

IMRE BOBA, SEATTLE

In Defence of Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus A Review Article

The written works of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (ob. 959) are generally considered to represent a valuable, if not unique, source for the study of the history of people bordering on, living within, settling in, or passing through the Byzantine Empire. Two of his works, «De Administrando Imperio» (thereafter: DAI) and «De cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae», contain, i.a., basic information on most of the people of East Central and Eastern Europe, attested there between ca. 600 and 950. This information is frequently unique, not found in other sources, but, in most cases fitting the web derived from other sources. The significant aspect of Constantine's main works is that they were not written as «histories» for posterity to read, but as confidential handbooks of practical governance of the Empire, written by the Emperor in order that his son should benefit from the experience and knowledge of facts assembled at the Imperial court.

Although the main work of Emperor Constantine of interest to historians, the DAI, contains detectable factual mistakes, mainly chronological, as well as some deliberate omissions of names of «personae non gratae», it remains the basic resource for the study of the earliest history of the Croats, Serbs, Bulgars, Hungarians, Russes and Moravians. The DAI is being constantly critically reevaluated: parts used, other parts questioned, few rejected. The most recent attempt to appraise the work of Constantine is by Herwig Wolfram in his short study «The Image of Central Europe in Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus».¹

Wolfram's brief study requires attention not only because of the array of remarks against the credibility of Emperor Constantine, but also because of a series of factual inaccuracies in his own formulations. In what follows I will attempt to juxtapose Wolfram's observations with sources and facts which are generally accepted as valid and do not support his criticism. In the very first paragraph of Wolfram's study one reads the following:

«[Emperor Constantine] drew upon a tradition that consisted of many layers collected by many generations and different centuries. In the ninth century the last stratum came to be added to this tradition. The destruction of the Avar

¹ Herwig WOLFRAM: *The Image of Central Europe in Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus*. In: *Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and His Age*. Athens 1987, 5-14. Cf. also Herwig WOLFRAM: *Die Geburt Mitteleuropas*. Wien 1987. My quotations are from Wolfram's English text, unless otherwise noted.

«commonwealth», the conquest of Pannonia by the Franks and their advance down to the borders of Dalmatia and Moesia, the creation of the Bulgarian polity, the rise and fall of the Moravian realm, the settlement of the «Turks», i.e. Hungarians, in Pannonia, all these events caused thoroughgoing changes in Central Europe, some of which were still felt in the time of Constantine».

These events did, in fact, take place and they were, no doubt, known in Constantinople, but Emperor Constantine did not draw upon most of them for the simple reason that he was not writing a history. He did not mention the destruction of the Avar commonwealth or the conquest of Pannonia by the Franks, although he did mention a crucial defeat of the Franks at the hand of some Slavs in Dalmatia (DAI 30: 80 ff.).

Some of the facts listed by Wolfram are simply wrong. The «creation of the Bulgarian polity» along the Lower Danube took place not in the ninth century, but was recognized as an independent realm by the Byzantines shortly after 680. The Hungarians occupied not only Pannonia but also Transylvania and most of the territory between the Danube and the Carpathians. Finally, Constantine mentioned the fall of the Moravian realm but not its rise.

Having stated what Constantine knew about Central Europe, Wolfram elaborated extensively on the fact that the Emperor «does not mention a single word about Cyril and Methodius» (p. 5). One possible answer could be that the activities and achievements of the two brothers were not relevant for the stated purpose of writing the *De Administrando Imperio*. A more plausible reason, however, is the fact that Cyril and Methodius, although despatched to Moravia on a fact-finding diplomatic mission from Constantinople, «defected» to Rome. As the letter of Pope Adrian II stated, «when they learned that your lands [of Rastislav, Sventopolk and Kocel] belonged to the Apostolic See, they [the two brothers] did nought against canon, but came to us [...]» (*Vita Methodii* cap. 8, thereafter abbreviated VM). It was in Rome that Methodius was first ordained a priest and later consecrated a bishop to the see of Saint Andronicus in Sirmium. The fact is that not only Emperor Constantine, but none of the Byzantine chroniclers ever refers to the mission of Cyril and Methodius. The two brothers are mentioned, however, in hagiographic texts written in Greek.

The following quotations illustrate Wolfram's interpretation of some of the relevant sources.

Wolfram: «Methodius had tried nothing less than to restore the abolished metropolitan church of Sirmium. [...] Even if he did so only nominally, his attempt was deeply rooted in the Illyrian tradition so dear to Byzantine policy and political theory.» (p. 5.)

There is no evidence for these statements. The initiative to restore the see of Sirmium came from Kocel, prince in Pannonia (VM: 8), and it was the Papacy which had a policy to restore Illyricum to Rome's jurisdiction.² Furthermore, there is no such thing as «abolishing» or «restoring nominally» a metropolitan or an episcopal church, nor could Methodius himself restore an episcopal see. An

² Cf. letter of Pope Nicholas I to Emperor Michael of 860, e.g., in MGH Epist. VI, 433-439.

episcopal see, in given adverse circumstances, may be temporarily evacuated, even if the see remains vacant for centuries. Methodius was appointed to the see of Saint Andronicus, hence to a concrete see located in Sirmium of which Andronicus once was a bishop. The restoration of the see of Sirmium was done by Pope Adrian II. Thus, whatever Methodius did in Illyricum, can not be credited to his roots in «Byzantine policy and political theory».

Wolfram: «In 863 the two brothers Constantine and Methodius came to early medieval Moravia, i.e., the land that stretched along the March-Morava river north of the present-day Lower Austria, about 60 miles north of Vienna. [...] Before the brothers went to the West they were quite successful as missionaries to the Khazars. After their return to Constantinople the Emperor decided that Constantine and Methodius were to evangelize or rather teach the Western Slavs. [...] In 862 the Moravian princes Rastislav and his nephew Zwentibaldus [...] had sent ambassadors to Constantinople hand over a *letter obviously written in Greek*. In this the Moravians honored Emperor Michael III as *their lord* and asked for a bishop and teacher. In fact they could have easily done without the latter. Instead, what they really wanted was a bishop who would create a Moravian church that was to be independent from the Bavarian archbishopric of Salzburg and its suffragans.» (pp. 5-6; emphasis added.)

Most of these conclusions could not have been derived by Wolfram from the available sources. The two brothers could not have gone to a Moravia north of Vienna for several documented reasons. When they reached the court of Rastislav the brothers realized that the place had once belonged to the jurisdiction of the Apostolic See. During the second half of the ninth century Papal jurisdiction was claimed only for former imperial territories south of the Danube. Pope John VIII claimed jurisdiction for the Papacy, and for Methodius, explicitly only «*intra totius Illyrici fines*» (cf. the letter of Pope John of 873 in *Magnae Moraviae Fontes Historici III*: 163-167; thereafter abbreviated MMFH). As those who are versed in Roman administrative history know, Illyricum was south of the Danube (cf., e.g., *Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia*: «*Non ultra Danubium sed quomodo ad Mare Magnum [= Adriatic] ponitur patria que dicitur Illyricus*». Cf. MMFH: 282).

The initiative to have someone from Constantinople to explain the «true belief» came from Rastislav and his relatives, and not from the Emperor. The source for the story of the invitation is the *Vita Methodii*, 5 and the *Vita Constantini*, 14. None of these mentions a «letter» nor that the letter was written obviously in Greek. The remark «obviously» can not serve as evidence. The evidence remains in the text of the *Vita Methodii*:

«[Sventopolk and his associates] sent emissaries [...] saying thus: [...] many Christian teachers have come to us from among the Italians, Greeks, and Teutons, teaching us in various ways. But we Slovenes are simple people, and have none to instruct us in the truth and explain wisely. O kind lord, send the type of man who will direct us to the whole truth.» (VM: 5.)

From that text Wolfram infers that what Rastislav and his associates «*really wanted*» was a bishop who would create a Moravian church that was to be independent from the Bavarian archbishopric of Salzburg and its suffragans. We do

not know what Rastislav's people «really wanted». What one knows is that the emissaries requested one only teacher to explain the precepts of true belief. One teacher would not suffice to organize a «Moravian» church as interpreted by Wolfram. A self-governing church hierarchy, «independent from Salzburg», would have been assured only by creating a church province with an archbishop and at least two suffragan bishops.

