

EMERIC, THE KING'S SON, AS DUKE OF THE RUS' (PART ONE)

Jakub Kurák

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Abstract: KURÁK, Jakub. *Emeric, the King's Son, as Duke of the Rus' (Part One)*. The first part of the study focuses on the confirmation of Emeric's title and its securing of sources in the first half of the 11th century. Afterwards, the author focuses on the thematic analysis of the historiographical theses, aiming at their origin, orientation and comprehensive understanding. Up to this point, numerous historical interpretations have emerged, which determine how Emeric's specific title should be interpreted. The perspectives of Slovak historiography on this specific topic have long been absent from the works of historians. Precisely because of that, it is extremely important to summarize and re-interpret the main directions emanating from the 19th and 20th centuries. The author of the study therefore deliberately focuses on a thematic, rather than chronological, explanation of the various opinions and deductions concerning „the royal son Heinricus.” The first part of the study attempts to respond interdisciplinarily to the selected views and to point out possible directions for future research. The topic of Emeric's specific title is far from finished, which once again provides space for discussion of this complex but still „mysterious topic” of the young prince and his title dux Ruizorum.

Keywords: *Kingdom of Hungary, Árpádians, prince, duke, Emeric, historiography, interpretation, ducatus*

Introduction

There are several important figures in the early-Árpád era who remain shrouded in mystery to this day. Among the known sources that describe the circle of the Árpád family, we can point to the figure of Prince (*kráľovič, herceg*) Emeric. In his case, a greater number of both younger and older written sources have survived to the present day, yet their content and interpretation remain extremely diverse. Prince Emeric, who probably died at the age of 24 (†1031), is still perceived by historians as a „controversial” figure of the early Árpáadian family - not in a negative sense, however. Very little is known about his life, due to the absence of more descriptive or complex information preserved in written sources. Nevertheless, certain parallels appear in some cases that might help us better understand this early royal figure. The main point of interpreting Emeric's source entries should therefore lie in a basic understanding of the purpose for which the source was compiled by the medieval scribe.¹

Apart from a deeper analysis of the written sources, regarding the issue of Emeric's life, one can point to a large number of contrasting works, which differ from each other on multiple levels. Eventually, in the field of written sources, it is now possible to rely on a greater number of (digitised) source editions, which are in many cases supplemented with into foreign languages. In the past centuries, the lack of digitisation often caused a split in historical opinions, due to the smaller number of sources historians could work with. This issue has also manifested itself in the case of

¹ Mainly in early Middle Ages, not in preserved descriptions of the High and Late Middle Ages.

the interpretation of Emeric's life, and by the early 21st century this problem represented a fairly broad thematic split. In the historical schools of Slovakia (Czechoslovakia), Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, and Russia (formerly the USSR), this aspect manifested itself in erroneous and unsound deductions that were adopted by several generations of historians (Miskov 2018, 34). Therefore, when researching Emeric's life, it is necessary to start afresh and precisely distinguish past (outdated) historiographical theses, from the direct information provided by the sources. These facts can be traced in selected examples of the past centuries (19th and 20th), when a large number of speculative theses emerged that went beyond the scope of source references (Voloshchuk 2014, 77). The purpose of this study will therefore be to critically evaluate the existing knowledge and update it from a contemporary perspective.

In the introduction, it is possible to point out selected source references that differ from each other both chronologically and in content. One of the first written sources that describe the figure of the king's son, can generally be categorized as imperial records. Among the (chronologically) earliest sources, one can point to *the Annales of Altahenses* (*Annales Altahenses* 1890), which were originally written continuously during the 11th century.² These Annals preserve information about the death of the young prince (incorrectly) dated to the year 1033. The first mention of Emeric is thus, paradoxically, an indication of his death.³ The source passage of the annals here reads: „But soon afterwards died the son of Stephen, king of Hungary, who was called Emeric and [subsequently] was canonized.”⁴ Like the *Annales Altahenses*, all other chronicle sources of the Holy Roman Empire (under Ottonian and Salian dynasties) describe Prince Emeric only more generically, using the title prince or duke (*dux*). The only exceptions are the contemporary *Hildesheim Annals*⁵ and the High Medieval *Hungarian-Polish Chronicle*, from which the scribe of the *Hildesheim Annals* definitely derived (Uhorsko-poľská kronika 2009, 96, 164). The single 11th-century source therefore describes Emeric in a particularly unusual way. In the *Hildesheim chronicle*, the death of prince Emeric is mentioned under the year 1031. There is a passage that reads: „And Emeric, son of King Stephen, prince-duke of Ruiz, was torn to pieces by a wild boar on a hunt, [whereby] he perished a miserable death.”⁶ At first glance, this reference could easily be mistakenly attributed to someone from a Piast or Rurik dynasty. Why did the scribe choose to assign this rank to an Árpáadian? In the search for similar name designations (ethnonyms that would apply to, or would equally date from, the 11th century), several sources can be pointed out.

