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WESTERN MISSIONARIES IN EASTERN EUROPE, 962–1009

Abstract: The second half of the tenth century and the first decade of the eleventh marked a major revival in missionary activity, following the interruption caused by Viking expansion, especially in Eastern and Northern Europe. The period witnessed missions to the Danes, the Hungarians, the Rus', the Pechenegs and the Prussians. This paper considers the large number of Christian missions undertaken during the period, most especially the best-evidenced of them (those of Adalbert of Prague and Bruno of Querfurt), but also those for which we have less information, including that of Poppo to the Danes and Adalbert of Magdeburg to the Rus', as well as the intended mission of Romuald to Hungary, within the context of both religious and diplomatic activity (and therefore of state formation). Given that many of the missions had political backing, not least from the Ottonian rulers of Germany, comparison is also made with the mission of John of Gorze to the caliph in Cordoba. The scale of the missions is considered, as is the significance of imperial, secular (in the case of Bolesław Chrobry and Vladimir), and papal involvement, both for the missionaries themselves and also for their backers. In addition to considering the backing, organisation and scale of the missions, this paper also examines the experiences of the individual missionary, whose interests and concerns went beyond those of his secular and ecclesiastical patrons. In particular, it examines the strategies evolved by individual missionaries in order to survive, but also to work, within an alien environment.

Keywords: Adalbert of Prague, Bolesław Chrobry, Bruno of Querfurt, Hungary, Liturgy, Mission, Otto III, Rus', Vladimir

The second half of the tenth century was a golden age of evangelisation. Christianisation of the non-Roman world had been a marked feature of the early Carolingian Age, with missions to the Saxons, and also to the Avars, the Carantanians, the Moravians and the Bohemians. There was even a lengthy but ultimately unsuccessful mission to the Danes and the Swedes. This was brought to an end by the growing aggression of the Vikings, while the arrival of the Magyars put a stop to mission among the Slavs. From the 950s onwards, however, missionary activity revived and even increased

dramatically — perhaps inspired by the idea that the Last Days were at hand[1]. There were missions from Constantinople as well as from Rome and Germany: sometimes in competition with one another. The eventual outcome of this period of missionary activity was the emergence of "Christian monarchies" in central, eastern and northern Europe[2]. Mission thus contributed to the process of state formation.

In some instances missionaries addressed societies in which royal, or quasi-royal, power was already established: one thinks here of the Danish kingdom of Harald Bluetooth, and the principalities of Bohemia, Poland and Kiev. Where such power was already present, Christianity brought literacy and increased political sophistication. But missionaries also worked in other, less politically developed societies, as, for example, that of the Prussians, where Adalbert of Prague met his fate. In fact, our narratives of mission often provide the earliest insights into the stage of political development current in a given kingdom or polity. A sizeable mission directed to a royal court (like that of the Trier monk Adalbert to Kiev) suggests the existence of a very different political society from that implied by a small scale attempt at evangelisation undertaken by a handful of ascetics — though one should also note that not every mission directed to an established king was large-scale[3]. Thus, while mission contributed to state formation, the evidence for it also constitutes important information for our understanding of the development of early states.

Mission, of course, was not simply an issue of state-formation. Ecclesiastics were aware of the possible jurisdictional gains that might accrue: competition between churches is, therefore, a recurrent issue. But mission also involved deep personal commitment, above all from the missionaries themselves, and no doubt also from some of their backers, and not just from ecclesiastics: Otto III's commitment to the salvation of souls is unquestionable (Bruno of Querfurt, Vita Quinque Fratrum, 2–3)[4]. The contrast between the diplomatic context

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1 *Roach L.* Emperor Otto III and the End of Time // Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 2013. Vol. 23. S. 75–102.

2 Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy. Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus', c.900–1200 / Ed. N. Berend. Cambridge, 2007.

3 *Wood I.N.* What is a mission? // Converting the Isles / Ed. R. Flechner and M. Ní Mhainaigh. Turnhout, 2015.

4 *Bruno of Querfurt*. Vita Quinque Fratrum / Ed. M. Miladinov // Vitae Sanctorum Aetatis Conversionis Europae Centralis (Saec. X–XI) / G. Klaniczay. Budapest, 2013.

within which some missions can be understood and the more personal concerns of the individual missionary will constitute a theme in the final part of my discussion. To begin, however, I will concentrate on the more formal aspects of missionary history. After a brief narrative and consideration of the evidence, I will first consider the missions as aspects of state activity, before considering some facets of the views of the missionaries themselves. Although there were important and successful Byzantine missions in this period, it is on those which had their origins in the West that I will concentrate.

In 962 a Trier monk named Adalbert (later to become Archbishop of Magdeburg) led a large and prestigious Ottonian mission to the Rus', at the request of Olga: however, nothing was achieved, and he returned having experienced considerable hostility (Adalbert, Continuatio Reginonis, *s. a.* 959, 961, 962)[5]. By contrast, probably in 963, the priest Poppo, apparently without significant German backing, converted the Danish king Harald Bluetooth (Widukind, III, 65)[6]. Three years or so later the Polish ruler Miesko accepted Christianity, under the influence of his Bohemian wife Dobrawa (Thietmar, IV, 56; Gesta Principum Polanorum, I, 5)[7]. There were missions to Hungary from the German Reich and sent by the pope through the 960s and 970s[8]. Already by the end of 965 pope Leo VIII had sent a Bulgarian called Salek together with a bishop Zachaeus to the Hungarians, on what appears to have been a diplomatic as well as a religious mission, although it was intercepted by Otto (Liudprand, Liber de Ottone, 6)[9]. Bishop Pilgrim prevented a monk Wolfgang from entering Hungary to preach, but did send missionaries there himself in 972–973[10]. Either Otto I or II also sent a legation led by Bruno, perhaps to be identified with bishop Prunwart, who is said by the necrology of Sankt Gallen to have baptised many Hungarians, including the king. Whether or

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[5] *Adalbert*. Continuatio Reginonis // Quellen zur Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit / Ed. A. Bauer and R. Rau. Darmstadt, 1977.

