
ABHANDLUNGEN

IMRE BOBA, SEATTLE/WASHINGTON

Braslavespurch: Bratislava OR «Braslav's Burg»: Zalavár?

One of the more important battles of the Middle Ages took place in 907 at a place named in sources Brezalauspurc or Braslavespurch. The battle was an encounter between the Frankish-Bavarian armies and the Hungarians. In modern historiography this battle is considered to be the event which frustrated the Frankish-Bavarian efforts to recover Pannonia and allowed the Hungarians to remain permanently in the Carpathian Basin.

Details about the battle of 907 are known from a description of some five hundred words written by the Bavarian court historian Aventinus (Johannes Turmair 1477-1534) in his Latin *Annales Boiorum* (written 1517-1521). A shorter version of the battle's description is part of the German translation of the *Annales*, in the *Bayerische Chronik*, prepared by his librarian and secretary. (STRAUSS.)

Aventinus, in preparation for writing his *Annales*, collected parts of chronicles and documents available to him as a court historian. Some of these sources, since lost, exist only in his and his secretary's transcriptions. On the basis of such transcriptions one of these sources has been reconstructed and is known today as the *Excerpta Aventini ex Annalibus Iuvavensibus antiqui derivati*. (MONUMENTA GERMANIAE HISTORICA, SCRIPTORES Vol. XXX/2, 743f.) In these excerpts one reads s.a. 907: «Interfectio Boiorum ad Braslavespurch».

In the various sources to which Aventinus had access and from which he made copious excerpts, there is no trace of a description of the battle of 907 itself. The only contemporary source which gives reference to the place and date of the battle is a sentence in the *Annales Iuvavenses maximi* under the year 907: »Bellum pessimum fuit ad Brezalauspurc IIII nonas Julii«. This source was discovered by Ernst Klebel in 1921 and subsequently published by H. Bresslau. (MONUMENTA GERMANIAE HISTORICA, SCRIPTORES XXX/2, Hannover 1934, 727-744.) A study of this source was published also by Bresslau in 1923. (BRESSLAU, KLEBEL.)

Although the source from Salzburg, as excerpted by Aventinus, identified the place of the battle as Braslavespurch, he used in his own *Annales* for the place the name-form «Vratislavia», and in the German version «Presburg» (in modern German spelling Preßburg, Hungarian Pozsony; since 1919 Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia). Possibly because the detailed description by Aventinus originated from the sixteenth century and there was no independent confirmation of it in

other, contemporary sources, some scepticism concerning the details of the battle of 907 – as described by Aventinus – was voiced at least a century ago. E.g. Joseph Kemper in 1857 could already refer to the suspicions voiced i.e. by Hansiz, Waitz and Dümmler. Kemper himself pointed out that Aventinus named among those killed people who perished half a century later, at Augsburg, in 955, and that there are names of people among the victims in 907 who were still alive in 908 and 910. Kemper noticed also that Aventinus based his description of the advancing army of Luitpold on the well-known campaign of Charlemagne against the Avars in 791. (KEMPER.)

The similarity between the itinerary of Charlemagne's army and that of Luitpold in 907 was noticed also by Kurt Reindel. (REINDEL.) Even more striking similarities can be shown between the text of Aventinus and the description of a campaign of Emperor Henry III in 1051 toward Fehérvár in Pannonia, at that time capital of Hungary. (Cf. Appendix.)

Similarities in descriptions of various campaigns originating in Bavaria and directed into Hungary are not necessarily borrowings from a single source. Thus the battle's lengthy description – typical for a historian of the sixteenth century utilizing his erudition – does not yet undermine the credibility of Aventinus. More weighty are the objections raised as to the exact location of the battle.

In his *Slovanské Starožitnosti* (1837) Šafařík accepted «Presburg» of the German translation of the *Annales* as the place of the battle: «A však po nešťastné porážce Ludwika IV. u Prešpurku l. 907» (= Defeat of Louis IV at Preßburg). (ŠAFAŘÍK Vol. II, 782). Ortway in his *Geschichte Preßburgs* (1892) also accepted the equation, although he added that there are also other views which suggest places south of the Danube, e.g. at Ménfő, near Győr. (ORTVAY.) Bretholz in his *Geschichte Mährens* (1893) opted for «at an unknown place». (BRETHOLZ.) Gyula Pauler in 1894 proposed Bánhida, a locality south of the Danube, between Komárom and Budapest, but he offered no supporting evidence either. (PAULER.) Vaclav Novotný in *České dejiny* (1912) simply stated: «The bloody battle of 907 took place somewhere in the Eastern March [of Bavaria], probably along its Pannonian border (it was referred to earlier as the battle at Prešpurk [...])» [Brackets by Novotný]. (NOVOTNÝ.) In modern historiography the exact location of the event remained, at least for a while, controversial.