² See: GddM (<https://www.geschichtsquellen.de/werk/177/>).

³ In the *Altahenses Chronicles* is an indication under the year 1033, of how Emeric was canonized shortly after his death: „[...] qui dictus fuerat Heinricus et est canonizatus.” (*Annales Altahenses* 1890, 19). This information may indirectly suggest to the reader that this is an updated source entry, which should be dated at least to 1083. In that year, Emeric was canonized during the reign of King Ladislaus.

⁴ *Annales Altahenses* 1890, 19.

⁵ The writing of this source also began as early as the end of the 10th century and continued concurrently until the first half of the 12th century. The chronicles are preserved in a 12th century description (from the year 1137). However, it is not known how many scribes were continuously involved in compiling this source. See: GddM (<https://www.geschichtsquellen.de/werk/294/>).

⁶ „Et Heinricus, Stephani regis filius, dux Ruizoru(m), in venatione ab apro discissus, periit flebiliter mortuus” (*Annales Hildesheimenses* 2014, 386). A similar chronicler's account, without reference to an unfortunate death, can be found in the texts of *Gallus Anonymus*. In the second book, *Chapter XI (BOLESLAUS PUER INTERFECIT APRUM)*, a similar event occurs, in which the young Boleslaus killed a boar while hunting. Therefore, this activity must have been particularly popular in times outside military interventions, when young princes and kings practised their hunting skills (*Gallus Anonymus* 2009, 70). According to contemporary medieval (and older antique) artistic depictions, it is known that this hunting had to take place in physical proximity using a spear. Due to the thick skin of the wild boar, this animal could not be hunted with a bow. By this reasoning, Emeric's unfortunate injury could be explained.

Forms of the same designation with the initial form *Ruiz-*, can be found in the Imperial mentions of Bruno of Querfurt (*Epistola Brunonis ad Heinricum regem*). This description was diplomatically addressed to Emperor Henry II, while this report also informed the emperor about the state of the Empire-Piast relations, up to the time of Boleslaw the Brave.⁷ In the source of Bruno's text, the following passage appears: „Surely the days and months of the whole year are now over, since which we have sat long in vain, dismissed the Hungarians, and set out on our journey to the cruellest of all heathens, the Pechenegs. The senior Ruzorum⁸ [Vladimir the Great], in kingdom and riches, detained me [in captivity] against my will for a month, as if he wished to destroy me of his own accord, [...]”⁹ A second reference dating to the first half of the 11th century can be found in the mentioned *Annales Altahenses*. Under the year 1043, the source contains a passage describing the envoys of Jaroslav the Wise. Here the source states: „The envoys from Ruzia brought equally large gifts, but most of the recipients left. The prince of Bulanici (Polonici) with his gifts was rejected by the envoys and did not deserve the presence of the emperor. They deserved [the rejection] because [Casimir] refused to appear [in person] according to his orders.”¹⁰ In a series of similar forms, one can also point to the related form *Rusorum regem*, which is preserved in several passages of *Thietmar's Chronicle*.¹¹ This form, however, does not strictly correspond to the basic form of the ethnonym *Ruiz-* (pl. *ruizi, ruizorum*), but to the form *Rusz-* (pl. *ruszi, ruszorum*). In this designation form, the grapheme *i-* has been replaced by the grapheme *s-* (from *Ruiz-* to *Rusz-*). Thus, according to the above selected references, it is easy to verify the form of the *dux Ruizorum* notation, which indeed dates to the first half of the 11th century. Emeric's mention therefore refers directly to the Rurikid characters „*Ruiz(i)*,” which can be interpreted in various ways.

