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Rupture – Integration – Renewal: The Gathering in Dalma and the Creation of a Political Community in the Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea

One of the most extensive but also most controversial narratives of the so-called *Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea* is the description of the formation of a community in the newly Christianized kingdom. The dominion, which was founded by the pagan Goths, beset with religious conflicts, and which allegedly covered the lands of Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia, in the person of Svetopelek¹ gained a ruler who proposed a new way of governing the state. Svetopelek first accepted Christianity due to Constantine, and then, after the missionary's departure to Rome, he ordered the demarcation of his dominions.

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¹ In the Latin version: *Sfetopelek*, *Suetopelek*.

Through this act of marking borders, however, the king sectioned off something more than the geographical territory over which his power extended. The very process of recollecting the border lines required written support. Svetopelek requested this support from Pope Stephen and Emperor Michael, so they sent legates and envoys to help him. Describing these events, the Priest of Dioclea mentioned a series of acts related to the decisions taken by the ruler, which resulted in the convening of a great gathering on the plain of Dalma (*in planitie Dalmae*). When the "cardinals and bishops" sent by the Pope joined the king at the site of the future meeting, he

...ordered that all the nations of his land and kingdom gather on this plain of Dalma. (...) So all the gathered, those who spoke Latin, as well as those who spoke Slavonic, on the orders of Honorius, the apostolic plenipotentiary, and the Christian king Svetopelek, held a twelve-day meeting at which the commandments of God and the Bible as well as Church affairs were discussed for eight days. The remaining four days were devoted to discussing royal power, bans, župans, and centurions, and the location of the kingdom. At this assembly, the old Latin and Greek privileges sent from the Holy See and from the Emperor were read out to all the people; the privileges concerned the division of the provinces, districts, and lands as it had been established and written down by the former emperors. And the king and all the people were glad. At the end of the gathering, on the twelfth day, the king was consecrated by the hands of the plenipotentiary Honorius, cardinals and bishops, and crowned according to the custom of the Roman kings, and a great joy reigned among the people in the whole kingdom² (Historia Królestwa Słowian [Duklanin], 1988, pp. 69–70).

[Tunc rex iussit congregari in eadem planitie Dalmae omnes populos terre, et regni sui. Igitur omnes congregati, tam latina, quam et sclavonica lingua qui loquebantur, iussu Honorii apostolici vicarii, ei christianissimi regis Suetopelk, per spatium dierum XII synodum fecerunt. In qua diebus octo de lege Divina, et sacra scriptura, ac de statu ecclesiae tractatum est. Caeteris autem quatuor diebus de potestate regis, de ducibus, et comitibus, et centurionibus, et de statu regis sermocinatum est. Relecta sunt, et in eadem synodo antiqua privilegia tam latina, quam graeca missa ab apostolico, et ab imperatore, audientibus cunctis populis de divisione provinciarum ac regionum seu terrarum, sicuti ab antiquis imperatoribus scripta, et ordinata fuerunt, et placuit regi, et cuncto populo finita synodo XIIa die per manus Honorii vicarii, et cardinalium, atque episcoporum coronatus est rex atque coronatus more Romanorum regum, et facta est laetitia magna in populo, et in universo regno eius. (Duklanin, 1950, p. 52).]

² The Polish translation of the Latin version of the *Chronicle* can be found in the edition of Jan Leśny (1988). However, unjustified emendations are omitted in the article (e.g. according to the original version Dubrovnik was changed to Ragusa). If not stated otherwise, all the translations into English are by the translator (Joanna Modzelewska-Jankowiak).

This fragment is the realization of one of the main themes in the work of the Priest of Dioclea – the unification of Latin-speaking population as well as Slavs who came to this land. The description of the events which happened during the meeting can be interpreted as an expression of the chronicler's beliefs about what action can lead to the creation of a new community in place of broken, hostile groups. It was not a chronicle reconstruction of a historical event, but rather a vision of the causative power of action by means of rituals and practices that supported social transformation.

Until recently, the *Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea* was one of the most commented-upon old written texts of medieval Dalmatian writing³. Its history is complicated. The work survived in two basic versions: Latin and Croatian. The oldest manuscripts of the former version date back only to the middle of the 17th century, while those of the latter are preserved in the manuscript from 1546. Earlier translations are known: a Latin edition into Italian by Mavro Orbini, published in 1601, and a Croatian edition into Latin by Marko Marulić in 1510. Both translators either used manuscripts that are not preserved today, or they added some passages to the text.

The *Chronicle* in its Latin version belongs to several traditions. It can be noticed that the plot core of the kingdom described by the Priest of Dioclea was changing as the text progressed. In the early chapters, the chronicler drew on the North Dalmatian and Croatian traditions, gradually moving the geographical center of gravity towards Dubrovnik and Travunija. In the last parts of the chronicle, the described dominion narrowed to the historical area of the Dioclea state. In this section, the source becomes slightly more credible and the information provided by the Priest of Dioclea is confirmed by Byzantine literature. The Croatian version repeated the first 23 chapters of the Latin version (except for the prologue) and ended at the moment when the Priest of Dioclea decided to shift the center of the fictional state to the south; in contrast to the Latin text, it was crowned with a large section devoted to the murder of King Zvonimir and the Hungarian conquest of Croatia⁴.

Despite these complicated circumstances of transmission, in the Yugoslav historiography the *Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea* was regarded as the oldest

³ See more: Šišić, 1928); Mošin, 1950, pp. 11–36; Leśny, 1988 and Živković, 2009.

⁴ Ryszard Grzesik (Grzesik, 2003) wrote about the Hungarian–Polish thread of the tale about the king's murder, and an extensive list of literature on this subject can also be found in this work.

historical narrative in the history of the Slavic nations that constituted that country⁵. It was assumed to have been written in Bar between 1149 and 1200 (Šišic, 1928; Mošin, 1950). In recent decades, the historians' consensus on this issue has been seriously undermined. It may be suspicious that the oldest mention, which unquestionably proves that there was knowledge of a fragment of the text of the *Chronicle*, comes only from the middle of the 14th century (Živković, 2009, p. 127), and the first traces of the *Priest of Dioclea* himself and his work come from the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries (Commentarii de temporibvs svis [Ludovici Tuberonis], 2001, pp. 87, 90; Pamiętnik o czasach moich [Ludwik Tuberon], 2016, pp. 150, 155)⁶.

