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"Inde Insulam Cyprum Inter Graecos Et Sarraticos (Sarracenos)…" Cyprus in 724 AD as Seen by the English Monk Willibald

ABSTRACT

This article takes a close look at excerpts from an account of a journey to the Holy Land made in 720s by the English monk Willibald (700–787/789), later bishop of the Bavarian city of Eichstätt, an associate of the Archbishop of Germania, St. Boniface and a saint of the Catholic Church. Willibald dictated the account of his peregrination many years after his pilgrimage to a related nun, Hygeburge of Heidenheim, who then wrote down his biography and descriptions of his travels in a work entitled *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi*. Fragments of the above-mentioned travel account concerning the specific political, social, and cultural situation in Cyprus that took place between the 7th and 9th centuries are the subject of the detailed analysis contained in this paper. Willibald arrived on the island during this period: specifically in the year 724. Cyprus at that time acted as an Arab-Byzantine quasi-condominium, being the object of efforts of these two powers, on the one hand officially trying to preserve its neutral character, while on the other working to diminish the influence of their competitor there. This peculiar situation had its effect on the relationship between Muslims (Arabs) and Christians (Cypriots and Byzantines) living on the island.

KEYWORDS: Willibald, Hygeburg of Heidenheim, Cyprus, travel, Byzantium, Arabs, pilgrimage

STRESZCZENIE

„Inde insulam Cyprum inter graecos et sarraticos (sarracenos) (…)". Cypr w roku 724 w oczach angielskiego mnicha Willibalda

Tekst niniejszego artykułu przybliża fragmenty relacji z podróży do Ziemi Świętej odbytej w latach 20. VII w. przez angielskiego mnicha Willibalda (700–787/789), późniejszego biskupa bawarskiego miasta Eichstätt,

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współpracownika arcybiskupa Germanii św. Bonifacego oraz świętego Kościoła katolickiego. Opis swojej peregrynacji Willibald podyktował wiele lat po odbytej pielgrzymce spokrewnionej z nim zakonnicy Hygeburdze z Heidenheimu, która następnie spisała jego żywot oraz opisy odbytych przez niego podróży w dziele zatytułowanym *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi*. Przedmiotem szczegółowej analizy stały się fragmenty wspomnianej relacji z podróży dotyczące specyficznej politycznej, społecznej i kulturowej sytuacji na Cyprze na przestrzeni VII–IX wieku. W tym okresie, a dokładnie w roku 724, na wyspę dotarł wspomniany Willibald. Ówczesny Cypr pełnił funkcję quasi-kondominium arabsko-bizantyńskiego, będąc przedmiotem zabiegów tych dwóch potęg, które z jednej strony oficjalnie starały się zachować jego neutralny charakter, z drugiej zaś próbowały pomniejszyć na nim wpływy swojego konkurenta. Ta swoista sytuacja miała swój wpływ na relację pomiędzy muzułmanami (Arabami) a chrześcijanami (Cypryjczykami i Bizantyńczykami) na wyspie.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: Willibald, Hygeburga z Heidenheimu, Cypr, podróże, Bizancjum, Arabowie, pielgrzymki

The title of the article purposefully suggests taking up in this text the subject of pilgrimage, which, as it is commonly known, has a rich literature on the subject, also in Poland.[1] Of course, this does not close the topic for further research, because each pilgrimage account can be approached from a different point of view, just as each itinerary has its own level of scholarly elaboration. Within the subject of pilgrimage-making, which covers the period from early Christianity up to the end of the eighth century,[2] one account that leaves even more room for research than its peers from this period (Bulas, 2012, p. 86) is that of the peregrination by the English monk Willibald (700–787/789), later bishop of the Bavarian city of Eichstätt, associate of the Bavarian archbishop, Saint Boniface, and saint of the Catholic Church, made to Palestine between 723 and 727 AD.[3] Despite

1 In Poland, matters of pilgrimage and travel in the early medieval period have been dealt with by Ryszard Bulas (2012), Marek Starowieyski (1990; 1993), Jacek Wiesiołowski (1993), Ewa Wipszycka (1995), Piotr Iwaszkiewicz (1994; 1995), Jerzy Strzelczyk (1995), Andrzej Bober (1965), and Aleksandra Witkowska O.S.U. (1995), among others. Due to the volume limitations of this article, I shall entirely omit reference non-Polish literature on pilgrimages during the period of interest. In doing so, it is important to mention the popularity of "travel" themes in various contexts, such as Soczyńska & Wółkiewicz, 2012; Quirini-Popławska & Burkiewicz, 2014; Dziewit, Pacukiewicz, & Pisarek, 2020, among others.

2 The periodization adopted appears very often in texts concerning the early Christian peregrinations; if there is no doubt about the beginning date, the end date of this period is linked to the coronation of Charlemagne as emperor by Pope Leo III (December 25, 800 AD).

