* (Bratislava, 1996); *eadem* and Zuzana Kusá (eds.), *Identity v meniacej sa spoločnosti* (Košice, 1997); Barbara Láštiová, Magda Petrjánošová and Jana Plichtová (eds.), *Konštruovanie slovenskosti vo verejnom priestore* (Bratislava, 2009).

defined its reference to identity based on constructivist and similar principles. They also defined the differences between historical science and historical memory.

As for new aspects of historiography, the research of identities, loyalties and memory was taken up also by ethnologists and folklorists interested in cultural, social or urban anthropology. Diversity and contrasts in society, in the past and today, were reflected in urban studies, which usually focused on interpersonal relations in small social groups (communities, unions) and in cities (Bratislava, Trenčín, Nitra, Nové-Zámky, Banská Bystrica, Banská Štiavnica, Zvolen, Skalica). Most of these studies resulted from common projects attended by urban ethnologists (Alexandra Bitušiková, Jolana Darulová, Michaela Ferencová, Katarína Košťalová, Daniel Luther, Katarína Popelková, Peter Salner, Monika Vrzgulová and others), and a certain number of historians (mainly E. Mannová), together with their colleagues from the Czech Republic, Poland and Austria.¹⁶ Later on, their works began to concentrate on newer factors which determine the relationships between people and their cities (urban and local identity), and on symbolic, and sometimes even mythical, views on city structures and the changing 'memory of cities' (for example, the changing picture of Bratislava based on works regarding its history).¹⁷

The work with memory literature or discussions with living people who still remember the changes was done by ethnologists, as well as historians who gathered different interpretations of the same events.

¹⁶ Peter Salner and Zuzana Beňušková (eds.), *Stabilität und Wandel in der Großstadt* (Bratislava, 1995); *iidem* (eds.), *Diferenciácia mestského spoločenstva v každodennom živote* (Bratislava, 1999); Jolana Darulová (ed.), *Banská Bystrica. Premeny mesta a spoločnosti* (Banská Bystrica, 1999); Daniel Luther and Peter Salner (eds.), *Menšiny v meste. Premeny etnických a náboženských identít v 20. storočí* (Bratislava, 2004); Blanka Soukupová, Hedvika Novotná, Zuzana Jurková and Andrzej Stawarz (eds.), *Město – identita – paměť* (Bratislava, 2007); *iidem* (eds.), *Evropské město. Identita, symbol, mýtus* (Prague, 2010); Michaela Ferencová et al. (eds.), *Paměť města. Obraz města, veřejné komemorace a historické zlomy v 19.–21. století* (Brno, 2009).

¹⁷ Elena Mannová, 'Objavovanie mnohovrstvovosti. Diferencovaná prezentácia minulosti multietnickej Bratislavy po politických zlomoch 19. a 20. storočia', *OS – Občianska spoločnosť*, ix (2005), 110–16; *eadem*, 'Historiografia Bratislavy. Diferencovaná prezentácia minulosti multietnickeho mesta po politických zlomoch 19. a 20. storočia', in Gábor Czoch (ed.), *Kapitoly z dejín Bratislavy* (Bratislava, 2006), 49–62.

Further research regarding collective identities and the transition of historical memory, especially symbols, myths, rituals, traditions or notions was conducted by ethnologists like Gabriela Kiliánová, Juraj Podoba and Oľga Danglová.¹⁸ Folklorists Eva Krekovičová and Hana Hlôšková¹⁹ dealt with the formation of social memory ‘from the bottom’. Based on the folklore material, they followed the construction of mental pictures ‘on themselves’ and ‘on the others’, and the creation of connections between official and unofficial memory. They followed the concept of the French *Annales* school (collective memory, national memory, realms of memory), the tradition of English social sciences (social memory) and the works of German cultural historians (cultural and communicative memory, according to Jan Assmann). Krekovičová mentioned the exchange of these concepts and their meaning, whereas she herself worked on the notion of collective memory²⁰ and sometimes ‘unofficial memory’ (Jews and Roma during the twentieth century) associated with lower-class people living in villages and small cities.²¹ However, as ethnologist Ján Botík puts it, ‘for all [the mentioned] concepts, the unifying principle is a common social function which plays an important role in the construction of collective and ethnic identity’.²²

¹⁸ Gabriela Kiliánová and Eva Riečanská (eds.), *Identities of Ethnic Groups and Communities: The Results of Slovak Ethnological Research* (Etnologické štúdie, 7, Bratislava, 2000); Juraj Podoba, ‘Nationalism as a Tool: Creating New Symbols of Ethnic Identity’, in Ton Dekker, John Helsloot and Carla Wijers (eds.), *Roots and Rituals. The Construction of Ethnic Identities* (Amsterdam, 2000), 315–27; Vladimír Krivý and Oľga Danglová (eds.), *Svet mnohých ‘MY a ONI’: Kolektívne identity na súčasnom Slovensku* (Bratislava, 2006).

¹⁹ Hana Hlôšková, ‘Interpretation of the Past in the Processes of Community Identification’, in Gabriela Kiliánová and Eva Krekovičová (eds.), *Folklore in the Identification Processes of Society* (Etnologické štúdie, 1, Bratislava, 1994), 11–20; Hana Hlôšková, ‘Individuálna a kolektívna historická pamäť (z hľadiska folkloristiky)’, in Ivo Budil and Zoja Horáková (eds.), *Antropologické symposium III. sborník* (Plzeň, 2004), 86–92.

²⁰ See Eva Krekovičová, ‘Inštrumentalizácia a transformácie vzťahu autoobraz – heteroobraz v kolektívnej pamäti v čase. Komická figúrka Róma v tradičnej folklórnej anekdote a na internete’, in *eadem* (ed.), *Folklór a komunikácia v procesoch globalizácie* (Bratislava, 2005), 67–92.

²¹ *Eadem*, *Medzi toleranciou a bariérami. Obraz Rómov a Židov v slovenskom folklóre* (Bratislava, 1999), 7–8.

²² Ján Botík, *Etnická história Slovenska. K problematike etnicity, etnickej identity, multietnického Slovenska a zahraničných Slovákov* (Bratislava, 2007), 13.