[6] *Widukind of Corvey*. Res Gestae Saxonicae // Quellen zur Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit / Ed. A. Bauer and R. Rau. Darmstadt, 1977; *Gelting M.H*. The kingdom of Denmark // Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy. P. 80.

[7] *Thietmar of Merseburg*. Chronicon / Ed. R. Buchner. Darmstadt, 1957; Gesta Principum Polanorum / Ed. P.W. Knoll and F. Schaer. Budapest, 2003.

[8] *Berend N., Laszlovsky J.* and *Szakács B.Z*. The Kingdom of Hungary // Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy. P. 326–328.

[9] *Liudprand*. Liber de Ottone // Quellen zur Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit / Ed. A. Bauer and R. Rau. Darmstadt, 1977.

[10] *Berend N., Laszlovsky J.* and *Szakács B.Z*. The Kingdom of Hungary. P. 329.

not this is true, the king, Géza, did convert, perhaps out of concern that one of his rivals, Gyula, had been baptised in Constantinople (Annales Hildesheimenses, *s. a.* 973; Annales Altahenses maiores, *s. a.* 973; Thietmar, II, 31)[11], and perhaps partly because of the influence of his wife (Bruno of Querfurt, Passio II Adalberti, 23)[12], but he accepted Christianity very much on his own terms. Pagan practices continued, and the king himself supposedly claimed that he was rich enough to offer sacrifices to the old gods while worshipping the new one (Thietmar, VIII, 4).

Certainly much remained to be done in Hungary and to the east of Poland. Adalbert of Prague, bishop from 982–987 and again from 992–994, worked among the Hungarians, and he would be martyred among the Prussians. In *c.* 1001, the monks Benedict and John headed north to Poland, in preparation for a mission to pagan Slavs, but they were murdered before they could begin their mission. Their intended companion, Bruno of Querfurt, did work among the Black Hungarians, and then among the Pechenegs, before he too was killed by Prussians. His martyrdom inspired his sometime abbot Romuald to undertake mission as well, but the latter turned back at the borders of Hungary, having decided that evangelisation was not a task for which he was destined (Peter Damian, Vita Romualdi, 39)[13].

Adalbert of Trier (who was to become archbishop of Magdeburg), his namesake the bishop of Prague, the monks Benedict and John, Bruno of Querfurt and Romuald of Ravenna can be grouped together in various ways. The Lives of Adalbert of Prague make much of the saint's education in Magdeburg during his namesake's archiepiscopate, and they speak approvingly of the archbishop. Moreover, the young Bohemian, whose name had originally been Woitech, adopted that of Adalbert as a mark of respect (Passio Adalberti, 3)[14]. Curiously, given the regard shown by Adalbert of Prague for his namesake, nothing is made of the older man's failed mission to the Rus' in

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[11] Annales Hildesheimenses / Ed. G.H. Pertz // Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores. Hannover, 1839. Bd. III; Annales Altahenses maiores / Ed. E. von Oefele // Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum. Hannover, 1891. [T. 4].

[12] *Bruno of Querfurt*. Passio II Adalberti / Ed. L. Weinrich // Heiligenleben zur deutsch-slawischen Geschichte. Darmstadt, 2005.

[13] *Peter Damian*. Vita Romualdi // Fonti per la storia d'Italia. T. 94 / Ed. G. Tabacco. Rome, 1957.

[14] Passio Adalberti / Ed. C. Gaşpar // Vitae Sanctorum Aetatis Conversionis Europae Centralis (Saec. X–XI) / G. Klaniczay. Budapest, 2013.

any of the martyr's vitae, although one might well guess that the episode had highlighted the need for missions to the East, and could even have instilled in the young Woitech a desire to evangelise. Bruno of Querfurt revered Adalbert of Prague, and his own missions were certainly undertaken with the intention of continuing his work (Bruno, Vita Quinque Fratrum, 6, 10, 11, 13; Ademar of Chabannes, Chronicon, III, 31)[15]. He and his friends Benedict and John were also disciples of Romuald of Ravenna (Bruno, Vita Quinque Fratrum, 2, 3, 32). They would all inspire him by their deaths (Peter Damian, Vita Romualdi, 28, 39).

Out of all the missionary histories of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries it is the failures that are best evidenced: those of Adalbert of Prague and Bruno of Querfurt to the Prussians, of Benedict and John to the Slavs, and of Bruno, once more, to the Pechenegs. For all these, especially those that culminated in martyrdom, we have contemporary narrative accounts. The successful missions have usually to be reconstructed from fragmentary references or from later sources. Although in many respects this means that writing a clear history of the Christianization of Eastern Europe is impossible, the source material that we have does allow us to pose certain questions about the nature of missionary activity: about the extent to which missions were part of the world of official diplomacy, and about how far they were very much more private enterprises, depending on the zeal of the individual. By extension, our documentation, because the best of it was written by men who were themselves missionaries, also allows us to see something of the personal experience of those working in the missionary field.

Our earliest source for the missions with which we are concerned is in fact a personal account, albeit a very short one: that of Adalbert of Trier, included in his continuation of the "Chronicle" of Regino of Prüm (Adalbert, Continuatio Reginonis, *s. a.* 962). Although the "Russian Primary Chronicle" tells us nothing of the hostile reception of the mission, it does allow us to see something of the context in its presentation of the anti-Christian position of Olga's son Svyatoslav[16]. We are similarly reliant on short chronicle entries for the mission

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[15] *Ademar of Chabannes*. Chronicon / Ed. P. Bourgain, R. Landes, G. Pon. Turnhout, 1999.

