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**On the history of the Apostolate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Under the Protection of Blessed Virgin Mary until 1914<sup>1</sup>**

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In the second half of the 19th century, the Apostolate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Under the Protection of Blessed Virgin Mary with headquarters in the Moravian Velehrad was one of the most important institutions that encouraged the development of the cultural heritage of the Thessaloniki Brothers and Christian and European cultural values within the framework of its missionary, cultural and educational goals. It initially developed mainly in the Moravian dioceses, but its activity soon spread to Slovakia and to the emigrant circles in America. The Association organized regular pilgrimages to Velehrad. It also supported missionary activities, for example in the Balkans or in the Russian Empire and started publishing an eponymous magazine in 1910. The unionist congresses in 1907 and 1911 in Velehrad were the pinnacle of the Apostolate's organizational activities until the outbreak of the First World War. The authors of this paper focused not only on the analysis of contemporary press and literature, but also on archival research with an emphasis on the Apostolate's literary fund, which can be accessed in the Regional Archives of Opava (Branch Olomouc). The documentary evidence is also based on recent expert literature. This paper also deals with the broader contexts of the Association's establishment, relevant political contexts, the Association's Statutes and their practical implementation, i.e. the activities at home and abroad, organizational issues, publication activities, the arrival of the Society of Jesus in Velehrad, the unionist congresses, and the most important personalities and supporters. The available options in researching the Association's activities allow us to closely inspect the forms and content of the propagation of Cyrillo-Methodian ideas, the wider role of the Church, or the Slovak-Czech-Slavic interactions and/or relations with the representatives of other non-Slavic nations.

The Mission of St Cyril and Methodius, Velehrad, Antonín Cyril Stojan.

*Introduction*

After the Austro-Hungarian settlement in 1867, the veneration of the Cyrillo-Methodian cult was backgrounded in the Slovak nation due to the changes in the political and social situation. This happened despite the fact that Pope Leo XIII. (1878–1903) published the encyclical *Grande munus* on September 30, 1880, which mandated that July 5 become a universal holiday for the veneration of St. Cyril and Methodius throughout the Catholic Church. In the last decades of the 19th century until the demise of the Habsburg Monarchy, the manifestations of worship of the Thessaloniki Brothers in the territory of today's Slovakia were only noted sporadically.<sup>2</sup> The ceremonial pilgrimages did not take place in Slovak cities, but in the nearby Velehrad in Moravia. The very spiritual administrators of Velehrad and the representatives of the Catholic circles in Moravia endeavored to make the Cyrillo-Methodian cult a modern form of piety connected not only to Moravia, but also to the entire Slavic region. The Velehrad Jesuits managed to deepen

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<sup>2</sup> The Greek Catholic and Orthodox believers were somewhat of an exception because they celebrated the saints of Byzantine origin in their liturgical ceremonies.

the Slavic reciprocity in their program. As part of the unionist congresses at the beginning of the 20th century, they established a number of contacts, primarily with the Catholics in the East Slavic and Yugoslav countries, Greek Catholics and even some Orthodox ones. In doing so, they confirmed that a modern program, which is based on professional research, contacts with foreign countries and an attempt to make Catholicism attractive to the Christian East, can also be built on the Cyrillo-Methodian ideas.<sup>3</sup>

During this period, the idea of founding a Christian association, the purpose of which would be to support and spread the idea of the unification of the Eastern Slavs with the Catholic Church in the sense of the Cyrillo-Methodian encyclical *Grande munus*, emerged in Moravia. The establishment of the *Apostolate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Under the Protection of Blessed Virgin Mary* (hereinafter the „Apostolate”) was initiated by Antonín Cyril Stojan (1851–1923), an active chaplain from the Moravian countryside and later an Archbishop of Olomouc.<sup>4</sup> He followed up on the work of two movements: the association Heritage of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, which was founded in Brno in 1850, but mainly the Brotherhood of St. Cyril and Methodius (*Bratovšćina sv. Cirila i Metoda*) founded by the Slovenian bishop Anton Martin Slomšek (1800–1862).<sup>5</sup>

A comprehensive version of the history of the Apostolate has not been published yet. The **documentary base** for researching this topic is not wide, but one can nevertheless rely on several rare sources. These above all include the publications of the theologian and Stojan's close associate František Cinek, which he published in the period between the two world wars, and which contain extensive sections about the establishment and activities of the Apostolate.<sup>6</sup> Among the more recent publications, it is necessary to mention the monograph by Michal Špaček, a priest and teacher at Palacky University in Olomouc, which was primarily based on an analysis of the articles published in the Association's eponymous periodical.<sup>7</sup> A separate literary fund of the Apostolate can be found in the Regional Archives of Opava, Branch Olomouc.<sup>8</sup> The documents of the Brno Committee of the Apostolate can be found in the Brno Bishopric Consistory and Brno Bishopric Ordinariate in the Diocesan Archive of the Brno Diocese.<sup>9</sup>

### *Establishment of the Association*

As can be seen in Stojan's accompanying letter to the draft Statutes of the Apostolate dated 1889, the idea of establishing an association was born sometime during the pilgrimages to Rome in 1877, and especially in 1881. The Lyon Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the Society of St. Boniface operating in Germany served as sources of inspiration for its inception.<sup>10</sup> The

<sup>3</sup> Hanuš, J.: Cyrilometodějství: Nesamozřejmá tradice. In Junek, M. (ed.): Cyrilometodějská tradice v 19. a 20. století, období rozkvětu i snah o umlčení. Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague – TOGGA, 2013, pp. 16–17.

