

Józef Cezary Kałużny

The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow

Unknown apostles of the grassroots mission in Gothic Dacia in the light of *The Passion of St. Sabbas the Goth*

Who do we consider apostles of Christ?¹ First and foremost we could name his closest companions: the Twelve Apostles (Lk 6:12–16), where the word 'Apostle' is spelled with a capital 'A'. The group is sometimes extended to include the first seventy-two sent out by Christ (Lk 10:1–12), who accompanied him since he started teaching. We may also include the so-called apostolic disciples such as evangelists Mark (Acts 12:12) and Luke (2 Timothy 4: 11), or St. Paul's companion Barnabas (Acts 4:11), all of whom passed on the seed of faith, becoming apostles themselves. In this way the apostle created his own disciples, who in turn frequently took the role of apostles, preaching the Gospel to next generations of apostolic disciples. Already in early Christianity the apostolic rank was first assigned to the Twelve Apostles. Yet for Christians it was obvious that also Barnabas, Mark, Luke or Paul mentioned above had also been apostles. It was particularly true of Paul, to which the title of 'apostle' stuck so much that he still spoken of as such, though in fact he did not belong to the Twelve. In addition, he described himself in the following way, "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither

1. *Apóstolos* (Greek) is derived from the verb *apostílo*: to send out; to send away; to dispatch (Mt 10:5; Mk 11:3) and is already known in the Old Testament, where prophets were referred to by the term (1 Kings 14:6). However, while the Old Testament somewhat specified their function, Christ gives the word 'apostle' a new meaning related to their rank or dignity (Lk 9:1–6; Mt 28:18–20).

by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead" (Gal 1:1).

So we have the Twelve, and then the growing group of those known and lesser-known ones, who contributed to evangelization, and upon whom the original Twelve conferred not so much the apostolic authority and succession connected with the hierarchical office of the bishop² but rather a term arising from testimony the of acts of evangelization. In our discussion we shall focus on the latter.

Please note that although the term 'apostle' has evolved as well, today we use it more commonly in the context of late ancient or early medieval apostles of nations:

- Ulfila – the Apostle of Goths,
- Patrick – the Apostle of Ireland,
- Augustine – the Apostle of Angles and Saxons,
- Cyril and Methodius – the Apostles of Slavs,

and so on,³ who combined the cognomen with apostolic succession, holding the rank of missionary bishops. For that reason the word 'apostle' usually implies some spectacular event related to significant achievements in terms of evangelization; much less often we associate it with individual 'grassroots' acts of Christianization.

In the present study I would like to focus on acts which from the very beginning unquestionably took place within the Church community, and were connected with the so-called grassroots, local mission. By this I mean direct, individual evangelization, making impact by the very presence of Christians, who lived by different, unique rules, which must have been

2. The question of hierarchical apostolicity of next generations of disciples, strictly related to apostolic succession, and sometimes apostolic authority emerging from succession is discussed by Bavarian theologian Johann Auer in his work *The Church: The Universal Sacrament of Salvation*. Auer presented the issue at Vaticanum Secundum; especially recommendable is the chapter: *The Apostolic Office as the Central Office of the New Covenant, and the Bishops as the successors of the Apostles*. Johann Auer, *The Church: The Universal Sacrament of Salvation*, in: *Dogmatic Theology Series*, ed. by H. M. Riley, vol. 8, Washington, D.C. 1993, pp. 195–344.
3. In an excellent study on the subject of consecutive great apostles of barbarian Europe, prof. Jerzy Strzelczyk adheres to this widely accepted context, which makes his synthesis clear. We can trace the lives of consecutive apostles and nations to which they were sent. Cf. J. Strzelczyk, *Apostołowie Europy*, Poznań 2010, pp. 42ff, 57ff, 71ff.

visible at least for the nearest environment, and which was naturally inherent in everyday life. My intention, however, is not so much to dwell on a large group of obscure apostles as to discuss the question of the potential effect of grassroots Christianization. Unlike top-down evangelization, which was often echoed in the historiography of Christianized peoples, almost none of the sources of grassroots Christianization are extant, so we use fragmentary writings or archaeological material as the basis. The latter, although recently more and more abundant and capable of becoming a contribution to theses on grassroots Christianization e.g. by Byzantine slaves in the Slavic environment, as mentioned by prof. Michał Parczewski [Fig. 1],⁴ and which could have preceded popular Christianization that came afterwards, is plainly questionable. Firstly, considering the ambiguity of e.g. the sign of the cross on earthenware [Fig. 2],⁵ and secondly due to the absence of mentions of such evangelization in written sources.

For this reason a more detailed analysis of the phenomenon, in view of the absence of a wider array of sources, is unattainable, though one may try to highlight certain section of the process, where sources related to specific acts of evangelization or testimonies of faith of individual Christians are extant. It seems that such example may be found in *The Passion of St. Sabbas the Goth*,⁶ a historical document, the authenticity of which has

4. On the basis of archaeological material from excavations in East-Central and Southeast Europe professor Michał Parczewski presented the possible effect of Christianity on Slavic population, which was due to the Byzantine slaves captured by the Slavs. The Archaeological Museum in Krakow, a lecture entitled: *Pierwsi chrześcijanie na północ od Karpat i Sudetów* [First Christians north of the Carpathian Mountains and Sudetes], 25 February 2016. Using archaeological sources, Parczewski attempted to shed some light on the phenomenon of 9th century Christian missions in Lesser Poland and Silesia, which could be directly related to the impact exerted by the principality Great Moravia on those regions. It seems reasonable to recognize this valuable voice in the discussion on the Christianization of Southern Poland while awaiting other sources which would support the aforementioned hypothesis.
5. M. Parczewski, *Ornament czy symbol kultu? Znak krzyża na naczyniach wczesnosłowiańskich*, in: *Dzieje Podkarpacia: Początki chrześcijaństwa w Małopolsce*, red. J. Gancarski, t. 5, Krosno 2001, pp. 15–19; W. Stępniań-Mińczewa, *Początkowo Słowianie nie mieli liter, będąc bowiem poganami liczyli i wróżyli za pomocą kresek i nacięć...*, in: *Święci i świętość u korzeni tworzenia się kultury narodów słowiańskich*, red. W. Stępniań-Mińczewa, Z. J. Kijas, Krakow 2000, pp. 45–51.
6. For the sake of clarity, when referring to the work I shall use an accurate translation by Jerzy Danielewicz: *Opis męki świętego Saby* [The Passion of St. Sabbas the Goth], przekł. J. Danielewicz, „Meander” 36 (1981), z. 1, pp. 35–39. Those interested

