



## **Tamás Nótári: Bavarian Historiography in Early Medieval Salzburg.**

Passau, Schenk Verlag, 2010. pp. 192

**Magdolna Sič, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor, University of Novi Sad

Faculty of Law

Email: rea3@eunet.rs

The monograph of the Hungarian Romance Scholar and Classical Philologist Tamás Nótári on Salzburg's historiography and legal history in the early Middle Ages was published in 2010 by Schenk Publishing house in Passau. This book discusses the seven most important historical sources of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries (the *Libellus Virgilii*, the *Gesta Sancti Hrodberti confessoris*, the *Liber confraternitatum*, the *Notitia Arnonis*, the *Breves Notitiae*, the *Carmina Salisburgenia* and the *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*). The author strives on the one hand for philological and historical, on the other hand for legal historical results. The sources are discussed in the order of their time of origin and the writer divides his monograph in three longer chapters: the first one deals with the time of bishop Virgil, the second is about the time of (Arch)bishop Arn and in the third one the author discusses the time of the Archbishops Liumpram and Adalwin.

In connection with Abbot-Bishop Virgil, who came from Ireland to Bavaria and was ordained in 749 as bishop of the Diocese of Salzburg, which had been founded ten years earlier, the writer analyses on the basis of four sources the cultural and political upswing which was due to Virgil's activity. Nótári argues that the works *Libellus Virgilii*, *Gesta Hrodberti* and *Liber confraternitatum* directly or indirectly belong to Virgil, i.e. he played a role in their genesis either as their author or as client. The *Libellus Virgilii*, which reports on the lawsuit between Virgil and Duke Odilo, was handed down – as Nótári remarks – not in its original form, but as a part of *Breves Notitiae*. The *Gesta Sancti Hrodberti confessoris* is a legend which discusses the life and activity of Saint Rupert, the bishop coming from Salzburg, who contributed considerably to the re-establishment of the church organisation in Salzburg. The *Liber confraternitatum*, i.e. the confraternity book of Salzburg, is a list of deceased monks of the monastery of Salzburg and it also contains the names of those people for the salvation of whose souls it

was prayed for in the monastery. A special place among the works which are attributed to Bishop Virgil is occupied by the *Kosmographie des Aethicus Ister*. Aethicus Ister is undoubtedly a pseudonym and Nótári assumes Virgil behind it, who composed this literary pamphlet in connection with the argument with Archbishop Bonifatius, the apostle of the ancient Germans.

In the second chapter of his monograph Nótári discusses the historical sources of Salzburg which originate from the time of (Arch)bishop Arn, after the dethronement of the last duke of the Agilolfing line, Tassilo III. The author analyses this dethronement in detail also from the point of view of legal history. In order to safeguard the claims of the archdiocese of Salzburg to ownership, Arn got two lists drawn up of the donations which the church had received. On the basis of the *Notitia Arnonis* and the *Breves Notitiae* the author examines several questions which are related to the Bavarian legal system of the early Middle Ages. He goes into the structure of the society, the donation certificates and the contract practice.

In the third part of his book the works are analysed which originate from the time of Archbishops Liupram and Adalwin, i.e. the *Carmina Salisburgensia* and the *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*. From a legal historical point of view the latter one deserves more attention: the Conversion was composed as an indictment in the trial against Methodius, the Apostle to the Slavs, who was summoned to appear in court and was convicted by bishops of Salzburg in Regensburg. Nótári analyses, in addition to the outcome of the mission among the Carantanians, the Bavarians and the Avars, from the perspective of ecclesiastical law also the counts on which Methodius was charged by the Bavarian bishops, who wanted to safeguard the Bavarian claims over Pannonia in this way. It is extremely remarkable that Nótári devotes in his monograph much attention to the show trials of the early Middle Ages, namely to the dethronement of Tassilo III and to the proceedings against Methodius: these explanations are very useful not only for experts in Bavarian historiography, but for researchers of the political processes of the Middle Ages as well.

The monograph ends with a detailed list of sources and with a thorough list of references, which display a deep knowledge of the sources and the relevant literature.