3 Willibald was canonized by Pope Leo VII in 938 AD.

the fact that the account of his pilgrimage has already been the subject of research, the description of Willibald's peregrination has encouraged various studies,[4] including those entering the field of historical-cultural and ethnographic discussion, especially with regard to the English monk's stay in Cyprus, which may seem to be an interesting object of observation that has not been sufficiently presented in the literature.[5]

Most early medieval peregrinations were undertaken for purposes other than making geographical observations, or as we would look at it from a modern perspective, both cultural and ethnographic. The earliest evidence of a pilgrimage to Palestine dates back to antiquity, namely the second century, and was written by Meliton of Sardes, who made the journey over a relatively short distance – from Sardes to Jerusalem (Starowieyski, 1993, pp. 149–150; Wipszycka, 1995, pp. 23–24). Importantly, until the end of the third century, journeys undertaken to Palestine were largely to verify information contained in biblical and historical accounts (Bulas, 2012). It was not until the fourth to sixth centuries, including the diary of Egeria from the pilgrimage of 381–384 AD, that the peregrinationists began to adopt a new approach to the holy places, manifested by more religiosity (Howard, 1980).

The account of Willibald's peregrination written down by the nun Hugeburc (also spelled Hugeberc, or perhaps Huneberc) of Heidenheim, under the title *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi*, also shows restraint in the descriptions of places he passed by, countries he visited, or people he met. However, from a text even so modest in its description, we can obtain and infer a great deal of important information about the situation in Cyprus at that time, which might not be of much interest were it not for the fact that Cyprus was then on the so-called front line, passing from hand to hand as part of the Byzantine-Arab confrontation. This situation persisted almost from the beginning of Arab expansion in the region (632) until 964 AD, when Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (963–969) finally removed the Arabs from Cyprus.[6]

In this paper, by analyzing the above-mentioned account of *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi* and by referring to Greek sources of that time

4 In Poland, Willibald and his journey to Palestine were briefly mentioned by Piotr Iwaszkiewicz (1995). In one of his texts, Richard Bulas noted that the *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi* is little known or elaborated (Bulas, 2012, p. 77).

5 Mariusz Misztal in one of his works (Misztal, 2018) hinted at the aforementioned episode related to Willibald's arrival on the island in the context of his reflections on the genesis of ethnic conflicts in Cyprus (until 1912).

6 Interestingly, at one point, neither side – neither the Byzantines nor the Arabs – could take the lead in the conflict over the island and so they sought to keep Cyprus neutral for each side in the conflict. Cf. Kyrris, 1984.

concerning Cyprus, such as the *Chronographia* written by the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes the Confessor in the second decade of the ninth century, as well as by examining the most recent literature on the subject, I intend to paint a picture of the situation, not only political, but above all, of the cultural-ethnographic reality of the 720s on the largest island of the Mediterranean Sea as perceived by a pilgrim from a remote part of Europe.

"Inde insulam Cyprum inter graecos et sarraticos (sarracenos) …"[7] (*The Hodoeporicon of Saint Willibald*, 1895, p. 11). This is how Cyprus was characterized by Willibald, who arrived on the island in early 724 AD. Cyprus, which, according to the words of his account quoted above, was "situated at that time between Greeks and Saracens" (Willibald, 2000, p. 160), that is, as can be presumed the island was inhabited by representatives of both nations. Additionally, the pilgrim suggested a few lines further: "Illi cyprii sedebant inermes fuerunt, quia pax maxima fuit et conciliatio inter sarracenos et graecos …" (*The Hodoeporicon of Saint Willibald*, 1895, p. 15). "The people of Cyprus were unarmed because of the great peace and agreement between the Saracens and Greeks" (Willibald, 2000, p. 160). It follows, therefore, that the coexistence of Christians and Muslims was either very peaceful or the absence of weapons was due to truce arrangements between the Byzantines and the Arabs.

Was it really possible for the Greeks and Arabs to coexist peacefully in Cyprus in the first half of the 8th century?

Did the latter actually settle the island at that time or were they just temporary visitors: soldiers from Arab garrisons or merchants?

Was it an idyllic reality or the next stage of Arab conquest in the Mediterranean?

After all, how did an English monk, a representative of the Latin Church, find his way around the Byzantine-Arabic reality, in contact with the Orthodox Church of Cyprus[8] and the new religion of Islam, then almost completely unknown in northern Europe?

These few questions that I have taken the liberty of raising here will be the main research context of this paper. The issue presented here focuses mainly on the written source material, therefore, the most important

7 The term Saracens was first used by Claudius Ptolemy in his *Geography* in the 2nd century AD. It was not until the 3rd century AD that the name Saracens became correlated with Arabs, and the name Arabs itself slowly began to disappear from the sources and was replaced by other names, out of which the term Saracens became the most popular one; cf. Dziekan, 2015, pp. 40–45.

