

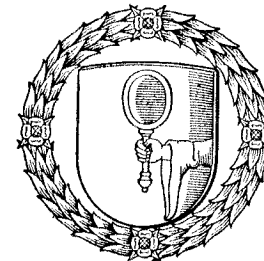
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TWO NEGLECTED PALADINS OF CHARLEMAGNE ERICH OF FRIULI AND GEROLD OF BAVARIA

BY JAMES BRUCE ROSS

PART I

THEIR ROLE IN CAROLINGIAN EXPANSION TO THE SOUTHEAST

IN Einhard's discussion of the wars waged by Charles the Great, the death in battle of distinguished Frankish officials is twice recorded, once in connection with the war in Spain¹ and again à propos of the Avar war.² The first notice, relating the loss of the Seneschal Eggihard, the Count of the Palace Anselm, and Roland, Duke of the March of Brittany, has been immortalized in the *Chanson de Roland* although the events it concerns were of relatively slight importance in the history of the Carolingian Empire. The second, recounting the death of Erich, Duke of Friuli, and Gerold, Prefect of Bavaria, deserves more attention that it has received from posterity.³ The contemporaries of these men, however, realized the significance of their services to the state and to Christendom, and mourned their loss in sincere accents. Their names are mentioned not once,⁴ but many times, although the facts of their lives are imperfectly recorded.

An attempt to bring together the scattered materials relating to the careers of these notable but neglected Carolingian figures seems peculiarly fitting at the present time because of the prominent, though somewhat obscure, role they played in the Carolingian *Ostpolitik*, the first conscious step in the historic Germanic push to the East.⁵ The great movement of the Germanic peoples to the south and west in the period of the *Völkerwanderung* had been halted at last under the Merovingian kings by the Frankish conquests of other Germanic tribes lying to the east. This policy was destined to reach its climax under Charlemagne who by his conquests of the Saxons, Bavarians, and Lombards brought the Frankish state face to face with non-Germanic peoples, the Slavs in the northeast, and the Avars and Slavs in the southeast. Much more is known about Charlemagne's relation to the former than to the latter. It is the latter, however, with which Erich and Gerold are concerned.

¹ Eginhard, *Vie de Charlemagne*, c. 9, ed. and trans. L. Halphen (Paris, 1923), p. 30 (*Les classiques de l'histoire de France au moyen âge*). The Latin text of this edition, which will be used throughout, will be cited hereafter simply as Einhard.

² *Ibid.*, c. 13, p. 40.

³ The sole direct treatment of Erich is a brief sketch by C. Pfister, 'Un héros strasbourgeois du temps de Charlemagne, Erich duc de Frioul,' *Bulletin de la société pour la conservation des monuments historiques d'Alsace*, 2nd Series, xxvi (1920), 135-140. Hereafter cited as Pfister, 'Un héros strasbourgeois.' There is nothing about Gerold.

⁴ Roland's name (Hruodlandus) is given only by Einhard, according to Halphen, *Vie de Charlemagne*, p. 30, n. 8.

⁵ Recent German historians, especially those writing after 1933, emphasize this interpretation strongly. See K. Hampe, *Der Zug nach dem Osten* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1921), pp. 11-12; F. Baethgen, 'Die Front nach Osten,' in *Karl der Grosse oder Charlemagne?* (Berlin, 1935), pp. 78-79; A. Brackmann, 'Reichspolitik und Ostpolitik im frühen Mittelalter,' *Sitzungsber. der preuss. Akad. der Wissenschaften. Phil.-hist. Kl.*, 1935, II, 948; H. Aubin, 'Zur Erforschung der deutschen Ostbewegung,' *Deutsches Archiv für Landes- und Volksforschung*, 1 (1937), 42, 52-54; and others.

A study of the careers of Erich of Friuli and Gerold of Bavaria should, then, help to clarify the history of the expansion of the Carolingian state to the south-east.¹ It should also throw light upon, though it can by no means solve, one of the most baffling problems of Carolingian history, the nature of the mark system in this region.² And, in addition, it may, in the case of Erich in particular, contribute something to our picture of the Palatine circle, for Erich enjoyed the friendship of Alcuin and Paulinus of Aquileia, and Gerold was a brother-in-law of the great Charles himself.

Carolingian expansion proceeded much more rapidly and successfully to the southeast than to the northeast. This seems paradoxical in view of the fact that the northern Slavs, being broken up into many small tribes, constituted no real obstacle to the Frankish state, whereas the Avars and their Slavic subjects formed an apparently powerful and threatening mass to the southeast.³ The explanation lies in the long duration of the Saxon wars which prevented any appreciable expansion across the Elbe, in contrast to the speedy and easy incorporation of Bavaria which drew Charlemagne inevitably into contact with the Avars, at this time probably already past the peak of their power and destructive capacity.⁴ Einhard calls the Avar war the greatest of all those waged by Charlemagne except the Saxon war, because of the degree of zeal and effort devoted to it,⁵ thus linking together the two conflicts which opened the way to the extension of Frankish influence and control over non-Germanic peoples. But, to both contemporaries and modern historians the war against the Avars meant far more than merely a dramatic episode in conquest and expansion; it represented also a decisive step in the fulfilment of a mission entrusted to the Franks, and particularly to Charlemagne. To contemporaries this mission was primarily a religious one,

¹ The basic contribution to the history of this subject was made by E. Dümmler in two monographs, 'Über die südöstlichen Marken des fränkischen Reiches unter den Karolingern (795-907),' *Archiv für Kunde österreichischer Geschichts-Quellen*, x (1853), 1-85, and *Über die älteste Geschichte der Slaven in Dalmatien (540-928)* (Vienna, 1856); hereafter cited as Dümmler, 'Über die südöstlichen Marken,' and *Über die älteste Geschichte der Slaven*. On these all later writers depend whether they acknowledge their debt or not. More recent monographs, practically all by German scholars, have amplified the subject though they have added relatively little to Dümmler's necessarily brief treatment of the history of the region before 800. I have tried to assemble the best of this more recent material, especially as it relates to Erich and Gerold, and to examine the sources anew, in order to present a fresh account and interpretation of the subject.

² Neither among historians nor cartographers has any agreement been reached concerning the territorial extent of the south-eastern marks or their relation to the boundaries of the empire proper. Nor do historians agree as to the meaning of the word 'mark' in general, or as to the nature and scope of the margraval powers. This subject will be dealt with in another article.

³ R. Sebicht, *Unsere mittelalterliche Ostmarkenpolitik* (Breslau, 1910), p. 6.

⁴ M. Vancsa, *Geschichte Nieder- und Oberösterreichs*, 1 (Gotha, 1905), 131. The Avar domination of the Slavs was seriously undermined as early as the seventh century, according to L. Niederle, *Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, 1, *L'histoire* (Paris, 1923), 65, 73-74, 195-196. Material on the history of the Avars is scanty. See the general account of H. H. Howorth, 'The Avars,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, New Series, xxi (1889), 721-810. Hereafter cited as Howorth, 'The Avars.'

⁵ Einhard, c. 13, p. 38: 'Maximum omnium quae ab illo gesta sunt bellorum praeter Saxonicum huic bello successit, illud videlicet quod contra Avares sive Hunos susceptum est. Quod ille et animosius quam caetera et longe majori apparatu administravit.'

the extension of the bounds of Christendom, the winning of souls from idolatry to the worship of Christ.¹ To modern historians, and especially to German historians, the mission was two-fold, if not three-fold. It was both religious and cultural — cultural either in the broad sense of the word or in the more narrow sense of a *Germanic* racial mission.²

What exactly was the role of Erich and Gerold in the Avar war, an event of such great significance to both contemporaries and moderns? Erich's part, as we shall see, was undoubtedly a major, perhaps the leading one, while Gerold's was less notable and far more obscure.

The first mention of the Avars³ occurs in the *Royal Annals* under the year 782,⁴ when their representatives appeared before Charlemagne 'in the interests of peace'.⁵ The precarious nature of this peace became apparent in 788 on the fall of Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, when at his trial he confessed among other crimes that he had incited the Avars against the Franks.⁶ This intrigue, despite or perhaps because of Tassilo's fall, led to a double but unsuccessful attack by the Avars on Frankish territory, both in Italy⁷ against the 'mark of Friuli',⁸ and in two installments against Bavaria, the two regions with which Erich and Gerold were

¹ See for example, Alcuin, Epistola 110, *M.G.H., Epp.*, iv, 157: 'Qualis erit tibi gloria, o beatissime rex, in die aeternae retributionis, quando hi omnes, qui per tuam bonam sollicitudinem ab idolatriae cultura ad cognoscendum verum Deum conversi sunt, te ante tribunal domini nostri Iesu Christi in beata sorte stantem sequentur et ex his omnibus perpetuae beatitudinis merces augetur.' See also the anonymous poem, 'De Pippini regis victoria Avarica,' *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, i, 116-117.

² For examples of the broader interpretation see A. Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, II (3rd and 4th ed., Leipzig, 1890), 420; H. von Schubert, *Geschichte der christlichen Kirche im Frühmittelalter*, I (Tübingen, 1917), 340-341; Hampe, *Der Zug nach dem Osten*, pp. 11-12; A. Brackmann, 'Die Anfänge der Slavenmission und die Renovatio imperii des Jahres 800,' *Sitzungsber. der preuss. Akad. der Wissenschaften. Phil.-hist. Kl.*, 1931, I, 72 ff., especially 83 ff. Hereafter cited as Brackmann, 'Die Anfänge der Slavenmission.' For a good example of the more recent racial emphasis see Baethgen, 'Die Front nach Osten' in *Karl der Grosse oder Charlemagne?*, pp. 77 ff.

³ Also called the Huns in the sources; the two names are used interchangeably. Einhard has the phrase, 'Avares sive Hunos,' in c. 13, p. 38.

⁴ *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 782, ed. F. Kurze, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* (Hannover, 1895), p. 60. These annals, formerly known as the *Annales Laurissenses maiores*, are the fundamental source for the history of the Avar war as for many other aspects of Carolingian history. Their revision through the year 801, an account both fuller and more finished in style, is contained in the same edition in parallel form. It will be referred to as the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, though Einhard's authorship is today completely rejected. The dependence of Einhard's *Vita Caroli* on the two versions of the *Annales* is generally accepted. See L. Halphen, 'Einhard, historien de Charlemagne,' *Études critiques sur l'histoire de Charlemagne* (Paris, 1921), pp. 60-103.

⁵ *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 782, p. 61: 'velut pacis causa.'

⁶ *Annales regni*, a. 788, p. 80. The enormity of this crime is emphasized here and in the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 788, p. 81, by being placed first, and also in the *Annales Laureshamenses* (*Codex Laureshamensis*), c. 21, *M.G.H., SS*, I, 33, where the Avars are indicated only by implication, however. I have been unable to secure the later edition of the last work, that by E. Katz, 1889.

⁷ The *Annales regni*, a. 788, p. 82, lack the name of the place: 'Idem . . . alia pugna commissa est inter Avaros in loco, cuius vocabulum est . . . , et Francis, qui in Italia commanere videntur . . .'