<sup>4</sup> In 1896, he graduated as Doctor of Theology and in 1897 he was elected member of the Reich Council for the Catholic National Party.

<sup>5</sup> Ambros, P. (ed.): Velehrad na křížovatkách evropských dějin. Olomouc: Refugium Velehrad-Roma, 2016, p. 132. On the activities and history of the association Heritage of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, see Masák, E.: Dějiny Dědictví sv. Cyrila a Metoděje v Brně 1850–1930. Brno: Dědictví sv. Cyrila a Metoděje v Brně, 1932. 318 p.

<sup>6</sup> Cinek, F.: Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo: pokus o nárys duchovní fysiognomie: k desátému výročí jeho smrti. Olomouc: Lidové knihkupectví, 1933. 1179 p. Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu. Olomouc: Lidové knihkupectví a nakladatelství, 1936. 745 p.

<sup>7</sup> Špaček, M.: Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoděje 1910–1948: Bibliografie časopisu věnovaného sjednocení Slovanů v Kristu a ukázky jeho unijního úsilí. Olomouc: Refugium Velehrad-Roma, 2011. 208 p.

<sup>8</sup> Regional Archives Opava, Olomouc Branch (hereinafter ZAO), Literary Fund of the Apostolate of Cyril and Methodius in Olomouc (hereinafter the ACM Literary Fund).

<sup>9</sup> Our thanks go to Mgr. Jitka Fričová for providing the relevant information.

<sup>10</sup> Thanks to the initiative of Paulina Jaricotová, a group of lay people founded the Society for the Propagation of the Faith – or the Lyon Society – in 1822, which was devoted to the collection of money for foreign Catholic missions and played

proposal for the creation of the Apostolate was discussed in greater detail by the participants of the meeting held in the jubilee year of 1885 in Velehrad in the presence of Olomouc Cardinal Friedrich Egon Fürstenberg (1813–1892), Vicar General and Residentiary of the Olomouc Diocese Emanuel Pötting-Persing (1819–1898), Residentiary of the Olomouc Diocese Vincent the Knight of Holle, Kroměříž Provost Adam Potulický, Father Ján Cibulka and Velehrad Dean Jozef Vykydal.<sup>11</sup> The proposal for the establishment of the Apostolate was received positively, but the first step was to draft the Statutes, which would be approved by the Olomouc Cardinal and bishops.<sup>12</sup>

The Central Committee launched its activities after the formalization procedures, which eventually lasted two years, and later it held a meeting with the diocesan committees on December 28 and 29, 1892 in Velehrad. The first solemn general assembly at this pilgrimage place was held from July 31 to August 1, 1893 with a pontifical Holy Mass and a convention of the Apostolic Academy. The opening speech was given by Dr. Ján Pospíšil, Chairman of the Apostolate, archpriest and the Olomouc Residentiary, and the closing address was given by Anton C. Stojan, father of the idea of the Apostolate.<sup>13</sup>

### *Statutes*

The first draft of the Statutes was presented to the Olomouc Cardinal by a delegation headed by Pötting-Persing, Vicar General of the Olomouc Diocese, as early as on July 12, 1885, but it was recommended for review.<sup>14</sup> The cardinal had to take into account the fact that Velehrad was still attacked by the Viennese circles as an anti-government pan-Slavist hub.<sup>15</sup> Stojan tried to involve wider Slavic Catholic circles in the issue. The reviewed version of the Statutes together with the idea of the Apostolate was presented on April 30, 1889 to the Catholic representatives from various Slavic nations at the Catholic Convention in Vienna directly by Stojan and his close associate Dr. Ján Schneider.<sup>16</sup> The response was positive. František Cínek provides us with the data from the Apostolate's attendance roster, which allegedly includes the attendance records from this event, i.e. 52 Czechs, 13 Poles, 5 Slovenians, 2 Croatians and only one Slovak – the Chairman of the Association of St. Vojtech Andrej Kubina.<sup>17</sup> Kubina commented on the presented statutes and suggested that the Central Committee of the Apostolate should extend its membership base beyond Moravia and include one representative per each Slavic nation with the right to vote. However, this proposal was not transferred to the Statutes that got approved later. All the participants agreed with the idea of the Apostolate, and Mr. Stojan received many letters of approval and support after the meeting – including the one from Lviv Metropolitan

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a pivotal role in the development of French missions in the 19th century. The Society was approved by Pope Gregory XVI. In 1922, it received a papal status and became the Church's official body for missionary cooperation. During the Benedict XV's pontificate, its seat was relocated from Lyon to Rome. ([http://www.archivioradiovaticana.va/storico/2012/11/10/kardin%C3%A1l\\_poupard\\_ako\\_osobitn%C3%BD\\_vyslanec\\_benedikta\\_xvi\\_v\\_lyone/slo-637696](http://www.archivioradiovaticana.va/storico/2012/11/10/kardin%C3%A1l_poupard_ako_osobitn%C3%BD_vyslanec_benedikta_xvi_v_lyone/slo-637696)). The Society of St. Bonifacio was founded in 1849 in Regensburg to provide aid to poor Catholic communities in the diaspora and to serve as a missionary association for Germany. (<https://www.bonifatiuswerk.de/de/werk/geschichte/>)

<sup>11</sup> Apart from J. Vykydal, who was a Velehrad parish priest until 1889 (and worked actively in the Cyrillo-Methodian spirit even at his new post in Cholin), the Velehrad chaplain Jan Vychodil, who published his pieces under the pseudonym Jan Andrejev, was one of the key personalities of this movement.