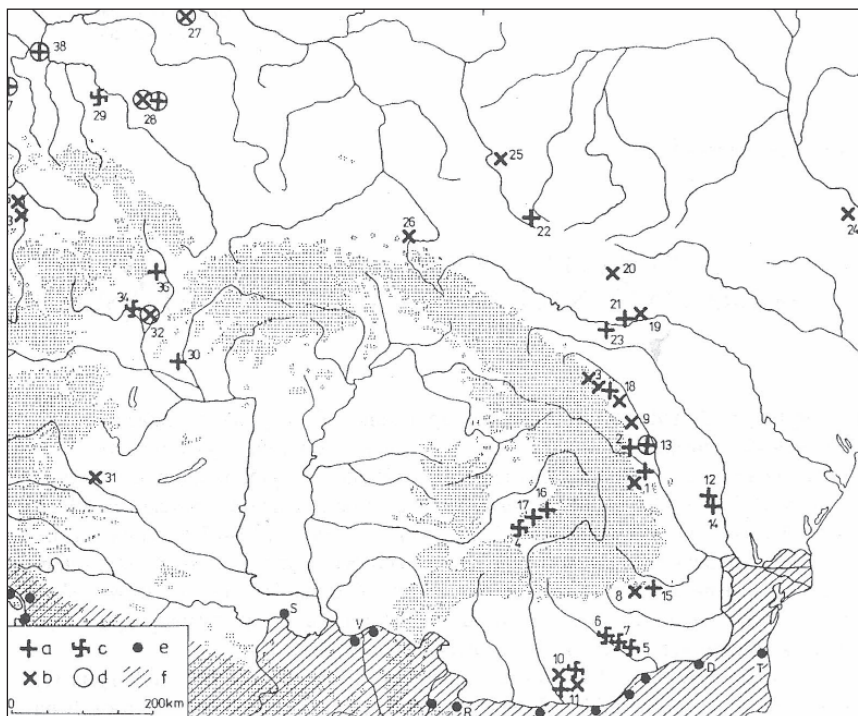


Fig. 1.

Locations where certain instances of the sign of the cross on Slavic vessels from 6th to 8th/9th c. were reported.

1–18	Romani	30	Slovakia
19–25	Ukraine	31	Slovenien
26–29	Poland	32–36	Czech Republic

not yet been challenged.⁷ The document is an account of the final days in the life of a Christian who died as a martyr in 372 on the Musaeus River in Dacia, which was back then inhabited by Goths (today the Buzau River in Romania).

At that time, Goths of Dacia – the so-called Visigothic alliance – had split into two groups, which from the 370s were divided not only by the Danube, but increasingly also by their attitude towards the Empire

in the original should refer to a critical edition by Hippolyte Delehaye published in «*Analecta Bolondiana*» 31 (1912), pp. 216–221.

7. J. Strzelczyk, *Męczeństwo św. Saby*, „*Meander*” 36 (1981) z. 1, p. 31.

and Christianity. Those inhabiting Moesia Inferior basically represented a pro-imperial group open to Christianization, as mentioned by Socrates of Constantinople, who wrote that Frigigern (chief of Moesian Goths, deceased 380): "...wanting to show his gratitude for the boon received, accepted the emperor's religion and ordered his subjects to follow suit".⁸ Large-scale missionary work was carried out there by bishop Ulfila (310–383), who actively contributed to spreading the Gospel among Gothic tribes.⁹ The other branch of the tribes remained on lands deserted by Romans during the reign of Aurelian (270–275) – the former province of Dacia ruled by Athanaric (365–381).¹⁰ The superior distinctly referred to traditional values and reigned accompanied by aristocracy – the so-called 'megistani', who were hostile to Christianity. Hence the persecution of Gothic Christians already in the beginning of his reign, as mentioned by Sozomen, who wrote that:

It is said that the officers appointed by Athanaric caused a statue to be constructed, which they placed on a chariot, and had it conveyed to the tents of those who were suspected of

8. Socrates of Constantinople, *Historia Ecclesiastica* [*Historia Kościoła*], przekł. S.J.Kazikowski, IV, 33, Warszawa 1986, p. 335.
9. Ulfila, Ulphilas, Orphila (ca. 310–383), of Gothic-Greek descent, student of Eusebius of Nicomedia, radical follower of Arianism, a Christian heresy assuming that the Son is subordinate to the Father. A missionary, the 'apostle' of Goths, Ulfila translated the Bible to the Gothic language. However, as his acts were limited to his mission among Goths from Moesia Inferior, Jerzy Strzelczyk asks to what extent Ulfila is the apostle of Goths and to what extent the bishop of Gothia. J.Strzelczyk, *Apostołowie Europy*, op. cit., pp. 45ff.
10. Athanaric is believed to stand behind the persecutions of 348, when Inna, Rima and Pinna, among others, died as martyrs. Ulfila himself crossed the Danube along with the majority of Gothic Christians to seek refuge on the imperial territory in Moesia Inferior, in the vicinity of the town of Nicopolis. J.Strzelczyk, *Męczeństwo św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 29.

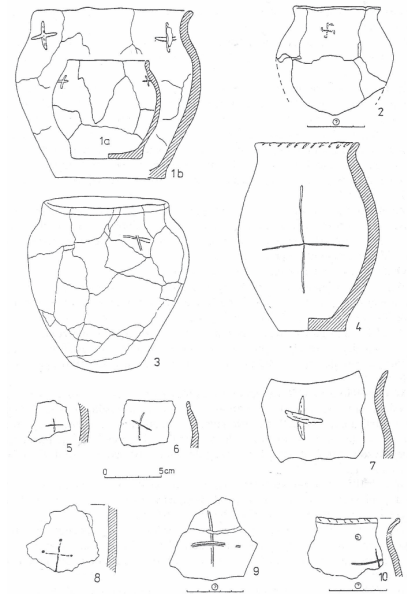


Fig. 2.
Selected examples of early-Slavic vessels with the sign of the cross from Romanian territory.

having embraced Christianity, and who were therefore commanded to worship the statue and offer sacrifice.¹¹

This may indicate that in the late 4th century Christians among Athanaric's Goths were already noticeable enough for the ruler to resort to official oppression. On the other hand, was Athanaric forced to act in such a way to 'save' traditional Gothic values threatened by a growing number of the followers of Christ, or was he merely dissociating himself from Fritigern's pro-imperial faction, with the latter supporting Christianity, a religion promoted in the Empire?