In the course of reconstructing the prince's title, one can point to a larger number of historiographical works, that can be categorized and divided either chronologically or thematically. For the purpose of summarizing the perspective of Slovak (formerly Austro-Hungarian and Czechoslovak) academics,¹² we can only briefly point to selected works by F. V. Sasinek (1869, 14, 20), whose views at that time were strongly influenced by the Polish environment (MPH 1864). This thematic inclination towards Polish academics was most evident during the 19th and early 20th centuries. From the 19th century to the present day, works (texts and studies) on this topic include, for example, those by Jonáš Záborský (2012, 163), Václav Chaloupecký (1923, 40-42), and from the archaeological field the works of Lubor Niederle (1922, 23-31), later on František Hrušovský (1939, 68-69), Daniel Rapant (1974, 47-74) and his follower Ondrej Halaga (1947, 58), Ferdinand Uličný (1995, 197), Martin Homza (*Uhorsko-poľská kronika* 2009, 89), Stanislav Konečný (2015, 44), and Ján Steinhübel (2016, 386-387). Among the defining works, we should particularly highlight the analyses of Daniel Rapant, who significantly shaped the opinion of Slovak academics.

⁷ See: GddM (<https://geschichtsquellen.de/werk/716>).

⁸ On the designation *Senior(em) Ruzorum*, see also Györfy's selection from Bruno's charter, in which the designation appears three times (DHA 1992, 45-46; Wood 2014, 36-37).

⁹ „Certe dies et menses iam complevit integer annus, quod ubi diu frustra sedimus, Ungros dimisimus, et ad omnium paganorum crudelissimos, Pezenegos, viam arripuimus. Senior Ruzorum, magnus regno et divitiis, unum mensem retinuit me, et retinens contra voluntatem, quasi qui sponte me perdere voluissem,ategit mecum ne ad tam inrationabilem gentem ambulare, [...]” (MPH 1864, 224).

¹⁰ „Legati quoque Ruzorum magna dona tulerunt, sed maiora recipientes abierunt. Bulanici ducis nuncii cum muneribus suis reiecti nec praesentiam caesaris aut affatum meruerunt, quia ipse, iuxta quod iussus erat, noluerat venire” (Annales Altahenses 1890, 32).

¹¹ Especially the chapters of the seventh book (MPH 1864, 309).

¹² Together with the exception of Czech academics, who worked in the territory of Slovakia (Czechoslovakia).

From the selected works of Hungarian historiography, which are more firmly established in historiographical views (in contrast to Slovak and partly Czech scholarship),¹³ we can summarily point to three great scholars who defined the basic interpretations of Emeric's title (*dux Ruizorum*). These are György Györffy (2003, 447-449), Gyula Kristó (1980, 57-66), and, in part, Gyula Moravcsik (1970, 111-126), who mainly dealt with hagiographical motifs concerning Emeric's life. Cséte Katona (2017, 23-60), together with Dániel Bagi (2020, 129-131), who partially summarized the conclusions of Hungarian scholars, represent the most recent contributions on this topic. The work of C. Katona, however, was primarily devoted to the possible occurrence of Varangian-Viking elites in early kingdom of Hungary, and thus also treated Emeric only briefly. Among the selected works of Ukrainian academics, one can highlight the summarizing work of Ivan Miskov (2018, 24-40), and, more marginally, Yuri Dyba (2010, 50-51) and Myroslav Voloshchuk (2021, 49-51). From the perspective of Russian researchers, the works of Alexander V. Nazarenko deserves particular attention, due to his linguistic analyses (2001, 29).

The current state of research on the analysis of Emeric's titles can be considered incomplete. This fact is manifested by the works of historians documented over the last two centuries. Many historians view this matter very differently. Argumentatively, many opinions can be considered unstable, or even ungraspable. In general, these groups of viewpoints (regarding what the title of *prince of Ruiz* might mean) can be divided into two main groups. The first is the military interpretation of the title, and the second is the territorial interpretation. However, both orientations may overlap thematically (Rapant 1974, 47-74). Particularly valuable works, characterized by their clarity on the subject, together with the summarizing views of the historiographical schools, are the works of I. Miskov and C. Katona.