Finally, instead of quoting the source or paraphrasing the source's form of addressing the Emperor by the ambassadors – «o kind lord» – Wolfram reworded the phrase to mean that the «Moravians honored Emperor Michael III as *their* lord», thus implying a sort of feudal affiliation of Moravia to the Empire. Wolfram, however, manages to contradict himself in the same paragraph by stating:

«The high Byzantine dignitaries knew all too well that Moravia had never belonged to the empire, that this land, which they therefore must have called Megale Moravia, lay beyond the pale of Romania».

By trying to prove his concept of Moravia's location north of Vienna, «beyond the pale of Romania», Wolfram opens a Pandora box of contradictions. As shown above, Wolfram's insistence of a Moravia being located sixty miles north of Vienna is contradicted by the very biography of Methodius. A clear contradiction is contained in Wolfram's formulation:

«The pope [...] invited the two brothers to Rome and, in 869, made Methodius [...] first archbishop of Pannonia-Sirmium and ten years later archbishop of Moravia.» (p. 6.)

First: transfer of bishops or archbishops from one see to another is against the canons. There were exceptions to the rule, but such cases are normally documented. As to the transfer of the see of Methodius from Sirmium to «Moravia», as suggested by Wolfram, there is no evidence.

Second: the title «archbishop of Moravia», used by Wolfram for Methodius, is not attested. The titles of bishops and archbishops refer canonically always to the town of residence, hence «archbishop of Salzburg», but not of Bavaria; of Gniezno, and not of Poland; of Canterbury, and not of England. Attested is, however, the canonically correct complete title of Methodius: «reverentissimus archiepiscopus sanctae ecclesiae Marabensis» in the letter of Pope John VIII of 880 (MMFH III: 197-208) and «[archi-]episcopus Moravou tes Panonias» in Vita Clementis (MMFH II: 207). In both instances reference is made to the town of his residence: Maraba or Morava in Pannonia.

Third: the invitation for a teacher came from a place named Morava: «iz Moravy» (VM: 5); and not from a «land Morava», in which case the Church-Slavonic form would have been the yet unattested «iz Morav». It was at the court of Rastislav that Constantine and Methodius realized that the place belonged to the jurisdiction of the Papacy, and it was Kocel, «prince in Pannonia» (VM: 8), who initiated the appointment of Methodius to the see of Saint Andronicus [in Sirmium]. Since the Papacy claimed jurisdiction over Illyricum only, then, logically, the church province of Sirmium in Pannonia, part of Illyricum, entrusted to Methodius, must have been comprised of the realms of Kocel, Rastislav and Sventopolk, thus territories «non ultra Danubium».

Consequently, the episcopal see of Methodius and his church province had to be within the patrimony shared by Rastislav, Sventopolk and Kocel, a realm south of the Danube.

Several official documents and hagiographic texts unequivocally attest that «Morava», a place and not a country, from which Rastislav and Sventopolk despatched their envoys to Constantinople in 863 (VM: 5), was located in Pannonia. The Old-Bulgarian Vita Naumi (II) recorded that Methodius was allowed by Pope Hadrian to go with his pupils to Pannonia, to the burg of Morava, as an archbishop: «otide v Panoniu, v grad Moravou» (MMFH II: 254). The Greek text of Bios Klementos, a most reliable source for Methodian studies, states that «Methodius adorned [by his presence] the province of Pannonia when he became archbishop of «Maraba» [in 869]». The same source refers to Methodius consistently as «episkopos Morabou tes Pannonias» [= bishop of Morava of Pannonia] (cf., e.g., MMFH II; Bios Klementos II: 4; III: 10; IV: 14 and VI: 23). Similar title, «archiepiskopos Morabou tes Pannonias», is used for Methodius in a list of bishoprics associated administratively once with Ochrid.³

In 879 in a letter of Pope John VIII Methodius is addressed as «archiepiscopus sanctae ecclesiae Pannoniensis». The title «archiepiscopus sanctae ecclesiae Marabensis» is used in the following year by the same pope, but this time the letter went to Sventopolk, prince of Maraba/Morava. In that letter Pope John stated that «eius [Methodii] archiepiscopatus privilegium confirmavimus et in perpetuum Deo iuvante firmum manere statuimus».

Pope John in this letter refers to Sventopolk as «princeps de Maravna» and refers to Methodius as «vester archiepiscopus ab antecessore nostro Adriano [...] ordinatus vobisque directus». Thus Sventopolk and Methodius have both resided in Maravna. Thus, Pope John confirmed the «privilegium», the document of appointment to the see of Andronicus, given to Methodius by Pope Adrian II in 869. The confirmation of this initial appointment was needed, because Methodius in the meantime had been accused of heresy (for the text of these and other relevant letters cf. MMFH III: 189-208).

The use of two forms of titles for the episcopal see of Methodius is not unique. To illustrate, the archbishop of Salzburg is known as «Salzburgensis», «Pettenensis», as well as «Juvavensis». The Latin morphological ending -enses / -ensis is used properly in all these titles to indicate inhabitants of a city. Thus it is evident that the two name-forms: «sancta ecclesia Marabensis» and «ecclesia Pannoniensis», both refer to the «holy assembly» of one and the same locality only, known in Rome as «[civitas] Pannonia», and in the Slavonian vernacular as «[grad] Morava». Morava in Pannonia, from which Rastislav despatched his emissaries to Constantinople in 863, was also the residence of «Zvuentapu[icus] de Maravna» in 879. On the same day when Pope John addressed Sventopolk «de Maravna», another papal letter was despatched to «Methodius archiepiscopus Pannoniensis ecclesiae» (MMFH III: 189, 192). Thus Wolfram's efforts to transfer Methodius from «Morava»/«civitas Pannoniensis» to a land «Moravia»

³ Heinrich GELZER: Das Patriarchat von Achrida. Leipzig 1902, 6.

outside Pannonia/Illyricum, to a region north of Vienna, remains a *pium desideratum*.

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As indicated above, Wolfram's excursus concerning the episcopacy of Methodius and his alleged residence north of Vienna has nothing to do with Emperor Constantine's image of Central Europe. As Wolfram says himself, the Emperor «does not mention a single word about Cyril and Methodius» (p. 5). Nonetheless, having presented his view on Moravia's alleged location, Wolfram draws the conclusion that Emperor Constantine «betrays a rather incomplete knowledge of the events; his information is full of gaps and even outright distorted» (p. 7). So far Wolfram's efforts to fill the «Moravian gap» allegedly left out by Constantine remain undocumented.

«Yet, – continues Wolfram – the author of the Book of Ceremonies, i. e. Constantine or somebody of his court, recorded a political-geographic term in his book, which exclusively drew upon the ecclesiastical Slavic and Greek tradition and must have originated in Methodius' entourage. The well known collective address that enumerates all the kings of the «rhigata» of the late Carolingian empire tells us which king is entitled to which titular forms. [...] The collective address starts with «eis ton rega Saksonias», which is followed by «eis ton rega Baioure». [...] interesting is the additional explanation of Bavaria: «estin de aute e choraioi legomenoi Nemitzioi». In other words, Bavaria is the land of the «Nemci» as the Slavs call all the Germans even today. How can this be explained? It is only the Church Slavic and Greek Methodian tradition that provides a clue to the understanding of the terminology. The Lives of Methodius and Clemens of Ochrid call Methodius' opponents and enemies either Franks or «Nemtzoi». In 880 Methodius had to settle on a compromise and to accept the Alleman Wiching as suffragan bishop of Nitra in present-day Slovakia. And it was exactly the Bavarian-Alemannic followers of this Latin bishop whom the Vita Clementis detests as «Nemci.» (p. 7-8.)