With Klebel's discovery of the *Annales* of Salzburg, however, the differences of opinion concerning the location of the battle of 907 seem to be resolved in favor of Šafařík's and Ortway's view. According to Klebel: «Brezalauspurc kann nur Preßburg (tschechisch Břetislava) sein. Also auch dieser Ort entstammt samt seinem deutschen Namen der vormagyarischen Zeit». (KLEBEL.) But there are problems with Klebel's conclusions. Klebel did not offer an in-depth analysis of the historical circumstances preceding and following the battle of 907, nor did he show that the name-form «Preßburg» or «Břetislava» is derived from «Brezalauspurc» or «Braslavespurch». There is no evidence that Preßburg existed or was settled and named by Germans before the arrival of the Hungarians (ca. 895).

The German name «Preßburg» appears in the sources for the first time in the forms «Brezesburg» and «Brezisburg» only in 1042 and 1052 in the *Chronicle of*

Herimannus Augiensis. The same Herimannus knew also a duke of Bohemia of the name Brezislaus s.a. 1039. One should note that Herimannus (1013-1054) was a contemporary to the events he described.

Herimannus Augiensis Chronicon:

1039. Heinricus rex, mota in Boemiam expeditione, cum dux gentis Brezislaus filium suum obsidem ei misisset [...].

1042. Heinricus quoque rex ulturus sui iniuriam Pannoniam cum exercitu in autumnno ingressus, [...] civitates Heimenburg et Brezesburg evertit, septentrionalem Danubii partem [...] vastavit [...].

1051. [...] magno cum exercitu imperator Pannonias petit [...] Welf Brezislaoque ducibus ad septentrionalem Danubii partem depopulandam transmissis [...].

1052. Imperator [...] in Pannonicam itidem expeditionem proficiscitur [et] Brezisburg castrum obsedit [...].

It seems to be self-evident that there is a philological connection between the names «Brezislaus» and «Brezisburg»/«Brezesburg». North of the Danube there are several places, the names of which are derived from the Czech personal name «Břetislav». Czechoslovak historians refer to these places as the «tak zvané břetislavské hrady» (= the so-called burgs of Břetislav). These burgs, however, did not exist, or were not yet named so, before ca. 1030.

It was the Přemyslid Prince Břetislav I (1034-1055) who constructed several burgs or reinforced old burgs in newly conquered territories after the liquidation by his father Udalrich (Czech: Oldřich (1012-1033/1034) of the Slavnik-Piast condominium between Bohemia proper and Hungary. The Polish «protectorate» over the Slavnik possessions began sometime about the year 1000 and lasted until ca. 1030. Zdenek Fiala in his *Přemyslovské Čechy* (1975) was of the opinion that «the fate of the territory of Morava [north of the Danube] from the fall of the Old Moravian realm during the early tenth century until 1030 is unclear and, given the dearth of reliable sources, simply puzzling». (FIALA. Cf. BOBA 1981.) The territory in question stretched along the Morava river from Poland proper to the Danube.

Cosmas Pragensis in his *Chronica Bohemorum* (I, cap. 40) ascribes the loss by the Poles of Moravia [north of the Danube] to the efforts of Udalrichus, father of Bracizlaus (Czech: Břetislav). Udalrichus expelled the Poles from all the cities of Moravia, and sold many of them into slavery in Hungary and places beyond. Udalrichus entrusted the occupied territory to his son Břetislav in, or shortly after, 1029. Thus the German name-forms Brezesburg/Brezisburg for Preßburg, attested for the first time in 1042 and 1052 during the lifetime of Břetislav (1005-1055), must be one of the «Břetislavské hrady», named for Brezislaus/Břetislav of Bohemia about the year 1030. The name was given to the place by Bavarian-German merchants settled in Preßburg's suburb. Bohemia was de-iure and de-facto part of the Empire. German merchants and craftsmen from Bohemia proper and Bavaria would be the first to settle in old towns in Northern Moravia from which the Poles and their local adherents were sold to slavery after 1029. German speaking settlers would naturally name their new domicile after the prince who settled them there,

hence; «Brezesburg», in Bavarian dialect «Prezesburg» > «Preßburg». (Cf. e.g. the name Etzelburg used apparently for Buda by German settlers brought in by duke Géza = Etzel. See: BOBA 1990.)

The historically plausible connection between Břetislav and Preßburg makes Klebel's identification of Brezalauspurch with Preßburg debatable. Klebel's conclusion does not result from a philological analysis, but is based on an optical illusion. It is impossible to have a phonetic transition from a Slavic etymon «bra-» (in «Braslav», attested for the ninth century) to «břeti-» (recorded in the eleventh century). An attested for the eleventh century Germanic «Prezes-burg» may, however, undergo the phonetic transition to a «Preß-burg». Consequently, Klebel's view can not be sustained on philological, historical or logical grounds. It is, therefore, a philologically sound and historically attested conclusion that Brezesburg/Preßburg is one of the burgs to be associated with Brezislavus/Břetislav of Bohemia.

