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Between Great Moravia and Přemyslid Bohemia. Ways of Christianization in the Czech Lands in the Middle Ages in the Latest Czech Research¹

Christianity performed a very important role in development of Central European countries in the Early Middle Ages. Christianity came to the Czech lands from Western Europe where a certain starting point was adoption of Christianity by Clovis, the King of the Franks, in the 480s². Under his reign Frankish Empire and with it Christianity spread towards the East. A basic breakthrough in the process of Christianization was represented by the period of Charles the Great. Expansion of Frankish Empire brought expansion of Western culture and with it Christianity. Slavonic rulers thus came into direct contact with the Western world³. Frankish Empire and its nobility and society affected Slavonic dukes and aristocracy who adopted many elements of Western culture, including Christianity. Christianity thus was not accepted as a mere religious belief but as an integral part of the lifestyle and social order⁴. Invasions of the armies of Charles the Great into

¹ Study was supported by Grantová agentura České republiky (the Science Foundation of Czech Republic), project number 15-01866S, receiver University of Ostrava.

² Cf. V. Drška, *La baptême de Clovis: imitatio imperii? La stratégie politique des élites ecclésiastiques gauloises au tournant de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Âge*, „Prague papers on History of International Relations“, 2009, pp. 9–27.

³ Cf. recently P. Charvát, *Nevyzpytatelné cesty Páně: příchod křesťanství k polabským Slovanům*, in: *Co můj kostel dnes má, nemůže kníže odnít. Věnováno Petru Sommerovi k životnímu jubileu*, ed. E. Doležalová and P. Meduna, Praha 2011, pp. 111–121.

⁴ Recently J. Sláma, *Nejstarší kontakty Čech s křesťanským světem*, in: *Co můj kostel dnes má, nemůže kníže odnít. Věnováno Petru Sommerovi k životnímu jubileu*, ed. E. Do-

Bohemia in the years 805 and 806 were not connected with the spread of Christianity in any way, just intensifying contacts with the Western neighbours, especially Bavaria. Christianization was more successful in the course of the 9th century in the Central Danube catchment area, naturally including Moravia, rather than the Elbe catchment area where Bohemia belonged⁵.

Christianization was a very complex process consisting of several stages and a number of local specifics. Written resources usually only recorded baptism in wider political contexts, especially as “official” baptisms of famous personalities or large groups of the population. Individual baptisms of private individuals were not usually recorded. The earliest stage of Christianization in the Slavonic tribal community was not primarily connected with the intrinsic values of Christianity, i.e. its ideals and moral content. Christianization was a strongly political matter and was connected with the beginnings of the Slavonic state. This applies to Slavic nations including Great Moravia, Přemyslid Bohemia as well as Piast Poland. Baptism was connected with active steps on the part of the sovereign and the aristocracy, thus Christianization can be said to have spread “from top to bottom”. In no case was Christianization an issue of individuals, Christianity was virtually adopted by the whole societies, i.e. the individual Slavonic “tribes”. Adoption of Christianity however substantially changed the inner structures and traditional order of these tribes. The change of the existing order allowed new definition of the role and power of the Christian sovereign and his laws⁶.

ležalová and P. Meduna, Praha 2011, pp. 13–20. On cultural influences cf. N. Profantová, *K průniku prvků franského životního stylu do Čech 9. století (na základě poznatků archeologie)*, in: *Velká Morava mezi východem a západem*, ed. L. Galuška, M. Kouřil and Z. Měřínský, Brno 2001, pp. 327–338.

⁵ D. Třeštík, *Čechové a Karel Veliký (791–806)*, „Marginalia Historica“, Vol. 4: 2001, pp. 7–61, esp. 28–41; idem, *Vznik Velké Moravy. Moravané, Čechové a střední Evropa v letech 791–871*, Praha 2001, pp. 71–85. On a power and political situation in the Danube basin recently R. Zehetmayer, *Rakouské Podunají kolem roku 900*, in: *Pád Velké Moravy aneb Kdo byl pohřben v hrobu 153 na Pohansku u Břeclavi?*, ed. J. Macháček and M. Wihoda, Praha 2016, pp. 73–101.

⁶ D. Třeštík, *Počátky Přemyslovců. Vstup Čechů do dějin (530–935)*, Praha 1997, pp. 297–302; Z. Měřínský, *Morava na úsvitě dějin. Vlastivěda moravská, Země a lid, nová řada, sv. 4*, Brno 2011, pp. 294–295; J. Žemlička, *Čechy v době knížecí (1034–1198)*, Praha 1997, pp. 19–21.

The key role in the spread of Christianity was performed by missions and their long-term effects on most of the population. Christianity reached the territory of Moravia through missionaries coming mainly from the Bavarian episcopacy in Passau at the turn of the 8th and 9th centuries. The assumed effect of Irish-Scottish missions in the territories of the Czech lands and Slovakia remains unclear (however, Irish and Scottish missionaries were certainly active in Bavaria). The Moravian territory was not a formal part of the Passau episcopacy and Christianization of the territories north of the Danube was also contributed to by the Salzburg archbishopric. Knowledge of the early stages of Christianization of Moravia in the former half of the 9th century is hindered by the lack of resources and therefore many researchers supported their opinions also with archaeological resources (archaeological research on Great Moravian churches and burial places)⁷.