This is worth remembering when we estimate the factual value of the work of the Priest of Dioclea, but this value is small even in the opinion of scholars who assume the 12th-century date of its creation. Both the Slavic Kingdom, the history of which was described by the Priest of Dioclea, and most of the rulers mentioned in the chronicle (belonging to a single dynasty that ruled for several dozen generations) were, in principle, a figment of the chronicler's imagination based on local traditions and legends⁷. Even if some names, as in the case of Svetopelek, set contemporary readers on the trail of historically confirmed persons, their environment and the events described by the Priest of Dioclea make the figure completely distant from the potential historical original. The dubious source of the work was repeatedly emphasized and it its content was even directly named as the description of legendary tales⁸

⁵ Against this background, Solange Bujan's proposal (Bujan, 2008) can be regarded as an exception which still gives rise to controversy as she publicized the heterogeneity of the individual parts of the work and recognized the entire work as a mystification, partly sewn together from several separate written sources, partly counterfeited by Mavro Orbini at the end of the 16th century.

⁶ Živković competently emphasized the wishfulness of some of the arguments put forward by Šišić to support the 12th-century genesis of this old written text, but he himself put forward an equally unlikely hypothesis about its authorship, and the weaknesses of this hypothesis were noted by Aleksandar Radoman (Radoman, 2013) in his review; however, as to the estimated date of creation of the *Chronicle*, the reviewer repeated Šišić's justification.

⁷ Denis Alimov described the fictitious "Kingdom of Slavs" in terms of local *ethnopoiesis*, which he understood as a process in which "authors of historical narratives either create a new image of ethnos or adapt already existing images to new conditions, or combine the former with the latter, thus ensuring the continuous dynamics of ethic categories within the structured political, social and cultural realities of the distant past" (Alimov, 2017b, p. 517).

⁸ Such an opinion about the Latin version was expressed by Johannes Lucius (Ivan Lucije), the first publisher of the work, who published the *Chronicle* in 1666.

(Šišić, 1928, p. 30) or was regarded as the first fiction in the lands of later Yugoslavia (Mijušković, 1988, pp. 91–93; Kožić, 1989).

Despite many reservations about the factual value of the *Chronicle*, scholars focused primarily on tracing the tracks of the historical events in it. The history of research on the old written text was related mainly to attempts to establish the identity of its author, traditionally called the Priest of Dioclea, as well as the principals and purpose of the work (Peričić, 1991; Živkovič, 2009; Radoman, 2016)¹⁰. Subsequently, many scholars attempted to demonstrate the historical elements hidden in its (rather indisputably) incredible story.

It was similar in the case of the chronicler's account of the great convention in Dalma, where the local ruler met with the Pope's and emperor's envoys, gathered all his subjects, granted rights to them, set the limits of power, and finally was crowned. Even a comparison of the accounts of the two basic versions of the Chronicle could result in the first interpretative complications. In the Croatian edition, above all, the names were changed: Budimir replaced king Svetopelek, the names of papal legates and emperor's envoys were omitted¹¹, as was the name of the Pope of the times when the described events supposedly took place. In this version, the emperor is first called Constantine, then Michael (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, pp. 50, 52). Instead of the Slavs described in the Latin version, Croats appeared in the respective lines. The place of the meeting was also moved from the plain of Dalma to Hlivaj mountain. Although there are many signs that the tale itself originated in northern Dalmatia or in Croatia, it was the Croatian lesson that was contaminated. The name of Svetopelek was preserved in vague references to the "svetipuk" of King Budimir (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, pp. 48–57), while Dalma also appeared next to Hlivaj mountain, like in the Latin version, as a point of reference for the division of Dalmatia (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], p. 54).

⁹ Recently, Stevo Vučinić has treated the *Chronicle* as a reliable historical source, trying to compare the plot of the work not only with written sources but also with the results of archaeological work (Vučinić, 2017). S. V. Alekseev (Alekseev, 2013; 2015) commented on the work of the Priest of Dioclea as part of the tradition reflecting events dating back to the times before the 10th century. The scholar also tried to place the *Chronicle* in the framework of the Slavic accounts of the rise of the kingdom, dynasty and ethnos.

¹⁰ Hypothesis about the author of the Croatian version (Ančić, 1997, pp. 292–303).

¹¹ In the Latin text, Cardinal Honorius is the Pope's representative, and the names of the emperor's envoys are Leo and John (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], pp. 51, 52).

The possible locations of Dalma and the aforementioned Hlivaj mountain are controversial. Since modern times, Dalma has been associated with the place of Duvno (later the town of Tomislavgrad), where the city of Delminium was supposedly located in ancient times. The identification was so strong that the congress convened by King Svetopelek is even today referred to as *Duvan*jski sabor in local historiographies (Jelić, 1909; Klaić, 1925). In this situation, the aforementioned Hlivaj can be interpreted as the town of Livno, which is located several dozen kilometers away. Marko Marulić translated this name in this manner in his translation of the Croatian version at the beginning of the 16th century. In the source text where Dalma was mentioned, he wrote about the "ruins of Delminium" (Jovanović, 2009, pp. 43-44). The alternative proposal assumed that the place described by the Priest of Dioclea would be the town of Omiš, the name of which is probably a derivative of the older toponym Delmis (Barada, 1928). While verifying these locations, it is worth referring to the source text in which the location of the plain of Dalma is described quite precisely. We can read that Svetopelek

divided the provinces and countries¹³ of his kingdom and their borders and estates as follows: the territory in the drainage basins of the rivers that flow from the mountains and run into the sea in the south, he called Primorje, and the territory in the drainage basins of the rivers that flow from the mountains in the north and run into the great river Danube, he called Surbia. Then he divided Primorje into two provinces: **from the place of Dalma, where the king stayed then and where the gathering took place** to Vinodol, he called the White Croatia, also known as Lower Dalmatia; here, with the approval of the holy Pope Stephen and his plenipotentiaries, he established the metropolitan Church in Solin and brought the following churches under its jurisdiction: Split, Trogir, Skradin, Arausona, the present-day city of Jadra, Nin, Rab, Osor, Vegla and Epidaurum. And [the lands] from this place of Dalma to the town of Bambalona – now called Dyrrachium – he called Red Croatia, which is also called Upper Dalmatia. And as for Lower [Dalmatia] he made the metropolitan Church of Solin; for Upper Dal-

¹² In the original: "campo qui Cliuna apellatur"; "iacent regionemque que a Delminii ruinis". In the Croatian version, Dalma had previously appeared as one of the places ruined by Stroil: "I pride u Bosnu i slize u Dalmaciju i rase primorske grade: Dalmu, Naron i bogati i lipi Solin i grad Skardon" (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 43). So, Dalma was not an inhabited place. There is no such passage in the Latin version of the *Chronicle*.