An association between Preßburg and Brecislaburgium was suggested already in 1753 by Mátyás Bél in his *Compendium rerum Hungaricarum*. The same view was expressed by Šafařík in 1837. Enumerating sources with medieval place-names located north of the Danube, Šafařík listed «in the land of the Slovaks Brecisburg, i.e. Bracislaw, Czech Brecislaw or Břetislav, today Prešpurek, known to Herimannus Augiensis in 1042 as «Brecisburg». (ŠAFAŘÍK Vol. II, 831). By suggesting that the name «Preßburg» («Prešpurek») is derived from the name «Brecisburg», Šafařík unwittingly created a contradiction between the concept of the battle of 907 taking place at Preßburg, and the concept that Prešpurek [Preßburg in the German edition] is connected with the name «Brecisburg» attested only in 1042. He has also failed to notice the philological difficulty of the equation between «Prešpurek» (=Preßburg) and the name-form «Vratislavia» used by Aventinus in his *Annales*.

Although none of the Slavicized name-forms were used by Šafařík himself, the names, «Břetislav», later modified to «Břetislava» and «Bratislava», became popularized by Slovak poets and writers. (PRAŽÁK.) The modern Czech and Slovak name of the place of Prešpurek is Bratislava. It was introduced officially in 1919 by a governmental decree. Some scholars remained sceptical and criticized the form «Bratislava» as being based on mistaken associations or faulty morphology. (BRÜCKNER, RUDNICKI, STANISLAV.)



It was, again, Herimannus Augiensis who knew Brezislavus and Brezesburg in connection with events north of the Danube between 1039 and 1052 and who had information also about a duke Brazlavo in Frankish Pannonia s.a. 884 and 892 – thus just a few years before the occurrence of the reference to Braslavspurch s.a. 907 in the *Annales* of Salzburg, as excerpted by Aventinus.

Herimanni Augiensis Chronicon:

884. Karolus imperator in citeriore Pannonia conventum habens [...] Brazlavo-

nem ducem, qui inter Dravum et Savum fluvios Pannoniae praefuit, nihilominus se tradentem accepit.

892. Arnolfus rex Pannonias adiens, [...] colloquio cum Brazlavone duce Pannoniae ulterioris habito [...] Marahensem devastat regionem.

Brazlavo is best known from the *Annales Fuldenses*, a detailed and reliable chronological presentation of events, compiled in the ninth century. The *Annales Fuldenses* are considered to be one of the best sources for the study of Pannonia as of the ninth century.

Annales Fuldenses:

884. Imperator per Baiowariam ad Orientem proficiscitur [...]. Postea veniente Brazlavoni duce, qui in id tempus regnum inter Dravo et Savo flumine tenuit suique miliciae subditus adiungitur [...].

892. Rex [Arnolfus] Orientem proficiscitur [...] in Hengistfeldon cum Brazlavone duce colloquium habuit [...]. Missi [regis] [...] propter insidias Zwentibaldi ducis terestre iter non valentes habere de regno Brazlavonis per fluvium Odagra [...] per fluenta Savi fluminis navigio in Bulgaria perducti [...].

896. Stipantibus denique idem partibus [i.e. in Graecia et in Bulgaria] inter se [et cum Ungariis] conflictibus imperator [Arnolfus] Pannoniam cum urbe Paludarum tuendam Brazlavoni duci suo in id tempus commendavit.

Some of these entries from the *Annales Fuldenses* were known also to Aventinus. However, in the Latin version of his *Annales* he paraphrased his source and, in doing so, substituted «Vratislaus» for «Brazlavo», while in the German version the name-form «Presla» is used.

Annales Boiorum:

IV, XIX 17: [... Arnulphus] ducatum Pannoniae secundae, quae tunc portio Boioariae erat, et ad inferiorem partem Dravi, Savi amnium et ad Danubium pertinebat, Vratislao viro bellicoso commendat [...].

IV, XX 24: [... Arnulphus] conventum apud Hengstoueld agit [...]. Interfuere eidem concilio Vratislaus ulterioris Poloniae [recte: Pannoniae; cf. Herimannus, supra, a. 892] praeses [...].

IV, XX 26: Iussu Arnulphi Vratislaus legatos eius ad Litomarum [i.e. Vladimirus] Bulgarum regem deducit [...]. (Cf. *Annales Fuldenses* s.aa. 884, 892.)

IV, XXI 8: [...] Vratislaus quoque Poloniae ulterioris [recte: Pannoniae] Venedorumque rector fidus nobis [i.e. Boiorum].

It is, thus, evident that «Vratislaus» of the *Annales Boiorum* is a Latinized version of the Bavarian «Brazlavo», or of the Slavic «Braslav».

The Humanist Aventinus had a predilection for Latinized forms of personal and place names. One has to note only his own pen-name «Aventinus» coined from «Abensberg» = «Aventinum», his birth place. He used the Latinized form «Vratislaus» both for Braslav, the Frankish duke of Pannonia in the ninth century, and for Břetislav, duke of Bohemia in the eleventh century. He used «Vratislavia» for «Braslavespurch» and also for the Polish Wrocław (German Breslau) in Silesia. He may also have used his sources without adequate scrutiny. He was familiar with the *Chronica Hungarorum* of Joannes de Thurocz, which had been available in print since 1488. In this work the name Vratislav occurs in connection with

events about the year 900. (THUROCZ.) Thurocz, however, has to be used with great caution. All this led, on occasion, to faulty geographic associations by Aventinus himself and by the readers of his *Annales*. But, strange as it may be, Aventinus never associated his «Vratislavia», the place of the main battle of 907, with a place north of the Danube, and definitely not with Preßburg.