⁸ The *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 788, p. 83, supply the name 'marcam Foroiulensem'; the place is also referred to as 'in campestribus Foroiuli' in the *Annales Maximiniani*, a. 788, *M.G.H., SS*, XIII, 22, and as 'ad Furgali' in the *Annales sancti Emmerami Ratisponensis maiores*, a. 788, *M.G.H., SS*, I, 92. This constitutes the first mention of the 'mark' of Friuli.

to be identified. The arrangements made in the same year (788) by Charlemagne for the protection of the new boundaries in the southeast proved unavailing. It was, in fact, the friction arising from boundary disputes which led to the first phase of the Carolingian offensive against the Avars, the great expedition of 791.¹ Charlemagne himself directed the campaign, leading one section of the tripartite army which in September advanced along the Danube from the Enns to the Raab, laying waste the country and destroying the fortifications of the Avars who fled before the invaders.²

In neither version of the *Royal Annals*³ is there mention of any other action against the Avars at this time. From a letter of Charlemagne, however, we learn of a concurrent attack on the Avars made late in August by troops sent from Italy by Pepin, King of Italy, at the command of his father.⁴ The achievements of this band from Italy, the first to enter the enemy's territory, seem much more impressive than those of the Danubian expedition; they made direct contact with the enemy, killing great numbers, storming one of their fortifications, and carrying off one hundred and fifty prisoners.⁵ Perhaps the greater success of the Italian troops in this campaign as well as their later achievements under Erich and Pepin in 795-796, can be accounted for in part by the fact that they included Lombard cavalry which was far better suited to attack on the nomad horsemen than the slow-moving infantry of the Franks.⁶ Another factor contributing to the success of the Italian troops may have been their smaller number, for the paramount obstacle to military success in this time and region was that of provisioning the army in an undeveloped area where even the direction of the river courses was on the whole unfavorable.⁷

¹ This explanation is given emphatically by the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 790, p. 87: 'Agebatur inter eos [i.e. Charlemagne and the Avar leaders] de confiniis regnorum suorum, quibus in locis esse deberent. Haec contentio atque altercatio belli, quod postea cum Hunis gestum est, seminarium et origo fuit.' In fact, however, hostile relations between the two go back to the Avar offensive of 788. A religious motive is given in the *Annales regni*, a. 791, p. 88: ' . . . propter nimiam malitiam et intollerabilem, quam fecerunt Avari contra sanctam ecclesiam vel populum Christianum . . .'

² For a full account of this expedition see S. Abel and B. Simson, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reiches unter Karl dem Grossen*, II (Leipzig, 1883), 16 ff. Hereafter cited as Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*.

³ *Annales regni*, a. 791, p. 88; *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 791, p. 89.

⁴ Charlemagne to Fastrada, *M.G.H., Epp.*, iv, 528: 'Et insuper retulit nobis, qualiter illa scara nostra, que prius de Italia iussimus pergere partibus Avariae in ill. confiniis resedendum, perrexerunt infra fines ipsorum decimo Kalendas Septembris. Et inierunt pugnam cum eis.'

⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Et dedit eis Deus omnipotens pro sua misericordia victoriam, et multitudinem de ipsis Avaris interfecerunt; in tantum, ut dicunt, quod in multis diebus maior stragis de ipsis Avaris factum non fuit. Et expoliaverunt ipsum ualium . . . Et centum quinquaginta de ipsis Avaris vivos conprehenderunt . . .' It is true that the *Annales Laureshamenses* (*Codex Laureshamensis*), c. 24, a. 791, *M.G.H., SS*, I, 34, speak of immense spoils and innumerable prisoners taken by the Danubian army, but the *Annales regni* and the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi* give the impression of little if any actual fighting between the Franks and the Avars.

⁶ This is the interesting thesis of C. Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, I (2nd ed., London, 1924), 77-78, who feels that the Lombard cavalry was the decisive element in the defeat of the Avars. He erroneously dates the campaign of 791 as of 790.

⁷ See K. Schttnemann, 'Ostpolitik und Kriegsführung im deutschen Mittelalter,' *Ungarische*

Who commanded these Italian troops the news of whose victory so cheered the heart of Charlemagne at his camp on the Enns? He himself refers specifically to 'that bishop, that duke and those counts,' and also to the 'duke of Istria,'¹ but unfortunately the names in the manuscript have been supplanted by 'ille' as in formularies.² It seems clear from the evidence of the letter to Fastrada, and also from other contemporary evidence,³ that Pepin did not personally participate.⁴ Belief in the presence of Erich of Friuli in this campaign, suggested by Leibniz, was rejected by later authorities,⁵ but has subsequently been championed by a historian who felt strongly that Erich's role in the whole course of the Avar war was consistently depreciated by contemporaries out of loyalty to the young Pepin.⁶ Unfortunately, his argument rests on no positive evidence except the youth of Pepin. It seems inherently probable, however, that Erich, if he were the head of the mark of Friuli at this time, should have been among the Italian troops sent on such an important mission against the Avars.⁷

The campaign of 791, though successful, was by no means decisive. Elaborate preparations were made in 792 and 793 for another expedition against the Avars but this had to be abandoned temporarily by Charlemagne because of bad news

Jahrbücher, xvii (1937), 31-56, reprinted with little change under a slightly different title in *Deutsches Archiv für Geschichte des Mittelalters*, II (1938), 54-84. His article is an attack on modern criticism of the early mediaeval *Ostpolitik* as weak. He stresses the great size, and hence failure, of the Frankish expedition of 791, and the smaller size, and hence success, of Erich's and Pepin's expeditions of 795-796, but offers no evidence of the size of either, though certainly the size of the former may be inferred from the magnitude of the preparations made in 791. He might better have noted the success of the Italian expedition of 791 whose small size is, I believe, suggested in its designation as 'scara' by Charlemagne in the letter to Fastrada. This definition of 'scara' as a troop or band rather than an army is supported by its usage in the original version of the *Annales*, for example in the years 778, 774, 776, 784, and by the way in which it is interpreted in the revision which, however, avoids the word. See also 'scara' in DuCange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, ed. Favre, vii, 336-337.

¹ Charlemagne to Fastrada: 'Fideles Dei ac nostri, qui hoc egerunt, fuerunt ille episcopus, ill. dux, ill. et ill. comites. Ill. dux de Histria, ut dictum est nobis, quod ibidem benefecit ill. cum suis hominibus.' *M.G.H., Epp.*, iv, 528.

² J. F. Böhmer, *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter den Karolingern*, ed. E. Mühlbacher, I (2nd ed., Innsbruck, 1899-1908), p. 132, No. 315. Hereafter cited as Böhmer, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher).

³ *Annales Laureshamenses (Codex Laureshamensis)*, c. 24, a. 791, *M.G.H., SS*, I, 34: 'Sed et ille tunc eius exercitus quem Pippinus filius eius de Italia transmisit . . .'

⁴ Pepin is erroneously named as one of the leaders by F. Palacký, *Geschichte von Böhmen*, I (Prague, 1864), 97. If, as Abel and Simson state (*Jahrbücher*, I [2nd ed., Leipzig, 1888], 318, n. 2) and Böhmer implies (*Regesten* [ed. Mühlbacher], I, p. 89, No. 215 a), Pepin was probably born in 777, he would have been only fourteen years old in 791.

⁵ Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 20, n. 5: 'Leibniz, *Ann. imp.*, I, 151, denkt mit Unrecht an den Markgrafen Erich von Friaul.'

⁶ G. Strakosch-Grassmann, *Geschichte der Deutschen in Österreich-Ungarn*, I (Vienna, 1895), 415, n. 1: 'Erich ist wohl der im Briefe Karls an Fastrada erwähnte ill. dux, der ausser dem Herzog von Istrien noch bei der ital. Armee genannt wird . . .'

⁷ Such is the argument of A. Hofmeister (pp. 266-267) in his authoritative monograph, 'Markgrafen und Markgrafschaften im Italischen Königreich in der Zeit von Karl dem Grossen bis auf Otto den Grossen (774-962),' *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, Ergänzungsband VII (1907), 215-435. Hereafter cited as Hofmeister, 'Markgrafen und Markgrafschaften.' (This serial will henceforth be referred to as *MIÖG*.)

from other borders of the kingdom, the defection of the Saxons and the invasion of Septimania by the Saracens.¹ The necessity of a crushing attack on the Avars became more apparent, however, because of their menacing relation with other enemies of the Franks. According to one source, at any rate, the Saxons were in communication with them in 792, and the Saracens were encouraged by their resistance to Charlemagne.² Thus there is little wonder that, in spite of the promise of submission made by one of their leaders in 795,³ Charlemagne, once his hands were free, launched what proved to be the decisive campaign against them, that of 795-796.

The initial and perhaps stunning blow of the new campaign brought fame and immortality to Erich of Friuli. It was his troops who stormed the Ring of the Avars and first despoiled it of its fabulous treasure. The dramatic character of the event, particularly the acquisition of the Avar treasure, stirred the minds of contemporaries and was recorded many times.⁴ Einhard was so dazzled by the vastness of the Avar treasure that he gave it a leading place in his account of the Avar war.⁵ The basic account, however, is that contained in the *Royal Annals*. It states briefly that Erich, Duke of Friuli, after he had sent his men into Pannonia with the Slav, Wonomir, despoiled the long-undisturbed Ring of the Avars, weakened by civil strife among their princes, and sent to King Charles at Aachen the treasure of the early kings collected throughout the course of centuries.⁶ Despite the apparent clarity of this account, several important aspects of it have been the subject of challenge or disagreement. With regard to the date of the event, it is now almost universally believed to have taken place late in 795 and not in 796 as the annalist records.⁷ The association of Erich's feat with the year

¹ See *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 792, p. 93; a. 793, pp. 93, 95.

² *Annales Laureshamenses*, c. 25 and c. 26, *M.G.H., SS*, I, 35. This fact is not given in either version of the *Annales regni*. E. Mühlbacher considers it entirely credible; see his introduction to 'Unedirte Diplome aus Aquileja (799-1082),' *MIÖG*, I (1880), 264, n. 5.

³ *Annales regni*, a. 795, p. 96. The word 'tudun' applied to the Avar leader here may be either a name or a title. Concerning the meaning of 'tudun,' and also of 'chagan' and 'iuguro,' the leaders mentioned in the entry for 796, see Howorth, 'The Avars,' pp. 798-799, p. 794.

⁴ See Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 99, n. 1, and 102, n. 2, for full references.

⁵ Einhard, c. 13, pp. 38, 40. His reasoning, that the Frankish spoliation was a just revenge for the Avar spoliation of other peoples, leads Halphen to comment: 'L'enchaînement des idées laisse à désirer,' *Vie de Charlemagne*, p. 40, n. 1.

