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**WESTERN SOURCES ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN HISTORY  
OF KIEVAN RUS: BRUNO OF QUERFURT (†1009)  
AND THIETMAR OF MERSEBURG (975–1018)  
ABOUT THE COURT OF ST. VLADIMIR**

*Abstract:* Two Saxon clergymen, Bruno of Querfurt and Thietmar of Merseburg left important sources about the age of Vladimir the Great. What did the two Germans write about the Russians and about their rulers? In my study I compare the opinions of the mentioned authors about Russians with their opinions about other peoples and rulers, e. g. Germans and Hungarians etc. The opinion of Thietmar on the different peoples and rulers was motivated by his relationship to Christianity, to the German Empire and to the Germans. Bruno sympathized with the Duke of the Russians, who worried about him and supported the peace with the Petchenegs.

*Keywords:* Bruno of Querfurt, Thietmar of Merseburg, St. Vladimir, Kievan Rus, Germany

Two Saxon clergymen, Bruno of Querfurt and Thietmar of Merseburg left important sources about the turn of the first Millennium to our age. Both of them were contemporaries of Vladimir the Great and they reported among some nations about the Russians as well. What did the two Germans know and what did they write about the Russians and about their rulers? How did they characterize the Duke and the people in comparison with other rulers and peoples? I try to give answers to these questions in my study.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This work is based on my book titled M. Halmágyi, *Mi és ők. Azonosság és idegenség az első évezred fordulóján*, Szeged 2014. (Title of the book in English: We and they: Identity and Otherness at the turn of the first millennium). Further in German: M. Halmágyi, *Westliche Quellen über die christliche Geschichte der Kijewer Rus: Bruno von Querfurt (†1009) und Thietmar von Merseburg (975–1018) über den Hof des Hl. Vladimirs*, Naukovi Zapysky Bogoslovsko-Istorychnogo Naukovo-Doslidnogo Centru Imeni Archimandrita Vasilija (Pronija) 6, ed. J. Danilec, (Mukachevo 2019), 39–53.

‘May God open paradise for you just as you have opened the way to the pagans for us!’<sup>2</sup> These passionate words were told by a young messenger of faith – Bruno of Querfurt – to the Duke of the Russians. The German monk wanted to get to the Pechenegs, to convert them to the Christian religion. Bruno was not only an avid, enthusiastic person of the first millennium: he was an author as well, who wrote about Hungarians, Petchenegs, Poles and about the Duke of the Russians, who can be identical with St. Vladimir.

What we know about Bruno of Querfurt, we mostly know from his own works. He was born in Saxony, in Querfurt, around 974/978. He studied in the Magdeburg cathedral school, then he became court chaplain of Otto III. When Otto moved to Italy 998, Bruno was also in his company. The bishop of Prague, Adalbert was killed 997 as a Christian missionary on the land of Prussians. This event could make effect on Bruno. In Rome he entered the monastery of St. Alexius and Boniface. Boniface was a martyr too, so Bruno-Boniface said about himself: his name is Boniface, he also must become a martyr of Christ.<sup>3</sup> The monastery of St. Alexius and Boniface was found in 970s by Sergius, Bishop of Damascus, who was expelled from his diocese. The founder gave the monastery a Greek character, but later the monks followed the rules of St. Benedict.<sup>4</sup> Later, Bruno left Rome, and became a member of a hermit community that lived near Ravenna, in the swampy region of the Po River.<sup>5</sup>

The leader of this community was St. Romuald. Some hermits wanted to go to the land of the Slavs to christianize them. An elderly hermit, Benedict warned Bruno to start the mission only with papal permission, and to learn the language of the Slavs. Two monks, Benedict and John set out, and went

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Bruno of Querfurt to King Henry II. On His Alliance with the Pagans, Translated by W. L. North, [https://d31kydh6n6r5j5.cloudfront.net/uploads/sites/83/2019/06/Bruno\\_of\\_Querfurt\\_Letter\\_to\\_Henry\\_II\\_for\\_MARS\\_website.pdf](https://d31kydh6n6r5j5.cloudfront.net/uploads/sites/83/2019/06/Bruno_of_Querfurt_Letter_to_Henry_II_for_MARS_website.pdf)

