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# ЗБОРНИК РАДОВА

ВИЗАНТОЛОШКОГ ИНСТИТУТА  
LVI

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CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS,  
*DE ADMINISTRANDO IMPERIO*  
AND THE BYZANTINE HISTORIOGRAPHY  
OF THE MID-10<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY\*

The paper is dedicated to certain aspects of the treatise *De administrando imperio*, composed at the court of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in 948–952. It first examines the diplomatic basis of the information collected in the treatise, then the management of the information available from other sources and some common information found in it and in other contemporary works such as *Theophanes Continuatus*, *Vita Basilii* and *De thematibus*. It closes with a conclusion about the authorship of the treatise and its place in the context of the historiographical activity at the court of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century.

*Keywords:* Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, *Theophanes Continuatus*, *Vita Basilii*, *De thematibus*, Byzantine historiography

The renewed scholarly activity during the sole rule of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus from 944 to 959 resulted in a number of famous encyclopedic and historiographical works and collections initiated, commissioned, edited or created by the emperor himself.<sup>1</sup> Among them, the treatise called *De administrando imperio*, composed between 948 and 952, has a special and prominent place, because of its

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<sup>1</sup> There has been considerable progress in the scholarly understanding of the literary activity under Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus thanks to the recent research, cf. the following footnotes and throughout the paper.

specific nature and intriguing character.<sup>2</sup> According to its Proem, the text was written by Emperor Constantine himself for his son and co-emperor Romanus II,<sup>3</sup> but recent scholarship tends to reject such a claim, assuming the existence of some “ghostwriters” that wrote it for the emperor.<sup>4</sup> Though the traditional view is by no means to be completely discarded, the authorship of the text, however, remains a question and a matter of debate, as well as its relation to other works of the period. An attempt to answer those questions would certainly improve our understanding of the emperor’s place in the wider context of the historiographical activity at the Byzantine court of the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century.

### *Diplomatic basis of De administrando imperio*

The composition of a treatise on foreign peoples and the relations of the Romans with them such as *De administrando imperio* fits well into the thematic framework of the extensive scholarly activity at the imperial court of the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>5</sup> which resulted in the creation of voluminous works such as the *Excerpta Historica*,<sup>6</sup> especially when we know that the fifty three topics it was meant to arrange the whole

<sup>2</sup> The scholarly literature on *De administrando imperio* is quite extensive; the most referent works are, however, *Bury*, Treatise, 517–577; DAI. Commentary, ed. *Jenkins*; *Ševčenko*, Re-reading, 167–195; *Sode*, Untersuchungen, 149–260; *Howard-Johnston*, *De administrando imperio*: a Re-examination, 301–336; *Kaldellis*, Ethnography, 87–93; *Magdalino*, Knowledge, 187–209; *Markopoulos*, Voices, 22–32; *Németh*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 130–137. It is curious that *De administrando imperio* was completely neglected in the most recent reviews of Byzantine Historiography, *Treadgold*, Middle Byzantine Historians; *Neville*, Guide.

<sup>3</sup> DAI, Proem, passim.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. n. 2. *Ševčenko*, Re-reading, 185–195; *Holmes*, Byzantine Political Culture, 69–72; *Németh*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 131–132, share the opinion that the main person responsible for the composition of *De administrando imperio* was Basil Lacapenus, known as the Bastard (ὁ Νόθος, +985), the illegitimate son of Romanus I Lacapenus and half-brother of Constantine’s wife Helene, the *parakoimomenos* of the emperor and his close associate, who was later also the *parakoimomenos* of Nicephorus II Phocas (963–969), who promoted him also to the position of the president of the Senate, and of John I Tzimiskes (969–976) and Basil II, whom he served as a regent up to 985, and who was involved in the creation process of a number of other projects of Constantine’s time; on these projects see the footnotes below. On Basil Lacapenus and his career, cf. *Brokkaar*, Basil Lacapenus, 199–233; *Krsmanović*, Evnusi, 306–402. According to *Howard-Johnston*, *De administrando imperio*: a Re-examination, 321–336; *Németh*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 132–133, the original recension of DAI was composed thanks to Leo VI between 900 and 910, and Constantine VII and his co-workers only re-edited it in 948–952.

<sup>5</sup> Already *Bury*, Treatise, 539–544, noticed that the impetus for the preparation of the work *De administrando imperio* came from the same encyclopedic-historiographical momentum that led to the creation of *De ceremoniis* and *Excerpta historica*.

<sup>6</sup> The immense project of the systematization of the past by excerpting passages from historical works of authors from Antiquity to the 9<sup>th</sup> century and arranging them into fifty three previously defined topics, with none of the passages of the original historical works left unsorted, was launched by Emperor Constantine VII shortly after he assumed supreme power in the 940s, involving many skilled scholars and scribes and lasted for several decades, to be finished only in the 970s or 980s thanks to Basil Lacapenus who supervised the project after Constantine’s death in 959. The project inspired many similar undertakings of the systematization of knowledge in the latter half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, see *Treadgold*, Middle Byzantine Historians, 153–165; *Neville*, Guide, 110–113, and especially the thorough study by A. *Németh*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 1–120 sq.

historical material into also included those dedicated to the relations between the Romans and the Barbarians in ancient times, some of which have been preserved (for example, *De legationibus*), while others are lost (*De nationibus*). There is, on the other hand, some information on the diplomatic relations between the contemporary Romans and the Barbarians of the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century, preserved in the so-called “diplomatic chapters” of *De cerimoniis*, another great collection of the time. Those are Chapters 15 and 46–48 of Book II, which describe the receptions of foreign delegations at the imperial court and the ways of addressing them at the court and in the letters addressed to them and the titles used officially for their rulers by the emperor.<sup>7</sup> However, those chapters (except for the beginning of Chapter 15) didn’t belong to the original *De cerimoniis* as left by Emperor Constantine VII, but rather to the “unfinished dossier” that contained “various texts and documents” that the emperor had gathered and kept along with the original version of *De cerimoniis*, which was later, between 963 and 969, appended as chapters to the Book II because they were associated with its content.<sup>8</sup> That means that in these “chapters” we have, in fact, to determine the real diplomatic material that came into being for the sake of actual diplomatic activity during the reign of Constantine VII (944–959). An example of such material is certainly the so-called “List of addresses to the foreign rulers”, preserved as Chapter II, 48, which was composed between March and October 946.<sup>9</sup> If we take a closer look at it we may find that its geopolitical scope fully matches that of *De administrando imperio*, since most of the rulers mentioned in it also appear in *DAI*.<sup>10</sup> That would suggest a close relation between *De administrando imperio* and the regular diplomatic activity of the imperial court at the time and allow us to presume that *DAI* was meant to be

<sup>7</sup> *De cerimoniis*, 566–598, 679–692.

<sup>8</sup> The original version of *De cerimoniis* produced during the lifetime of Constantine VII comprised the present Book I, Chapters 1–83 and Book II, Chapters 1–15 (earlier part). It was most probably Basil Lacapenus who, during the reign of Nicephorus Phocas (963–969), added some additional chapters to Book I (Chapters 84–97) and appended the material of the “unfinished dossier” left by Constantine VII, with a few later additions, to Book II (the latter part of the Chapter 15 and the Chapters 16–57) and had it copied into the Leipzig manuscript, which already contained the treatises on military expeditions, cf. *Featherstone*, Preliminary remarks, 457–479; *Idem*, Olga’s visit, 241–251; *Idem*, Further remarks, 113–121; *Idem*, *De cerimoniis*, 142; *Idem*, Δὲ ἐνδεῖξιν, 75–79; *Idem*, Basileios Nothos, 355–360. Cf. also Constantine Porphyrogenetos, *Book of Ceremonies I–II*, xxiii–xxxviii; *Németh*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 137–144.

<sup>9</sup> *De cerimoniis*, 686–692; *Zuckermann*, *Voyage d’Olga*, 647–672.

<sup>10</sup> The *amir al-muminin*, *De cerimoniis*, 686.13–22, *DAI*, ch. 25, 43, 44, 47; the *prince of princes of Greater Armenia*, 686.22–687.3, *DAI*, ch. 43–44; the *prince of Vaspurakan*, 687.4–8, *DAI*, ch. 43, 45; the *prince of Taron*, 686.8, *DAI*, ch. 43; the *curopalates of Iberia*, 687.16–18, *DAI*, ch. 43, 45–46; the *exousiokrator of Alania*, 688.2–7, *DAI*, ch. 10–11; the *exousiastes of Abasgia*, 688.7–10, *DAI*, ch. 45–46; the *king of Saxony*, 689.4–5, *DAI*, ch. 30; the *amir of Africa*, the *amir of Egypt*, 689.14–690.1, *DAI*, ch. 25; the *duke of Venice*, 690.4, *DAI*, ch. 27–28; the *prince of Capua*, the *prince of Salerno*, the *duke of Naples*, the *archon of Amalfi*, the *archon of Gaeta*, 690.4–6, *DAI*, ch. 27; the *khagan of Chazaria*, 690.16–21, *DAI*, ch. 13, 38, 42; the *prince of Russia*, 690.21–691.1, *DAI*, ch. 9; the *princes of the Hungarians*, 691.2–4, *DAI*, ch. 38, 40; the *princes of the Pechenegs*, 691.4–7, *DAI*, ch. 37; the *prince of Croatia*, the *prince of the Serbs*, the *prince of the Zachlumi*, the *prince of the Kanalites*, the *prince of the Terbuniotes*, the *prince of Dioclea*, the *prince of Moravia (Paganía)*, 691.8–13, *DAI*, ch. 29–36; the *king of Francia*, 691.13–20, *DAI*, ch. 26, 28–29; the *lord of Arabia Felix*, 691.24–692.2, *DAI*, ch. 25; cf. *Byzance et ses voisins*, 353–672.

an elaboration about the peoples that were otherwise known at the imperial court and with which, or most of them, it had established diplomatic relations, and the “List of addresses” could have served as a solid starting point for such a task.

