

“CARANTHANI MARAHENSES” AND  
“MORAVI SIVE KARINTHI”

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In two medieval sources that may be of interest for the study of the history of the Slovenes there are references to *Carinthini Moroanenses* and *Moravi sive Karinthi* respectively, both these phrases being interpreted in modern scholarship as mistaken or, at least, ambiguous.

The first phrase, *Carinthini Moroanenses*, appears in *P. Magistri, qui Anonymus dicitur, Gesta Hungarorum*, in chapter 50. *De devastatione Pannonie; Arpad et sui milites. . . . Carinthinorum Moroanensem fines crebris incursibus irripuerunt. . . .*<sup>1</sup> The other phrase, *Moravi sive Karinthi*, is used in *Helmoldi presbyteri Chronica Slavorum, I.1.:* “. . . Poloni, habentes septentrione Pruzos, ab austro Boemos et eos qui dicuntur Moravi sive Karinthi atque Sorabi. . . .”<sup>2</sup>

For Helmoldus the southern neighbors of the Poles were, explicitly and without any ambiguity, Carinthians known otherwise as Moravi. In *Gesta Hungarorum* the term *Carinthini*, for the people of Carinthia, is used in conjunction with an adjectival form *Moroanenses*. The editors of the text understood the form *Moroanense* to be a derivative of the name of the river Mura (a southern confluence of the river Drava), associated by P. Magister mistakenly with the Moravians.<sup>3</sup> The editors of the text added the remark that *Carinthini Moroanenses* goes back, ultimately, to the report of Regino, who reported *s.a. 889 (recte 894)* that the “*gens Hungarum. . . . Carantanorum, Marahensium ac Vulgarum fines crebris incursionum infestationibus irrumpunt. . . .*”<sup>4</sup>

While the reference of Helmoldus to *Moravi sive Karinthi* can be right or wrong pending acceptable arguments in favor or against the statement, the objections to the statement of P. Magister, *Carinthini Moroanenses*, as reference to one political formation, can be sustained only if the phrase used by Regino, *Caranthanorum, Marahensium ac Vulgarum fines*, is correct, i.e., that Regino refers to *Caranthani* and *Marahenses* as two distinct political formations.

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The solution to the problem hinges on the question, is the comma in Regino's text between the terms *Caranthani* and *Marahenses* justified or not? It was not only P. Magister who did not use the comma in the crucial place. There is another source based on Regino, the *Chronica collecta a Magno presbytero*, where one reads *s.a.* 890: ". . . Pannoniorum et Avarum solitudines, deinde Caran-tenorum Marahensium ac Vulgarum fines . . . devastatum est."<sup>5</sup> Therefore it is not surprising that it is only the printed edition of Regino's *Chronicon* in the first volume of the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, that carries the comma. It was the editorial zeal of the historians of the early nineteenth century that provided commas and spelled out medieval abbreviations, the siglas, according to their own interpretation of manuscripts.

The oldest preserved version of *Regionnis Chronicon*, from the tenth century and preserved in the State Library of Bavaria in Munich (*Codex Monacensis 6388*), has no comma in the crucial phrase, thus Regino's reference to *Caranthani Marahenses* and the variants in the text of P. Magister and Magnus presbyter, as well as Helmold's information about *Moravi sive Karinthe*, are to be considered as references to one and the same people, or political formation, namely to some Carinthians who at a given time were closely associated with Morava.

Those who are familiar with the conclusions reached in my book on Moravia<sup>6</sup> and share my observations on the close contacts in the ninth century between Caranthania and the realm of Morava will find the references in the medieval chronicles to *Caranthani Marahenses* and *Moravi sive Karinthe* self-explanatory. Most of the contacts between the realm of Rastislav and Sventopolk and the Frankish-Bavarian realm were across Caranthania, at a time when Caranthania was separated from the Danube by the counties of Bavaria proper forming the Ostmark. The name *Maravenses* is formed from the name of a city "Morava," attested directly or obliquely in several sources as being located in Pannonia, more precisely on the river Sava,<sup>7</sup> across from Sirmium of antiquity (present-day Sremska Mitrovica). Hence P. Magister in his *Gesta Hungarorum* could not have confused the city of Morava with the river Mura, because the endings *-ensis* form adjectives (or adjectival nouns) from the names of localities or small islands, and not from river names. Despite the traditional insistence upon interpreting the name form *Marahenses* as equivalent to the modern and conventional name "Moravians," as if the name denoted an entire population of a country, annalistic notations refer in most cases to *Sclavi Margenses*, *Sclavi Maravenses*,<sup>8</sup> in the same way as one refers to Kievan Rus, Muscovite Rus, hence a political entity around a burgh or city, what German scholarship calls *Burggemeinschaft*.