[16] Russian Primary Chronicle / Trans. S.H. Cross and O.P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor. Cambridge, Mass., 1953. P. 82–84.

of Poppo to the Danes (Widukind, III, 65; Thietmar, II, 14; Adam of Bremen, Gesta, II, 25, scholion 20 (21))[17]. The history of the conversion of Miesko has to be reconstructed from allusions in the works of Thietmar and the later Gallus Anonymus (Thietmar, IV, 56; Gesta Principum Polanorum, I, 5). That of Géza and the subsequent baptism of Istvan (St Stephen) in Hungary have equally slight contemporary documentation, although Géza's conversion seems to lie at the centre of a great deal of diplomatic activity, political as much as religious[18], while for Stephen there are significant later legends[19]: even Adalbert of Prague's involvement with the Hungarians, which may have included Stephen's baptism is only mentioned in passing by Bruno of Querfurt (Passio II Adalberti, 16, 23).

When we get to Adalbert's failed mission to the Prussians the evidence increases considerably. We have a number of Lives which provide detailed accounts of the martyr's early life and training, his episcopate, his time as a monk in Rome, and his final mission to the Prussians. The earliest of these, the so-called "Ottonian Life", seems to be a version of a work written by John Canaparius, abbot of the monastery of SS Boniface and Alexius in Rome[20]. Canaparius had known Adalbert when he was a monk at the community, and he also had access to information supplied by the saint's brother, Radim-Gaudentius, who was present at his martyrdom. This "Ottonian Life" was used by Bruno of Querfurt, who wrote two versions of his "Passio of Adalbert", one in 1004 and the other in 1008. He would appear to have received additional information from both Radim and the Polish ruler Bolesław Chrobry. For Bruno's own missions we have first-hand information, in chapters of his "Life of the monks Boniface and John", often known as the "Life of the Five Brothers": he himself was meant to be a member of their mission, but had failed to join them by the time of their murder. In addition he provides a reference to his own work among the Hungarians as well as a more substantial account of his mission to the Pechenegs in his letter

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[17] *Adam of Bremen*. Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum // Quellen des 9. und 11. Jahrhunderts zur Geschichte der hamburgischen Kirche und des Reiches / Ed. R. Buchner. Darmstadt, 1961.

[18] *Berend N., Laszlovsky J.* and *Szakács B.Z.* The Kingdom of Hungary. P. 328–330.

[19] Legendae Stephani regis / Ed. E. Bartoniek // Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum. Budapest, 1938. Vol. 2.

[20] *Gaşpar C.* Preface: The Life of Saint Adalbert, Bishop of Prague and Martyr // Vitae Sanctorum Aetatis Conversionis Europae Centralis. P. 79–94.

to Henry II of *c.* 1008[21]. We thus have extensive autobiographical material relating to some of his missionary activities. About his death we are less well informed, but there are short (and contradictory) passages in Thietmar's "Chronicle", the "Quedlinburg Annals", the "Chronicle" of Ademar of Chabannes, and in Peter Damian's "Life of Romuald", together with the "Hystoria de predicatione Brunonis" of Wibert, who was supposedly present at the time, and who thus purports to give us one final eye-witness narrative.

The earliest of our missions, that Adalbert of Trier, was certainly an officially organised undertaking. Adalbert himself relates in his continuation to Regino's "Chronicle" under the year 959 that "Legates of Helena queen of the Rugi (that is Olga of the Rus'. — *I. W.*), who had been baptised in Constantinople under emperor Romanus, fraudulently, as it turned out, came to the king (Otto I. — *I. W.*) asking him to ordain a bishop and priests for that people". Adalbert was consecrated bishop three years later, and travelled to the Rus', only to discover that his voyage was in vain: the return journey was hazardous, and some of his companions were killed on the way (Adalbert, Continuatio Reginonis, *s. a.* 962). These events can be placed in the context of Olga's political diplomacy, in which she used both Otto and the Byzantines to try to strengthen her position[22], albeit unsuccessfully. Olga's machinations provide perhaps our first contemporary insight into the development of the power of the ruling dynasty in Kievan Rus'. Although Adalbert had to beat a hasty retreat, it is clear that his was a major diplomatic mission, sponsored by the German king, and backed by the Church.

By contrast, the mission of Poppo to the Danes is something of a mystery. There is only one early substantial reference to it, in Widukind's "History" (III, 65). There was probably once a *vita* of Poppo, the main moments of which are depicted in the panels of the Tamdrup altar from Jutland[23], but no detailed narrative account survives. Poppo is said to have converted the king, having successfully undergone the ordeal of holding a piece of hot iron (in later versions wearing a heated iron glove) in defence of his faith. The event ought to have interested Adam of Bremen. The history

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[21] *Bruno of Querfurt*. Epistola ad Henricum II imperatorem / Ed. W. von Giesebrecht // Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserzeit. 4e Aufl. Leipzig, 1875. Bd. 2. S. 689–692.

[22] *Franklin S.* and *Shepard J.* The Emergence of Rus 750–1200. Harlow, 1996. P. 132–138.

[23] *Gelting M.H.* The kingdom of Denmark. P. 99.

of the Danish kingdom from the eighth century onwards, and the repeated attempts to Christianise it, is a central theme of his work, but clearly Poppo was not a member of the Church of Hamburg-Bremen, and therefore, except in a *scholion* added to his "History" (Gesta, II, 25, schol. 20 (21)), Adam places his account of the mission, which would have constituted too much of a threat to the claims of his own Church, several decades too late (Gesta, II, 35). As a result we know nothing of Poppo himself, unless, as seems likely, given that Widukind describes him as becoming a notably religious bishop, he is to be identified with Folkmar, Archbishop of Cologne from 965–969 (Widukind, III, 65)[24]. Certainly an association with a rival diocese would explain Adam's silence. If Poppo were associated with the Church of Cologne, we might guess that his mission had official backing: indeed, since the Archbishop of Cologne from 953–965 was Bruno, brother of Otto I, the mission might have been as official as that to the Rus', but we cannot be certain, and the absence of any detailed comment in Ottonian sources suggests that caution should be exercised.