The first specific data on arrival of the first missions to Great Moravia are contained in *Methodius' Life*, written shortly after the death of Archbishop Methodius in 885⁸. According to this document Christianity in Moravia was mainly represented, in addition to priests from "Germany", i.e. from Bavarian monasteries and episcopacies, by priests and missionaries from North Italy and Dalmatia ("Greeks"). The earliest Christian churches were probably established in Great Moravia as early as in the first quarter of the 9th century⁹. Earlier literature includes opinions that the arrival of Christianity also changed burial customs – causing the transition from cremation to burial. However, burial was already practised in the Czech lands before the arrival of Christianity and therefore was not directly connected with Christianization of the local population. The change in the bur-

⁷ Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, pp. 295–319; D. Třeštík, *Vznik...*, pp. 117–121; A. Provazník, *Britanie v raném středověku, charakter její christianizace a expanze misionářů do střední Evropy*, „Časopis Matice moravské“, Vol. 110: 1991, pp. 19–36.

⁸ J. Vašica, *Literární památky epochy velkomoravské 863–885*, Praha 1996, pp. 95–109.

⁹ Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, pp. 296–299; J. Vašica, *Literární památky...*, p. 281; L. Galuška and L. Poláček, *Církevní architektura v centrální oblasti velkomoravského státu*, in: *České země v raném středověku*, ed. P. Sommer, Praha 2006, pp. 92–153; D. Kalhous, *České země za prvních Přemyslovců v 10.–12. století*, Vol. II: *Svět doby knížecí*, Praha 2013, p. 158; I. Štefan, "Great" Moravia and the Přemyslid Bohemia from the point of view of archeology, in: *The Great Moravian tradition and memory of Great Moravia in the medieval Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. R. Antonín, Opava 2014, pp. 20–23.

ial customs however brought a relatively big change in the traditional culture, probably in connection with social changes and the origin of elites. The new burial method probably reached the Slavonic territories through influence from the surrounding, already Christianized ethnic groups¹⁰.

The first stage of Christianization in Great Moravia was accomplished in the early 830s. According to the tradition described in the resources of the Passau episcopacy “all Moravians” (*omnes Moravos*) were baptised by the Passau Bishop Reginhar¹¹. The baptism was said to have taken place around 831. The initiative may be assumed to originate from the Great Moravian Duke Mojmir I, who discussed the issue with Bishop Reginhar probably already in or around 829. Anyway, Moravians established contact with Frankish Empire in the early 820s at the latest, as in 822 a delegation from Moravia participated in the Frankfurt assembly. The assembly discussed matters of the Eastern boundary of the empire. The coverage by that baptism is not known; it probably only included the duke and his retinue (representatives of Moravian aristocracy). The reasons were mainly political – the Moravian Duke Mojmir thus reinforced his position in relation to Frankish Empire and joined the “family” of European Christian sovereigns. This step was closely connected with the origin of the State of Great Moravia (this is to be understood in terms of an early mediaeval “state”)¹².

Adoption of Christianity by the duke and his retinue (court) was often connected with anti-Christian movements, i.e. rejection of the new religion. These movements are documented from many different territories, including Bohemia. There are no such reports from Moravia, among other things

¹⁰ Z. Měřinský, *Morava...*, pp. 303–305; I. Štefan, *Změna pohřebního ritu v raném středověku jako archeologický a kulturně-antropologický problém*, „Archeologické rozhledy“, T. 59: 2007, pp. 805–836, esp. 811–812; D. Kalhous, *Hroby, kostely, kultura a texty*, in: *Pád Velké Moravy aneb Kdo byl pohřben v hrobu 153 na Pohansku u Břeclavi?*, ed. J. Macháček and M. Wihoda, Praha 2016, pp. 167–168.

¹¹ *Notae de episcopis Pataviensibus*. Monumenta Germaniae historica (= MGH), Scriptorum, t. XXV, ed. G. Waitz, Hannover 1880, p. 623; *Thomas Ebendorfer – Catalogus praesulum Laureacensium et Pataviensium*. MGH, Scriptorum rerum Germanicarum, Nova series, T. XXII, ed. H. Zimmermann, Hannover 2008, p. 80.

¹² D. Třeštík, *Vznik...*, pp. 117–126; idem, *Počátky...*, pp. 270–276; Z. Měřinský, *Morava...*, pp. 308, 315; L. Jan, *Počátky moravského křesťanství a církevní správa do doby husitské*, in: *Vývoj církevní správy na Moravě* (XXVII. Mikulovské sympozium 2002), Brno 2003, pp. 7–8.

because Christianization of Great Moravia was quite advanced then already. The conflict between Christianity and the former pagan cults was not primarily a dispute between two religions but rather a conflict between the old and the new social arrangement. Some historians therefore assume that until the arrival of the missionaries in 863/864 there existed a certain compromise between the old pagan cult and Christian belief. In the former half of the 9th century there were still places of pagan sacrifices next to Christian churches in the sites of Great Moravian castles, according to archaeological finds¹³.

Adoption of the rules of Christian life by the Moravian society was a long-term process. Baptism itself was accompanied with explanation of the basic rules of the faith, according to the canon law, but this obviously could not suffice to abandon the existing superstitions, pagan customs and rites. One of the regulations of the synod held in Mainz in 852 characterises Moravian Christianity as “rough” or “crude” (*rudis adhuc christianitas gentis Maraensium*)¹⁴. Persisting pagan elements in Moravian life in the mid 9th century are also mentioned in the legends on the lives of Constantine and Methodius still written in Great Moravia. *The Life of Constantine* describes activities of Bavarian and Franconian clergy in Moravia before the arrival of the two brothers from Thessaloniki. Some priests allegedly preached heresy and even did not object to pagan rites and weddings, in contradiction to canon law¹⁵. The process of Christianization of the Moravian society still continued in the last third of the 9th century. After the return of Archbishop Methodius to Moravia in 873, the Church administration apparently began to develop, including instating clergy in all castles. Together with this, Christianization continued, as the legend *Methodius' Life* says: “Pagans abandoned their heresies and adopted belief in the true God”¹⁶.