(2020. 14. okt.) p. 3. „Aperiat tibi Deus paradisum, sicut nobis aperuisti viam ad paganos!”; Bonifatius (Bruno Querfurtiensis) Henrico II. regi litteras mittit, *Diplomata Hungariae Antiquissima I. (1000–1131)*, editor Gy. Györffy, Budapest 1992, 44–48, 45.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Et ego Bonifatius vocor; cur ergo etiam ipse Christi martir esse non debeo?’ Petrus Damiani, *Vita sancti Romualdi*, editor G. Waitz, MGH, SS IV, editor. G. Pertz, (Hannover 1841), 846–854, 850.; D. Baronas, *St. Bruno of Querfurt: The Missionary Vocation*, Lithuanian Historical Studies 14, ed. S. C. Rowell, (Vilnius 2009), 41–52. 43, 44.; G. Mako, *My Cherished Enemy: The Construction of Identity and Otherness in Russia*, Dissertation, Cambridge 2018, 51.

<sup>4</sup> P. Engelbert, *Prágai Szent Adalbert. Püspökideál, politika és szerzetesség*, Mons Sacer I., ed.: I. Takács 1996, 27–32. (The St. Adalbert of Prague. Bishop ideal, politics and monasticism.); Mako 2018, 57.

<sup>5</sup> Petrus Damiani, *Vita sancti Romualdi*, editor G. Waitz, MGH, SS IV, editor. G. Pertz, (Hannover 1841), 846–854, 850.; Bruno, *Vita quinque fratrum = Life of the Five Brethren by Bruno of Querfurt*, Preface and translation by Marina Miladinov. *Vitae Sanctorum Aetatis Conversionis Europae Centralis (Saec. X–XI) – Saints of the Christianization Age of Central Europe (Tenth–Eleventh Centuries)*, editor G. Klaniczay, Budapest – New York 2012, 183–313. 212–213.; H. G. Voigt: *Brun von Querfurt. Mönch, Eremit, Erzbischof der Heiden und Märtyrer*, Stuttgart 1907, 34, 380–383, 386–387. (Voigt translated Bruno’s works into German. I used the German translations of Voigt during my study.); W. H. Fritze, *Brun von Querfurt*, *Theologische Realenzyklopädie 7*. Berlin – New York 1981, 233–236. 233; Baronas 2009, 48; Halmágyi, 2014, 55;

to Poland. Bruno, however, went to Rome, and got the permission of Pope Silvester II. Then he wanted to reach Poland himself to join his companions, Benedict and John. However, between the German and Polish rulers – Henry II. and Bolesław Chrobry – a war broke out in 1003. The chronology of Bruno's further travels is controversial. He has been in Hungary at least once – or twice – and tried to christianize the Black Hungarians, but with little success. In 1004 he was in Germany, and was consecrated a bishop in Merseburg. In Germany, he wrote a longer biography about his role model, Bishop Adalbert. From Hungary he went in the direction of the Kievan Rus.<sup>6</sup>

Bruno calls the Duke of the Russians '*senior Ruzorum*'. He refers with the same title – *senior* – to Henry II, the German king and to Bolesław Chrobry, the Polish Duke, and the ruler of Sweden. The Hungarian prince – most likely Géza – was mentioned in the work of Bruno with the title *senior magnus*. Not only earthly rulers have this title in the works of Bruno: according to his confession St. Peter is his '*senior*'. Therefore, Bruno was acting not in the service of a secular ruler, but as a messenger of St. Peter, and as an envoy of the Pope.<sup>7</sup>

He characterizes the Duke of the Russians sympathetically: 'a man great in his reign and wealth'.<sup>8</sup> The Duke worried about him, as a messenger of faith: he wanted to hold back him from the dangerous journey to the Petchegens. But Bruno wanted to set himself on the way, and addressed to the Duke: '*May God open Paradise for you just as you have opened the way to the pagans for us!*'<sup>9</sup>

Bruno and his companions walked for two days through an uninhabited land. On the third day they were attacked by the Pechenegs, but they were saved by a certain sign. Unfortunately, Bruno does not explain, what this sign actually was. However, in the legends of saints we often meet the phrase that the pagan invaders are tamed and honored man of God. When Bruno and his companions arrived in the camp of the Pechenegs, they were scourged, but at last they got

<sup>6</sup> Bruno, *Vita quinque fratrum* = Life of the Five Brethren, op. cit, 211–225. 242–245.; Voigt 1907, 78, 848–392, 401; Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi, *Chronicon*, Thietmar von Merseburg, *Chronik. Neu übertragen und erleuchtet von W. Trillmich*, (Darmstadt 1974/ 2011). VI. cap. 94. p. 342–343. (I used the German translation of Trillmich during my work.); Bonifatius (Bruno Querfurtensis) *Henrico II. regi litteras mittit*, op. cit, 45.; Voigt 1907, 82. 85. 96–97. 10–104.; Fritze 1981 234; See also: B. Kürbis, *Purpurae passionis aureus finis. Querfurti Brúnó és az öt vértanú testvér; Európa közepé Európa közepé 1000 körül*, ed. A. Wiczorek – H-M. Hinz, Stuttgart 2000, 317–321. 318.; Halmágyi 2014, 56–58. Mako 2018, 50–69.