<sup>12</sup> ZAO, ACM Literary Fund, database no. 1, inv. no. 13-29.

<sup>13</sup> Cínek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., pp. 418-420.

<sup>14</sup> Cínek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 409.

<sup>15</sup> Cínek, Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Since 1881, Stojan and Schneider collaborated in the leadership of the Society of Saints of St. Hostýn, which was founded as an association of worshippers of the Virgin Mary of St. Hostýn. Vídenský, F. B.: Sv. Hostýn ve svém původu a svých osudech. Praha: Dědictví sv. Jana Nepomuckého, 1913, pp. 99-101.

<sup>17</sup> Cínek, F.: Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo, c. d., p. 239.

Sembratovič. In this year, the Preparatory Committee was formed, which established contacts with Czech College in Rome.<sup>18</sup>

Cardinal Fürstenberg of Olomouc issued his approval with the Statutes after more than two years of work on August 7, 1891, however, on the condition that the Association would only operate in the Moravian dioceses and solicit a permission from the Brno Ordinariate and the state. The Olomouc Ordinariate approved the final wording of the Statutes on October 12, 1891, and the Brno Ordinariate joined the approval a month later on November 30, followed by the Ministry of the Interior in 1892 although their initial position on the document was negative.<sup>19</sup>

Three manuscripts of the statutes have been preserved in the archives without further identification and names of the compilers/drafters. Compared to the first two copies, this is a significantly extended version of the text with a commentary.<sup>20</sup> In his monograph on Stojan, František Cinek mentions a section from the approved Statutes.<sup>21</sup> The order and content of the points differs in the individual versions. Velehrad is mentioned as the headquarters of the Apostolate in the Statutes, but in actuality the headquarters were also in Olomouc. Since its approval by the Church and the state, the Apostolate of Cyril and Methodius had several departments: the so-called Central (Foreign) Department and Diocese Department for the Archdiocese of Olomouc and the Diocese of Brno, which were established in 1892.<sup>22</sup> A year later, Stojan received support for the Apostolate from the Austrian part of the Wrocław Diocese.<sup>23</sup> The literary fund on the Apostolate of St. Cyril and Methodius in the Regional Archives of Opava, Branch Olomouc, only contains the minutes from the meeting of the Olomouc Committee and the first minutes from the meeting of the Brno Committee from the period up to 1914. These are bilingual minutes in Czech and Latin, and mainly contain information about the financial agenda. The minutes mention that the members supported the orphans in the parishes, Catholic schools, the activities of the Jesuits in Velehrad and St. Hostýn, the convict in Valašské Meziříčí and the Association of St. Cyril and Methodius in Vienna. Part of the contribution was sent directly to Rome.<sup>24</sup> According to the preserved report, the Olomouc committee did not convene in the years 1904–1910 and its officials attended the free meetings in Velehrad.<sup>25</sup>

In his publication *Velehrad víry*, František Cinek states that the outline of the Statutes of the Apostolate included the following paragraphs: „*Through our actions, we also want to contribute to the unification of Slavs in the Catholic Church. In addition to prayers, the members of the Apostolate will also contribute financially (alms of love), which will enable the missionary efforts at home and abroad, and contribute to the Holy See for the Slavic missions, establishment of schools, and support of all missionary activities necessary for an effective implementation of the unification plans. We want to pray together for the unification, but also contribute with our actions and material means to support all missionary efforts and strengthen and revive the Cyrillo-Methodian faith at home and overseas, and spread the idea of unity among the alienated brothers. This will also include writing (mainly the „winged writings“). Diligent efforts will be made for the Apostolate of St. Cyril and Methodius to be established at all Catholic Slavs. This*

<sup>18</sup> Cinek, F.: *Velehrad víry*. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 418.

<sup>19</sup> The original Statutes from 1889 have not been preserved Cinek, F.: *Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo*, c. d., p. 241, 245.

<sup>20</sup> ZAO, ACM literary fund, database no. 1, inv. no. 13-29.

<sup>21</sup> Cinek, F.: *Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo*, c. d., pp. 246-247.

<sup>22</sup> Cinek, F.: *Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo*, c. d., p. 252.

<sup>23</sup> Cinek, F.: *Velehrad víry*. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 424.

<sup>24</sup> ZAO, ACM Literary Fund, database no. 1, inv. no. 13-29. Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pri arcidiecezi olomouckou. Zápisy ze schůzí výboru.

