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THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF *SCLAVINIA* IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY AND ITS INTERPRETATION IN THE CHRONICLE OF GALLUS ANONYMUS

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Abstract. *The study examines the development of the concept of Sclavinia as reflected in the first Polish chronicle by Gallus Anonymus in the early twelfth century. Drawing on comparative textual analysis and structural-semantic interpretation, the paper traces how the term Sclavinia evolved from a purely geographic designation to an ethnocultural and, later, an ethno-political construct. Particular attention is given to the ideological impulses rooted in the Moravian–Pannonian scholarly tradition and the reform initiatives associated with St. Adalbert and Emperor Otto III. By contextualizing Gallus' portrayal of Sclavinia within broader eleventh- and twelfth-century intellectual currents, the study elucidates how this concept functioned as a marker of Slavic identity and a potential political counterweight to Germania.*

Keywords: *Sclavinia, the Slavs, Chronicle of Gallus Anonymus, the Primary Chronicle, ethnogenesis.*

Introduction

The aim of the present study is to delineate and interpret — through comparative textual analysis and structural-semantic examination of a selected twelfth-century historical source — the essential developmental trajectory through which the toponym *Sclavinia* evolved. The earliest reference to a land inhabited by Slavs, termed *Sclavinia*, originates from the early seventh century, and since that moment this geographical designation appears regularly in historical sources of various provenance, though in modified forms¹. Sometimes

¹ The earliest reference to territory inhabited by Slavs and designated by the term *Sclavinia* is found in the Byzantine author Theophylact Simocatta in his work *History*, written in the first half of the 7th century. Simocatta describes the period of Emperor Maurice's reign, focusing primarily on the foreign policy of Byzantium toward Persia, the Avars, and