At this point we should enquire when Christianity first appeared among Goths. The Gospel presumably reached Gothic tribes before the middle of the 3rd century, i.e. from the time when the tribes started to settle at the shore of the Black Sea, intensifying contacts with the Empire, both in the commercial and military aspect, the latter one being a dominant issue and a nuisance for the Romans. Undeniably, Goths started penetrating the lands by the Black Sea from the north-eastern border — areas surrounding Crimean Chersonesus¹² — as far as Asia Minor,¹³ which became the preferred spot of the incursions of rapacious Gothic pirates, an abundant source of loot, including Christian slaves. It is Asia Minor (among other locations) which was the cradle of thriving early Church; little wonder that the force of its impact echoed as far as Gothic Moesia (Ulfila's work) or Dacia (Sabbas's testimony) after over a century.¹⁴

Considering the above, although it is difficult to clearly specify the dawn of Christianity among Goths, it is not surprising that the name of Theophilus, regarded as the bishop of Goths, is mentioned as early as the Council of Nicaea in 325.¹⁵ While we cannot determine whether he had come to Nicaea from the Danube or from an area near Crimean Chersonesus, the

11. Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* [*Historia Kościoła*], przekł. S. J. Kazikowski, VI, 37, Warszawa 1980, p. 443.
12. Л. В. Седикова, Т. Ю. Яшаева, *Очерк истории Херсонеса конца IV–X вв.*, in: *Архитектура вczesнобизантийских будовли сакралных Черсонезу Таурыйдзкого: Вczesнобизантийские будовле сакралне Черсонезу Таурыйдзкого* red. A. B. Biernadzki, E. J. Klenina, S. G. Ryzowa, t. 1, Poznań 2004, s. 33ff.
13. M. Salamon, *The chronology of Gothic incursions into Asia Minor in the 3rd century A.D.*, "Eos" 59 (1971), pp. 109–139.
14. *The chronology of Gothic incursions*, op. cit.
15. Socrates of Constantinople, *Historia Ecclesiastica...*, op. cit., p. 257.

bishop's Greek name reveals a descent outside the Gothic community.¹⁶ In any case, the Goths made forays into the territory of the Empire since the middle of the 3rd century, and the slaves which were brought to the barbarian world despite their low social status carried the seed of the Gospel.¹⁷ Even more importantly, the Christian faith permeated into native Gothic population, as evidenced in the passion of St. Sabbas. According to the document, "Christianity spread at the level of rural community, among simple Visigothic free folk"¹⁸ – as described by J. Strzelczyk, although with a reservation that: "this cannot alter the fact that before Adrianopolis (378) the impact of Christianity and work of even the most ardent missionaries [...] was rather slight".¹⁹

Unfortunately, also extant archaeological sources from the lands inhabited by Goths, with the rare exception of discovered ruins of a late 4th century church²⁰ contain practically no mention of Gothic Christianity. A few epitaphs from late 4th/early 5th century with universal Christian symbols (the Good Shepherd, Christogram) are highly questionable and seem rather to reflect the presence of 'Roman Christians' on lands inhabited by Goths.²¹ In his discussion of selected late-Gothic (5th/6th century) artefacts, Ralf Bockman goes as far as to admit that an archaeologist is somehow powerless when faced with the absence of Gothic-Arian archaeological heritage. He suggests that even sources from the later period (5th/6th century), apart from exceptional cases, contain in fact very scant information on the nature of Christianization in the Gothic environment. Giovanni Montanari does not fully subscribe to such view, transferring discussion from a strictly archaeological and architectural ground into the realm of iconographic analysis. Montanari claims that although most archaeological and iconographic sources were destroyed, the few surviving heritage

16. J. Strzelczyk, *Męczeństwo św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 26.
17. Philostrogius, *De Ecclesiasticis Historiis*, II, 5, PG 65, col. 468–469; S. Longosz, *Wulfila propagator kultury chrześcijańskiej w starożytnej Mezji i Tracji*, „Vox Patrum” 4 (1983), p. 131.
18. J. Strzelczyk, *Męczeństwo św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 31; idem, *Społeczeństwo wizygockie IV wieku w świetle męczeństwa św. Saby*, „Eos” 68 (1980), pp. 229–250.
19. J. Strzelczyk, *Męczeństwo św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 28.
20. B. Filarska, *Początki architektury chrześcijańskiej*, Lublin 1983, pp. 138ff.
21. R. Bockmann, *The Non-Archaeology of Arianism – What Comparing Cases in Carthage, Haïdra and Ravenna Can Tell Us about 'Arian' Churches*, in: *Arianism: Roman Heresy and Barbarian Creed*, ed. by G. M. Berndt, R. Steinacher, Farnham-Burlington 2014, pp. 201–218.

sites in Ravenna (the Arian Baptysterium or the basilica of S. Apollinare Nuovo basilica) are sufficient to attempt to capture the unique Gothic-Arian confessional and liturgical tradition.²² Please note, however, that the cultural remains of the 'Gothic civilisation' reflected in material sources are rather modest, considering the scale of the phenomenon.²³ In view of the above, it seems unlikely that any spectacular instances of preserved material evidence from Dacia confirming the presence of a Christian community among 4th century Goths could be found.

Thus, long-term connections between 'Gothic' Christians from Dacia and Moesia Inferior and communities from Asia Minor, especially Cappadocia are even more noteworthy, as they bore fruit not only in the form of the letter we shall discuss here, but also in the 'translatio' of the remains of St. Sabbas. The evidence constitutes a convincing proof that it was from those regions that the source of Goths' Christianization came from. We may consider several possibilities of the way in which Christianity permeated into the Gothic community, which are not mutually exclusive. Firstly, there could have been Christians who, although enslaved by Goths, isolated and forced to remain ethnically and religiously different, with time frequently assimilated to local communities, while maintaining both their Christian identity and contacts with their Cappadocian motherland.²⁴ Secondly, the Christian faith was inherited from one of parents or someone close, just to mention bishop Ulfila, brought up in a Christian family of a Gothic father

22. G. Montanari, *Ravenna: L'iconologia. Saggi di interpretazione culturale e religiosa dei cicli musivi*, Ravenna 2002; in particular Chapter VII: *Elementi per una ricerca storico-teologica sull' "arianesimo" nella città di Ravenna*, pp. 189–203. The above thesis is also supported by Emanuela P. Iacco, inspired by numerous suggestions made by a researcher into Ravenna's monuments Joseph Bovini, makes a rather risky attempt to systematize the themes of Arian liturgy in a surviving decoration in the Basilica of S. Apollinare Nuovo. E. P. Iacco, *L'arianesimo nei mosaici di Ravenna*, Ravenna 2011, pp. 49–68.
23. J. Strzelczyk, *Goci – rzeczywistość i legenda*, Warszawa 1984, pp. 167–175, 289–315; V. Długosza, *Barbarzyńcy w północnej Italii. Ostrogoci i Longobardowie*, Warszawa 2011, pp. 108–136.
24. Asia Minor was repeatedly attacked by Goths inhabiting the north-western coast of the Black Sea from the second half of the 3rd century. Particularly bothersome were incursions made by Gothic pirates, who not only looted the lands, but also enslaved large numbers of Greeks. Many Cappadocians fell victim to such invasions, including Ulfila's ancestors, who were captured by Goths. Philostorgius, *De Ecclesiasticis Historiis*, op. cit., col. 468–469; M. Salamon, *The chronology of Gothic...*, op. cit., pp. 131–136.