Entrusting the «urbs Paludarum» in 896 to Braslav had the strategic purpose of defending Carantania and the Bavarian «Oriens» (Marca orientalis) from the predatory incursions by the Hungarians. (Cf. *Annales Fuldenses* s.a. 896, quoted above.) The urbs Paludarum would be henceforth referred to by the name of the duke in control of the burg, hence the Bavarian name-forms Brezalauspurc and Braslavespurch. These forms are attested only for 907, and only in two *Annales* originating from Salzburg, the see of the diocese of which Pannonia between the Drave and Rabe rivers was a part.

However, the Hungarians must have already had control of the entire Pannonia as early as 900. Herimannus Augiensis s.a. 900 noted: «Ungarii Pannonias depopulatas occupant». The *Annales Fuldenses* reported for the same year: «Ungari [...] cum his, que [in Baiowaria] depredaverunt, redierunt, unde venerant, ad sua, in Pannoniam».

The Frankish forces in 907 started out from Ennsburg with the aim of recovering lost territories:

Annales Boiorum:

IV XXI 19: Ludovicus, rex Germanie atque Boiorum, ex omni Boiaria peracto delectu Anassiburgium, novam Boiorum coloniam, se confert [...]. Ibi decretum omnium sententia Ugros Boiariae regno eliminandos esse.

One of the obvious objectives of the campaign would have been the recovery of the urbs Paludarum, the burg of Braslav.

There seems to be enough evidence to conclude that the name «Preßburg» is derived from «Brezesburg», and the name of «Brezesburg» from the name of Brezislav I, the Přemyslid duke of Bohemia (1034-1055). It is also evident that «Vratislav» of Aventinus is a substitution for the name of Brazlavo, duke of Pannonia, and «Vratislavia» for «Braslavespurch».

Thus the generally accepted identification of Preßburg/Bratislava with «Brezalaus-purc»/«Braslaves-purch» as the place of a battle in 907 is anachronistic on historical and chronological as well as on philological grounds. Consequently, one has to consider «Brazlavo dux Pannoniae», known from the *Annales Fuldenses* s.a. 884, 892, 896 and to Herimannus s.a. 892, as the person whose name was used to define the «Braslavespurch» of the events in 907, formerly the «urbs Paludarum», entrusted to him in 896. Where was, then, Braslavespurch, if it could not have been Preßburg/Bratislava on the Danube?



The «urbs Paludarum» given to Brazlavo in 896 lay a few miles south-west of lake Balaton, in the marshes of the river Zala, in the very center of Pannonia. The region was settled already under the Romans, as is attested by ruins of Roman settlements in the vicinity and the traces of a network of Roman roads. The neighboring Roman Castellum, modern Keszthely, gave its name to an Avar-Slav archeological complex of the region, the so-called Keszthely Culture (late sixth – early ninth century). The area around the future «urbs Paludarum» was given first as a fief by Louis «rex in Germania» to Privina (ca. 838-861), a Slavonian noble, expelled from his possessions by Moimar (ca. 830-846). In 847 the fief of Privina was changed to «proprietas», an allodial, inheritable, possession. (KOS.)

The center of Privina's fief, later his allodial possessions, was known during his lifetime as «civitas Privinae». (*Conversio*, cap. 11.) When inherited by his son Kocel, the center of the realm became known as «castrum Chezilonis noviter Mosapurc vocatum». (*Conversio*, cap. 13.) Evidently, the «civitas», community, was in the meantime fortified; hence the terms «castrum» and «purc». In the course of shifting political loyalties, Kocel's realm reverted to the Franks. Kocel lost his «proprietas» sometime about 876, and the name of the place had to be changed accordingly. It was called, once again, by a topographic definition «urbs Paludarum», the exact Latin translation of the Germanic-Bavarian «Mosapurc». This «urbs Paludarum» was given by king Arnulf in 896 to Brazlavus, after whose demise the name of the burg was changed once again. Today it is known by a topographic definition: «Zalavár» = The Burg in the district Zala or on the river Zala. The name Zalavár today is carried by a village located next to the extensive ruins of a burg in the marshes of the river Zala, dating back to the ninth century.



The main reason for caution in accepting Aventinus' description is that there are no medieval sources which would confirm the details, including the location, of the military operations of 907 as he describes. There are, however, several brief notices of the battle without a reference to the place and some necrologs kept in monasteries of persons killed. The only known source Aventinus used, in addition to his own excerpt from the *Annales* of Salzburg, is another brief excerpt made by his secretary from the *Annales Altahenses*: «907: Occisio Bavariorum in gentili gladio»; «908: Luitpoldus dux cum aliis multis interfectus est ab Ungariis». (*Annales Altahenses maiores*.) On the margin of these sentences Aventinus added in his own hand: «Interfectio Boiorum a Braslavaspurch». This entry by Aventinus seems to confirm that he identified the events of 907/908 with Braslavaspurch and not with Pisonium, Presburg or Bratislaburgium, the names he used for Preßburg of his own times.