According to Štefan Šutaj, most Slovak historians have accepted the definition apparatus established by the French historiography with regards to the issues of memory and history. Nevertheless, he pointed out the language barrier and problems of continuity of these concepts in the Slovak conditions. For example, the 'Slovak' aggregation – historic privity (as a state, not as a process) – did not correspond with the French concept of memory.²³ That which has been used for French culture and French (political) history not necessarily 'fits' the history of Central European nations which were formed in multi-ethnic environments. A fitting example of this anomaly was *realms of memory* (*lieux de mémoire*) – one of the most frequently cited notions of French historian Pierre Nora. In spite of (initially) having a purely national content and excluding non-national aspects, it is still used for naming symbols fixed in the past of social groups in the multicultural Central Europe. Recently, Slovak and Austrian historians cooperated to overcome this deficit, and especially the Austrian historian Moritz Csáky defined the theses regarding ethnic-cultural plurality, differentiation, dynamics and multilingual aspects of realms of memory.²⁴

On the other hand, the definition of terms connected to the collective memory in Slovakia are used and interpreted quite freely as experts working on the concept of memory change it according to their own taste. In the strict sense of the word, they understood the term as defining urban units and architectonic buildings and symbols. They rather used the term *memory of places*.²⁵ The wider meaning of this phrase includes tangible objects and abstract phenomena, mental processes, symbolic places, notions, ideas, experience of members of ethnic, social, confessional or other groups related to history. Elena

²³ Štefan Šutaj, 'K možnostiam výskumu historickej pamäti', in Marie-Elisabeth Ducreux and François Mayer (eds.), *Dějiny a paměť – odboj a kolaborace za druhé světové války* (Cahiers du CeFRes, 6, Prague, 1995), 17–18.

²⁴ Elena Mannová, 'Fascinácia pamäťou: Moritzovi Csákymu', *OS – Občianska spoločnosť*, x (2006), 6.

²⁵ Dušan Škvarna, *Začiatky moderných slovenských symbolov. K vytváraniu národnej identity od konca 18. storočia do polovice 19. storočia* (Banská Bystrica, 2004), 10; Gabriela Kiliánová, *Identita a pamäť: Devín – Theben – Devény ako pamätné miesto* (Bratislava, 2005). Earlier on, Kiliánová elaborated the notion 'sites of memory'; cf. *eadem*, 'Mýtus hranice: Devín v kolektívnej pamäti Slovákov, Maďarov a Nemcov', *Historický časopis*, 1, 4 (2002), 633–50; Gabriela Kiliánová, 'Ein Grenzmythos: Die Burg Devín', in Hannes Stekl and Elena Mannová (eds.), *Heroen, Mythen, Identitäten: Die Slowakei und Österreich im Vergleich* (Vienna, 2003), 313–21.

Mannová, for instance, presents ‘the city as such’ characterised by its historic or current names (Levoča/Leutschau/Lőcse) as places of three different collective memories – of Slovaks, Germans and Hungarians.²⁶

To overcome this problem of translation and reinterpretation from the French, Š. Šutaj suggested that the term *historical memory* should be used (the same as the French *mémoire*).²⁷ In Slovakia, this term has been better defined by Ľubomír Lipták, on the occasion of an international conference named ‘The memory of war and the resistance in Czechoslovakia, Central Europe and France’, held in 1994. He demonstrated the manipulation of historical memory by official state representatives during the twentieth century on the example of memorials built in remembrance of the Slovak National Uprising (1944). Research in this field was only getting started, consequently, it was not a broad analysis of official interpretation through ‘focal points of memory’ but, rather, a file of questions useful to grasp the relationship between memorials as parts of historical memory and the actual political situation (e.g., symbolism, place and quantity of memorials). Different eras and political systems influenced historical memory profoundly and often old memorial were destroyed or changed, which Lipták described as

the rejection of unfitting memorials as a memento of an era, the inability to live with ones past and the illusion that if the symbols change, history will as well.²⁸

The Austrian influence on the diversification of historical anthropology and micro-history became prominent in Slovakia during the late 1990s. They outcome is presented in the anthology *Collective Identities in Central Europe in Modern Times*,²⁹ which launched the next era

²⁶ Elena Mannová, ‘Leutschau – Lőcse – Levoča als multiple Orte des Gedächtnisses’, in Johannes Feichtinger *et al.* (eds.), *Schauplatz Kultur – Zentraleuropa. Transdisziplinäre Annäherungen* (Gedächtnis – Erinnerung – Identität, 7, Innsbruck *etc.*, 2006), 225–35; *eadem*, ‘Slovenský Norimberg a malá Moskva. Symbolické premeny obrazu Levoče’, *OS – Občianska spoločnosť*, x (2006), 154–68.

²⁷ Šutaj, ‘K možnostiam výskumu’, 18.

²⁸ Ľubomír Lipták, ‘Pamätníky a pamäť povstania roku 1944 na Slovensku’, *Historický časopis*, xliii, 2 (1995), 369.

²⁹ Moritz Csáky and Elena Mannová (eds.), *Kolektívne identity v strednej Európe v období moderny* (Bratislava, 1999). This work has been translated into English: *idem* (eds.), *Collective Identities in Central Europe in Modern Times* (Bratislava, 1999).

of memory research in Slovakia. Studies by ethnologists, historians, philosophers and experts from different areas represented in this book follow the creation and representations of collective and national identities on various levels: from the presentation of memory in public places, the changes in identities in different political situations, through to mechanism of selection (docile, progenitor memory). They also deal with forgetfulness and remembering and the fixation of memory sites through rituals (funeral rituals, guild cooperation) and symbols (traditional pipe flutes, architecture).

The collective volume *Teoretické prístupy k identitám a ich praktické aplikácie* [Theoretical approaches to identities and their practical application] (2005) opened up various questions regarding the research into personal and collective identities. Its authors (historians, ethnologists, psychologists, sociologists, political scientists) brought forward the essence of identity, realms of personal history, traditions and history, as well as several terminological problems (e.g., the use of the term *identification* instead of *identity*).³⁰

The time span between the publications of these two works can be described as very productive in terms of the number of published studies and there is a visible inclination to follow Western European concepts. Eva Krekovičová and Eva Kowalská have successfully led a project titled 'Collective Identities in Modern Society. Region of Central Europe – Processes of Construction, Reproduction and Transformation of Collective Categories and Identities', carried out between 2002 and 2006 by the Slovak Academy of Sciences' Centre of Excellence. Thanks to this project, many studies have been published by leading scholars associated with the historical, ethnological, sociological and linguistics institutes of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava, the Academy's social sciences institute in Košice and the Faculty of Philosophy, Comenius University in Bratislava. In this same manner, a special issue of the periodical *OS* (i.e. *OS – Občianska spoločnosť* [Civic society forum]) was published, under the title *Pamäť viacjazyčného priestoru* [Memory of the multilingual area]. The first study contained in this issue outlined the move from the perception

³⁰ This volume attempts at replacing the term 'identity' by a more 'appropriate' one: Michaela Ferencová (p. 41), Andrej Findor (p. 48), Daniel Šmihula (p. 93); cf. Juraj Marušiak and Michaela Ferencová (eds.), *Teoretické prístupy k identitám a ich praktické aplikácie (zborník zo seminára)* (Bratislava, 2005).

of collective memory and historical memory (historiography) towards two complementary ways of remembering the past. Elena Mannová named the new type of historiography 'symbolic history' or a 'different historiography', describing its task of writing about the ways in which the past was used or misused and how it affected the present.³¹

'We and the Others in Modern Society. Constructions and Transformations of Collective Identities' was a top-of-the-line publication prepared solely by Slovak authors.³² It had a very wide thematic range, and was quite multidisciplinary. The main topics this work deals with include the creation, reconstruction and transformation of collective identities based on ethnicity, national identity, confession, local (regional) identity, as well as crisis of identities. Identity is dealt with as a practical, analytical and collective category. However, the authors have also problematised the relative instability of the term, its constructivist, procedural and contextual aspects as well as its dynamics. By using these methods, they distanced themselves from essentialist (primordial) concepts. As for collective memory, they followed two lines of inquiry: *memory as content* (common past representation) and *memory as a process* (remembering and forgetting through media of memory). Nevertheless, even here the content of research was the most important aspect (historical memory, national memory, other).