<sup>25</sup> ZAO, fond ACM, Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pri arcidiecezi olomouckou. Zápisy ze schůzí výboru, p. 94.

way, the prayers, sacrifices and work will be united by sacrificial selfless love. It will be a spiritual crusade – a love quest.”<sup>26</sup>

The authors of the comments to the first point of the Statutes, which can be found in the archive of the preserved comments, expressed their intentions with the activities of the Apostolate as follows: „*The purpose of the Slavic Apostolate is to work and help through prayer and material means to preserve and strengthen the Catholic Slavs in the true faith and unity of the Church and revert the non-Catholic Slavs to this holy Catholic faith and Church unity. This is how the work of our saint apostles Cyril and Methodius shall proceed. To this end, the Sl.* [Slavic – author's comment] *Apostolate will make its best effort for the Slav.* [Slavic – author's comment] *Catholics living among the non-believers or foreign nationalities to be instructed in the faith, so that the teachers and priests are provided or occasionally sent to them as the need arises. It will support the converts either by contributions or by providing them with services and food. Among the non-Catholic Slavs, it will support the missionaries to preach the message for apostolic purposes.*”<sup>27</sup>

It is interesting that one of the points of the Association's founding document is dedicated to prayer. The members were to add the line „*Holy Virgin Mary and St. Cyril and Methodius, pray for us*” to their daily Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary. The priests were advised to dedicate at least one Holy Mass to the living and deceased members of the Apostolate during the year around the memorial days related to the Thessaloniki Brothers (February 14, April 6, July 5). The following point about the contributions states that the annual membership fee was 12 crowns and it was to be collected within the respective parish. More than half of it was supposed to be forwarded to the missionary activities of the Apostolic See.<sup>28</sup>

### *Activities*

The Association developed its activities in several directions, which corresponded to the approved Statutes. Priest Michal Špaček, an expert on the history of the Apostolate, analyzed the Association's activities in greater detail. In his bibliography published in 2011, he stated that the Association was active in religious and cultural cooperation at home (organizing celebrations, pilgrimages, lectures, etc.), spiritual care for the emigrants and compatriots working abroad, and in unionist efforts.<sup>29</sup>

Thanks to A. C. Stojan, **pilgrimages** of the Apostolate were held in Velehrad every year since 1891, and an Old Slavonic service of the eastern rite was celebrated during the festivities dedicated to the Slavic missionaries.<sup>30</sup> The number of pilgrims grew steadily from year to year, and pilgrimages from Slovakia arrived in 1896.<sup>31</sup> A little later – in 1910 – the magazine Apostolát printed an apt statement: „*Velehrad became the center of our entire religious and cultural life. There is no other association in our country so prominent that organizes its festivities on Velehrad, and there are no other folk festivals in our religious and cultural life so extensive and spectacular that take place on the sacred Velehrad. Today, all Moravian people – if they feel religious – gravitate towards Velehrad. It had and still has proven leaders who have led it to the*

<sup>26</sup> Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 411.

<sup>27</sup> ZAO, ACM Literary Fund, database No. 1, inv. no. 13-29, Slavic Apostolate (statutes and notes).

<sup>28</sup> ZAO, ACM Literary Fund, database No. 1, inv. no. 13-29, Apostolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie.

<sup>29</sup> Špaček, M.: Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoděje 1910 – 1948, c. d., p. 108.

<sup>30</sup> Špaček, M.: Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoděje 1910 – 1948, c. d., pp. 106-107.

<sup>31</sup> Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., pp. 427-428.

*cradle of Slavic culture and reminded and helped preserve the Cyrillo-Methodian heritage*“.<sup>32</sup> The program approved in 1912 for the following year can give us an idea of the major holidays that were held and hosted under the patronage of the Apostolate in Velehrad at the beginning of the 20th century. The noteworthy ones include the anniversary of the death of St. Cyril on February 14 and the death of St. Methodius on April 6 on the second Sunday after Easter; there were several activities planned on the occasion of the feast of the Thessaloniki Brothers from July 4 to 9, another unionist congress was to be held between July 24 and 27 together with the meeting of the Apostolate, the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary was held on August 15, and the feast of St. Wenceslas took place on September 28, followed by the feast of St. Kliment on November 28.<sup>33</sup> Several pilgrimages were held in Velehrad in 1913 during the commemoration of the 1050th anniversary of the arrival of St. Cyril and Methodius to Great Moravia. Among others, they included a pilgrimage of the Slovaks led by the member of the Diet of Hungary Ferdinand Juriga and priest Florián Tománek, the participants of which were welcomed by A. C. Stojan. During its course, a commemorative plaque was installed on today's Stojan Square.<sup>34</sup>

From an **organizational** point of view, the Association managed the **missions** and care for the Czech Catholics **abroad** with relative ease, especially overseas in the USA and among the Eastern and Southern Slavs. The main object of interest was the territory of former Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Poland, and especially the Tsarist Russia. Extensive write-ups but also shorter reports – mainly about the religious situation in these territories – can be found in each issue of the Apostolate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Under the Protection of Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>35</sup> In 1894, Stojan sent requests for the establishment of the Apostolate to all Polish and Ruthenian ordinariates. In 1896, he traveled to Lviv for the celebrations of the 300th anniversary of unification and tried to draw the attention of the wider Greek-Catholic circles to the importance and goals of the Apostolate. The activities of the Apostolate grew rapidly in the Archdiocese of Lviv also on the basis of these initiatives.<sup>36</sup> When the missionary options of the Apostolate in the territory of Soviet Russia became strongly restricted by the Soviet Union after the Bolshevik coup, the Association devoted itself to missions among the members of the Orthodox Church and Russian emigrants.<sup>37</sup>