⁶ *Annales regni*, a. 796, p. 98: 'Sed et Heiricus dux Poroiulensis missus hominibus suis cum Wonomyro Slavono in Pannonias hringum gentis Avarorum longis retro temporibus quietum, civili bello fatigatis inter se principibus, spoliavit — chagan sive iuguro intestina clade addictis et a suis occisis — thesaurum priscorum regum multa seculorum prolixitate collectum domno regi Carolo ad Aquis palatium misit.'

⁷ See the conclusive reasoning of Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 99 and n. 3; Böhmer, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher), I, p. 145, No. 329 I; Kurze, ed., *Annales regni*, p. 98, n. 1. The argument rests on the relation of certain events to each other. In the *Annales regni*, the record of 796 opens with the following succession of events: first, the death of Pope Hadrian I and the accession of Leo III; second, the expedition of Erich and his dispatch of the treasure to Charlemagne; third, the King's distribution of the treasure, the greater part of which he sent to Rome ('ad limina apostolorum') by Angilbert. We also know from the congratulatory letter of Charlemagne to Pope Leo that he was sending by Angilbert presents to Leo originally intended for Hadrian (Alcuin, Epistola 93, *M.G.H., Epp.*, IV,

796 rather than with 795, in the *Royal Annals* and also in certain other annals,¹ can perhaps be explained by the fact that the campaign launched by Erich was continued in 796 by Pepin whose troops also reached the Ring and carried off the rest of the treasure.²

Another troublesome point is the degree of Erich's participation in the storming of the Ring in 795. The evidence of the *Royal Annals* seems clearly to imply that it was Erich's men under the Slav, Wonomir, and not he personally, who took the Ring, though his direction of the affair is also clearly indicated.³ He has been given credit, however, by some modern writers for much more explicit participation than is warranted by the sources, such as marching straight upon the Ring and capturing it,⁴ and penetrating Pannonia, reaching the fortress of the Avars between the Danube and the Theiss, storming it, and seizing the treasure.⁵

Despite the achievement of 795, however, a second blow at the heart of the Avar power seemed necessary to Charlemagne. Accordingly, in the summer of 796⁶ he sent Pepin into Pannonia where, according to the *Royal Annals*, the Ring was again reached, occupied, and plundered of its remaining treasure.⁷ In the revision of the *Royal Annals* Pepin with his Italian and Bavarian troops is also given credit for driving the Avars across the Theiss and totally destroying the Ring as well as for seizing their treasures.⁸

Pepin's victory and triumphal return to his father at Aachen, with treasure (187). Since the gifts seem to have come out of Erich's booty, and since Charlemagne at the time of the arrival of the booty had not received word of the death of Hadrian (Dec. 25, 795), the treasure must have arrived at Aachen late in 795 or very early in 796; hence Erich's expedition must have taken place toward the end of 795. The only historian (to my knowledge) who rejects this line of reasoning is Strakosch-Grassman, *Geschichte der Deutschen*, I, 414 and n. 1; his insistence on the date 796 for the expedition rests on his denial of the fact that the gifts to Leo came out of the Avar treasure. He presents no evidence, however, to offset the clear statement of the *Annales regni* that Charlemagne sent a large part of the booty to Rome, and it does not seem possible that Charlemagne would have twice sent by Angilbert notable gifts to Leo soon after his accession.

¹ For example, the *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 796, ed. F. Kurze, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* (Hannover, 1891), p. 18; here the events of 795-796 are telescoped.

² *Annales regni*, a. 796, pp. 98, 100. The events of 796 are discussed below.

³ Note the words 'Heiricus . . . missis hominibus suis cum Wonomyro Sclavo in Pannonias hringum . . . spoliavit.' This interpretation is supported by Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 99, and n. 2, and Böhmer, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher), I, p. 145, No. 329 I. It seems to me that the key word is 'missis' with regard both to Erich's presence and to his direction.

⁴ Howorth, 'The Avars,' p. 798. ⁵ Pfister, 'Un héros strasbourgeois,' pp. 137-138.

⁶ The season is given by the *Annales Laureshamenses*, c. 29, a. 796, *M.G.H.*, SS, I, 37.

⁷ *Annales regni*, a. 796, pp. 98, 100: 'Rex . . . filium suum Pippinum . . . in Pannonias cum exercitu misso . . . altera [legatio], quae dixit Pippino cum exercitu suo in hringo sedere . . . rex . . . in Aquis palatio filium suum Pippinum e Pannonia redeuntem et partem thesauri, quae remanserat, adducentem laetus aspexit.'

⁸ *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 796, p. 99: ' . . . Pippinum vero filium suum cum Italicis ac Baioaricis copiis in Pannonia ire iussit . . . Pippinus autem Hunis trans Tizam fluvium fugatis eorumque regia, quae . . . hringum . . . vocatur, ex toto destructa, direptis pene omnibus Hunorum opibus ad patrem Aquisgranum hiberna habentem venit ac spolia regni, quae secum detulit, eidem praesentavit.' Böhmer, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher), I, p. 148, No. 334 f, insists, rightly, I think, that 'Hunis trans Tizam fluvium fugatis' does not imply any actual fighting across the Theiss.

and prisoners¹ in his train, seem to have impressed contemporaries greatly and in effect to have overshadowed the earlier deed of Erich, or at least to have identified the defeat of the Avars in the crucial years 795-796 primarily with Pepin.² It is questionable whether Pepin's achievements deserve such acclaim. Certainly Erich had struck the first blow and opened the way for his successor. Moreover, it is possible that Erich may have participated in the attack of 796 although there is no positive evidence to this effect.³ It seems rash, indeed, to state as a matter of fact that on this occasion Erich did not command but was under Pepin's orders, thus assuming his presence.⁴ But even bolder claims have been made for Erich by his modern champion who assumes, quite without evidence, the leadership of Erich and the purely nominal capacity of Pepin who in the triumphal return of 796 thus received credit for the acts of others!⁵ The possibility that Erich may at least have been in Pepin's train is strengthened by a letter from Alcuin to Erich, obviously written after the victory over the Avars, in which Alcuin thanks the hero for having deigned to visit him in his modest home.⁶

Whatever may have been Erich's share in Pepin's expedition of 796, his services in the decisive campaign of 795-796, which must obviously be considered as a whole, are outstanding. The Avar power was definitely broken if not entirely crushed, as the campaigns of 797 and 799 were to indicate. Before con-

¹ These prisoners are the subject of two letters of Alcuin, one to Charlemagne urging him to show mercy to the 'Hunnice' captives (Epistola 118, *M.G.H.*, *Epp.*, IV, 173), and the other to Pepin thanking him and Charlemagne for consenting to the redemption of the prisoners (Epistola 119, p. 174). The identity of one of these, the Lombard Aio, revealed in a diploma of February 2, 799 (*M.G.H.*, *Diplomata Karolina*, No. 187, I, 251) is additional proof of the danger of other enemies of the Franks entering into relations with the Avars, who in this case had harbored a political exile.

² See especially the anonymous poem, 'De Pippini regis victoria Avarica,' *M.G.H.*, *Poet. Lat.*, I, 116-117; also the opening lines of Angilbert's 'Ad Pippinum Italiae regem,' *M.G.H.*, *Poet. Lat.*, I, 358. This attitude may also account for the striking emphasis and amplification given to Pepin's deeds in the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 796, as compared with the more prominent place given to Erich in the *Annales regni*, a. 796.

³ This supposition is logically tenable, and is strengthened by the mention of Italian troops as well as Bavarian in Pepin's army ('cum Italicis . . . copiis,' in the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 796); they are called more specifically 'Lombards' in another source (*Chronicon Moissiacense*, a. 796, *M.G.H.*, SS, I, 302). ⁴ See Pfister's statement in 'Un héros strasbourgeois,' p. 138.

⁵ Strakosch-Grassmann, *Geschichte der Deutschen*, I, 415-416. His assumption is again, as in the case of the campaign of 791, based on Pepin's youth, but is even less valid here because, although Pepin was only thirteen or fourteen years old in 791, he was eighteen or nineteen in 796. The latter is by no means too precocious an age for military capacity.

⁶ Alcuin, Epistola 98, *M.G.H.*, *Epp.*, IV, 142: 'Satis mihi sacrae lectionis intentio et pie humilitatis conversatio placet in vobis, et quoniam meae parvitatibus familiariter mansuenculam visitare non sprevisistis.' This possibility is suggested by Hofmeister in his 'Markgrafen und Markgrafschaften,' p. 267. It seems sounder to date this letter and Erich's visit to Alcuin after Pepin's victory of 796 rather than after Erich's victory of 795 because the *Annales regni* in the latter case state that Erich sent ('misit') the treasure to Charlemagne at Aachen. The *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, however, may possibly imply by use of the verb 'detulerat' that Erich himself after the victory of 795 took the treasure to Aachen. Jaffé's note in Dümmler's edition of Alcuin's letters, *M.G.H.*, *Epp.*, IV, 142, n. 4, accepts the latter interpretation, and ascribes the letter to 796 on the basis of the date and content of the entry for 796 in the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*.

sidering the latter it may be well to discuss some of the far-reaching consequences and implications of the victories of 795-796.

The submission of the Avars, or of a considerable part of them, took place in installments, partly after Erich's attack and partly after Pepin's.¹ The religious significance of this victory and the submission following it was widely recognized. Alcuin stresses this aspect exclusively in his letter to Erich² and in a letter of congratulation to Charlemagne.³ The same theme fills the anonymous poem celebrating Pepin's victory,⁴ and is mentioned in Theodulf's poem to the king.⁵ The king himself in the letter of 796 to Pope Leo III mentioned above clearly expresses his own conception of the function of his office, the defense by arms of the church of Christ from the incursion of the pagans and the devastation of the infidels from without, and the protection of the Catholic faith within.⁶ Such an attitude was naturally embodied in missionary activity which began immediately after Pepin's victory. In fact the allocation of the new mission fields was undertaken by Pepin at his camp on the Danube while on his return from Pannonia. Here at a council of bishops he entrusted the conversion of the Avar and Slavic peoples in the area between the Drave, the Raab, and the Danube to Bishop Arno of Salzburg,⁷ an arrangement which was confirmed by Charlemagne in 803.⁸ The region

¹ According to the *Annales regni*, a. 796, pp. 98, 100, where the following sentences appear immediately after the account of Erich's attack: 'In eodem anno tudun secundum pollicitationem suam cum magna parte Avarorum ad regem venit, se cum populo suo et patria regi dedit; ipse et populus baptizatus est, et honorifice muneribus donati redierunt.' Then, after the mention of Pepin's expedition, comes the statement: 'Cuius [Pepin's] legationes ad eum [Charlemagne] . . . venerunt, una, quae dixit occurrisse ei kagan cum ceteris optimatibus, quem sibi Avares post interfectionem priorum [the 'chagan' and 'iuguro' mentioned earlier] constituerunt. . . .' The *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 796, p. 101, however, mention only the submission of the 'tudun' and that after Pepin's expedition, a fact which strengthens my belief in the depreciation of Erich's services by the reviser of the *Annals*.