The newest publication, contributed to by French, Czech, Austrian and Slovak historians, titled *Paměť míst, událostí a osobností: historie jako identita a manipulace* [Memory of places, events and persons: history as identity and manipulation],³³ brought forward theoretical methods of understanding the functions, forms and changes of memory. The complicated structure of memory and the various mechanisms connected therewith are shown using the examples of historical events, persons and phenomena (Hussitism, the tradition of St Stephen, state holidays, buildings, countryside and localities).

³¹ Elena Mannová, 'Fascinácia pamäťou', *OS – Občianska spoločnosť*, x (2006), 5.

³² Gabriela Kiliánová, Eva Kowalská and Eva Krekovičová (eds.), *My a tí druhí v modernej spoločnosti. Konštrukcie a transformácie kolektívnych identít* (Bratislava, 2009).

³³ Milan Hlavačka, Antoine Marés and Magdaléna Pokorná (eds.), *Paměť míst, událostí a osobností: historie jako identita a manipulace* (Prague, 2011).

III SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIONS OF THE PAST: MYTHS, STEREOTYPES, TRADITIONS, SYMBOLS

Myths, stereotypes, traditions and symbols received a dual status after 1989. They continued to be the tools of legitimisation of political power and they also became a theme of historiography (as well as ethnology, and literary works). Next to the slowly professionalising historiography of the nineteenth and twentieth century, there existed simplified and proofless ideas about the history of Slovaks. National myths used and reproduces by the political elite, journalists and political scientists made their way to the relatively uneducated and misinformed public, and later changed into stereotypes. The field was clear for nationalistic politicians after 1993; 'empty memory' (the term used by Krekovičová) led to a 'combat for memory'.³⁴ A different naming came out from the words of historian Dušan Škvarna, who set the Hungarian and Slovak culture against each other. According to Škvarna, both cultures were formed on the same foundation, that of the historical Kingdom of Hungary, in the same era and social context; each of them went on its own way, though. The Hungarian culture has pre-empted more from the heritage of the shared state whereas the Slovak one has not. Škvarna describes it as a *mentality of greatness* on the Hungarian side and a *mentality of belittlement* on the Slovak side.³⁵ Twenty years later, he renamed these terms as *overfilled historical memory* and *half-filled historical memory*.³⁶

The historian Dušan Kováč considers the increased interest in the national history and in the rebirth of national myths to be an aftermath of the communist era. This phenomenon was based on dwindling communist myths, which were substituted by national myths related to historical rootedness and continuity.³⁷ The previous,

³⁴ Eva Krekovičová, 'Autostereotypen und politische Eliten (Am Beispiel der Slowakei)', in Hans Henning Hahn and Elena Mannová (eds.), *Nationale Wahrnehmungen und ihre Stereotypisierung. Beiträge zur Historischen Stereotypenforschung* (Frankfurt a.M., 2007), 486.

³⁵ Dušan Škvarna, 'Self-Reflections of Two Neighbours: Magyars and Slovaks', *Human Affairs*, iii, 1–2 (1993), 131.

³⁶ *Idem*, 'Deformované moderné dejiny – deravá pamäť' (Uhorsko a slovenská historická kultúra), in Edita Ivaničková et al. (eds.), *Kapitoly z histórie stredoeurópskeho priestoru v 19. a 20. storočí. Pocta k 70-ročnému jubileu Dušana Kováča* (Bratislava, 2011), 198.

³⁷ Kováč, *O historiografii a spoločnosti*, 114.

predominantly 'social' dimension of myths and stereotypes was substituted by a national one, and their historical references carried over to later years. The fixation of myths was relatively easy in the mentality of the Slovaks because the bygone totalitarian regimes forbade unrestrained historical reflexion, and because 'non-dominant' Slovaks and their country once formed part of bigger states.³⁸ The designing of Slovak mythology and historical imagery occurred on the official (state holidays, rest days, state symbols, state flag and anthem) and unofficial level (folklore). This indicated that in Slovakia, there were at least these two parallel historical narration and thus, there were also at least two lines of identification with the national collective.³⁹

During the 1990s historians, ethnologists, folklorists, literary scholars, art historians, anthropologists and social psychologists showed greater interest in the research of myths and mental pictures. These emerged as a part of historical memory and therefore were important topics for social scientists. Škvarna believes that a scientific clarification of the roots of historical traditions, positive and negative stereotypes (e.g. the self-stereotype of a belittlement of Slovaks, lagging and 'a thousand-years-long oppression') can contribute to 'the clarification of one's own history ..., [and] conciliation of memory'.⁴⁰

Misused historical parameters, gappy memory, deformed pictures of history painted in dark colours are the factors that weaken social connections and self-respect – social responsibility, moral principles and pomposity; they contribute to moral relativism, amorphism and mistrustfulness.⁴¹

Literary historians (Peter Zajac, René Bílik, and others)⁴² have shown the interrelation and mutual substitution of myths and reality on the

³⁸ Milan Zemko, 'Dejiny ako manipulovaný nástroj politiky', in René Bílik (ed.), *Súčasnosť mýtov a mýty súčasnosti* (Bratislava, 1993), 41.

³⁹ Eva Krekovičová, 'Rekonštrukcia historických obrazov, národné symboly a historická pamäť', in Kamil Sládek and Dušan Škvarna (eds.), *Hľadanie novej podoby strednej Európy* (Prešov and Bratislava, 2008), 173–82.

⁴⁰ Dušan Škvarna, 'Rozpor medzi kolektívnou pamäťou Slovákov a minulosťou Slovenska', *Acta historica Neosoliensia*, xiii, 1–2 (2010), 268–77.

⁴¹ Škvarna, 'Deformované moderné dejiny', 198.

⁴² Bílik (ed.), *Súčasnosť mýtov*; Peter Zajac, 'Slowakische Mythen am Ausgang des 20. Jahrhunderts', in Eva Behring, Ludwig Richter and Wolfgang Schwarz (eds.),

basis of contemporary language and literature.⁴³ Other social sciences also produced various studies dealing with the relationship of myths and identity.⁴⁴ Some also included the concept of 'deformed' Slovak history (apologetic, plebeian) and the forming stereotypes (for example the stereotype of thousand years suffering of the Slovak nation).⁴⁵ Others dealt with narrative sources (folk songs, poems, anecdotes, memories, contemporary newspapers) and analysed the impact of ethnic and national stereotypes, and myths.⁴⁶ Through the use of the comparative method, these stereotypes were analysed

Geschichtliche Mythen in den Literaturen und Kulturen Ostmittel- und Südosteuropas (Stuttgart, 1999), 325–36.