From the short contemporary entries in chronicles and obituary notes it is evident that most of the persons who perished during the campaign of 907 were killed south of the Danube. As a matter of fact, none of the sources perused by Aventinus, or sources known otherwise and to which he may have had no access, have references to the Danube in connection with the events of 907. Although

several bishops and abbots participated in the battle and were killed, it has been pointed out that Aventinus did not mention the bishops of Regensburg and Passau as participants or victims of the encounter. Both these bishops were crucially interested in regions directly south and north of the Danube. (BOGYAY.)

By the decision of the emperor Luis the Pious of 829, the jurisdiction of the bishops of Passau extended south of the Danube as far as the Raba and Spratza (Spratzbach) rivers (MONUMENTA GERMANIAE HISTORICA, DIPLOMATA Vol. I, No. 173), thus covering Pannonia superior. Richarius, bishop of Passau, was ordered in 900 to build against the Hungarians a fortress at the confluence of the Danube and the Enns rivers. While the bishop of Passau did not participate in the campaign of 907, among the killed was bishop Zachary of Sabiona/Saeben south of the Brenner Pass (since 901 residing in Brixen) and the archbishop of Salzburg, whose jurisdiction covered also Pannonia south of the Raba and Caranthonia. The campaign has been recently characterized as conducted by a Bavarian-Carantian army. (KLAÍČ.)

Significant also is the absence of Aribio and Isanrich from the Frankish-Bavarian expedition that proceeded along the Danube. These two men were the military commanders in charge of defences of the counties just south of the Danube and west of the Raba. Among the many contingents of warriors from far away regions of the Frankish realm listed by Aventinus, absent are the Bohemians, although the commander of the assembled Frankish-Bavarian forces was Luitpold, at that time not only marchgrave of the «Boioarica gens» but also «dux Boemorum», at least since 903, possibly since 892. (REINDEL, BOBA 1988.)

Thus one may conclude that the expedition was directed into Pannonia, which had been occupied by the Hungarians ca. 900, and which was ecclesiastically under the jurisdiction of Salzburg. The main body of the Bavarian forces, led by the archbishop of Salzburg, came most probably across Caranthonia. Starting out from Ennsburg, they marched along the Enns river into Caranthonia, where they joined the forces of the bishop of Sabiona/Saeben and continued along the Mur or Drava rivers toward Pannonia. Luitpold, for reasons of logistics, marched along the northern bank of the Danube. His aim was also the recovery of Pannonia south of the Raba–Danube line. This is the route used by Bavarian and Frankish forces in campaigns against the Hungarians on several occasions, e.g. in 1051.

While contemporary sources do not mention persons whose presence «ex-officio» would be expected, were the campaign directed toward Preßburg on the Danube, there are direct references to «Oriens» and, obliquely, to Pannonia, as the destination of the Frankish army.

Martyrologium Frisingense (10th century):

A. D. 907 II. Non. (Julii). Octava apostolorum. Bellum Baioariorum [cum] Ungariis in oriente. (QUELLEN UND ERÖRTERUNGEN ZUR BAYERISCHEN UND DEUTSCHEN GESCHICHTE Vol. VII, München 1858, 451-481.)

Kalendarium necrologicum Weissenburgense (12th century):

Uodo episcopus [Frising.] cum aliis multis apud Ungros occisis. (FONTES RERUM GERMANICARUM Vol. IV, Stuttgart 1868, 312.)

«Oriens», with capital «O», is a definition of Bavaria's eastern marches south of

the Danube, in contrast to what will be known north of the Danube as «Nordgau». «Apud Ungros» refers to Pannonia controlled since 900 by the Hungarians. (Cf. *Herimannus Augiensis* s.a. 900: «Ungarii Pannonias depopulatas occupant». *Annales Fuldenses* s.a. 900: «Ungari [...] cum his, que [in Baiowaria] depredaverunt, redierunt, unde venerant, ad sua, in Pannoniam».) In the understanding of Aventinus, the «apud Ungros» of the monk of Weißenburg was Pannonia inferior.

Annales Boiorum:

IV, XXI 18: Ugri duos reges Dursacum et Bugothum creant [ca. 900]. Pannonias ante in vastam solitudinem Danubio tenus redactus occupant, eas Boiis auferunt, ubi colonias Ugrorum deducunt.

IV, XXI 19: Ludovicus [...] Annasiburgium [...] se confert [...]. Ibi decretum omnium sententia Ugros Boiariae regno eliminandos esse [...].

A more precise definition of Pannonia held by the Hungarians is provided in the *Bayerische Chronik*: the territory between the Raba and Sava rivers.

Bayerische Chronik:

Cap. 138: Die Ungern [...] erwelten si zwên kunig, Dursac und Bugoth, namen die land under der Rab bis an die Sau ein, so vor baierisch warn gewesen. Künig Ludwig in Baiern helt ainen grossen tag zu Ens [...]. Da ward beschlossen, man solt die Ungern vertreiben. (For complete texts cf. **Appendix**.)