It is hard to accept Wolfram's claim that «the Lives of Methodius and Clemens of Ochrid call Methodius' opponents and enemies either Franks or «Nemtzoi»». This is not the case in either of the two sources. In Vita Methodii only the «Nemci» are mentioned and not the Franks. These «Nemci» are teachers of religion active in Moravia before Methodius' arrival at the court of Rastislav (VM: 5). «Nemci» as clergy are mentioned as conspiring against the interests of the Moravians at the time when Methodius was detained in Svaabia. These clergymen were expelled by the Moravians before Methodius returned from captivity (VM: 10). As a matter of fact, the author of the Vita Methodii has nothing to say about Wiching.

It is only the Greek Bios Klementos [Vita Clementis] in which the two names, Franks and «Nemtzoi», are used concurrently; but they are used in distinctly different contexts, and the two names are not used interchangeably. The Franks represent the political elite, of whatever ethnic origin, in the service of the Frankish

royal family (Bios Klementos XIII: 40). The «Nemitzoi» are the soldiers, barbarian people, by nature rough = «stratiotai andropoi barbaroi, Nemitzoi gar» (XIII: 41).

The author of the Bios Klementos never associates bishop Wiching with the Franks or with the «Nemitzoi». Wiching is mentioned in chapters II: 24 and IX: 29 as a bad Christian and an adversary of Methodius, but there is no evidence that he had a «Bavarian-Allemanic» following of any sort whom the author of the Bios Klementos may have detested as «Nemci». Certainly, the «Nemitzoi», the Barbarian soldiers, were not the followers of the «Latin bishop» Wiching. Incidentally, Methodius was also a Latin bishop. Both, Methodius and Wiching, were consecrated to that dignity in Rome.

One may make a case that the «Nemitzoi» were rather the retainers of Sventopolk. It was their task to expel the pupils of Methodius after his death «from the town», and these soldiers returned «to the town», evidently, the residential town of Methodius as well as of Sventopolk (Bios Klementos XIII: 41). This town was obviously not within the diocese of Wiching, but in the diocese of Methodius. Furthermore, in the paragraph just preceding the story of the cruel «Nemitzoi» it is stated explicitly that «[Sventopolk] relied a thousand times on the Franks» (XIII: 40). Thus the «opponents and enemies» of Methodius were not «either the Franks or Nemitzoi», but Sventopolk who employed the simple Nemitzoi and relied on the Franks «a thousand times». Wiching had nothing to do with the expulsion of Methodius pupils. Their expulsion was authorized by Pope Stephen V in a letter addressed to Sventopolk in 885:

«Contumaces autem et inobedentes contentioni et scandalo insistentes post primam et secundam admonitionem si se minime correxerint, quasi zizaniorum seminatores ab ecclesiae gremio abici sancimus et, ne una ovis morvida totum gregem contaminet, nostro vigore refreni et a vestris finibus procul excludi praecipimus.» (MMFH III: 225 – emphasis added.)

Thus Wolfram's effort to fault Wiching and the Nemitzoi for the difficulties encountered by Methodius remains unsubstantiated.

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If one peruses the first seven-and-a-half pages of Wolfram's study, one cannot but notice, that there is nothing in it about Emperor Constantine's image of Central Europe. Wolfram's main interest, as shown, being the location of Moravia, he returns to that subject as perceived from a geo-political angle:

«[Emperor] Constantine could not or would not mention either Constantine or Methodius. But the author knows the name of Zwentipald I (870-894), the most important of the Moravian princes, whom he records as ruling over the Megale Moravia. Unfortunately, the author locates this realm to the south of the Hungarians living in Pannonia [...].» (p. 8.)

First, Emperor Constantine did not know the German name-form «Zwentipald» but the Greek form «Sphendopokos». The various forms of the name lend themselves to philological analysis as to the meaning of the name, hence the quotations of texts should retain the spelling as in the text. Otherwise, the conventional

name-form of «Sphendoplokos» or «Zwendibald» in current historiography is «Sventopolk», as attested in Slavonic sources (e.g. in VM).

Second, Sventopolk/Sphendoplokos had a longer political life than just the years 870-894. Prior to becoming prince of Moravia, he was already in possession of his own realm, evidently part of a patrimony shared with Rastislav, his uncle. In 870 Sventopolk placed himself and his «regnum» under the protection of the Franks. A conflict ensued between the two relatives, as a result of which Sventopolk detained Rastislav, delivered him to the Franks, and himself assumed control of Morava (*Annales Fuldenses* s.a. 870).

Contrary to Wolfram's understanding of Constantine's text, the Emperor did not «record» that Sventopolk was ruling over «Megale Moravia». Constantine's remark reads:

«the archon of Moravia, Sphendoplokos, was valiant [...] the Tourkoi possessed their [i.e. of his sons'] country in which even now they live» (DAI 41: 2 ff.).

Wolfram's judgement that it was «unfortunate» that Constantine placed Megale Moravia «to the south of the Hungarians» seems to be ahistoriographic. Unfortunate for whom? The Hungarians? The Moravians? For an objective historian? Or for Wolfram only? It is true, as Wolfram points out, that this type of agonizing seems to be always the result of the inability to reconcile the evidence of sources with the preconceived resolution of the problem. Wolfram is confident that he has found the way out from agonizing:

«Constantine Porphyrogenitus [...] used «megas», «megale» either in the sense of the «older» or of «foreign», beyond the pale of the Roman empire. One finds the «Megale Fraggia» as opposed to Frankish Italy. As recently has been pointed out, the pair «magnus» – «minor» means «foreign» and «Roman» in the context of political geography. Constantine's terminology is, therefore, based upon a good old tradition». (pp. 8-9.)

Wolfram neglects to mention that the commentator to *De Administrando Imperio* (quoting Ohnsorge) sees in Constantine's text a distinction between «Fraggia» = regnum Italicum, Papia and «megale Fraggia» = «Trans-alpine Francia» (DAI 26: 6, 18; 28: 4-5; 29: 134 and Commentary, 92). Thus, Constantine's «megale Fraggia» refers, evidently, to Roman territory under Frankish control, and not to foreign, «beyond the pale of the Romania». (p. 6.)

Apart from the philological and logical aspects of the suggested use of the term «megas/megale», attention is drawn also to Wolfram's method of historiography. Wolfram consistently uses the phrase «Megale Moravia», with a capital «M», as if the phrase represented a title of a realm: «Moravia Outside the Roman Empire». In fact, the Emperor uses «megale» as a simple adjective, with lower case «m», and so does Jenkins, the currently accepted authority of the English translation of the DAI.

As to the «good old tradition» known to Wolfram upon which Constantine based his terminology, one would expect to see the evidence as reflected in *De Administrando Imperio*. Most of the occurrences of the term «megas», «megale» in the DAI refer to persons in the sense «old», on two occasions the term refers to

«old» places. One of these geographic references is to «Fraggia», already discussed above; the second reference is to «megale katra oikoumena» in DAI 35: 13. This entry is, evidently, contrasted by Constantine with «katra oikoumena» in chapter 34: 19. Certainly, the distinction is implied between «old» and «not old katra». Both groups of these «katra» were in Dalmatia, hence within the Empire. One of these «megale katra» has been identified by the commentator to the DAI, with reference to Jirecek, with Starigrad (= «old burg/town»), possibly Budva, on the Adriatic coast (DAI II: Commentary, 141).

As evidence for his thesis that «megas/megale» denotes «beyond the Empire», Wolfram provides several illustrations, i.a., he cites «Germania magna». This phrase, however, means actually «Altdeutschland» = «Germania Magna».⁴ Another example offered is the contrast between «Asia magna» and «Asia minor», quoting the two phrases out of the relevant contexts. His evidence is contradicted also by a brief contribution by Buerchner to Pauly-Wissowa's Real Encyclopaedie. The one sentence definition reads:

«An den frühesten Stellen griechischer Schriftsteller und anderen oft «Asia» = Kleinasien, oder = persisches Reich, «Asia minor» zuerst bei Orosius 12; dagegen «e megale Asia» = die römische Provinz Asia [...]».

Hence «megale», in this case, refers to a territory within the Empire. Last but not least, there is a «Megale Roma» as the opposite of «Nea Roma».⁵

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Wolfram's further effort to show that Emperor Constantine placed Moravia outside the Empire is introduced with an interim summation:

«Thus follows the conclusion that the Megale Moravia was a polity established in a country that had never belonged to the Roman empire. This evidence is in line with another passage that calls the Megale Moravia the unbaptized, «e abaptistos.»» (p. 9.)