Adoption of Christianity also performed a significant role in the establishment of the Great Moravian state. Establishment of an independent epis-

¹³ Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, p. 315; D. Třeštík, *Vznik...*, pp. 129–130; idem, *Počátky...*, pp. 91–93; B. Dostál, *K pohanství moravských Slovanů*, „Sborník prací filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity“, Vol. C 39: 1992, pp. 7–17, esp. 10–11.

¹⁴ *Magnae Moraviae fontes historici*, Vol. IV: Leges, textus iuridici (= MMFH), ed. D. Bartoňková and R. Večerka, Praha 2013, p. 21; Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, pp. 308–309.

¹⁵ J. Vašica, *Literární památky...*, pp. 250–251.

¹⁶ Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, p. 309; J. Vašica, *Literární památky...*, p. 285.

curacy was an important step in this process, whose existence was highly relevant politically. Formation of an autonomous Church administration subordinate to the local bishop and thus to the duke, brought “independence” of Great Moravia in a sense. The whole process of establishment of an episcopacy, or archbishopric, in Moravia was rather complicated and several opinions of it have been published in literature. D. Třeštík assumed that only the establishment of a bishopric would be insufficient. Such Moravian bishop would have to be subordinated to the archbishop, probably of Salzburg. The Duke Rostislav apparently sought the creation of the Moravian archbishopric (eastern church, however, did not know the institution of the archbishopric)¹⁷.

As is well known, the Moravian Duke Rostislav I (846–870) addressed his application first to Rome (sometime between 858 and 862) and as it failed he readdressed it to the Byzantine Empire. This was an attempt to extricate from the influence of the Bavarian church and the political influence of East Frankish Empire. The church organisation built in Moravia since the 830s was under the influence of Bavarian and Franconian clergy through whom the King of Franconia interfered with political affairs in Moravia. The establishment of the Moravian bishopric (and even better archbishopric) was a key political goal of Duke Rostislav¹⁸.

Byzantine Emperor Michael III sent to Moravia a group of priests and intellectuals headed by the brothers Constantine and Methodius. They arrived in Great Moravia in 863 or 864. As the legends about the lives of the two brothers tell, Duke Rostislav requested the arrival of a *bishop and teacher*. This request was not fully granted, however, due to the relationships between the Byzantine Empire and the Roman Curia and the interests of the Bavarian church. A mission was sent from the Byzantine Empire headed by Constantine, a man of deep philological and philosophical learning. Constantine introduced the principal idea in the sense that Christian

¹⁷ Recently D. Třeštík, *Vznik...*, pp. 179–182; Z. Měřinský, *Morava...*, p. 251.

¹⁸ D. Kalhous, *K významu sirmijské apoštolské tradice při formování episkopální organizace na Moravě*, in: *Východní Morava v 10. až 14. století*, ed. L. Galuška, P. Kouřil and J. Mitáček, Brno 2008, pp. 43–52; L. Jan, *Stará Morava mezi Východem a Západem*, in: *Svatý Prokop, Čechy a střední Evropa*, ed. P. Sommer, Praha 2006, pp. 251–264; D. Třeštík, *Vznik...*, pp. 180–181; Z. Měřinský, *Morava...*, pp. 250–252; D. Kalhous, *České země...*, pp. 158–159.

faith should be spread and explained in a language the local people would understand. Before his arrival in Moravia, Constantine had already created a new alphabet according to eastern models for Old Church Slavonic, which became the liturgy language. Using local, a Slavic language in the liturgy was very unusual and it caused repeatedly controversies¹⁹.

The arrival of the mission headed by Constantine and Methodius not only brought about a change in the liturgy language (i.e. the mere replacement of Latin with Early Slavonic), but also substantially changed the rites. The Byzantine Church proceeded differently in baptising pagans. While the Western Church introduced, usually very formally, the mere basics of the new faith, in the Eastern Church the process preceding baptism was quite long²⁰. The new Slavonic liturgy developed by Constantine combined Roman and Byzantine elements. The two brothers also translated and created a number of liturgy texts for Moravia, including part of the New Testament. For Moravian conditions Constantine formulated an auxiliary code (*Zakon sudnyj ljudem*, Judicial Code for the People) following the Byzantine model (code *Ekloge ton nomon*, 739–741), including in its provisions the surviving pagan customs. The code strictly prohibits pagan rites in private yards (houses)²¹. Similarly Methodius, on the basis of Byzantine Church regulations and Emperor Justinian laws, translated the collection of the canon and civil laws called *Nomocanon*. It contains provisions of the duties of the bishop and priests. Some articles concern the conditions for receiving the baptism²². Probably Methodius also translated from Latin penitential a basic handbook for priests with a list of sins and the appropriate penances. Old Church Slavonic text has a title *Provisions of the holy Fathers* and it is only a part of the Latin original (*Merseburger Bußordnung*). Methodius did not adopt in his text a number of provisions of pagan prac-

¹⁹ Recently V. Vavřínek, *Cyrl a Metoděj mezi Konstantinopolí a Římem*, Praha 2013, pp. 116–148; on relations with papal power M. Betti, *The Making of Christian Moravia (858–882). Papal Power and Political Reality*, Leiden – Boston 2014, pp. 41–107; briefly Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, pp. 256–259, 261; D. Kalhous, *Hroby...*, pp. 171–172; idem, *České země...*, p. 158.

²⁰ Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, p. 261.

²¹ J. Vašica, *Literární památky...*, pp. 81–89, 191–212; Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, pp. 267–274, 310–311; MMFH IV, s. 128–176.

²² J. Vašica, *Literární památky...*, pp. 72–78; MMFH IV, s. 182–324.

tices. He probably did not consider it important for the Great Moravian conditions²³.