² Epistola 98, *M.G.H., Epp.*, iv, 142: 'Unde et gratias agimus vestrae benignitati, Deumque diligentissime pro vestra deprecatur sospitate, quatenus tuae fortitudinis dexteram contra adversarios sui sancti nominis vicitrem ubique faciat. . . .'

³ Epistola 110, *M.G.H., Epp.*, iv, 157: 'Gloria et laus deo Patri et domino nostro Iesu Christo, quia in gratia sancti Spiritus . . . christianitatis regnum atque agnitionem veri Dei dilatavit, et plurimos longe lateque populos ab erroribus impietatis in viam veritatis deduxit.' This is the famous letter in which he warns the king against following the practice used in Saxony of imposing tithes on the newly conquered people, stressing the importance of teaching and baptizing them first.

⁴ 'De Pippini regis victoria Avarica,' *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, i, 116-117.

⁵ Theodulf, 'Ad Carolum regem,' ll. 37-40, *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, i, 484: 'Adveniunt gentes Christo servire paratae,
Quas dextra ad Christum sollicitante vocas.
Pone venit textis ad Christum crinibus Hunnus,
Estque humilis fidei, qui fuit ante ferox.'

⁶ Alcuin, Epistola 93, *M.G.H., Epp.*, iv, 137-138.

⁷ See the extremely interesting and basic account of the beginning of this missionary activity in the southeast, in the *De conversione Bagoariorum et Carantanorum libellus*, c. 6, *M.G.H., SS*, xi, 9. The people concerned are here described as ' . . . populum qui remansit de Hunis et Sclavis in illis partibus.' The *De conversione* was probably composed about 870 in Salzburg, according to W. Wattenbach, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*, 1 (7th ed., E. Dümmler, Stuttgart and Berlin, 1904), 291. ⁸ *De conversione*, c. 6, p. 9.

to the south of this area fell under Aquileia, and that to the north under Passau.¹ The ecclesiastical organization of the new area began soon after, under the direction of Arno, made archbishop in 798.² Thus the expansion of Christianity and the extension of the organization of the Roman Catholic Church in the south-east ensued immediately after the Avar war of 795-796, and as a result of the victories in which Erich played such a prominent part. The way was also opened for German colonization which began early in the ninth century.³

Another consequence of the victories of 795-796, certainly more trivial in meaning but far-flung and curious in ramifications, was the acquisition and distribution of the Avar treasure by Charlemagne. The impression made on contemporaries by the treasure was so profound that it is often referred to even without mention of the storming of the Ring, and in many miscellaneous connections.⁴ The credit for acquiring this treasure must obviously be divided between Erich and Pepin. The *Royal Annals* stress Erich's share and minimize Pepin's, referring to the latter's booty as 'the part which was left,'⁵ while the revision of the annals seems to depreciate Erich's part by referring to it much more briefly and emphasizes Pepin's gain.⁶ From the most reliable source, the *Royal Annals*,⁷ it seems clear that Erich sent his part of the treasure to Charlemagne, whereas Pepin took his, but nevertheless Erich has been described also as taking his.⁸

There is no difference of opinion, however, as to the arrival of the treasure in Aachen, and there can be no doubt of the sensation it created. The sheer quantity⁹ aroused the wonder of contemporaries and is especially noted by Einhard.¹⁰ Theodulf also refers to the manifold treasures sent by God from Pannonia to the King.¹¹ Another account, which may be legendary,¹² gives a more vivid picture of the mass of booty, sufficient to fill with gold, and silver, and precious silks, fifteen

¹ According to Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, II, 424.

² *De conversione*, c. 7, and c. 8, *M.G.H., SS*, xi, 9-10.

³ K. Schünemann, *Die Deutschen in Ungarn bis zum 12. Jahrhundert*, *Ungarische Bibliothek*, 1st Series, Vol. VIII (Berlin and Leipzig, 1928), 2 ff.

⁴ See Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 102, n. 2, for a complete list of references.

⁵ *Annales regni*, a. 796, p. 100: ' . . . partem thesauri, quae remanserat. . . .'

⁶ *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 796, p. 99: ' . . . direptis pene omnibus Hunorum opibus. . . .'

⁷ *Annales regni*, a. 796, p. 98: ' . . . Heiricus . . . thesaurum . . . Carolo . . . misit.'

⁸ The sources which state that Erich personally took the treasure to the king, or that an embassy from the Avars brought it, are regarded as being in error by Böhmer, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher), I, p. 145, No. 329 l. Strakosch-Grassmann, *Geschichte der Deutschen*, I, 415, as usual exaggerates Erich's role by saying 'Erich kam persönlich mit dem Schatze zum Könige nach Aachen. . . .'

⁹ Implied in the phrase of the *Annales regni*, a. 796, p. 98, ' . . . thesaurum priscorum regum multa seculorum prolixitate collectum. . . .'

¹⁰ Einhard, c. 13, pp. 38, 40: ' . . . omnis pecunia et congesti ex longo tempore thesauri direpti sunt neque ullum bellum contra Francos exortum humana potest memoria recordari quo illi magis ditati et opibus aucti sint . . . tantum auri et argenti in regia repertum, tot spolia praetiosa. . . .' Einhard's familiarity here with the *Annales regni* is obvious.

¹¹ 'Ad Carolum regem,' ll. 33-34, *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, i, 484:

'Percepe multiplices laetanti pectore gazas,
Quas tibi Pannonico mittit ab orbe deus.'

¹² According to Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 104, n. 2.

wagons, each drawn by four oxen.¹ The source of much of this amazing treasure, especially of the gold mentioned, was probably the tribute in gold *solidi* which the Byzantine Empire had paid for many years in the seventh century to the threatening Avars.² That the contents consisted of more than gold, however, can be learned from the various references to its distribution,³ a subject which has caused considerable discussion. The *Royal Annals* state clearly that Charlemagne sent a great part of the treasure to Rome by Angilbert and distributed the rest to his optimates, clerical and lay, and his other 'fideles.'⁴ This statement is slightly modified in the revision of the annals which omits any specific reference to ecclesiastics.⁵ Later annals and chronicles, probably without warrant, extend the recipients to include bishoprics, abbey, and the poor.⁶

More interesting is the question of Charlemagne's gifts out of the treasure to the papacy and to foreign notables. That the king's gifts, intended for Hadrian and actually sent to Leo, came out of the treasure can scarcely be challenged,⁷ though there is actually no specific reference to the nature of the gifts or their provenance.⁸ Theodulf in an epitaph intended for Hadrian's tomb mentions gifts in general but includes the words 'tunics' and 'gold.'⁹ Was there some ulterior motive in the sending of these presents, whatever they may have been, to the pope at this time? This question has recently been discussed by two German historians. Albert Brackmann has developed an elaborate and intricate thesis which links the Avar treasure with the missionary work of the southeast and even with the coronation of 800!¹⁰ He believes that Charlemagne in his letter to Leo in 796

¹ Anno dcccxcv. idem rex fortissimus Karolus cum manu valida Hunorum gentem armis vastando subegerat, eorum principe fugato, et ipsius exercitu superato vel perempto, sublatis inde xv. plaustris auro argenteoque paliisque olosericis preciosis repletis, quorum quodque quatuor trahebant boves.' This is to be found in *Symeonis monachi historia regum*, c. 57, ed. T. Arnold, Rolls Series, LXXV, Part II, 57. It is also included in the *Ex vetustis Annalibus Nordhumbriis, Historiae regum Anglorum et Dacorum insertis*, ed. R. Pauli, *M.G.H.*, SS, xiii, 155. Pauli, in contrast to Abel and Simson, considers the passage as a reliable and important addition to Franish accounts of the subject; see his article 'Karl der Grosse in northumbrischen Annalen,' *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, xii (1872), 162.

² See Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 102 and n. 1. The greed of the Avars for gold was apparently axiomatic; see Aleuin's letter to Arno of Salzburg, Epistola 107, *M.G.H.*, *Epp.*, IV, 275: 'Avarus aurum quaerit.'

³ For a full list of these references see Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 106-107 and notes.

⁴ *Annales regni*, a. 796, p. 98: '... magnam inde partem Roman ad limina apostolorum misit per Angilbertum ... porro reliquam partem obtimatibus, clericis sive laicis, ceterisque fidelibus suis largitus est.'

⁵ *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 796, p. 99: '... ad sanctum Petrum magnam partem thesauri ... reliquum vero inter optimates et aulicos ceterosque in palatio suo militantes liberali manu distribuit.'

⁶ Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 106, n. 4.

⁷ See the discussion of this point in connection with the date of Erich's expedition of 795, above.

⁸ In his letter to Leo, Charlemagne uses the words 'munera' and 'exenia,' Aleuin, Epistola 93, *M.G.H.*, *Epp.*, IV, 137.

⁹ Theodulf, 'Super sepulchrum Hadriani papae,' *M.G.H.*, *Poet. Lat.*, I, 490:

'Munera grata tibi incolumi mittenda parabam,

Tristia nunc maesto pectore dona paro.

Marmora pro tunicis, proque auro flebile carmen. . . .'

¹⁰ A. Brackmann, 'Die Anfänge der Slavenmission,' pp. 72 ff.

was deliberately using the rich gifts from the Avar booty as an inducement to secure the cooperation of the papacy in the great task of the Avar and Slav mission which now lay before him,¹ and that this cooperation assumed positive form, as a result of the gift, in the organization of the church by Arno of Salzburg in the conquered territory under papal rather than Frankish supervision. Furthermore, he thinks that the conception of empire which triumphed in 800 was not essentially Roman but Christian, and that this conception in which the king's role was primarily that of the 'defensor ecclesiae,' was greatly enhanced by, though not born of, the victory over the Avars. On the other hand, Heinz Löwe rejects the theory that Charlemagne expressed any deep-laid schemes in the letter to Leo and in the sending of the gifts.² With regard to the gifts, he discards the view that, because Charlemagne did not share with the papacy the Saxon booty of 772, it can be argued that he was trying to bribe the pope with Avar booty in 796,³ and points out that Charlemagne also sent gifts to King Offa of Mercia in 796, apparently without ulterior motives. He insists, moreover, that in the mission field of the southeast the pope played little part, that the directing ideas came not from him but from Aleuin. He regards the letter of 796 as indicating a clear limitation of papal activities to prayer. Löwe's interpretation of the founding of the Carolingian Empire is consistent with his other ideas; he views it primarily as the expression of Germanic self-assertion in opposition to Byzantium, and not as essentially Christian or Roman.⁴ While Brackmann's interpretation of the empire is fundamentally plausible, his thesis with regard to the meaning of the letter of 796 and the sending of the gifts seems far-fetched and over-subtle.⁵

Out of the Avar booty Charlemagne in 796 also sent gifts to King Offa of Mercia, which are specified as a sword-belt, a Hunnic sword, and two silken cloths,⁶ and perhaps to King Aethilred of Northumbria (d. 796).⁷

Another possible consequence of the distribution of the Avar treasure in Francia has been widely accepted, namely that the influx of precious metal had an inflationary effect and led to the rise of prices one-third in the following decade. This supposition seems to go back to Guérard's commentary on the *Polyp-*

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 78: '... und sollte das ungewöhnlich reiche Geschenk den Papst für die Aufgabe willig machen?'