Wolfram asserts here that Moravia could not have been within the Empire, because Constantine calls Megale Moravia the «unbaptized». But why would Constantine call Moravia of Sventopolk «abaptistos» if «all the Moravians» were baptized by Reginhar, bishop of Passau, already in 831? (cf. MMFH V: 151.) The Moravians themselves claimed baptism from «Saint Peter», i.e., Rome (VM: 10). One wonders what Methodius was doing as archbishop in the realm of Rastislav and later of Sventopolk between 869/873 and 885?

⁴ Christian MEHKIS: Altdeutschland = Germania Magna. In: Archiv für Anthropologie N.S. 22 (1932) 78-115.

⁵ For the analysis of occurrences of «megas»/«megale» for persons, in sense «old», cf. DAI II: Commentary, 83, 84, 85, 92, 97, 118, 140, 141, 177, 180 etc. For all possible and acceptable uses of the adjectives «megas», «magnus», «great», «gross» cf. any good phraseological or bilingual dictionary. On the semantics of «megas»/«megale» Wolfram refers his readers (p. 12, note 12) to «a thorough study on the meaning of the geographical terminology in a forthcoming publication of Evangelos Chrysos», first announced by WOLFRAM: Die Geburt Mitteleuropas.

Satisfied that the true meaning of «the term Megale Moravia and its location [which] have made modern historians agonize» (p. 8) has been resolved, Wolfram returns, once again, to the phrase «unbaptized»:

Wolfram: «[According to Constantine's chapter 40] the unbaptized Megale Moravia lies beyond the old and venerated city of Sirmium, which is exactly in Pannonia. In fact, there was nothing like an unbaptized Moravia *in central Pannonia in the ninth century*». (p. 10; emphasis added.)

In these two sentences there are two inadmissible twists of reasoning. Wolfram suggests that Constantine placed the unbaptized Moravia into «central Pannonia». Wolfram also insinuates that the Emperor described conditions «in the ninth century», while, in fact, Constantine's text is formulated in present tense, thus reflects conditions as during his own lifetime, expressly, at a time when Moravia had been occupied by the Tourkoi.

Neither the text of Constantine nor any other source has suggested that «unbaptized» Moravia was in central Pannonia in the ninth century. Some speculations to that effect were made by Marquart.⁶ He concluded, however, that the term refers to a time period after the destructions brought about by the Hungarians.

The Emperor's understanding that «megale Moravia» of his own times was «deprived of baptism» (= «a-baptistos»), is in line with the content of a letter sent by the Bavarian bishops to Rome in 900. Shortly before that date the Papacy attempted to restore the church hierarchy in Moravia, but the episcopate of Bavaria protested against this move as infringement upon their own claims for jurisdiction. In their letter the bishops also complained that the Moravians shaved their heads in Hungarian fashion and that they invited the Hungarians for joint raids into [Frankish] Pannonia (MMFH III: 232-244). If not formally pagan, the Moravians, after the death of Methodius and in the absence of bishops, who alone at that time were empowered to baptize, were truly «abaptistos», i.e., «deprived of baptism» or, as formulated by the bishops of Bavaria in 900, «pseudochristiani».⁷

All this is again confirmed by the genuine letter of bishop Pilgrim of Passau to Rome dated in 974, in which he requests the right to restore the ecclesiastical hierarchy in orientalis Pannonia and Moesia, provinces of which, in his words, Moravia with four bishoprics was once a part (MMFH III: 246-250).

Thus, evidently, the term «abaptistos» refers to the territory, which once Christian, lost its church organization for some fifteen years after the death of Methodius. To wit, Bulgarian and Czech sources speak about Sventopolk, his companions and the whole land as having been anathemized by Methodius (I Vita

⁶ Joseph MARQUART: *Ostasiatische und osteuropäische Streifzüge*. Hildesheim 21981, 119-120.

⁷ More troublesome is Wolfram's recent interpretation of Emperor Constantine's phrase «megale Croatia [...] abaptistos» (DAI 31: 4) to mean «megale Chrovatia, the «neugetaufte» (= «newly baptized»; in WOLFRAM: *Die Geburt Mitteleuropas*, 540, note 25). Wolfram, evidently, understood the Greek term «abaptistos» to be the equivalent of the modern ecclesiastic term «anabaptist», for «baptized again».

Naumi, Christianus Monachus, *Legenda beatus Cyrillus*. In: *MMFH II*: 178, 192, 303).

Constantine's use of the term «e abaptistos» in chapter 40 did not apply to a Moravia under Sventopolk's rule, nor was Constantine placing his realm «beyond Sirmium [...] in central Pannonia». What follows is the relevant text of Emperor Constantine:

«But the Tourkoi, expelled by the Pechenegs, came and settled in the land which they now dwell in. In this place are various landmarks of the olden days: first there is the bridge of the Emperor Trajan, where Tourkia begins; then, a three days journey from this same bridge, there is Belgrade [...], then, again, at the running back of the river is the renowned Sirmium by name [...], and to that place lies great Moravia the unbaptized, which the Tourkoi have blotted out, but over which Sphendoplokos used to rule». (DAI 40: 25 ff.).

Evidently, under the influence of interpretations current fifty years ago on Moravia's location north of the Danube, Wolfram translated the phrase «apo ton ekeise» with a less specific «beyond», instead of the proper equivalent, the concrete: «to that place» («ekeise» = «thither, to that place», Latin «illuc». In Greek «from that place» is «ekeithen»;⁸ cf. DAI, Glossary: 319). The difference is obvious. Constantine located «great Moravia the unbaptized» not «beyond Sirmium» at a distance of 300 miles to the north as the crow flies, but just «to that place», namely next to Sirmium.

Relevant in Constantine's topographic references is the fact that he lists «megale Moravia» near the «landmarks of the olden days», determining the southern boundary of Tourkia by the remnants of old Roman edifices: from the bridge of Trajan to Sirmium. Similar geographical determinants are given for the jurisdictional territory of Methodius by the compiler of an official ecclesiastical document, *Conversio Bagoariorum*, which Wolfram, its recent editor, calls «Das Weißbuch der Salzburger Kirche». The text of the *Conversio* includes a brief history of the region contested by the archbishop of Salzburg and archbishop Methodius:

Conversio. Cap. 6: «In plagis Pannoniae inferioris et circa confines regiones Romani possederunt ipsique ibi civitates et munitiones at defensionem sui fecerunt alique aedificia multa, sicut adhuc apparet [...]. Et illa pars Pannoniae ad diocesim Iuvavensem conversa est, edicendum putamus.» Cap. 14: «A tempore igitur, quo dato et praecepto domni Karoli imperatoris orientalis Pannoniae populus a Iuvavensibus regi coepit praesulibus [...]. Hoc enim ibi observatum fuit, usque dum nova porta est doctrina Methodii philosophi.»

In these two brief but precise fragments all the geographic references («Pannonia inferior»; «orientalis Pannonia»; Roman edifices; «plagae» = «territories along the border») point in fact toward the territory south of the Drava and between the Danube and Sava, that is, toward the same region which Constantine considered to be once of Sventopolk and thereafter occupied by the Hungarians.

⁸ Henry George LIDDELL – Robert SCOTT: *A Greek-English Lexikon* [...]. Oxford 1968, 505.

The same general area was claimed, with reference to Moravia, a century later (974) by Pilgrim, bishop of Passau, a «praesul» under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Salzburg. Pilgrim sought Papal approval for his pastoral work among the Hungarians, whom he claimed to have converted. He expected to be promoted to archiepiscopal rank and to have his own suffragans in four former dioceses which were once in Moravia and, expressly, located in Pannonia orientalis and Moesia (MMFH III: 246-250). In fact, Morava/Sirmium, the archiepiscopal see of Methodius, was the capital of the once united provinces of Moesia I and Pannonia II, known also as orientalis or Sirmiensis. Although Wolfram judged bishop Pilgrim to be «der große Fälscher»,⁹ the letter of 974 is recognized as genuine.