⁴³ Influenced by the concept of cultural memory of J. Assmann, the researchers have switched from a teleological and linear understanding of literary historiography into literary memory and archives. Peter Zajac, 'Literarizácia slovenských mýtov na konci dvadsiateho storočia', *Slovenská literatúra*, xlv (1998), 340–47; *idem*, 'Literárne dejepisectvo ako synoptická mapa', *Slovenská literatúra*, li, 6 (2004), 463–70; René Bilík, 'Vznik minulosti (Historický žáner v próze slovenského romantizmu)', *Slovenská literatúra*, lii, 4–5 (2005), 296–318.

⁴⁴ Zuzana Profantová, 'Mýtus a identita', in Katarína Podoláková (ed.), *Utváranie národnej a kultúrnej identity* (Acta culturologica, 2, Bratislava, 1998), 87–94.

⁴⁵ Ivan Kamenec, 'Stereotypy v slovenských dejinách a v slovenskej historiografii', *Studia historica Nitriensia*, viii (2000), 339–44; *idem*, 'Unterdrückung – Abwehr – plebejische Gleichheit. Autostereotypen der slowakischen Geschichte', in Hans Henning Hahn (ed.), *Stereotyp, Identität und Geschichte. Die Funktion von Stereotypen in gesellschaftlichen Diskursen* (Frankfurt a.M., 2002), 313–21; Elena Mannová, 'Das kollektive Gedächtnis der Slowaken und die Reflexion der vergangenen Herrschaftsstrukturen, Kakanien revisited' (2006). Available at <<http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/fallstudie/EMannova1.pdf>> [Accessed 10 Sept. 2012].

⁴⁶ Gabriela Kiliánová, 'Die Reflexion von ethnischen Stereotypen im alltäglichen Erzählen', in *eadem* and Eva Krekovičová (eds.), *Folklore in the Identification Processes of Society* (Etnologické štúdie, 1, Bratislava, 1994), 107–14; Gabriela Kiliánová, 'Ein Grenzmythos: Die Burg Devín', in Stekl and Mannová (eds.), *Heroen, Mythen, Identitäten*, 49–80; Eva Krekovičová, 'The Picture of Gypsy in Folk Songs', *Human Affairs*, iii (1993), 170–90; *eadem*, *Medzi toleranciou a bariérami*; *eadem*, 'Identity a mýty novej štátnosti na Slovensku po roku 1993 (Náčrt slovenskej mytológie na prelome tisícročia)', *Slovenský národopis*, 1, 2 (2002), 147–70; *eadem*, 'Identitäten und Mythen einer neuen Staatlichkeit nach 1993. Eine Skizze der slowakischen Mythologie an der Jahrtausendwende', in Stekl and Mannová (eds.), *Heroen, Mythen, Identitäten*, 375–414; *eadem* (ed.), *Mentálne obrazy, stereotypy a mýty vo folklóre a v politike* (Bratislava, 2005); *eadem*, 'Výtvarné umenie ako médium verzus naratívnosť a slovenská národná mytológia', in Aurel Hrabušický (ed.), *Slovenský mýtus. Slovak Myth* (Bratislava, 2006), 113–23.

in reference to the Slovak- Hungarian,⁴⁷ Slovak-Czech,⁴⁸ and Slovak-Polish relations.⁴⁹

The publication 'Slovak myths' mapped the milestones of Slovak national mythology, encompassing the Great Moravia, Matúš Čák Trenčiansky, Jánošík, Štúr, Štefánik, Hlinka, Tiso, Husák, up to the myths of the communist era. The authors declared that explaining the mechanisms of the creation of myths, and their deconstruction, such as about the golden age and the suffering of the Slovak nation, would trace their influence, and warn about their negative impact on the Slovak society. The authors concluded that similarly to the other nations, the Slovaks have simplified their complex past to create a magical unity of the society.⁵⁰

Not only the local interdisciplinarity but also the international cooperation between Slovak, Czech, Austrian,⁵¹ and German⁵² scholars in respect to common myths and their transformations (such as Hussitism and Great Moravia),⁵³ among other things, have borne abundant fruits. The publication titled *Nationale Wahrnehmungen und ihre Stereotypisierung* gave Slovak historians, ethnologists and linguists enough room to show the creation, spread and influence of myths in Slovak culture (ethnic stereotypes in language, architecture, gastronomy, social security, and so on).⁵⁴

⁴⁷ Attila Simon (ed.), *Mýty a predsudky v dejinách* (Šamorín and Dunajská Streda, 2005).

⁴⁸ Mária Sučanská, 'K otázke výskumu mýtov, predsudkov a stereotypov vo vzťahu Čechov a Slovákov v 20. storočí', *Acta historica Neosoliensia*, iv (2001), 145–54.

⁴⁹ Lucia Rusnáková, 'Úvod do problematiky stereotypov, predsudkov a mýtov v slovensko-poľských vzťahoch v 20. storočí', *ibidem*, iv (2001), 138–44.

⁵⁰ Eduard Krekovič, Eva Krekovičová and Elena Mannová (eds.), *Mýty naše slovenské* (Bratislava, 2005).

⁵¹ Adam Hudek, 'Československé mýty o Veľkej Morave a husitoch z pohľadu slovenskej historiografie', *Česko-slovenská historická ročenka* (2008), 41–52; Daniela Kodajová, 'Slovenský ľud ako mýtus česko-slovenských vzťahov', *ibidem*, 53–67.

⁵² Stekl and Mannová (eds.), *Heroen, Mythen, Identitäten*.

⁵³ Elena Mannová, 'Vom "Völkerkerker" zur "Völkerfamilie"? Das Bild der Habsburgmonarchie in der slowakischen Historiographie', in Frank Hadler and Mathias Mesenhöller (eds.), *Vergangene Größe und Ohnmacht in Ostmitteleuropa: Repräsentationen imperialer Erfahrung in der Historiographie seit 1918* (Geschichtswissenschaft und Geschichtskultur im 20. Jahrhundert, 8, Leipzig, 2007), 263–77.

⁵⁴ Hahn and Mannová (eds.), *Nationale Wahrnehmungen*.