and mother of Greek origin, whose parents came from the vicinity of the town Parnassos in Cappadocia.²⁵ In addition, one may not exclude the possibility of Christian missionaries arriving from the east, especially from the monastic community, as it was a perfect opportunity to spread the Gospel. It seems even more likely if we consider several examples such as the 4th century monk/missionary Eutyches,²⁶ Syrian rigorist, missionary and anchorite Audius or monk martyr Harpyla. The above could at least partly explain the presence of Christian monks in the lands of Goths.

Obviously we need to emphasize the fact it was the time of bitter discipline- and doctrine-related²⁷ conflicts in the Church. This must have had an effect on looking for new space for the evangelization of disloyal Christians, who in the aftermath of council decisions (the Council of Nicaea in 325, and particularly the First Council of Constantinople in 381) and imperial edicts (381) became barely tolerated within the bounds of the Empire, while the 'Apostle of Goths' Ulfila, himself an Arian, presumably readily accepted any such support.²⁸

25. *De Ecclesiasticis Historiis*, op. cit., col. 468–469 (entirety: 453–638: <http://bit.ly/2qrjHWY>).
26. S. Longosz, *Wulfila propagator kultury chrześcijańskiej...*, op. cit., p. 132.
27. All heterodox trends, stigmatized and severely constrained in the Empire, perfectly fit within such types of mission. This was the case with e.g. the Audian schism, which became active in the early second half of the 4th century on the Roman-Gothic border. The trend, thanks to Audius, a Syrian anchorite, sent by Constantius II to the lands on the Danube, reached Scythia Minor, a Roman province at the mouth of the Danube River at the Black Sea (the province had been annexed to a higher-lever administrative region of Moesia Inferior). According to several accounts, Audians were even allowed to set up monasteries in Dacia. J. Strzelczyk, *Męczeństwo św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 27.
28. From the end of the 4th century missionary work among Goths was dominated by Arius's disciples, who – especially after the First Council of Constantinople in 381 – were generally regarded by the Orthodox Church as dangerous heretics, and such heresy was fought by Gratian (375–383), who supported Christian unity in the Catholic vein in the West, and Theodosius (379–395) in the East alike (K. Iłski, *Chrzest Imperium Romanum*, Poznań 2005, p. 10 ff). Arians were therefore forced to migrate to the borderlands of the empire or even beyond the Roman *limes*. Followers of the heresy had already Christianized the Gothic community, as can be traced in the context of the mission of bishop Ulfila among Goths of Moesia Inferior. This made it even easier later on to dominate the process of Christianization among the remaining Gothic, and then, on a broader scale, among German tribes (Vandals, Suebi, Gepids, and later also Lombards). M. Ożóg, *Inter duas potestas. Polityka religijna Teodoryka Wielkiego*, Kraków 2012, pp. 31–51; J. Strzelczyk, *Goci – rzeczywistość...* op. cit., pp. 102–110; P. Scardigli, *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo*, Spoleto 1967, pp. 47–86.

The above claims seem substantiated insofar that as early as in the beginning of the letter discussed here, being a testimony to the martyrdom of St. Sabbas, we read:

Let it grow in charity, peace, love of God our Father and Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Church of God with the Gothic Church of God in adjoining Cappadocia and all the Local Churches of the Holy Universal Church.²⁹

The phrase 'at the Gothic Church of God adjoining Cappadocia' obviously refers not so much to geographical proximity (the shortest trade route being over 1200 kilometre long, and the shortest naval route over 1000 kilometre long) but rather to spiritual closeness; some significant bond the exact nature of which we may only guess at.

This also confirms the fact that it is not only the letter itself, a proof of martyrdom, that was addressed to Cappadocians, but also the body of St. Sabbas – with the intention of protecting it against profanation, and giving it due respect – was translocated from Dacia to the Church of Asia Minor.³⁰ Interestingly enough, the act of handing over the earthly remains of the saint was responsibility of Junius Soranus, the governor of Scythia Minor,³¹ about whom we learn that:

Junius Soranus, the honourable governor of Scythia, worshipper of the Lord, drove the remains from a barbarian country into the Roman empire, ordering his most trustworthy people to carry them. And by conveying with gratitude to his homeland the gift of honour and the fruit of faith, he sent the body to Cappadocia for the sake of your piety, at the request of the council of elders, who dealt with godly affairs.³²

At this point we notice a mention of Soranus, governor of Scythia Minor – a Roman province at the mouth of the Danube to the Black Sea³³ "worshipper

29. *Opis męki świętego Saby*, op. cit., p. 35.

30. J. Leemans, *Individualization and the Cult of the Martyrs: Examples from Asia Minor in the Fourth Century*, in: *The Individual in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. by J. Rüpke, Oxford 2013, pp. 187–206.

31. J. Leemans, *Individualization and the Cult of the Martyrs...*, op. cit., p. 190.

32. *Opis męki świętego Saby*, op. cit., p. 39.

33. Scythia Minor (today Dobruja) is a Roman province, which after administrative and geographical changes at the end of the 3rd century was annexed to Moesia Inferior, becoming a Roman/Gothic border-territory.

of the Lord," who sends a great gift "to his homeland... Cappadocia." Note again the link with Cappadocia by the figure of Soranus, though this time rather accidental. It is worth noting that the recipient of the Gothic church's gift of faith was the then Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia himself, i.e. Basil the Great (329–379†).³⁴

However, returning to the main subject of our interest, i.e. the possible grass-roots Christianization in the Gothic community, as may be echoed by the evidence of Sabbas's martyrdom, one should consider another above-mentioned passage, which reads that the body of Sabbas was sent back "...at the request of the council of elders, who dealt with godly affairs".³⁵ One can interpret this phrase in multiple ways, but the key seems to be the council of elders of the Christian community from the Gothic territory – since the letter is addressed by the Gothic Christians to their brothers in Cappadocia. It seems that "the council of elders, which dealt with godly affairs" we read about does not so much refer to the ecclesiastical structures that were just being formed in those areas in Gothic Dacia, but rather to the traditional structures of the Gothic community in which the elders played a leading role. So it seems that in this case we may rather speak of an authoritarian group of Christians elders leading the Church, who decided to translocate the body of the Sabbas. Could we then assume that Christianity, which had permeated into the Gothic community for over a century, had already developed its own schemes of functioning there? Unfortunately, premises allowing us to formulate such a claim, or even a hypothesis, are highly disputable, and the lack of additional information on this subject precludes such possibility.