The text of Regino and the references derived from him in the chronicles of P. Magister and Magnus presbyter are the only instances of a direct association between the Caranthenians and the burgh of Morava. These references describe events that occurred in 894, at the exact time when Morava for a short while was occupied and controlled by Bavarian and Caranthenian forces.

The realm of Sventopolk had been formally a dependency of the East Frankish kings at least since 874. Although there were intermittent conflicts between the partners of the contract, the feudal relation was renewed in 884, and confirmed again in 890, when Sventopolk received also the Duchy of Bohemia as a fief. In addition to his "patrimonial" holdings in *Pannonia orientalis*, around the burgh of Morava, Sventopolk also controlled the former dominium of Privina and Kocel in *Pannonia inferioris*, as well as the county of Steinamanger (Sabaria, Sobotec). All these fiefs were formally controlled by the Marchgraves of Caranthenia, Arnulf till 877, Ruodpert between the years 887-893 and Liutpold thereafter, till the disintegration of Caranthenian/Bavarian control of the Pannonias and the dissolution of Sventopolk's realm between 890 and 900.<sup>9</sup>

Sventopolk, who in 890 received the fief of Bohemia and had transferred there the center of his activities, revolted against his lord, King Arnulf, in 892. In that year Arnulf, supported by Braslav, presumably a Caranthenian Slovene (at that time duke in control of the territory between the Drava and Sava), and by the Hungarians, devastated *terram Maravorum*,<sup>10</sup> Sventopolk's hereditary possession. Once again, Sventopolk reconciled himself with Arnulf, and gave to him one of his sons as hostage.<sup>11</sup> Apparently Arnulf restored his authority over Sventopolk's realm, and Morava (the city and its region) became again a fief under the Marchgrave of Caranthenia. But the tranquility did not last. The Hungarians began to plot an invasion: "*Arnulfus per Ungaros Zvendibolh vicit . . . Zuendibolh pacem proposcit, et dato filio obside, sero promuerit. Arnulfus secure potitus est imperio. Ungari observato exitu et contemplati regiones, malum cordibus, quod post in propatulo claruit, machinabantur.*"<sup>12</sup> Sventopolk died in 894. This is the year in which the Hungarians reappeared, but this time as enemies of Arnulf, and penetrated into the frontier zones of the *Carantheni Marahenses ac Vulgari*, obviously neighboring territories, south of the Danube, as indicated by all the historical references to the events.<sup>13</sup>

The thesis of a close association of the Caranthenians with the city of Morava, or the realm centered around Morava, is made more plausible by another entry in the *Annales Fuldenses*. In the entry for the year 901 one reads:

Generale placitum Radaspona civitate habitum est. Ibi inter alia missi Marahavorum pacem optantes pervenerunt; quod mox, ut petierunt, complacuit et iuramento firmatum est. Inde ob hoc ipsum Richarius episcopus et Udalricus comes Marahva missi sunt, qui eodem tenore, ut in Baiowaria firmatum fuit, ipsum ducem et omnes primates eius eandem pacem se servaturos iuramento constringerunt.

Interdum vero Ungari australem partem regni illorum Caruntanum devastando invaserunt.<sup>14</sup>

Scholars have been puzzled by the fragment of the text "australem partem regni illorum Caruntanum." The problem involves the use by a Frankish-Bavarian annalist of the pronoun "illorum" for an apparently Frankish territory, instead of "nostrum" or "nostrorum."

Since the author of the entry could hardly be mistaken on the subject of Frankish possessions and the purpose of the mission to Marahva, one has to assume that the author, in fact, had in mind some territory that was not Frankish-Bavarian. On grammatical grounds the antecedent of "illorum" is the phrase "dux et omnes primates eius," *i.e.*, the duke of Marahava and his nobility, and not "Richarius episcopus et Udalricus," nor the Bavarians or the Franks who were not even mentioned in the paragraph. Furthermore, the text does not refer to Caranthania, but to "Caruntanes" (pl. gen.: "Caruntanum"), an alternate name for the Slovenes inhabiting Caranthania and, by extension, for Slovenes or other Slavs, *e.g.* those in the Pannonias, controlled from Caranthania,<sup>15</sup> in this case the \**Carunthani Marahavanenses*, for whom the author of the entry used the pronoun "illi" in a derogatory sense: ". . . the southern part of the possessions of *those* Caranthans" (derogatory, because the text has nowhere a reference to *these* Caranthans).

It was possibly Šafařík who first attempted to resolve the ambiguity by simply expanding the sentence in question to read: "Interdum vero Ungari australem partem regni illorum (*Moravorum*), Carantanum, devastando invaserunt." Šafařík interpreted the sentence to mean "In jenem werden Pannonien oder die östlichen Grenzgebiete Karantaniens ausdrücklich der südliche Teil des mährischen Reiches genannt."<sup>16</sup> In other words Šafařík suggested that the *regnum Carantanum* was an extension of a Moravia located north of the Danube. In order to interpret the word *Carantanum* to mean a name for a possession, he had to place commas in front of and after the term *Carantanum*.