The research on historical memory has been enriched by studies in historical traditions and pictures of 'own' and 'common' past. Even prior to 1989, studies were published which dealt with the theme of Great Moravia, Cyril and Methodius; however, these were often deformed by Marxist ideology (significant was the omission of the religious dimension in the second case).⁵⁵ Since mid-1990s, in the new political climate, including the reappearance of Christian tradition in the public sphere, both traditions were analysed not only in the Slovak context but also dealt with as a part of the European cultural legacy. Historians outlined the origins of both myths from the end of the ninth century up until today, as well as their assumption of the role of a national cult (Eva Kowalská).⁵⁶ At the same time, they also showed the different confessional facets of the Cyril-and-Methodius cult during the 1850s and 1860s (Július Mesároš).⁵⁷ Some religious historians also researched into how the memory of the Great Moravian era was cultivated.⁵⁸ The ethnologist Gabriela Kiliánová chose to research the ruin of the castle Devín as a site of memory, to show how in the memory of the Slovaks it was associated with the Great Moravian era and, at the same time, with the memory of Hungarians and Germans (as well as Czechs and Moravians).⁵⁹ These nations, however, took it as their own only in a certain era (the Germans, for instance, during the Slovak state of 1939–45),⁶⁰ because 'usually nations or other communities do not share certain sites, at least not in the same time, but rather push one another out and try to take a site as their own'.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Jozef Butvin *et al.*, *Veľká Morava a naša doba. K 1100 výročiu príchodu Cyrila a Metoda*, ed. Jozef Pitoňák and Jan Sloboda (Bratislava, 1963).

⁵⁶ Eva Kowalská, 'Kyrill und Method. Ihre Tradition in der Politik und Geisteswelt der Slowakei', in Stefan Samerski (ed.), *Die Renaissance der Nationalpatrone. Erinnerungskulturen in Ostmitteleuropa im 20./21. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 2007), 116–27.

⁵⁷ Július Mesároš, 'Cyrilometodská tradícia v slovenskom národnom obrodení (Od bernolákovcov k miléniu)', *Historické štúdie*, xxxvii (1996), 27–47.

⁵⁸ Anton Bagin, *Cyrilo-metodská tradícia u Slovákov* (Bratislava, 1993); Imrich Kružliak, *Cyrilometodský kult u Slovákov. Dlhá cesta k slovenskej cirkevnej provincii* (Prešov, 2003).

⁵⁹ See fns. 23 and 24.

⁶⁰ Gabriela Kiliánová, 'Pamätné miesto pre viacerých: Devín v Nemeckej ríši počas rokov 1938–1945', *OS – Občianska spoločnosť*, x (2006), 130–38.

⁶¹ Kiliánová, 'Mýtus hranice', 633.

There are studies dealing with a number of dates symbolic to Slovak history, just to quote the revolutionary years 1848–9,⁶² or the fall of the communist regime.⁶³ Changes in perception and interpretation of many phenomena were followed by processes like cultivation of memory, its strengthening, weakening, change, deformation, forgetting, or manipulation. This dynamics was reflected in the tradition of majority, or minorities, in Slovakia (e.g. studies by M. Michela regarding the tradition of St Stephen in Slovakia after the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy).⁶⁴ Nowadays historians concentrate on the confrontation of official historical narratives with professional historiography on the pages of historical textbooks (Mannová)⁶⁵ and on the means used in them to construct the Slovak national identity (A. Findor, S. Otčenášová).⁶⁶

A basic ‘package’ has been created out of myths, stereotypes and historical traditions, which served to strengthen the identification of groups. In Slovak scholarly circles the research has refocused on national (ethnic) symbolic units. Some Slovak national symbols were presented in previously mentioned publications regarding national mythology

⁶² Dušan Škvarna, ‘Unerfülltes Verlangen – deformierte Traditionen: 1848/49 in der slowakischen Geschichtsschreibung’, in Barbara Haider and Hans-Peter Hye (eds.), *1848 Ereignis und Erinnerung in den politischen Kulturen Mitteleuropas* (Vienna, 2003), 217–28; *idem*, ‘Obraz rokov 1848/49 v slovenskej kultúre (od polovice 19. storočia po súčasnosť)’, *Acta Academiae Paedagogicae Agriensis. Sectio Historiae*, xxxvi (2009), 129–46; Peter Macho *et al.*, *Revolúcia 1848/49 a historická pamäť* (Bratislava, 2012).

⁶³ Adam Hudek, ‘Formovanie obrazu pádu komunizmu na Slovensku’, in Ivaničková *et al.* (eds.), *Kapitoly z histórie*, 145–58.

⁶⁴ Miroslav Michela, ‘Svätoštefanská idea a jej odraz vo formovaní identít obyvateľstva na Slovensku – ako predmet výskumu’, in Juraj Marušiak and Michaela Ferencová (eds.), *Teoretické prístupy k identitám a ich praktické aplikácie (zborník zo seminára)* (Bratislava, 2005), 119–25; *idem*, ‘Svätoštefanská tradícia na Slovensku v medzivojnovom období’, in Ivantyšinová (ed.), *Národ – cirkev – štát*; *idem*, ‘Percepcia svätého Štefana na Slovensku v medzivojnovom období’, in Hlavačka, Marés and Pokorná (eds.), *Paměť míst, událostí a osobností*, 218–42.

⁶⁵ Elena Mannová, ‘Der Kampf um Geschichtslehrbücher in der Slowakei nach 1990’, in Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, Rudolf Jaworski and Monika Sommer (eds.), *Umbruch im östlichen Europa. Die nationale Wende und das kollektive Gedächtnis* (Innsbruck, etc., 2004), 125–36.

⁶⁶ Andrej Findor, *Začiatky národných dejín* (Bratislava, 2011); Slávka Otčenášová, *Schválená minulosť. Kolektívna identita v československých a slovenských učebniciach dejepisu (1918–1989)* (Košice, 2010).

and tradition (e.g. Great Moravia, Saints Cyril and Methodius, Devín); others appear in works of historians, ethnologists, art historians and literary historians: the picture of herders (E. Krekovičová);⁶⁷ Jánošík – the brigand tradition (Joanna Goszczyńska);⁶⁸ the *fujara* (fipple flute) (I. Mačák);⁶⁹ potato dumplings with sheep cheese (E. Mannová);⁷⁰ hymns or anthems (P. Zajac);⁷¹ national clothing (Z. Štefániková, M. Zuberová);⁷² the Tatra mountains (Ľ. Lipták, P. Macho, A. Vetráková);⁷³ Bratislava as the main city (Ľ. Lipták);⁷⁴ Podbradlan county (Macho);⁷⁵ the cult of national heroes – Pribina (I. Zubácka);⁷⁶ Ján Amos Komenský and Daniel Krman (Macho);⁷⁷ Anton Bernolák

⁶⁷ Eva Krekovičová, 'Od obrazu pastiera vo folklóre k národnému symbolu', *Slovenský národopis*, xlii (1994), 139–54.

⁶⁸ Joanna Goszczyńska, *Mýtus o Jánošíkovi vo folklóre a slovenskej literatúre 19. storočia* (Bratislava, 2003).

⁶⁹ Ivan Mačák, 'Symbol fujary', in Csáky and Mannová (eds.), *Kolektívne identity*, 89–99.