² H. Löwe, *Die karolingische Reichsgründung und der Südosten* (Stuttgart, 1937), 72 ff.

³ An argument used by Brackmann, p. 75.

⁴ 'So ist das Kaisertum Karls d. Gr. der Ausdruck germanischen Selbstbewusstseins, mit dem sich das von Karl unter germanischer Führung zur politischen Einheit gebrachte Europa als gleichberechtigte Macht neben Byzanz stellte,' Löwe, p. 164.

⁵ The evidence from the *De conversione*, moreover, seems to me to support Löwe's, rather than Brackmann's, thesis with regard to the direction of activities in the new mission field.

⁶ Letter of Charlemagne to Offa, Aleuin, Epistola 100, *M.G.H.*, *Epp.*, IV, 146: 'Vestrae quoque dilectioni . . . dirigere studuimus unum balteum et unum gladium Hunicum et duo pallia sirica. . . .' These are referred to simply as 'munera' in Aleuin's letter to Offa, Epistola 101, *M.G.H.*, *Epp.*, IV, 147. Both letters also refer to presents sent to certain Anglo-Saxon episcopal sees; see also Aleuin, Epistola 104, *M.G.H.*, *Epp.*, IV, 150.

⁷ See Aleuin's letter to Offa mentioned above. Certain gifts made by Queen Liutgard at this time may possibly have come from the Avar treasure; see Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 107, n. 2.

tique de l'abbé Irminon,¹ where he refers to Einhard's description of the quantity of treasure (which he translates very loosely) as evidence of the depreciation of precious metals and, by his observations on the comparative value of the *denier* in 794 and 806, implies the rise in prices mentioned above. It was repeated many times in the nineteenth century, both with and without reference to Guérard, but was also challenged.² In the twentieth century the belief was again rejected by Inama-Sternegg who states that a demonstrable rise in prices can be explained sufficiently by the Carolingian currency reform, and that this reform antedated the arrival of the Avar booty.³ Dopsch, on the other hand, states that while the influence of the Avar treasure on Frankish economy cannot be proved, neither can it be disproved.⁴ It is unlikely that the problem can ever be resolved, considering the inadequacy of the evidence. At all events it is obvious that the Avar treasure, acquired primarily by Erich, has worked upon the minds of modern writers and caused a ferment almost as great as that created in the minds of contemporaries!

Erich's services in the Avar war continued after the great campaign of 795-796 in the final phase which must, however, be considered in the nature of an epilogue. He is not mentioned in the *Royal Annals* for 797 which merely say that in that year legates of the Avars came to Charlemagne bearing great gifts, nor in the revision which uses practically the same words.⁵ In one source, however, he is named specifically as the leader of a group of Franks and Lombards who entered into battle with the Avars, won a victory, and conquered the land for the king;⁶ and in another the sending of an army into 'Hunia' is mentioned⁷ though

¹ B. Guérard, 'Prolégomènes, commentaires et éclaircissements,' *Polyptique de l'abbé Irminon*, I (Paris, 1844), 140-141.

² It was accepted for example, by Max Büdinger, *Oesterreichische Geschichte bis zum Ausgange des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts*, I (Leipzig, 1858), 135 and n. 2, who refers to Guérard; by Otto Kaemmel, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Deutschtums*, I (Leipzig, 1879), 208 and n. 1, with reference to Guérard; by S. Riezler, *Geschichte Baierns*, I (Gotha, 1878), 182, without reference to Guérard. L. Hartmann, *Geschichte Italiens im Mittelalter*, II, Part II (Gotha, 1903), 316, suggests a probable influence of the treasure on Frankish economy. These later references are surprising in view of the investigations of Adolf Soetbeer who in 1866 retracted his earlier (1862) belief in the influence of the treasure on Frankish prices; see his 'Beiträge zur Geschichte des Geld- und Münzwesens in Deutschland. Viertes Abschnitt: Geld- und Münzwesen im fränkischen Reiche unter den Karolingern,' *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, VI (1866), 82, n. 1, where he states that such a belief is supported by insufficient evidence and, besides, seems improbable in view of the manner of distribution of the treasure.

³ K. von Inama-Sternegg, *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte bis zum Schluss der Karolingerperiode*, I (2nd ed., Leipzig, 1909), 647-648, and 648, n. 1.

⁴ A. Dopsch, *Die Wirtschaftsentwicklung der Karolingerzeit vornehmlich in Deutschland*, II (2nd ed., Weimar, 1922), 81.

⁵ *Annales regni*, a. 797, p. 102; *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 797, p. 103.

⁶ *Annales Alamannici, continuatio Murbacensis (Codices Turicens. et Sirmodianus)*, a. 797, *M.G.H.*, SS, I, 48: 'Erius cum quibusdam Francis et Langobardis in Wandalis prelium commisit, victoriam cepit, terram ipsam cum dominatione domni regis Karoli acquisivit.' The Avars are apparently referred to as 'Wandali' in these annals. This identification of *Wandali* with the Avars is accepted by most authorities from Dümmler on ('Über die südöstlichen Marken,' p. 7) although Büdinger (*Oesterreiche Geschichte*, I, 138) questions it indirectly by suggesting that Erich's first expedition against the

without reference to Erich. The absence of any reference to an expedition against the Avars in 797 in the *Royal Annals*, generally so full as regards expeditions in all directions, is curious; it may, perhaps, indicate the minor importance of such an engagement, or the greater interest of the annalist in the Spanish affairs which are the dominant subject of the entry for 797. Even the embassy from the Avars is mentioned only incidentally.¹

The last important year in the Avar war both in general, and for this account in particular, is 799 when both Erich and Gerold fell in battle. This marks the first definite appearance of Gerold in the Avar war.² The connection of these deaths with the struggle against the Avars must be examined critically. Einhard clearly states that both warriors fell in *this* war, meaning the Avar war which he is discussing, though he goes on to say that Erich fell in Liburnia through the ambush of the inhabitants, while Gerold was killed by an unknown person in Pannonia when he was about to go into battle against the Avars.³ His information is obviously drawn both from the *Royal Annals*,⁴ and from their revision,⁵ though he gives fuller information about Gerold's death. It seems indisputable that Gerold fell in the course of a campaign against the Avars, but not so clear what connection Erich's death had with the struggle against his ancient enemy. The *Royal Annals* by mentioning first the defection of the Avars certainly seem to imply that Erich's death as well as Gerold's was a result of the Avar war, whereas the revision makes a nice distinction between Gerold's death in battle with the Avars

Dalmatian Croats may have taken place in 797. Doubt might be cast on the identification by Niederle's statement that the Slovenes are sometimes erroneously called *Wandali*; see his *Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, I, 85. I am inclined to accept Dümmler's interpretation, however, because of the apparent distinction made in the *Annales Alamannici*, 797, between Pepin's attack on the *Slavos* (Slavs) and Erich's on the *Wandalis*, and because of the statement in the *Annales Guelferbytani*, a. 797, that an army was sent into 'Hunia.' (See the following footnote.)

¹ *Annales Guelferbytani, pars altera*, a. 797, *M.G.H.*, SS, I, 45: 'Karolus rex . . . transmisit Pippinum cum hoste in Wenedum, et aliam hostem in Hunia. . . .'

² It is difficult to see any basis for the statement of F. von Šišić, *Geschichte der Kroaten*, I (Zagreb, 1917), 61, that Erich tried to invade Dalmatian Croatia at this time unless he, like Büdinger, identifies the *Wandali* with Slavs rather than Avars.

³ There is absolutely no evidence that Gerold took part in the campaign of 791, as stated by G. Meyer von Knonau in his edition of the Monk of St. Gall's *De Carolo Magno in Mitteilungen zur vaterländischen Geschichte*, xxxvi (1920), 32, n. 77. This must be a typographical error.

⁴ Einhard, c. 13, p. 40: 'Duo tantum ex proceribus Francorum eo bello perierunt: Ericus dux Forojulianus in Liburnia juxta Tharsaticam maritimam civitatem insidiis oppidanorum interceptus et Geroldus Baioariae praefectus in Pannonia, cum contra Hunos proelaturus aciem strueret, incertum a quo, cum duobus tantum qui eum obsequantem ac singulos hortantem comitabantur, interfectus est.'

⁵ *Annales regni*, a. 799, p. 108: 'Eodem anno gens Avarum a fide, quam promiserat, defecit, et Ericus dux Forojulianensis post tot prospere gestas res iuxta Tharsaticam Liburniae civitatem insidiis oppidanorum oppressus est, et Geroldus comes, Baioariae praefectus, commisso contra Avars proelio cecidit.'

⁶ *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 799, p. 109: 'Acceptit [rex] etiam tristem nuntium de Geroldi et Erii interitu, quorum alter, Geroldus videlicet Baioariae praefectus, commisso cum Hunis proelio cecidit, alter vero, id est Ericus, post multa proelia et insignes victorias apud Tharsaticam Liburniae civitatem insidiis oppidanorum interceptus atque interfectus est.'

and Erich's death in Liburnia, which sounds like a deliberate clarification of the original version. Einhard's account seems obviously based on the *Royal Annals* though stated somewhat less ambiguously. Despite the implication of the *Royal Annals* (perhaps due to the clumsy sentence structure), and Einhard's slight expansion of that implication, there is little doubt that the revision is here a more reliable authority. The inhabitants of the Liburnian coast were Slavs, not Avars, and specifically Croats,² under nominal Byzantine sovereignty at this time;³ thus the reference to the inhabitants of the city of Tharsatica indicates that it was a native Slavic ambush and not an Avar one which was responsible for Erich's death.⁴

The loss in the same year⁵ of two such distinguished servants of the Frankish state was deeply felt and widely mourned. The reviser of the *Royal Annals* adds the words 'the sad news of their death' to the more objective account of the original. Alcuin in gloomy words to Arno of Salzburg fears that the loss of such brave men who had not only guarded but also expanded the boundaries of the Christian empire may be the presage of greater disaster to come.⁶ Paulinus of Aquileia⁷ pours forth his grief in a lament notable for its depth and sincerity of feeling, stressing Erich's role as the tamer of barbarous peoples and conqueror of vast regions, and noting his heroic conduct in the moment of death, fighting to the last. Gerold's services 'for the peace of the church' in the Avar war form

¹ I cannot agree with Halphen who in his excessive criticism of Einhard, *Vie de Charlemagne*, p. 40, n. 2, states that Einhard relied on the revision but failed to note the distinction made between the deaths of the two. Instead of proving that Einhard was guilty of negligence ("C'est pousser un peu loin la distraction") in his use of the revision, this case indicates that Einhard held closely to the original account in the *Royal Annals*. He can thus be charged with overlooking the revision but not with misinterpreting it.