In 880 Pope John VIII issued a bull entitled *Industriae tuae*, by which he granted protection to Duke Svatopluk I and with him the whole Great Moravian “state”. The pope reconfirmed the Slavonic liturgy and alphabet. He also confirmed the position of Methodius as the Moravian archbishop and granted Duke Svatopluk the right to establish new episcopacies in Great Moravia with new bishops to be ordained by Methodius and his two suffragans. The bishops were also to elect new archbishops to be inaugurated on the basis of papal confirmation. The pontifical privilege also underlines that Duke Svatopluk and his “judges” (*tibi et iudicibus tuis*), i.e. noblemen and officials, preferred the Latin liturgy, probably in connection with their orientation towards Frankish Empire and its aristocracy²⁴. One thing is certain: the Church administration was only completed at the very end of the existence of Great Moravia, which was also caused by the disputes after Methodius’ death in 885. In 899 Pope John IX sent his legates to Moravia, who a year later ordained an archbishop and three subordinate bishops there to renew church administration in the region²⁵.

Older Czech historiography assumed that the decline of Great Moravia under Hungarian raids in the early 10th century meant not only disintegration of the institutional “state” but also decay of the church organisation in Moravia²⁶. Following data in Cosmas’ Chronicle the latter was only restored in 1063 by establishment of the episcopal throne in Olomouc²⁷. Written resources about the history of Moravia in the 10th century are fragmentary.

²³ J. Vašica, *Literární památky...*, pp. 89–92, 218–226; MMFH IV, pp. 118–127.

²⁴ *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris regni Bohemiae* (= CDB), t. I, ed. Gustav Friedrich, Prague 1904–1907, pp. 18–21, n. 24; Z. Měřinský, *Morava...*, pp. 329–331.

²⁵ CDB, T. I, pp. 29–33, n. 30; Z. Měřinský, *Morava...*, pp. 330–331, 336; D. Kalhous, *České země...*, p. 159.

²⁶ On the fall of Great Moravia see recently I. Štefan, *Great Moravia, Statehood and Archaeology. The ‘Decline and Fall’ of One Early Medieval Polity*, in: *Frühgeschichtliche Zentralorte in Mitteleuropa*, ed. J. Macháček and Š. Ungerman, Bonn 2011, pp. 333–354; P. Kouřil, *Staří Maďaři a jejich podíl na kolapsu a pádu Velké Moravy aneb Spojenci, sousedé, nepřátelé*, in: *Pád Velké Moravy aneb Kdo byl pohřben v hrobu 153 na Pohansku u Břeclavi?*, ed. J. Macháček and M. Wihoda, Praha 2016, pp. 102–143.

²⁷ *Die Chronik der Böhmen des Cosmas von Prag*. MGH, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, Nova series, t. II, ed. B. Bretholz, Berlin 1923, p. 113; J. Žemlička, op. cit., pp. 98–99; M. Wihoda, *Morava v době knížecí 906–1197*, Praha 2010, pp. 127–131.

One of the few written mentions documents that in 976 the Moravian bishop, together with the Prague bishop, attended litigation in Mainz. The tradition of Moravian episcopacy in the 10th century is also documented by *Granum cathalogi praesulum Moraviae*, a compilation dating from the 15th century, based on some older, today unknown resources. This resource is very unreliable, though, especially as concerns the chronology of events²⁸.

According to this document there were two successors to Methodius in Moravia after his death (however they were not archbishops). There is a hypothesis that they held one of the original suffragan episcopacies, established together with the archbishopric towards the end of the 9th century. The seat of the episcopacy might have been in Olomouc, proved by newer archaeological finds to be one of the major Great Moravian centres, with settlement continuity into the 10th century. Some researchers believe, though, that Olomouc only became the episcopal seat in the last quarter of the 10th century²⁹.

After the establishment of the Prague episcopacy in 973 the Moravian episcopal throne was probably occupied as well, with both dioceses subordinate to Mainz³⁰. The Moravian bishop, together with the Prague bishop, were probably ordained by Archbishop Willigis in 976. After the death of the bishop the Moravian diocese was unified with the Prague diocese, probably in connection with the plans of Prague Bishop Vojtěch to establish an archbishopric, in order to govern a large territory including Moravia. These

²⁸ *Das Granum catalogi praesulum Moraviae*, ed. J. Loserth, Wien 1892, pp. 23–26; D. Kalhous, *Granum catalogi praesulum Moraviae jako pramen k dějinám Moravy v 10. století?* „Mediaevalia Historica Bohemica“, T. 11: 2007, pp. 23–38.

²⁹ L. Jan, *Počátky...*, pp. 7–20; Z. Měřínský, *Morava...*, p. 344; J. Bláha, *K raně středověké topografii Olomouce se zvláštním zřetelem k oblasti tzv. Předhradí*, „Sborník prací historických 19 – Acta Universitatis Palackianae Olomucensis. Historica“, T. 31: 2002, pp. 13–28; idem, *Raně středověká Olomouc jako problém kontinuity centra světské a církevní správy*, „Sborník prací historických 18 – Acta Universitatis Palackianae Olomucensis. Historica“, T. 30: 2001, pp. 205–213.