In order to take a closer look at the figure of Sabbas and his missionary work, it is necessary to analyse in more detail the letter as the source, remembering however that it is a hagiographic and historical text that praises the heroic attitude and virtues of the martyr. Nevertheless, we shall try to extract what interests us the most, i.e. the subject of the grassroots missionary work of St. Sabbas. The letter, being at the same time a description of martyrdom, reads:

Sabbas, being a Goth by birth and living in Gothia [Dacia], appeared among a hypocritical and perverse tribe like light

34. H. Delehaye, *Les Origines du Culte des Martyrs*, Brussels 1912, pp. 71, 205.

35. *Opis męki świętego Saby*, op. cit., p. 39.

in the universe, following the examples of saints, and, like saints, distinguished himself by virtuous deeds in the vein of Christ.³⁶

Leaving pathos aside, we note some facts from the life of the martyr: Sabbas, a Goth by birth, lives in the village "like light (...), following the examples of saints (...)". It can be assumed that, living among the Goths, not only does he fail to keep Gothic religious rites but instead he is open with his convictions, fully observing the principles of Christian life.

Since childhood there was nothing else in him than a desire to worship the Saviour and our Lord Jesus Christ, recognizing reaching the perfection in learning about the Son of God as the highest virtue.³⁷

Sabbas did not convert as an adult, but had been Christian 'since childhood'; the conclusion is simple, he must have been born to a Christian family. At least one of his parents had to be Christian, and the other did not oppose, as Sabbas was a living witness, missionary and apostle of the Gospel among Goths for many decades, without being stopped or condemned by anyone. Furthermore: "he was a righteous man in his faith, and a pious one [...], who spoke the truth amicably to all men".³⁸ At this point we already have a clear message that Sabbas not only lived since an early age as a Christian in his village, but also "spoke the truth to all men" and even "never hesitated to speak openly of the Lord".³⁹ It is also highly probable that he proclaimed the orthodox truth compatible with the Nicean creed.⁴⁰

At this point, a question should be raised about the attitude of other residents of the settlement, that is Goths who tolerated the Christian creed of their fellow countrymen. Most studies quite correctly emphasize strong family ties, or more precisely tribal ties prevailing in Gothic settlements, which in those communities were more important than the overarching religious policy of the elders ('megistani').⁴¹

36. *Opis męki świętego Saby*, op. cit., p. 35.

37. *Opis męki świętego Saby*, op. cit.

38. *Opis męki świętego Saby*, op. cit.

39. *Opis męki świętego Saby*, op. cit., p. 35.

40. P. Parvis, *Sabas Orthodox or Arian?*, in: *Arianism: Roman...*, op. cit. pp. 67–83.

41. E. A. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the time of Ulfila*, Oxford 1966, pp. 65ff; J. Strzelczyk, *Męczeństwo św. Saby*, op. cit., pp. 31ff.

However, it must be added that the rural community, which had to rely heavily on itself, was more pragmatic than the 'Gothic lords', since there were many of 'our fellow Christian (tribesmen)', and they had been with us for a long time, and they had never done any wrong to us – on the contrary, we must protect them, because any such loss would weaken the settlement. What is more, our relatives are among them. In the end, folk piety, though simple and 'jealous of its own truth', albeit more forgiving to otherness in the multicultural and polytheistic melting-pot in which Goths lived, looked with anxiety at such a hasty stigmatization of alien gods and their followers. Therefore we are not surprised to read that:

Certain heathen folk in the village where Sabbas lived came up with an idea that their Christian neighbours eat pieces of ordinary meat instead of sacrificial meat offered to idols, as required by the public resolution of their persecutors.⁴²

Elsewhere in the letter, the author adds:

When the Goths repeated their attempt, some pagans from the village, whilst offering sacrifices to evil spirits, intended to swear by persecutors that there was not a single Christian in their village.⁴³

And when the above trick failed, because Sabbas, unwilling to partake in it, confessed his faith, the practical villagers "in the presence of the persecutor" – needless to say a fairly liberal officer – "hiding friends and relatives swore that there was no Christian in their village except that one".⁴⁴ In the text we find more situations like the one just mentioned, showing that Christians were customarily hid and protected, and Gothic officials or soldiers, if not directly supervised by a more conscientious or anti-Christian superior, easily refrained from any further persecution.

However, in the above passages, not only the issue of concealing the Christians, nor the liberal attitude to persecutory orders displayed by some Goths, should draw our attention, but two other issues. First of all, the author of the letter, probably an inhabitant of the area, and probably a Goth himself, emphasized the fact (obvious to him) that pagans were strongly

42. *Opis męki świętego Saby*, op. cit., p. 36.

43. *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit.

44. *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 36.

associated with their Christian fellow tribesmen ('Christian neighbours'; 'friends and relatives').⁴⁵ Unquestionably he writes about converted Goths, as Romans were diplomatically avoided in such persecutions – take, for example, Sansalas the priest, who was victimized but not killed.⁴⁶ Therefore, the bonds mentioned above are not bonds of foreign slaves, 'naturalized' with time, but fellow tribesmen like Sabbas, Gutthikas (a presbyter from a neighbouring village) or many nameless Christians associated with them. Secondly, the author invariably refers to the Christians in plural, and such information, when communicated casually, is even more credible. Since in Sabbas's village we have priest Sansalas and 'other' Christians, and in the neighbouring settlement, to which Sabbas would go for Passover, lived Gutthikas the presbyter and probably some of the Christians he served, we have a large group of Gothic proselytes rather than some scattered instances of converts – at least in the area in question.⁴⁷

What else do we learn about Sabbas? "He sang in the church to the sounds of the harp and his entire heart was in it". We are interested not only in St. Sabbas's vocal talent – though otherwise interesting story is the use of musical instruments during the liturgy in the 4th century Gothic church; more noteworthy is the fact at that point the author writes about a church. The term 'church' (*ecclesia*) had been already used in the early 4th century by Eusebius of Caesarea in reference to the place of Eucharistic meetings, and not only in relation to the Christian community.⁴⁸ It seems that within a few decades the definition of a church as a place of liturgical meetings became so common that in this case we may think of it as a location, not a community.⁴⁹ So there was a church; of course it did not have to be some spectacular venue – it was probably not, but we have a dedicated space

45. *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit.