⁷⁰ Elena Mannová, 'Stereotypen auf dem Teller. Eine Analyse der Speisennamen in slowakischen Kochbüchern im 20. Jahrhundert', in Hahn and Mannová (eds.), *Nationale Wahrnehmungen*, 39–58.

⁷¹ Peter Zajac, 'Stredoeurópske hymny', *Slovenský národopis*, l, 2 (2002), 194–200.

⁷² Zuzana Štefániková, 'Formy a funkcie národného odevu na Slovensku', *Slovenský národopis*, xxxix (1991), 37–48; Magdaléna M. Zuberová, 'Odevná kultúra meštianstva na Slovensku 1900–1918', in Elena Mannová (ed.), *Meštianstvo a občianska spoločnosť na Slovensku 1900–1989* (Bratislava, 1998), 189–96.

⁷³ Lubomír Lipták, 'Tatry v slovenskom povedomí', *Slovenský národopis*, xlix, 1 (2001), 145–62; *idem*, 'Die Tatra im slowakischen Bewusstsein', *Historische Sozialkunde*, xxxiii (2003), 14–23; *idem*, 'Die Tatra im slowakischen Bewusstsein', in Stekl and Mannová (eds.), *Heroen, Mythen, Identitäten*, 261–88; Peter Macho, 'Od pravlasti ku kolíske, od Karpát ku Tatrám. Mýtus slovanského strediu v kontexte vývoja slovenskej národnej identity a ideológie', in Zdeněk Hojda, Marta Ottlová and Roman Prahl (eds.), "Slavme slavně slávu Slávov slavných". *Slovanství a česká kultura 19. století* (Prague, 2006), 240–57; Anna Vetráková, 'Atraktivný symbol Slovacji', *Autoportret. Pismo o dobrej prazestrzeni* (2010), 26–9.

⁷⁴ Lubomír Lipták, 'Bratislava als Hauptstadt der Slowakei', in Stekl and Mannová (eds.), *Heroen, Mythen, Identitäten*, 135–73.

⁷⁵ Peter Macho, 'Podbradľanský kraj ako topograficko-historický konštrukt v popularizačných dielach o Štefánikovi (1919–1929)', in Ivan Kamenec, Elena Mannová and Eva Kowalská (eds.), *Historik v čase a priestore. Laudatio Lubomírovi Liptákovi* (Bratislava, 2000), 111–19.

⁷⁶ Ida Zubácka, 'Nitra – kolíska slovenskej štátnosti. Príspevok k 70. výročiu Pribinových slávností', *Studia historica Nitriensia*, xi (2003), 255–71.

⁷⁷ Peter Macho, "'Náš" Komenský? K jednotlivým vrstvám identity J. A. Komenského v novodobej slovenskej reflexii', in Jiří Malíř and Radomír Vlček (eds.),

(M. Ferencová);⁷⁸ Ján Kollár (D. Kodajová);⁷⁹ Milan Rastislav Štefánik (Macho, Z. Vanovičová, Z. Malá)⁸⁰ and personalities from the ‘other’ world – Slovak and Hungarian (Ľ. Lipták, P. Macho).⁸¹

Studies centred on the first half of the nineteenth century and heraldic works⁸² marked the last step in compiling the so-far most comprehensive monograph dealing with Slovak national symbolism.

Morava a české národní vědomí od středověku po dnešek (Brno, 2001), 73–83; *idem*, ‘‘Celý vzdelaný svet ide sláviť 300-ročnú pamiatku Slováka’’. Komenského jubileum v roku 1892 – oslava vzdelanosti alebo manifestácia národnej identity?’, in Vladimír Michalička (ed.), *Dejiny školstva a pedagogiky na Slovensku* (Bratislava, 2008), 157–69; *idem*, ‘Vzpomínejte na vůdce své: Oslavy 200. výročia smrti Daniela Krmana roku 1940 v kontexte ľudáckeho režimu a protestantskej rezistencie’, *OS – Občianska spoločnosť*, x (2006), 116–29.

⁷⁸ Michaela Ferencová, ‘Spomienkové slávnosti: Ako inštitúcie ovplyvňujú identifikačné procesy?’, *Slovenský národopis*, liii, 1 (2005), 19–36.

⁷⁹ Daniela Kodajová, ‘Oslavy storočnice Jána Kollára v roku 1893’, in Tatiana Ivantyšinová (ed.), *Ján Kollár a slovenská vzájomnosť. Genéza nacionalizmu v strednej Európe, in Slovenské štúdie. Zvlášťne číslo* (special issue), 4 (2006), 95–109.

⁸⁰ Peter Macho, *Milan Rastislav Štefánik v hlavách a v srdciach: fenomén národného hrdinu v historickej pamäti* (Bratislava, 2011); *idem* and Zora Vanovičová, ‘Der Mythos von Milan Rastislav Štefánik in Geschichtsschreibung und mündlicher Tradierung’, in Stekl and Mannová (eds.), *Heroen, Mythen, Identitäten*, 199–229; Zora Vanovičová, *Motív smrti ako mýtotočný prvok vo folklórnom cykle o M. R. Štefánikovi*, in Dušan Ratica (ed.), *Zmeny v hodnotových systémoch v kontexte každodennej kultúry* (Bratislava, 1992), 115–26; *eadem*, ‘Národný hrdina – folklórny hrdina (Milan Rastislav Štefánik)’, *Etnologické rozpravy* (1996), 103–8; *eadem*, ‘Milan Rastislav Štefánik v ústnej tradícii na Slovensku’, *Slovenský národopis*, xlix, 1 (2001), 328–40; Zuzana Malá, ‘Mýtizácia osobnosti Milana Rastislava Štefánika z hľadiska koncepcie mýtu Mircea Eliadeho’, in Zuzana Profantová (ed.), *Malé dejiny veľkých udalostí po roku 1948, 1968, 1989*, 2 vols. (Etnologické štúdie, 13, Bratislava, 2005), ii, 122–34.

⁸¹ Daniela Kodajová, ‘Oslavy významných osobností národotočného procesu (Kollár – Palacký – Mickiewicz – Puškin)’, in Jozef Hvišč (ed.), *Historické a kultúrne zdroje slovensko-poľských vzťahov* (Bratislava, 2000), 89–109; Dušan Škvarna, *Ľudovít Košut očami slovenských patriotov v 2. tretine 19. storočia, Annales Historici Presovien-sis* (2005), 111–17; *idem*, ‘Kossuth aus der slowakischen Sicht’, in Holger Fischer (ed.), *Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894): Wirken – Rezeption – Kult* (Hamburg, 2007), 95–104; Peter Macho, ‘Štefánik a Kossuth ako symboly slovenského a maďarského nacionalizmu (Nacionálny mýtus versus integrácia a dezintegrácia v stredoeurópskom priestore)’, in Peter Švorc and Ľubica Harbuľova (eds.), *Stredoeurópske národy na križovatkách novodobých dejín 1848–1918. Zborník venovaný prof. PhDr. Michalovi Danilákovi* (Prešov, 1999).

