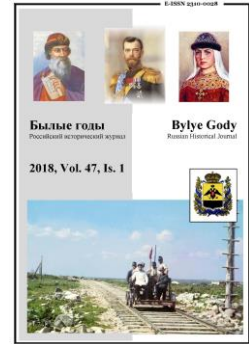


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## The Role of Cyrillo-Methodian Cult in the Slovak National Revival in the Context of Contacts with the Eastern Slavs

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### Abstract

The Cyrillo-Methodian tradition is a fundamental part of national stories formation of various Slavic nations. There was a restoration of spiritual values in religious, national and cultural life of Slavs especially during the era of national revival movements. This tradition shaped a strong cultural element that was supposed to play a key role when conforming the continuity of a given community. As the Cyrillo-Methodian phenomenon is related to the concept of historical antiquity, cultural maturity and state independency of various Slavic nations, it belongs to efficient elements of their self-definition.

The important basis formed literary works that concern the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition and cult in the 19th and 20th century. In addition to them, later Slovak and foreign scientific publications were used in regard to the given topic.

The solving of the research tasks was carried out by generally used methods, as the historical-comparative method and the principle of historicism. They allowed to handle the general framework of the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition and cult which dominated many Slavonic nations. In this regard we put emphasis on the example of Slovakia where we took into consideration the aspect of the Slovak National Process that had particularly sprouted since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

This paper focuses on the role of Cyrillo-Methodian cult in the Slovak National Revival in the context of contacts with the Eastern Slavs. The authors conclude their article with the statement that the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in the 19th century played the important role in the Slovak National Revival and contributed to the instrumentalisation of ideas of the Slavonic Patriotism.

**Keywords:** Cyril and Methodius, Slovakia, Russia, the Slavs, cult, National Revival, identity, Ľudovít Štúr, 19th century.

### 1. Introduction

The stay of Byzantine thinkers Cyril and Methodius in Great Moravia in 60's of 9<sup>th</sup> century was to be one of their many stops of their diplomatic missions. The Solun brothers and their disciples left behind a great work in the form of a new script - the Glagolitic script, translations of key liturgic and legal works as well as their own literary production. Establishment of Moravian archdiocese was a significant step as well. Their work did not cease to exist but it was deepened in various cults in Europe after Methodius's death in 885. Disciples of the Solun brothers were banished from the Great Moravia but they used their experience in the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia and the Byzantine Empire. Slavic culture and liturgical language spread into other countries from these religious centers.

Contemporaries undoubtedly could not be aware of consequences of the forced leave of the Solun brothers from Great Moravia. Active influence of first disciples of Cyril and Methodius in the Bulgarian Empire at the turn of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> century was decisive for expansion of powers of the Slavic world directly linked to the cultural development and Christianization. More than one hundred years later, other generations of scholars stimulated religious environment of the Eastern Slavs concentrated in Kievan Rus' to

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such a form that Great Moravian cultural tradition found its continuation and establishment. Intellectual elites of several Slavic nations established the development of national identity on the cult of Cyril and Methodius in the later time period. It was not a coincidence because they had relatively intense connections that allowed them to look for various kinds of inspirations related to this cult.

## 2. Materials and methods

The important basis formed literary works that concern the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition and cult in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to them, later Slovak and foreign scientific publications were used in regard to the given topic.

The solving of the research tasks was carried out by generally used methods, as the historical-comparative method and the principle of historicism. Syntheses and analyses have an important position within this article. They allowed to handle the general framework of the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition and cult which dominated many Slavonic nations. In this regard we put emphasis on the example of Slovakia where we took into consideration the aspect of the Slovak National Process that had particularly sprouted since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 3. Discussion

Transformation of perception of a function of the Cyrillo-Methodian idea at the turn of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century included many contradictions and paradoxes related to mutual relationship between modernizing and at the same time nationalizing society on one hand and on the other hand between changing position of religion in the center of this society. Cyrillo-Methodian cult reflected contemporary distinctive and often contradictory religious, national, constitutional, political and political-party interests, concepts, objectives and conflicts inside this society (Malíř, 2014: 103-104). Nowadays, significant attention is drawn to the issue of Cyrillo-Methodian idea in historiography. Cyrillo-Methodian stories were initially almost exclusive part of religious historiography and hagiography (Arpáš, 2017: 233-240; Podolan, 2013: 198; Ruttkay, 2016: 2-10; Vepřek, 2016: 193; Zozulák, 2013: 790-799; Zozulák, 2017: 3-11; Žeňuch, 2016: 199-209).