46. In the document we find that: "the servants of lawlessness left presbyter Sansalas tied up, and took Sabbas took with them and drowned him in the river Musaeus. The blessed, mindful of the Lord's commandment and loving his companion as himself, asked: What is the presbyter guilty of so that he shall not die with me? They replied: It is not up to you to decide." *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 38.

47. J. Mansion, *Les origines du christianisme chez les Gots*, «Analecta Bollandiana» 33 (1914), pp. 5–30.

48. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Ecclesiastical history* [*Historia kościelna*], przekł. A. Lisicki, VIII, 1, Poznań 1924, pp. 360ff.

49. J.C. Kałużny, *Miejsca spotkań eucharystycznych Kościoła w świetle źródeł pierwszej połowy II wieku* in: *Starożytność chrześcijańska. Materiały zebrane* red. J.C. Kałużny, t. 2, Krakow 2010, p. 38ff.

where Christians would meet at the Eucharist. As we know from archaeological research, even the oldest brick Christian temples in the area are dated to late 4th/early 5th century.⁵⁰ Therefore, we can assume that at the end of the 4th century, some fixed venues – churches, although one ought to be careful when quoting their numbers – served the Christian community in Dacia.

All in all, from the above considerations it follows that in late 4th century Dacia, before the Arian wave of Christianization, there was a Catholic community, and there were even some churches (venues of Eucharistic meetings). What do we learn about Sabbas? We know he was a Christian since he was a child, and lived fully in keeping the commandments of the Gospel, and proclaimed it publicly among the Goths without fear of the consequences. For Christians he was a radical witness to their faith, and for pagans a peculiar, sometimes burdensome compatriot, albeit certainly faithful to his convictions. Is there yet something important? It seems that the author gives us at least one more important hint:

he did not care about money or other business beyond his needs, led a life of sobriety, kept his composure at all times, avoided women, was patient in all matters, spent his days in prayer, oblivious to vain fame, offering prayers in good intentions, he did good deeds and refrained from inappropriate acts.⁵¹

The question of radicalism, which was a characteristic of Sabbas's testimony of faith, may have already sprung up, provoking his persecutors. While other Christians were protected by heathen countrymen and probably pagan family members, Sabbas cried out: "I'm Christian!",⁵² not fearing for his own life. But it is also evident that such confession would not bring persecution on his relatives (wife, children, parents), as a thirty-eight year-old Sabbas had no family, or at least it was suggested by the author of the letter

50. M. Mackensen, *Die Fundmünzen von Golemanovo Kale (Ausgrabung 1936/1937)*, in: S. Uenze, *Die Spätantiken Befestigungen von Sadovec (Bulgarien). Ergebnisse der Deutsch-Bulgarisch-Österreichischen Ausgrabungen 1934–1937*, Munich, 1992, pp. 339–354. In Golemanova Kale in Bulgaria (Dacia), a small brick church (a nave 6 by 7 metres) dating back to the end of the 4th century was discovered. In addition, the northern part of the Dacia Diocese at the banks of the Danube river between the Danube and the Adriatic, reveal numerous examples of early-Christian basilicas dating back to late 4th/early 5th century. B. Filarska, *Początki architektury chrześcijańskiej...*, op. cit., p. 138ff.

51. *Opis męki św. Saby...*, op. cit., p. 36.

52. *Opis męki św. Saby...*, op. cit.

("he never approached a woman; he avoided them"). Living alone, austere, even ascetically, when during the first wave of persecutions a Gothic officer asked nearby witnesses whether Sabbas had any property, he received the answer, "nothing more than what he is wearing". Since we know that monastic life in the empire flourished since the beginning of the fourth century, and that Cappadocia is repeatedly referred to as one of the important places of its growth, one may wonder whether Sabbas, whose story almost instantly implies a description of a Christian ascetic, could have been a monk, or at least could have lived according to the general rules of ascetic life. After all, the oldest Eastern monastic principle by St. Basil the Great bishop of Cappadocian Caesarea had been established less than 2 years earlier (370). Therefore, ascetic life was still extremely spontaneous in its forms. It is enough to compare monastic life which flourished in the middle of the 4th century in Egypt with Syrian monasticism (or Palestinian monastic life with Cappadocian one), to conclude, rather colloquially, that "every country has its own customs".⁵³

From other sources we learn that there may have been monastic life in Gothic Dacia, in the various forms, be it heterodox, as proposed by the radical Syrian monk Audius and his disciples, or orthodox, as represented by martyr Harpyla⁵⁴. Was Sabbas then a Christian ascetic? He probably was, especially as the ideals of ascetic life were extremely popular in the 4th century and shared similar characteristics.⁵⁵

An expert on the subject, the late Benedictine father Marian Kanior in an introduction to his book "Historia monastycyzmu chrześcijańskiego" emphasizes that although monastic trends, depending on geographic or cultural conditions, differed from one another, there were common causes for the formation of spontaneous anchoretic life. At this point Kanior

53. The characteristics and specific features of individual monastic trends can be found in a publication by Marian Kanior, in which we learn that every region and cultural environment left its unique mark on the monastic currents since the 3rd century. M. Kanior, *Historia monastycyzmu chrześcijańskiego*, Krakow 1993, p. 19ff.
54. J. Strzelczyk, *Apostołowie Europy*, op. cit., p. 47; idem, *Spółczesność wizerunkowa IV wieku w świetle męczeństwa św. Saby*, „Eos” 68 (1980), pp. 229–250. See also the list of sources: P. Heather, J. Matthews, *The Goths in the Fourth Century*, Liverpool 1991, pp. 96–122.
55. T. Kaczmarek, *Idealy życia pustelniczego w IV wieku*, in: *Wczesnochrześcijańska asceza*, red. F. Drączkowski, J. Pałucki, Lublin 1993, pp. 59–71.

emphasizes the need for testimony of both on part the of Christian brothers and pagans:

sacrifice was undertaken voluntarily on two purposes. A personal goal was one's own sanctification and a closer union with God by working on oneself. But this practice also had another purpose, namely to inspire Christians and influence the heathen through exemplary missionary activity so that their apostolic mission could be more effective.⁵⁶

Quite importantly, later on Kanior, adds that the essential components of an anchorite include Christian asceticism, which "characterizes the same spirit everywhere".⁵⁷ First of all: "People do not marry [...] because temperance is considered the most effective means of asceticism";⁵⁸ secondly, "they live in austerity by voluntarily renouncing their right to possessions".⁵⁹ Lastly, Kanior concludes and emphasizes that in the initial period of the monastic movement's formation in a given region "there could be no trace of organization or centralization of ascetics in that period".⁶⁰