² See Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 195-196, and Böhm, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher), I, p. 157, No. 351 f. Šišić, *Geschichte der Kroaten*, I, 61, says the name 'Tharsatica' is preserved in the fortress Trsat near modern Rijeka. The belief that Erich as well as Gerold was killed by the Avars is continued in later sources (see Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 195, n. 2) as well as by certain modern writers, such as Carlo de Franceschi, *L'Istria; note storiche* (Parenzo, 1879), p. 85, and K. von Häuser, *Kärntens Karolingerzeit von Karl dem Grossen bis Heinrich I* (Klagenfurt, 1894), p. 9.

³ See O. Harnack, *Das karolingische und das byzantinische Reich in ihren wechselseitigen politischen Beziehungen* (Göttingen, 1880), pp. 38-39.

⁴ It is, of course, not beyond the realm of possibility that the Tharsaticans were acting in concert with the Avars, but the implication of the words of the revision seems to me to run counter to such a supposition.

⁵ Gerold's death fell on September 1, 799; see Böhm, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher), I, p. 157, No. 351 f. There is no evidence as to the exact date of Erich's death.

⁶ Alcuin, Epistola 185, *M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 310: 'Ecce quomodo recesserunt subito viri fortissimi, qui terminos custodierunt, etiam et dilataverunt, christiani imperii, Nop solum hoc damnum plan-gimus, sed maioris periculi signum timeamus.' It is possible that Epistola 198, *M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 326-329, was written by Alcuin to Charlemagne to console him for the loss of Erich and Gerold, though Dümmler rejects this theory, p. 326, n. 7.

⁷ Versus de Herigo duce, *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, I, 181-183. This poem is discussed below in connection with Erich's relationship to Paulinus.

the chief subject of his epitaph,¹ and his defense of the holy church against the infidels caused him to be likened unto a martyr by a later Carolingian, Walahfrid Strabo (d. 849).² Thus both Erich and Gerold were celebrated by their contemporaries not merely as men of great deeds, as warriors,³ but as sons of the church who defended and extended her boundaries at the expense of the infidels!

Little if any more protection against the once terrible menace of the Avars was needed after 799. Their day was done. Although there is evidence of disturbance in Pannonia in 803, followed by the submission of an Avar prince,⁴ few references to the Avars can be found henceforth. The last mention of their name in Charlemagne's reign concerns the protection of the Avars from the newly freed Slavs.⁵ Their end, like their beginning, is obscure.⁶ Either exterminated or absorbed by other peoples, they completely lost their separate identity. Even the location of their famous stronghold, the Ring sacked by Erich and Pepin, cannot be determined with exactitude,⁷ though it seems certain that it lay on the 'other' side of

¹ Epitaphium Geroldi comitis, ll. 3-5, *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, I, 114:

Pannoniis vera ecclesiae pro pace peremptus,
Oppetit saepe Septembribus ense Kalendis,
Sideribusque animam dedit.

² Heitonis visio Wettini, c. 27, *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, II, 274: 'De Geroldo etiam quondam comite dixit idem angelus, quod in requie esset gloriae martyrum adaequatus: "Zelo," inquit, "dei in defensione sanctae ecclesiae infidelium turbis congressus temporalis vitae dispendia est passus, ideo aeternae vitae est particeps factus.'" The relevant part of the metrical version of the *Visio*, p. 329, is similar in substance.

³ The *Annales regni*, a, 799, p. 108, say à propos of Erich's death 'post tot prospere gestas res,' which the revision expresses as 'post multa proelia et insignes victorias.'

⁴ In the *Annales Mettenses priores*, a, 803, ed. B. Simson, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* (Hannover, 1905), p. 90, but only by implication in the *Annales regni*, a, 803, p. 118. This year (803) is perhaps a more accurate terminal date for the Avar war, if it is possible to fix such, than 799. Einhard, c. 13, p. 38, says that the war lasted eight years; he is probably reckoning from 791 to 799, following the *Annales regni*. He seems to me justified in so doing in view of the very brief reference to southeastern affairs in 803 in the *Annales regni*: 'Imperator autem in Bajoarum profectus dispositis Pannoniarum causis . . .' but Halphen, *Vie de Charlemagne*, p. 39, n. 3, says coldly 'Erreur! les *Annales royales*, qui Éginhard avait sous les yeux, en marquent le début en 791 et la fin en 803 seulement.'

⁵ *Annales regni*, a, 805, pp. 119-120; a, 811, p. 135. In 805 some of the Avars were granted a special place of settlement. Their fate has been compared to that of the Indians on North American reservations, constantly subject to the encroachment of 'colonists,' in this case Slavs and Germans, especially Bavarians; see Ludmil Hauptmann, 'Politische Umwälzungen unter den Slowenen vom Ende des sechsten Jahrhunderts bis zur Mitte des neunten,' *MIÖG*, xxxvi (1915), 269-270.

⁶ Modern opinion seems to agree that the Avars who invaded Europe were not true Mongols, except possibly for their leaders, but rather Uighur Turks. See Howorth 'The Avars,' pp. 723-724; M. Kiessling, 'Hunni,' in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*, new edition, vol. VIII (Stuttgart, 1913), cols. 2588 ff., esp. 2608-2609; and Niederle, *Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, pp. 63-65, pp. 73-74. In the absence of adequate written evidence modern investigation of their history is making use of archaeology; see for example the researches of the Hungarian scholar Nándor Fettich in *Archaeologia Hungarica*, I (1926), 1-65, and xviii (1936), 7-105.

⁷ According to Riezler, *Geschichte Baierns*, I, 182, n. 1, 'Spuren des Ringes will man auf der Pusste Sarto-Sar in der Nähe von Tatar gefunden haben.'

the Danube,¹ in the valley between the Danube and the Theiss.² Their history and fate are summarized succinctly in the earliest written account of Slavic history:

The Avars were large of stature and proud of spirit, and God destroyed them. They all perished, and not one Avar survived. There is to this day a proverb in Rus which runs, 'They perished like the Avars.' Neither race nor heir of them remains.³

If 'God destroyed them' as the Slavs believed, certainly Erich of Friuli might be considered as an instrument of His will, and to a lesser extent, Gerold of Bavaria.

Though the Avars disappeared, the former subjects of this long-dominant *Herrenvolk*, the Slavs of the southeast, remained and now came into direct contact with the Frankish state.⁴ It was their destiny rather than that of the Avars to become the recipients, willing or unwilling, of Frankish religious and cultural influences. The obscure history of this first significant contact between the Franks and the southeastern Slavs will be considered here only as it is illumined at certain points by the career of Erich of Friuli.⁵

It is necessary to return to the fall of Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria, in 788 and to the consequent incorporation of Bavaria into the Frankish state. With Bavaria there came the Slavic province lying to the south, called by contemporaries 'Karantana' or something similar (Karantanien in German),⁶ which had been reduced by Tassilo in 772,⁷ but was disputed by the Avars first with the Bavarians and, after

¹ Böhmer, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher), I, p. 148, No. 834 f.

² Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 100 and n. 8. The elaborate description of the nine concentric circles of fortifications given by the Monk of St Gall (Book II, c.i) can hardly be accepted literally although he gives as his authority for the account of the wars Adalbert who fought with his lord Gerold in the 'Hunnic' war (Book I, c. xxxiv). See the latest edition, Monachus San Gallensis (Notkerus Balbulus), *De Carolo Magno*, ed. G. Meyer von Knonau, *Mitteilungen zur vaterländischen Geschichte*, xxxvi (1920). The historical value of this work, almost completely rejected by Halphen in his 'Le moine de Saint-Gall,' *Études critiques sur l'histoire de Charlemagne*, pp. 104-142 (with whose opinion F. Ganshof in general agrees in his review of Halphen's book, in *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, III [1924], 154) is reaffirmed to some extent by M. von Knonau in the 'Nachwort' to his edition, pp. 65-67; he specifically defends the Monk's description of the Ring against Halphen's assault though admitting its gross exaggeration, p. 66 (see also p. 34, n. 80). The work was written after 888 according to Wattenbach, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*, I, 207.

³ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, ed. and trans. S. H. Cross, *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, XII (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), 141. This excerpt comes from the introductory account of early Slavic history which is obviously traditional in nature, according to Professor Cross, p. 109.

⁴ Concerning the relations between the Slavs and the Avars see T. Peisker, 'The Expansion of the Slavs,' *Cambridge Mediaeval History*, II (New York, 1926), Chapter xiv, esp. pp. 432 ff. Peisker's theory of the century-long and cruel enslavement of the Slavs by Germanic and Turco-Tatar peoples, especially the Avars, is emphatically rejected by Niederle, *Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, I, 29 ff.

⁵ The Avar invasion, successfully repelled, of the Frankish kingdom of Sigebert in 562 had no lasting influence on either people. See Howorth, 'The Avars,' pp. 731-732.

⁶ M. Doeberl, *Entwicklungsgeschichte Bayerns*, I, (Munich, 1906), 78.

⁷ H. Pirchegger, 'Karantanien und Unterpannonien zur Karolingerzeit,' *MIÖG*, xxxiii (1912), 272. Hereafter referred to as Pirchegger, 'Karantanien und Unterpannonien.' According to Niederle (*Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, I, 79), the Slavs first appeared definitely in this region in the late sixth century, fell under the Avars after 611, were liberated by Samo 623-658, remained free until 745 when Borut, 'prince de Carinthie,' recognized Bavarian domination in return for aid against the Avars, rebelled against the Bavarians but were subdued by them in 722.

788, with the Franks.¹ This region, sometimes called a Slavic 'duchy,'² was extensive and ill-defined as to limits; it is too loosely referred to by modern writers as 'Kärnten' or 'Carinthia,' or 'Carinthie,'³ because it included far more than merely modern Kärnten.⁴ In geographic terms it seems to have been the region through which the upper Drave flowed. The Carolingian acquisition of this region was, in one sense, the first step in the expansion to the southeast. It brought the borders of the Frankish state into direct contact with the Avar realm in Pannonian Croatia on the one hand and the Byzantine Empire in Dalmatian Croatia on the other.⁵

The Slavic inhabitants of this region are generally referred to in the sources as *Slavi*, sometimes *Sclavani*, or as *Winedi* (in various forms) from which the usual German designation *Wenden* (*Wends* in English) is derived.⁶ As a result of German colonization in this area which began soon after 796, the Slavic element gradually disappeared except in the southern parts where the density of Slavic settlement had been greatest.⁷

Relations between Charlemagne and the Slavs in the southeast are first indicated in the *Royal Annals* by the presence, probably as a leader, of the Slav Wonomir among Erich's troops who stormed the Ring in 795.⁸ This fact certainly proves the cooperation of a prominent Slav, and perhaps of his people, if he were a prince or chieftain, with the Franks against the Avars. It may also prove his recognition of Frankish overlordship in general and his dependence on the margrave of Friuli in particular.⁹ But who was Wonomir and who were his people? Abel and Simson think that he was probably a Slovene, largely on the basis of his hostility to the Avars and his apparent dependence on Erich, and suggest the possibility of his being 'Duke of Kärnten,' as Leibniz believed.¹⁰ Leibniz' supposition that Wonomir was a Karantanian Slav and hence a Slovene was supported

¹ Hauser, *Kärntens Karolingerzeit*, pp. 3-4. Hauser believes that the border disputes referred to in 790 (*Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 790, p. 87) concerned this area. ² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³ As for example by A. Kleinclausz, *Charlemagne* (Paris, 1934), p. 163.