³⁰ D. Třeštík, *K založení pražského biskupství v letech 968–976: pražská a řezenská tradice*, in: *Vlast a rodný kraj v díle historika. Sborník prací žáků a přátel věnovaný Josefu Petráňovi*, ed. J. Pánek, Praha 2004, pp. 179–196; idem, *Moravský biskup roku 976*, in: *Ad vitam et honorem. Profesoru Jaroslavu Mezníkovi přátelé a žáci k pětasedmdesátým narozeninám*, ed. T. Borovský, L. Jan and M. Wihoda, Brno 2003, pp. 211–220; D. Kalhous, *Záhadné počátky pražského biskupství*, in: *Evropa a Čechy na konci středověku. Sborník příspěvků věnovaných Františku Šmahelovi*, ed. E. Doležalová, R. Novotný and P. Soukup, Praha 2004, pp. 195–208.

plans, however, did not materialise and Moravia remained part of the Prague diocese until the early 1060s when Bohemian Duke Vratislaus II installed a new bishop in Olomouc again³¹. The preservation of the albeit limited Church administration in Moravia meant that most of the local population remained Christian. Later resources at least do not mention any “repeated” Christianization of Moravia in the 11th century. The presence of a bishop in the region was important for many church acts, although he could be substituted by choir bishops in many respects³².

Also Bohemia developed close contacts with Frankish Empire since the early 9th century. The origins of the process of Christianization are little known due to the lack of written resources. A singular event was described in 845. According to Franconian annals 14 Bohemian “dukes” with their retinues (*XIII ex ducibus Boemanorum cum hominibus suis*) were baptised at the court of Ludwig the German early that year. The baptism probably took place in Regensburg. The event was interpreted in various ways in Czech historiography, the latest extensive account being compiled by historian D. Třeštík. The reasons for the baptism were probably political and the Bohemian princes probably wanted to establish closer contact with Frankish Empire through it. The initiative probably came from the dukes, who requested to be baptised. Remarkably the event involved 14 dukes together, probably representing the whole Bohemian tribe (*gens Bohemorum*) and therefore governors of the individual parts of Bohemia. Their coordinated proceeding must have been the result of an agreement among them. Some historians believe that this step was intended to avoid a military action by Frankish Empire. This variant may be considered probable but it needs to be noted that adoption of Christianity itself could not be a guarantee of peace. The baptism itself was performed against a strong political

³¹ Z. Měřinský, *Morava...*, pp. 340–344; D. Kalhous, *České země...*, pp. 168–170; L. Jan, *Počátky...*, pp. 11–12; M. Wihoda, *Morava...*, pp. 100–102; V. Vaniček, *Svatý Václav. Pánovník a světec v raném středověku*, Praha – Litomyšl 2014, pp. 164–165. Cf. also J. Bláha, *Topografie a otázka kontinuity raně středověkého ústředí v Olomouci*, in: *Přemyslovský stát kolem roku 1000*, ed. L. Polanský, J. Sláma and D. Třeštík, Praha 2000, pp. 192–196; A. Roubic, *Obnovení biskupství v Olomouci*, „Historická Olomouc a její současné problémy“, T. 8: 1990, pp. 19–31; Z. Měřinský, *Církevní instituce na Moravě a jejich úloha ve vývoji hospodářství a osídlení od 10. století do předhusitského období*, „Archaeologia Historica“, T. 10: 1985, p. 375.

³² Cf. D. Kalhous, *České země...*, pp. 171–172.

background, which is also documented by the fact that it took place abroad and only concerned the dukes. Its relevance for further development was negligible, though, without any significant effect on later Christianization of Bohemia³³.

The origins of Christianity in Bohemia are thus in harmony with the earliest surviving documents only connected with the personality of the first historically known Czech prince Bořivoj. His baptism is described by the earliest Bohemian legends, the most important of them, from the viewpoint of Christianization of Bohemia, being Christian's Legend (*Legenda Christiani*) from the late 10th century³⁴. The legend tells how Duke Bořivoj and his wife Ludmila were baptised by Archbishop Methodius in Moravia in around 882–884³⁵. The background of this event was mainly political again and concerned the duke and his retinue – 30 men (*cum suis triginta*). In addition the baptism also took place abroad, which was probably due to the fact that Bořivoj was subordinate to the sovereign of Great Moravia, Duke Svatopluk I. Christian's Legend emphasises one important aspect connected with the baptism – Bořivoj as a pagan could not sit at the table with the other members of Svatopluk's court but had to sit on the floor. This aspect is also known from other resources, showing the important social dimension of Christianity³⁶. Detailed description of the baptism of Duke Bořivoj is not possible to verify by sources. Legend partially idealizes the whole process³⁷.

The legend also includes other important facts about the procedure of the baptism. Unlike in the case of the Western Church baptismal procedure

³³ *Annales Fuldenses sive Annales regni Francorum Orientalis*. MGH, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, t. VII, ed. F. Kurze, Hannover 1891, p. 35; D. Třeštík, *Počátky...*, pp. 74–96; idem, *Křest českých knížat roku 845 a christianizace Slovanů*, „Český časopis historický“, T. 92: 1994, pp. 423–459; D. Kalhous, *České země...*, p. 155.

³⁴ Most recently D. Kalhous, *Anatomy of a Duchy. The Political and Ecclesiastical Structures of Early Přemyslid Bohemia*, Leiden–Boston 2012, pp. 186–193. Cf. idem, *Legenda Christiani and Modern Historiography*, Leiden–New York 2015.

³⁵ *Kristiánova legenda. Život a umučení svatého Václava a jeho báby svaté Ludmily*, ed. J. Ludvíkovský, Praha 1978, pp. 18–21. Recently V. Vaníček, op. cit., pp. 40–48.

³⁶ Cf. D. Třeštík, *Počátky...*, pp. 300–301. Cf. idem, *Bořivojův křest v historiografii*, „Folia Historica Bohemica“, T. 10: 1986, pp. 41–59.

³⁷ Cf. P. Sommer, *Začátky křesťanství v Čechách. Kapitoly z dějin raně středověké duchovní kultury*, Praha 2001, p. 19.