In the era of forming modern identities, thus during National Revival when certain interest groups needed to support categorical constructs of continuity within forming their identity so in case of respect for the saints thus to Cyril and Methodius, there is incorporation of another deeper motive hidden in these constructs - attempts to create divine "model" and to prove divine life existence, interconnection of mundane and spiritual life (Hanuš, 2013: 15).

## 4. Results

**Development of the Cult of Cyril and Methodius in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century.** There were significant changes at places where Cyril and Methodius were active during Great Moravian missionary activity after the fall of the Great Moravia. The territory of contemporary Slovakia became a part of the Kingdom of Hungary for several centuries after 1000. Cyrillo-Methodian cult was relatively quickly replaced with an incoming cult of Hungarian saint rulers and younger saints of Nitra diocese (St. Svorad and Benedict). Although Cyrillo-Methodian literature and literary message could not be developed and application of literary traditions implemented by Cyril and Methodius was interrupted for a long time period, their work in universal spiritual perception persisted in cultural heritage of entire generations – either in aristocracy of Slavic origin or of common people. Manifestations of respect did not completely disappear from religious life (especially from its non-liturgical manifestations) (Mulík, 2009: 98).

Respect for Cyril and Methodius is documented in an increasing number of manifestations of various Slavic nations from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Saint brothers are especially mentioned in historical and liturgical literature whereas in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries concepts about their activity in individual scripts are partially stabilized (Tibenský, 1992: 579; Žeňuch, 2002: 47). Initial interest in Cyrillo-Methodian cult was not massive - at the beginning it was shown by individual scholars. Even in the field of religion, worshiping of Byzantine missionaries was only gradual. The fact that the Solun brothers were not patrons of any church in the entire Kingdom of Hungary proves this fact (Kowalská, 2013: 70). It changed after 1777, when the pope Pius VI., based on the incentive of enlightened ruler Maria Theresa, approved 14<sup>th</sup> March as the day of worshiping the memory of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in all Catholic Churches of the Habsburg Monarchy (Vragaš, 1991: 60).

Two elements of Church-religious life were primarily important for forming of Slovak national identity in Slovak ethnic environment – Catholic and Evangelical of the Augsburg Confession. Historical Cyrillo-Methodian narrative was domesticated in circles of scholars of both confessional societies, although in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was more often emphasized by Catholic intellectuals. Both saints eventually symbolized the shape of Church that was split by schism and in case of Evangelical community they provided the possibility to legitimize its existence still doubted by the pressure of recatholization (Kowalská, 2007: 120). Evangelical scholars also identified themselves with Great Moravia and they perceived Sts. Cyril and Methodius as messengers of Christianity among the Slovaks and propagators of the Word of God in a domestic language. They found themselves as disciples of their work while the connecting element between them and themselves was in reformation that rehabilitated domestic languages and called for the return to original ideals of Christianity (Škvarna, 2004: 20).

Development of Cyrillo-Methodian tradition was based on ideological foundations of all generations of Slovak National Revival. Followers of Anton Bernolák greatly contributed to the development of traditions (emphasizing its religious scope), especially Anton Bernolák and Juraj Fándly themselves. National awakers raised interest not only in literature but in folk song as well. Vojtech Šimko, a member of Slovak Learned Society, promoted a hymn song *Nitra, milá Nitra* [Nitra, dear Nitra] whereas “slovenská mati” [Slovak mother] has got strong attributes of Cyrillo-Methodian content. This awakening ode from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was sung by followers of Ludovít Štúr on Devín on 24 April, 1836.<sup>1</sup> However, attempts of followers of Anton Bernolák were no longer developed.

**The Cult of Cyril and Methodius in 19<sup>th</sup> century.** There was a new generation of awakers in the Evangelical and Catholic confession in 20's and 30's of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was formed in the situation of strengthening Hungarization. A new stimulus for revival was seen in significant growth of political influence of Russia after Napoleonic wars, where Slovaks and Czechs saw a patronage for their ethnicity, prospect of the Slavs and their future in numerous family of Slavic nations. In the context of these changes, the perception of mission of the Solun brothers in awakening circles changed. Reminiscence on Christianizing activity of Cyril and Methodius lived to see a qualitative development of Cyrillo-Methodian idea not only in the scope of spreading a new culture, script and language but it started to play a role in political (state-building) sense considering contemporary connotations in the Great Moravian empire. The existence of the Great Moravia as a powerful state body that preceded the Kingdom of Hungary was to legitimize attempts to obtain greater political rights. Elements of Cyrillo-Methodian theme may be found in several works by prominent Evangelical scholars such as Ján Kollár and Pavel Jozef Šafárik from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Podolan, 2013: 202-219). Kollár created a concept of Slavic reciprocity and the idea of Czech-Slovak literary-linguistic and tribal unity in his poetic work. An attempt for literary and cultural union of the Slavs in Kollár's work *O literárnej vzájomnosti* [About Literary Reciprocity] was a presage of political Pan-Slavism. His opinions had positive reaction in czarist Russia that considered them as expansion of its historical role starting with the patronage of all Orthodox believers ending with the unification of the Slavs.