¹³ Ksenija Hvostova noticed that the Priest of Dioclea consistently applied the division into provinces and countries (*regiones*). Before describing Svetopelek's new orders, the chronicler defined the outer lands as provinces and also used this term in relation to the territories of the former order (Istria, Pannonia). After the congress in Dalma, the Priest of Dioclea called provinces first of all territories managed by the ban (Хвостова, 1959, pp. 44–45).

matia, according to the old law, he made the metropolitan Church in Dioclea, bringing the following churches under its jurisdiction: Bar, Budva, Kotor, Ulcinj, Svač, Skadar, Drivast, Polat, Serbia, Bosnia, Travunija and Zachlumia. He divided Serbia, which is called Transmontana, into two provinces: one, stretching from the great Drina river westwards to the Pini mountains, he called Bosnia, and the other, from this Drina river eastwards to Lipljan and Lab, he called Raška (Historia Królestwa Słowian [Duklanin], 1988, p. 71).

[...divisit provincias, et regiones regni sui, ac terminos, et fines earum hoc modo: secundum cursum aquarum, quae a montanis fluunt, et intrant in mare contra meridianam plagam, Maritima vocavit; aquas vero que a montanis fluunt contra septentrionalem plagam, et intrant in magnum flumen Donavi, vocavit Surbia. Deinde Maritima in duas divisit provincias: a loco Dalmae, ubi rex tunc manebat, et synodus tunc facta est usque ad Valdevino vocavit Croatiam Albam, quae et Inferior Dalmatia dicitur, cui Inferiori Dalmatiae consensu domini papae Stephani, et legatorum eius, instituit Salonitanam ecclesiam metropolim, sub cuius regimine has ecclesias statuit, videlicet: Spalatum, Tragurium, Scardonam, Aransonam, quod nunc est castellum Jadrae, Aenonam, Arbuam, Absarum, Vegliam, et Epitaurum, quod nunc dicitur Ragusium. Item ab eodem loco Dalmae usque Bambalonam civitatem, quae nunc dicitur Dyrachium, Croatiam Rubeam vocavit, quae et Superior Dalmatia dicitur, et sicuti Inferiori Dalmatiae Salonitanam ecclesiam constituit metropolim, simili modo Superiori Diocletanam ecclesiam pro iure antiquo statuerunt metropolim, sub cuius regimine has ecclesias declararunt, scilicet: Antibarium, Buduam, Ecatarum, Dulcignum, Suacium, Scodram, Drivastum, Pollatum, Sorbium, Bosonium, Tribunium, Zaculmium. Surbiam autem, que et Transmontana dicitur, in duas divisit provincias: unam a magno flumine Drina contra occidentalem plagam usque ad montem Pini, quam et Bosnam vocavit. Alteram vero ab eodem flumine Drina contra orientalem plagam usque ad Lupiam, et Lab, quam Rassam vocavit (Duklanin, 1950, pp. 54–55).]

According to the Priest of Dioclea, the southernmost city of Lower Dalmatia was Epidaurum, also called Ragusa¹⁴. Critics of the hypothesis suggesting that Dalma is Duvno rightly noticed that since the meeting place separated the two Dalmatias (Lower and Upper), this meeting field should extend southward of Epidaurum, while both Duvno and Omiš lie far to the north of this city. This is how Ludwig Steindorff reasoned: he recognized that the location of Dalma should be moved to the south, near today's Podgorica, i.e. where the city of Dioclea was located in antiquity, it was the second of the metropolises distinguished by the chronicler, the later burial place of King Svetopelek, and the place of coronation of his son (Steindorff, 1985, pp. 303–321)¹⁵. Ten kilometers west

¹⁴ The history of its creation was described in detail in the Latin version a little later.

¹⁵ According to Steindorff, the act of elevation of the Slavic ruler would be based on the events from the reign of Michael of Duklja, to whom Pope Gregory VII supposedly sent the royal crown in 1077 (Steindorff, 1985; 1995, p. 155).

of Podgorica, in the valley of the Zeta river, the scholar found the place of Daljam, where he assumed that Dalma had been probably located. However, he admitted himself that there were no sources which would corroborate the fact that a settlement of this name existed as early as in the Middle Ages. It can be added that in the second part of the description of the bishoprics established by Svetopelek, the geographical key was not retained, which makes the hypothesis connecting Dalma with Daljam and the Podgorica region doubtful.

In the description of the events on the plains of Dalma, it is not difficult to observe the realization of a schematic tale about the division of lands and the demarcation of the kingdom's borders. According to the natural landform features, Svetopelek divided his dominion into two main parts along a mountain ridge (division into coastal land and the land behind the mountains). Then he introduced another compass-based partition as, for the Priest of Dioclea, such a quadripartite model was an example of an ideal rulership (Steindorff, 1986, p. 320); in the times of Svetopelek, this included all territories that, according to the historiographer, belonged to the Slavic Kingdom. The range which was delimited in the fields of Dalma and confirmed by papal and imperial privileges would be a point of reference and a goal to be achieved by the successive rulers described in the *Chronicle*. Therefore, the whole area where the meeting took place should also be included in the sphere of mythical geography of the region. In the name Dalma we find a reference to ancient Delminium, which was the symbolic center of the whole of Dalmatia. Today we know that the city was situated near Duvno. For medieval chroniclers, however, it was often a half-legendary reference. Even chroniclers as close to Dalmatian issues as Thomas the Archdeacon probably did not know the exact location of the ancient city16. The Priest of Dioclea could have perceived it in a similar way. As Nikola Banašević noted (Banašević, 1971, pp. 58-60), the expression in planitie Dalmae in the work of the chronicler meant the same as "in the middle of Dalmatia" - in the center of the lands ruled