So it seems that we can say with conviction that Sabbas was a Christian ascetic and as such became an apostle of Christ among Christians and pagans alike. In such a situation it is easier for us to understand that he lived extremely poorly, almost with no possessions; he avoided contact with women, and instead of spending the Passover with the Christian community in his settlement, he preferred to "visit presbyter Gutthikas to celebrate it with him".⁶¹ And when his journey to another village to visit Gutthikas had failed, he went back to his settlement and "they spent the feast of Passover together [with Sansalas]".⁶²

Is it really possible to speak with full conviction of St. Sabbas as the apostle, even to a limited extent in which the term refers to apostles of the grassroots mission? Surely he was a faithful follower of Christ, intransigent and uncompromising. Sabbas was a witness of faith, proclaiming it openly

56. M. Kanior, *Historia monastycyzmu chrześcijańskiego...* op. cit., p. 20.

57. M. Kanior, *Historia monastycyzmu chrześcijańskiego...* op. cit.

58. M. Kanior, *Historia monastycyzmu chrześcijańskiego...* op. cit.

59. M. Kanior, *Historia monastycyzmu chrześcijańskiego...* op. cit.

60. M. Kanior, *Historia monastycyzmu chrześcijańskiego...* op. cit., p. 20.

61. *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 36.

62. *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit.

wherever and whenever he was able to. He lived as a Christian ascetic who had chosen the way of the 'vita apostolica', renouncing his affection for earthly things. Finally, the road he took led him to his death on April 12, 372. Still, can Sabbas be called an apostle? Let us come back to the term 'apostle' as defined in the early Christian church – the church of the times of Sabbas: a person who communicates faith both by word and testimony of his life, making others accept faith and follow in his footsteps. Thus, the answer to the question to what extent Sabbas proves to be an apostle of the Gospel among Goths environment is best answered by the author of the letter:

he received the award of the aforementioned vocation which he had yearned for since his youth: he openly confronted his enemy, conquered the evil of earthly life, and made himself kindly to all. By his godly death he showed us that for the sake of memory and the edification of the faithful we should never remain idle.⁶³

At the end of the passion of St. Sabbas, a witness to the events adds:⁶⁴

Thus, when making the sacrifice on the day when he won the reward after hard work, request brothers who live afar to hold a spiritual service, so that there is rapture in every Catholic and apostolic church, and praise the Lord, who chooses his servants.⁶⁵

Closing our discussion, we can say that the character of Sabbas, an exemplary, though exceptional, Christian from Gothic Dacia, appears to us very clearly as a witness of faith. From our source it follows that from an early age Sabbas was an embodiment of virtues and proclaimer of the Gospel. Being an ascetic, he lived in the spirit of poverty and celibacy, and as such became an apostle among Christians and heathens alike. He was twice arrested and, having been tortured, drowned in the river Musaeus (today's Busau), in Dacia (presently Romania) on 12 April 372. The martyr was 38 years old. Julian Soranus, governor of Scythia, ordered to translocate

63. *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 35.

64. Only a person who had witnessed martyrdom, and at least assisted its participants, could have recorded such details as the fact that his body was: "wrapped in the hands of his brothers and set aside", *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit., p. 39.

65. *Opis męki św. Saby*, op. cit.

Sabbas's body to Cappadocian Caesarea, where he was received by St. Basil. It appears that Sabbas the Goth, although a unique figure, can be said to set an example of Christian missionary activity – the so-called 'grassroots' (or 'bottom-up') mission among barbarian people, thus predating the process of later 'top-down' Christianization.

Bibliography:

Primary sources:

- Euzebiusz z Cezarei, *Historia kościelna*, przekł. A. Lisiecki, Poznań 1924.
- Męczeństwo św. Saby* in: *Ojcowie żywi*, t. 9, red. E. Wipszycka, M. Starowieyski, Kraków 1991.
- Opis męki świętego Saby*, przekł. J. Danielewicz, „Meander” 36 (1981), nr 1, pp. 35–39.
- Philostrogius, *De Ecclesiasticis Historiis, II, 5*, PG, pp. 453–638; <http://bit.ly/2qrjHWY>.
- Socrates of Constantinople, *Historia Kościoła*, przekł. S. J. Kazikowski, Warszawa 1986.
- Sozomen, *Historia Kościoła*, przekł. S. J. Kazikowski, Warszawa 1980.

Secondary works:

- Arianism: Roman Heresy and Barbarian Creed*, ed. by G. M. Berndt, R. Steinacher, Fornham-Burlington 2014.
- J. Auer, *The Church: The Universal Sacrament of Salvation*, in: *Dogmatic Theology Series*, ed. by H. M. Riley, vol. 8, Washington, D.C. 1993, pp. 195–344.
- R. Bockmann, *The Non-Archaeology of Arianism – What Comparing Cases in Carthage, Haidra and Ravenna Can Tell Us about “Arian” Churches*, in: *Arianism: Roman Heresy and Barbarian Creed*, ed. by G. M. Berndt, R. Steinacher, Fornham-Burlington 2014, pp. 201–218.
- H. Delehaye, *Les Origines du Culte des Martyrs*, Bruxselles 1912.
- D. Długosza, *Barbarzyńcy w północnej Italii. Ostrogoci i Longobardowie*, Warszawa 2011.
- B. Filarska, *Początki architektury chrześcijańskiej*, Lublin 1983.
- G. Heather, J. Matthews, *The Goths in the Forth Century*, Liverpool 1991.
- E. P. Iacco, *L'arianesimo nei mosaici di Ravenna*, Ravenna 2011.
- K. Iłski, *Chrzest Imperium Romanum*, Poznań 2005.