<sup>7</sup> Bonifatius (Bruno Querfurtensis) *Henrico II. regi litteras mittit*, op. cit, 45. 46–47.; Voigt 1907, 61. 437. 438. 439.; Bruno, *Vita Adalberti* 23. cap., shorter redaction, Sw. Wojciecha biskupa i męczennika żywot drugi / napisany przez Brunona z Kwerfurtu; wydała. wstępem i objaśnieniami opatrzyła *Jadwiga Karwasińska*, Warszawa: Państwowe Wyd. Naukowe, 1970, p. 61.; J. Fried, *Otto III. und Boleslaw Chrobry. Das Widmungsbild des Aachener Evangeliiars, der „Akt von Gnesen“ und das frühe polnische und ungarische Königtum*, Stuttgart 1989. 77, 78.; *Vita quinque fratri*, Preface and trans. Miladinov, Marina: (*Life of the five Brethren by Bruno of Querfurt*), *Vitae Sanctorum Aetatis Conversionis europae Centralis* (saec. X–XI), op.cit, 224/225.

<sup>8</sup> '*magnus regno et divitiis*', Bonifatius (Bruno Querfurtensis) *Henrico II. regi litteras mittit*, op. cit. 45; Letter of Bruno, op.cit, 2.

<sup>9</sup> Bonifatius (Bruno Querfurtensis) *Henrico II. regi litteras mittit*, op. cit. 45; Letter of Bruno, op.cit, 3. p.

the permission to proclaim the Christian faith. They baptized thirty people, and Bruno succeeded in making peace between the Pechenegs and the Russians. The Duke of the Russians gave the Pechenegs his son as a hostage, and Bruno consecrated a bishop to the people of the steppe.<sup>10</sup>

After his missionary trip Bruno came to Poland. He wrote here his letter to the German king, Henry II., in which he reported about his above-mentioned missionary journey. He could not see again his old companions – Benedict and John. The two hermits and their Polish companions were attacked and killed by robbers in 1003. Bruno wrote the story of their life and sufferings: it is another important source of this epoch. He wrote a shorter text about the life of his hero, St. Adalbert. After his stay Poland, he embarked on his last journey. He was killed as a martyr on the land of the Baltic tribes 1009, March 18.<sup>11</sup> When Bruno wrote, his heart and his pen were led by the interests of his missionary work. He has little to say about Western Europe, he reports primarily on the people of Central and Eastern Europe. Vladimir supported his mission, so Bruno sympathized with the Duke. Bruno opposed the politics of Otto II, because he was at war with Christians.<sup>12</sup> The bishop disapproved of the behaviour of Otto III also, because he had left Germany and had moved to Italy.<sup>13</sup> In his letter to Henry II, he reproached the king himself, as Henry joined the Pagan Liutizs (Lutizen), and waged war against the Christian Boleslaw. He wrote kind words about Duke Boleslaw Chrobry, because he supported the missionary plans of Bruno.<sup>14</sup> He mentioned the Duke of the Hungarians and his wife in the following context: Adalbert sent ‘to the Grand Lord of Hungarians or rather to his wife. This held the whole land in her hands and ruled over her husband and even over the things that were masculine matters. In Hungary Christianity had started under her leadership, but, - a stained religion - , was mingled with paganism and became worse than barbarism, a casual and powerless Christianity.’<sup>15</sup> The Grand Duke, whom he does not name, is certainly identical with Duke Géza. He was the father of St. Stephen, and he appears in the Hungarian sources as Geycha,

<sup>10</sup> Bonifatius (Bruno Querfurtensis) Henrico II. regi litteras mittit, op. cit. 45-46; Letter of Bruno, op.cit, 3-4.; Voigt 1907, 438-439.; According to Simon Franklin und Marta Font there are two different Dukes in Bruno’s letter: „... ille senior Ruzorum fide titubaverit” ; „pervenit ad seniore Ruzorum”. ‘... if that lord of the Rus’ wavers in his faith. .... I came to the lord of the Rus ‘. Letter of Bruno, op.cit, 3; Voigt 439) F. Márta, *Querfurti Brúnó kijevei útja: kérdések és feltevések a historiográfia tükrében. (The journey of Brun of Querfurt to Kiev: questions and hypothesis in the mirror of the historiography)*, Belvedere Meridionale 24, ed. G. F. Kiss, M. Halmágyi, (Szeged 2012) 67–75. 70.