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Since Wolfram never quotes Constantine and rarely paraphrases his text, it seems appropriate to confront Wolfram's views with the testimony of the Emperor. Constantine Porphyrogenitus:

«These nations are adjacent to the Tourkoi: on their *western* side Francia; on their *northern* the Pechenegs; and on the *south* side «megale Moravia», the «chora» of Sphendoplokos, which has now been totally devastated by these Tourkoi and occupied by them. On the side of the mountains the Croats are adjacent to the Tourkoi.» (DAI 13: 3ff; emphasis added.)

Here is Wolfram's paraphrase of the above:

«Ch. 13 [of DAI] mentions the neighbors [of the Tourkoi] in the west and north but has no peoples living in the east of the Tourkoi, whereas the south is occupied by both the Megale Moravia of yesteryear and the Croatians of Constantine's time.» (p. 10.)

In his summary Wolfram uses the phrase: «Megale Moravia of yesteryear» and makes it contemporaneous with «the Croatians of Constantine's time». However, at Constantine's time, about 950, a territory south of the Hungarians could not have been «occupied by both the Megale Moravia of yesteryear and the Croatians». Constantine's text is clear on that: «the Tourkoi [...] occupied «megale Moravia», while the Croats are adjacent to the Tourkoi».

Wolfram's phrasing suggests that Constantine knew a «Megale Moravia of yesteryear» that existed before the arrival of the Tourkoi, but placed it mistakenly south of and outside of the Tourkoi after their arrival. However, the unadulterated text of the chapter clearly states the opposite: megale Moravia «is» the land occupied by the Tourkoi, and forms the southern part of their realm. In Constantine's fragment it is significant that he lists «nations», but does not include the nation of Sphendoplokos but only his «chora», which was already occupied by the Tourkoi.

⁹ WOLFRAM: Die Geburt Mitteleuropas, 234.

The Emperor's reference to «ptoi e chora tou Sphendoplokos» is an added phrase to explain that «megale Moravia» was once the «chora of Sphendoplokos», in this case «the land around the city of Morava».¹⁰

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The fact that «megale Moravia» was within the realm of the Tourkoi as of ca. 950 and that it formed the southern part of their settlements is evident also from Constantine's chapters 38, 41 and 42:

«The Pechenegs fell upon the Tourkoi and drove them out with their archont Arpad. The Tourkoi, in flight and seeking a land to dwell in, came and in turn expelled the inhabitants of «megale Moravia» and settled in their land, in which the Tourkoi now live to this day.» (DAI 38: 58 ff.)

In the light of the text of chapter 13 – «on the south side [of the Tourkoi is] megale Moravia, the «chora» of Sphendoplokos» – preference should be given to the meaning of the term «megale» as referring to the land «in which the Tourkoi now live to this day» [i.e., ca. 950]. N.B.: the Tourkoi/Hungarians never settled in the valley of the Northern Morava river.

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«After the death of this same Sphendoplokos the Tourkoi came and utterly ruined them [i.e., the sons of Sphendoplokos] and possessed their country, in which even now [ca. 950] they live. And those of the folk who were left scattered and fled for refuge to the adjacent nations, to the Bulgars and Tourkoi and the Croats and the rest of the nations.» (DAI 41: 19 ff.)

The only geographic indicator in this fragment that contradicts Wolfram is that the Moravians fled to their immediate neighbors: the Bulgars and Croats, or joined the Hungarians. In the case of Wolfram's Moravia north of the Danube, along the Northern Morava river, one would expect that they would flee to Poland, Bohemia, even to Frankish Bavaria.

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«From Thessalonica to the river Danube, where stands the city called Belgrade, is a journey of eight days, if one is not travelling in haste but by easy stages. The Tourkoi live beyond [= «peraden»] the Danube river, in the land of Moravia, but also on this side [= «enden»] of it, between the Danube and the Sava river.» (DAI 42: 15 ff.)

Over the years scholars have exerted considerable effort to bring this fragment into line with the previous definitions of Moravia's location. Note, for instance,

¹⁰ «Chora: das Land außerhalb der Polis». In: *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*. Hg. Theodor Klauser. II. Leipzig 1951, 1107.

Marquart, who noticed the contradictions and unclarity of the above text, and suggested the reading:

«The Tourkoi live on the other side of the Danube river, but also on this side of it, in the land of Moravia, between the rivers Danube and Sava.» (NB: Marquart's reconstruction of the text is in Greek.)¹¹

Although Marquart clarifies the syntax of the text, he concludes, nevertheless, that the Emperor confused Moravia [= «Mähren» along the Northern Morava river] with the principality of Privina and Kocel along the lake Balaton.¹² This reasoning is rather convoluted. If Constantine confused the territory along the lake Balaton with a Moravia in the north, then why would he place the «chora Moravias» in the vicinity of Sirmium? Furthermore, what is to be done with all the other references to a Moravia in the south?

Marquart's rejection of his own conclusion is not justified on logical and philological grounds. First of all, Marquart did not use any evidence to show that Constantine was wrong, relying simply on his belief that Moravia was somewhere north of Vienna. Secondly, if Constantine consistently erred in placing Moravia in the South, then one expects some evidence that he was consistently wrong also in the previous chapters. One may also argue that had Constantine understood the term «megale» to mean, as Wolfram would have it, «a realm beyond the Roman pale», then he would have never placed the center of Moravia next to Sirmium, formerly the capital city of a Roman province and often the residence of Roman Emperors.

My own contribution to the controversy is philological. Constantine uses the adverb «enden» = «on this side» in chapter 42 and in all other instances to define locations relative to rivers (e.g., 29: 13; 37: 39, 58; 45: 130, 165). The adverb «enden» is a semantic counterpart of «peraden» or «ekeiden» = «beyond», «from the other side». Thus the adverbial phrase «alla kai enden» = «on this side» should be understood as indicating a location south of the Danube and not south of the land of Moravia.

Constantine in chapter 42 describes the territories in which the Tourkoi live as being «beyond [...] but also on this side of the Danube» as well as «between the Danube and the Sava river», logically, he refers to the stretch of the Danube where it flows parallel to the river Sava. Since Constantine described the territory occupied by the Tourkoi, and since the Tourkoi, in fact, occupied Moravia, the inserted phrase; «in the land of Moravia», may have been placed anywhere in the sentence under analysis without causing any ambiguity. Thus, both «explications du texte», Marquart's syntactic, and mine, semantic, bring the fragment into line with the location of Moravia as described by Constantine in caps. 13, 38, 40, 41.

¹¹ MARQUART: *Ostasiatische und osteuropäische Streifzüge*, 119.

¹² MARQUART: *Ostasiatische und osteuropäische Streifzüge*, 119-120.

From Constantine's narrative it must be by now evident, that he uses the term «megale» only for a territory already occupied by the Hungarians, a territory located in Pannonia Sirmiensis and territories directly neighboring on it (cf. DAI 38: 58; 40: 33; 41: 1, 2 and 42: 19 all quoted above).

Although Wolfram used and made references to the Emperor's Book of Ceremonies, he failed to notice, or at least he did not consider for discussion, chapter II 48. This chapter gives the forms of addressing the «archonts of Croatia, of the Serbs, Konavlans, Travunjans, of Dioklea [and] «eis ton archonta Moravias»».

The significance of this fragment is that this Moravia was in existence ca. 950, the Emperor conducted correspondence with that realm, and it was located among the South Slavic realms, next to Dioklea. This «Moravia» must be considered a formation which came into existence after the fall of the realm of Sventopolk centered initially in Pannonia Sirmiensis. This «Moravia» was, evidently, formed after the destruction of Moravia of Sventopolk «by the folk who were left, were scattered and fled for refuge to the adjacent nations, to the Bulgars and Turks and Croats and the rest of the nations» (DAI 41: 23 ff.). These facts may explain why Constantine referred to Moravia of Sventopolk as «megale», i.e. «the old, former, or previous».