Territorial interpretation of the title

In general, it can be stated that in the territorial (provincial) interpretation, Emeric is classified as the administrator of the territory (*ducatus*). This territory, still unspecified, may have been administered by the young prince according to his father's (King Stephen's) will. In historical works, this territory is generally described as the „border mark.” Deductions about how Emeric's territorial title should be interpreted appeared most often in the works of Polish, Slovak (previously Czechoslovak), Ukrainian, and Russian (Soviet) researchers. Logically, these considerations were based in the first half of the 20th century and were later influenced by the existing political situation concerning Subcarpathian Rus. The border of the royal territory, commonly known as „*confinium*” (Zsoldos 2000, 99-116), was therefore often associated with the designation of the frontier mark, more specifically „*marchia Ruthenorum*” (Chaloupecký 1923, 40-41; Rapant 1974, 55). This indication of the Ruthenian mark, however, originates from a different Imperial source, *Vita Chuonradi archiepiscopi Salzbургensis*, dating to the middle of the 12th century.¹⁴ The first to introduce this thesis abroad, at the beginning of the 19th century,

¹³ The papers and texts of Slovak historians are presented in this study in the largest numbers, due to the need for a brief summary, which has been absent in the academic environment so far. However, their qualitative value is only minimally reflected in the subject matter, except for Rapant's selected essays. Nonetheless, his study is characterized by the strong conviction that, in Emeric's case, there can be no question of a medieval scribe's mistaken notation.

¹⁴ The mentioned source contains a reference to the border territory (*marchia Ruthenorum*), where the King of Hungary was supposed to be located, during the dynastic struggles with the Rurikid dynasty. At that time a messenger was sent to the Hungarian kingdom to confirm peace negotiations with the Holy Roman Empire (Font 2021, 132).

was Herman I. Bidermann. He laid the basis for the historiographical association of the title *dux Ruizorum* with the territorial mention of the Ruthenian mark (Bidermann 1862). On the other hand, it may be noted that from today's perspective, there is no direct historical or philological relationship between the two historical mentions (Nazarenko 2001, 29, 37). Therefore, the record of this specific mark is separated in time from Emeric's title by around 90 years.¹⁵ The only common point of these sources is their imperial origin. Although the views of individual academics were based on general statements, there is no other contemporary source for Emeric's title that explains its nature. This issue was often derived from the general circumstances of the first half of the 11th century, which were marked by close contacts with the Piast, but especially the Rurikid dynastic environment (Hrušovský 1939, 68).

From the perspective of the administration of the (border) mark, scholars have theorized about the affiliation of the frontier territory to the old Kievan Rus' (Micjuk 1936, 14). In these interpretations, Emeric functioned as the „administrator-bearer” of the border region, though its precise location is debated. An alternative thesis proposed that the Árpádián mark served as a defensive buffer against the territorial expansion of Rurikid Rus' (Konečný 2015, 44). The principal points of disagreement among Soviet historians centered on determining which polity actually administered the mark (Miskov 2018, 30), with Shusharin's deductions serving as a representative example.¹⁶ A similar phenomena is evident in 19th century research, particularly among Polish historians, who generally favoured a territorial-provincial interpretation.¹⁷ Finally, attention should be drawn to the contributions of Henryk Paskiewicz, who approached the subject of the border mark with pronounced scepticism due to the lack of contemporary evidence. No source from the 11th century mentions the Ruthenian mark (in his translation, „*Transcarpathian Rus'*”) including the Old East Slavic Chronicles (Paszkievicz 1955, 74).¹⁸

In evaluating the title *dux Ruizorum*, historians have often been compelled to rely on secondary references and analogical evidence, given the absence of contemporary primary sources. In doing so, they have attempted to provide at least a tentative explanation of Emeric's title. Scholarly deductions grounded in the territorial theory were most frequently drawn from a variety of archaeological, political, and cultural sources, which historians analyzed within the context of 10th- and 11th-century events. However, the majority of these interpretations remained

¹⁵ From a methodological point of view, the retrospective linking of these two records cannot be accepted by today's standards. The reason for this association at the time can be traced, as previously noted, to the contemporary context of the 20th century, when the ethnonyms *Rutén* and *Rusín* were associated with the medieval references *Ruizorum*, *Ruthen(i)*, *Ruthenorum*. Thus, throughout the first and second halves of the 20th century, these interpretations were often developed in connection with the *Ruthenian* (*Rusín*) question. It is therefore unsurprising that such theses appeared most frequently in the works of Soviet and, to some extent, Polish historians (Miskov 2018, 24-25).

