

Letters from Times of Hope and Dispair

(from the correspondence between František Kutnar and Jaroslav Marek)

The edition we are submitting to the reader contains correspondence between professor Jaroslav Marek (1926–2011) and František Kutnar (1903–1983) from the period of their co-operation on *Přehledné dějiny českého a slovenského dějepisectví* I. and II. [*Overview of Czech and Slovak Historiography* I and II] (Praha 1973, 1977). Even nowadays, half a century after its publication, it represents one of the pillars of modern Czech and Slovak historiography. As early as at the times when it was being written and even more so when it reached the book-shelf, it polarised the Czech historian community with its concept that was non-conformist towards the period ideological context. This published correspondence enables a close insight into the creative process of both authors. Despite coming from different generations, they still shared very similar methodological standpoints. The correspondence exceeded bounds of methodological issues; it reflected changes in the political situation and cultural milieu, it noted how the view of individual personalities in Czechoslovak historical science evolved and it marked their willingness to adapt to ideological oppression or even to become its facilitators.

Most edited letters are deposited in the inheritance and private collection of prof. dr. František Kutnar in Archív Národního muzea v Praze (the Archive of the National Museum in Prague); also his sons Aleš and Petr Kutnar and prof. Marek's wife Jarmila Marková provided certain materials. Prof. Marek's private fund was not preserved.