Cyrillo-Methodian cult gradually gained multi-functional role among Slovaks. A Catholic Priest and follower of Anton Bernolák, Ján Hollý wrote one of his most important works related to this cult in 1835 - an epic poem *Cyrillo-Methodiada* that belonged to the basis of Slovak literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Paramount generation of Slovak awakers led by Ludovít Štúr also emphasized the cult - its national-state aspect especially under the influence of this poetic work and other of his works from 30's and 40's of the 19<sup>th</sup>. This generation promoted the concept of independence and national language, making the Evangelists to leave their former positions of literary-linguistic unity of the Czechs and Slovaks. The process of formation of Slovaks into a modern nation took place under unpleasant circumstances because the Hungarians also formed into a modern nation which political elites changed Hungary into Hungarian national state. At the beginning of 40's of the 19<sup>th</sup> century intensive spreading of Hungarian language in public life was most significantly manifested in Protestant education where fear of Russian influence played its role (Predanociová, 2016: 58). Štúr's concepts changed during his life. After 1848, he definitely inclined to integration of Slovakia to Russia (Gbúrová, 2017: 53-56).

Regarding followers of Ludovít Štúr, mainly Evangelical scholars, national-identifying interpretation of Cyrillo-Methodian tradition apparently got on the level of civilizing identity as a higher stage of collective identity<sup>2</sup> where they attempted not to separate national and religious idea. However, one of the leaders of Štúr's generation Jozef Miloslav Hurban in his essay *Slovensko a jeho život literárny* [Slovakia and its Literary Life] that was published in a magazine *Slovenskje Pohľady na vedi umeňja a literatúru* [Slovak Views on Science and Literature] mentions merits of Cyril and Methodius when spreading Christianity but he emphasizes them as creators of a script, translations and literature. This work may be considered as a synthesis of history of literature where a new view on an activity of both saints in Great Moravia is integrated as well as a picture of “*the state of memory on the Solun brothers*”. Hurban pointed out at the fact that Slovaks had, as one of the first nations, access to the Bible in their mother tongue thanks to Sts. Cyril and Methodius (Kodajová, 2013: 88-90). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the image of saints that preferred a cultural importance of their mission was not primarily linked to a particular confession what eventually provided a common platform for cooperation of Catholic and Lutheran Church dignitaries while preparing celebration of millennium of their arrival to Great Moravia.

The cult of both brothers was also spread in other Slavic countries where in each of them with different political, cultural and confessional conditions for its existence. The influence of Cyril and Methodius may be found in Orthodox Church so the messages of both brothers are intensively commemorated in Russia or Ukraine. Roots of this tradition of Eastern Slavs may be found in the Early Middle Ages (Fris, 2003). In the 13<sup>th</sup> century Mongolian hordes caused recession not only in political but cultural life of Rus that made the

<sup>1</sup> The song was published for the first time by Ján Kollár in his collection *Národné zpievanky* [National Songs] (1834, 1835) and in 1836 by Karol Kuzmány in *Hronka* journal as well.

<sup>2</sup> In 1842 Jozef Miloslav Hurban started to publish an almanac *Nitra* where he published a poetic composition with Great Moravian theme called *Osudové Nitry* [Faiths of Nitra] and short novels *Svatba krále velkomoravského* [Wedding of Moravian King] and *Obrazy z deviateho stoletia* [Pictures from the 9<sup>th</sup> Century] (Kačírek, 2017: 163-164).

cult of Cyril and Methodius much weaker. References to them were rarer and local Church had a decisive role in at least limited keeping of awareness and respect for the saints. More dynamic renewal of Cyrillo-Methodian cult in Eastern Slavs as well as Slovaks occurred in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the process of forming modern nations and national movements.