*De administrando imperio* also provides some specific information that is clearly in connection with the data recorded in the “diplomatic chapters” of *De cerimoniis*. The author, who I believe was indeed Emperor Constantine himself, at one point, exclaims in surprise that the Byzantine historians had failed to mention the crossing of the descendants of Muawiyah I, the Umayyad dynasty, over to Spain in 755.<sup>11</sup> But, how then could he have known of that event if there was no such information in the Byzantine historical works he had at his disposal? Is it not probable that he might have gathered some information on the history of the Arabs of Spain during his meeting with the ambassadors of the caliph of Cordoba Abd ar-Rahman III (912–961), who were formally received at the imperial court on 24 October 946, as described in *De cerimoniis*, II, 15<sup>12</sup> However, some Byzantine authors, namely Theophanes in his *Chronography*, did mention this event,<sup>13</sup> but Constantine misinterpreted it and dated it to the reign of Justinian II, confusing it with the Arab conquest of Spain in 711, which indeed was not mentioned explicitly by Theophanes.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, the fact that the ruler of the Arabs of Spain was not mentioned in the “List of addresses”, composed in 946, but before the arrival of the Cordovan delegation to Constantinople,<sup>15</sup> shows that the Byzantines up until then were not very familiar with them and that Constantine indeed could claim that his knowledge of their affairs, if it had resulted from his encounter with their envoys, was greater than that of any of the earlier Byzantine authors.<sup>16</sup> The Arab chapters of *De administrando imperio* (ch. 14–25) include Spain, which is represented in them as an Arab country and in those chapters, curiously, Muawiyah I has a central place.<sup>17</sup> In Chapter 25 it is stated that there are three amir al-muminin among the Arabs – one in Baghdad, who is descended from Muhammad (the Abbasids); the second in Egypt, who is descended from Fatima (the Fatimids); and the third in Spain, who is descended from Muawiyah (the Umayyads).<sup>18</sup> Bearing

<sup>11</sup> DAI, 21.28–31.

<sup>12</sup> *De cerimoniis*, 571.11–16; *Kresten*, “Staatsempfänge”, 31–34; *Zuckermann*, *Voyage d’Olga*, 654–660; *Signes Codoñer*, *Bizancio y al-Ándalus*, 212 sq.

<sup>13</sup> Theophanis *Chronographia*, 424.12–16, 425.13–15, 426.1–7.

<sup>14</sup> Theophanes speaks of the Arabs that crossed from Africa to Spain, conquered it and ruled it from then on in the context of the Frankish wars with them, which he describes under the year AM 6216 = AD 723/724, and of the flight of the Umayyads to Spain under the year AM 6241 = AD 748/749, *Theophanis Chronographia*, 403.12–13, 426.1–7; *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, 556–558, 588–589; *Németh*, *Database*, 92–95; *Idem*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 233–236.

<sup>15</sup> *Zuckermann*, *Voyage d’Olga*, 654–660, 669–672.

<sup>16</sup> *Signes Codoñer*, *Bizancio y al-Ándalus*, 212–244, identified as many as ten exchanges of embassies between the courts of Constantinople and Cordoba in the period 946–959, following a gap of more than a century from 838.

<sup>17</sup> *Németh*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 234–235; *Komatina*, *Byzantine Concept of “Syria”* (forthcoming).

<sup>18</sup> DAI, 25.56–62.



in mind that he himself states that “the Arabs living in Spain are called the *Mauiatæ* (Μαυιάται),”<sup>19</sup> the question arises whether it was in fact Constantine’s Spanish-Andalusian informants who insisted on the importance of Muawiyah as the ancestor of their rulers in early Muslim history, especially given that he was the first Sunni caliph, who defeated Ali and the Shi’a. It was, in my opinion, the impression made on Constantine by the encounter with them and the information they could have offered about the Arab rule in Spain and the origin of their ruling family that could have led to his claim that he knew more about it than the earlier Byzantine writers had recorded, and that because of this he wished to emphasize his own knowledge about the history of the Arabs of Spain.<sup>20</sup>

Data on the contemporary situation in the Muslim world that the author recorded at the end of Chapter 25, including those on the political division of the Arab Empire and the independence of the Shi’a rulers in Yemen and the rise of the Persian Buyids and their usurpation of actual power from the Caliph in Baghdad in 945,<sup>21</sup> could first of all have been provided also by the Arab ambassadors, those whose receptions at the imperial court were also recorded and described in *De cerimoniis*, II, 15. The receptions in question were of “the envoys of amir al-muminin from Tarsus, for the exchange of prisoners and peace”, on 31 May 946,<sup>22</sup> and “of Daylamite, the amir of Emet (Amide) and the envoy of Abuhamed”, i.e. the Hamdanids, on 30 August of the same year.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, it seems that the information about the Russians collected in Chapter 9 of *De administrando imperio*,<sup>24</sup> does not derive from what the emperor might have learnt from the Russian princess Olga, whose reception at the imperial court is also described in *De cerimoniis*, II, 15, if that reception occurred on 9 September 946, as is usually assumed.<sup>25</sup> Namely, in Chapter 9 Constantine writes that “Svjatoslav, the son of Igor, the prince of Russia, had his seat in Novgorod.”<sup>26</sup> Had he met Olga already in 946 he would certainly have learnt from her that her husband Igor had already died the year before, as his death, according to the Russian chronicles,

<sup>19</sup> DAI, 22.39–40.

<sup>20</sup> *Németh*, Database, 92–95; *Idem*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 233–237, explained the statement found in Chapter 21 of *DAI* that the earlier Byzantine historians hadn’t mentioned the establishment of Arab rule in Spain with the assumption that the emperor and his co-authors who worked on the *Excerpta Historica* searched for such information in the old chronicles but failed to find any.

<sup>21</sup> DAI, 25.63–85; *Bonner*, *Waning of empire*, 346–356.

<sup>22</sup> *De cerimoniis*, 570.11–592.19.

<sup>23</sup> *De cerimoniis*, 593.1–594.14. On these embassies, cf. *Kresten*, “*Staatsempfänge*”, 30–31; *Zuckermann*, *Voyage d’Olga*, 669–672; *Featherstone*, *Δι’ ἔνδειξις*, 75–81, 85–106. The way of addressing these Arab envoys is recorded in *De cerimoniis*, II, 47, *De cermoniis*, 682.18–686.2.

<sup>24</sup> DAI, 9.3–113.

<sup>25</sup> *De cerimoniis*, 594.15–598.12; *Kresten*, “*Staatsempfänge*”, 9–11; *Zuckermann*, *Voyage d’Olga*, 647–654, 660–672. On the discussion on Olga’s visit, cf. *Tinnefeld*, *Zum Stand der Olga-Diskussion*, 531–567.

<sup>26</sup> DAI, 9. 4–5.

occurred in 945.<sup>27</sup> However, the reception of Olga at the imperial court is known to have occurred a whole decade later, in 957, as M. Featherstone has convincingly argued,<sup>28</sup> so it wasn't she who provided Constantine with the information about the Russians. Instead, the information most probably came from his encounter with the Russian envoys sent by Prince Igor in 944 to negotiate a treaty with the imperial government following the Russian attacks of 941 and 944, which is also recounted in the Russian chronicles.<sup>29</sup> The text of the chapter is mostly dedicated to the way in which the Russians sail in their *monoxyla* down the Dnieper and over the Black Sea to Constantinople and it is clear that it alludes to the recent arrival of the Russian navy to the walls of the capital. On the other hand, the mention of a special representative of Svjatoslav, the son of Igor, in the list of the Russian envoys sent to Constantinople by Igor preserved in the Russian *Primary Chronicle*,<sup>30</sup> testifies to his special political status in his father's realm, which is referred to in Chapter 9 of *De administrando imperio*.

The friendly relations between the Empire and the Frankish king Hugh of Italy (926–947), crowned in 944 by the marriage of Constantine's son Romanus II and Hugh's daughter Berta, are mirrored in the "List of addresses" of *De cerimoniis*, where Hugh is recorded as "beloved, the most respected and spiritual brother of ours (the emperors'), the most noble and most distinguished king of Francia",<sup>31</sup> the epithets far more exalted than those ascribed to the other rulers of the Frankish sphere.<sup>32</sup> However, the full emphasis on that diplomatic friendship is given in *DAI*, in Chapter 13, where Constantine elaborates why with the Franks alone of all the foreign and barbarian nations the Roman emperors can enter marital relationships,<sup>33</sup> and in Chapter 26, where King Hugh is recorded with all the epithets that he was entitled to according to the "List of addresses" and where he is presented as the sole true and legitimate king of all the Franks and a direct descendant of Charlemagne.<sup>34</sup> Chapter 26 is often considered part of the "Italian dossier" of *DAI*,<sup>35</sup> and it has been assumed that there is no passage on Franks in the work.<sup>36</sup> However, Chapter 26 deals with the Franks of Italy, just like most of Chapter 27 deals with the Italian Lombards, and the rest of it and the

<sup>27</sup> PSRL I, 54–57.

<sup>28</sup> Featherston, Olga's visit, 241–251.

<sup>29</sup> PSRL I, 44–54; *Curta*, Eastern Europe, 292–293.

<sup>30</sup> PSRL I, 46.

<sup>31</sup> *De cerimoniis*, 691.13–20.

<sup>32</sup> *De cerimoniis*, 689.4–12.

<sup>33</sup> *DAI*, 13.107–126.

<sup>34</sup> *DAI*, 26 *passim*. On that subject, cf. *Komatina*, "King of Francia", 157–168; *Prinzing*, Emperor Constantine VII and Margrave Berengar II of Ivrea, 193–199, with older literature. I am indebted to Prof. G. Prinzing who very kindly sent me his article.

<sup>35</sup> *DAI*. Commentary, 82–93; *Howard-Johnston*, *De administrando imperio*: a Re-examination, 321–322.

<sup>36</sup> *Bury*, *Treatise*, 575; *Howard-Johnston*, *De administrando imperio*: a Re-examination, 306, 320–321; *Kaldellis*, *Ethnography*, 89–90.

whole Chapter 28 with the Venetians. Thus, these three chapters, instead of treating Italy as a political and geographical unit, deal with the peoples that inhabited and ruled parts of it – the Franks, the Lombards and the Venetians. As for the origin of the information on the history of the Frankish rule in Italy, it has long been established that the author gathered it mainly from Liutprand of Cremona, who came to Constantinople in September 949 as an envoy of the future king Berengar II and stayed there for a couple of months, having in-depth discussions at the court, for there are many traces in the author's account on Italy in Chapter 26 that can be linked to what Liutprand wrote in his *Antapodosis*.<sup>37</sup> However, there might have been other informants, first of all the young Empress Berta-Eudocia,<sup>38</sup> but also Bishop Sigefred of Parma who accompanied her in 944 or the imperial envoy Andrew who reached Italy in 948–949 and returned before the end of Summer 949.<sup>39</sup> Thus, it is clear that the diplomatic activity of the imperial court is what lies behind the information on the Franks of Italy in *De administrando imperio*.