Thomas located the city of Delminium in the east when he wrote about the division of Sclavonia into two bishoprics. He located one of them in Sisak in the west and the other one in Delminium: "uidelicet ab oriente fuit episcopus delmitanus, unde Dalmatia dicta est; ab occidente fuit episcopus sciscianus, ubi beatus Quirinus martir quondam extit presul"; he also wrote about a place with the same name in the east, where the church consecrated by St. German of Capua was situated (Historia Salonitanorum [Tomasz Archidiakon], 2006, p. 58, 60), but earlier he wrote about the ruins of Delmina in the south: "Est enim region quedam in superioribus partibus, que dicitur Delmina, ubi antique menia astenduntur, ibi fuisse Delmis civitas memoratur" (Historia Salonitanorum [Tomasz Archidiakon], 2006, p. 2). Steindorff believed that the chronicler had meant the city of Dioclea (Steindorff, 1995, pp. 151–156).

by the king. Thus, Dalma could actually be a synonym of this region – the central field where the coronation and unification act takes place.

There is also a lack of consensus among historians about what the Priest of Dioclea actually described. Historians have recognized the coronation of the Slavic ruler from the perspective of presentism. It is not unusual that the *Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea* was very popular in post-war Yugoslavia as it presented the common Slavic Kingdom, the area of which accidentally largely covered the Yugoslav territory. Researchers associated with the individual nations of the federation had previously used the image of the great Slavic king to reinforce the concept of equally important national histories.

As early as in the 19th century, Croatian historians noticed the similarity between Svetopelek's assembly and two congresses that were probably convened during the reign of Tomislav. Letters attached to the 16th-century continuation of the chronicle of Thomas the Archdeacon (Historia Salonitana maior) contain a description of the decisions taken at the meetings, today called the Synods in Split, which supposedly took place in 925 and 928. During these meetings, the Dalmatian magnates and the clerical elite made decisions concerning the form of the Church administration and the boundaries of individual dioceses. One of the participants was supposedly the Croatian ruler Tomislav, described as rex Croatorum (Historia Salonitana maior, 1967, pp. 96–106). In the imagination of historians, the Synods in Split and the Dalma congress were contaminated to such an extent that, on the basis of the chronicler's account, the course of Tomislav's alleged coronation in Duvno and even the extensive borders of his country were reconstructed. Meanwhile, we know very little about the events of the first half of the 10th century. The basis of knowledge about the course of both Synods in Split is late copies of documents, the authenticity of which is also questioned. The name of Tomislav appeared only in 13th-century sources which did not mention his coronation. The figure of the first "King of Croats" became a historiographic legend to such an extent that on the millennium of the events, in 1925, it was even decided to change the name of Duvno to Tomislavgrad, which definitely, though unreasonably, consolidated the myth that linked Tomislav and Svetopelek that had been described by the Priest of Dioclea (Boroń, 2010, pp. 120-125).

There were also other ideas that bound the fictitious ruler with the historical prototype. Borislav Radojković (1962) acknowledged that the prototype of Svetopelek was Michael Višević, Prince Michael of Zahumlje, who together with Tomislav led the synod of 925. Luka Jelić (1909) believed that the con-

gress could have been held during the reign of the Croatian King Krešimir IV in the second half of the 11th century, and more precisely, in August 1057, when Pope Stephen IX (1057–1058) and Emperor Michael VI (1056–1057) in fact ruled at the same time¹⁷. Other scholars went even further in their speculations, seeing in Svetopelek a figure inspired by the rulers of the 9th century. Borna or Branimir were mentioned in this context. Vladimir Košćak (1980-1981) even maintained that during the reign of Branimir there had been a general meeting at which the legates of Pope Stephen V (885-891) and Emperor Leo VI The Philosopher (886–912) had given the prince power over the Adriatic coast. In turn, Dominik Mandić (Mandić, 1971, pp. 58-60) suggested that the fragment of the Chronicle described the formation of the Croatian state as long ago as in the days of Pope Stephen II (752–757) and Emperor Constantine V (741–775), but he did not support this thesis with any source. The figures of Svetopelek and Budimir, his counterpart in the Croatian text, were also linked, among others, with the hypothetical dynasty that ruled Bosnia (Hadžijahić, 1983), or even with Prince Porga, who was mentioned by Constantine Porphyregonitus ("De administrando Imperio" [Konstantyn Porfirogeneta], 1967, Chapter 31, pp. 148–149) and whose name was changed on this occasion to Budko-Budimir (Rus, 1932)¹⁸.

A character who immediately brings associations with the Dalmatian Svetopelek is the Great Moravian Svatopluk (Svętopъłkъ). The Priest of Dioclea took the name of the first Christian ruler of the fictitious kingdom from the Cyril-Methodian tradition; what is more, he linked the baptism of the king with the activities of Constantine. The missionary appeared in the *Chronicle* even a little earlier. While describing the reign of Svetomir, Svetopelek's father, the chronicler recalled that in those times "a certain philosopher named Constantine of Thessaloniki bloomed like a rose; he was a son of the patrician named Leo, the most noble of all men and since childhood deeply educated in the Holy Scriptures" (Historia Królestwa Słowian [Duklanin], 1988, pp. 66–67).

¹⁷ As Živković counted, seven emperors named Michael reigned in Constantinople in the years between 811 and 1078, but only in the case of Michael II the Amorian (820–829) was the imperial activity in the Balkans proven. However, only Michael VI (1056–1057), already mentioned, ruled parallel to Pope Stephen (Stephen IX, 1057–1058), but also in this case this time was also limited to thirty days (Živković, 2004, pp. 54–55).

¹⁸ See Steindorff, 1985, pp. 282–285.

¹⁹ "Temporibus huius floruit, ut rosa ex civitate Thessalonica quidam philosophus Constantinus nomine, filius cuiusdam Leonis patricii vir per omnia sanctissimus atque in divinis scripturis profundissime a pueritia edoctus" (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 48).

The chronicler then reported on the conversion of the "Khazar province" by Constantine; he returned to the figure of Svetomir, writing about his death and about Svetopelek assuming the throne, and he then returned to the figure of Constantine. The historiographer mentioned that Constantine had created a writing system for the Slavonic language and had translated the books of the Old and New Testaments from Greek into this language. He unwaveringly omitted any mention of Methodius, which could have resulted from the "black legend" that shrouded the second of the Solun Brothers in the medieval Dalmatian region, where (especially in Latin circles) he was associated with Arianism²⁰ (Historia Salonitanorum [Tomasz Archidiakon], 2006, pp. 78–79; Historia Salonitana maior, 1967, pp. 95–96).