The Association's activities in **Southeastern Europe** were equally as interesting. In the case of Yugoslav ordinaries, Stojan proceeded similarly to the Tsarist Russia. In 1909, a branch of the Apostolate with 15,000 members was established in Ljubljana, Slovenia, which was in charge of the missionary activities in the Balkans from the following year onwards. The Association also focused on supporting the Czech workers in **Rhineland**. Starting in 1915, it provided the Kroměříž premises to the theologians from Halíč/Galícia, Tyrol and Trident who lost their seminaries at home during the war.<sup>38</sup> Stojan also addressed all Prussian ordinariates with active Slavic Catholics.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Jašek, A.: Velehradské slávnosti. In: Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie, 1910, č. 7-9, p. 112.

<sup>33</sup> For details, see Ctítel Cyrillo-Methodějští! In: Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie, 1913, č. 1, pp. 1-5. In the end, the unionist congress did not take place.

<sup>34</sup> For details, see Cínek, F.: Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo, c. d., pp. 764-768. Hudec, P.: Slováci na Velehradě 1863–1938. In: Slovania: téma aktuálna: zborník príspevkov z vedeckej konferencie Forum. Slavica 2009 usporiadané v Nitre 2. júla 2009. Nitra: Forum Slavica, 2011, s. 239-277.

<sup>35</sup> For more details, see Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie 1910–1914. Available online at <http://scriptum.cz/cs/periodika/apostolat-sv-cyrilla-a-methoda>

<sup>36</sup> Cínek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 424.

<sup>37</sup> Špaček, M.: Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoděje 1910–1948, c. d., pp. 139-152.

<sup>38</sup> Špaček, M.: Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoděje 1910–1948, c. d., p. 108.

<sup>39</sup> Cínek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 424.

A series of **publications** with unionist and cyrillo-methodian issues were published under the auspices of the Apostolate either separately in the Velehrad Academy, or as magazines in the Apostolate's periodicals „Slavorum litterae theologicae” for the Catholic clergy.<sup>40</sup> The Velehrad Academy, which was approved by the Ministry of the Interior on May 18, 1910, was tasked with research focusing on the Cyrillo-Methodian issues, the Greek-Catholic Church, and it coordinated the unionist congresses in Velehrad.<sup>41</sup>

The widely popular illustrated monthly „Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie” was considered a flagship of the Association and it was published from 1910 to 1954 when it practically disappeared after the death of its long-time secretary Prelate František Jemelka. One of the Association's activities was to send valuable books to military hospitals.<sup>42</sup>

### *Velehrad as the Apostolate's center under the management of the Society of Jesus*

Since the 1850s, Velehrad had come to the forefront of Moravian believers and clergy as a memorable place in the tradition, which is associated with the activities of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. The association *Dědictví sv. Cyrila a Metoda* was focused on its restoration, followed by the associations „*Malice Velehradská*“, „*Kurouna Soluňská*“ and „*Jednota paní a panen Moravských*“, which started their operations here.<sup>43</sup> Cardinal Fürstenberg understood that regular pastoral activity is important for the further development of Velehrad as an important pilgrimage site. For this reason, he first approached the Cistercians who had worked there in the past, but without success. Then, in 1889, he turned to the Society of Jesus whose members finally took over the administration of Velehrad in the following year. The young Czech branch of the Order of St. Ignatius had many excellent domestic and nationally conscious workers. Eduard Vostatek, the former superior of the Prague college and a native of nearby Veselí na Morave, became the first rector of the Jesuit college and organized regular pilgrimages and celebrations and developed exercise activities.<sup>44</sup> These activities were fully followed up on by his successor Ján Cibulka. Antonín Cyril Stojan presented the idea of spiritual exercises at the first general assembly of the Apostolate. In addition to organizing these exercises for the clergy, the first spiritual exercises for teachers were held on August 26-30, 1893 in Velehrad (with the presence of 109 teachers), and work with influential intelligentsia started to take shape in accordance with Stojan's plans. A time slot for students of secondary and vocational schools was added in 1896 (96 male teachers, 62 female teachers, 44 professors and academics, 122 students). The numbers of participants grew year by year. In 1898, a new time slot was added for workers (122, among them 9 editors of workers' papers). The Moravian metropolitan and Olomouc archbishop Theodor Kohn (1893–1904) directly supported the spiritual exercises.<sup>45</sup> The Olomouc Committee of the Apostolate supported these activities financially every year from the membership fees.<sup>46</sup> After becoming head of the Archbishopric Office in 1893, Archbishop Th. Kohn was inter alia willing to establish a fund for two priests of the Society in Velehrad in exchange for them publishing

<sup>40</sup> Slavorum litterae theologicae 1905–1910, available online: <https://librinostri.catholica.cz/kniha/1758-slavorum-litterae-theologicae-conspectus-periodicus-acta-academiae-velehradensis-kompletni-vsechny-svazky>

<sup>41</sup> Jašek, A.: Velehradská Akademie. In: Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie, 1910, nr. 7-9, pp. 103-107.

<sup>42</sup> Špaček, M.: Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoděje 1910–1948, c. d., p. 108.