8 The Church of Cyprus has been an autocephalous (independent) Orthodox Church since the Council of Ephesus (431 AD). Under Emperor Zeno, the Church of Cyprus became independent of the Patriarchate of Antioch and was granted the right to ordain bishops and other privileges.

research method shall be the interpretation of the relevant passages in the account of Willibald's journey to Palestine titled *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi*.[9]

Willibald the pilgrim

Willibald, the protagonist of this text, did not attain important dignities before the end of his life and also after his death. However, before he became the first bishop of the German city of Eichstätt, and later a saint of the Catholic Church, he made a pilgrimage to Palestine, visiting Italy, Greece, Byzantine Anatolia, Palestine, Egypt and also Cyprus on the way (Guth, 1982).

Willibald was born in the English town of Wessex on October 21, 700 AD, as one of three children, St. Richard the Pilgrim, and St. Bonna (Wuna) of Wessex; his siblings were St. Walburga and St. Winibald (Willibald, von Eichstätt, 2006, pp. 25–26). Willibald's parents sent him to the Benedictine monastery of Waldhem in Hampshire already at the age of five as a fulfillment of a vow they had made when Willibald became seriously ill (Willibaldus, 1874a, pp. 6–8). Leading a monastic life from this early age, he was accustomed to the ideal of *peregrinatio religiosa* (Willibaldus, 1874a, pp. 9–11; Strzelczyk, 1995). In 722, he set out with his father and brother on a pilgrimage to Rome (Hagen, 1987). At first, the peregrinationists headed for France, and then traveled toward Italy. In Lucca, Willibald's father fell ill and consequently died (Willibaldus, 1874a, pp. 15–16). After their father's death, the brothers continued their journey and after some time reached Rome, where they also became seriously ill (Willibaldus, 1874a, p. 17; Willibald, von Eichstätt, 2006, p. 26). Having recovered, the brothers separated: Winebald remained in Rome, and Willibald went by sea to Asia Minor, where he reached Ephesus and visited the tomb of John the Baptist (Willibaldus, 1874a, p. 20). He spent the winter of 723 in the Lycian city of Patara from where, in the spring of the following year, he sailed to Cyprus (Willibaldus, 1874a, p. 21). Willibald then traveled to Tartus, where the head of St. John the Baptist was kept in one of the local churches. In the following months, probably in late 725 or early 726, Willibald and his companions set out for the Holy Land and Egypt (Willibaldus, 1874a, pp. 21–40; Aist, 2009; Aist, 2011; Limor, 2019). In 727 he traveled to Constantinople, where he spent two years (Willibaldus, 1874a, pp. 41–42). After this relatively long

9 The source publications are the following editions of *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi*: Wright, 1848, pp. 13–22; Meyrik, 1873, pp. 39–76; Warren & Conder, 1884, pp. 29–31; Talbot, 1954, pp. 153–177; Wilkinson, 1977, pp. 125–135; Talbot, 1995, pp. 143–164.

stay in the Byzantine capital, in the early summer of 729, Willibald returned via Sicily to Italy, where he was engaged in the restoration of the monastery of Monte Cassino and where he also took on the Benedictine habit, spending the next ten years there (Willibaldus, 1874a, pp. 44–48). While in Italy, he told Pope Gregory III (731–741) about his pilgrimage to the Holy Land (Willibaldus, 1874a, pp. 46–47). In 739, at the request of Archbishop Boniface of Germania, he went to Bavaria, where he assisted in missionary activities. This is where he was appointed as the first bishop of Eichstätt in Bavaria (Angenendt, 1990). On June 23, 778, Willibald told the assembled monks and nuns at the monastery in Heidenheim about his peregrination. The account of the pilgrimage discussed, made between 778 and 780 was written down by a nun related to Willibald, Hugeburc of Heidenheim (Larrington, 2004; Watt, 2020).[10] This author emphasized in her work that her description is not a compilation of rumors or second-hand information, but the result of a careful analysis of the report given to her by the main protagonist of the account, who told her the story of his pilgrimage in the presence of witnesses (Limor, 2004, p. 24)[11]. Willibald passed away on 7 July 787 or 789 and he was buried in the chancel of Eichstätt Cathedral (Engels, 1990)[12].