Diplomacy seems also to lie at the heart of the conversion of Géza. There are traces of Byzantine, papal, Ottonian, and perhaps merely episcopal legations in our sources. That some of these legations were as much political as religious is highly likely, but the evidence is too slight[25]. If we wish to form an impression of what an official Ottonian legation might have looked like we can turn to Liudprand of Cremona's journey to the Byzantine court in 960[26]. And Liudprand, one might note, was in contact with Adalbert of Trier[27]. Yet his mission was to another Christian ruler, however alien Constantinople may seem in Liudprand's account. A better parallel may be the embassy of John of Gorze to the caliph in Cordoba in *c.* 953 (John of St-Arnoul, Vita Iohannis Gorziensis, 116)[28]. Given the overlap between diplomacy and religious action in some of the legations we have been talking about,

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[24] Ibidem. P. 80.

[25] *Berend N., Laszlovsky J.* and *Szakács B.Z.* The Kingdom of Hungary. P. 328–329.

[26] *Liudprand*. Legatio ad imperatorem Constantinopolitanum Nicephorum Phocam // Quellen zur Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit / Ed. A. Bauer and R. Rau. Darmstadt, 1977.

[27] *Huschner W*. Transalpine Kommunikation im Mittelalter: diplomatische, kuturelle und politische Wechselwirkungen zwischen Italien und dem nordalpinen Reich (9.–11. Jahrhundert), 3 vols. Hannover, 2003. P. 596–599.

[28] *John of St-Arnoul*. Vita Iohannis Gorziensis // *Jean de Saint-Arnoul*. La vie de Jean, abbé de Gorze / Ed. M. Parisse. Paris, 1999.

we need not worry that this visit to al-Andalus would have been radically different from a formally constituted religious mission. An initial legation sent by Abd Ar-Rahman had been interrupted when its leader, a Spanish bishop, died at the court of Otto. The German king decided to send an official delegation to Cordoba in response. The task was, however, a dangerous one because Otto's letter deliberately insulted Islam. Further, because of the insulting nature of the letter, there was genuine fear among members of the Christian community in Cordoba that they would suffer as a result. The diplomatic legation of c. 953 thus had significant religious overtones that allow comparison with the missions of evangelisation which concern us. Because of the nature of the message and the danger it raised, the legation was entrusted to a monk, since theoretically monks, being already dead to the world, did not fear martyrdom (Ibidem). Moreover, John himself made the legation all the more dangerous by refusing to compromise in his undertaking, even though it meant that the lives of others were at stake: for the saint himself this offered the possibility of martyrdom (Ibidem, 117), and, according to his hagiographer, he did end up spending three years in a Cordoban prison (Ibidem, 131, 134). The issue of danger is explicitly dealt with in the section of the "Life" concerning the saint's appointment to lead the delegation. Although John was senior enough to be excused the task, he volunteered to undertake it (Ibidem, 117). Here one can find an exact parallel in the choice of monks for the Danish mission of 829. Anskar was of relatively humble birth, and could therefore be chosen to accompany Harald Klak without any qualms, but there was some concern that his friend Autbert wished to accompany him, for he was regarded as being too noble for such a dangerous job (Rimbert, Vita Anskarii, 7)[29].

The missions of the 990s and the first decade of the eleventh century are less obviously tied up with royal or imperial diplomacy, and shed less direct light on state development, although they were officially sanctioned. The final mission of Adalbert of Prague and the first mission of Bruno of Querfurt had royal agreement. Otto III was a keen supporter of missionary activity, and gave his approval in both instances (Passio Adalberti, 159; Bruno, Vita Quinque Fratrum, 3). Particularly hard to evaluate is the missionary work of Adalbert of Prague in Hungary. We know from Bruno of Querfurt, although not

[29] *Rimbert*. Vita Anskarii // Quellen des 9. und 11. Jahrhunderts zur Geschichte der hamburgischen Kirche und des Reiches / Ed. R. Buchner. Darmstadt, 1961.

from the earlier "Ottonian" *vita* of Adalbert, that the saint was involved in what appears to have been a formally constituted mission, perhaps just before his second exile from Prague in *c.* 994. In addition he both sent messengers to the Hungarians and on one occasion offered to go himself, and drew them from error to Christianity (Bruno, Passio II Adalberti, 16). In later tradition, including the "Legenda maior" of St Stephen (4, 5)[30], his involvement extended to a major campaign of Christianisation and to the baptism of the infant Istvan. Bruno records an exchange of letters between Adalbert and the wife of a Hungarian ruler, probably Sarolt the wife of Géza, concerning the possibility of mission at the time of his final departure from Rome (Passio II Adalberti, 23). All of this suggests contacts with the court — and is indeed important evidence for the Arpadian royal household — though none of it indicates a legation on the scale of that of Adalbert of Trier to Kiev, or indeed the mission sent by one of the Ottos (perhaps in 972) to Géza. That of John of Gorze does, however, show that even a legation sponsored by Otto I might be small scale, since it involved only two monks and five baggage animals, though they were accompanied by at least one member of the original Muslim legation. Protocol still demanded that an attempt should be made to entertain them lavishly on their journey through Muslim Spain (John of St-Arnoul, Vita Iohannis Gorziensis, 117–119).

Most of the missions undertaken by Adalbert of Prague and Bruno of Querfurt seem to have been slightly larger but less formally constituted than that of John of Gorze. Adalbert gained the approval of Otto III to embark on mission, instead of returning to Prague, and he subsequently secured the backing of Bolesław Chrobry for his evangelisation of the Prussians, but it seems to have been a small scale affair. Bolesław, it is true, supplied a ship and thirty heavily armed men to transport the saint to Gdansk (Passio Adalberti, 27, 28; Bruno, Passio II Adalberti, 24). This official (and indeed forceful) backing, however, was not something that Adalbert wanted, and he apparently proceeded from Gdansk with only two companions, his half-brother, Radim, and a priest called Benedict. This may not have been what the Polish ruler intended, but his support was not necessarily a help when it came to working among the Prussians. According to Bruno, the brother of the man who killed Adalbert had been killed by the

[30] Legenda S. Stephani regis maior /Ed. E. Bartoniek // Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum, Budapest, 1938. Vol. 2.