⁴ According to K. Kretschmer, *Historische Geographie von Mitteleuropa* (Munich and Berlin, 1904), p. 185, it also included Steiermark (Styria) and Krain (Carniola). Pirchegger, 'Karantanien und Unterpannonien,' p. 272, states frankly that the boundaries of Karantanien are unknown. Concerning the extent and density of the Slavic occupation of this area see Niederle, *Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, I, 80 ff.

⁵ Šišić, *Geschichte der Kroaten*, p. 60. According to Harnack, *Das Karolingische und das byzantinische Reich*, p. 31, the Frankish conquest of Istria, under Byzantine sovereignty, followed soon after.

⁶ See P. J. Schafarik, *Slawische Alterthümer*, II (Leipzig, 1844), 310-311, and Niederle, *Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, I, 85-86.

⁷ Here the Slovenes have maintained themselves to the present day, according to Niederle, *Manuel*, I, 80-81, 86-87.

⁸ *Annales regni*, a. 796, p. 98: 'Sed et Heiricus, dux Foroiulensis, missis hominibus suis cum Wonomyro Slavo in Pannonias, hringum . . . spoliavit. . . .' The revision of the annals does not mention Wonomir.

⁹ Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 99, n. 1.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* Abel and Simson doubtless mean a duke of *Karantanien*, rather than of *Kärnten* in the narrow sense. The source of information to which they refer is Leibniz, *Annales imperii occidentis Brunsvicensis*, ed. G. H. Pertz, I (Hanover, 1843), 189: . . . 'Wonomirus Slavus, dux, credo, Carantanorum.'

by a number of later writers more or less emphatically,¹ but certain recent authorities consider him definitely a Croat, perhaps the ruler of a Croatian state between the Drave and the Save,² or more specifically a Pannonian Croatian prince, 'Vojnomir,' who with his following aided in the overthrow of the Avars and submitted to Frankish rule, under the supervision of the Margrave of Friuli.³ The reasoning of these later historians, though based to some extent on later, ninth-century, evidence, seems to be more valid.

Whether we consider Wonomir as a Karantanian Slav (hence a Slovene) or as a Pannonian Croatian prince, his presence with Erich's troops seems to be an example of the retention by Charlemagne of native princes in the territory of the south-east, either in the part already nominally acquired in 788 (Karantana) or in that part in process of being acquired from the Avars.⁴ Hofmeister believes that this policy was an unusual feature of the administration of this area, and suggests that the duke of Istria mentioned in Charlemagne's letter to Fastrada as a participant in the successful Italian expedition of 791 may also have been a native prince of this sort, perhaps under the direction of the margrave of Friuli.⁵ Another case may be that of Ingo named among the counts and dukes to whom Arno sent priests in the regions of Karantana and lower Pannonia.⁶ The date of this event is uncertain, probably in the last years of the eighth century.⁷ The exact status of such native princes, however, is by no means clear. Whether or not such a prince as Wonomir enjoyed as much authority as is indicated by the statement that 'Erich made an alliance with him' is debatable.⁸

At any rate the friendly relations between the Franks and the southeastern Slavs (whether Slovenes or Croats) indicated by Wonomir's presence in Erich's army gave way to enmity, at least in part. In 797, while Erich was again engaged in fighting the Avars, Pepin with Bavarian and some Lombard troops took the

¹ Such as Schafarik, *Slavische Alterthümer*, II, 320, n. 2; Dümmler, 'Über die südöstlichen Marken,' p. 19, who, however, also considers it possible that Wonomir may have been 'Grosszupan von Croatien' or 'einen Fürsten der Slovenen zwischen Sau und Drau' in his *Über die älteste Geschichte der Slawen*, p. 34; Bldinger, *Oesterreichische Geschichte*, I, 184; Känemmel, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Deutschlands*, I, 214; Riezler, *Geschichte Baierns*, I, 181; Pfister, 'Un héros strasbourgeois,' and Peisker, 'The Expansion of the Slavs,' *Cambridge Mediaeval History*, II, 449.

² Pirchegger, 'Karantanien und Unterpannonien,' p. 274 and n. 4. He apparently believes that the participation of the Karantanian Slavs in the campaign against the Avars can be taken for granted because of their dependence on Bavaria and hence on the Frankish state.

³ See Šišić, *Geschichte der Kroaten*, p. 60, who insists that Wonomir was a 'pannonisch-kroatischer Fürst und nicht ein slovenischer (karantanischer),' p. 60, n. 1. F. Dvorník, *Les Slaves, Byzance et Rome au IX^e siècle* (Paris, 1926), p. 46, also definitely considers 'Vojnomir' to be prince of 'la Croatie pannonienne.'

⁴ See Dümmler, 'Über die südöstlichen Marken,' pp. 17-19.

⁵ Hofmeister, 'Markgrafen und Markgrafschaften,' pp. 242, 277-278. See also Dümmler, 'Über die älteste Geschichte der Slawen,' p. 38. The identity of this duke, often referred to as 'Duke John,' is not established; see Böhmer, *Regesten* (ed. Mühlbacher), I, p. 133, No. 315.

⁶ See the *De conversione*, c. 7, *M.G.H.*, SS, XI, 9.

⁷ Dümmler, 'Über die südöstlichen Marken,' p. 18. There is abundant evidence of the use of such native princes in the ninth century; see, for example, Schünemann, *Die Deutschen in Ungarn*, pp. 2 ff.

⁸ Pfister, 'Un héros strasbourgeois,' p. 137: 'Erich . . . sur sa route trouva les Carentènes ou Slawènes, fit alliance avec leur chef Wonomir et pénétra avec lui en Pannonie.'

field against the Slavs.¹ What Slavs were these? Dümmler is uncertain, but seems to believe they were probably a part of the Wends (i.e., Slovenes) in Kärnten and Krain (i.e., Karantana) who later (830) revolted,² rather than Croats.

There is no evidence to prove that in 797 Erich led his first expedition against the Dalmatian Croats,³ or that it was these Croats whom Pepin attacked in 797.⁴ There is little doubt, however, that Erich lost his life during a struggle with the Croats along the Dalmatian coast.⁵ To what extent Erich deserves credit for the Carolingian conquest of Dalmatia in whole or in part is not clear. Dümmler believes that he subjugated the Croats of this region, if only to a state of loose dependence on the Frankish state,⁶ while other historians are more sceptical and believe his activity may have been limited to certain punitive expeditions against them.⁷ Certainly 'he made them feel the weight of his arms'⁸ but it is doubtful whether he 'conquered the population of the islands of the Dalmatian coast.'⁹

The extension of Frankish influence into this coastal region continued after Erich's death. It led to a struggle with the Byzantine Empire which was not finally settled until 812 when Frankish overlordship of the Croats, but not of Venice or the maritime cities, was recognized.¹⁰

In summary, Erich's connections with the Slavs of the south-east, Slovenes and Croats, though regrettably obscure, seem to illustrate two important aspects of the relation between the Carolingian state and these peoples in the late eighth and early ninth centuries: first, cooperation expressing itself in joint effort against the common enemy, the Avars, and in the Carolingian retention of native princes in the conquered territory; second, hostility probably growing out of the natural desire of the Slavs to remain independent once they were freed from the Avars, and out of the inevitable friction arising between Frankish officials and native princes of uncertain status.¹¹

¹ *Annales Alamannici, contin. Murb. (Codices Tur.)*, a. 797, *M.G.H.*, SS, I, 48: 'Pipinus cum Baguaris et quosdam de Langobardis super Sclavos, terram devastavit, et cum pace reversus est . . .'; also *Annales Guelferbytani, pars altera*, a. 797, *M.G.H.*, SS, I, 45: 'Karolus rex . . . transmisit Pipinum cum hoste in Wenedum . . .'

² Dümmler, *Über die älteste Geschichte der Slawen*, p. 34.

³ Unless as Bldinger, *Oesterreichische Geschichte*, I, 138, implies, the *Wandali* were Slavs and specifically Croats.

⁴ As Kleinclausz, *Charlemagne*, p. 170, states.

⁵ *Annales regni*, a. 799, p. 108: ' . . . Ericus . . . iuxta Tharasticam Liburniae civitatem insidias oppidanorum oppressus est.'

⁶ Dümmler, *Über die älteste Geschichte der Slawen*, p. 34. The early history of this group of the southern Slavs is extremely obscure; see Niederle, *Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, I, 92 ff.

⁷ Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 197, n. 1, following Harnack, *Das karolingische und das byzantinische Reich*, p. 39, n. 3. Harnack produces evidence that Dalmatia in 802 still belonged to the Byzantine Empire.

⁸ Kleinclausz, *Charlemagne*, p. 170.

⁹ Pfister, 'Un héros strasbourgeois,' p. 138: ' . . . il avait dompté les populations des îles jetées au-devant de la côte de Dalmatie.'

¹⁰ See Dümmler, *Über die älteste Geschichte der Slawen*, pp. 34 ff., and Harnack, *Das karolingische und das byzantinische Reich*, p. 54. Einhard, c. 15, p. 44, includes Liburnia and Dalmatia among Charlemagne's conquests but his territorial terms are vague and ill-defined.

¹¹ As to Gerold, no definite connection with the Slavs of the southeast can be proved. The Monk of St Gall, Book I, c. xxxiv, speaks of his informant Adalbert as having served with his lord Gerold in the Hunnic, Saxon, and Slavic wars, but there is no other confirmation of this statement or indication as to which Slavs are meant.

PART II

WARRIORS AND SCHOLARS

Erich and Gerold, warriors and administrators, left no personal record of the memorable events in which they participated such as that left by the later Carolingian warrior Nithard. Fortunately, the meagre references to their deeds in the Carolingian annals and histories are supplemented to some extent by the writings of certain distinguished ecclesiastics who expressed love and admiration for these men of action. Erich in particular enjoyed the warm friendship of Paulinus, Patriarch of Aquileia (787-802), and, probably through Paulinus, the acquaintance of Alcuin, himself a dear friend of the latter.¹ The bases of this triangular friendship were probably the proximity of Erich and Paulinus, their common interest in the conquest and conversion of the Avars and Slavs, especially in the district of the mark of Friuli which fell under Erich as lay and Paulinus as ecclesiastical administrator, and the burning concern of Alcuin for the expansion of Christendom in this area which linked him to them both. It is his correspondence which reveals the bond between the three, and especially one letter written shortly after Erich had paid him a visit, in which he expresses satisfaction with Erich's Christian way of life and his condescension in visiting Alcuin's humble home, gives thanks to God for Erich's victories over the infidel, and commends him expressly to his neighbor Paulinus as a preceptor.² It was probably on the occasion of this visit that Erich was entrusted by Alcuin with a letter to Paulinus; this letter is expressly mentioned in another epistle of Alcuin to Paulinus thanking God for the marvelous victory over the Avars and urging Paulinus to undertake the conversion of the infidels.³ Alcuin's deep sense of loss on the death of Erich and Gerold was expressed in a letter to Archbishop Arno of Salzburg.⁴ He mourns

¹ Paulinus, of Italian origin, had been an early member of the Palatine circle, called 'artis grammaticae magister' in a donation which Charlemagne made to him out of goods confiscated from the Lombard rebels of 776 (see Böhmer, *Regesten* [ed. Mühlbacher], I, p. 85, No. 202) and known under the name of Timothy (see Alcuin, Epistola 60, *M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 103).