The nature of Cyrillo-Methodian message was attractive not only for Catholic but Orthodox Church as well and therefore it was lively especially among Balkan and Eastern Slavs. It was becoming an important factor of unionist movement in Catholic and Orthodox circles. Popularity of Cyrillo-Methodian cult and its spreading among Southern and Eastern Slavs was a suitable ground for searching for ways to gain Orthodox Slavs for union with Catholic Church. Pope's letter *In suprema Petri Apostoli Sede* written by the Pope Pius IX. issued in January 1848 served as a certain stimuli in this direction. In his letter the Pope addressed Catholics and Orthodox Christians and he initiated many reflections and attempts to unify Roman-Catholic and Orthodox Church and at the same time to increase an interest in Cyrillo-Methodian idea at international level. After 1848, several associations and periodicals in different countries claimed allegiance to Cyrillo-Methodian idea (Malíř, 2014: 106).

From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century commemorations of saints in press were intensified and also in other public forums what was, besides the mentioned letter of Pius IX, related to millennial celebrations of their arrival to Great Moravia (1863), decease of Cyril (1869) and Methodius (1885). Catholic magazine *Cyrill a Method* was named after the Solun brothers in the Kingdom of Hungary. *Katolícký časopis pro Cirkev a školu* [Catholic Magazine for Church and School], that also had their portrait in heading, was published for the first time symbolically on the feast of Sts. Cyril and Methodius<sup>1</sup> in Banská Štiavnica in 1850. Contributions in the magazine were focused on Cyrillo-Methodian issue of the Slovak reciprocity and strengthening of Slovak national awareness. A high school professor in Banská Bystrica Juraj Šlota implemented an annual commemoration of the feast of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Upper-Hungarian environment in 1853 for the first time. Not only teachers and students but city representatives, clerks and citizens of Banská Bystrica also participated in celebrations that took place on 14<sup>th</sup> March in a church in the form of church services. Notices of a similar nature that were related to Cyril and Methodius regularly appeared in the magazine (Ivanič, Hetényi, 2017: 77-91).

60's of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are known as Matica period when the political situation was temporarily released and the Hungarians did not gain the overall power in the Kingdom of Hungary. After change of a political regime (after the fall of so called Bach's absolutism) and after the establishment of more liberal situation there was a repeated enlivening of national life of the Slovaks. At the occasion of millennial celebrations of the arrival of the Solun brothers to Great Moravia in 1863 there were many activities performed organized by the representatives of Catholic as well as Evangelical Church. Main coordinators of these celebrations were the bishop of Banská Bystrica Štefan Moyses, the bishop of Spiš Ladislav Zábojský and Evangelical superintendent Karol Kuzmány. Due to the resistance of Church nobility, the festive commemoration of the arrival of Cyril and Methodius was of exclusively religious nature without a more distinctive connection with patriotic idea. In many purely Slovak localities an attempt to organize millennial commemorations was supported neither by the Bishop of Estergom, Hungarian offices nor by local priests who preferred the tradition of St. Stephane (Kohútová, 2014: 65).

In dioceses of Banská Bystrica and Spiš commemorations of Cyril and Methodius were announced via shepherd letters and took place in several locations. The most prominent commemorations took place on 14 and 15 March, 1963 in Banská Bystrica and on 31 May, 1863 in near village of Selce where a local temple was consecrated to Cyril and Methodius at this occasion - this patrocinium is the oldest consecration of a church to these saints in the entire Kingdom of Hungary. The festive academies took place during the jubilee year in Slovak high schools in Banská Bystrica and Revúca (Vetráková, 2012: 213-228). Besides festive services and academies Cyril and Methodius were commemorated through publications, articles, pictures and statues. Churches, chapels, altars, bells, church flags, schools and libraries were named after them (Škvarna, Hudek, 2013: 4).

The most significant success of the Slovak National Revival in this era was the establishment of Matica slovenská based on the model of other Slavic countries that already had their Matica. The first general assembly of Matica slovenská took place on 4 August, 1863 and it declared that this institution is a commemoration of the millennial memorandum of Christianization of the Slovaks. During the festive mass, merits of Sts. Cyril and Methodius were emphasized in a sermon (Kohútová, 2013: 66-67). Spreading of Cyrillo-Methodian cult, its popularity as well as forms of its maintaining and worshiping reached their peak about 1863 in Church ground, national life and print. It contributed to the content as well as national character of Cyrillo-Methodian tradition. Originally, religious and Slavic scope were dominant but it gradually gained more Slovak-like character in both confessional environments until it became one of the most effective tools how to strengthen and manifest national emancipation of Slovaks. During this period the cult of Sts. Cyril and Methodius developed itself in spatial, instrumental, visual, experience way. These saints were standardized as one of the most frequent and typical Slovak symbols (Lopatková, 2014, 69-77; Škvarna, Hudek, 2013: 47-49). Cyrillo-Methodian cult was to a certain extent evoked by Orthodox especially Russian environment. However, in regard to Slavophile orientation of several Slovak political leaders and non-