Bořivoj and his retinue were only instructed about the basics of Christian faith after the baptismal procedure itself, on the following day. For the Bohemian duke to be able to fulfil at least the basic Christian obligations, he received a priest named Kaich, whom the prince later seated in his castle called Levý Hradec³⁸. Bořivoj had St. Kliment's church built there, the foundations of its "successor" from the 11th century have been discovered by archaeological research. The original church was probably wooden, like presumably most early churches outside the central castles (like the Great Moravian "provincial" churches were also largely wooden)³⁹. Christian's story also includes another element with analogies in a foreign environment, and that is the uprising against Duke Bořivoj for the reason of *abandoning parental morals and adopting the new and unheard of Christian code of sanctity*⁴⁰. Opposition arose against Bořivoj and the duke himself had to flee to Great Moravia. He could only return when his opposition was defeated⁴¹. After his return he had the Virgin Mary Church built at Prague Castle⁴².

Churches were also built by Bořivoj's successors. Duke Boleslav II, according to Cosmas' Chronicle, allegedly had 20 churches built in his time, which visually documents his Christianizing efforts. Mentioned count of churches, however, is probably a symbolic number⁴³. The process of Christianization of Bohemia mainly originated from the original Přemyslid domain in Central Bohemia (the oldest churches in the castles). The spread

³⁸ *Kristiánova legenda...*, p. 21; D. Třeštík, *Počátky...*, pp. 327–333.

³⁹ P. Sommer, *Začátky...*, pp. 76–81, 144–160; recently I. Štefan, *Velká Morava, počátky přemyslovských Čech a problém kulturní změny*, in: *Pád Velké Moravy aneb Kdo byl pohřben v hrobu 153 na Pohansku u Břeclavi?*, ed. J. Macháček and M. Wihoda, Praha 2016, pp. 215–219; D. Kalhous, *Hroby...*, pp. 176–177; J. Mařík, *Ecclesia lignea, memorai nebo něco úplně jiného?*, in: *Co můj kostel dnes má, nemůže kníže odnít. Věnováno Petru Sommerovi k životnímu jubileu*, ed. E. Doležalová and P. Meduna, Praha 2011, pp. 40–45.

⁴⁰ *Kristiánova legenda...*, p. 21.

⁴¹ V. Vaníček, *op. cit.*, pp. 42–43.

⁴² Recently J. Frolík and J. Maříková-Kubková et al., *Nejstarší sakrální architektura Pražského hradu. Výpověď archeologických pramenů*, Praha 2000; J. Frolík, *Nejstarší církevní architektura na Pražském hradě – současný stav poznání*, in: *Velká Morava mezi východem a západem*, ed. L. Galuška, M. Kouřil and Z. Měřinský, Brno 2001, pp. 107–113; cf. I. Štefan, *Velká Morava...*, pp. 216–217.

⁴³ *Die Chronik der Böhmen...*, p. 42; D. Kalhous, *Problémy formování církevní správy v českých zemích v raném středověku*, „*Studia Mediaevalia Bohemica*“, T. 7: 2015, p. 8.

of Christianity was closely connected with the process of unification of the whole of Bohemia under the Přemyslid reign⁴⁴. The oldest churches built in individual Přemyslid castles were the centres of Christianization. Thus the Church administration was based on the large parish principle⁴⁵. However, development of Church centres with churches in ducal castles was slowed down by the lack of clergy, a problem similar to the one faced by Archbishop Methodius in Great Moravia. Bohemian legends document that under the reign of Duke Wenceslaus and Duke Boleslaus I priests from Bavaria, Schwaben and other German countries were invited to Bohemia⁴⁶.

Like in the case of Great Moravia, Přemyslid dukes also attempted the establishment of an independent episcopacy in Bohemia. The origins of these efforts can be linked to the reign of Duke Wenceslaus and his brother Boleslaus I, but their intention only materialised in 973. Nevertheless, full Church and with it political independence was only represented by establishment of an archbishopric. Unlike Poland and Hungary, the Přemyslid dukes were unable to assert this intention. The Prague archbishopric was only established by the Luxembourg royal family in 1344⁴⁷.

Christianization, however, was not limited to the level of Church institutions. In the Early Middle Ages Christianity was mainly connected with the castle-related population and only later spread to the village communities. Written documents do not provide any detailed accounts on this

⁴⁴ Cf. P. Sommer, *Začátky...*, pp. 21–22; idem, *Svatý Prokop. Z počátků českého státu a církve*, Praha 2007, pp. 21–23.

⁴⁵ L. Jan, *Die Anfänge der Pfarrorganisation in Böhmen und Mähren*, in: *Pfarreien im Mittelalter. Deutschland, Polen, Tschechien und Ungarn im Vergleich*, ed. N. Kruppa, Göttingen 2008, pp. 183–199; idem, *Počátky*, pp. 13–15; I. Štefan and L. Varadzin, *Počátky farní organizace v Čechách a na Moravě ve výpovědi archeologie*, in: *Církevní topografie a farní síť pražské církevní provincie v pozdním středověku* (= Colloquia mediaevalia Pragensia 8), ed. J. Hrdina and B. Zylinská, Praha 2007, pp. 33–53; D. Kalhous, *Problémy...*, pp. 16–21; F. Hrubý, *Církevní zřízení v Čechách a na Moravě od 10. do konce 13. století a jeho poměr ke státu*, „Český časopis historický“, T. 22: 1916, pp. 17–53, 257–287, 385–421; T. 23: 1917, pp. 38–73.

⁴⁶ V. Vaniček, op. cit., p. 107.