- T. Kaczmarek, *Idealy życia pustelniczego w IV wieku*,
in: *Wczesnochrześcijańska asceza*, red. F. Drączkowski, J. Pałucki,
Lublin 1993, pp. 59–71.
- J. C. Kałużny, *Miejsca spotkań eucharystycznych Kościoła w świetle źródeł
pierwszej połowy II wieku* in: *Starożytność chrześcijańska. Materiały
zebrane* red. J. C. Kałużny, t. 2, Kraków 2010, pp. 38f.
- M. Kanior, *Historia monastycyzmu chrześcijańskiego*, Kraków 1993.
- J. Leemans, *Individualization and the Cult of the Martyrs: Examples from
Asia Minor in the Fourth Century*, in: *The Individual in the Religions
of the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. by Jörg Rüpke, Oxford 2013,
pp. 187–206.
- S. Longosz, *Wulfila propagator kultury chrześcijańskiej w starożytnej Mezji
i Tracji*, „*Vox Patrum*” 4 (1983), pp. 131.
- M. Mackensen, *Die Fundmünzen von Golemanovo Kale (Ausgrabung
1936/1937)*, in: S. Uenze, *Die Spätantiken Befestigungen von Sadovec
(Bulgarien). Ergebnisse der Deutsch-Bulgarisch-Österreichischen
Ausgrabungen 1934–1937*, Munich, 1992, pp. 339–354.
- J. Mansion, *Les origines du christianisme chez les Gots*, «*Analecta
Bollandiana*» 33 (1914), pp. 5–30.
- G. Montanari, *Ravenna: L'iconologia. Saggi di interpretazione culturale
e religiosa dei cicli musivi*, Ravenna 2002.
- M. Ożóg, *Inter duas potestas. Polityka religijna Teodoryka Wielkiego*,
Kraków 2012, pp. 31–51.
- M. Parczewski, *Ornament czy symbol kultu? Znak krzyża na naczyniach
wczesnosłowiańskich*, in: *Dzieje Podkarpacia: Początki
chrześcijaństwa w Małopolsce*, red. J. Gancarski, t. 5, Krosno 2001,
pp. 15–19.
- P. Parvis, *Sabas Orthodox or Arian?* in: *Arianism: Roman Heresy and
Barbarian Creed*, ed. by G. M. Berndt, R. Steinacher, Farnham-
Burlington 2014, pp. 65–83.
- M. Salamon, *The chronology of Gothic incursions into Asia Minor in the
3rd century A.D.*, „*Eos*” 59 (1971), pp. 109–139.
- P. Scardigli, *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto medioevo*,
Spoleto 1967.
- W. Stępnia-Mińczewa, *Początkowo Słowianie nie mieli liter, będąc bowiem
poganami liczyli i wróżyli za pomocą kresek i nacięć...*, in: *Święci
i świętość u korzeni tworzenia się kultury narodów słowiańskich*,
red. W. Stępnia-Mińczewa, Z. J. Kijas, Kraków 2000, pp. 35–51.

- J. Strzelczyk, *Spółczesność wizerunkowa IV wieku w świetle męczeństwa św. Saby*, „Eos” 68 (1980), pp. 229–250.
- J. Strzelczyk, *Męczeństwo św. Saby*, „Meander” 36 (1981), nr 1, pp. 25–34.
- J. Strzelczyk, *Apostołowie Europy*, Poznań 2010.
- Л. В. Седикова, Т. Ю. Яшаева, *Очерк истории Херсонеса конца IV–X вв.*, in: *Architektura wczesnobizantyjskich budowli sakralnych Chersonesu Taurydzkiego: Wczesnobizantyjskie budowle sakralne Chersonesu Taurydzkiego*, red. A. B. Biernadzki, E. J. Klenin, S. G. Ryżow, t. 1, Poznań 2004, s. 33–38.
- E. A. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the time of Ulfila*, Oxford 1966.

Abstract

Józef Cezary Kałużny

Unknown apostles of the grassroots mission in Gothic

Dacia in the light of The Passion of St. Sabbas the Goth

It is commonly held that the Christianization of the Gothic environment in the second half of the 4th century is a result of a large-scale operation carried out by Ulfila and his disciples – universal Christianization recognized by Gothic authorities. However, in this study attention is drawn to the fact that earlier missionary activities, referred to here as 'grassroots Christianization,' had already been of great significance since the second half of the 3rd century. The bottom-up mission involved spreading the Gospel in the Gothic community in a rather spontaneous way, by slaves captured by Goths in the Empire, in successive generations of their descendants (the case of Ulfila), or even heresiarchs seeking refuge outside the Empire. The process was frequently elusive, due to the lack of clear records of those activities in archaeological sources or writings, with the notable exception of credible testimony in the form of "The Passion of St. Sabbas the Goth", a document which became the basis for the analysis conducted by the author. The source suggests that Christianization was also a bottom-up phenomenon and had reached the 'plebeian' environment of Goths much earlier, bearing fruit in the form of an active Church community and preparing the Gothic world for late 4th century missionaries. Thus, it was not merely a spectacular act of the apostolic mission of bishop Ulfila or his successors, but also of such apostles as Sabbas the Goth, presbyter Gutthikas, Harpyla the monk or other apostles of the grassroots mission whose names today we are unable to mention.

Keywords:

unknown apostles, the Christianization of Goths, the Passion of St. Sabbas the Goth, grassroots Christianization, bottom-up Christianization.

Abstrakt

Józef Cezary Kałużny

Nieznani apostołowie misji oddolnej w gockiej Dacji

w świetle Opisu męki św. Saby Gota

Słowa kluczowe:

Nieznani apostołowie, chrystianizacja Gotów, męczeństwo św. Saby Gota, chrystianizacja oddolna.

Przyjęło się uważać, że chrystianizacja w środowisku gockim w drugiej połowie IV wieku to efekt prowadzonej na wielką skalę – m.in. przez Wulfilę i jego uczniów – powszechnej chrystianizacji uznanej przez władze Gotów. Jednak w niniejszym opracowaniu zwraca się uwagę na to, że duże znaczenie miały również wcześniejsze – prowadzone od drugiej połowy III wieku – działania ewangelizacyjne nazwane tu chrystianizacją oddolną. Misja oddolna związana była z przenikaniem Dobrej Nowiny do społeczności gockiej w sposób dość spontaniczny – m.in.: wraz z niewolnikami gockimi, pochodzącymi z cesarstwa, w kolejnych pokoleniach ich potomkami (casus Wulfili), czy wręcz herezjarchami szukającymi schronienia poza granicami Imperium – i częstokroć nieuchwytny, ze względu na brak wyraźnej recepcji tych działań w źródłach archeologicznych czy tekstach pisanych. Chlubny wyjątek w tym względzie stanowi wiarygodne świadectwo jakim jest *Opis męki świętego Saby Gota*, dlatego dokument ten stał się podstawą prowadzonej przez autora analizy. Z źródła wynika bowiem, że chrystianizacja była również zjawiskiem oddolnym i dotarła do „plebejskiego” środowiska Gotów znacznie wcześniej, wydając owoce w postaci funkcjonującej wspólnoty Kościoła i przygotowując świat gocki na misjonarzy końca IV wieku. Zatem nie był to jedynie akt spektakularnej i prowadzonej z ogromnym rozmachem apostołowskiej misji biskupa Wulfili, tudzież jego następców, ale również takich apostołów jak omawiany przez nas Saba Got, wzmiankowany prezbiter Gutthikas, mnich Harpyła, czy inni nieznani nam dziś z imienia apostołowie misji oddolnej.