There is no doubt that this was also the case with the information on the Hungarians, for the author himself speaks of the Hungarian envoys who were received at the imperial court, most probably in 948, at the end of Chapter 40: “Tebelis is dead, and it is his son Termatzous who came here recently as *friend* with Boultzous, third to the prince and karchas of Turkey.”<sup>40</sup> There is no reason to doubt that they were the author's main source for the information on the Hungarians, recounted in Chapters 38–40, which originate in the Hungarian tradition,<sup>41</sup> as is evident when we compare the information from Chapter 38 on the Hungarian homeland, the *vojvode* Lebedias, Almoutzis (Almos) and Arpad and the election of the first prince,<sup>42</sup> to the Hungarian legends about the nation's origins and its first leaders, written down by the Anonymous Notary of King Bela III at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>43</sup> The information on the genealogy of the Hungarian rulers as well as about their political organization was certainly given by the same

<sup>37</sup> Bury, *Treatise*, 553–556; Schummer, *Liutprand of Cremona*, 197–201; Prinzing, *Emperor Constantine VII and Margrave Berengar II of Ivrea*, 204–205.

<sup>38</sup> DAI, *Commentary*, 4, 83.

<sup>39</sup> Bury, *Treatise*, 553, 555; Prinzing, *Emperor Constantine VII and Margrave Berengar II of Ivrea*, 193, 200–204.

<sup>40</sup> DAI, 40.63–65. The coming of the Hungarian leader Bulcsu to Constantinople is also mentioned by John Scylitzes, *Scylitzes*, 239; DAI, *Commentary*, 153; *Moravcsik*, *Byzantium and the Magyars*, 104–107; *Curta*, *Eastern Europe*, 256–258.

<sup>41</sup> DAI, *Commentary*, 145–146. *Moravcsik*, *Byzantium and the Magyars*, 56–57, however, thought that the information came from the report of the imperial envoy Gabriel, who at an unspecified earlier moment had been sent to the Hungarians with the imperial order to attack the Pechenegs and draw them away from the country that once belonged to them and to reclaim it and resettle in it, which they declined, DAI, 8.22–33. Cf. also Howard-Johnston, *De administrando imperio: a re-examination*, 312–314, 324, who thought that most of the information on the Northern peoples was gathered in the time of Leo VI c. 900, and only updated in later intelligence reports.

<sup>42</sup> DAI, 38.3–60.

<sup>43</sup> *Anonymi Gesta Hungarorum*, 33–41; *Curta*, *Eastern Europe*, 250–255.

Hungarian envoys,<sup>44</sup> who might have contributed to some extent also to the author's information on the Pechenegs written in Chapter 37, bearing in mind the close contacts between the two peoples during the previous decades, though the author's information on the Pechenegs were for the most part provided through the regular annual exchange of envoys between the imperial court and that steppe people.<sup>45</sup>

In *De administrando imperio* the diplomatic relations between the imperial court and the Armenian and Georgian principalities are most elaborately recounted and many exchanges of envoys and letters are described, beginning already with the reign of Leo VI, as well as the frequent receptions of the Caucasian princes at the court, which all certainly resulted in much of the diplomatic material that the author had at his disposal for the composition of his account.<sup>46</sup>

### **Information and interpretation**

Most of the information from *De administrando imperio* that the emperor collected through these diplomatic contacts is in fact our only information about some events. However, as Paul Magdalino rightly noticed, where it is not the only source, it is often quite different and even incorrect compared to what other sources report of the same events. That led to the question whether the emperor consciously invented facts and intentionally and deliberately reinterpreted historical information in his own way.<sup>47</sup> There are two examples in Chapter 29 of *DAI* that aptly illustrate how the emperor treated the information available to him from other sources and reinterpreted it in order to create his own interpretation of the past.

The first such piece of information is that the South Slavic peoples – the Croats, Serbs, Zachlumi, Terbuniotes, Kanalites, Diocletians and the Pagani, rebelled against Roman rule in the time of Michael II and became independent, that they at that time didn't have princes (*archontes*) but only “župans elders” and that most of them had still not been baptized but “remained unbaptized for a long time”, and how they sent envoys to the new emperor Basil I “asking and begging him to baptize those unbaptized among them and that they be, as they had originally been, subject to the Empire of the Romans; and that glorious emperor, of blessed memory, gave ear to them and sent out an imperial agent and priests with him and baptized all of them that were unbaptized of the aforesaid nations, and after baptizing them he then appointed for them princes (*archontes*) whom they themselves approved and chose, from the family which they themselves loved and favoured. And from that day to this their princes come from these same families, and from no other.”<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *DAI*, 40.51–68.

<sup>45</sup> *DAI*, 1.16–24; Howard-Johnston, *De administrando imperio: a re-examination*, 312.

<sup>46</sup> *DAI*, 43–46 passim; Chrysos, Βυζαντινή επικράτεια, 15–24; Martin-Hisard, Constantinople et les archontes du monde caucasien, 428–458; Howard-Johnston, *De administrando imperio: a re-examination*, 314–318, 326–327; Živković, O takozvanoj „Hronici srpskih vladara“, 318–325.

<sup>47</sup> Magdalino, *Knowledge*, 206–208.

<sup>48</sup> *DAI*, 29.63–79.

The closest parallel to that information, as has been long noticed,<sup>49</sup> is to be found in Chapter 18 of the *Tactica* of Leo VI (886–912), Constantine’s father, where it reads: “Our father Basil, the emperor of the Romans, now in the divine dwelling, persuaded these peoples to abandon their ancient ways and, having made them Greek (γραικώσας) subjected them to the rulers according to the Roman model, and having graced them with baptism, he liberated them from slavery to their own rulers and trained them to take part in warfare against those nations warring against the Romans.”<sup>50</sup>

The passage in question, however, deals with the Slavs in Greece, as is evident from the following sentence which speaks about the “frequent uprisings by the Slavs in the past and the many disturbances and wars” the Romans “had suffered from them in ancient times.”<sup>51</sup> Those Slavs were indeed subjugated and, over time, due to the politics of the Roman emperors, *graecized* and during the 9<sup>th</sup> century baptized, and the emperors did deprive them of the right to have their own princes, replacing them with imperial officials.<sup>52</sup> The author, nevertheless, understood that passage as dealing with the Serbs and the Croats, the Slavs of the Western part of the Balkans, who were politically relevant in the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century, unlike the already subjugated and *graecized* Slavs of Greece, and interpreted it in that manner. It is evident, in the first place, from the detail that recounts how Emperor Basil appointed for the Slavs *archontes* from the families they wanted,<sup>53</sup> where the author found that what he read in Leo’s account on Basil’s rule – that Basil had liberated the Slavs from being subjugated to their own *archontes* and subordinated them to the *archontes* “according to the Roman model”, contradicts what he himself knew as a fact – that at his time the Slavs were ruled by their own *archontes* from their own dynasties, which he clearly states in Chapter 29 of *DAI*: “And from that day to this their princes (*archontes*) come from these same families, and from no other.”<sup>54</sup> So, the author just conformed the information of Leo’s *Tactica* on the Slavs in Greece to the conditions he knew as a fact in the case of the Serbs and the Croats and interpreted it in his own way in Chapter 29 of *DAI*, which resulted in an assumption that Emperor Basil had appointed for the Slavic peoples the *archontes* they themselves chose from the dynasties they themselves wanted.<sup>55</sup> The previous assumption, that the Slavs up until then hadn’t had *archontes*, “but only župans elders, as is the model (τύπος) of other Slavonic regions,”<sup>56</sup> is just a

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *DAI*. Commentary, 103; Živković, Južni Sloveni, 369–371; Ančić, Zamišljanje tradicije, 137–138; Komatina, Crkvena politika, 283–285.

<sup>50</sup> *Taktika*, 18.95, ll. 453–457.

<sup>51</sup> *Taktika*, 18.95, ll. 457–460. Commentary of the passage by Haldon, *Critical Commentary*, 350–351, though useful for its relation to the relevant passages of Maurice’s *Strategikon*, is somewhat vague about posterior events.

<sup>52</sup> Živković, Južni Sloveni, 43–262; Komatina, Crkvena politika, 286–290; Kaldellis, Romanland, 136–151.

<sup>53</sup> *DAI*, 29.75–78.

<sup>54</sup> *DAI*, 29.78–79.

<sup>55</sup> Komatina, Crkvena politika, 283–285.

<sup>56</sup> *DAI*, 29.66–68; Ferjančić, Vasilije I, 9–28; Alimov, Ot županov k arhontam, 14–42.

logical statement resulting from the information that it was only Emperor Basil who appointed the *archontes* for them, because he, according to the Leo's *Tactica*, "subjected them to the *archontes* according to the Roman model (τύπος)."<sup>57</sup> The use of the same term τύπος as used by Leo and in the same context in which the "Roman model" of rule through the *archontes* is opposed to the "Slavic model" which, according to him, knows only of "župans elders", clearly testifies that the author, searching for information on the early history of the South Slavs, used the military treatise of Leo VI and proceeded to interpret data contained therein in his own way.

According to Chapter 29 of *DAI*, at the time when the Slavs of the Western Balkans were in that manner subjected once again to Roman imperial rule, Emperor Basil I began his war against the Arabs of Bari, who were attacking the Dalmatian coast and besieging Ragusa.<sup>58</sup> The emperor requested assistance from the Frankish emperor Louis II (850–875) and the Pope of Rome, who sent him their troops that started the siege of Bari together with the imperial forces, which included also "the Croat and the Serb, and the Zachlumian and the Terbuniotes and the Kanalites and the Ragusans along with everyone from the cities of Dalmatia (for all of them were present because of the imperial order)."<sup>59</sup> "The Croats and other Slavic *archonts*", the author continues, "were carried over into Lombardy by the inhabitants of the city of Ragusa in their own vessels."<sup>60</sup>

On the other hand, the contemporary sources provide certain information about the restoration of Roman rule over the South Slavic tribes at the beginning of the reign of Emperor Basil I in the context of the events concerning the Siege of Bari in 870–871. Namely, the pirates of the Croatian prince Domagoj captured in the spring or summer of 870 the papal legates who were traveling by sea back to Italy from the Church Council held in Constantinople in 869–870 and took the acts of the Council from them. The pope and Emperor Basil both reacted and the imperial fleet, led by the patrician Nicetas Ooryphas, intervened and liberated the papal legates, who finally reached Rome by 22 December 870,<sup>61</sup> but also attacked the Slavs on the Eastern shore of the Adriatic, which directly threatened the interests of Louis II, the Frankish emperor in Italy. In his letter addressed to Basil I in the summer of 871, Louis II also noted those events, expressing his protest against them. In this letter he writes that "the patrician Nicetas, sent to the lieutenant Hadrian with vessels, taking the advantage of the situation, took from those Slavs much booty, and after devastating some cities, took their people into captivity," so he protests – "our cities were devastated and the whole people of our Sclavenia mercilessly taken into captivity", which all happened while "those same our Slavs were with their vessels present beneath the walls of Bari, preparing for the common good and not

<sup>57</sup> *Taktika*, 18.95, l. 455.