<sup>11</sup> About circumstances of Bruno’s last journey see: D. Baronas, *The year 1009: St Bruno of Querfurt between Poland and Rus*, Journal of Medieval History 34, ed. C.M. Woolgar, (Amsterdam 2008), 1–22.

<sup>12</sup> Voigt 1907, 341.

<sup>13</sup> „Peccatum regis hoc fuit. Terram suae nativitatis delectabilem Germaniam iam nec videre voluit” Bruno, Vita quinque fratrum 7. cap. 226/227. Voigt 393.;

<sup>14</sup> Bonifatius (Bruno Querfurtensis) Henrico II. regi litteras mittit, op. cit. 47; Letter of Bruno, op.cit, 4–8.

<sup>15</sup> Voigt 1907, 362.

Geysa.<sup>16</sup> The name Deuvix – mentioned by Thietmar – is most likely also a version of this name. Bruno does not tell us the name of the Hungarian Duchess, but he describes her as an active, strong ruler. In the chronicle of Thietmar, the wife of Deuvix, named Beleknegini, was introduced as a strong lady as well: ‘she drank immoderately, sat on horseback like a warrior, and killed a man in excessive temper.’<sup>17</sup> In the Hungarian sources the wife of Géza is mentioned with the name Sarolt. Beleknegini is probable identical with Sarolt.<sup>18</sup> Thietmar sympathizes with the son of Deuvix: he is merciful to his defeated uncle, and gives back his captive wife without ransom, as a ‘voluntary present’. This son of Deuvix must be identical with St. Steven.<sup>19</sup> Bruno does not mention the Hungarian king Steven, neither his name nor his title. There is no trace of the king of Hungary in the writings of Bruno, although the German missionary had been in Hungary himself.

The Pechenegs are in the letter of Bruno the ‘cruellest of all pagans’<sup>20</sup> Liutizen, Prussians, Swedes, Czechs, Jews, Greeks and Saracens also appear in the works of Bruno.<sup>21</sup> In comparison with other peoples and rulers, we can say that the Russians represented by their Dukes are presented in a positive light in the writings of Bruno.

Above, I mentioned the importance of language knowledge during the mission. However, the messengers of faith in the Middle Ages communicated not only with words but also with symbols. The missionaries who came to England in the 6<sup>th</sup> century had carried a cross before them. When Vladimir sent ambassadors to Byzantium, they were deeply impressed by the priests: singing and by their ceremony. However, the knowledge of the language had to be considered indispensable during the missionary work. The son of the Polish Duke was also a member of the hermit community at Ravenna, so it is possible that Bruno and his companions could learn the Slavic language from him.<sup>22</sup>

What was Bruno’s relationship to the Greek rite of Christianity? Bruno died in 1009, so he lived before the Schism of the Church in 1054. In his biog-

<sup>16</sup> „Toxun genuit Gecham”. *Chronici Hungarici Compositio Saeculi XIV*, ed. S. Dománovszky, cap. 63, *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*. I. (SRH), ed. I. Szentpétery, (Budapest 1937 /1999.), 311. ; „Thocsun genuit filium nomine Geysam”, P Magistri, qui Anonymus dicitur, *Gesta Hungarorum*. Introduction by E. Jakubovich, notes by D. Pais, cap. 57. *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum* I. (SRH), p. 116.

<sup>17</sup> Thietmar VIII. cap. 4. p. 444–445. „supra modum bibebat et in equo more militis iter agens, quendam virum iracundiae nimio fervere occidit.”

<sup>18</sup> *Chronici Hungarici Compositio Saeculi XIV*, cap. 30. SRH. I. 291; P Magistri... cap. 27. SRH I. 69.

<sup>19</sup> Thietmar VIII. cap. 4. p. 442–443. „suscepit eam ex munere”.

<sup>20</sup> ‘omnium paganorum crudelissimos’, Bonifatius (Bruno Querfurtensis) Henrico II. regi litteras mittit, op. cit. 45; Letter of Bruno, op. cit. 2.