⁸² Jozef Novák, *Štátny znaky v Čechách a na Slovensku dnes aj v minulosti* (Bratislava, 1990); Ladislav Vrteľ, ‘O slovenskom národnom symbole’, *Slovenská archivistika*, xxiv, 2 (1989), 60–85.

These studies also focused on the national emancipation in the Habsburg Monarchy, from the late eighteenth century until the 1860s.⁸³ They followed the origins of heraldic symbols (state flag, colours), natural phenomena (Tatra Mountains, the Danube, the Váh, lime tree, pigeon, eagle), commemorative sites (Devín, Trenčín and Orava Castle; symbolic city centres – Nitra, Trenčín, Trnava, Bratislava, Banská Štiavnica), objects of folk and everyday culture (*valaška* [axe], *fujara* [flute], folk costumes, dance – the *odzemok*, hymns – *Hej*, *Slováci* and *Nad Tatrou sa blýska*, sheep-cheese-based food, the tinker, the herder) and from historic(al) or mythic(al) figures (Jánošík, famous people from Great Moravia, saints, warriors; religious, cultural and political figures of the Slavic/Slovak national life). According to D. Škvarna, the symbols coming from the nature and folk environment indicated the yoke, suffering and belittlement of the Slovaks, rather than fame. The state mostly petrified the position of the Slovaks in the monarchy and their relationship towards other ethnics, especially their incomplete social structure and low national self-identification. On the other hand, specific Slovak symbols represented national memory and strengthened national identity.

The effect of symbols especially in creating common emotions, sense of fellowship and collective identity increases their influence in the public sphere. The research on them has been centred on the mediums of memory as well as myths, historic pictures and symbols. The authors have mostly focused on memorials, memorial tables and names of streets (Lipták, Mannová, M. Ferencová, Macho, M. Brtko),⁸⁴

⁸³ Škvarna, *Začiatky moderných slovenských symbolov*. The issues in question have been covered by Dušan Škvarna in the following studies: *idem*, 'Genéza moderných slovenských národných symbolov', *Studia Academica Slovaca*, xxxi (2002), 356–69; *idem*, 'Revolučná kríza 1848/49 a národné symboly', *Acta historica Neosoliensia* (2004), 43–59; *idem*, 'Národné symboly – integrácia dovnútra, dezintegrácia navonok', in Kamil Sládek and Dušan Škvarna (eds.), *Hľadanie novej podoby strednej Európy* (Prešov and Bratislava, 2008), 183–95.

⁸⁴ Ľubomír Lipták, 'Politische Veränderungen der Denkmäler und Denkmäler der politischen Veränderungen in der Slowakei', in Berthold Unfried (ed.), *Spuren des "Realsozialismus" in Böhmen und der Slowakei. Monumente – Museen – Gedenktage* (Vienna, 1996), 151–87; *idem*, 'Rok 1918 a rekonštrukcia historickej pamäti v mestách na Slovensku', in Jindřich Pecka (ed.), *Acta contemporanea. K päťadesiatinám Viléma Prečana* (Praha, 1998), 180–91; Ľubomír Lipták, 'Rošády na piedestáloch. I: Pomníky a politické zmeny pomníkov', *OS – Fórum občianskej spoločnosti*, 11 (1998), 29–34; *idem*, 'Rošády na piedestáloch. II: Pomníky a politické zmeny

state (political) holidays, jubilees and rituals (S. Miháliková, Ferencová, M. Závacká, I. Chalupecký, D. Kováč, D. Kodajová, A. Kurhajcová, A. Vetráková),⁸⁵ celebrations (music, dance, theatre), and the symbolics

pomníkov', *ibidem*, 12 (1998), 31–6; *idem*, 'Monuments of Political Changes and Political Changes of Monuments', in *idem* (ed.), *Changes of Changes: Society and Politics in Slovakia in the 20th Century* (Studia Historica Slovaca, 22, Bratislava, 2002), 71–94; Elena Mannová, 'Konštrukcia menšinovej identity v mestskom prostredí (Maďari v Komárne a Lučenci 1918–1938)', in Daniel Luther and Peter Salner (eds.), *Etnicita a mesto. Etnicita ako faktor polarizácie mestského spoločenstva v 20. storočí* (Bratislava, 2001), 111–40; Elena Mannová, 'Platz. Inszenierungen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses in Komárno an der slowakisch-ungarischen Grenze', in Moritz Csáky and Klaus Zeyringer (eds.), *Inszenierungen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses. Eigenbilder, Fremdbilder* (Paradigma. Zentraleuropa, 4, Innsbruck, 2002), 110–31; Elena Mannová, 'Nemzeti hősoktól az Európa térig. A kollektív emlékezet jelenetei Komáromban, a szlovák-magyar határon', *Regio*, xiii, 2 (2002), 26–45; *eadem*, 'Von Maria Theresia zum Schönen Náci. Kollektive Gedächtnisse und Denkmalkultur in Bratislava', in Rudolf Jaworski and Peter Stachel (eds.), *Die Besetzung des öffentlichen Raumes. Politische Plätze, Denkmäler und Straßennamen im europäischen Vergleich* (Berlin, 2007), 213–16; Michaela Ferencová, 'Kto je zakladyto do kameňa? Spomínanie v meste bez viditeľnej histórie', *OS – Občianska spoločnosť*, x (2006), 175–81; *eadem*, 'Spolužitie zaliate v bronz: Pomníky významných osobností ako prostriedok organizovaného šírenia klasifikačných schém', *Slovenský národopis*, lvi, 1 (2008), 5–17; *eadem*, 'Pomníky ako prostriedok legitimizácie režimov a transformácie spoločnosti. Prípad mesta Nové Zámky', in *eadem et al.* (eds.), *Paměť města*, 333–58; Peter Macho, 'Poznámky k procesu premenovávania ulíc a námestí v Trnave (1918–1924)', *Acta historica Neosoliensia*, xi (2008), 395–404; Martin Brtko, 'Pamätník v Darney ako miesto pamäti', in Hlavačka, Marés and Pokorná (eds.), *Paměť míst, událostí a osobností*, 375–91.