Nonetheless, Wolfram concludes his analysis of Constantine's evidence with the dictum:

«Reading the Latin sources of the ninth century nobody in his right mind would doubt that the center or rather centers of the Moravian realm lay on the March, Thaya and even Vistula rivers, but not south, or south of present-day Hungary.» (p. 9).

The problem with this summary condemnation of those who disagree with Wolfram is that he has not provided, as yet, a single quotation from Latin, Greek, Slavonic or other sources, allegedly known to him, that contradicts the testimony of Constantine, nor does he challenge the evidence used by those who take Constantine seriously. What about questioning also «the right mind» of those medieval chroniclers who wrote the sources quoted above, which do contradict Wolfram? His statement is unfair to the Popes who wrote the relevant letters, to the compiler of the Russian Primary Chronicle, to the biographers of Methodius and of Clemens of Ochrid, and to Christianus Monachus of Bohemia – to list only a few authorities who did place the center of Moravia into Illyria, specifically in Pannonia. It is also unfair to scholars who share the view of the Emperor-historian. Here are some other fragments of Wolfram's narrative in which he goes beyond the evidence to be derived from sources:

«The sources mention the Moravians in connection with the Bohemians: both peoples were neighbors. Several times the Carolingian armies invaded Moravia from the west via Bohemia.» (p. 9).

This statement is clearly an exaggeration. There are few sources in which Bohemians and Moravians are mentioned in one and the same sentence or in one paragraph. No source refers to them as being neighbors. In fact, the first involvement of the Bohemians with the Moravians dates from 871, the other from 890. What

follows is some background information on the possible Bohemian-Moravian encounters.

Concrete geographic indicators are provided by a complete scrutiny of Frankish sources written in the ninth century in which the Bohemians and Moravians appear in a continuous narrative.

In 822 «all the oriental Slavs» were represented at a parley in Frankfurt, among them the «Wilzi, Beheimi et Marvani». Since the Wilzi [at the Baltic Sea] were not neighbors of the Beheimi, one cannot conclude that the Marvani and the Beheimi were, necessarily, neighbors. In addition, there is a problem with this entry in the *Annales regni Francorum*. One of the oldest manuscripts does not record the name of the «Marvani» at all, and one manuscript has the name of «Maritani» instead (cf. *MMFH* I: 50).

Another source, the «*Descriptio civitatum et regionum*», dated for the first half of the ninth century, lists the «Marharii» between the «Bethemare» and the «Vulgarii» (*MMFH* III: 287-291. Note the map on p. 290). Thus there is a choice for the territory of the Marvani/Marharii: either neighbors of the Bohemians or of the Bulgars. More precise geographic indications are contained in a number of annalistic entries summarizing the events of 846:

Annales Fuldenses: «Hludovicus [rex Germaniae] iuxta lacum Briganticum [Lake Constance] II. Non. April. pascha celebravit. Postea cum Hluthario locutus, volens eum cum Karlo pacificare, cum res non haberet effectum, circa medium Augustum cum exercitu ad Sclavos Margenses defectionem molientes profectus est. Ubi ordinatis et iuxta libitum suum compositis rebus ducem eis constituit Rastizem nepotem Moimari; inde per Boemanos cum magna difficultate et grandi damno exercitus sui reversus est.»

Herimanni Chronicon: «Ludowicus, Marahensibus Sclavis compressis, Rastizen ducem constituit, et per Boemiam cum gravi damno exercitus rediit.»

Annales Hildesheimenses: «Ludowicus [rex Germaniae] filius Ludowici, Pannoniam subegit et Behemos domum rediens vastavit.» The same or similar entries are carried in *Annales Quedlinburgenses*; *Weisenburgenses*; *Altahenses maiores*; *Lamberti*; *Magdeburgenses* and by *Annalista Saxo*.

These three basic entries seem to be independent of each other. While the *Fuldenses* refers to «Sclavi Margenses», the *Herimanni Chronicon* knows the «Marahenses Sclavi». Both name forms relate the Sclavi to a town «Margos»/«Maraha». The *Annales Hildesheimenses* and related sources place the events into Pannonia, where, in fact, «grad Morava v Panonii», «Moravou tes Panonias» was located (cf. above). The *Annales Fuldenses* knows that Louis, prior to moving to the Sclavi Marahenses, stayed along the Lake Constance. There is no indication that he had crossed the Danube at any point or that he moved across Bohemia to reach his destination.

In 871 a Moravian prince brought for himself a bride from one of the Bohemian princely families. As it was returning with the bride to Moravia, the entourage was ambushed by a contingent of Bavarian soldiers patrolling the border (= «qui terminos observabant», *Annales Fuldenses* s.a. 871). This episode shows that

when travelling from Bohemia to Moravia, one had to cross the Bohemian-Bavarian border, evidently somewhere south, and not east, of Bohemia.

The first attested political association between the Moravians and Bohemians occurred in 890, when Arnulf made Sventopolk duke of the Bohemians: «Arnulfus rex concessit Zuentibolch Marahensium Sclavorum regi ducatum Behemensium» (Reginonis Chronicon). A parallel but independent version of the event was preserved by the Canon of the Prague cathedral, Cosmas Pragensis (Chronica Bohemorum I: 14).

All of the above citations contradict Wolfram's assertion that «the sources mention the Moravians in connection with the Bohemians: both peoples were neighbors» and that «the Carolingian armies invaded Moravia from the west via Bohemia». Incidentally, Cosmas of Prague disagrees with Wolfram's undocumented view that «the Moravians made the Bohemians their subjects for some years at the end of Zwentibold's reign» (p. 9). To the contrary. Bohemia was not incorporated into Sventopolk's realm. It was, and remained, a Frankish fief. According to Cosmas Pragensis, Sventopolk lost his Bohemian fief within two years for «ungratefulness to his lord and Emperor, Arnulf» (for details cf. Chronica Bohemorum I: 14).

In summation: There is no evidence that the Frankish army moved «several times» across Bohemia against the Moravians, nor that the Bohemians and Moravians had been attacked by the Franks in a single expedition. As a rule, there were separate Frankish armies engaged against the Bohemians and against the Moravians. The latter two never assisted each other in defensive or offensive wars against the Franks. While the Bohemians had problems only with the Bavarians and Thuringians, as well as the Slavic Sorbs and the Susli, the Moravians were always involved with the Frankish lords of Carantania, with the Frankish-Bavarian counts of Pannonia and with the Bulgarians. There is no record to show that the Bohemians and the Moravians were in the ninth century neighbors across a yet not attested common border line.

A possible Moravian-Bohemian neighborhood north of the Danube is contradicted also by the events of 882-884 which were brought to discussion by Wolfram:

«The Battles of the Bavarian-Moravian war of 882 to 884 took place along the Danube in Lower Austria and western Hungary. The Moravians [in 882-884] attacked the embattled area from the region north of the Danube whereas the Bavarians tried to defend their strongholds south of the river.»

In this brief summary of events, for which the *Annales Fuldenses* provide four printed pages, Wolfram is far from accurate. The entire *Annales* are named after Fulda, but parts were written in Mainz, places west-northwest from Prague, thus far to the north of the Danube and all geographic indicators in the *Annales* are traditionally evaluated from that vantage point. However, one has to take into consideration that the events for 882-897 were written in Regensburg, hence south of the Danube (*Annalium Fuldensium Continuatio Ratisbonensis*). Thus the geographic coordinates for the events of 882-884 are different from those given in

Fulda or Mainz. As a result, the home-base of Sventopolk's forces, as seen from Regensburg, was not north of the Danube but south of it.

Contrary to Wolfram's summary of the events, the main military encounters of 883 were between Sventopolk and Arnulf of Carantania and Lower Pannonia and not in Lower Austria and Western Hungary. The jurisdiction of Arnulf, as the duke of Carantania, reached only to the Spraza-Raba line from the south. The devastation inflicted by Sventopolk on Bavarian-Carantanian forces took place south-south-east of the Raba river (cf. *Annales Fuldenses* 884 for the events of 882-884). There can be no doubt that the base of Sventopolk's operation was the former principality of Kocel in Mosaburg on lake Balaton. Thus, Sventopolk must have been the eastern neighbor of Arnulf. For a similar testimony to be derived from the *Annales Fuldenses* one may consult Lubomir Havlik's footnotes to his edition of the source in *MMFH* I: 113-116.