<sup>21</sup> Halmágyi 2014. 63–89.

<sup>22</sup> *Venerabilis Baedae Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, Oxford 1881; Bede, *A history of English Church and People*, Translated and with an Introduction by L. Sherley-Price, revised by R. E. Latham, 1968. I. 25; *The Russian Primary Chronicle Laurentian Text*. Translated and edited by S. Hazzard Cross and Olgred P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, Cambridge (Massachusetts) 1953, 111. <http://www.mgh-bibliothek.de/dokumente/a/a011458.pdf> (2019. 24. Febr.)

raphy of St. Adalbert we read that Adalbert once visited St. Nil. Nil was a Greek hermit, who lived in Italy. He suggested Adalbert to join the Latin monks. One should therefore follow the rite and customs of his own. Here we can remember the Admonitions of King Stephen: ‘Which Greek ruled the Latins according to Greek customs, and which Latin ruled the Greeks according to Latin customs? None of them.’<sup>23</sup>

It’s an interesting question whether Bruno was on the side of the violent or non-violent mission. He regarded the blinding of pagan Black Hungarians as a sin. He himself went to the Hungarians as well as to the Pechenegs without arms. He was wounded among the Hungarians, beaten by the Pechenegs, and sacrificed his life to his faith among the Baltic tribes. The question arises: if Bruno was a follower of the peaceful mission, why did he write in his letter to Henry II that the Liutizians must be forced into the church? The Black Hungarians, Pechenegs and Prussians were then still pagans. Under the Elbe Slavs, however, the Christian mission began during the rule of Henry I (919-936) and Otto I (936-973). Many of the Elbe Slavs were baptized, dioceses were founded between the Elbe and Oder: Brandenburg and Havelberg in 948. These bishoprics were swept away by the uprising of the Elbe Slavs. The Liutizians were regarded as apostates, who rose against Christianity. According to Bruno’s opinion, they were allowed to use violence against them. Those areas that were once in Christian hands were counted among the Christian lands, even when the inhabitants became apostates.<sup>24</sup> In connection with the Christianization of the Prussians the possibility of the violent proselytization arises. Bruno mentions in his letter to Henry II that Boleslaw was ready to play a role in the Christianization of Prussia, but the war between him and King Henry II did not make it possible. Bruno probably thought that the Christian rulers should defeat the pagans who obstruct the activity of missionaries. Since the Prussians killed St. Adalbert, it might have been found necessary to use the violence against the Prussians.<sup>25</sup>

*‘In this great city, the capital of the empire, there are more than 400 churches and 8 markets.’*<sup>26</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg characterizes Kiev with the sentence quoted above. Who was Thietmar, what is his chronicle, and what does he write about Kievan Rus?

<sup>23</sup> „Ast, inquit, homo ego sum Grecus; melius conueniunt cum quibus hec agas monachi Latini.” Brun, *Vita Adalberti*, cap. 13, longer redaction, p. 15.; Voigt 348.; ‘Quis graecus regeret latinos graecis moribus, aut quis latinus regeret graecos latinis moribus? Nullus.’ *Sancti Stephani regis primi Hungariae: Libellus de institutione Morum*. Cap. VIII. Szent István. Intelmek I. Ed. and Translated into Hungarian: L. Havas, Debrecen, AIAΘA 2004, 44; Szent István király intelmei Imre herceghez. Translated into Hungarian by Á. Kurcz. Árpád-kori legendák és intelmek. Szentek a magyar középkorból. I. Budapest 1999, 47-55. 54. (I followed the translation of Kurcz.)

<sup>24</sup> H-D. Kahl, *Zum Geist der deutschen Slavenmission des Hochmittelalter*, Heidenmission und Kreuzzugsgedanke in der Deutschen Ostpolitik des Mittelalters, Ed. H. Beumann, Helmut, Darmstadt 1973, 156–176. 177 – 274. 189. 220.; Baronas 2009, 46–47.

<sup>25</sup> Kahl 1973, 187, 199.

<sup>26</sup> Thietmar VIII. cap. 32. p. 474–475.

Thietmar was born about 975 in Walbeck, in Saxony. He was a relative of Bruno of Querfurt. They were schoolmates in the Magdeburg cathedral school. Having become bishop of Merseburg, Thietmar wrote a great chronicle of the history of his diocese and the history of the Saxon kings. He concentrated not only on Saxony and the German Empire. His horizon extended to almost all the peoples of Europe, and his chronicle is an important source of the Elbe Slavs, Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, and Kievan Rus.