Poles (Passio II Adalberti, 30). Bolesław's backing also proved fatal to the small community set up by Benedict and John at Meseritz. News of the treasure he had given prompted robbers to kill the two monks and their three companions (Bruno, Vita Quinque Fratrum, 13; Peter Damian, Vita Romualdi, 28). Ironically, it was all for nothing, since Benedict had already returned the silver to Bolesław. As for the Meseritz community itself, while it could certainly call on helpers, it does not seem to have numbered many more than the five men who were killed by the robbers.

Whether Bruno received any backing from the court of Stephen during his missions to the Black Hungarians is unclear: indeed we do not even know the whereabouts of the Hungarians he evangelised[31]. We should perhaps assume rather more official support for his missionary work than is apparent from our sources. Although he lost an important patron with the death of Otto III, like Adalbert of Prague Bruno was supported by Bolesław Chrobry, whose backing for mission was an important aspect of his relations with neighbouring peoples: indeed one might say that it is a mark of Bolesław's statesmanship. It is tempting to think that Bruno's journey to Kiev was backed by the Polish ruler, who we are told in the "Russian Primary Chronicle" was on good terms with Vladimir after 996[32]. The latter's amicable relations with Bolesław and Stephen of Hungary surely facilitated the work of the missionary. It is also tempting to think that the missions that Bruno sent to Sweden, about which we only hear in his letter to Henry II, were related to Bolesław's contacts with Denmark: the Polish ruler's sister, after all, had married king Swein (Thietmar, VII, 39).

We get a little more information from Bruno's mission to the Pechenegs in the letter sent by the saint to Henry II. Before crossing into Pecheneg territory he and his companions — how many there were we do not know — stayed with Vladimir in Kiev, and the ruler tried to persuade them not to proceed with their mission. When he failed to do so, Vladimir took his army and led Bruno and his companions out to the Serpent Walls, and he and his troops waited on one hill, while the group of missionaries waited on another: this would seem to suggest quite a substantial number of people, and certainly Bruno's company was large enough for him to leave behind one of their number as bishop to the thirty Pechenegs he had

[31] *Berend N., Laszlovsky J.* and *Szakács B.Z.* The Kingdom of Hungary. P. 331–332.
[32] Russian Primary Chronicle. P. 122.

converted, together with a son of Vladimir, who was offered as a hostage. Although our evidence here is that of an eye-witness, it is worth remembering what Bruno has omitted. He does not pause to tell us anything about the church of Kiev, or its bishop, who must in some way have acquiesced in Bruno's missionary activities beyond the Serpent Walls[33].

The letter to Henry II suggests that Bruno's following at the time of his mission to the Pechenegs was not insignificant: certainly not as small as the community of Benedict and John at Meseritz, which he had originally intended to join. Although we may not be dealing with anything as officially constituted as the legation of Adalbert of Trier, the group surrounding Bruno in 1009, at the time of his martyrdom among the Prussians — or perhaps, as has been suggested among a different group of Rus'[34] — does appear to have been somewhat larger than that accompanying the bishop of Prague at his death. Wibert, who claims to have been one of Bruno's chaplains and was supposedly present at the time, lists four colleagues, Tiemic, Icus, Hezich, and Apich, who were killed, while he himself was blinded[35]. How many lesser figures may have been with them we do not know. Thietmar (VI, 95) claims that many were martyred along with Bruno, while the "Quedlinburg Annals" talk of eighteen companions (Annales Quedlinburgenses, *s. a.* 1009)[36]. This suggests a well supported mission, and, since Bruno in all probability set out from the court of Bolesław, we should probably see it as yet one more example of the Polish ruler's realisation of the potential political value of backing the Christianisation of his pagan neighbours[37]. Thietmar (VI, 95) thought that Bolesław subsequently secured the return of Bruno's relics. Intriguingly Ademar of Chabannes (III, 31) claimed that it was the Rus' who redeemed them, suggesting perhaps that Vladimir was involved either jointly, or in competition with Bolesław, in backing Bruno's last act of evangelisation[38]. Damian goes some way towards

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[33] *Baronas D*. The year 1009: St Bruno of Querfurt between Poland and Rus // Journal of Medieval History. 2008. Vol. 34. P. 14.

[34] Ibidem. P. 1–22.

[35] *Wibert*. Hystoria de predicacione episcopi Brunonis cum suis capellanis in Pruscia et martyrio eorum / Ed. G.H. Pertz // Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores. Hannover, 1841. Bd. VI. S. 579–580.

[36] Annales Quedlinburgenses / Ed. G.H. Pertz // Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores. Hannover, 1839. Bd. III.

[37] *Baronas D*. The year 1009. P. 11–12

[38] Ibidem.

supporting Ademar's account, by claiming that the Rus' still venerated Bruno in his own day (Peter Damian, Vita Romualdi, 39)[39].

The intended mission of Romuald was rather grander than those that inspired him. According to Damian (Vita Romualdi, 39), on hearing of the death of Boniface, the name by which he knew Bruno, he decided to copy his missionary example, and went to Rome, where two colleagues, though probably not Romuald himself (the Latin is ambiguous), were elevated to the status of archbishop, and then set out for Hungary with twenty-four disciples. This suggests a significant papally-approved mission. In the event Romuald fell ill on the frontiers of Pannonia, and turned back.