<sup>1</sup> The fiest of Sts. Cyril and Methodius was in the given period celebrated on 14 March.



existence of other more valuable domestic traditions, this aspect could not be threatened by Cyrillo-Methodian cult in Slovak national program.

In 1864, the bishop of Banská Bystrica and the chairman of Matica slovenská Štefan Moyses together with Croatian and Czech bishops asked the Holy See to make a liturgical feast of Sts. Cyril and Methodius take place in all Slavic countries annually on 5 July (instead of 9 March) (Zubko, 2011: 237).<sup>1</sup>

The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 that was a consequence of the lost war between Austria and Prussia caused closing of Slovak Matica slovenská, Slovak high schools and many other more serious wounds. In May and June of this year there was Russian ethnographic exhibition and Slovak congress held in Moscow. Matica slovenská received an official invitation but did not send any official delegation due to its fear of persecutions. Only attorneys such as Pavol Mudroň and Ján Jesenský as well as a Catholic priest Andej Radlinský arrived in Moscow privately. After their return, they were accused of a treason (Kováč et al., 1998: 523).

The atmosphere in the Habsburg monarchy at the turn of 60's and 70's was marked by political processes, closing down of many religious associations and a ban of larger manifestations of national awareness. Jubilee millennial anniversary of the death of Cyril in 1869 was commemorated only in Moravian Velehrad (Kindlerová, 2013: 30). Commemorations of Cyrillo-Methodian cult was in regard to changed political-social situation overshadowed despite the fact that 1880, the pope Lev XIII. published an encyclical *Grande munus* where he ordered 5 June to become a universal holiday for worshiping of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in the whole Catholic Church. In the encyclical inspired by Zagreb archbishop J. J. Strossmayer opinions on holiness of both brothers were confirmed and their work was commemorated. Further encyclical contained an appeal to unify the churches. With gratitude for this, Slavic pilgrimage to Rome was held supported by the presence of Slovaks.

The mentioned millenniums were a strong impulse for development of Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in other Slavic countries as well. Their cult remained continually preserved especially in Bulgarian and Croatian environment while it was primarily focused on their merits for preparation of students who continued with already started religious activity right in the Balkans. Connections to Moscow were the strongest at Bulgarians among other Slavic countries as Bulgarian populations expected help from Orthodox Russia of the same belief.<sup>2</sup>

Until 19<sup>th</sup> century, services dedicated to particular saints were brought into Russian sacral menaions in the context of imperial state politics. The situation radically changed later during the era of Cyrillo-Methodian celebrations when events from Russian church history become the center of attention regarding perception of hymnography. There were no special ceremonies stated to be used by the Solun Brothers in liturgical practices of countries that used liturgical books from Russia (except for Russia itself) there was a need to change this situation in Russian Orthodox Church. First practical steps towards re-establishment of worshiping of Slavic first teachers were taken by Antonij, the Bishop of Smolence. In summer 1861, he addressed an arch-prosecutor of Church synod with a request to elaborate such a service and implement it into worship practice because as he informed - in liturgical books there was not a reference on them linked to 11 May a service to Cyril and Methodius (Pociechina, Kravetsky, 2013: 17-18). A proposal by a bishop Antonij was supported by a Moscow metropolitan Filaret (Popov, 2013: 305-306). Filaret himself composed a song for this canon. Certain doubts within a discussion on newly established service caused a recognition of equal status of Slavic teachers with disciples, so a metropolitan was forced to draw up a special file where he explained the meaning of the importance of such equality. Synod subsequently approved a text about Cyril and Methodius related to 11 May and names of saints that were in 1863 integrated into liturgical books (Pociechina, Kravetsky, 2013: 18).