It was, then, the occupation by the Hungarians of Pannonia south of the Raba river that prompted Louis – as told by Aventinus in the rest of the chapter – to organize the expedition leading to the battle at Brezalauspurc. Since the Hungarians did not occupy territories between the Raba and the Danube, the main encounter could not have taken place north of the Danube.



One has to consider the validity of the views of those who placed the battle south of the Danube. The answer in favour of Bratislavia being, in fact, Braslavespurch near the lake Balaton is provided by Aventinus himself. An analysis of the relevant texts of his Latin *Annales* leads to the following observations. Aventinus consistently refers to Preßburg north of the Danube with the name-forms Posonium, Pisonium [from the Hungarian «Pozsony»], Vratislaburgium and Presburg. In one instance he mentions all three names: «Imperator [...] Ungariam invadit, Pisonium, quod Teutones vulgo, diminute Presburgium, integre Vratislaburgium nuncupant.» He never used in his own writings the form «Braslavespurch» known to him from his excerpts. As shown, he used instead of Braslavespurch the name form «Vratislavia». One has to stress, that he used this form only once, namely, when describing the events of 907. He used the same name-form, however, for Wrocław (Breslau) in Silesia. Just before describing the events at Bratislavia in 907, he mentioned Presburg in connection with an armed encounter in 904 between the Hungarians and the forces of Luitpold as a place located north of the Danube: «Presburg, nunc prima Ungariae urbs» [as of the 16th century]. (*Annales Boiorum* IV, XXI 11.)

The name «Presburg» instead of «Vratislavia», in connection with the events of 907, was used not by Aventinus but by his secretary, the translator of the *Annales Boiorum*. However, in doing so, the translator followed the logic of his master. As shown, Aventinus used for duke Braslav the Latinized version Vratislaus, and Vratislavia for Braslavspurch. The translator used for Braslav the Slavic-Bavarian Presla and for Presla's burg, logically: Presburg. While the translator's text with «Presburg» created ambiguity, misleading some of his readers, the Latin text of Aventinus, with his unique use of «Vratislavia», for events in 907 alone, is unequivocal.

Annales Boiorum:

IV, XXI 19: Ludovicus, rex Germaniae atque Boiorum, ex omni Boiare peracto delectu Anassiburgium, novam Boiorum coloniam, se confert [...]. Belli deinde periti, omnes copias in tria agmina partiuntur. [1] Luitpoldus, Austriaci limitis dux, ripa aquilonari, [2] meridionali vero in parte Theodmarus archimysta Iuvavensis, Zacharias Sabonensis, Otto Fruxinensis [...] Vratislaviam usque procedunt ibique castra faciunt. [3] Eodem in Danubio navibus copias [...] dynastae Boiorum perducunt. [Numbering added to emphasize sequence of events.]

In brief: The army of Luitpold marched along the northern bank of the Danube while the army of the three bishops moved south of the Danube, where they reached Vratislavia and pitched camp. Only after this event is there reference to the third army floating down the Danube.

It is also unequivocally clear that the army of the bishops was defeated south of the Danube, near their encampment, at Vratislavia. Only thereafter did the Hungarians cross the Danube, where they defeated Luitpold in charge of the first army. The defeat of the Frankish-Bavarian expedition was completed with an attack against the troops and supplies carried by boats:

Annales Boiorum:

IV, XXI 20: Nec Ugri segniciei atque socordiae, ubi se tantis apparatus peti vident [...]. Regesque utriusque [Ugrorum: Dursacus et Bugothus] infinito equitatu, quo plurimam tum valebant, [1] agmen episcoporum incessunt [...]. Boios fessos invadunt, superant, sternunt, caedunt quinto Idus Augusti. [2] Noctumque clanculum Danubium tranant, Luitpoldum legatum Ludovici [...] cum omnibus copiis [...] trucidant. [3] Postridie, hoc est tertio Idus Augusti, eos qui ad naves erant, facile absque labore, metu perterritos, simili strage adficiunt. [Numbering added to emphasize sequence of events.]



Sources, among them the *Annales* of Aventinus, support only the conclusion that the name «Braslavspurch» of the *Annales Salzburgenses* is derived from and connected with the name and person of Braslav, duke of Pannonia. Aventinus used for duke Bratislav the name Vratislaus and for the burg of Bratislav: Vratislavia. He placed the encounter between the Hungarians and the main Frankish-Bavarian forces south of the Danube, at Vratislavia. Thus the battle of 907 took

place south of the Lake Balaton at the urbs Paludarium: Braslavespurch, the burg of Braslav (today Zalavár). Consequently, the concept that the «interfecto Boiorum ad Braslavespurch» in 907 took place at Bratislava, north of the Danube, remains without foundation.



A problem yet to be solved is posed by the fact that the *Annales Altahenses maiores* s.a. 1052 refers to Preßburg under the name-form «Preslawaspurch».

Annales Altahenses maiores:

Natale imperator feravit Goslaræ, pascha Nemidone. Rursus ad Ungros expeditio, sed nihil honoris vel utilitatis acquisitum regno. Cum enim urbem Preslawaspurch, in finibus utriusque regni sitam, diutina premerent obsidione, papæ adiuratione constricti inde discesere.