In 884 Sventopolk made peace with, and became a vassal of, Emperor Charles III at a meeting held (1) «in terminis Noricorum et Sclavorum»; (2) «prope flumen Tullinam Monte Comiano»; (3) «in citeriore Pannonia» (1: *Annales Fuldenses*; 2: *Fuldenses, Cont. Ratisbonensis*; 3: *Herimanni Chronicon*). All these entries show that the border line between the Bavarians («Norici») and the people of Sventopolk («Sclavi») was somewhere in Pannonia.

In the following year, in 885, Sventopolk and Arnulf became reconciled, ceasing their own hostilities of the years 882-884: «Pax in Oriente inter Arnolfo et Zwentibaldo [...]»; «Pax inter Arnolfum, Carentani et Pannonie ducem, et Zwentibaldum Marahensem ducem» (*Annales Fuldenses, continuatio Ratisbonensis; Herimanni Chronicon*).

Most of Moravia's external contacts were with Carantania, separated from the Danube by Frankish frontier marches under control of royal marchgraves. The two distinct peace treaties show clearly that Sventopolk «dux Marahensis» [i.e. of a polity around a burg Morava] ruled over parts of Pannonia bordering on «Bavarian» Pannonia in the north, and Carantania in the west.

It seems evident that the sources cited decidedly deny any connection prior to 890 between the realm of Rastislav, later of Sventopolk, and the realm of the Bohemians.

Having presented his case for Moravian-Bohemian neighborly contacts, Wolfram turns his attention to encounters between the Franks and the Bulgars in 892. Although the event has no relation to Constantine's image of Central Europe, it provides some data on which one may surmise Moravia's location.

Wolfram: «In 892 [...] Arnulf strengthened his diplomatic ties with the Bulgarians living in what is now Lower Slavonia and the Western Alfoeld. The royal ambassadors could not reach Bulgaria by taking the Danube route since the Moravians occupied or at least harassed northern Pannonia until they arrived at the Sava river at Siscia-Sisak from where they went to Bulgaria.» (p. 9.)

The diplomatic ties were established not with the Bulgarians of Lower Slavonia and the Western Alfoeld but with Laodimir, the king of the Bulgars, hence in Bulgaria. The Moravians did not at that time occupy or harass northern Pannonia. To the contrary. King Arnulf, supported by duke Braslav in control of a territory

between the Drava and Sava rivers and assisted by the Hungarians, invaded and for four weeks devastated Sventopolk's realm. Preparations for the expedition were arranged between Arnulf and Braslav in Hengisfeldon near Graz in Carinthia. Sources have nothing to say about the Frankish envoys avoiding the Danube route and taking instead the Sava river at Siscia-Sisak. Siscia is not even mentioned in that connection.

The source, *Annales Fuldenses* (MMFH I:118-19), is explicit: the ambassadors started out from the territory controlled by Braslav, «dux inter Dravo et Savo flumine». They progressed along the Odagra and Kulpa rivers, the latter being a southern tributary of the Sava. They continued floating down the Sava in order to avoid an ambush by duke Sventopolk. Since the threat to travel by boat was posed by Sventopolk's forces, he was, evidently, in control of the banks of the Sava, just east of the duchy of Braslav. One may add, that the ambassadors had to wait in Bulgaria eight months before they could safely return home «along the route they came», in May of 893, evidently, in changed political-military circumstances.

Furthermore, there is no evidence for the presence of Bulgarians in Lower Slavonia [i.e., between the Drava-Danube and Sava rivers], otherwise known as Pannonia Sirmiensis. From that territory were expelled the pupils of Methodius in 885. They encountered the Bulgars for the first time in Belgrade, where they were received by the governor of the town, Boritkanos (VCI XVI: 47).

As to the «Bulgarians of Lower Slavonia», Wolfram contradicts himself on page 11, where he states that «Belgrade is the first Bulgarian stronghold for travellers coming from, or through, Pannonia». If this is true, then, considering the danger faced by the Franks on their way to Belgrade, Pannonia Sirmiensis was not controlled by the Bulgarians. Logically, if the pupils were coming either from the West, or from the North and encountered the Bulgarians in Belgrade, neither Lower Slavonia nor Western Alfoeld could have been under Bulgarian control.

Wolfram, plainly, relies on controversial historiographic presentations rather than on the direct perusal of sources. In this and other cases the discrepancy between simple ascertained facts and his reconstruction of the chain of events remains inscrutable.

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One has to remark, again, that Wolfram's digression on the assumed Moravian-Bohemian neighborhood or about Frankish-Bulgarian diplomatic contacts across a non-attested common frontier have nothing to do with Emperor Constantine's image of Central Europe. Certainly, the Emperor had nothing to say either about Frankish-Moravian legal problems in Lower Austria, brought into discussion by Wolfram:

«In 888 a Bavarian nobleman obtained a royal diploma that allowed him to build a fortified stronghold about twenty miles south of the Danube in an area that lies halfway between the Lower Austrian cities of Krems and St. Pölten. The lord of this castellum was entitled to hold <placita> in the <regnum Mara-

orum», i.e. to administer justice in neighboring Moravia if needed.» (pp. 9-10.)

The royal diploma referred to by Wolfram was issued by king Arnulf for his «ministerialis», named Heimo. With that diploma Heimo received hereditary rights to resolve legal cases only within his allodial property. Heimo's property was located within the county under the jurisdiction of marchgrave Arbo/Aribo, who gave his prior consent to the diploma, a charter of immunity: «[nos Arnolfus] dedimus quidem ei cum consensu praefati comitis [Arbonis] eiusdem hereditatis suae rectitudinem perpetuo iure in proprietatem [...]».

The diploma has nothing to say about Heimo's having the right to hold «placita» in the «regnum Maravorum» nor about «administering justice in neighboring Moravia». The term «placita» is not even used in the diploma. Considering that the «urbs» of Heimo was located some 40 miles west of Vienna, it could hardly have been neighboring on Wolfram's Moravia located, as postulated by him, 60 miles north of Vienna. The charter, incidentally, not quoted nor identified by Wolfram, reads loud and clear:

«Et is forsan de Maravorum regno aliquis causa iustitiae supervenerit, si tale quidlibet est quod ipse Heimo vel advocatus eius corrigere nequiverit, iudicio eiusdem comitis [i.e., Arbonis] potenter finiatur.» (MMFH III: 75-77.)

This fragment, the last sentence of the charter, limits Heimo's judiciary competence to cases in which his own subjects were involved with people who would come to settle legal cases from the «regnum Maravorum». Such plaintiffs may have been merchants travelling along the Danube and involved in disputes with Heimo's own subjects. Thus Heimo was holding court not «in» the «regnum Maravorum» itself, and was not administering justice «in» neighboring Moravia, as understood by Wolfram, but within the boundaries of his allodial property only. Complicated legal cases were appealed to Arbo, the «comes terminalis».

In the so-called «Zollurkunde von Raffelstetten» (MMFH IV: 114-119) the «iura thelonica» – laws concerning custom duties – were entrusted to the same Arbo. This document mentions Bavarians, Slavs and Jews, as participants in the international trade activities. Mention is made also of «mercatum Marahorum». Such a «mercatum» (= trading place, custom control point) may well have been along the Roman roads leading from the Danube toward Carantheria or along the Raba river, dividing Pannonia superior from Pannonia inferior.

It seems apparent that Arbo, the marchgrave, had jurisdiction only along the trade routes leading across his county toward the «mercatum Marahorum» of unspecified location, most probably somewhere along the Raba river, which formed the border between the Danubian marches and the possessions once of Pribina and Kocel, and – since the wars of 882-885 – under the control of Sventopolk. (For Kocel's possessions just south of the Raba river cf. MMFH III: 128 and map on p. 321.)