In addition to the backing of such secular rulers as Otto I, III and Bolesław Chrobry, most of the missions which concern us were also officially approved by the papacy. Leaving aside the intercepted mission of Salek and Zachaeus sent by pope Leo, even if we turn to the smaller missions at the end of our period, Adalbert, Bruno, Benedict, John and Romuald all made certain that they had papal, in addition to imperial, approval, even though in the case of the mission of John and Benedict this led to their being murdered while awaiting the arrival of the papal license (Bruno, Passio II Adalberti, 18; Bruno, Vita Quinque Fratrum, 5; Peter Damian, Vita Romualdi, 39). Not that any pope in this period (unlike Gregory I or Nicholas I) seems to have had a missionary strategy — though occupants of the papal see tended to realise that mission in the name of Rome could enhance their authority and jurisdiction.

While these missions can be placed within a world of papal and secular diplomacy, they can also be analysed from a different perspective. The greatest of the missionaries, Adalbert of Prague and Bruno of Querfurt, were not simple pawns in the hands of monarchs, and indeed Bruno in particular was a scourge of secular rulers, criticising Otto II, III and Henry II (Passio II Adalberti, 12; Vita Quinque Fratrum, 7; Epistola ad Henricum II). While the evidence allows us only to consider some large-scale official legations, like that of Adalbert of Trier, in terms of international politics, the final mission of Adalbert of Prague and the intended missions of Benedict and John invite a different approach, which concentrates rather on missionary ideology. These were relatively small scale projects, which involved a more complex relationship with the surrounding

[39] Ibidem. P. 14.

pagan communities. Marina Miladinov, in discussing the work of Adalbert and Bruno, has presented it not so much as a missionary enterprise as an exercise in eremitism[40], and this is a powerful way to read the evidence. Yet mission was central to these saints, even if it was differently conceived than was the official delegation of Adalbert of Trier. Moreover, the complaints of Benedict and John, while waiting for Bruno to arrive with the papal license, contrast the idea of eremitism, which might be undertaken anywhere, with martyrdom among the pagans (Bruno, Vita Quinque Fratrum, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 21). Not only that: mission involved action over and above the practice of the ascetic life. We get some sense of the missionary strategy envisaged in the discussions between Adalbert of Prague and his followers and their opponents in the "Ottonian Life" and in Bruno of Querfurt's account, as well as in the latter's Life of Benedict and John.

Preaching the Gospel was, of course, central. Not surprisingly it is given pride of place in the "Russian Primary Chronicle"[41]. But an assertion of Christian doctrine was not always well received. Faced with a Prussian audience the bishop of Prague announced, "I am a Slav by birth, Adalbert by name, a monk by profession, and once a bishop by rank, but now by my function — your apostle. Your salvation is the purpose of our journey; that you abandon your deaf and dumb idols and recognise your Maker, who alone is God and besides whom there is no other; and that you may come to life, believing in His Name, and to be found worthy to receive the reward of celestial joys in the imperishable dwellings". The reaction was naturally hostile, and Adalbert was told that his views did not coincide with the common law and single way of life of the region (Passio Adalberti, 28)[42]. Such an exchange takes us away from the history of state formation, into one of cultural conflicts at the local level.

Bruno's description of Adalbert's missionary strategy is slightly more detailed than is that of the "Ottonian Life". He provides an equivalent exchange between the saint and a group of hostile Prussians, though he puts into their mouths a fear that the mission will cause

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[40] *Miladinov M*. Margins of Solitude. Eremitism in Central Europe between East and West. Zagreb, 2008.

[41] Russian Primary Chronicle. P. 98–110.

[42] Passio Adalberti / Ed. C. Gaşpar // Vitae Sanctorum Aetatis Conversionis Europae Centralis (Saec. X–XI) / G. Klaniczay. Budapest, 2013.

famine (Bruno, Passio II Adalberti, 25). Thereafter, however, he adds a conversation between Adalbert and his companions in which they take stock of their missionary strategy. Realizing that they looked far too distinctive, Adalbert said, "It seems to me that our raiment and horror of our clothes harms the souls of the pagans not a little. So, if it appears acceptable, let us change our clerical garb, let our hair become long and hang down, and allow the bristles of our shaven beards to grow, so that being unrecognised we may have greater safety to work. Becoming like them we can live familiarly with them, speaking to them and dwelling among them; let us seek food by working with our own hands like the apostles, and let us meditate secretly in the depths of our minds on the riches of the Psalms" (Bruno, Passio II Adalberti, 26)[43].

It may be that the ideas expressed here are genuinely those of Adalbert, but they also represent Bruno's own consideration of the problem of missionary activity in an alien land. We find similar ideas in his "Life of the Five Brothers" (10). Once Benedict could speak Slavonic, something he had also urged on Bruno, he suggested to John that he should "cut all his hair and put on male clothing such as is worn by seculars, in order to win over with his appearance the eyes of the pagans, lest they should be affrighted by the novelty of dress at the first contact and not allow anyone to approach them. This way, as they hoped, since he would not differ from them either in his bearing or in his dress, he would find more easily an opportunity for preaching". The only distinction between this plan and that put into the mouth of Adalbert concerns a different hairstyle, and presumably reflects the differing local populations.

In political sophistication the setting of Bruno's own martyrdom is somewhere between the relatively sophisticated political societies that we have encountered among the Rus', the Hungarians and the Danes, and the village communities of the last days of Adalbert of Prague. There was a king, Nethimir, but he scarcely seems equivalent in power to Vladimir, Stephen or Bolesław. According to Damian (Vita Romualdi, 27), Bruno arrived at the court of the king of the Rus' (which is usually regarded, not necessarily correctly, as a mistake for Prussians) in rags and barefoot. The king mistook him for a beggar, so the saint went out and changed into his clerical robes, which

[43] *Wood I.N.* Pagans and Holy Men, 600–800 // Irland und die Christenheit / Ed. P. Ní Chatháin and M. Richter. Stuttgart, 1987. P. 358–359.

prompted the king to state that it was clear that he was ignorant of the truth. Following this exchange Bruno underwent an ordeal by fire. It is not impossible that Bruno's original appearance before the king was dictated by his desire to look like a native.