<sup>58</sup> *DAI*, 29.84–103.

<sup>59</sup> *DAI*, 29.103–112.

<sup>60</sup> *DAI*, 29.113–115.

<sup>61</sup> *Liber pontificalis* II, 184.24–31; *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 525.30–51. On the identity of the attackers, cf. *Ferjančić*, *Vasilije I*, 15–16; *Živković*, *Južni Sloveni*, 365–367; *Komatina*, *Crkvena politika*, 169–270, n. 195; *Kislinger*, *Erster und Zweiter Sieger*, 250–251.

intending any harm to him.”<sup>62</sup> The “Sclaveni nostri” and the “Sclavenia nostra” referred to by Emperor Louis II in this letter were certainly the Croats, who had acknowledged Frankish supremacy since the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, which was recognized by the Treaty of Aachen of 812, and it is clear from his letter that they were besieging Bari in 870 because of his command and with their own ships.<sup>63</sup> On the other hand, in Chapter 29 of *DAI* Emperor Constantine emphasizes and underlines that the Croatian and other South Slavic soldiers as well as those from Ragusa and other Dalmatian cities “all... were present because of the imperial order”,<sup>64</sup> that is, because of the order of Emperor Basil I, and that they had been ferried over to Italy by Ragusan ships. It seems like he is challenging the statements of Louis’ letter.

In all probability, it is the information contained in the letter of Emperor Louis II to Emperor Basil I from the summer of 871 on the intervention of the imperial fleet under Nicetas Ooryphas against the Croats in 870 that lies at the root of the mentioned data from Chapter 29 of *DAI*. This intervention had far-reaching consequences for the political situation on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, since after that the Croats were indeed forced to recognize Roman supreme authority, which in the following decade, until 879, is well-attested in the sources,<sup>65</sup> and it is quite possible that Emperor Constantine, when he says that in the time of Basil I the Slavs of the eastern coast of the Adriatic recognized Roman authority, had in mind the above mentioned events. He certainly had access to the aforementioned letter of Louis II to Emperor Basil, which would have allowed him to find information about the intervention of the imperial fleet led by Nicetas Ooryphas, otherwise known to have been in the Adriatic at the time, since it ended the Arab siege of Ragusa in 868.<sup>66</sup> That intervention was directed only against the Croats, but in Louis’ letter they are called by the general name of Slavs, so the emperor concluded that it must have referred to all the South Slavs of the eastern Adriatic area that he knew in his time – the Croats and Serbs and the Serbian coastal tribes of the Narentans, Zachlumi, Terbuniotes, Kanalites and Diocletians. On the other hand, the fact that the reestablishment of imperial authority over the Slavs mentioned in the letter was achieved in a violent manner didn’t speak in favour of his ideological position of the legitimacy of imperial power over the Serbs

<sup>62</sup> „Et Niceta quidam patricius, Hadriano loci servatore cum classibus destinato, accepta quasi pro huiusmodi re occasione, multas praedas ab ipsis Sclavenis abstulit, et quibusdam castris dirruptis, eorum homines captivos adduxit... Sane spiritalem tuam nolumus ignorare fraternitatem, super castra nostra dirrupta et tot populus Sclaveniae nostrae in captivitate sine qualibet paritate subtractis, supra quam dici possit animum nostrum commotum. Non enim congrue gestum est, ut eisdem Sclavenis nostris cum navibus suis apud Barim in procinctu communim utilitatis consistentibus et nichil adversi sibi aliunde imminere putantibus, tam impie domi sua quaeque diriperentur, sibi que contingerent, quae si praeno-scerent, nequaquam prorsus incurrerent“, *Chronicon Salernitanum*, 525.48–526.6; *Komatina*, *Crkvena politika*, 270–271; *Kislinger*, *Erster und Zweiter Sieger*, 250–255.

<sup>63</sup> *Ferjančić*, *Vasilije I*, 14–16; *Živković*, *Južni Sloveni*, 338–367; *Kislinger*, *Erster und Zweiter Sieger*, 254–255; *Komatina*, *Crkvena politika*, 269–271.

<sup>64</sup> *DAI*, 29.108–111.

<sup>65</sup> *Ferjančić*, *Vasilije I*, 13–21; *Komatina*, *Crkvena politika*, 270–271.

<sup>66</sup> *Kislinger*, *Erster und Zweiter Sieger*, 247–252.

and Croats that had lasted ever since the time of Emperor Heraclius,<sup>67</sup> leading him to conceal that fact. That this is only his interpretation of the events based on the data in the letter of Emperor Louis II, and not the version taken from some existing account, is corroborated also by the fact that he as the participants of these events along the other South Slavic tribes regularly includes the Kanalites, who existed as a separate entity in the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century, but not in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>68</sup> It is quite clear, therefore, that the author shaped his narrative on the establishment of Byzantine authority over the South Slavic tribes of the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea during the reign of Basil I on the basis of the information from the letter of Emperor Louis II to Emperor Basil I from 871, which he interpreted in his own way and in accordance with his own needs and postulates.

The stories about the baptism of the South Slavs in the time of Basil I, of their subjugation to the same emperor and their participation in the siege of Bari in 870–871 appear also in Chapters 52–55 of *Vita Basilii*, but that seems to be only an adaptation and retelling of the information from *DAI* 29, in a different style and with slight modifications.<sup>69</sup>

#### ***De administrando imperio and other contemporary works: shared information***

There is some further historical information in *De administrando imperio* that also appears in other related historical works of the period, such as *Theophanes Continuatus* I–IV and *Vita Basilii* (*Theophanes Continuatus* V), as well as *De thematibus*. What is, however, most important concerning this information is the fact that it is not to be found in the relevant passages of the works of other historiographers of the time, such as Genesisius and Symeon the Logothete. That is why such places deserve special attention and a close examination.<sup>70</sup>

#### *Roman losses in the West in the time of Michael II*

In the previous passages I have tried to explain the origin of the information about the restoration of imperial rule over the South Slavic tribes in the first years of the reign of Basil I, after it was temporarily discontinued because of the weak rule of Michael II (820–829). According to Chapter 29 of *De administrando imperio*, it was because of “the sloth and inexperience of those who then governed the Roman Empire and especially in the time of Michael from Amorium, the Lisper, that the inhabitants of the Dalmatian cities became independent, subject neither to the Emperor of the Romans nor to anybody else, but also the peoples of those parts, the Croats and Serbs and Zachlumites and Terbuniotes and Kanalites and Diocletians and the

<sup>67</sup> *DAI*, 29.54–58, 31.57–60, 32.146–148.

<sup>68</sup> *Komatina*, Politički položaj Konavala, 11–21.

<sup>69</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 52.1–55.36; *Komatina*, Crkvena politika, 262–265.

<sup>70</sup> *Németh, Excerpta Constantiniana*, 161–162, only concludes that the emperor’s redactors inserted various redactions of the same text into the multiple treatises.



Pagani, shaking off the reigns of the Empire of the Romans, became self-governing and independent, subject to none.<sup>71</sup> The same information about the breaking of the imperial rule in the South Slavic lands and the Dalmatian cities can be found in *Theophanes Continuatus* and *Vita Basilii*. For example, in *Theophanes Continuatus*, Book II, there is information that during the rule of Michael II (820–829) the Saracens took from the Romans Sicily, Calabria and Lombardy and the island of Crete, and that at that time Dalmatia also revolted against the Roman Empire.<sup>72</sup> According to *Vita Basilii*, the Saracens took almost all of Italy and Sicily, while the inhabitants of Pannonia and Dalmatia rebelled against the rule of the Romans.<sup>73</sup> However, neither Genesis nor Symeon the Logothete mentions that Dalmatia was among the provinces that were lost during the reign of Michael II – Genesis mentions only Crete,<sup>74</sup> while Symeon speaks of Crete, Sicily and the Cyclades.<sup>75</sup> That may mean that there was no such information in the so-called “common source” of *Theophanes Continuatus* and Genesis.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, even in *De administrando imperio*, Chapter 22 recounts that the Hagarenes from Spain in the time of Michael II conquered parts of Sicily, devastated all of the Cyclades islands and came to Crete.<sup>77</sup> It is clear that this reference in *DAI* is in full concordance with the information provided by Symeon the Logothete, and that it differs from that recounted in *Theophanes Continuatus* II and *Vita Basilii*.

Also, in Genesis, Symeon the Logothete and *DAI* 22, there is no mention of Calabria, Lombardy or Italy in the context of the Arab conquests during the reign of Michael II, which are mentioned in *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28 and *Vita Basilii*, Ch. 52.<sup>78</sup> But, if we take a closer look at *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28, we can observe that it consists of two parts of information. The first states that “then the Hagarenes took possession not only of Sicily, but also of Calabria and Lombardy” (Οἱ δ’ Ἀγαρηνοὶ οὐ τῆς Σικελίας μόνον ἔκτοτε ἀλλὰ καὶ Καλαβρίας καὶ Λαγοβαρδίας ἐγένοντο ἐγκράτες), and that they remained in possession of them “until the reign of Basil of blessed memory, which will be related in the history of his reign”.<sup>79</sup> The other part summarizes Michael’s nine-year-long reign and concludes that it was his wickedness that made God bring forth “the events surrounding Thomas and the Cretans as well as those of

<sup>71</sup> *DAI*, 29.58–66; *Ferjančić*, *Vasilije I*, 10–11; *Živković*, *Južni Sloveni*, 353, n. 1162; *Komatina*, *Crkvena politika*, 266–268, n. 184.

<sup>72</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, II.28.

<sup>73</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 52.1–14.

<sup>74</sup> Genesis, II.10–12 (pp. 32–34).

<sup>75</sup> Symeon, 128.5; Pseudo-Symeon, 621–622; Georgius Monachus *Continuatus*, 789.