The Priest's entire account of Svetopelek's rule had a dual structure. In the first part, it was Constantine who was the leading figure. During his journey to Rome, the "holy man" was received with reverence by Svetopelek, and as a result of the missionary's teachings "King Svetopelek believed in Christ and was baptized with all his kingdom" (Historia Królestwa Słowian [Duklanin], 1988, p. 68). The ruler was a passive character in this thread and his presence allowed the chronicler to emphasize the merits of Constantine. On this basis, Lubomir Havlík claimed that the whole fragment devoted to King Svetopelek was in fact a separate work: The Dalmatian Legend, which describes the activities of Constantine and was later included in the Chronicle (Havlík, 1976, pp. 46-63). From this perspective, the description of the Dalmatian congress could be a development of the theme of convening the synod by the Moravian Svatopluk, known from several earlier texts on the activity of the Brothers, primarily from the Slavic Life of Methodius (Žitije Mefodija, 1967, pp. 157–158). This hypothesis can be contradicted by a detail in the plot and the description of the course of the meeting in Dalma, in which Constantine did not participate. From the moment he left Svetopelek's state to go to Rome, the Slavic ruler clearly came to the forefront in the chronicler's narrative and we will not find a single word about the missionary's activity in the text.

²⁰ See more (Katičić, 1986). In both versions, admittedly, a mysterious "liber Methodius" appeared, the Slavic book in which laws and customs were written. Nobody knows, however, whether its name referred to Methodius, his translation activities, or simply to the word "method" (Steindorff, 1986; Margetić, 2000). Marko Kostrenčić suggested that in this case this might be a code of law, which he identified with the translation of the Nomokanon made by Methodius. This idea was discussed in detail by Marko Petrak (Petrak, 2018).

While the motif of Svetopelek's conversion and baptism indicates the presence of the Cyril-Methodian tradition, the king's further actions, and above all the events in Dalma, could have been inspired by later motifs from local tales. The name of Svetopelek pervaded the territory of Dalmatia probably together with one of the stories about the activities of Constantine. It is impossible to say whether this happened by means of the Czech tradition or via Ohrid literature. It can be noted that there is no transference of threads related to the negative description that put the ruler in a bad light that concerned the Moravian Svatopluk and was included in the Czech and Hungarian chronicle works and some Latin hagiographies written in Czechia, as well as *Bios Klimentos* associated with the Ohrid center²¹.

In the medieval Czech and Hungarian historiography, the figure of Svetopelek could have been presented by separate tales which were not connected with the legend of Constantine and Methodius. Cosmas and then Dalimil described the fall of this ruler in his struggle against Hungarians; they also noted his mysterious disappearance from the battleground and his appearance on Zobor mountain, where, according to tales, he was said to live in hiding as a monk (Vardna, 2013; Havlík, 1976, p. 20).

Excerpts from Hungarian chronicles prove an attempt was made by the Hungarian elite to take over some of the Greater Moravian traditions (Homza, 2013, pp. 48–84; Grzesik, 2014a; 2014b). Svetopelek was named Morót in an anonymous *Gesta Hungarorum*, which meant a Moravian, and his power supposedly extended to the lands where the Khazars lived²²

²¹ The theme of the conflict between Svatopluk and Methodius appeared in *Tempore Michaelis imperatoris* (*Legenda Moravica*), *Vita s. Ludmillae et s. Venceslais* by the so-called monk Kristián and the legend *Beatus Cyrillus*. In Ohrid literature, the motif of a quarrel between the ruler and Methodius was present in the Greek *Bios Klimentos* (*Bioς Κλήμεντος, Bulgarian legend*). The main difference in comparison with the Czech "black legend" of Svetopelek is the reason for the sudden change of the prince, who was led astray by the Latin clergy headed by Wiching, on whom the curse of Methodius was put. There is no similar information in a few other Latin works from the territory of Czechia, e.g. *Diffundente sole* (*Legenda Bohemica*) and *Quemadmodum*. Havlík assessed that these works should be considered older. He also claimed that the tradition was shaped as a result of a mistake, and that the negative description of Svetopelek was caused by the bad reputation of his godson Zventibold of Lorraine (Havlík, 1976, pp. 21–24). It is hard to accept this explanation uncritically, because Havlík seemed to ignore the fact that after Zventibold's death the ruler became the object of worship and his character was depicted in it according to the rex-confessor formula (Štrbáková, 2013).

As Havlík observed, if we do not put the fragment of the Croatian text of the *Chronicle* about Svetipuk as the ruler in "Khazarik" down to linguistic ineptitude, it is in *Gesta Hungarorum* that we should look for analogies for a similar detail concerning the area of the ruler's reign (Havlík, 1976, p. 20).

(Gesta Hungarorum, [Szymon z Keza], 1999, p. 67). In turn, in the chronicle of Simon of Kéza, which was written in the second half of the 13th century, Svetopelek (*Zvataplug*) was Morót's son. The chronicler noted that the name of Svetopelek was unknown, while Morót "nomine maior erat" (Gesta Hungarorum [Szymon z Keza], 1999, p. 76). According to the historiographer's account, the prince died in a battle with Hungarians, which to some extent corresponded with the motifs of the Czech tradition. The chronicle of Simon of Kéza also describes the lands under the authority of the ruler: "Zvataplug, son of Morót, prince in Poland, who gained control over Bracta and ruled as the emperor of Bulgarians and Moravians, began to be the ruler of Pannonia when the Huns were banished from it"²³. This passage was a description of the extensive dominion of Svetopelek that might have loosely corresponded with the image of a vast, multipartite kingdom in the work of the Priest of Dioclea.

