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The Bavarian Geographer and the Old Prussians

It is a widespread opinion in literature that the ethnonim “Prussians” is first encountered as the form *Bruzi* in a short manuscript written in Latin discovered in the late XVIII century (*codex Clm 560*) and conserved in the Bavarian State Library (*Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*).

The manuscript is known as the *Descriptio civitatum et regionum ad septentrionalem plagam Danubii* and consists of a list of 58 tribes located in Central and Eastern Europe. His unknown author by the end of the XVIII century was referred to as *Géographe de Bavière*.

The *codex* is traditionally dated back to the IX century, nevertheless an accurate codicological and palaeographical study of the original text and his context shows that the *Descriptio civitatum* is actually a “trace” and it has been inserted in the manuscript undoubtedly at a *later* date.

Moreover a thorough philological examination of the latin text points out that it is by no means certain that the ethnonym “Bruzi” refers to the Old Prussians.