The reference occurs in connection with Emperor Henry III's campaigns of the years 1050-1053 against Endre I, king of Hungary. The name-form «Preslawaspurch», used evidently for Preßburg, closely resembles the name-forms Breslavaspurch and Braslavespurch identified by me with urbs Paludarium, the Burg of Braslav. The contradiction seems to be, however, more apparent than real.

The fact is that the compiler of the *Annales Altahenses* covers extensively the events affecting Preßburg between the years 1050-1053, but he never refers to the place under any name except Preslawaspurch, and that only once. Furthermore, the entire text of the *Annales Altahenses maiores* is known only from the transcription made mainly by Aventinus. He must have been aware of the distinction between «Braslavespurch» and «Preslavaspurch». While he himself supplemented the remark «Interfectio Boiorum a Braslavaspurch» on the margin of his extracts from the *Annales Altahenses* s.a. 907, he retained the name-form «Preslawaspurch» when copying from the same *Annals* the events at Preßburg in 1052.

In connection with the events of 1051 and 1052 one has also to notice that in the *Bayerische Chronik* of Aventinus the name of Břetislav is rendered as «Presla»: «[1051 ...] zog kaiser Hainrich wider herauf in Bairn gein Regenspurg und gein Passau, schickt wider die Ungern [...] pischof Gebhard von Regenspurg, herzog Presla aus Beham und herzog Welfh aus Kernten» (V. cap. 28), while in the following year, s.a. 1052, the *Annales Altahenses* carry the reference to «Preslawaspurch». Hence, clearly there is a connection between duke Presla of 1051 and Preslawaspurch (Preßburg) of 1052, and not between Preslawaspurch and Braslav of Pannonia.

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Appendix

Ioannis Aventini Annales Boiorum

[s.a. 904]: IV, XXI 11: Cussal [...] castra ad Phischam amnem infra Viennam Austriae cum principibus suis locat. At partem eius exercitus [...] Luitpoldus adsecutus de improvise inopinatus adgreditur [...] caeteros in fugam dat, caedit, prosternit usque ad Presburg, nunc primam Ungariae urbem. Ubi traiecto Histro Cussalem victoria cum suis exultantem invadit, [...] regem cum maximo procerum suorum numero ad superiorem amnem Phischam interficit.

[s.a. 907]: IV, XXI 19: Ludovicus, rex Germaniae atque Boiorum, ex omni Boiaria peracto delectu Anassiburgium, novam Boiorum coloniam, se confert. Adsunt episcopi, monarchorum antistites, proceres Boiorum quinto decimo Calendas Iulii, anno Christianae salutis nongentesimo super septimum. Ibi decretum omnium sententia Ugros Boiariae regno eliminandos esse. Vires igitur ex universis Boiariae provinciis, ex Nariscis, Boethis, Chamabis, Vindelicis, Noricis, Vennonibus, Athesinis, Stiriis, Venedis, Charinis, Carnis contrahuntur: bellum Ugris indicitur, intento infestoque exercitu utraque Danubii ripa proceres Boiorum in hostes contendunt. Ludovicus cum Burckardo Bathaviensi episcopo, Arabone praefecto Anassiburgii substitit. Belli deinde periti, omnes copias in tria agmina partiuntur. Luitpoldus, Austriaci limitis dux, ripa aquilonari, meridionali vero in parte Theodormarus archimysta Iuvavensis, Zacharias Sabonensis, Otto Fruxinensis cum monachorum praesulibus Gumpoldo, Hartvico, Helmprechtio Vratislaviam usque

procedunt ibique castra faciunt. Eodem in Danubio navibus copias Sighardus Senonum princeps cognatus regis, Ratholdus, hattochus, Meginuwardus et Eysengrinus dynastae Boiorum perducunt.

IV, XXI 20: Nec ugri segniciei atque socordiae, ubi se tantis apparatibus peti vident, se dedunt. Cuncta antea, quae necessaria forent, arma, viros, equos comparant iamque non pro gloria, sed salute pugnaturi acriter resistunt. Interim aliquot equites caeteras Boiorum legiones lacessere iubent. Regesque utrique infinito equitatu, quo plurimum tum valebant, agmen episcoporum incessunt: quasi perrupturi aciem pernicibus equis magna vi impetunt: ingentem sagittarum imbrem indunt, Boios spiculis, quae cornis arcibus iaculabantur, obruunt rursusque cedunt. Velociores erant quam exercitus noster gravi armatura instructus: Rursus cum procul abesse credebantur, aderant: eadem velocitate et sequebantur, aderant: eadem velocitate et sequebantur et fugiebant. Dum te vicisseputares, in discrimine maximo eras. Eminus sagitta Ugri inimicos petebant. Nec enim aperto Marte, pedestri praelio, acie congregi, ense cominus pugnare, urbes obsidere, oppida oppugnare, castella expugnare tum noverant: sed nunc cedendo, nunc urgendo insidiisque dimicare soliti erant. Et tantus in illis dolus, tanta velocitas, tanta peritia militiae inerat, ut absentes an praesentes, fugitantes an instantes, pacem simulantes an bellum gerentes perniciosiores essent, in incerto haberetur. Dum igitur vasto impetu advolant, rursus verso equo instant: utroque modo spicula spargunt, tela ingerunt, dextra, laeva, a fronte, a tergo incursant: nostros defatigant: tandem undique ingruunt, undique Boios fessos invadunt, superant, sternunt, caedunt quinto Idus Augusti. Noctaque clanculum Danubium tranant, Luitpoldum legatum Ludovici, Eysengrinum epularum magistrum cum omnibus copiis, cum quindecim dynastis in castris trucidant. Postridie, hoc est tertio Idus Augustie, eos qui ad neves erant, facile absque labore, metu perterritos, simili strage adficiunt.