We do not know from when the name of the ruler was known on the Adriatic Sea. Speculations that Svetopelek could have entered the local dynastic legends as early as in the 9th or 10th centuries are not confirmed. Apart from the Latin version of the *Chronicle*, we have a fourteenth-century gloss in a 12th-century *Supetar cartulary* which put Svetopelek at the start of the royal genealogy. In the insertion, we will find the disquisition of the bans "de genere Croatorum a tempore regis Suetopelegi usque ad tempus Suenimiri regis Croatorum" (Švob, 1956, p. 104). Perceiving the Croatian native rulers as those who ruled "from the times of Svetopelek to the times of Zvonimir, the king of Croats" would corroborate the existence of the unknown lesson of the *Chronicle*, in which Svetopelek would open the rank of Christian rulers (as in the Latin text) and Zvonimir would close it (as in the known Croatian version)²⁴. Apart from a mention in the cartulary, the figure of some Bosnian king from a "Moravian-Croatian family" was also known in late medieval Ragusa. They are mentioned by *Annales Ragusini*, but there are many signs

²³ "Zvataplug filius Morot, princeps quidam in Polonia, qui Bracta subiugando Bulgaris Messianisque imperabat, incipiens similiter in Pannonia post Hunnorum exterminium dominari" (Gesta Hungarorum [Szymon z Keza], 1999, p. 74). The identification of Bracta with Brač (Latin: Bractia) seems to be an interesting suggestion. It is possible, however, that Bactria was meant here – the land in the east famous for Alexander the Great's conquests (Gesta Hungarorum [Szymon z Keza], 1999, p. 74, note 2).

²⁴ More on the possible references to this gloss and the so-called *fragment of The Chronology* to the content of the *Chronicle*: Mladen Ančić (Ančić, 2013, pp. 178, 190, note 148).

that this mention was placed there due to the Latin version of the *Chronicle* (Havlík, 1972).

The issue of the catalogue of bishoprics, that is the list of dioceses subordinate to two metropolises allegedly established by Svetopelek in Dalmatia, is interesting in the context of the purpose for which the description of the Dalma congress appeared in the work of the Priest of Dioclea. This fragment complemented the motif of baptism on the advice and by the hands of Constantine, as well as the mission of the Papal Legate Honorius, who was to help Svetopelek reinforce his faith, mark out the borders of the state, and, through the establishment of new bishoprics, build the Church administration of the newly Christianized territories. So, we read that Svetopelek:

[in the Lower Dalmatia], with the approval of the holy Pope Stephen and his plenipotentiaries, established the metropolitan Church of Solin and subordinated the following churches to its jurisdiction: Split, Trogir, Skradin, Arausona, the present-day city of Jadra, Nin, Rab, Osor, Vegla, and Epidaurum, today called Ragusa. And [the lands] from this place of Dalma to the town of Bambalona – now called Dyrrachium – he called Red Croatia, which is also called Upper Dalmatia. And as for Lower [Dalmatia] he made the metropolitan Church of Solin; for Upper Dalmatia, according to the old law, he made the metropolitan Church in Dioclea, bringing the following churches under its jurisdiction: Bar, Budva, Kotor, Ulcinj, Svač, Skadar, Drivast, Polat, Serbia, Bosnia, Travunija and Zachlumia (Historia Królestwa Słowian [Duklanin], 1988, p. 71).

cui Inferiori Dalmatiae consensu domini papae Stephani, et legatorum eius, instituit Salonitanam ecclesiam metropolim, sub cuius regimine has ecclesias statuit, videlicet: Spalatum, Tragurium, Scardonam, Aransonam, quod nunc est castellum Jadrae, Aenonam, Arbuam, Absarum, Vegliam, et Epitaurum, quod nunc dicitur Ragusium. Item ab eodem loco Dalmae usque Bambalonam civitatem, quae nunc dicitur Dyrachium, Croatiam Rubeam vocavit, quae et Superior Dalmatia dicitur, et sicuti Inferiori Dalmatiae Salonitanam ecclesiam constituit metropolim, simili modo Superiori Diocletanam ecclesiam pro iure antiquo statuerunt metropolim, sub cuius regimine has ecclesias declararunt, scilicet: Antibarium, Buduam, Ecatarum, Dulcignum, Suacium, Scodram, Drivastum, Pollatum, Sorbium, Bosonium, Tribunium, Zaculmium (Duklanin, 1950, p. 54).]

While commenting on the division into the Church provinces, it was assumed that this fragment was probably written in the second half of the 12th century so as to enhance the efforts to restore the archbishopric of Bar, the clergy of which claimed the legacy left by the ancient metropolis of Dioclea. In the prologue of the Latin version of the *Chronicle*, the Priest stated that he was writing this work because he had been asked by clergymen from the seat of the Dioclean metropolis (or, presumably, the city of Bar). The place where the Latin text was written must have influenced the dichotomy of Solin–Dioclea and the role of the competitive

center of Epidaurum, namely Ragusa, among the suffragan dioceses subordinated to Solin. The dispute between Bar and the archbishopric in Dubrovnik that had continued since the 11th century inspired the creation of a forged bull of Pope Callixtus II in the mid-12th century; it described the suffragan dioceses subordinate to Bar in the Priest's style of writing²⁵. In 1252, John of Plano Carpini, the archbishop of Bar, claimed that Dalmatia was divided into two metropolises in Split and in Bar, and that they were heirs to the ancient traditions of the centers of Solin and Dioclea²⁶. For many historians, it was proof of the reception of the information of the *Chronicle*, particularly the passage describing the Church administration of the Kingdom of Svetopelek. However, the catalogue of bishoprics does not appear in the Croatian text, which only mentions that numerous bishoprics were subordinate to Solin and Dioclea. Therefore, it is possible that we have to take into consideration the later interference in the Latin text of the *Chronicle*, inspired by authentic or fabricated documents.

The lack of a prologue in the Croatian version indicates that the tale of Svetopelek and Dalma could be part of a tradition originally unrelated to Bar, and at the time of the formation of the Latin version known to us the text was updated to better harmonize with the ideological message of the Bar Church hierarchy. In fact, the city of Bar appeared only a few times in the entire *Chronicle*, and the only representative of the Bar clergy mentioned in it was Peter, known as "Antibarensis sedis archiepiscopus" (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 96). This fragment is related to the Dioclean part of the work and is not included in the Croatian text. In addition, this title contradicts the previously used terminology in which Dioclea was after all the seat of the metropolis. Apart from these two fragments, which did not match each other, the chronicler remained silent about the traditions of the Bar (arch)bishopric.