<sup>43</sup> Brázdil, F.: Jezuité na Velehradě. Příchod Tovaryšstva Ježíšova na Velehrad a jeho působení do druhé světové války (Historickopravní pojednání). Svitavy: Trinitas, 2005, p. 35.

<sup>44</sup> For more details, see Brázdil, F.: Jezuité na Velehradě, c. d., pp. 36-55.

<sup>45</sup> Cínek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., pp. 421-422.

<sup>46</sup> ACM, Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda při arcidiecezi olomouckou. Zápisy ze schůzí výboru, p. 94.

a scientific magazine for the clergy (following the example of „Stimmen aus Maria Laach“, which, however, the order didn't have enough capacity to pursue on its own).<sup>47</sup> In 1894, the idea of a Cyrillo-Methodian university in Moravia was born.<sup>48</sup>

Due to the growing number of activities, a large house was needed for the pilgrims, which would serve as a dormitory and a place for spiritual exercises. From 1909 onwards, the committee of the Cyrillo-Methodian Society of Velehrad (hereinafter referred to as the „Society“) had been striving to achieve this goal through financial donations on the pages of Apostolate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Under the Protection of Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>49</sup> The Society was founded on July 31, 1902 and its task was to „Resurrect, restore and enhance the holy memory of Cyril and Methodius; implement the ideas of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, i.e. to manifest, spread and glorify the Catholic faith through meetings in Velehrad [...]; through Christian education in the schools that the Society of Velehrad will arrange in memory of Sts. Cyril and Methodius; contribute to the unification of faith through literary activity; take care of the physical needs of pilgrims and others, so that shelter and other provisions can be furnished for them adequately and decently, taking into account the applicable regulations“. The Society had 2500 paying members in 1905 and the number jumped to 13100 at the end of 1912.<sup>50</sup> The Society held a general assembly once a year. In addition to building the house for pilgrims, the Society focused on its maintenance and it also tried to open a museum and improve train and bus connections.<sup>51</sup>

### *Unionist congresses*

Unionist congresses can be considered the pinnacle of organizational activities of the Apostolate. Three such congresses were held in Velehrad before the outbreak of the First World War. In addition to the lectures by important Catholic and Orthodox theologians, the aim of the congresses was to create a space for cooperation between the representatives of clergy of the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church and discuss the controversial theological issues, and thus make attempts to unify the Church. The Slavic peoples understood Velehrad as a place from whence the Christian faith spreads among the nations and where they can meet and unite. The sanctuary became an international church-wide center for the leading theologians of the time.<sup>52</sup> As Petr Hudec, an expert on the history of Velehrad, aptly stated: „The congresses did were not mere intellectual debates – they were also liturgical celebrations – after all, the identity and continuity of each church is preserved in its liturgy. It was the very sacred liturgy that was expected to serve as a converging element between the Eastern and Western Christians. Therefore, it became a rule to celebrate the Eastern liturgy at the unionist congresses in order to emphasize the unity of the Church of Christ in the beauty of various ceremonies.”<sup>53</sup> The unionist congresses came to the attention of several worldwide periodicals and, as a result, the Apostolate received positive responses.

<sup>47</sup> Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 9.

<sup>48</sup> Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 425.

<sup>49</sup> Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie, 1910, nr. 7-9, p. 148.

<sup>50</sup> Jašek, A.: Cyrillomethodějské Družstvo „Velehradě“. In: Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie, 1913, nr. 1, pp. 5-7.

<sup>51</sup> Cinek, F.: Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo, c. d., pp. 449-452. For the Velehrad museum, see Hudec, P.: 3.6.5. Velehradské muzeum. In Ambros, P. (ed.): Velehrad na křižovatkách evropských dějin. Olomouc: Refugium Velehrad-Roma, 2016, pp. 134-137.

<sup>52</sup> Špaček, M.: Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoděje 1910–1948, c. d., p. 317.

<sup>53</sup> Hudec, P.: Velehradský unionismus. Cyrilometodějská idea jednoty v různosti. Velehrad: Matice Velehradská, 2023, pp. 27-28.



The preparations for the First Unionist Congress started in 1906 by a special commission headed by Stojan and Antonín Podlaha, a priest and art historian in one persona. It was attended by prominent theologians from Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Macedonia, France and Italy. The patronage of the event was taken over by the Moravian Metropolitan František Saleský Bauer (1841–1915). The First Congress was held on July 24–26, 1907. The literary sources mention 76 participants, among them several famous names such as Andrey Sheptickyj, the Metropolitan of Lviv and head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, Roberto Menini, a former Vicar Apostolic in Sofia and Plovdiv, Aurelio Palmieri, OFM Cap., an Augustinian and excellent expert on the Byzantium and the Orthodox Church, and Professor Franc Grivec from Ljubljana, a well-known expert on the Cyrillo-Methodian cultural heritage.<sup>54</sup> After the congress, Roberto Menini and Aurelio Palmieri were to report to Pope Pius X. Also, a session of the general assembly was held after the congress, followed by a theological congress on July 29–30, 1907. Andrej Hlinka co-celebrated the mass for the Slovak delegation and participated in both events.<sup>55</sup>