⁴⁷ D. Třeštk, *K založení...*, pp. 179–196; D. Kalhous, *Záhadné počátky...*, pp. 195–208; idem, *Anatomy...*, pp. 143–157; V. Vaniček, op. cit., pp. 157–165; M. Wihoda, *Pražské arcibiskupství svatého Vojtěcha*, in: *Kościół w monarchiach Przemyslidów i Piastów*, ed. J. Dobosz, Poznań 2009, pp. 205–217. On beginnings of the Prague archbishopric recently Z. Hledíková, *Arnošt z Pardubic. Arcibiskup, zakladatel, rádce*, Praha 2008.

process, though. An important role in the process of Christianization was performed by the second Prague bishop Adalbert-Vojtěch († 997) of the Slavník family. His activities on the episcopal throne are described by legends, which also mention difficulties he repeatedly had to address (disorderly marriage, slavery, markets on Sunday, non-fasting etc.)⁴⁸. He sought support for his efforts to deepen the principles of Christianity in Bohemia from Duke Boleslaus. The duke with his magnates (*primates*) granted Adalbert the right under canon law (*secundum statuta canonum*) to dissolve pagan marriages, found new churches and collect Church fees⁴⁹.

Thus Christianization in Bohemia was connected not only with the effort to baptise the whole population but also with the attempt to establish at least the basic principles of Christian life and suppress earlier pagan habits and rites. Elements of pagan customs, however, survived, sometimes permanently, in the folk culture, and unless they contradicted the Christian faith, the Church either tolerated them or even included them in the “official” cult⁵⁰. Even in the former half of the 11th century the progress of Christianization in Bohemia was not much advanced, as is documented by a set of provisions (*decreta*) by Duke Břetislav I, allegedly announced over the grave of St. Adalbert in Gniezno in the context of a military action in Poland in 1039⁵¹. The provisions only survived in Cosmas’ rendering, with details of the circumstances of publication of these “laws” probably originating from him. However, the contents of the individual provisions are probably genuine and Cosmas took them over from an earlier document. Thus the Bohemian duke tried the legal way of elimination of pagan rites and customs in his country. The Laws of Duke Břetislav I of 1039 were to reinforce

⁴⁸ P. Sommer, *Začátky...*, pp. 16, 54–55; D. Kalhous, *České země...*, pp. 159–161.

⁴⁹ CDB, T. I, p. 43, No. 37. Cf. J. Zachová and D. Třeštík, *Adhortace De ammonicione ad presbiteros a biskup Vojtěch*, „Český časopis historický“, T. 99: 2001, pp. 279–293.

⁵⁰ Cf. P. Sommer, *Začátky...*, pp. 13–51; Z. Smetánka, *Legenda o Ostojovi. Archeologie obyčejného života v raně středověkých Čechách*, Praha 1992, pp. 180–250; P. Charvát, *Ideologická funkce kultury v přemyslovských Čechách*, in: *Typologie raně feudálních slovanských států*, ed. J. Žemlička, Praha 1987, pp. 229–237, esp. pp. 236–237.

⁵¹ *Die Chronik der Böhmen...*, p. 85–90. Cf. B. Krzemińska, *Břetislav I. Čechy a střední Evropa v prvé polovině XI. století*, Praha 1999, pp. 188–229. Recently M.R. Pauk, *Ergo meum maximum et primum sit decretum. Prawo kanoniczne i sądownictwo kościelne w tzw. Dekretach księcia Brzetysława I*, in: *Právní kultura středověku*, ed. M. Nodl and P. Węcowski, Praha 2016, pp. 27–44.

the position of Christianity in the country. Severe punishment (both secular and canonical) was established for certain practices contradicting Christian principles. The provisions banned polygamy, punished adultery and abortions, prohibited insobriety, burying outside Christian cemeteries, and Sunday work and markets. The text also mentions provisions concerning serious offences such as murder⁵². The clergymen performed an important role in enforcement of these laws. The truth is, though, that the success of Christianization was also limited by the insufficient number of clergy and churches in rural areas.

The tradition of Old Slavonic literature in Bohemia in the 10th and 11th centuries relates only to literary sources, with the exception of the penitential *Někotoraja zapověď*, which originated probably in the 11th century⁵³. This text came into being as a compilation, partly based on Great Moravian *Nomocanon*. The penitential contains repentance for a total of 42 sins, which included, among other things, the life of priests and relationships between men and women⁵⁴. The process of Christianizing a society that was far from finished in the 11th century in the Czech lands also corresponds to the classification of sins related to paganism (magic operations, a belief in false gods and sacrifice).

Assertion of Christian standards in the society was a long process. A significant role in enforcing of Christian rules belonged to the duke in the 11th and 12th centuries. Duke Břetislav II in 1092 announced another similar collection of laws, also known in their brief form from Cosmas' Chronicle only⁵⁵. The duke allegedly expelled all magicians and pythons

⁵² Cf. P. Sommer, *Začátky...*, p. 14; idem, *Svatý Prokop...*, pp. 25–26.

⁵³ Recently D. Kalhous, *Slovanské písemnictví a liturgie 10. a 11. věku*, „Český časopis historický“, T. 108: 2010, pp. 1–33, esp. p. 16; M. Vepřek, *Filologický pohled na problém kontinuity cyrilometodějské kulturní tradice v Čechách 10.–11. století*, „Konštantínove listy“, T. 3: 2010, pp. 39–48; idem, *Česká redakce staroslověnštiny jako dědictví kultury Velké Moravy*, in: *Studia Moravica II* (Acta Universitatis Palackianae Olomucensis – Moravica 2), Olomouc 2004, pp. 47–53; in a broader context R. Večerka, *Staroslověnská etapa českého písemnictví*, Praha 2010. On the penitential J. Vašica, *Církevněslovanský penitenciál českého původu*, „Slavia“, T. 29: 1960, pp. 31–48; recently Š. Bukovská, *Církevněslovanský penitenciál českého původu*, Olomouc 2015 (Bachelor's thesis at the Faculty of Arts, Palacký University, published on www.theses.cz). Edition of the text: С.И. Смирнов, *Материалы для истории древнерусской покаянной дисциплины*, Москва 1912, pp. 28–31.