Celebrations of a millennial of Cyrillo-Methodian mission were mentioned also in Russian church press. Readers in Russia were also informed about preparations on a consistent course of Cyrillo-Methodian celebrations in Habsburg monarchy via an article by an anonymous correspondent published in *Duchovnjaja beseda*<sup>3</sup> [Religious Talk] on 26 December, 1862. Besides its informative function, the article apparently had also another purpose - to arouse Orthodox believers who did not start with preparations on the celebration of Cyrillo-Methodian anniversary. The report is primarily focused on passive attitude of the Orthodox Church in the Kingdom of Hungary that failed to react on general arousing of the Slavs to the millennial celebration with any particular measurements. Fear that the conclusion of these events might be interpreted in a way that the belief brought by Cyril and Methodius was of Roman Catholic not Orthodox nature should have served as a strong argument. The mentioned magazine *Duchovnjaja beseda* [Religious Talk] reflected the course of millennial celebrations in the Habsburg empire when it provided a relatively detailed description how Catholic Slavs celebrated millennial anniversary of Slavic teachers and how the Evangelists followed them (Pociechina, Kravetsky, 2013: 17).

<sup>1</sup> The shift of this feast was not done uniformly in individual dioceses of northern Kingdom of Hungary.

<sup>2</sup> Russian ruler's court was fully aware of this and Bulgarian issue was in the background of many Russian-Turkish conflicts and wars. The Russian army eventually stood at liberation of Bulgaria from the domination of the Ottoman Empire in 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Church weekly published in 1858–1876 in Saint Petersburg.

Similarly as in the rest of the Slavic world, in Eastern Slavic countries in 60's of 19<sup>th</sup> century there were many celebrations held as commemorations of Cyril and Methodius. There was a synod of Orthodox Church which established Saints Cyril and Methodius' Day in 1863 as a memory of completion of millennium from the first consecration of the Gospel into the language of the people annually on 11 (24.) May, on a day when the Solun brothers came to Great Moravia based on tradition. The choice of this date had its more rational reasoning and it was based on the study by a professor of Moscow university Ivan D. Beljajev of 1862. He wrote about a certain Church original document that belonged to Moscow historical society and Russian historical sights where there was an instruction how to depict icons of Cyril and Methodius ([Pociechina, Kravetsky, 2013: 17](#)).

Building of monuments subsequently started in Czarist Russia and from 1865 with awarding of Sts. Cyril and Methodius ([Krilj, 2003: 1-5](#)). Another way of showing respect was a celebration dedicated to millennial anniversary of Slavic document in 1868.

Key personalities of contemporary national historiography, literary science and linguistic concentrated in Moscow university in Russia started to be interested in Cyrillo-Methodian cult. In 1865, *Kirillo-Mefodijeuskij sbornik* was issued under the editorial office of Professor Michail P. Pogodin that covered a significant number of primary resources connected to work of Cyril and Methodius including medieval services. Political aspects of Cyrillo-Methodian celebrations were also mentioned there. Prominent Russian scientist (a filologist Fiodor I. Busleav, an ethnologist Piotr A. Bessonov, a literary scientist Ivan S. Aksakov etc.) pointed out at the fact that Cyrillo-Methodian heritage proved unity of Slavic history. They understood a renewal of religious memory of Cyril and Methodius as a proof of the arising idea of the Slavs in Russian public awareness. There roots were supposed to be a key to future religious connection of all Slavs ([Pociechina, Kravetsky, 2013: 18-19](#)).

The renewal of liturgical worshipping of Slavic first teachers in Russia was developed in parallel with scientific development and movements that perceived Cyril and Methodius as symbolical figures of the entire Slavic culture ([Shpakovskaja, 2014: 151-152](#)).

In Russia on 8 (21) April 1885, Method's death was commemorated by services in the cathedral of st. Isaac in Saint Petersburg. The same day there were celebrations of millennial anniversary of archbishop's death also in Kiev and several ideologists of Slovak battle - writers Svetozár Hurban Vajanský, Jozef Škultéty či Pavel Valášek, an attorney from Nitra participated ([Mulík, 2011: 2015](#)).