IV, XXI 21: Tres dies continenter irato coelo pugnatum. Maxima pars nobilitatis Boiariae perit, vulgus promiscuum sine numero occisum. Luitpoldus, dux orientalis Boiariae praefectorumque praetorio Rheni, cum undeviginti Boiorum dynastis, quorum haec sunt nomina, caesus est, Pilgrinus, Dietpoldus, Hebbo, Eysengrinus, Hathechus, Bero, Rudmundus, Leitfridus, Waltherus, Arebertus, Babo, Iringus, Gundboldus, Eysengrinus, Hathochus, Meginuwardus, Rutholdus, Albertus, Luitpoldus [...] Perpauci [...], quos fuga servavit, ad Ludovicum Anassiburgium perveniunt. Aribo in demortui Luitpoldi locum substituitur.

Johannes Turmair's Bayerische Chronik

[s.a. 907]: IV. 138. *Wie die Ungern die Baiern zwier schluegen, unden bei Presburg und an der Ens.*

Die Ungern, dieweil und künig Ludwig im reich zu schaffen het, erwelten si zwên künig, Dursac und Bugoth, namen die land under der Rab bis an die Sau ein, so vor baierisch warn gewesen. Künig Ludwig in Baiern hielt ainen grossen tag zu Ens am sibenzehenden tag des brachmonats, als man zelet nach Christi gepurt

neunhundert und siben jar. Da ward beschlossen, man solt die Ungern vertreiben. Zogen also mit dreien heren an die Ungern: auf der linken seiten zog hinab mërg'nanter herzog Luitbold, auf der rechten der erzbischof Diethmar von Salzburg, Otto bischof von Freising, Zacharias bischof von Brixen mitsambt den äbten Guntbold, Hartwig, Helmprecht; auf dem wasser mit streitschifn warn graf Sigenhart von der Sempta, ander haubtleut mër, Rathold, Hathoch, Megenward, Eisengrein. Und kam das bairisch volk unden zu Presburg zesam.

Aber die Ungern warn auch nit faul, werten sich umb leib und leben, lagen ob, erschlugen die Baiern all ob ainem haufen. Herzog Luitbold ward mitsambt den obg'nanten dreien bischofn, dreien äbten, mit neunzehen bairischen grafn erschlagen.

V. 28. Der sechst ungerisch krieg kaiser Hainrichen des dritten und sechsten herzogen in Bairn. [s.a. 1051]:

Dieweil also die Bairn und Ungern auf der gränitz miteinander kriegten, raiset kaiser Hainrich der dritt wider den grafen von Flandern, kam die kaiserin frau Agnes nider, gepar ein sun, den nennt man auch Hainrich; ward getauft zu Köln. Bracht in nach im an das reich, swuern im etlich fürsten, geistlich und weltlich.

Nach dem zog kaiser Hainrich wider herauf in Bairn gein Regensburg und gein Passau, schickt wider die Ungern seins vaters brueder, pishof Gebhard von Regensburg, herzog Presla aus Beham und herzog Welfh aus Kernten. Die zogen mit Herescraft durch Merhern in Ungern, hebten an zu prennen. Da kam ein sölich ungewitter, fiel ein söllichs naß weter an, das die päch und güß überal anliefen; muessen mit herrngewalt widerumb abziehen, starben in die pferd, viech und leut. Auf der andern seiten zog durch Kernten selbs der kaiser in Ungern. Die feint hetten ir frucht selbs veprent, all prun und essend ding vergift und verderbt, warn gein holz geflohen, gaben dem kaiser kain schlacht; nur wens iren vortail ersahen, si fielen ietzo forn ietzo hinden in die kaiserlichen, liessen in kain rûe. Der kaiser dieweil und er liferung het, zog er durch Ungern, verprents alles was er fand, allain die kirchen nit. Nachmals, do ime an der liferung abgieng, zog er wider heraufwerts. Die Ungern kamen in entgegen, wolten den kaiserischen wern; aber sie warden abgetriben. An der Râbnitz lagen die Ungern mit gewalt, wolten die kaiserischen nit über lassen, vermaintens mit dem hunger zu dempfen. Die Hochburgundier, Saxen und Polacken, so in des kaisers her warn, kamen über die Râbnitz, fielen hinden in die Ungern, schluegens in die flucht und raumbten dem ganzen her ein freien weg. Und zog der kaiser in das reich herauf, lies das volk alles wider haimb ziehen.