Šafařík seems to be correct inasmuch as he contrasted the southern part of the *regnum* with an implied northern part. But in

such a case also the northern half would be part of the *regnum Carantana*, and not a Moravia north of the Danube. Since Carantania (Šafařík's Carantana) was a province or duchy always separated from the Danube by counties under the direct jurisdiction of the dukes of Bavaria, there could not be a northern part of Carinthia/Caranta. But there could be some people from Carinthia, as there indeed were, namely the "Moravi sive Karinthe" of Helmold Presbyter.<sup>17</sup> Helmold's statement concerning a people known as *Moravi sive Carinthe*, directly south of the Poles, seems to be supported by several historical, archaeological and philological arguments.

In 890 Sventopolk with a contingent of his "gens Maravorum," i.e., his kinsmen and retainers, resettled in Bohemia. Part of his "gens" remained with his sons in Pannonia. The *Annales Fuldenses* makes a distinction between *Marahabiti* and *gens Marahensis* (or *Marabi*), the two distinct terms being used even in a single entry. The term *Marahabite* refers to people from *Marahaba/Morava* residing outside their homeland<sup>18</sup> (cf. *Israelitae = qui ex Israel*).<sup>19</sup>

After Sventopolk's expulsion from Bohemia proper, these *Marahabite*, remained on territories east of Bohemia, territories that they themselves conquered shortly after 890 and before Sventopolk's demise.<sup>20</sup> Since the new acquisitions were not Frankish possessions before 900, the Moravians (*Marahabite*) were able to claim and retain the acquisition. Henceforth this realm remained independent from Frankish/Bavarian rule for over a century, especially since the rulers of this new homeland, associated in historiography with the name (or dynasty) of a certain Slavnik, became friendly with the Saxon branch of the Frankish royal house and thus were able to ward off, at least for a while, Bavarian-Bohemian encroachments. This realm, a new Moravia north of the Danube (in contrast to *Megale Moravia*, i.e., "Old Moravia" mentioned by Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus), is well defined in medieval sources as equal in standing with Bohemia, Poland and Hungary. This neglected page of the history of the territories east of Bohemia, presented here only in a brief sketch,<sup>21</sup> explains why Helmold in the second half of the twelfth century placed the *Moravi sive Carinthe* south of the Poles and, obviously, east of the Czechs and north of the Danube.

The combined evidence of Cosmas, Helmold and of the Frankish annals confirms, then, our contention that the Moravians of Moimar, Rastislav and Sventopolk had direct and close contacts with Carantania throughout their political existence and that, at least from 874, Moravia proper with a center in Morava on the river Sava, was intermittently subordinated to the Marchgraves of Carantania.

Hence the justification for Regino's use of the term *Caranthani Marahenses*, and for Helmold's *Moravi sive Carinthe*.

Against this historical background one may understand better the presence of South Slavic, especially Southeast Alpine, artifacts and skeletal remnants in archaeological material, from the ninth and subsequent centuries, excavated in territories east of Bohemia proper, in Northern Moravia. This archaeological complex, known under the name of Kötlach ("Kötlacher Kultur"), referred to also as "Caranthanian Culture," is also strongly represented in Zalvar/Blatograd, the former residence of Privina and Kocel (*civitas Privinae, Chezilonis castrum*) on Lake Balaton. Their property was given to Sventopolk as a fief in 884.

Revealing in this respect are the excavations in Dolní-Vestonice, north of the Danube, in the territory conquered by Sventopolk after 890. Archaeologists have unearthed there a cemetery dating from the ninth century and in use till the twelfth century. According to an official report, as of 1950 there were 560 graves with ceramic objects and jewelry having characteristics entirely different from the earlier stages of the material culture of the region. The material culture in the graves "shows contacts with the old Slovenes and has south and central German characteristics resembling the Kötlach Culture."<sup>22</sup> In 1967 a new report by the same chief investigator suggested the possibility that the graveyard was actually used by Slovene craftsmen.<sup>23</sup> Since archaeology itself cannot be used to reconstruct past history but only supplement written evidence, in this case we have a "material" confirmation for Helmold's *Moravi sive Carinthe*; Helmold wrote his description shortly before 1170 and the graveyard was last used during the twelfth century.