Thietmar rarely left Germany, he had never been to Kiev, he could not personally see the Duke of the Russians – unlike Bruno. Thietmar calls the Duke of Kiev by his name: Vladimir. He even translates his name: *potestas pacis*, meaning ‘power of peace’. He presents the Duke in several character traits antipathically, according to his characterization Vladimir was a voluptuous man. He accepted the Christian faith at the urging of his Greek wife, „but with works of righteousness did not glorify him.” The Russian Chronicle (Poveszty Vremennih Let, PVL) also talks about the sins of Vladimir just before the presentation of his conversion. The idea that we read in the chronicle of Thietmar may also be related to the fact that Vladimir got his wife from Byzantium: she was the emperor’s daughter, Princess Anne, daughter of Romanos II. The German King, Otto I. actually wanted to get a purple-born Emperor’s daughter for his son from Byzantium; but he got only a relative of the emperor, John Tzimiskes. Her name was Theophanu, and she was not a purple-born emperor’s daughter. These circumstances could also influence the opinion of the German bishop.<sup>27</sup>

In the chronicle of Thietmar the name of Vladimir’s wife is Helene. Although, the real name of the wife was Anne. Helene was perhaps an older daughter of Romanos II, whom Otto I. had acquired for his son in 967/968.<sup>28</sup>

However, Thietmar knows that Vladimir’s wife from Byzantium played a role in the conversion of Vladimir. Another cause of the negative depiction of Vladimir in the German chronicle may be that Vladimir put a German missionary named Reinbern in jail, who died in captivity.<sup>29</sup> The PVL tells us that Vladimir and his people were eventually baptized by Byzantine missionaries.<sup>30</sup>

Thietmar can also write good things about Duke Vladimir: ‘Because the mentioned king had heard of the Burning Light through his priests, he washed away the blemish of past sins by constant, generous donations.’<sup>31</sup>

Thietmar tells us about the grave of Vladimir: ‘he lies buried in the great city of Kiev, in the church of the martyr of Christ and of Pope Clement, next to

<sup>27</sup> Thietmar VII. cap. 72. 73. 74. p. 432–437; The Russian Primary Chronicle, op.cit, 94.; A. Poppe, *Vladimir als Christ*, Österreichische Osthefte. 35/1993. 553–575, 559–560.

<sup>28</sup> A. Poppe, *The political background to the baptism of Rus, Byzantin-Russian relations between 986-989*, The rise of Christian Russia. London 1982, 230. Anm. 114. .; Poppe 1993, 557. Anm. 14.

<sup>29</sup> Thietmar VII. cap. 72. p. 432–435.

<sup>30</sup> The Russian Primary Chronicle, op.cit, 96–117

<sup>31</sup> Thietmar VII. cap. 74. p. 436–437., „Et quie de lucerna ardente a predicatoribus suis rex prefatus audivit, peccati maculam peracti assidua elemosinarum largitate deterisit.” Poppe 1993, 559–560.

his wife; their sarcophagi stand free in the middle of the church.’<sup>32</sup> The mention of the church of Pope Clement in Kiev is a good example of the contact of the western and eastern parts of the Church in this era.

Thietmar calls Vladimir king (*rex*). Even the ruler of the Hungarians - the son of Deuvix, most likely King Stephen - was designated by Thietmar as king (*rex*),<sup>33</sup> but the rulers of Poland and Bohemia are mentioned as Dukes (*dux*, *duces*). Thietmar expresses with these words, that Russians and Hungarians were independent from the German Empire.

After Vladimir’s death, Poland’s Duke, Bolesław Chrobry, supported Vladimir’s stepson, Swentepolk, against Vladimir’s son Jaroslaw. When Bolesław moved against Kiev in 1018, he was accompanied by 300 German, 500 Hungarian and 1000 Pecheneg warriors. This is what the Chronicle of Thietmar tells us. The army of Bolesław conquered Kiev on August 14, 1018., and so German warriors – who fought at his side – could get to know the important city, and this information could later reach Thietmar. Kiev is called Cuiewa and Kitava by him. Bolesław and Swentepolk were received by the ‘Archbishop of the city in the Monastery of St. Sophia’. Thietmar even knows that that monastery was ‘burned down the previous year.’ The Bishop of Merseburg tells in his chronicle about the huge dimensions of Kiev. ‘In this great city, the capital of the empire, there are more than 400 churches and 8 markets; the number of inhabitants is unknown. As in the whole country, they are composed of strong, fleeting servants, who come together from everywhere, but especially from fighting Danes who have so far asserted themselves against the frequent harassment of the Pechenegs and also defeated other enemies’<sup>34</sup> When Thietmar talks about Danes here, he certainly means Wareger. The chronicler knew about the Scandinavian origin of the Russians. He does not say that the Russians are Slavs,<sup>35</sup> although he interprets the name of Vladimir from Slavic.