Unlike Russia, in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the end of the Habsburg monarchy we meet with manifestations of worshipping of the Solun brothers in the territory of today's Slovakia only sporadically. The exception was the Orthodox and Greek-Catholic believers who continued in celebrating the saints of Byzantine origin in their liturgical ceremonies ([Škvarna, Hudek 2013: 49-63](#)). Oppression of Hungarian authorities against Slovaks reached its peak during Russian-Turkish war (1877–1878) that lead to liberation of Bulgarian nation from Turkish misery what was significantly supported by Slovaks. The government in Budapest took gradual yet systematic steps towards assimilation of non-Hungarian ethnicities. In this difficult situation, Svetozár Hurban Vajanský, a son of Jozef Miloslav Hurban, presented his ideological orientation to Russia that he considered to be an ideal of the only Slavic free country. It was nothing new, Vajanský only adapted his strong belief in the future of the Slavs and especially Russia to the situation given. Vajanský was the most noticeable representative of Pan-Slavism in Slovakia in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century ([Vajanský, 1977](#)). In the context of Russophile manifestations and steps of these Slovak activists, Hungarian government perceived Cyrillo-Methodian cult as an ideological instrument of Pan-Slavism.<sup>1</sup>

Ostentatious national manifestations of Slovaks were suppressed at the beginning by Hungarian government. Processions and other public events in Slovak cities where Cyrillo-Methodian mission was probably active (Devín, Nitra) could not be held during this period. Possibility to show respect to saints in public was allowed in 80's of 19<sup>th</sup> century in neighboring Moravian Velehrad. Through one of the few wider campaigns for spreading of Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in *Katolícke noviny* (Catholic Magazine), the oldest Catholic magazine in Slovakia, that played an important role when constituting Slovak language, massive participation of Slovaks in millennial celebrations in Velehrad was ensured in 1885. Besides Czechs, Moravians and Slovaks also Polish, Sorbs and southern Slavs participated in celebrations despite persecutions by the state ([Kindlerová, 2013: 31](#)).

Spectacular Cyrillo-Methodian celebrations in Velehrad in 1885 met with a positive response in whole Moravia. Influenced by them, a priest Anton Cyril Stojan in Olomouc established in 1891 *Apoštolát svätých Cyrila a Metoda* (Apostolate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius). Its purpose was to strengthen Slavic Catholic Church and also unification of Slavic non-Catholics in a united belief. It greatly developed its activity in Bohemia, Moravia in Croatia and Slovakia. Thanks to Stojan, theological congresses which crucial task was to bring people closer together and attempt to develop a doctrine bridge between Slavic Orthodox East and Latin West were held in the centre in Velehrad, an imaginary archishop city of st. Methodius.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Political Pan-Slavism as a movement directly threatening integrity of State was a crime in the Kingdom of Hungary (§ 127 of Hungarian Criminal Code).

<sup>2</sup> Lipka C. Svätocyrillo-metodská tradícia medzi západnými Slovanmi (St. Cyrillo-Methodian Tradition between Western Slavs). In: <http://www.kultura-fb.sk/new/old/stare/dejiny-22.htm>

Unionist attempts overlapped with national and political attempts. As the Cyrillo-Methodian idea was also demanded by Slavophiles in Russia who understood it as a possibility to act for unification based on Orthodoxy, Velehrad unionism raised suspicion of Austrian government of improper interference of its persons involved into domestic political sphere. Cyrillo-Methodian issue got into the power field of efforts of Catholic Church and promoting of church union with an aim to attract Orthodox Slavs from Balkan countries on one hand and on the other hand of strengthening movement which representatives together with Orthodox Church in Russia understood Cyrillo-Methodian cult as a suitable ideological instrument for spreading of the attempts to unify Slavs based on their Orthodoxy (Kouřil, 1993: 127-132; Vlček, 2002; Vlček, 2005: 59-109). However, Church representatives in Morava could not resist the pressure of Vienna court and organized these celebrations in Velehrad in strictly religious Catholic manner. They minimized participation of representatives of Russian Orthodox Church and Slavophiles and eliminated their effort to summon an interconfessional congress of Slavs during jubilee celebrations.<sup>1</sup> Fears of Pan-Slavism led the government of Vienna to decision to make Cyrillo-Methodian jubilee celebrations monitored by the police (Malíř, 2014: 109).

During the era of the Kingdom of Hungary, Slovaks could fruitfully develop their respect at least abroad where approximately one third of them lived at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Cyrillo-Methodian cult was developed so rapidly and intensively that at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century it became a clear identifying feature of Slovak immigrants in the USA and Canada. It is proved by churches, public building, schools and even medals and honors of various institutions that are named after them. Similarly as a cult helped in unifying Lutherans and Catholics in the kingdom of Hungary, it contributed to unifying Roman-Catholic and Greek-Catholic immigrants from Slovakia in American environment (Kowalská, 2013: 74).