Clearly going native was not possible for a mission like that of Adalbert of Trier. Indeed the protocol of a large scale diplomatic mission would have required radically different behaviour. The strategy set out by Bruno in his Lives of Adalbert and of Benedict and John can only have been appropriate for small-scale missions: and the notion of going native would not have appealed to everyone. And while some missionaries were keen to integrate as far as they could into the societies within which they were working, there were certain aspects of the Christian life which they would not abandon. Above all, they continued the performance of the liturgy. This is a recurrent feature in the lives of missionaries and missions, which is scarcely surprising, since ritual and ritual objects provided a familiar routine which the Christian could follow wherever he was[44]. The "Life of John of Gorze", a man who made no attempt to integrate into is surroundings, includes a fine account of the saint's liturgical activity while waiting in Cordoba for an audience with Abd Ar-Rahman. He and his companion went to church every Sunday, as well as on the great feasts, including Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost (John of St-Arnoul, Vita Iohannis Gorziensis, 124). The little eremitic community of Meseritz, where Benedict and John waited for Bruno, celebrated a full liturgy in their small church (Bruno, Vita Quinque Fratrum, 13). We hear of nothing so elaborate for Adalbert or Bruno in the mission field, but on arriving at Gdansk Adalbert celebrated mass, and the morning before his martyrdom he and his companions Radim and Gaudentius sang psalms and again celebrated mass (Passio Adalberti, 27, 30; Bruno, Passio II Adalberti, 24, 30). While waiting on the Serpent Walls for agreement from Vladimir to be allowed to proceed into Pecheneg territory, Bruno sang the responsory for the Feast of the See of St Peter, "Peter if you love me tend my sheep" (Epistola ad Henricum II). Among the Pechenegs he clearly performed the liturgy, since it was at nones one Sunday that he was seized and dragged to a meeting of the council. That he could appear in full vestments before a minor Russian or Prussian king also

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[44] *Wood I.N.* The Missionary Life. Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe 400–1050. Harlow, 2001. P. 260–261.

indicates the centrality of ritual (Wibert, Hystoria de predicacione). Poppo, one might add, would have seen the ordeal that he underwent in liturgical terms, since within the Frankish Church it was a form of trial for which there was a liturgy[45].

That the liturgy should continue to dominate the day of a missionary even in the most alien of circumstances is scarcely surprising. It provided a regular routine for each day of every year. Initially it marked the missionary off from the society in which he was active. To the outsider ritual was intriguing, and not surprisingly it surfaces in a number of tales of mission. In the "Russian Primary Chronicle"[46] observation of the rival ritual observances of the Bulgars, Germans and Greeks was key to determining which faith would be adopted by the Kievan Rus'. According to this tradition it was the glory of the Byzantine liturgy that ensured commitment to the Orthodox Church. From being a set of private rituals that reassured the missionary in an alien world, the liturgy was transformed into one of the foundation stones of the new Christian monarchy. The services of the Church came to structure early medieval year alongside, and sometimes in conflict with, the rhythms of nature.

While the liturgy provided the missionary with a daily timetable, the Bible and the *acta martyrum* provided a model for behaviour: in his letter to Henry II Bruno talks of the blood of martyrs shed in his own day. It is to the Martyr Acts, and the awareness of them shown by our missionaries, that I wish finally to turn, since Adalbert, Bruno and their fellows hoped that they would be able to live up to the standards of previous generations of Christians willing to die for the sake of Christ: that hope was indeed a major concern of Bruno's hagiography. The *acta martyrum*, whether real or imaginary, tend to revolve around a confrontation between the saint and a pagan ruler or judge, and many also include an account of tortures used to try to force the saint to sacrifice to pagan idols. The tales of suffering provided models of what a saint might be expected to endure at the hands of hostile rulers in order to achieve eternal life.

We find citations of individual martyr acts in missionary texts from the ninth century onwards. Rimbert's "Life of Anskar" is full

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[45] *Keefer S.L.* The Anglo-Saxon Lay Ordeal // Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald / Ed. S.D. Baxter, C.E. Karkov, J.L. Nelson and D. Pelteret. Farnham, 2009. P. 359.

[46] Russian Primary Chronicle. P. 110–111.

of references to the "Passio of Sixtus and Sinicius". Here there is a complex undertone, since the cult had been championed by Ebo of Rheims, one of Anskar's early patrons, and indeed himself involved in the Danish mission. Ebo, however, had fallen from grace during the crisis of Louis the Pious' reign[47]. To cite the "Passio Sixti et Sinicii" might have been a way of acknowledging Ebo's importance.

More directly associated with the missionaries with whom we have been concerned is the "Passio Gorgonii". Gorgonius was supposedly martyred in Nicomedia during the persecution of Diocletian, and his relics were translated to Rome. In the mid-eighth century they were acquired by Chrodegang of Metz, who installed them in the monastery of Gorze. The cult was, therefore, one with which John of Gorze was familiar, and indeed the account of the Translatio of the relics from Rome to Metz has recently been ascribed to John himself[48]. Despite this, John did not initially know anything about the supposed life of Gorgonius, as Milo of Minden discovered on a visit to the monastery. Back in his own diocese, however, the latter came across a copy of the "Passio", which he sent to John[49]. Intriguingly, the "Passio of Gorgonius", which includes not only a confrontation between the martyr and the emperor Diocletian but also a peculiarly gruesome account of the torture of the saint before his execution, was written by a bishop named Adalbert. Traditionally, the Adalbert in question has been thought to be the bishop of Prague, but it now appears more likely that it was Adalbert of Magdeburg, the Trier monk sent by Otto to the Rus'[50]. If this is the case, we might make a connection between the composition of the "Passio Gorgonii" and the 962 mission to the Rus'. Adalbert was conjuring up an image of what it was like to be interrogated before a pagan ruler. Of course, if the author were Adalbert of Prague, we could also set the "Passio" against his expectations of martyrdom while involved in evangelising the pagans.