⁸⁵ Silvia Miháliková, 'Sviatky na Slovensku ako súčasť politických rituálov', *Historický časopis*, liii, 2 (2005), 339–54; Ferencová, 'Spomienkové slávnosti', 19–36; Marina Závacká, 'Prvé máje v režimovej tlači 1939–1944', in Xénia Šuchová (ed.), *Ľudáci a komunisti: Súperi? Spojenci? Protivníci?* (Prešov, 2006), 130–36; Ivan Chalupecký, 'Feiern und Gedenktage in der Slowakei', in Emil Brix and Hannes Stekl (eds.), *Der Kampf um das Gedächtnis: Öffentliche Gedenktage in Mitteleuropa* (Vienna, Cologne and Weimar, 1997), 189–204; Dušan Kováč, 'Štátne sviatky v Slovenskej republike ako "miesta pamäti"', in Hlavačka, Marés and Pokorná (eds.), *Paměť míst, událostí a osobností*, 105–18; Daniela Kodajová, 'Národné oslavy – manifestácia slovacity', *Studia Academica Slovaca*, xl (2011), 165–80; Alica Kurhajcová, 'Oslavy – symbolické obsadenie verejného priestoru v stredoslovenských mestách (1900–1914)', in Veronika Středová et al. (eds.), *České, slovenské a československé dějiny 20. století*, 5 (Hradec Králové, 2011), 139–51; *eadem*, 'Medzi centrom a perifériou: náčrt procesu identifikácie sa s ideami milenárnych osláv v mestách Zvolenskej župy (1896)', in Slávka Otčenášová and Csaba Zahorán (eds.), *Hľadanie spoločného jazyka o spoločnej minulosti – dialóg mladej generácie slovenských a maďarských*

of associations (Mannová).⁸⁶ Through these means, group identity has been strengthened and official memory (state ideology) presented, along with the unofficial one, referred to as ‘counter-memory’. The researchers analysed important moments in the political history (especially the years 1918, 1938, 1945, 1948 and 1989), interpreting them along symbolic antitheses such as integration – disintegration, tolerance – destabilisation, dominance – marginalisation, majority identity – minority identity. Naturally, these categories have only served as barriers between which different levels of loyalty were formed: loyalty towards authorities (the monarchy, government), homeland (nation), the old or the ‘new’ regime. The different layers of loyalty and its changes during the WWI as well as during the interwar period have been researched by historians (Mannová, L. Vörös, G. Dudeková)⁸⁷

historikov (Keressünk közös nyelvet a közös múlthoz – szlovák és magyar történészek fiatal nemzedékének párbeszéde) (Košice, 2012), 47–54; Anna Vetráková, ‘Cyrilometodské oslavy a ich hlavné aktéri’, in Blanka Snopková (ed.), *Významné osobnosti v dejinách Banskej Bystrice. Fenomén osobnosti vo výskume regionálnych dejín* (Banská Bystrica, 2010), 119–31; Anna Vetráková, *Symbolický a rituálny rozmer memorandových slávností*, in *150. výročie Memoranda národa slovenského (1861–2011)* (Martin, 2012), 49–59; Ingrid Kušniráková et al., “Výjdeme v noci vo faklovom sprievode a rozsvietime svet”. *Integračný a mobilizačný význam slávností v živote spoločnosti* (Bratislava, 2012).

⁸⁶ Elena Mannová, ‘Vereinsbälle der Preßburger Bürger im 19. Jahrhundert’, in Viliam Čičaj and Othmar Pickl (eds.), *Städtisches Alltagsleben im Mitteleuropa vom Mittelalter bis zum Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Bratislava, 1998), 251–7; eadem, ‘Transformácia identity bratislavských Nemcov v 19. storočí’, *Historický časopis*, xliii, 3 (1995), 437–49; eadem, ‘Selbstinszenierung des deutschen Bürgertums in Bratislava im 19. Jahrhundert’, in Salner and Beňušková (eds.), *Stabilität und Wandel, 29–43*; eadem, ‘Identitätsbildung der Deutschen in Preßburg im 19. Jahrhundert’, *Halbasien. Zeitschrift für deutsche Literatur und Kultur Südosteuropas*, v (1995), 60–76; eadem, “Ale teraz je dobrý Slovák”. Vplyv novej štátnej hranice na etnické vzťahy v Lučenci a Komárne (1918–1938)’, in Kamenec, Mannová and Kowalská (eds.), *Historik v čase*, 53–62 (also published in the German and Hungarian version); eadem, ‘Die Pressburger Deutschen und ihre Vereine im 19. Jahrhundert (Vornationale Identität im multiethnischen urbanen Raum)’, in Wynfrid Kriegleder, Andrea Seidler and Jozef Tancer (eds.), *Deutsche Sprache und Kultur im Raum Pressburg* (Bremen, 2002), 65–82.

⁸⁷ Elena Mannová, ‘Uhorská a československá štátna idea: zmena povedomia v slovenskej spoločnosti’, in Hans Mommsen, Dušan Kováč and Jiří Malý (eds.), *První světová válka a vztahy mezi Čechy, Slováky a Němci* (Brno, 2000), 87–95; eadem, ‘Koncept lojality. Postoj k autoritám na Slovensku počas prvej svetovej vojny’, *Historický časopis*, lv, 4 (2007), 681–98; eadem, “Sie wollen keine Loyalität lernen!”

who analysed symbolic representations of personal level (emotions, fear, memories) and public sphere (repressions, radicalisation).

* * *

The basis of memory research lies in displaying macro-societal processes on a micro-level. However, this must not be done one-sidedly – black or white. Being aware of this, the Slovak historians usually work together with specialists in social sciences and refer to symbolic representations of power and collective identities in various eras and regions. The deciphering of symbolic notions (myths, symbols, stereotypes, celebrations, etc.) helps reconstruct (the) historical memory, its function and importance. This new methodological trend applied to research of ‘well known’ and ‘traditional’ phenomena is, as a rule, characteristic for the younger generation of the Slovak historians. The establishment of this new method has progressed in two main phases, namely, in the course of the 1990s and in the first decade of the twenty-first century. But this process has not finished yet.

Identitätsdiskurse und lokale Lebenswelten in der Südslowakei 1918–1938’, in Peter Haslinger and Joachim von Puttkamer (eds.), *Staat, Loyalität und Minderheiten in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa 1918–1941* (Munich, 2007), 45–67; *eadem*, ‘Křízy lojality’, in Dušan Kováč *et al.* (eds.), *Prvá svetová vojna 1914–1918* (Slovensko v 20. storočí, 2, Bratislava, 2008), 205–30; *eadem*, ‘Southern Slovakia as an Imagined Territory’, in Steven G. Ellis *et al.* (eds.), *Frontiers, Regions and Identities in Europe* (Pisa, 2009), 185–204; László Vörös, ‘Slováci “najvlasteneckejší Uhri” alebo “slobodný národ”? Sociálne reprezentácie Slovákov v maďarskej tlači v rokoch 1914–1918’, in Peter Dráľ and Andrej Findor (eds.), *Ako skúmať národ* (Brno, 2009), 79–105; László Vörös, *Analytická historiografia verzus národné dejiny. “Národ” ako sociálna reprezentácia* (Pisa, 2010), 125–54; Gabriela Dudeková, ‘Dvojsečná zbraň. Vojnové nadšenie, perzekúcie a problém lojality Slovákov v prvej svetovej vojne’, in Ivaničková *et al.* (eds.), *Kapitoly z histórie*, 243–68.