Since it is difficult to perceive the congress in Dalma as a hidden description of a historical event, and the connections of this plot with the hypothetical legend of Constantine and the issue of the archbishopric in Bar do not explain the sense of the history itself, we should look at it in the context of the entire

²⁵ They included: "ecclesiam Dioclitanam, Antibarensem, Buduensem, Ecatarensem, Dulchinensem, Svacinensem, Scodrensem, Drivastinensem, Polatinensem, Serbiensem, Bosoniensem, Tribensem cum omnibus suis pertinentiis ac monasteriis tam Latinorum quam Grecorum seu Sclavorum (…)" (following: Šišić, 1928, p. 138).

²⁶ "quod in tota Dalmacia ab antiquo non fuerunt nisi duo archiepiscopatus, videlicet Salona et Dioclea. Et in loco Salone est Spaletum et m loco Dioclee est Antibarum" (Codex diplomaticus, 1906, pp. 482–483).

work. In the case of the *Chronicle*, for the reasons described above, this is difficult yet not impossible.

First of all, the matter of toponyms reveals the chronicler's tendency to emphasize the ancient roots of some centers. This concerns Zadar and Ragusa. In these cases, the historiographer used the Latin principle *quod nunc est* or *quod nunc dicitur*. In this way, in one sentence, he summarized a more developed story about the establishing of new cities or towns by the Latins who had survived the barbarian invasions (Steindorff, 1985, p. 297). The relationship between Arausona and Jadra may be regarded an early version of a popular tale about the refugees from Biograd who founded Zadar (Latin: Belgradum or Alba Maris, Italian: Zaravecchia), while the story of refugees from the Epidaurum who established Ragusa was told in detail by Priest of Dioclea in another thread. It can be assumed that the chronicler also knew the legendary beginnings of Split which associated this city with Solin and the links between Bar and Dioclea. Interestingly, if this was indeed the case, he did not decide to directly stress the relationship of Solin and Bar with their ancient heritage.

Looking at the events that followed the baptism of King Svetopelek, we can see that the chronicler was most interested in the relationship between the described present times and the destroyed and forgotten past. This was symbolized by the relations between the Latins and the Slavic people living on the coast.

The destruction of these relationships was a consequence of the Goths' previously described invasion. The Priest of Dioclea recalled that barbarians under the command of Totila and Ostroil attacked Dalmatia and defeated the local Christian rulers. The beaten king of the Dalmatians took refuge in Solin and never again appeared on the pages of the chronicle. After Totila and half of his army left for Italy, Ostroil expanded his power in Dalmatia and the hinterland; he laid the foundations for a dynasty that, in the chronicler's work, would continuously sit on the throne of the kingdom. In this narrative, the Slavs appeared as settlers of King Selimir (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 44), while in the following chapters "the Goths are becoming the Slavs" so there is no doubt that we are dealing with pagan people 28.

²⁷ "Gohti qui et Sclavi" (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 46). The Adriatic "Gothicism" was summed up by Denis Alimov (2017a; 2017b), who saw in it a complex phenomenon, the roots of which should be sought in the exonym with which the Latin residents of cities initially described Slavic visitors.

²⁸ The author of the Croatian text presented it differently, probably placing the Croats on the side of Christians (Alimov, 2017b, p. 521; Kowalski, 2018).

The Goths' invasion caused a break of cultural and religious continuity in the *Chronicle*. The descendants of Ostroil, kings-pagans, were judged by the chronicler on the basis of their attitude towards the Christian minority. We read that the son of the leader, Senulad II, "did much damage and evil to Christians living in coastal cities and towns" (Historia Królestwa Słowian [Duklanin], 1988, p. 64). In turn, his successor, Silimir, kept the peace with them. One of the next pagan rulers, Ratomir, was distinguished by such a hostile attitude towards Christians that he went so far as to demolish their cities and settlements. Then, "seeing that they were in danger of great suffering and persecution, Christians began to gather in the highest mountains and defensive places, erecting, as far as possible, temporary defenses, castles, and fortifications" (Historia Królestwa Słowian [Duklanin], 1988, p. 66).

One of the first decisions of converted Svetopelek was the order to return that was given to the hiding Latins. This matter bothered the chronicler to such an extent that he raised it directly after the description of the baptism and the departure of Constantine to Rome:

At that time great joy came, and the Christians, going down from the mountains and hiding places where they sought refuge, began to praise and worship the name of the Lord, who saves those who are faithful to him. Then, King Svetopelek ordered those Christians who spoke Latin to return to their own countries, so as to rebuild the cities and places that had been destroyed earlier by pagans²⁹ (Historia Królestwa Słowian [Duklanin], 1988, p. 68).

Thus, the restoration of cities and towns was the first order of the Christian ruler of the Slavs, and the second decision, which was related to the previous one, was the order to "remind and describe the estates". When the Dalma Synod was to begin, the chronicler clearly emphasized that "those who spoke Latin, as well as those who spoke Slavonic" gathered, thus distinguishing the new double foundations of the kingdom – the old Latin roots and the new Slavic roots.

The Latin version of the work shows the outline of Christians who were fleeing to the mountains also in the context of the foundation of Ragusa. When the chronicler described the interregnum period after the fall of Časlav, he men-

²⁹ "Tempore isto facta est laetitia magna, et christiani descendentes de montanis, et locis abditis, quo dispersi erant, coeperunt nomen Domini laudare et benedicere, qui salvos facit sperantes in se. Post haec Sphetopelek rex iussit christianis, qui Latina utebantur lingua, ut reverterentur unusquisque in locum suum, et reaedificarent civitates, et loca quae olim a paganis destructa fuerunt" (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 50).

tioned the devastating invasion of the Saracens. He wrote that the Saracens demolished coastal places, while the Latins at that time "hid in the mountains inhabited by the Slavs" ("Historia Królestwa Słowian" [Duklanin], p. 80). The chronicler added that when the Latins intended to return to their cities and towns the Slavs caught them and let them free only on the condition of an oath of service and tribute. Only the appearance of the royal heir, Pavlimir Bello, and the renewal of the kingdom could ease the tense situation between the two ethnoses.