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One of the purposes of historical research is to resolve contradictions presented in sources or ambiguities in one and the same source. Many such contradictions can be traced to faulty editions of medieval texts, to translations of texts made on the basis of assumptions,<sup>24</sup> and interpretations formulated without sufficient base of solid evidence. Recently several collections of sources pertaining to Moravian and Cyrillo-Methodian studies have been published.<sup>25</sup> A critical perusal of these sources, without preconceived ideas, shows that all events affecting the history of the realm of Moimar, Rastislav and Sventopolk before 884/890 occurred on territories between Caranthania and Bulgaria, in the Pannonias. Since there is no evidence in the sources for the presence of Sventopolk north of the Danube before 890, and since the Czech chronicler Cosmas testifies

that territories east of Bohemia were conquered by Sventopolk only after 890,<sup>26</sup> there are enough arguments for scholars to review critically many assumptions concerning Moravia's history in general, and of the activities of Constantine and Methodius in particular.

The case of a comma in the published text of Regino, and the outright rejection of Helmold's reference to *Moravi sive Carinthe*, may serve as random illustrations for the need for possible revisions.

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NOTES

1. *Gesta Hungarorum* in *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*, vol. I (Budapest, 1937) p. 100.
2. *Helmoldi presbyteri Chronica Slavorum*, in *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum* (Hanover, 1868), p. 18.
3. *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*, (Budapest, 1937), p. 100, note 5. Cf. also p. 103, note 3.
4. *Reginonis abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon. . . .* in *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum* (Hanover, 1890), p. 131.
5. *Chronica collecta a Magno presbytero*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, XVII, p. 484.
6. Imre Boba, *Moravia's History Reconsidered* (The Hague, 1971).
7. Note especially *Povest vremennykh let*, edited by V.P. Adrianova-Perets (Moskva-Leningard, 1950), s.v.; "Morava."
8. E.g., all instances in one of the basic texts for the study of Moravia's history, in the *Annales Fuldenses*, for the years 846-887, whenever references are made to the people of Rastislav or Sventopolk. For the text of the *Annales Fuldenses*, see *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum* (Hannover, 1891), pp. 36-106.
9. For details see M. Mitterauer, *Karolingische Markgrafen im Südosten* (Vienna, 1963), s.v.v.
10. *Annales Fuldenses*, s.a. 892. Cf. *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum* (Hannover, 1891), p. 121.
11. *Regino, op. cit.*, s.a. 890.
12. *Annalista Saxo*, s.a. 890. Cf. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, vol. VI, p. 587.
13. E.g., Regino, *Annales Fuldenses*, P. Magister, *Magnus Presbyter and Annalista Saxo*.
14. *Annales Fuldenses, op. cit.*, s.a. 901.

15. For a fairly complete list of terms used for the Slavs, Slovenes and Caranthenians see Franc Kos, *Gradivo za zgodovino Slovencev*, I-II (Ljubljana, 1902-1906), s.v.v. "Karantanija," "Sloveni" and "Slovenci."
16. P. J. Šafařík, *Slawische Alterthümer*, vol. II (Prague, 1844), p. 495.
17. Cf. text preceding note 2.
18. *Annales Fuldenses*, s.a.a. 897, 898 and 899.
19. Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "Israel."
20. *Cosmae Pragensis chronica Bohemorum*, I, 14, e.g., in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptorum*, N.S. vol. II, p. 32.
21. For details see my "Problemstellung:" "Between Poland and Bohemia: The realm of the Slavniks" in *Symposiones* (London, 1981), pp. 193-198 (Polish text with English summary).
22. Cf. a summary of the report in *Slavia Antiqua*, 4(1953), p. 476.
23. *Slavia Antiqua*, 15(1968), p. 235.
24. One of the more striking cases of "corrective" translations dates back to the middle of the nineteenth century. In the Greek original of *Vita Clementis* the phrase occurs: *Methodios episcopus Moravos tys Panonias*. The editors of the Greek text prepared for Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* in the parallel Latin translation corrected the meaning of the phrase ("Morava of Pannonia") to read *Moravia et Pannonia*. Although in the text of the *Vita* there are several references to a city of Morava in Pannonia, all in association with Methodius, the patently misleading translation; "Moravia et Pannonia," became a frequent and only quotation in support of the assumption that there was a Moravia north of the Danube. Surprisingly enough, the editors referred in the preface to a translation made by Miklošič. But Miklošič in his edition of the *Vita Clementis* explained in the introduction the crucial phrase to mean, explicitly; *Methodius . . . episcopus Moravi Pannoniae*, i.e., bishop of Moravus of Pannonia. For the mistaken translation see Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 126, cols. 1194-1222. For the view of Miklošič see his introduction to the *Vita Sancti Clementis*, (Vienna, 1847), pp. X, XI and XIV.
25. E.g., F. Grivec and F. Tomšič; *Constantinus et Methodius Thessalonicenses, Fontes* (Zagreb 1960) and *Magnae Moraviae Fontes Historici*, 5 volumes (Brno, 1966-1976).
26. *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica*, op. cit., I, 14.