² Alcuin, Epistola 98, *M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 142. This letter, referring clearly to Erich's first victory, was probably written in 796 and has the ring of a letter composed after a first meeting between the two. (For a fuller discussion of the date see above in connection with the dispatch of the Avar treasure to Charlemagne.) The first part has already been quoted. The last part reads: 'Plura tibi, vir venerande, de christianae pietatis observatione forte scripsissem, si tibi dator egregius et pius caelestis vitae praceptor Paulinus meus praesto non esset; de cuius corde emanat fons viventis aequae in vitam salientis aeternam. Illum habeas tibi salutis aeternae consiliatorem, ne alicubi tuae conversatonis pes impingat . . .'

³ Epistola 99, *M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 144: 'Binas vestra paternitati paulo ante direxi cartulas, unam per sanctum episcopum Histriensem, aliam per virum venerabilem Hericum ducem.' It is possible that the letter borne by Erich to Paulinus is Epistola 95 (*M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 139-140) and that this letter may indicate Erich also as the bearer of an earlier letter from Paulinus to Alcuin; see J. F. Madrisi's *Vita sancti . . . Paulini*, in Migne, *PL*, XCIX, col. 113. Erich is not mentioned here by name, however.

⁴ Epistola 185, *M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 310; 'Ecce quomodo recesserunt subito viri fortissimi, qui terminos custodierunt, etiam et dilataverunt, christiani imperii. Non solum hoc damnum plangimus, sed maioris periculi signum timemus.' There is little doubt that the two brave men referred to here are Erich and Gerold, but considerable doubt as to whether Alcuin's Epistola 198 (*M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 326-329), written to console Charlemagne on the death of certain friends, concerns Erich and Gerold.

their loss primarily as Christian champions, who had not only guarded but also expanded the boundaries of the Christian empire, rather than as personal friends.

The bond between Erich and Paulinus must have been more warm and intimate, more secular in character. The tone and content of Paulinus' lament reveal a fuller acquaintance and a deeper human grief.¹ He speaks of the 'sweet name' of Erich,² celebrates his private virtues of generosity, piety, courage, and intelligence,³ as well as his heroic death in action,⁴ pronounces a curse on the region where he fell,⁵ and describes the universal mourning, the cries and tears, which followed the sad news of his death.⁶ The strength of their friendship, doubtless enhanced by proximity,⁷ is also indicated by Paulinus' composition of a book of moral precepts for the guidance of Erich, perhaps at the suggestion of Alcuin.⁸ A work of little originality, being largely a compilation,⁹ it nevertheless has certain points of interest. It advocates piety and charity,¹⁰ the same virtues stressed in the lament on Erich's death, and dwells at length on the militant role of both the spiritual and the temporal warrior,¹¹ of which Paulinus and Erich themselves furnished excellent examples respectively. Neither in form nor content, however, does it have the interest of Paulinus' lament.¹²

Dümmler rejects Jaffé's identification of these friends with Erich and Gerold; see his note to Epistola 198, p. 326, n. 7. The pertinence of Epistola 275 (*M.G.H., Epp.*, IV, 422-424) seems even more dubious; see p. 422, n. 2.

¹ Paulinus' authorship of this poem is universally accepted. See especially A. Ebert, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Literatur des Mittelalters im Abendlande*, II (Leipzig, 1880), 91; also M. Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, I (Munich, 1911), 369-370. I have been unable to secure the important work on Paulinus by Giannoni, Vienna, 1896.

² 'Versus de Herico duce,' stanza 2, l. 1, *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, I, 131.

³ *Ibid.*, stanza 5, p. 131. Erich's generosity as a donor was remembered even in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries by the Church of St. Nicolai at Sacile, on the border of the dioceses Concordia and Ceneda, according to Hofmeister, 'Markgrafen und Markgrafschaften,' pp. 268-269.

⁴ *Ibid.*, stanza 10, p. 132. ⁵ *Ibid.*, stanzas 8 and 9, p. 132.

⁶ *Ibid.*, stanzas 11 and 12, p. 132, which begin: 'Heu me, quam durum quam que triste nuntium illa sub die defenda percipuit. . . .' (The same phrase 'tristem nuntium' is used in the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 799, p. 109.)

⁷ In 787 Paulinus on his return to Italy established himself at Cividale (the modern name of Friuli) on account of the still ruined condition of Aquileia, according to A. Monteverdi, 'Paolino d'Aquileia,' *Memorie storiche Forogiuliesi*, XXIV (1928), 97.

⁸ *Liber exhortationis vulgo de salutaribus documentis*, in Migne, *PL*, XCIX, cols. 197 ff. The belief that this tract was written for Erich is generally accepted. See J. C. F. Baehr, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur im karolingischen Zeitalter* (Carlsruhe 1840), 358; Büdinger, *Oesterreichische Geschichte*, I, 142, n. 3; Ebert, II, 90; Manitius, I, 369. Its composition is often connected with Alcuin's commendation of Erich to Paulinus, in Epistola 98, noted above; for example, by Büdinger, Ebert, and Manitius. ⁹ See Ebert, II, 90; Manitius, I, 369.

¹⁰ *Liber exhortationis*, c. 5, Migne, *PL*, XCIX, cols. 200-201. ¹¹ *Ibid.*, c. 20, cols. 212-214.

¹² Ebert, II, 86-89, feels that the lament is a rare example of the popular secular poetry inspired by the great deeds of the time; of the few remaining examples three stand in close relationship to the Avar war, the anonymous poem on the victory of Pepin in 796, the lament for Erich, and another lament on the destruction of Aquileia by Attila, hence by the Huns, the forerunners of the Avars. (The last poem, 'Versus de destructione Aquilegiae numquam restaurandae,' *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, I, 142-144, is also attributed probably to Paulinus by Manitius, I, 370.) Pfister, 'Un héros strasbourgeois,' p. 140, suggests that a similar popular lament ('un chant funéraire') may have been written in honor of Roland (d. 778) and become the source of the later *Chanson*.

It is likely, as Pfister suggests, that Erich aided Paulinus in the propagation of the faith in the conquered territory,¹ but there is no evidence that Paulinus on his side took part in the expeditions against the Avars.²

Gerold's death, despite his high position as the king's brother-in-law,³ apparently did not inspire a poetic lament. The literary sources which supplement the annals and Einhard are in this case later in composition and scantier in content. Alcuin, who regretted his loss in the letter of 799, never referred to him by name.⁴ Charlemagne's confidence in him is doubtless indicated by Gerold's responsible position as 'prefect of Bavaria' in the critical period of the Avar war,⁵ but there is no evidence of intimacy between the two.⁶ His fate, however, caught the attention of a later Carolingian, Walahfrid Strabo, Abbot of Reichenau (d. 849), who gives him a prominent place in the remarkable *Visio Wettini*, composed some time after 824.⁷ In this poem Gerold is named by the guiding angel as an example of one who by his services in warfare against the infidel lost mortal, only to attain eternal life.⁸ His personal qualities of distinction and integrity,⁹ his lineage, his lack of heirs and consequent bestowal of goods on the church,¹⁰ his death in the war against the Avars, and the transportation of his body by servants to the Church of St Mary in Reichenau, are also mentioned.¹¹ His epitaph, once ascribed to Walahfrid Strabo, adds little, noting chiefly his death in Pannonia for the peace of the church.¹²

Walahfrid's poem gives evidence that Gerold's fame, especially as a warrior and pious donor, lived on in the ninth century.¹³ In time it apparently grew beyond its

¹ Pfister, 'Un héros strasbourgeois,' p. 139.

² As P. Richard states in his article 'Aquilée,' *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, III, col. 1121: 'Paulin prit part aux expéditions dirigées contre eux [the Avars]. . . .'

³ He was the brother of the former queen, Hildegard (d. 788), the mother of Charlemagne's three sons, Charles, Pepin, and Louis, according to Einhard, c. 18, pp. 54-56. Concerning Gerold in general, see Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 189-194.

⁴ Epistola 185, *M. G. H., Epp.*, IV, 810, quoted above. It is possible that Epistola 198, pp. 326-329, may also concern Gerold's death.

⁵ The meaning of this title will be discussed in another article dealing with the organization and administration of the southeast. Gerold is also named as *missus* in a document of 791; see Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 192, n. 5.

⁶ No evidence can be found for the statement that Gerold was 'ein besonderer Liebling des Kaisers,' made by P. F. Stälin, *Geschichte Württembergs*, I (Gotha, 1882), 118.

⁷ *Visio Wettini Walahfridi*, *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, II, 301 ff. See Manitius, I, 308-309, and Ebert, II, 148-152.

⁸ *Visio Wettini*, II, 802-810, p. 329. This passage though fuller is almost identical with that in the prose version, *Heitonis Visio Wettini*, c. 27, *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, II, 274.

⁹ *Visio Wettini*, II, 811-812, p. 329:

'Hic vir in hac patria summa bonitate nitebat,
Moribus egregius, verax, mansuetus, honestus . . .'

¹⁰ *Visio Wettini*, II, 813 ff., p. 329.

¹¹ *Visio Wettini*, II, 822-826, p. 330.

¹² 'Epitaphium Geroldi comitis,' *M.G.H., Poet. Lat.*, I, 114. (Dümmler, p. 101, rejects the authorship of Walahfrid.) In these lines 'a faithful Saxon' is credited with bringing his body to Reichenau.

¹³ His donations to Reichenau and to St Gall are especially notable; see Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, p. 190, n. 3; p. 192, n. 2.

original limits. The Monk of St Gall (writing after 883) is alone responsible for the belief that Gerold fought not only in the Avar war but also in the 'Saxon and Slavic wars.'¹ Later tradition gave him the honor of being Charlemagne's standard-bearer and even duke of Swabia, and made his fame responsible for the Swabian privilege of first entry into battle.²

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¹ *De Carolo Magno*, Book I, c. xxxiv, ed. M. von Knonau, in *Mitteilungen zur vaterländischen Geschichte*, xxxvi (1920), 32: 'Sequens vero de bellicis rebus accerrimi Karoli ex narratione Adalberti, patris eiusdam Werinberti, cudadur; qui cum domino suo Keroldo et Hunisco et Saxonico vel Sclavico bello interfuit' Riezler, *Geschichte Baierns*, I, 177, speaks of Gerold's winning fame in the Saxon wars.

² See Abel and Simson, *Jahrbücher*, II, 192, and notes 6, 7, and 8.