In assessing the individual peoples, religion, custom, and the relationship of the particular people to the German Empire played a major role for Thietmar. He wrote with sympathy about the English who paid taxes to the pope, he painted a dark picture of the Danes who conquered England. The Liutizs (Liutizen) - a pagan tribal federation at the Elbe - were characterized negatively. As he writes about the cruel customs of the Poles, he paints a mischievous picture about them. However, when the Poles bravely asserted themselves in a city

<sup>32</sup> Thietmar VII. cap. 74. p. 436–437. „sepultum in Cuiewa civitate magna et in aeclesia Christi martiris et papae Clementis iuxta predictem coniugem suam, sarcophagis eorundem in medio templi palam stantibus.”

<sup>33</sup> F. J. Schröder, *Völker und Herrscher des östlichen Europa im Weltbild Widukinds von Korvei und Thietmars von Merseburg*, Münster 1974, 18.

<sup>34</sup> Thietmar VIII. cap. 32, p. 474–475. „In magna hac civitate, que istius regni caput est, plus quam quadringente habentur ecclesiae et mercatus VIII, populi autem ignota manus, quae, sicut omnis haec provincia, ex fugitivorum robore servorum huc undique confluentium et maxime ex velocibus Danis, multum se nocentibus Pecinegis hactenus resistebat et alios vincebat.”

<sup>35</sup> H-W. Goetz, *Die Slawen in der Wahrnehmung Thietmars von Merseburg zu Beginn des 11. Jahrhunderts*, *Lětopis: Zeitschrift für sorbische Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur*, 62 (2015), 103–118. 110.



against the pagan Liutiz (Liutizen) with firm faith, the Christian Poles are presented with a better color. So, the bond of religion is more important to the Saxon bishop than political interest. When writing about Lorraine, he mentions that there, in the west, not only the sun goes down, but 'all justice, obedience and mutual love.'<sup>36</sup> In the chronicle many other peoples were mentioned, e. g. Saracens, Jews, Italians, Greeks.

Above, I mentioned that Thietmar translated the name of Vladimir from Slavic. Thietmar was able to understand Slavic. In the diocese of Merseburg Slavs lived also, and Thietmar had to speak and understand Slavic in order to fulfill his duty as a pastor. In his chronicle he translates Slavic words, he even writes and translates a Slavic sentence.<sup>37</sup>

It is worth mentioning that the German king, Otto I could also speak Slavic. The Saxon author, Widukind of Corvey tells us about it. In the chronicle of Thietmar, we read that a son of the king, named William, was born of a noble, captive Slav woman.<sup>38</sup> She was definitely a prisoner of war from the land of the Elbe Slavs. Maybe Otto learned from her Slavic or could practice her language skills with her. Her son, Wilhelm became a bishop of Mainz.

There is a German source where we can find a mention of the Russians from this era in connection with the Hungarian ruling family. In the Hildesheim Yearbooks we read in the year 1031: „Et Henricus, Stephani regis filius, dux Ruizorum, in venatione ab apro discissus, periit flebiliter mortuus.”<sup>39</sup> 'Henry, King Stephen's son, the Duke of Ruizen, was ripped open by a boar and died a miserable death.'<sup>40</sup> According to György Györffy, Prince Emerich (Imre), Stephen's son, was the leader of the royal bodyguards, and this bodyguard consisted of Russian warriors. According to the theory of Gyula Kristó Russians lived on the Hungarian-German border area, and Duke Emerich could be the leader of them.<sup>41</sup> There are also other examples from this period of contacts between Russians and Hungarians: when Duke Vladimir died in 1015 and his stepson Swentepolk wanted to kill Vladimir's son Svjatoslav, who fled to Hungary. Svjatopolk, (Swentepolk) however, sent murderers to the Hungarian

<sup>36</sup> Halmágyi 2014, 53; Thietmar IV. cap. 14. p. 130–131.

<sup>37</sup> Further: H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg, Reichsbischof und Chronist*, Köln–Wien 1973, 118.