<sup>76</sup> On the common source of Genesis and *Theophanes Continuatus*, cf. *Barišić*, *Génésios et le Continuateur de Théophane*, 119–133; *Idem*, *Sources*, 257–271; *Signes Codoñer*, *Constantino Porfirógéneto*, 319–341; *Theophanes Continuatus*, 10\*–19\* (*M. Featherstone*, *J. Signes Codoñer*).

<sup>77</sup> *DAI*, 22.40–48.

<sup>78</sup> Genesis mentions Arab rule in Lombardy only in his account of the reign of Basil I, Genesis, IV.32 (p. 82.42–57).

<sup>79</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, II.28.1–4.

the Africans, as has been recounted”, and then adds that “all of Dalmatia then also revolted from the empire of the Romans (*ἀλλὰ καὶ* πᾶσα ἡ Δαλματία τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀπέστη βασιλείας), and they all became self-governed and independent until the reign of the glorious Basil; for then they were all again brought under subjection to the Romans”.<sup>80</sup> As we can see, the first part states that the Romans lost not only Sicily, but also Calabria and Lombardy, the other that the Empire did not suffer only because of the ἀπόστασις of Thomas, the attacks of the Saracenes from Africa and the loss of Crete, but also because of the revolt in Dalmatia. Thus, it is obvious that Calabria and Lombardy in the first case and Dalmatia in the second are additions to the main narrative and they are clearly marked as such. The fact is that in the previous chapters of Book II of *Theophanes Continuatus* dealing with the earlier part of Michael’s rule, only the events in Sicily and Crete are described, with Calabria, Lombardy and Dalmatia not even being mentioned.<sup>81</sup> Thus, in the description of the territorial losses of Michael II it in fact fully corresponds to Genesis, Symeon and *DAI* 22, which means that in the sources available to all of them there was only information concerning the loss of Crete, Sicily and Cyclades, just as it appears in the sources of the previous century.<sup>82</sup> So, the information that place Calabria, Lombardy and Dalmatia in that context must have had a different origin.

Both parts of information in *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28, the first one which adds Calabria and Lombardy to the losses of Michael II, and the other which adds Dalmatia, end with a statement that those territories remained outside the rule of the Romans until the reign of Emperor Basil, who brought them back to the Roman dominion, the first part explicitly stating that those events would be related in the history of his reign, thus obviously referring to *Vita Basilii*.<sup>83</sup> However, there are some important differences between the accounts of these events in *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28 and *Vita Basilii* 52. Namely, according to *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28 the Arab conquest of Calabria and Lombardy and the rebellion of Dalmatia happened in the time of Michael II, while the account of *Vita Basilii* 52 places them in the reign of Michael III (842–867), which is clear from the context in which it recounts further events. It starts with the statement that during the rule of Michael “almost the whole of that part of Italy that had formerly belonged to our New Rome, and most of the area of Sicily, had been conquered by the neighboring Carthaginian power.” Moreover, “the Scythians dwelling in Pannonia, Dalmatia, and beyond,” that is the Slavic tribes of the Eastern Adriatic, “rebelled against the immemorial rule of the Romans, and became independent and sovereign,” even rejecting the Holy Baptism.<sup>84</sup> Then the Hagarenes

<sup>80</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, II.28.5–16.

<sup>81</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, II.21–27.

<sup>82</sup> The two texts from the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the *Georgii Monachi Chronicon* II, 798.1–3, and the *Vita Theodorae*, 263 (7.9–11), speak only of the Cyclades, Crete and Sicily, in the identical manner: „...ἀλλὰ μὴν/ώσαυτως καὶ πληθὴ πλοίων αὐτῶν ἐξελθόντα τὰς Κυκλάδας νήσους ἠρήμωσαν καὶ τὴν Κρήτην καὶ Σικελίαν παρέλαβον“, though they both place those events in the reign of Emperor Theophilus (829–842).

<sup>83</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, II.28.3–4, 12–16.

<sup>84</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 52.1–14.

came from Carthage and besieged the Dalmatian cities of Budua, Rosa, Lower Cataro and Ragusa. The Ragusans, pressed by the long siege, decided to appeal to the Emperor, “even though they must have known full well that the ruler <of the time> was engrossed in things of a rather different kind.”<sup>85</sup> However, while their envoys were still on their way, “the worthless emperor had disappeared from among men, and absolute power was transferred to Basil, the watchful and sober-minded steward of the common weal.”<sup>86</sup> The new emperor sent a fleet of one hundred vessels under the command of Nicetas Ooryphas, the *droungarios* of the Fleet, which caused the Saracens to lift the siege and “cross over to Italy, which is now called Lombardy”, where they captured the city of Bari and settled in it, from where they seized the whole land up to Rome.<sup>87</sup> Further in the text, there is also the statement that “the barbarians who had crossed over into Roman dominions during the disorderly and slovenly reign <of Michael> and had been repulsed from Ragusa were still, as has already been stated, present in Italy, raiding it without respite and plundering it without mercy.”<sup>88</sup>

Obviously, from this context it is clear that the “worthless emperor” to whom the besieged Ragusans appealed for help, but who was overthrown before they could reach him, was the same one from the beginning of the story, whose incompetent rule resulted in the rebellion of the Dalmatians – Michael III.<sup>89</sup> Thus, it contradicts the account of *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28. Another difference lies in the geographic terms used in the two accounts. According to *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28 the Saracens conquered Calabria and Lombardy, while *Vita Basilii* 52 speaks of their conquest of “almost the whole of that part of Italy”, and only later explains that “Italy is now called Lombardy”. However, in the description of the same events in *De thematibus*, Chapter 11, the emperor is directly referred to as “Michael, son of Theophilus”, while it is stated that after the siege of Ragusa the “Africans” crossed over to Lombardy, took the city of Bari “and all the cities and the whole of Lombardy and the rest of the cities of Calabria as far as Rome.”<sup>90</sup> Thus, regarding the identity of the emperor it agrees with the version of *Vita Basilii*, while regarding the geographic terms it is more congruent with the account of *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28.

On the other hand, according to Chapter 29 of *De administrando imperio*, it was because of “the sloth and inexperience of those who then governed (the Empire) and especially in the time of Michael from Amorium, the Lisper”, that the Dalmatian cities and the Slavic tribes of Dalmatia became independent from Roman rule.<sup>91</sup> For the Arab conquest of Italian territories it says nothing in that context, but later

<sup>85</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 53.1–18.

<sup>86</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 53.18–23.

<sup>87</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 53.23–45.

<sup>88</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 55.1–5.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. *Vita Basilii*, 52.4–5, 9–11 comment (*I. Ševčenko*).

<sup>90</sup> *De thematibus*, 11.18–34.

<sup>91</sup> *DAI*, 29.58–66.

relates how, after the fleet sent from Constantinople by Emperor Basil I in 868 under the command of Nicetas Ooryphas made the Saracens lift the siege of Ragusa, they “crossed over into Lombardy and laid siege to the city of Bari and took it”, built a palace there and “for forty years” ruled all of Lombardy as far as Rome.<sup>92</sup> After the siege of Ragusa the Saracens did cross over to Italy, although not to conquer Bari, but because they had come from there, since they, as is well-known, had ruled that city from 847.<sup>93</sup> So, at that point their rule in that city had lasted only twenty years. However, the mention of the “forty years” of Saracen rule in “all of Lombardy as far as Rome” points to the conclusion that the author believed that it had started during the rule of Michael II (820–829), more precisely during his last years, when the Arab conquests in Sicily began. So, there is a parallel in the accounts of *DAI* 29 and *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28. The Arab rule in Lombardy and Calabria is also mentioned in *DAI* 27,<sup>94</sup> which may explain the use of the same geographic terms in *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28.

Thus, we can conclude that the information about the Roman losses in the West during the rule of Michael II in *Theophanes Continuatus* II.28 actually has its origin in Chapter 29 of *DAI*<sup>95</sup> rather than in some common source that was lost, as is usually assumed.<sup>96</sup> This information was not known to Genesisius and Symeon the Logothete, and Constantine himself was also not aware of it while writing Chapter 22 of *DAI*. It is clear that at the time of writing Chapter 22 he had at his disposal only those sources about the Arab conquests in the time of Michael II that were available also to Genesisius and Symeon and that included the same information provided in the sources of the previous century, such as the *Chronicle* of George the Monk and the *Vita Theodorae*. Later, in Chapter 29 he wrote that Dalmatian cities and the South Slavic tribes had become independent from imperial rule during the reign of Michael II and he extended the duration of the Arab dominion in South Italy backwards to the rule of the same emperor. The reason for inventing all that information was obviously the same – in each case Roman rule was restored by his grandfather Basil I, described as the saviour and champion of Roman interests in the West. Thus, it was necessary to explain how those interests came to be in such a bad condition before his time, and the context was conveniently found in the real losses in the West during the time of Michael II (Sicily, Crete, Cyclades). From the same source, Chapter 29 of *DAI*, this information also made its way into *Vita Basilii*, Ch. 52, where it was further elaborated and adjusted in some details, as well as into *De thematibus*, Ch. 11, where the story received its final shape.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>92</sup> *DAI*, 29.94–103.

<sup>93</sup> *Musca*, Emirato di Bari, passim.

<sup>94</sup> *DAI*, 27.61–66.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Barišić, Sources, 269–270.

<sup>96</sup> *DAI*. Commentary, 102.