Although we should probably not ascribe the "Acta of Gorgonius" to Adalbert of Prague, we know that the tales of martyrs influenced

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[47] *Palmer J.T.* Rimbert's Vita Anskarii and the Scandinavian Mission in the Ninth Century // The Journal of Ecclesiastical History. 2004. Vol. 55. P. 235–256.

[48] *Jacobsen P.J.* Miracula s. Gorgonii. Studien und Texte zur Gorgonius-Verehrung im 10. Jahrhundert // Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Studien und Texte. Hannover, 2009. Bd. 46. S. 83–86.

[49] Ibidem. S. 61–63.

[50] Ibidem.

him. The cult of the martyrs was strong in his episcopal city, where there was a church dedicated to St George, while the cathedral was dedicated to St Vitus, another supposed victim of the Diocletianic persecution. Equally important, the memory of more recent martyrs was very present: it was only two generations since the killing of Ludmilla and Wenceslas, and the murdered king is remembered in the "Life of Adalbert" himself (Passio Adalberti, 8; Bruno, Passio II Adalberti, 21). In Rome Adalbert stayed in the monastery dedicated to SS Boniface and Alexius (Passio Adalberti, 16). Alexius, as a saint who abandoned the parental home to become a pauper might have seemed an appropriate role model for Adalbert in Italy. In addition, Adalbert may have seen a parallel between his own poor reception in Prague and the treatment of Alexius as a pauper in his parents' house: his sympathy for the saint may be deduced from the homily *in natali sancti Alexii confessoris* which is ascribed to him[51]. Boniface, however, was more appropriate as model for a man confronting pagans. The Boniface in question was not the Anglo-Saxon missionary, but rather a legendary Roman martyr who had supposedly travelled to Tarsus to proclaim his Christianity, and to be tortured and martyred. Otto III deliberately associated Adalbert with another apostle strongly associated with mission, Bartholemew, installing relics of the Bohemian martyr in the church of St Bartholemew that he founded on the Isola Tiberina in Rome[52].

The missionaries of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries were deeply influenced by the idea of martyrdom. Missions and legations to alien societies were dangerous, though a high-profile officially-sponsored mission, like that of John of Gorze or Adalbert of Trier, was probably less so than the personally-conceived projects of Adalbert of Prague or Bruno of Querfurt. Martyr Acts seem to have been seen as providing some sort of preparation for working in a pagan world. Perhaps because of the danger we also find a remarkable percentage of missionaries writing either autobiographically about their own experiences or exploring the parallel experiences of others, as we see in the works of Adalbert of Trier and Bruno of Querfurt[53]. Above all, in the writings of Bruno, some of whose missions may have been

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[51] *Voigt H.G.* Adalbert von Prag. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Kirche und des Mönchtums im zehnten Jahrhundert. Berlin, 1898. S. 358–365.

[52] *Wood I.N.* The Missionary Life. P. 212.

[53] Ibidem. P. 264–265.

relatively high-profile while others were small-scale, we get a real sense of what it was like to be a missionary in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.

The great revival of missionary work that we see in the sixty years after 950 of course reflects the expansionist policies of the newly confident Ottonian Reich and of the Polish state, and it plays into the development of the Christian monarchies of Denmark, Hungary and Kiev. A series of missions were sent under Ottonian aegis, with papal approval, and in the last decades of the period with the support of Bolesław Chrobry, to the Rus', to the Hungarians, and the Prussians: Vladimir of Kiev also backed some missionary endeavours. Some of these were substantial legations, others were small affairs. In either case, the missionary set off into a world that was alien, even if, in retrospect, we can see within it the seeds of later states: to cope with that he looked to past history, to the history of the Roman martyrs, and to the histories of immediate predecessors. In trying to grapple with the dangers, Bruno of Querfurt in particular, but also Adalbert of Trier and others, set down a remarkable dossier for the understanding of missionary history, and by extension of one aspect of the development of the Christian monarchies of the Ottonian period.

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ЗАПАДНОЕВРОПЕЙСКИЕ МИССИОНЕРЫ
В ВОСТОЧНОЙ ЕВРОПЕ, 962–1009 гг.

Аннотация: В период со второй половины X в. до первого десятилетия XI в., когда набеги викингов прекратились, заметно оживилось миссионерство, особенно в Восточной и Северной Европе. Именно в это время осуществляются миссии к датчанам, венграм, на Русь, к печенегам и пруссам. В статье рассматриваются многие христианские миссии, предпринятые в

данный период, особенно имеющие документальное подтверждение (миссии Адальберта Пражского и Бруно Кверфуртского), но равным образом и те, информация о которых невелика, в том числе миссии Поппо к датчанам и Адальберта Магдебургского на Русь, а также намечавшаяся миссия Ромуальда в Венгрию, в контексте как религии, так и дипломатии (и, значит, становления государственности). Поскольку многие миссии имели политическую поддержку, не в последнюю очередь со стороны Оттоновской династии в Германии (*или:* Саксонской династии), в статье проводится сравнение и с миссией Иоанна Горзенгского к халифу Кордовы. Рассматривается масштаб миссий, а также значение участия императора, мирских правителей (в частности, Болеслава Смелого и Владимира) и папы Римского как для самих миссионеров, так и для их покровителей. Помимо освещения причин, организации и масштаба миссий, в статье исследуется опыт конкретных миссионеров, чьи интересы и задачи подчас стояли выше интересов и задач светских и церковных покровителей. В частности, внимание уделяется стратегиям конкретных миссионеров, выработанным ими для выживания, но также и для ведения своей деятельности в чуждом им окружении.

Ключевые слова: Адальберт Пражский, Болеслав Смелый, Бруно Кверфуртский, Венгрия, Владимир, литургия, миссия, Оттон III, Русь