The First Unionist Congress had a direct impact on the establishment of the Apostolate in Zagreb. This idea was approved at the Croatian Theological Congress in 1908, and the Bishops' Consistory approved the Statutes on January 8, 1910 according to the Moravian pattern, followed by the government authorities a month later.<sup>56</sup>

The Second Unionist Congress was held from July 31 to August 3, 1909. In addition to the above Slavic nations, it was also attended by the representatives of Romanians, French and Bulgarians and by two Orthodox theologians. A total of 169 participants attended. Altogether 14 speakers gave speeches, of which 2 were Orthodox – archbishop Aleksij Maltsev from the Russian embassy in Berlin and priest Vasilij Goeken who was delegated to the congress by St. Petersburg Metropolitan Antonij Vadkovsky. Yet again, it was held under the patronage of the Moravian Metropolitan František Saleský Bauer and Andrey Sheptickyj, and Stojan was the main executive organizer. In addition to the plenary sessions, four working sections convened: western, eastern, general theoretical and practical. The General Assembly of the Apostolate, the Congress of Theologians and the Congress of Catholic Teachers took place simultaneously with the Unionist Congress. The Second Unionist Congress received a positive response among the Catholic and Orthodox believers and was reported on by several world periodicals. The direct participants remembered about it as an important event in the world and Church history. Eastern liturgy was celebrated directly by A. Sheptickyj during the convention on August 1 and it was attended by many pilgrims. The theologians rehearsed the corresponding liturgical chants and the ceremony was accompanied by a commentary by master of ceremonies František Pospíšil.<sup>57</sup>

The Third Unionist Congress was held from July 26 to July 30, 1911. Up to 200 unionists gathered together with the protector Archbishop František Saleský Bauer because Andrey Sheptickyj did not attend due to illness. The congress was directed by Antonín C. Stojan. Two sections were hosted in addition to the plenary sessions: theoretical and practical – with several prominent theologians from Russia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Thessaloniki, Rome and France. The well-known guests included Epiphanius Shanov, a Greek-Catholic Bulgarian bishop and apostolic vicar of Macedonia based in Thessaloniki, Arsenius Pellegrini, an abbot of the Greek monastery of Grottaferrata in Rome, Belgian Benedictines Placide de Meester and Aurelio Palmieri, experts

<sup>54</sup> Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 443.

<sup>55</sup> Cinek, F.: Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo, c. d., p. 561.

<sup>56</sup> Zvěsti ze světa Slovanského. In: Apoštolát sv. Cyrilla a Methoda pod ochranou bl. Panny Marie, 1910, nr. 3–4, p. 58.

<sup>57</sup> Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., pp. 444–445. Špaček, M.: Apoštolát sv. Cyrila a Metoděje 1910–1948, c. d., p. 113.

on Byzantine liturgy, and the Slovenian professor Grivec.<sup>58</sup> The lectures were published in *Acta Academiae Velehradensis*, and the main language of publication was Latin.<sup>59</sup>

The key resolutions of the Third Congress, which were to be translated into Russian and sent to the representatives of the Orthodox Church, included:

1. Not only the Catholics, but also the Eastern Christians are invited to pray for the unification of the Church.
2. The priests who incline to unification should dedicate a holy mass to end the schism at least once a month and the believers should receive the Eucharist for that purpose.
3. The theologians of the Eastern Rite should be allowed to study at Catholic theological faculties.
4. All publications from the Congresses should be translated into Russian.<sup>60</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The failure of Czech and Slovak politics within the framework of the Austro-Hungarian settlement in 1867 undoubtedly contributed to the mutual rapprochement with increased Rus-sophile tendencies and a revival of the idea of Slavic mutuality. It is for a fact that unlike the Slovak National Movement, which found itself in an extremely difficult situation, the Czech National Movement flourished and developed on a massive scale. In their efforts to solve the Czech issues and address the democratization plans, its representatives were able to appeal to broad masses and not only to members of the intelligentsia.<sup>61</sup> At the turn of the century, these mainly included the representatives of culture and clergy who maintained the continuity of Czechoslovak relations. The special activities of the clergy in Moravia helped the Slovaks – at least to a limited extent – to break away from passivity they were led into by the intolerant Hungarian regime.

*The Apostolate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Under the Protection of Blessed Virgin Mary*, headquartered in Moravia, was an extremely active association with activities in several countries since 1892. Statistics suggest that it was a mass phenomenon: for example, the Apostolate had 60,000 members in 1895. It had four strong branches in the dioceses of Olomouc, Brno and Wrocław, and it was also active in Slovenia, in the archdiocese of Prague and among the Greek Catholics in Halíč/Galícia.<sup>62</sup> It was also active in the territory of Poland, Ukraine and Russia. It gained strong positions in the southern Slavic regions. In the spirit of the work of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, its mission was to implement the unification plans, i.e. an attempt to restore the unity of the Church. The activities supporting this underlying idea took various shapes and forms – establishment of schools, „Slavic missions” and the Pan-Slavic Apostolic Library in Velehrad. Apostolic and unionist literary activities were strongly encouraged and they had a pan-Slavic nature. Stojan, the principal personality behind the Association, created a peculiar form of apostolic celebrations during the regular pilgrimages to Velehrad. Care for the spiritual needs of the pilgrims with access to the Sacraments was implemented in a practical way. However, it also involved original folk, religious and national manifestations.<sup>63</sup> The Association was mainly

<sup>58</sup> Cinek, F.: Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo, c. d., pp. 696-705.