Thus Wolfram's arbitrary paraphrasing of the charter reveals either faulty Latin or careless reading of the otherwise unambiguous text. The passage on Heimo does not support Wolfram's contention that Moravia was north of the Danube. In

the charter the Danube is not even mentioned. Wolfram concluded his excursus on Heimo with the selfassuring statement:

«It is easy to cite further passages that clearly prove the location of Moravia north of the Danube. There are, however, still people who do not care about the ninth century evidence and want to believe Constantine who has his Me-gale Moravia in southern Pannonia or even further to the south. Already in 1962 Gyula Moravcsik suggested a solution to the problem: «We believe therefore that Constantine's source has simply confused the northern Moravia with the district of the southern Moravians».¹³

First, if Wolfram is confident that for him «it is easy to cite further passages that clearly prove the location of Moravia north of the Danube», then one is disappointed that he does not reveal such passages, although even one solid unadulterated quotation would suffice to silence those with whom he disagrees.

Secondly, contrary to Wolfram's scepticism, there are people who do care about the ninth century evidence. This evidence is available in a recently edited five-volume collection of relevant documents (MMFH); none of the facts contained in it contradicts the testimony of Emperor Constantine.

Finally, Wolfram allows for a choice between those «who want to believe in Constantine» and those who believe in Moravcsik. For the relevance of «beliefs», in interpreting Constantine's narrative, there is an unique passage by Moravcsik himself in the Commentary volume to the *De Administrando Imperio*:

«Scholars have given different explanations [to cap. 13: 5]. Bury believed [...], Feher believed [...]. We believe [i.e., Moravcsik] therefore that Constantine's source has simply confused the northern Moravia with the district of the southern Moravians.» (DAI II: 62-63.)

In historiography, however, «belief» is not yet evidence. But even Feher's belief was not unconditional, as Moravcsik himself has noted:

«Feher believed that Constantine's statement is based on southern tradition, according to which Svatopluk was ruler of a great southern Slav empire.»

Moravcsik named also a non-believer, Manojlovic, who, in Moravcsik's words, «was probably nearer to the mark in seeing here the traces of a conception of a southern Moravia». «His thesis» – continues Moravcsik – «is supported by an additional text, published by Lambros.»

¹³ Wolfram supports his verdict with two footnotes. In the first, Wolfram refers the reader to himself, to Heinz Dopsch and to Charles Bowlus. The views of Dopsch are not entirely negative, but his criticism is not conclusive (cf., e.g., his «heilige Mährische Kirche», an uncanonical title: *Slawenmission und päpstliche Politik – zu den Hintergründen des Methodius-Konfliktes*. In: *Salzburg und die Slawenmission*. Hg. Heinz Dopsch. Salzburg 1986, 305 – and his reliance on Passau's [unattested] jurisdiction north of the Danube). The evidence provided by Bowlus against Wolfram's concept is rejected without even summarizing what he had to say. The second note is to the «belief» of Gyula Moravcsik. But Moravcsik recognized that there was, indeed, «a district of the southern Moravians» (cf. DAI II: Commentary, 63).

The Greek text, cited by Lambros and reproduced by Moravcsik, lists the Bulgars, Moravs, Serbs, Vlachs and Slavs of Illyria, all baptized during the rule of Emperor Michael [ob. 867]. Moravcsik rephrased the Greek fragment to read:

«Here, then, we are dealing, not just with a series of names connected with the river Morava [in text recte: Illyria], but with actual «Moravoi», who are said to be living there» [IB: i.e., in Illyria].

*

Having berated those «who believe in Constantine», Wolfram turns again to a topic which has nothing in common with «Constantine's image of Central Europe».

Wolfram: «To be sure, Privina and Chozil could also have been considered Moravians since they had to flee from their city Nitra when the Moravians from the March river took over in what is now central Slovakia» (p. 10).

This formulation is short and logic. Privina and Kocel were not considered «Moravians» by any of the authors of sources available and certainly not yet by anyone «in his right mind». Why should Privina and Kocel be considered «Moravians» if they were expelled by the Moravians? Wolfram supports his statement with a reference to *Conversio Bagoariorum*. The *Conversio*, however, states clearly that Privina was killed by the «Maravi» (cap. 13), hence he could hardly have been a Moravian himself. In «*Skazanie o pismenach*», tenth-century Bulgarian source, Kocel is named «kniaz Blatenska» [= prince of Blatenski grad = Mosaburg, near lake Balaton], while Rastislav is identified in the same source as «kniaz Moravska» [= prince of Moravski grad] (MMFH III: 371).

Wolfram himself runs into a contradiction. In the sentence just preceding the above quotation he states: «The Slavic princes Privina and his son Kocel organized the Frankish Pannonia [...] and defended it against both Moravians and Bulgarians». Hence Wolfram recognizes that Privina and Kocel were not Moravians. Incidentally, the two were never involved with the Bulgarians.

There is no evidence either for a flight from a «city Nitra». The source, *Conversio Bagoariorum*, mentions rather a «locus Nitrava»; «locus» being a term for «a place» and not «a city» (MMFH III: 312). The attested toponym «Nitrava» would have remained in modern Slovak «Nitrava». The town Nitra in Slovakia is known in Hungarian as «Nyitra» and in German as «Neutra». A ninth century form «Nitrava» would have developed in Hungarian into a form «Nyitro», in German into «Nitrau» and in Slovak would have remained «Nitrava». Consequently, the toponym «Nitrava», known from the *Conversio*, can not be identified with Nitra in Slovakia.

Finally, the occurrence of the name «Nitrava» in the *Conversio* is a gloss added by a copyist to the original text (cf. Wolfram's edition of *Conversio* p. 52, and his own commentary on the same page, note «c»). Wolfram continues:

«Needless to say, Constantine did not mention Privina or Chozil or their principality [around lake Balaton]. In consequence he [Constantine] had to fill the political-geographic gap left in his «descriptio regnorum» before the Hungarian invasions. Zwentibold's Megale Moravia seemed to fit exactly this end. Thus

chap. 42 combines an old tradition with the political situation after the Hungarian conquest of Moravia. «The Turks live beyond the Danube river, in the land of Morava, but also on this side of it, between the Danube and the Sava river.» (p. 11.)

This imaginative argumentation is, once again, devoid of evidence. Wolfram does not explain how he identified the «political-geographic gap» in Constantine's narrative or what constitutes «an old tradition». The last sentence of Wolfram's quotation: «The Turks live beyond the Danube river, in the land of Morava, but also on this side of it, between the Danube and the Sava river», hardly supports his case. As shown above, Constantine refers only to the west-east stretch of the Danube which is parallel to the Sava, hence to the northern boundary of Pannonia Sirmiensis.

Had Constantine confused the unattested «old tradition» of a Moravia located north of Vienna with the realm of the non-Moravians Privina and Kocel around the lake Balaton, one would expect, instead of the phrase «between the Danube and Sava river», the phrase: «between the Danube and the Drava river».

*

Wolfram's treatment of Emperor Constantine's information concerning the Croats deserves special attention. Here is just a sampling.

Wolfram: «It is methodologically dubious if not impossible to rely upon Constantine and speak of the existence of Croatians in Dalmatia at the beginning of the ninth century. Constantine obviously transferred the results of the Croatian ethnogenesis into a period of time when it had just begun and had not yet overcome a nameless stage of development.» (p. 12.)

To use Wolfram's phrase, «nobody in his right mind» (p. 9) would agree with this axiomatic formulation. In fact, the Emperor provided not only an «ethnogenesis» but also a detailed «polito-genesis» of the Croats that goes back to the early seventh century. To dismiss Constantine's detailed testimony without recourse to documentary evidence against his veracity is frivolous.

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In his criticism of Constantine's «image of Central Europe» the author has failed to quote a single paragraph from the Emperor's works. The Emperor has been judged and condemned without being offered a chance to be heard. One does not know how incomplete was his knowledge of events before his own times, but one thing is certain: having access to the Imperial archives and contact with foreign envoys, the Emperor could hardly have been ignorant of the recent history of his realm's neighbors, including the history of the Moravians.

Arnold Toynbee presented in detail the Emperor's «image of Central Europe» and came to the conclusion: «Great Moravia had lain in the Western Illyricum».¹⁴

¹⁴ Arnold TOYNBEE: *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his World*. London 1973, 516.