<sup>97</sup> That the version of *De thematibus* was posterior to both *DAI* and *Vita Basilii* has already been shown by Pertusi, *De thematibus*, 43–47. In the description of the Arab attack of 867–868 in *Vita Basilii* and *De thematibus* Ragusa is described as the “metropolis” of the southern Dalmatian cities, *Vita Basilii*,

*Petronas Camaterus and the city of Sarkel*

Another example of the shared information between *De administrando imperio* and *Theophanes Continuatus* I–IV is the mission of Petronas Camaterus among the Khazars and the construction of the city of Sarkel in the time of Emperor Theophilus (829–842), which is described in detail in Chapter 42 of *DAI* and in *Theophanes Continuatus* III.28.<sup>98</sup> In Chapter 42 of *DAI* it is found within the context of a detailed geographical description of the territory north of the Black Sea. The author states here that from the lower Danube, across from Dristra, the land of the Pechenegs begins and extends all the way to Sarkel, the city of the Khazars, which is manned with a permanent regiment of three hundred soldiers.<sup>99</sup> Then comes the story of Petronas Camaterus, the building of Sarkel on the coast of the Don and the establishment of the post of the *strategus* of Chersones.<sup>100</sup> It is followed by a description of the distance between the Danube and Sarkel and of the rivers that lie between them, a description of the country of the Pechenegs and of other lands north of the Black Sea.<sup>101</sup> In *Theophanes Continuatus* III.28, the story begins with the information that the city of Sarkel is located on the river Don, which divides the Pechenegs and the Khazars,<sup>102</sup> followed by the story about Petronas Camaterus, the construction of Sarkel and the establishment of the post of the *strategus* of Chersones, which is almost identical to that of *DAI* 42, with which the account ends.<sup>103</sup> This account is not found in any other historical source recounting the reign of Emperor Theophilus – neither in the *Chronicle* of George the Monk from the 9<sup>th</sup> century nor in the contemporary works of Genesius and Symeon the Logothete. However, it is believed that it made its way into both Chapter 42 of *DAI* and *Theophanes Continuatus* III.28 from some unknown common source.<sup>104</sup> This would, therefore, be a source known again only to the authors of *De administrando imperio* and *Theophanes Continuatus*. Nevertheless, upon closer inspection of the story as recorded in these two sources, it can be seen that in Chapter 42 of *DAI* the story of Petronas Camaterus and the construction of Sarkel is placed into the wider context of the description of the area north of the Black Sea, while in *Theophanes Continuatus* III.28 it is extracted from that context. The information that

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53.9–10; *De thematibus*, 11.20–23, but not in *De administrando imperio*, which testifies that both works were posterior to *DAI*, since the bishopric of Ragusa obtained the metropolitan rank only around 950, Komatina, Crkva i država, 65–67.

<sup>98</sup> *DAI*, 42.20–55; *Theophanes Continuatus*, III.28.3–33; *Signes Codoñer*, Emperor Theophilus, 337–345, who places the event in the first years of Theophilus' reign.

<sup>99</sup> *DAI*, 42.20–23.

<sup>100</sup> *DAI*, 42.23–55. The *theme* of Chersones (*Klimata*) headed by a *strategus* was established in 841, cf. *Seibt*, Was lehren die Siegel, 190–191; *Signes Codoñer*, Emperor Theophilus, 345–347.

<sup>101</sup> *DAI*, 42.55–110.

<sup>102</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, III.28.3–9.

<sup>103</sup> *Theophanes Continuatus*, III.28.9–33.

<sup>104</sup> *Bury*, Treatise, 569–570; *DAI*, Commentary, 154; *Howard-Johnston*, *De administrando imperio: a Re-examination*, 325–326; *Signes Codoñer*, Emperor Theophilus, 342–343.

the Don River on which Sarkel is situated separates the Pechenegs “on this side” and the Khazars “on the far side” makes more sense in the context in which the scope of the country of the Pechenegs from the Danube to Sarkel, that is from the West to the East, is first exposed, then independently of it, and it points to the conclusion that the information was actually taken from Chapter 42 of *De administrando imperio*.<sup>105</sup> In fact, the author of *Theophanes Continuatus* took from that passage only that part of the story which was dated to the reign of Emperor Theophilus and included it in his account of this emperor’s reign.

### *Theme of Mesopotamia*

There is also important common information shared between *De administrando imperio* and *De thematibus* concerning the creation of the theme of Mesopotamia, which is found in Chapter 50 of *De administrando imperio* and Chapter IX of *De thematibus*. In Chapter 50 of *DAI* the author states that Mesopotamia was initially not a *theme*, but that “the emperor Leo called Manuel from Tekis and brought him to Constantinople and made him a protospaharius. He had four sons: Pankratukas, Iachnukas, Mudaphar and John. The emperor made Pankratukas commander of the *Hicanati*, and after that, the *strategus* of the Bukellarii, Iachnukas he made *strategus* of Nicopolis, and he gave to Mudaphar and John crown land in Trebizond, and he honored them all with dignities and conferred on them many benefits. And he created the theme of Mesopotamia and appointed the late Orestes the Charsiantes *strategus* of it, and then he ordered that the *turma* of Kamacha be under the theme of Mesopotamia, and he made the *turma* of Keltzene also under the theme of Mesopotamia.”<sup>106</sup> In *De thematibus*, there is a section on the theme of Mesopotamia, cited as the ninth theme of the East, in which it is said that “the theme of Mesopotamia is not of many years (that is, not very ancient), nor was it great and vast, but an anonymous and nameless *kleisoura*. In the days of the emperor Leo, the blessed and holy father of ours, the late Pankratukas the Armenian and his brothers Pukrikas and Tautukas escaped and surrendered the castles there and the place spread and acquired the name of *strategis* (a theme led by a *strategus*).”<sup>107</sup> Although the names of Pankratukas’ brothers do not correspond to those recorded in the *DAI*, it is clear that this is the same information. It is also obvious that the data on the establishment of the theme of Mesopotamia in Chapter 50 of *DAI* is far more comprehensive and complete. There, the story of Pankratukas and his brothers appears only as part of a wider account on the creation of the theme of Mesopotamia, which begins with the statement that “in the past the theme of Chozanon was under the Saracens, and the theme of Asmosaton was also under the Saracens. Chanzit and Romanopolis were frontier passes of the Melitenians. And from the Mountain of Phatilanon all beyond belonged to the Saracens; Tekis belonged

<sup>105</sup> Ševčenko, Re-reading, 190, n. 56.

<sup>106</sup> *DAI*, 50.117–130. The theme of Mesopotamia was established in 899–901 or 911, *Krsmanović*, Byzantine Province, 84–85, 120–121.

<sup>107</sup> *De thematibus*, IX.1–6.

to Manuel. Kamacha was the extreme *turma* of Colonia, and the *turma* of Keltzene was under Chaldia.<sup>108</sup> Only then the above story of Pankratukas' family begins with the words that "Mesopotamia was not a *theme* at that time",<sup>109</sup> followed by the passage on Manuel and his sons explaining how the *theme* of Mesopotamia was established and how the *turmae* of Kamacha and Keltzene were subordinated to it,<sup>110</sup> to conclude the entire section with the statement that all these territories "are now under the authority of the Romans" and that during the reign of Emperor Romanus Romanopolis and Chanzit were also added to the theme of Mesopotamia.<sup>111</sup> Thus, in Chapter 50 of *De administrando imperio*, the wider context of the creation of the theme of Mesopotamia and the preceding history of that event is exposed. The main place in it is occupied by Manuel, the former master of Tekis, who fled with his four sons to the Roman emperor Leo VI the Wise, who endowed him and his sons richly and made them Roman dignitaries, and then, in the area of Tekis which they had handed over to him, founded the theme of Mesopotamia with Orestes Charsianites as *strategus*, and added to it the *turmae* of Kamacha and Keltzene, which until then belonged to the neighboring older themes of Colonia and Chaldia, while the emperor Romanus later added to it the cities of Romanopolis and Chanzit, newly conquered from the Arabs. So, without the whole context, the story of Manuel and his sons would make little sense. In *De thematibus* there is, however, only a short summary of that story, in which the escape to Roman territory and the transfer of the possessions is attributed to Manuel's sons. The story as recorded in *DAI* is obviously more complete and original, while in *De thematibus* it appears as its derivation and adaptation. That the version recorded in *De thematibus* is later than that of Chapter 50 of *DAI* is also corroborated by the fact that in it Pankratukas is referred to as "late" (ἔκτερος), while in *De administrando imperio* this is not mentioned.

#### *De administrando imperio* and *Theophanes Continuatus VI*

There is also some information that is shared between *De administrando imperio* and the third part (Book VI) of the chronicle of *Theophanes Continuatus*,<sup>112</sup> concerning the war between the Hungarians, instigated by the imperial government, and Symeon of Bulgaria in 894–896,<sup>113</sup> the marriage of Mary, the granddaughter of Emperor Romanus I to Peter of Bulgaria in 927,<sup>114</sup> and the marriage of his grandson, Romanus II, son of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, to Bertha, the daughter of King Hugh of Italy in 944.<sup>115</sup> However, there is no direct connection between the descriptions of these events in the two texts other than the fact that both describe the same

<sup>108</sup> *DAI*, 50.111–117.

<sup>109</sup> *DAI*, 50.117.

<sup>110</sup> *DAI*, 50.117–130.

<sup>111</sup> *DAI*, 50.130–132.

<sup>112</sup> *Németh, Excerpta Constantiniana*, 161–162.

<sup>113</sup> *DAI*, 40.7–19; *Theophanes Continuatus et al.*, 358.7–359.16.

<sup>114</sup> *DAI*, 13.146–175; *Theophanes Continuatus et al.*, 414.1–415.9, 422.10–15.

<sup>115</sup> *DAI*, 26.66–72; *Theophanes Continuatus et al.*, 431.11–19.

events. The descriptions in the two texts are different, as is their origin. The account of the Hungarian-Bulgarian war in Chapter 40 of *DAI* is part of the Hungarian tale of the *Conquest of the Homeland* and comes from the Hungarian tradition, while the account of *Theophanes Continuatus VI* comes from Byzantine evidence. The two dynastic marriages in the family of Romanus I and Constantine Porphyrogenitus were well-known events among contemporaries, which the authors of both texts were.

### *Constantinian historiography*

The above analysis points to several important aspects of *De administrando imperio*. It shows, 1) that its geographical scope was the same as that of the “List of addresses” of 946 and other “diplomatic chapters” of *De cerimoniis*, 2) that it discusses the peoples the Empire had regular diplomatic contacts with at the time, 3) that much of its information on foreign peoples was provided by their envoys who visited Constantinople, 4) that the details about some events not known to other Byzantine authors writing about them were intentionally invented, 5) that the author deliberately altered the information available in extant sources in order to shape his own interpretation of the past, 6) that the information shared by *DAI* and *Theophanes Continuatus I–IV*, *Vita Basilii* and *De thematibus* originates from *DAI*, but that information common to *DAI* and *Theophanes Continuatus VI* is independent from each other. All of that, in my opinion, leaves no room for a better candidate for the authorship of *DAI* than Emperor Constantine himself. Was it not him who had the best opportunity to collect oral accounts on foreign peoples from their envoys to the imperial court? Was it not him who, because of his meeting and talks with the envoys of the caliph of Cordoba, could have claimed that he knew something about the history of the Arabs of Spain that the earlier Byzantine authors had not recorded? Was it not him who had a vested interest in altering the available information in order to downgrade the Amorian dynasty and to praise his grandfather Basil I? Thus, I believe that there is no ground to doubt the claim of Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus that he personally was the author of *De administrando imperio*.