¹⁶ V. Šušarin, for example, inclined toward the theory of the origin of the (border) autonomous territory, presumably formed after the initial reforms during King Stephen's reign. Jonáš Záborský similarly expressed this idea in 1875: „*To you (Russians) the principality is left, but I (Stephen I) and my son are your rulers (knjazi)*” (Záborský 2012, 163). A comparable view was shared by Rapant, who referred to this area as the province of Emeric's principality (*ducatus*) and argued that the principality ended after the intervention of Yaroslav the Wise in 1031 (Rapant 1974, 60).

¹⁷ For the border designation, the term „*Słowaczyna*” was also created anachronistically, albeit deliberately (MPH 1864, 513). This artificial name for the frontier mark was applied in the 11th and 12th centuries to serve as an equivalent of the „*Ruthenian mark*”.

¹⁸ Nearly all of the works mentioned above reflect a methodologically misleading linking of Emeric's title *dux Ruizorum* with the border territory *marchia Ruthenorum*. It should be emphasized that, to this day, there is no single contemporary source that demonstrates any direct connection between these two records.

speculative. Today it is a well-known fact that from the second half of the 10th century, several cultural influences „shaped” the north-eastern Carpathian areas. Among these impacts, one can briefly point out (in addition to the Rurikid influence): the Piast influence (Hudáček 2018, 27-74; 2019, 53-95; Florek 2019, 281-312) and weaker White Croatian influence, which has been interpreted from *Nestor* and the chapters of the *De Administrando Imperio* (1967, 147). It is also certainly important to highlight the Přemyslid influence (Sommer – Třeštík – Žemlička 2009, 85-88), which had a far-reaching range under Boleslaus I and II, extending beyond the Carpathian Mountains to the areas of the Czerwień trade centres (Wołoszyn 2020, 171-200). From the first third of the 11th century onwards, one can already point to a significant growth in influence under the reign of Yaroslav the Wise (Lubik 2020, 6-20).

Apart from the deductions described above, research perspectives associated with the hagiographical direction of Emeric's theme can be found in 20th-century Polish academic scholarship. This younger tradition is possibly linked to the Benedictine monastery on Bald Mountain (Łysa Góra). More specific information regarding the association of Emeric's tradition with this place is not known, but it is theorised to have begun during the period of Boleslaus III Wrymouth (Derwich 1994, 113-129; Derwich 2004, 118-127). According to tradition, St. Stephen was to enter into an alliance with Mieszko II, which was to be sealed by the marriage of Emeric to a Piast princess (Györffy 2003, 367-368).¹⁹ At the site of Bald Mountain, the Piast dynasty was to offer the relic of the Árpáadian (Byzantine) Holy Double Cross (Moravcsik 1947, 142).

It is almost fascinating how specifically focused and interpretive the theses from the Polish, Czechoslovak, and Soviet scholarly environment were regarding the border areas.²⁰ These considerations, however, did not influence Hungarian historians, who were oriented instead toward the western, even Danubian, areas.

Hungarian academics have interpreted this question in terms of securing the Árpád borders in the west. One of the more established (albeit combined) deductions was presented by G. Kristó. In contrast to Györffy's military interpretation, Kristó often offered opposing views. Although many aspects of Kristó's interpretation are now outdated, his methodological combination of archaeological materials with complex linguistic research (particularly in toponymy), was exceptionally advanced for its time. His research thematically combined the perspective of both territorial and military interpretations. Kristó relied strongly on the linguistic analyses of Kniezsa and Moór, which were especially popular at the time (Kniezsa 1938, 425; Moór 1936, 259). His research focused on place names of selected locations (as *Rusovce*, *Oroszi*, *Kisoroszi*), which he later associated with the Rurikid settlements.²¹ These small areas were considered to guard and secure the Árpáadian border of the western parts of the Kingdom (Kristó 1980, 64).²²

¹⁹ In Györffy's understanding, it was the first trace of a Byzantine reliquary (the two-armed cross of the Árpádians), which could be connected to Emeric's tradition. The reliquary was originally supposed to have been in the possession of St. Stephen. In this way, the toponymic tradition in the Piast location may have referred to „*świętokrzyski*.” The hagiographical mention of Długosz describes prince Emeric, who was on a hunting trip in the borderland, where he is said to have discovered the ruins from which the monastery was later built. However, the whole deduction has a more hagiographical character (Györffy 1988).