<sup>59</sup> Karczubová, L.: *Acta Academiae Velehradensis* – journal. In Farrugia, E. G.: *Encyklopedický slovník křesťanského Východu*. Olomouc: Refugium Velehrad-Roma, 2010, pp. 37-39.

<sup>60</sup> Cinek, F.: Arcibiskup dr. Antonín Cyril Stojan: život a dílo, c. d., p. 705.

<sup>61</sup> For more information on mutual cooperation, see <https://www.valka.cz/13655-Ceske-narodne-hnutie-a-ceskoslovenske-vztahy-po-rakusko-uhorskom-vyrovnani>

<sup>62</sup> Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 426.

<sup>63</sup> Cinek, F.: Velehrad víry. Duchovní dějiny Velehradu, c. d., p. 425.

supported by the educated Moravian and Czech elite primarily from among the clergy, teachers, officials and other members of the intelligentsia.

The ongoing research into the activities of this Association allows us to closely inspect the propagation of Cyrillo-Methodian ideas, the wider role of the Church, or the Slovak-Czech-Slavic interactions and/or relations with the representatives of other non-Slavic nations. The veneration of Cyril and Methodius in Slovakia was not provided ample space to develop and grow into a tradition, as was the case in the neighboring Czechia (or even Slovenia) and, as a consequence, the Slovaks greatly depended on the Moravian Velehrad as the most important center of the Cyrillo-Methodian cult.<sup>64</sup> As bearers of the Christian and cultural values, St. Constantine-Cyril and Methodius significantly contributed to the creation of European identity. They lived in a period of key political changes and used this opportunity to become involved in the social and cultural processes and influence them to a significant extent. In his apostolic letter *Egregiae Virtutis* of December 31, 1980, Pope John Paul II. rightly declared them co-patrons of Europe together with St. Benedict.<sup>65</sup> The Apostolate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Under the Protection of Blessed Virgin Mary can be undoubtedly construed as a continuation of their work.

### **Zur Entwicklung des Apostolates der Heiligen Kyrill und Methodius unter dem Schutz der Jungfrau Maria bis 1914**

Peter Ivanič – Martin Hetényi

In der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jh. gehörte das Apostolat des heiligen Kyrill und Method (mit dem Sitz in mährischem Welehrad – Willerat) unter der Obhut der seligen Jungfrau Maria zu einer der wichtigsten Institutionen, welche die Entwicklung sowohl des kulturellen Erbes der Brüder aus Thessaloniki als auch die Entwicklung christlicher und europäischer, kultureller Werte im Rahmen seiner Missions, Kultur, und Bildungsziele eklatant unterstützte. Ursprünglich entwickelte sich das Apostolat vorerst in mährischen Diözesen, aber später verbreitete sich seine Wirkung auch in die Slowakei und ins Milieu der Emigration in Amerika. Der Verband organisierte regelmäßige Pilgerfahrten nach Welehrad und unterstützte zugleich mannigfaltige Missionsaktivitäten z.B. auf dem Balkan und in dem Russischen Reich. Das Apostolat wurde seit dem Jahre 1910 zum Herausgeber der gleichnamigen Zeitschrift. Die in den Jahren 1907 und 1911 veranstalteten Verbunds-kongresse verkörperten bis zum Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkrieges den Höhepunkt von organisatorischen Bemühungen seitens des Apostolats. Die Autoren des vorliegenden Beitrags konzentrierten sich nicht nur auf die Analyse gegenwärtiger Presse und Literatur, sondern auch auf die Archivforschung mit Schwerpunkt auf den Literarischen Fond, welcher der Öffentlichkeit im Regionalen Opavaer Archiv (Referat Olomouc) zugänglich ist. Die gewonnenen wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnisse beruhen zugleich auf der neulich unternommenen Archiv-forschung. Der Beitrag konzentriert sich neben dem Erwähnten auf: breitere Kontexte der Verbandsgründung, relevante politische Zusammenhänge, Verbandssatzung und ihre Betätigung, d.h. die Umsetzung sowohl im In- als auch im Ausland, Publikationstätigkeit, Die Ankunft der Gesellschaft Jesu nach Welehrad, Verbunds-kongresse und bedeutende Persönlichkeiten sowie Mäzene. Das zugängliche Forschungsinstrumentarium ermöglicht eine eingehende Untersuchung von: Formen und Inhalten der Verbreitung des Kyrill und Method Vermächtnisses, Rolle der Kirche, slowakisch-tschechisch-slawische Interaktion, und/oder Beziehungen mit Vertretern anderer nicht-slawischen Nationen.

<sup>64</sup> Letz, R.: Ústredné cyrilo-metodské slávnosti na Slovensku v rokoch 1919–1938 ako prejav cyrilo-metodskej úcty a tradície. In: *Slavica Slovaca*, 2020, vol. 53, nr. 3, p. 453.

<sup>65</sup> Zubko, P.: Kult svätých Cyrila a Metoda v tradícii latinskej cirkvi. *Vybrané kapitoly cyrilo-metodského kultu*. Ružomberok: Verbum, 2014, p. 202.