It is well known that there was a void in historiographic work since the time of Theophanes the Confessor at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. From the century and a half dividing Theophanes and Porphyrogenitus only the *Chronicle* of George the Monk, which was known to him and used for the *Excerpta Historica*, and some hagiographic and a couple of documentary sources were extant at his time.<sup>116</sup> He himself in *De administrando imperio* recounts the history of the Arabs at the end of Chapter 22 only up to the moment described by Theophanes, and after that he has nothing more to say about them until his own time, when he, at the end of Chapter 25, adds what he learnt about the present political situation in the Arab lands from various Muslim ambassadors he had received at his court in the middle of the 940s. Constantine was thus

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<sup>116</sup> On the Byzantine historiography between Theophanes Confessor and the time of Porphyrogenitus, cf. *Treadgold*, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, 78–152; *Neville*, *Guide*, 87–94.



well aware of this void in historical memory and felt the need to have this gap filled. He first commissioned the writing of a history of the emperors beginning with Leo V in 813 from Genesisius, a man about whom very little is known apart from what he himself says in the Proem to his history titled the *Reigns of the Emperors* (Αἱ Βασιλῖαι), even whether his first name was Joseph or not.<sup>117</sup> If we consider that the similarities in the Proems to the *Excerpta Historica* and to *De cerimoniis* testify that both projects – the first systematizing historical knowledge and the other court ceremonial – started at about the same time in the mid-940s,<sup>118</sup> then the idea of composing a history of the period not yet described was certainly born simultaneously. In the Proem to the *Reigns of the Emperors* Genesisius states that it was Emperor Constantine who entrusted to him the task of writing a history of the emperors from the reign of Leo V (813–820), which “was not handed over to the *book of history*” (τὰ μὴ παραδεδομένα βιβλῶ τῆ ἱστοροῦση),<sup>119</sup> which means that he was the first to write about it.

That would not, however, remain so for long. The emperor soon entrusted the same task to a group of authors known to us under the common appellation of *Theophanes Continuatus*,<sup>120</sup> who were, as demonstrated by Juan Signes Codoñer, involved in the work on the *Excerpta Historica* as well.<sup>121</sup> In Title and the the Proem to their work they also state that they were commissioned by Emperor Constantine to write a history about the events that had occurred after the Blessed Theophanes concluded his *Chronography* in 813, namely from the reign of Leo V, and that he also gave them the material that he himself had “gathered... from scattered sources written by certain men, and others from reports transmitted orally, with the noble intention of setting forth a sort of common instruction for all.”<sup>122</sup> The mention of some “written sources” in this statement seems to contradict Genesisius’ claim that there was no “book of history” that covered the period.<sup>123</sup> On the other hand, it was shown in the above analysis that many pieces of information that the authors of *Theophanes Continuatus* I–IV included in their history actually come from *De administrando imperio* and the material they say he gathered from “scattered sources written by certain men, and others from reports transmitted orally”, rather than pointing to a single “book of history”, would actually be the most appropriate way to explain what kind of work *De administrando imperio* was. So it is quite probable that the material they have in mind when they say that it was provided by the

<sup>117</sup> Markopoulos, Genesisios, 137–150; Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, 180–188; Theophanes Continuatus, 10\*–15\* (*M. Featherstone, J. Signes Codoñer*); Neville, *Guide*, 95–100; Németh, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 156–158.

<sup>118</sup> Németh, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 139–144.

<sup>119</sup> Genesisius, 3; Németh, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 157.

<sup>120</sup> Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, 188–196; Theophanes Continuatus, 10\*–19\* (*M. Featherstone, J. Signes Codoñer*); Neville, *Guide*, 101–109; Németh, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 151–152.

<sup>121</sup> Signes Codoñer, *Author of Theophanes Continuatus I–IV*, 17–41; Németh, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 153–155; Markopoulos, *Voices*, 26–28.

<sup>122</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, I, Title, 1–8, Proem, 19–26.

<sup>123</sup> Németh, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 157–158.

emperor, along the material known as the “common source” they shared with Genesisius, was in fact contained in *De administrando imperio*, which would strongly corroborate the hypothesis that the emperor himself was the author of the latter work.

It seems, in my opinion, that the emperor ordered that the history of the period be recounted once again not only because he was not satisfied with Genesisius’ work, as believed by most scholars who characterize his stylistic, literary and scholarly skills as inadequate and his ideological views as not “pro-Macedonian” enough,<sup>124</sup> but also because he himself had in the meantime discovered information that was not known to Genesisius and formed his own interpretation of the history of some important events of the period. The authors of *Theophanes Continuatus* I–IV carefully selected from that new material only those passages that were relevant for the period of their interest and used them for the composition of their own narrative about the history of the emperors from 813 to 867, which resulted in an account of that period that differs from those of Genesisius and Symeon the Logothete in those details that could be connected with the material of *De administrando imperio*. However, they also had to be careful about ideological matters also, so certain information they had received needed to be left aside, like that provided in Chapter 50 of *DAI*, about the uprising of the Slavs of the Peloponnese in the time of Theophilus and Michael III, quelled by the *strategus* Theoctistus Bryennius during the sole rule of the latter,<sup>125</sup> which might have seemed like a success of the despised Amorian emperor and would hardly fit into his *psogos*.

The emperor himself continued working with that material, using it to compose the history of the reign of his grandfather Basil I (867–886) – *Vita Basilii*.<sup>126</sup> As already established in historiography, the fact that the authors of *Theophanes Continuatus* I–IV refer to “the history of the emperor Basil” indicates only that they knew that there would be such a book,<sup>127</sup> rather than that they had already read it,<sup>128</sup> while the above analysis of the information about the Roman losses in the West, which are in *Theophanes Continuatus* II ascribed to Michael II and in *Vita Basilii* to Michael III proves that they actually hadn’t. The *Vita Basilii* was thus composed either simultaneously or after *Theophanes Continuatus* I–IV as an independent work of history, which, as stated in its Proem, was meant to be continued, if time and his ill health allowed it, down to the time of Constantine VII himself,<sup>129</sup> and it was only later that it was appended as Book

<sup>124</sup> Markopoulos, Genesisios, 142–150; Magdalino, Knowledge, 200–203; Treadgold, Middle Byzantine Historians, 187–188; Theophanes Continuatus, 14\*–15\* (M. Featherstone, J. Signes Codoñer); Neville, Guide, 95–96, 105–106; Németh, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 156–157.

<sup>125</sup> *DAI*, 50.1–25; Živković, Južni Sloveni, 131–136.

<sup>126</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 3\*–13\* (C. Mango); Magdalino, Knowledge, 200–208; Varona, Contribución, 739–775; Treadgold, Middle Byzantine Historians, 165–180; Neville, Guide, 102–103; Németh, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 152–156, 161–164.

<sup>127</sup> Ševčenko, Title and preface, 88–89; Varona, Contribución, 739–775.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. *Vita Basilii*, 9\* (C. Mango); Treadgold, Middle Byzantine Historians, 165; Featherstone, Basileios Nothos, 360–361.

<sup>129</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 1.18–22.

V to the compilation known as *Theophanes Continuatus*.<sup>130</sup> *Vita Basilii* was, as claimed in its Title and Proem, also written by the emperor himself,<sup>131</sup> but this assumption has been almost abandoned by scholars.<sup>132</sup> There are, however, some stylistic parallels between it and *De administrando imperio*, though in general the style of *Vita Basilii* shows much more literary sophistication than the plain style of *DAI*.<sup>133</sup> One close parallel between the two works can be observed when one compares the end of Chapter 51 of *Vita Basilii* with the beginning of Chapter 43 of *DAI*. In *Vita Basilii*, the author wrote that it was said “so much for the state of affairs *towards the rising sun* (πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον) during the years of Basil’s pious reign”, and that now he is “about to narrate the state of affairs *towards the falling one*”,<sup>134</sup> while in *DAI* 43 the emperor claims that “concerning the northern Scyths sufficient has been made plain to you, beloved child... but also it is right that you should not be ignorant of the parts *towards the rising sun* (πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον)...”<sup>135</sup> Since the phrase was used in different contexts, it does not imply a textual dependence of one place upon the other, but rather reveals the same stylistic manner of the author of both works. Furthermore, because the second sentence, written in the first person, was clearly addressed to Emperor Constantine’s son Romanus, designated as “beloved child” (τέκνον ποθούμενον), there is every reason to assume that the author in question was Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus himself. As already established, *Vita Basilii* was composed during the last years of Constantine’s life, and the illness he alludes to at the end of his Proem is perhaps the best indication of that.<sup>136</sup> The above analysis which shows that the historical material collected in *DAI* was used for *Vita Basilii* suggests that it certainly happened after *De administrando imperio*. Using the material from *DAI* while writing *Vita Basilii* the emperor, however, adjusted it to the more sophisticated style of his grandfather’s biography, often changing the style of the sentences, but he also further developed and processed it and in some places even reinterpreted it in a different way, changing the meaning of the information from *DAI*. Since he had already handed over parts of it to the authors of the books I–IV of *Theophanes Continuatus*, who were writing independently of him, there appeared certain important divergences and inconsistencies in the text of *Vita Basilii* in relation to the first four books of *Theophanes Continuatus* concerning those places.

<sup>130</sup> Varona, Contribución, 772–775.

<sup>131</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 1.1–22.

<sup>132</sup> Current scholarship, however, admits that the emperor supervised the work and authored the Preface himself, Ševčenko, Title and preface, 86 sq; *Idem*, Re-reading, 185 sq; Markopoulos, Voices, 24; cf. above, n. 126; Serreqi Jurić, *Usporedba*, 41–44. I am especially indebted to my colleague Ivan Basić from the University of Split, who kindly made the text of this doctoral dissertation, which is still in preparation for publishing, available to me.

<sup>133</sup> Ševčenko, *Storia letteraria*, 89–127; Serreqi Jurić, *Usporedba*, 44–90, 117–145, 157–174, 189–277.

<sup>134</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 51.32–35.

<sup>135</sup> *DAI*, 43.2–6.

<sup>136</sup> *Vita Basilii*, 8\*–9\* (C. Mango); Varona, Contribución, 772–775.

