SUMMARIES

THE SAINT AND THE NATION.
ALEXANDER NEVSKY AND ST. WENCESLAS IN
THE CULTURAL MEMORY OF THE RUSSIAN
AND CZECH NATION

Frithjof Benjamin Schenk

Selecting the examples of Alexander Nevsky and Wenceslas, the author attempts to evaluate the scope of the comparative history of the development of national memories in application to a Russian and a Czech national patron. At the centre is the question how the image of the two holy princes changed in Russian and Czech cultural memories across the centuries, to what extent those radical changes may be interpreted as expressions of how collective identities changed, too, and what similarities and differences may be perceived. Whereas the parallels point towards structural analogies of the respective collective (dynastic, ecclesiastic or national) identity discourses, the differences suggest that if one compares the Czech and the Russian recollecting communities, there are significant time shifts between certain phases and sometimes different directions the quest for sense has taken.

“VELEHRAD IS OUR PROGRAMME.”
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CYRILLO-METHODIC IDEA
AND THE VELEHRAD MOVEMENT FOR 19TH
AND 20TH-CENTURY MORAVIAN CATHOLICISM

Franz Machilek

In the course of the 19th century, the adoration of the Saints, Cyril and Methodius, grew among Slavic peoples. More and more, it became linked up with national demands and finally lead to the so-called Cyrillo-Methodic idea which aimed at a rapprochment between the Catholic and Orthodox denominations. Velehrad, where St. Methodius is said to be buried, evolved into a Moravian centre of this idea as well as Czech catholicism in general. Beginning with the late 19th century, a circle around Antonín Cyril Stojan, who later became archbishop of Olomouc, sought to counteract endeavours to politically exploit Velehrad and the Cyrillo-Methodic idea, and instead to devote greater attention to religious questions such as the relationship with the Orthodox world. Starting in 1907, several Union Congresses took place which were devoted to just this goal. It is important to note that the Catholic reform movement “Jednota”, which had been revived after the first World War, was a con-
sequence of the Velehrad movement to a certain extent, and that some of the founders of the Czechoslovak Church had been part of it as well. After 1948, the communists sought to make the Cyrillo-Methodic idea a symbol of close relations with the Soviet Union. With this in mind, they also exploited a widespread interest in pilgrimages to Velehrad. Whereas the 1000th anniversary of the death of St. Methodius in 1985, due to many restrictions by the communist rulers, had of necessity to be observed in a rather restrained fashion, the visit in April 1990 by Pope John Paul II became a celebrated event and a symbol of changed political circumstances.

CZECH CATHOLICISM AFTER THE FIRST WAR FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE HOLY SEE

Emilia Hrabovec

Soon after Czechoslovakia had been founded, the Bohemian Lands witnessed a strong anti-catholic current, the aims being secularization of public life, a separation of church and state and an eventual emancipation of the nation’s own church. Pope Benedict XV reacted to this crisis by striving to establish contacts with the new state as soon as possible. By 1919, the extent of the reform demands was perceived by the Vatican as being equivalent, in the most radical variant, to the conversion of the Catholic church into a separate ecclesiastic organisation of the new nation. The reasons of the crisis were located in changing political and spiritual values, in the legacy of the Austrian state religion, in an influence of the protestant, positivistic outlook on history, but first and foremost in the clergy lacking appropriate training. Gradually it dawned upon those in charge that in the laicist republic, the future of the church was dependent upon the discipline of the clergy. At this point, a decision was made to examine to what extent the Jednota movement, a grouping of priests outspokenly demanding reforms, could be adapted to the new situation. Finally, after the Czechoslovak National Church had been established, “Jednota” was disbanded. In spite of further attempts at mediating, in the course of 1920 the Vatican gradually reached the conclusion that not by making concessions, but only by drawing very clear lines between the Catholic Church and other parts of society and by the church reforming from within could the crisis be overcome.