⁵⁴ Š. Bukovská, op. cit., pp. 21–22, 29–31.

⁵⁵ *Die Chronik der Böhmen...*, p. 160–161; P. Sommer, *Svatý Prokop...*, pp. 26–27.

(*omnes magos, ariolos et sortilegos*) from the country and had all hallowed trees and forests cut down and burnt. Cosmas states that the village folks were “half pagans yet” (*villani, adhuc semipagani*) and kept a number of pagan customs. They brought gifts and sacrificed animals at springs to evil spirits, buried their dead in fields and forests (which had already been explicitly banned by the laws of 1039), performed rituals on crossroads to appease the dead and rituals in masks over their dead (*super mortuos suos inanes cientes manes ac induti faciem larvis bachando exercebant*). The latter ritual meant night vigil by the dead connected with his reconciliation and talking about his life⁵⁶.

These practices are also documented by other written resources, such as the Opatovice Homiliarium (*Homiliarium quod dicitur Opatovicense*) from the half of the 12th century, including sermons against pagan practices of the local folk. This document also mentions magicians (*carios*), incantations (*precantatores*), “evil women” (*malae feminae*), pythons (*divinos*) etc., and a number of pagan rituals and customs. The laity should largely follow the rules of the Decalogue, and they were not allowed to be in touch with the pagans, feast with them and participate in pagan rituals. The provisions of Homiliarium order to observe fixed saint’s days and to attend services only in the churches⁵⁷.

These written documents quite clearly demonstrate the survival of pagan customs especially in the village territories, more remote from the castle centres with their Christian churches. Churches, however, were built quickly also in rural areas during the 11th century. Burial place not situated near the churches were abandoned since the turn of the 11th and 12th centuries. Basics of the parish administration were created during the first half of the 12th century how some written records prove it⁵⁸.

The numerous village population was largely Christianized but their awareness of the basics and essence of Christianity was low. Elements of

⁵⁶ On the content of rituals P. Sommer, *Začátky...*, pp. 17–18.

⁵⁷ Edition: *Das Homiliar des Bischofs von Prag*, ed. F. Hecht, Prag 1863; J. Dynda, *Mezi „pohanstvím“ a křesťanstvím: Homiliář opatovický jako pramen pro studium archaického slovanského náboženství?* in: *Křižovatky Slovanů*, ed. M. Giger, H. Kosáková and M. Příhoda, Červený Kostelec 2015, pp. 185–206; P. Sommer, *Svatý Prokop...*, pp. 51–53.

⁵⁸ I. Štefan and L. Varadzin, op. cit., pp. 33–53; D. Kalhous, *České země...*, pp. 176–190; idem, *Problémy...*, pp. 8–9, 22–33; P. Charvát, *Ideologická funkce...*, p. 237; P. Sommer, *Svatý Prokop...*, pp. 50–51.

archaic religious thinking thus survived until the High Middle Ages. It should be emphasized that the older customs and habits appear just as particulars. Paganism so did not create any alternative to Christianity in the late 10th century. In addition, the “paganism” can not be regarded as some united religious system. “Pagan” is simply everything in the sources that is “unchristian”. Surviving pagan customs and rituals so have lost their “institutional” grounds. They took place in private, in closed communities or in the outlying wild (surviving shrines, sacred trees and groves)⁵⁹. A number of folk customs and traditions, as mentioned above, not in direct contradiction to the principles of Christianity, were even adopted into the Church rites or at least respected by the Church⁶⁰. Like in other countries, Christianization in the Czech lands in the Middle Ages was a very long process. It includes elements of religiosity, cultural transfers or institutional grounds (building of the church administration).

Shrnutí

Christianizace hrála významnou roli při vzniku raně středověkých států ve střední Evropě. V průběhu 9. století se křesťanství dostalo na území českých zemí, nejprve na Velkou Moravu, kde vznikla samostatná církevní organizace s vlastním arcibiskupstvím. Od konce 9. století bylo christianizováno také území Čech, kde významnou roli v tomto procesu sehrála vládnoucí dynastie Přemyslovců. Již první Přemyslovci usilovali také o vlastní církevní správu, podařilo se jim založit v Praze v roce 973 pouze biskupství. Postupnou christianizaci země a vytlačování starších pohanských kultů dokládají nařízení knížete Břetislava I. z roku 1039 a Břetislava II. z roku 1092. V průběhu 11. století byla také intenzivně budována síť kostelů, takže v první polovině 12. století mohly vzniknout základy farní organizace.

⁵⁹ On the archaeological findings (cult places, amulets etc.) recently N. Profantová, *Nové poznatky o archeologicky zjištěných projevech pohanství v českých zemích*, in: *Co můj kostel dnes má, nemůže kníže odníti. Věnováno Petru Sommerovi k životnímu jubileu*, ed. E. Doležalová and P. Meduna, Praha 2011, pp. 21–39. Cf. M. Šolle, *Od úsvitu křesťanství k sv. Vojtěchu*, Praha 1996, pp. 41–59. On amulets in the modern rural culture cf. R. Doušek, *Magické předměty na moravském venkově*, in: *Archaické jevy tradiční kultury na Moravě*, ed. A. Křížová, Brno 2011, pp. 161–176.

⁶⁰ P. Sommer, *Začátky...*, pp. 16–19; J. Dynda, *op. cit.*, pp. 203–205.