*De thematibus* was also claimed to be written by the emperor himself.<sup>137</sup> The traditional view that it was composed in 934–944 has been long challenged, with a later date for the composition – the last years of the emperor’s life (c. 956–959), being proposed with strong arguments.<sup>138</sup> In the above analysis I have tried to present some new arguments that show that *De thematibus* was written after *DAI*. It would be easy to establish a connection between *De thematibus* and the fifth section of *DAI* as defined in the Proem and in its short introduction in Chapter 48 which covers the part of the work from the end of Chapter 48 up to the end, dedicated to the reforms and innovations that occurred in the Roman state at various times.<sup>139</sup> Within this section there is in the latter part of Chapter 50 a short survey on the reforms in the thematic organization of the Empire, where the author explains how some of the themes that existed at his time came into being, and many of those reforms happened in the time of the recent emperors Leo VI and Romanus I.<sup>140</sup> Thus, it could be possible that the idea for the composition of a separate work on the themes of the Empire, *De thematibus*, in which the history of the themes would be recounted from ancient times, was born precisely while the emperor was collecting information about reforms in the thematic organization for the section on innovations in the Empire of *De administrando imperio*.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus, however, was not given the time he needed to extend the biography of his grandfather to become a more comprehensive history of the imperial rule of his family down to his own time, so at the moment of his death in 959 the period from the death of Basil I in 886 had yet to be recounted in a history book. Such a task was to be completed only after his death, but in a way much different than he envisioned it, with the completion of what is known as Book VI of *Theophanes Continuatus*, which has much in common with the *Chronicle* of Symeon the Logothete, with a different view of the past and composed independently from Constantine’s program.<sup>141</sup> *De administrando imperio*, on the other hand, remained restricted to the imperial palace and of all the information collected in it only those pieces that had been included in *Theophanes Continuatus* were available to later authors.

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<sup>137</sup> *De thematibus*, 59. After a close philological and stylistic analysis of both texts, *Serreqi Jurić*, *Usporedba*, 342–347, came to the conclusion that *De thematibus* and *Vita Basilii* were written by the same author, but couldn’t tell decisively whether that had been Emperor Constantine or not.

<sup>138</sup> The traditional dating is still upheld by *Németh*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, 124–130, though he admits the possibility that it was subsequently revised. For the later dating, cf. *Lounghis*, *Sur la date de De thematibus*, 299–305; *Ahrweiler*, *Sur la date de De thematibus*, 1–5; *Serreqi Jurić*, *Usporedba*, 103–109.

<sup>139</sup> *DAI*, Proem, 23–25, 48.22–27; *Signes Codoñer*, *Eslavos*, 128–129.

<sup>140</sup> *DAI*, 50.83–221.

<sup>141</sup> *Featherstone*, *Basileios Nothos*, 356–363; *Theophanes Continuatus*, 16\*–19\* (*M. Featherstone*, *J. Signes Codoñer*); *Treadgold*, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, 197–224.

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## КОНСТАНТИН ПОРФИРОГЕНИТ, *DE ADMINISTRANDO IMPERIO* И ВИЗАНТИЈСКА ИСТОРИОГРАФИЈА СРЕДИНЕ X ВЕКА

Оживљена научна делатност током самосталне владавине цара Константина VII Порфирогенита између 944. и 959. произвела је низ значајних енциклопедијских и историографских дела, које је осмислио, покренуо, приредио или пак написао сам цар. Међу њима посебно место припада спису познатом под називом *De administrando imperio*, насталом између 948. и 952. године, због његове специфичне природе и загонетног карактера. Како је истакнуто у његовом предговору, спис је написао сам цар Константин VII Порфирогенит за свог сина и савладара Романа II, али у савременој науци постоји тежња да се та тврдња доведе у питање, уз тезу да је сам спис заправо дело непознатих „ghostwriters“ који су писали у царево име.

Настанак трактата о страним народима и односима Ромеја с њима какав је *De administrando imperio* у потпуности одговара оквиру интересовања научне делатности на цариградском двору средине X века, поготово када се узме у обзир да је у то време започет рад на обимним *Excerpta Historica*, међу чије су се педесет три теме нашле и оне о дипломатским односима између Римљана и варвара у античко доба. С друге стране, подаци о дипломатским односима између тадашњих Римљана и варвара из средине X века сачувани су у такозваним „дипломатским поглављима“ књиге *De cerimoniis*, а то су поглавља 15. и 46–48. из друге књиге тог списка, која су пак проистекла из живе дипломатске активности на двору Константина VII. У том смислу је посебно интересантно поглавље II, 48, које представља тзв. „Листу адреса за стране владаре“ из 946. године,



чији геополитички оквир у потпуности одговара оном који се може наћи у *De administrando imperio*. У потоњем спису се такође могу наћи и неки подаци који су у непосредној вези са подацима забележеним у „дипломатским поглављима“ *De cerimoniis*, попут оних о историји шпанских Омејада, који су могли потицати од њихових посланика који су били свечано примљени на царском двору 946, или оних о савременој политичкој ситуацији у Абасидском калифату, које су цару могли пренети посланици сиријских емира који су такође исте године посетили царски двор. С друге стране, подаци о Русима, италијанским Францима, Мађарима и Печенезима који су се нашли у спису *De administrando imperio* недвосмислено потичу из дипломатских контаката које је са њиховим представницима имао царски двор током пете деценије X века, док су дипломатски односи с јерменским и грузијским кнежевима оставили значајан траг у дипломатском материјалу царске архиве.

Многи подаци из списка *De administrando imperio* које је цар прикупио на тај начин су једини подаци о одређеним догађајима. Међутим, како је Пол Магдалино приметно, тамо где то није једини извор, његови подаци су често различити и чак погрешни у поређењу са оним што се о истим догађајима може дознати из других извора. То доводи до питања да ли је цар свесно и намерно интерпретирао историјске податке према свом сопственом нахођењу. У 29. поглављу списка *De administrando imperio* постоје подаци који на најбољи начин могу да дочарају како је цар баратао подацима које је имао на располагању из других извора и тумачио их како би створио сопствену интерпретацију прошлости. Први такав случај су подаци о томе како је цар Василије I потчинио и покрстио Словене и поставио им архонте из *Такѿиике* Порфирирогенитовог оца, цара Лава VI, који се односе на Словене у Грчкој, али које је Порфирирогенит применио на Словене западног дела Балканског полуострва – Србе и Хрвате и саобразио их тамошњим историјским околностима. Други случај су подаци из писма франачког цара Лудвига II цару Василију I у вези са опсадом Барија 870–871. и учешћем *Словена* (Хрвата) са сопственим бродовима у њој у оквиру франачких снага, које је Порфирирогенит прерадио и саопштио како су у опсади учествовали припадници свих јужнословенских племена уз византијске снаге и по заповести цара Василија I, а уз помоћ дубровачких бродова.

У спису *De administrando imperio* постоје и неки историјски подаци који се појављују у другим блиским историјским делима из истог периода, као што су *Теофанов Насѿављач I–IV*, *Vita Basilii* (*Теофанов Насѿављач V*) и *De thematibus*, али којих, с друге стране, нема у одговарајућим одељцима дела других историописаца из истог времена, као што су Генесије и Симеон Логотет. Такав је случај са подацима о ромејским губицима у Лангобардији и Далмацији у време цара Михаила II, о посланству Петроне Каматира Хазарима и изградњи њихове тврђаве Саркел у време цара Теофила, те о оснивању теме Месопотамије у време цара Лава VI, који сви, заправо, потичу из одговарајућих одељака списка *De administrando imperio*, одакле су, некад и са нешто измењеним појединостима,

ушли у поменута дела настала такође трудом самог цара Константина Порфирогенита или у његовом кругу и по његовој жељи. С друге стране, одређени подаци који се могу наћи у *De administrando imperio* и у *Теофановом Насѡављачу* VI нису у непосредној вези, него потичу из различитих извора.

Изложена анализа је указала на неке значајне аспекте списка *De administrando imperio*, који не остављају простора за бољег кандидата за аутора тог списка од самог цара Константина VII и на основу којих се може закључити да је он аутор тог списка неоснована. Цар Константин Порфирогенит је био сасвим свестан велике празнине у историографском раду још од времена Теофана Исповедника с почетка IX века, чија се *Хрониографија* завршавала 813. годином, и био је решен да се та празнина попуни. Због тога је најпре поверио Генесију да напише историју царева од устоличења Лава V 813. године, да би убрзо потом исти задатак поверио групи аутора познатих под заједничким називом *Теофанов Насѡављач* (књиге I–IV), који су били укључени у рад на *Excerpta Historica*, а који у предговору свом делу истичу како им је сам цар ставио на располагање грађу коју је он сам „сакупио... из различитих извора које су писали неки људи, и других из извештаја који су пренети усмено...“, што би понајпре могло да се односи на грађу коју је он сабрао у оквиру свог списка *De administrando imperio*, а за чије је податке показано да су били коришћени за одговарајуће делове хронике *Теофановој Насѡављача* I–IV. То би могло да значи да је цар наложио да се историја периода од 813. године обради поново не само зато што је био незадовољан Генесијевим радом, него и зато што је у међувремену и сам дошао до нових података који се односе на тај период и до сопствене интерпретације догађаја из тог времена, за коју је сматрао да треба да буде узета у обзир у великом историјском прегледу посвећеном том периоду. Он сам је наставио да ради с том грађом, користећи је приликом састављања биографије свог деде, цара Василија I, *Vita Basilii*, која је настала истовремено или након настанка *Теофановој Насѡављача* I–IV, као посебно историјско дело, које је, према ономе што саопштава у предговору, Константин Порфирогенит намеравао да продужи све до своје владавине, и које је, пошто то није стигао да уради, тек накнадно прибројано спису *Теофановој Насѡављача* као књига V. Посебан спис о темама Ромејског царства, *De thematibus*, цар је саставио последњих година живота, подстакнут радом на подацима о реформама у унутрашњој организацији Царства у последњој, петој целини списка *De administrando imperio*. Цар ипак није успео да заврши задатак који је себи задао и прошири биографију свог деде у целовиту историју владавине царева из његове династије, тако да је у тренутку његове смрти 959. године период од смрти Василија I 886. и даље био историјски необрађен. Тај посао завршио је тек после његове смрти непознати аутор хронике познате као *Теофанов Насѡављач* VI, која има много заједничког са *Хроником* Симеона Логотета и различит поглед на прошлост од оног који је имао Константин Порфирогенит. Сам спис *De administrando imperio* остао је ограничен на царски двор и од свих података сакупљених у њему само су они који су били укључени у *Теофановој Насѡављача* били доступни каснијим ауторима.