²⁰ It is obvious how they were historically and ideologically oriented toward the northeastern (border) areas of the Carpathian Mountains and the territory of Subcarpathian Rus.

²¹ Kristó's dedication to this topic can also be seen in the example of his native village *Orosháza*.

²² According to Kristó's theses, the areas around the Little Danube, together with the important river fords (across the Danube near Rusovce) were strategic intra-dynastic points. According to Henrich Marczali, the activity of the Rurikid element in the area of the western kingdom was intended to secure the western borders. After 1024, when Stephen's brother-in-law Emperor Henry II, died, Hungarian-German

Nevertheless, it is today impossible to reconstruct the Rurikid-Rus' settlement, retrospectively, based on 11th century toponymy, as scholars have attempted to do in the past.²³ According to current scholarship, it can be concluded that in the 11th century, the East Slavic settlements had a very irregular character across the whole Árpáadian landscape (Font 2021, 88-96; Voloshchuk 2021). Only at the turn of the 12th/13th century do more comprehensive sources of this nature appear (Voloshchuk 2013, 408-413). The theory of Emeric, based on the assumption of Rurikid settlement,²⁴ would find a more stable position only after the later period of Coloman the Learned (Marek 2006, 227). In making similar conclusions, it would have been more appropriate, again, to point out the historical record of *Annales Altahenses*. Under the year 1039, one finds a mention of a certain *Schebis*, here designated as „*marchio*.” It is clear that in medieval Hungary, this rank was specifically related to a frontier function.²⁵ In this particular case, it is not so important that the reference was to a border county officer (*comes*), but that the Imperial chronicle sources recorded and recognised these functions in the Árpáadian environment. Moreover, this Imperial record directly indicates that a „universal” title such as *dux Ruizorum* cannot be directly linked to border patrol duties.

If these branching theses and deductions are summarized, the border mark, or administrative territory, could be located in two main areas: in the northeast of the Kingdom, or in the west around the Danube region.²⁶ These theories stem from logical deductions that the Kingdom of Hungary must have already had defined boundaries at the beginning of its formation.

Clearly defined boundaries served not only the population but also the authorities for various diplomatic purposes (in the case of messengers and dynastic escorts, it had to be specified up to which point the escort would be accompanied and where the neighbouring dynasty would assume responsibility). From the beginning of the Kingdom, such demarcated borders could also aid in managing and controlling tax collection, as well as regulating trade transported from the border areas along the Danube and Tisza rivers. In another scenario, the representative of these areas could have guarded, with the assistance of strongholds, the provincial gates near the Carpathian Mountains (Vargha – Mordovin 2019, 144). A defensive (regional) *gyepű* system may have been linked to this pattern (Somogy 1966, 19). However, these deductions are still largely based on general assumptions regarding inter-cultural (trade) contacts, which were administered and controlled by various dynasties. In the 11th century, the northwestern to northeastern region

relations became more serious. Then, in 1030, an invasion by the forces of Břetislav (then an ally of Conrad II), emerged, reaching the borders of Esztergom (as described by Kosmas under the year 1030). It was in connection with this political event that the guarding of the borders could have shifted to the western side of Hungary, along with securing the trading routes toward Hainburg and Vienna. But even in this case, Kristó strongly doubts that Emeric, as an important member of the royal family, guarded the borders with his „*družhina*” as required (Kristó 1980, 64). Interestingly, this thesis of securing the borders against the Bavarians was also supported by G. Labuda. According to his thesis, Emeric may have been entitled to Bavarian territories through his mother (Labuda 2008, 62; Bagi 2020, 131).

²³ A critique of Kristó's theory has most recently been indirectly presented by Voloshchuk (2013, 408-413).

