

referring to the classic work of A.A. Vasiliev on the reign of Justin I³.

On the pages of her book the Author presents Theoderic as a capable player who skilfully managed religious matters. She points out that the ruler had to deal with important issues such as the Laurentian Schism, which was tearing apart the Church in Rome, or the Acacian schism, which determined the nature of relations between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople. It is significant that Theoderic was able to use both schisms for his own purposes.

³ A.A. VASILIEV, *Justin the First: An Introduction to the Epoch of Justinian the Great*, Cambridge 1950.

The Scholar points out that for the majority of his rule, Theoderic managed to preserve stable, peaceful relations between the Arians and the Catholics. Only during the final years of his rule did Theoderic take steps against the latter group, as a consequence of the anti-Arian policy of Emperor Justin I. This step however should not obscure the thirty years during which the king of the Goths earned the reputation of a ruler who could bring about religious peace in his country.

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VLADIMÍR VAVŘÍNEK, *Cyril a Metoděj mezi Konstantinopolí a Římem* [Cyril and Methodius between Constantinople and Rome], Vyšehrad 2013, pp. 375.

The book discussed here was written by Vladimír Vavřínek, an outstanding Czech Slavist and Byzantinologist¹, a scholar who for many years now has worked on the so-called Cyril-Methodius question, and is a renowned expert in the field. The book is, it seems, something of a summary of the many years of research performed by its author and an attempt at sharing his conclusions – on the subject of the activity of the “Solun [Thessalonican] Brothers” that was so important in the history of mediaeval Europe – with a wider audience (hence its popular science character).

V. Vavřínek begins the tale about the life and activity of Constantine and Methodius from the moment of the arrival of the messengers of the prince of Great Moravia to Constantinople – which became a pretext for

presenting the capital of the Byzantine Empire (*Příchod Moravanů do Konstantinopole* [The arrival of the Moravians to Constantinople], p. 7–18), and subsequently of the main aspects of the history of Byzantium, with an added emphasis on religious matters, from 4th century until the time of the arrival of the Moravian envoys. This part of the work is entitled *Byzanc* [Byzantium] – p. 19–49. In the following section (*Soluňští bratři před odchodem z Byzance* [Solun Brothers prior to departure from Byzantium], p. 50–88), the Author examines the fortunes of Methodius and Constantine up to the point when they were designated by the emperor Michael III and the patriarch Photius to undertake missionary activity in the Great Moravian state.

The subsequent part of the book (... *rudis adhuc christianitas gentis Maravensium*, p. 89–115) was devoted to the beginnings of the Great Moravian state, with an emphasis on the presence of Christianity (prior to the arrival of the Solun Brothers) among the local populace. It is a starting point for characterising the activity of Constantine and Methodius in the Great Moravian state during Rostislav's reign in the following part (*U Rostislava*

¹ He authored many works, among them: *La révolte d'Aristonikos*, Praha 1957; *Staroslověnské životy Konstantina a Metoděje*, Praha 1963; *Církevní misie v dějinách Velké Moravy*, Praha 1963; *Dějiny Byzance*, Praha 1992, 1994 (co-author); *Encyklopedie Byzance*, Praha 2011 (in cooperation with P. BALCÁREK).

[*In the state of Rostislav*], p. 116–148). It is also here that the reasons for their departure from Great Moravia and the fortunes of their journey to Rome are described. It also presents a sketch of the relations between the papacy and Constantinople, drawing particular attention to the influence exerted on said relations by the rivalry over the Bulgarian church. The following part of the book (*U prahů apoštolských* [At the papal see], p. 149–192) pertains to the stay of the Solun Brothers in Rome. The author describes here: the welcoming of Constantine and Methodius by pope Hadrian II; the death of Constantine; the circumstances of the elevation of Methodius to the dignity of archbishop, and finally the events that led to the return of the Bulgarian church into the Constantinopolitan area of influence. In the part entitled: *Metoděj – arcibiskup svatě cirkve moravské* [Methodius – archbishop of the holy Moravian church] (p. 193–268), V. Vavřínek presents the activity of Methodius after his return to the Great Moravian state, ruled at this time by Svatopluk. The Author's argument focuses on the various aspects of church life in the Great Moravian state; on the relations between Methodius and Svatopluk, papacy, German clergy, Byzantium, as well as on the translation activity of the archbishop. In the following part of the book (*Slovan-ské písemnictví na Velké Moravě* [Slavic literature in Great Moravia], p. 269–304), V. Vavřínek characterised Slavic literature associated with the Solun Brothers and their students, focusing his attention on the *Life of Constantine* and the *Life of Methodius*. The following fragment, *Poslední léta moravské cirkve* [The final years of the Moravian church] (p. 305–322), concerns the fortunes of the Church in the Great Moravian state from the year 885 until its end;

the subsequent one, *Cyrlometodějské dědictví* [Cyrillo-Methodian legacy] (p. 323–350), is in turn devoted to the reception of the Slavic liturgy and literature in the Premyslid Czech state, in Bulgaria and in Rus.

The work is supplemented by: acknowledgements (351–252), selected bibliography (354–358)², indices (359–375). The book is neatly published, richly illustrated and supplied with maps. The graphic design is guaranteed to attract a reader's attention, and is an excellent addition to the interesting, clearly presented and standing on a high professional level and reflecting the modern state of the knowledge content. This is certainly a book that can be read for gain with pleasure by both an „ordinary” reader as well as a scholar already versed in the themes it discusses. One can only regret that such works are relatively rarely written by great scholars, such as Vladimír Vavřínek.

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² I am aware that the bibliography is a selection, however it would be worthwhile, in my opinion, to expand it at least by the work of L. SIMEONOVA, *Diplomacy of the Letter and the Cross: Photios, Bulgaria and the Papacy 860s–880s*, Amsterdam 1998 (very important for the study of relations between Constantinople and Rome at the time of Photius' patriarchate, with an expanded look at Bulgarian matters). I will use the occasion to add a correction – the full title of Tadeusz WASILEWSKI's work listed in the bibliography: *Bizancjum i Słowianie w IX wieku. Studia z dziejów stosunków politycznych i kulturalnych*, and it was published in 1972, and not in 1970 (p. 358).