<sup>38</sup> Thietmar, II. cap. 35, p. 72–73. „captiva et Sclavonica”; Widukind von Corvey: *Res gestae Saxoniae*. Die Sachsengeschichte. Übersetzt und herausgegeben von Ekkehart Rotter und Bernd Schneidmüller. Stuttgart 1997. Lib. II. cap. 36.

<sup>39</sup> *Annales Hildesheimenses*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. rerum Germanicum in usum scholarum, VIII. Contulit cum codice Parisiensis G. Waitz. Hannover 1878, 36.

<sup>40</sup> *Die Jahrbücher von Hildesheim*. Übersetzt von Eduard Winkelmann. Neu bearbeitet von Wilhelm Wattenbach. Die Geschichtsschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit. 2. Ausgabe. Band 53. Leipzig 1893, Quellensammlung zur mittelalterlichen Geschichte. Fortsetzung. (Cd-ROM) Berlin, Heptagon, 1999.

<sup>41</sup> *Annotation 716<sup>th</sup>* by G. Thoroczkay to his Hungarian translation of the part of the Hildesheim yearbooks, *Az államalapítás korának írott forrásai*, Ed. Gy. Kristó, Szeged 1999, 216.; Gy. György, *István király és műve*, Budapest 2000, 313; Gy. Kristó, *Nem magyar népek a középkori Magyarországon*, Budapest 2003, 106–119. (Non Hungarian People in medieval Hungary)

mountains - the Carpathians - (k gorě Ugor'stěj) and killed Svjatoslav.<sup>42</sup> From Russian sources we know that three Hungarian brothers were in the territory of Rus: Efrem, Moses and George.<sup>43</sup>

The two Saxon authors - Bruno von Querfurt and Thietmar von Merseburg - have devoted a great deal of attention to the eastern parts of Europe. Bruno was influenced by the interest of the mission. The opinion of Thietmar on the different peoples and rulers was motivated by his relationship to Christianity, to the German Empire and to the Germans. Bruno sympathized with the Duke of the Russians, who worried about the messenger of faith. Thietmar characterized Vladimir with negative qualities, but he mentioned that the Duke had given alms. Thietmar informs us about 400 churches that stood in Kiev, among which the Church of St. Clemens and the St. Sophia. Both Bruno and Thietmar are important contemporary authors who inform us on the church history of Kievan Rus.

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ЗАПАДНИ ИЗВОРИ О ХРИШЋАНСКОЈ ИСТОРИЈИ КИЈЕВСКЕ РУСИЈЕ:  
БРУНО КУЕРФУРТСКИ (†1009) И ТИТМАР МЕРСБУРШКИ (975–1018)  
О ДВОРУ СВЕТОГ ВЛАДИМИРА

Бруно Куертфуртски био је мисионар почетком 11. века. Проповедао је хришћанство у Угарској, потом код Печенега, а преминуо је као мученик међу балтичким племенима 1009. године.

Један од његових рукописа је везан за писмо немачког краља Хенрија II. Покушао је да убеди Хенрија да се не бори против војводе од Полеа. У свом писму Бруно говори и о својим путовањима. Бруно је био наклоњен политици војводе Руса који је између осталог био посвећен вери. Додуше у писму не помиње војводу али може се поистоветити са Светим Владимиром. Тиетмар, епископ Марсбурга, приређивач је његове хронике од 1012. до 1018. године. То је извор првог реда када се говори о Словенима из Елбе, Одере, Полеа, Кијевске Русије. Занимљиво је да се по начину како је Владимир описан може закључити да је описан као неко ко је антипатичан (можда зато што је био ожењен ромејском принцезом Аном, ћерком Романа II). Немачки краљ Отон I желео је Ану за супургу свога сина, али је заправо добио само девојку из царске породице. Тиетмар такође помиње око 400 цркавама у Кијеву, међу којима посебно говори о цркви Божанске Премудрости.

<sup>42</sup> The Russian Primary Chronicle, 130.; Régmúlt idők elbeszélése. A Kijevi Rusz első krónikája. Translate I. Ferincz, notes L. Balogh et al, Budapest, 2015. 108.

<sup>43</sup> I. Ferincz, *Magyar Mózes és Efrém – Az ortodox egyház szentjei*, Az ortodoxia története Magyarországon a XVIII. századig, Ed. I. H. Tóth, Szeged 1995. 37–44. (Efrem and Moses the Hungarian - Saints of Orthodoxy. In: The history of Orthodoxy in Hungary until the 18th century.)