In both cases, these events were complemented by the description of the elevation to power. It may be surprising that in the plot of the *Chronicle* more than 60 rulers are mentioned, but there are very few descriptions of enthronements. Apart from the question of the usurper of the imperial diadem, King Bodin, only the narratives about Svetopelek³¹ and Pavlimir Bello are distinguished against this background. Both can be regarded as rulers creating or reconstructing the ideal order of the state, delineating its borders and designing a new political community.

In the first case, this required an external sanction. So as to determine the area of his own power, Svetopelek first turned to the "wise men" 32 of his land (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 50). The role of memory and the institution of "old men" - people appointed to remember laws, traditions and borders - was stressed. However, this did not work. Thus, the chronicler probably emphasized that in the former pagan state the traditions of the ancient order had in fact been forgotten. Svetopelek therefore addressed the Pope and the Emperor as guarantors of admitting his kingdom into the group of Christian states. The role of the papal legate Honorius was particularly significant. We read that, in fact, he and the king opened the synod. We can guess that he was responsible for putting the Church's affairs in order, and for restoring the "ancient" rights of coastal cities and towns. Finally, it was Honorius who crowned the king. As the chronicler presented it, the coronation was held "in accordance with the custom of the kings of Rome" (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 52)³³ and it is not certain whether he meant German kings or a symbolic reference to Rome as the cradle of ancient order.

³⁰ "Latini autem fugientes montana petebant, quo Sclavi habitabant..." (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 70).

And the dependent fragment of his son Svetolic.

^{32 &}quot;omnes sapientes regni sui".

^{33 &}quot;more Romanorum regum" (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 52).

The figure of the Romans performed a similar function during Pavlimir's renewal of the kingdom. He himself was a descendant of Slavic kings and Roman women from the city's patriciate. He led his people to the land of their fathers when the inhabitants of Epiduarum were leaving their city. Together with the escapees from Rome, the exiles founded Ragusa, i.e. Dubrovnik as the Slavs called it³⁴. At this moment, Pavlimir became the leader of some of the Latins, as it seems, but he did not have the legitimacy to sit on the throne of the Slavic rulership. Having heard of the arrival of the king's heir, the bans and župans appointed by Svetopelek to the role of the state elite decided to send for Pavlimir. He was received with honors in the city of Tribunia, which probably means the arrival of the king (*adventus regis*). On the spot, Pavlimir was elevated by the will of the people to the fathers' throne by the bans and župans (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, pp. 69–72). It is curious that the description of this coronation omitted the participation of the clergy, which clearly distinguished it from the coronation of Svetopelek. It is possible that this was because the ceremony was not held in any of the previously established bishop centers, or because the emphasis was put on the elevation of the ruler to the "Slavic" throne, which would mean that the king had already been recognized by the Latin side. The stability of the secular state administration was checked at the same time. The offices of the bans and župans, appointed by Svetopelek, fulfilled their function, recognizing and bringing to the throne one of his distant successors. In this way we should also understand the journey which Pavlimir made when he regained the entirety of the ancestral lands (Ljetopis popa Dukljanina [Duklanin], 1950, p. 72). He made the rounds of his estates and thus he consolidated the work that took place in the fields of Dalma.

Thus, the description of the meeting in Dalma referred primarily to the concept of restoring the old order. The interruption of the continuity of power and the disintegration of political communities as a result of the Goths' invasion demanded extraordinary steps that could help to form a new community, to consolidate the kingdom and to adapt it to enter the sphere of *christianitas*. In the chronicler's vision, this required appropriate ceremonial actions that could restore the initial situation. In order to achieve this, the historiographer described a series of ritual activities: a baptism, a decision on the demarcation of borders, a request for help from the Pope and the Emperor, an announcement of the grand congress during which, in addition to religious issues, the secular

³⁴ See more on Ragusa's adoption of the ancient tradition of Eupidaurum (Živković, 2007) and (Kunčević, 2004; 2015, pp. 23–81).

and Church governments of the state were established. The most important task for the ruler, however, was to unite the Slavic community descended from the pagans with the inhabitants of the coast, who had been Christian Latins for centuries. At this exact point, the *Chronicle* can be considered a work that intentionally shows the possibilities of cooperation between these two groups.

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Zerwanie, scalenie, odnowa. Wiec w Dalmie i tworzenie się wspólnoty politycznej w *Latopisie popa Dukljanina*

Latopis popa Dukljanina to tajemnicza i kontrowersyjna narracja, która przedstawia losy fikcyjnego państwa rozciągającego się na terenie średniowiecznej Dalmacji i interioru. W artykule omówiono jego fragment poświęcony wydarzeniom na polach Dalmy, gdzie według dziejopisu odbył się wielki zjazd zwołany przez króla Svetopelka. Przedstawiono tu liczne opinie i pomysły dotyczące interpretacji opisanych wydarzeń: ceremonię koronacyjną, proces wytyczania granic, a przede wszystkim jednanie wspólnoty nowego państwa, i sformułowano wniosek, że Dukljanina najbardziej interesowała kwestia wyodrębniania się społeczności politycznej dwóch grup – dzikich Słowian i będących spadkobiercami antycznego świata mieszkańców wybrzeża.

Słowa kluczowe: *Historia Królestwa Słowian, czyli Latopis popa Dukljanina*, średniowieczna Dalmacja, król *Svetopelek*, założenie Republiki Raguzy, Święci Cyryl i Metody, Wielkie Morawy

Rupture – Integration – Renewal: The gathering in Dalma and the creation of a political community in the Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea

In this paper I would like to discuss an excerpt from the *Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea* that concerns a great gathering ordered by the newly baptized King Svetopelek at the fields of Dalma. The *Chronicle* is a rather mysterious and controversial source which presents the history of a fictional state stretching through medieval Dalmatia and the hinterland. The division of the state which took place during Svetopelek's reign shows how the chronicler believed the kingdom was to be governed. Space played a special role in the narrative about the gathering. Describing the King's actions, the Priest of Dioclea simultaneously offered a geographical and political vision of a new order. The interpretation of the events that took place in Dalma (the coronation ceremony, the process of defining the borders of the kingdom and, above all, the unification of the newly founded state community) led to the conclusion that the chronicler was most interested in the problem of creating a political community of two previously hostile groups: the barbarian Slavs and the inhabitants of coastal cities, who were the heirs of the ancient world.

Keywords: Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea, medieval Dalmatia, king Svetopelek, the foundation of Raguza, saints Cyril and Methodius, Great Moravia

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