²⁴ It is positive to note that the phenomenon of anachronistic ethnicity, which historians have relied upon until recently, is likely disappearing. Academics addressed similar issues on the topic of „Viking graves in Poland” in 2013, later in 2019 (Bogacki – Janowski – Kaczmarek 2019) and most recently in 2024 (Gardela 2025). Their main insight was to emphasize a complex understanding of the relationships of Scandinavian material culture, which in many ways interacted with and merged into the culture of the Eastern and Western Slavs.

²⁵ „*Schebis marchio Ungarie eodem anno est defunctus*” (Steinhübel 2016, 390; 2021, 405).

²⁶ At the beginning of the 11th century, Emeric may have exercised control over a certain territory, which was likely located either around the northeastern borders of the Carpathians or near the western border (along the line Esztergom – Győr – Mošon – Sopron?).

beyond the Carpathian Mountains represented an important trade route (Bogucki 2016; Brather 2010, 153-154; Ritoók 2020, 166). The main role among the Přemysls, Árpáds, Piasts, and Rurikids was played by the Czerwień hillforts, which were located along a vertical line not far from the Carpathian Mountains (Hudáček 2016, 55-62; Wołoszyn 2013, 87).

Conclusion

Using selected examples of territorial interpretation, it was possible to observe how the opinion of (not only) Slovak historians on this topic had been formed and shaped. Together with the opinions of foreign academics, these analyses and deductions were broken down and compared in such a way that readers could understand the gradual emergence and development of these academic thoughts. Yet, the most frequent interpretations (quantitatively) were focused on the northeastern regions of the Hungarian kingdom. Particularly defining for the Slovak historiographic school was the study of D. Rapant, who in an overly uncompromising manner, rejected the view that the record *dux Ruizorum* could have been a scribal error. By his words: „*If we satisfy ourselves with the judgment, or rather with Pauler's (un)opinion of 1893, that there has been a misunderstanding, not rare among medieval chroniclers, or a scribal error, it seems to us, however, that we are dealing after all with the historical testimony of an otherwise reliable and fairly well-informed annalist, which, if properly resolved, could have wider than purely personal significance in relation to prince Emeric*” (Rapant 1974, 53).²⁷

For this reason, there are hardly any theses in the works of Slovak historians that perceive Emeric's record as a misrepresentation in medieval writings. Although a territorial interpretation seems rather unlikely at this stage, according to the means at the disposal of the king's son (and in particular the principle of primogeniture), Emeric could have been given some authority over selected territories in the kingdom. As critically pointed out by D. Bagi, in the case of Emeric, none of these theories can be conclusively proven, due to the absence of more specific sources (Bagi 2020, 132-133).

An absolutely fundamental weakness in the case of Emeric is the austerity of his Hildesheim inscription. Deductions on the subject are countless, differing from one another on multiple levels, from simplicity to confusing complexity. Despite their contemporary perspectives, all views must be treated with extreme caution, even those that are no longer methodologically usable. Can Emeric be identified with confidence as the prince of the Rurikids? Almost certainly not. It is therefore necessary once again to leave behind historiographical analyses and return to the literal text of the source. Emeric's title clearly refers (in person) to *Ruizorum*, that is, to the ethnonym *Ruiz* and not to the territory of the *Ruiz* marks. It is safe to say that Emeric was indeed the only known son of a king chosen to sit on the Árpadian throne. If he did truly bear this title (which cannot yet be confirmed with certainty), it would have represented a high-ranking title in his case.

²⁷ „Spokojíme sa s úsudkom, lepšie povedané s odsudkom Paulerovým z roku 1893, že tu ide o nedorozumenie, nie zriedkavé vraj u stredovekých kronikárov, prípadne o písársku chybu. Nám sa však jednako len vidí, že tu ide predsa len o historické svedectvo inak spoľahlivého a dosť dobre informovaného annalistu, ktoré pri správnom rozriešení mohlo by mať aj širší ako čisto osobný význam v súvislosti s kráľovičom Imrichom“ (Rapant 1974, 53).

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Mgr. Jakub Kurák, PhD.
 Jan Stanislav Institute of Slavistics SAS
 Dúbravská cesta 9
 841 04 Bratislava
 Slovakia
 jakub.kurak@savba.sk
 ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8949-5825