20<sup>th</sup> century is in the history of Slovakia characterized by frequent and significant changes. The establishment of the Czechoslovak republic brought new possibilities and new symbolism. Cyrillo-Methodian tradition was a categorical imperative for Catholic and Evangelical Church. Religious respect for holy brothers was becoming a matter of course. They were perceived as national patrons in Slovakia where their feast was eagerly celebrated every year on 5 July.

## 5. Conclusion

In Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Croatia, the feast of Sts. Cyril and Methodius is celebrated annually on 5 July. Nowadays in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Bulgaria, 24 May is a bank holiday named the Day of Slavic Culture and Scriptum, as well as in Macedonia under the name Day of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. The restoration of church memory of Cyril and Methodius in Russian Empire that were actualized in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in relation to ideas of unification of Slavic culture, stimulated an interest in Russian saints and their service.

Cyrillo-Methodian cult was originally a religious and church concern. In 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was increased interest in this tradition based not only on religious-church but national and political motivation as well. The concept of Cyril and Methodius in the Kingdom of Hungary had different backgrounds for its development compared to Eastern Slavic countries. Regarding Slovak National Revival in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, cultural tradition based on Great Moravia was an important stimulus for its own self-identification. Slovaks compared to Czechs and Russians could not rely on statehood and therefore they followed the reference of Cyril and Methodius in broader dimensions and also beyond the scope of religious perception- in particular in its national-state dimension. During the era of the Kingdom of Hungary Slovaks could develop Cyrillo-Methodian respect spread thanks to several promoters only to a limited extent. Despite of this ideological transfer, often through personal contacts, stimulated interest in Cyrillo-Methodian cult also in Slovak awakening circles. Worshipers of holy brothers from church circles intended to contribute to strengthening of faith in their country during the period of threat of increasing secularism and to getting to know Christian East by their diverse practical activity in their Christian ministry (Kindlerová, 2013: 38). Deeper understanding of the importance of Sts. Cyril and Methodius is related, besides the boom of their cult regarding the Orthodox, Catholics and Evangelists, to scientific exploration of their life and work which beginnings are linked to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Instrumentalization of Cyrillo-Methodian message for national-political and later for political-party purposes completed their wide-ranging and variable role in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its multifunctionality enabled spreading and deepening of religious awareness and National Revival activity at the same time. Similarly, the Cyrillo-Methodian cult had its place regarding the development of interconfessional movement and at the same time and it was eventually used as a part of national-defensive efforts (Malíř, 2014: 114). Nowadays, the current appeal through the process of digitalization is to access world cultural heritage of Cyril and Methodius to the public (Nikonova – Biryukova, 2017: 169-173).

## 6. Acknowledgement

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<sup>1</sup> Vice versa, representatives of Czech politics took a positive stance towards the interest of other Slavs in Cyrillo-Methodian celebrations due to national-political reasons.



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### **Роль Кирилло-мефодиевской культуры в словацком национальном возрождении в контексте контактов с восточными славянами**

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**Аннотация.** Кирилло-мефодиевская традиция является основной частью формирования национальных историй многих славянских народов. Восстановление духовных ценностей трудов Кирилла и Мефодия происходит в религиозной, национальной и культурной жизни славян, особенно в эпоху национальных процессов возрождения. Эта традиция была сильным элементом культуры, который должен был сыграть ключевую роль в подтверждении преемственности сообщества. Поскольку кирилло-мефодиевский феномен связан с идеей исторической древности, культурной зрелости и государственной автономии многих славянских народов, он интегрируется в эффективные элементы их самоопределения.

В качестве материалов привлечены труды посвященные кирилло-мефодиевской культуре в XIX и XX веках. Помимо этого были использованы словацкие и зарубежные научные публикации по теме исследования, опубликованные в новейшее время.

При решении исследовательских задач применялись общелогические методы, а также историко-сравнительный метод и принцип историзма. Важное значение в статье имеют методы обобщения и конкретизации, которые позволили обобщить труды кирилло-мефодиевской культуры, доминирующие во многих славянских народов, и рассмотреть на примере Словакии, изучая их с точки зрения словацкого национального процесса возрождения во второй половине XIX века.

В статье авторы сосредоточились на роли кирилло-мефодиевской культуры в возрождении словацкой национальности в контексте контактов с восточными славянами. Авторы приходят к выводу, что кирилло-мефодиевская традиция в XIX веке сыграла важную роль в национальном возрождении Словакии и внесла свой вклад в идею инструментализации славян.

**Ключевые слова:** Кирилл, Мефодий, Словакия, Россия, славяне, культ, национальное возрождение, идентичность, Людовит Штур, XIX век.

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