Cyprus in the 7th and 8th centuries

Between the 4th and 7th centuries there was a period of intense contact between Byzantium, whose origins as a state are seen as dating back to

10 Her authorship of the text was not established by German historian Bernhard Bischoff (1906–1991) until 1931, when he discovered that she had encrypted her name in the manuscript of the *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi*. Hugeburc was a nun (and a relative to Willibald, by the way) from the convent in Heidenheim, where St. Walburga, the sister to St. Willibald, was superior (the convent was funded by their brother, St. Winebald), cf. Bischoff, 1931; Gottschaller, 1973; Schieffer, 1983; Stanchi, 1987; Vitone, 1994; Pille, 1997; Head, 2002; Larrington, 2004; Bammesberger, 2006; Iadanza, 2007; Iadanza, 2014. Interestingly, some scholars have not attributed much attention to the author of the account, despite her identification 90 years ago; cf. Iwaszkiewicz, 1995, p. 101.

11 Some mention should be made of the work by Hugeburc. *Hodoeporicon* is made up of two parts. The first part are chapters detailing Willibald's life before his departure for the East and after his arrival in Germany at Boniface's request. This part of the account is written in flowery and ornate language, keeping with the hagiography of the time. Hugeburc wanted to give her work the proper gravity and pathos, but it was far from literary perfection (Gottschaller, 1973, pp. 80–102). The second part is an account of Willibald's travels, written in simple and direct Latin. This section was probably left untouched and unaltered by Hugeburc, who placed it in her work as Willibald had dictated it to her (Limor, 2004, p. 267).

12 In 989, St. Willibald's remains were deposited in a newly built crypt, where the saint's relics have been kept in a crystal reliquary which was placed in a marble sarcophagus in 1745.

the reign of Constantine I the Great (306–337), and the Arabs. It was both a meeting and a clash of two cultures: the Roman-Greek and the Oriental one (Wolińska & Filipczak, 2015).

Cyprus was also affected by this clash and encounter, and after the breakup of the Roman Empire, it became a province of its eastern part. From the seventh century, it was an object of Byzantine-Arab rivalry (Misztal, 2013, p. 117). This state of affairs actually continued until 964, when Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (963–969) finally removed the Arabs from Cyprus (Romane, 2019, p. 51; Shepard, 2015, 2, p. 34).[13] Very often, historians dealing with this period in the history of the island describe it as a gloomy time based on fragmentary source material which makes it impossible to reconstruct the course of events properly (Metcalf, 2009; Misztal, 2013). A major problem for scholars of the history of Cyprus, especially for the early medieval period, is that much of this period is based on manuscripts that were written several hundred years after the events described (Metcalf, 2009, pp. 389–399).

There is no unanimous agreement as to when the Byzantine period in the island's history began. The beginning of the Byzantine period – which we could also transfer to the history of Cyprus – is commonly assumed to be 476, the year in which the last emperor of the Western empire, Romulus Augustulus, stepped down and Odoacer took over in Rome, returning the insignia of imperial power to the Eastern Roman emperor Zeno, who resided in Constantinople.[14] Mariusz Misztal points out that with regard to Cyprus itself, we can speak of the Byzantinization of the island (as well as the entire empire) from the turn of the second and third decade of the seventh century, when Emperor Heraclius replaced Latin titles and phrases with their Greek equivalents, which could suggest a departure from Latin models (Misztal, 2013, p. 101).

During the reign of Emperor Heraclius, a religious movement was born in the Arab countries that bordered the Byzantine territories in Syria and Palestine, which transformed the face of the Middle East forever and influenced the further development of medieval civilization (Dawson, 1961, p. 155). We are talking about Islam, of course. The Arabs, who became the first carriers of the new faith, very quickly subjugated Byzantine Syria, because the empire, after the wars with Persia, was weakened and the Syrian population favored the invaders (Zakrzewski, 1995, p. 43).

13 Interestingly, at one point, neither side-neither the Byzantines nor the Arabs – could take the lead in the conflict over the island and so they sought to keep Cyprus neutral for each side in the conflict. Cf. Kyrris, 1984.

14 The Lodz school of Byzantine studies assumes the genesis of Byzantine history in the reign of Constantine the Great; cf. Leszka & Leszka, 2018, pp. 29–38; Wolińska & Filipczak, 2015.

As early as 632, the island was attacked by a force not fully identified, perhaps just pirates or already Arabs (Metcalf, 2009, p. 408). However, the probability of an attack by the Arabs is questioned due to the fact that they captured ships only with the conquest of Syrian and Egyptian harbors, which took place a few years later. It was only then that Muawiyah, the first of the Umayyad caliphs, made the Arabs rule the sea and pose a serious threat to Byzantium. He moved the capital of the caliphate from the distant Arab Medina to Damascus. This enabled him to rule the Syrian coast, which, with its numerous seaside cities, opened access to the Mediterranean, and provided him a navy from the descendants of the ancient Phoenicians (Zakrzewski, 1995, p. 47).[15] Then, in 647 or 649, a large Arab fleet led by Muawiyah arrived on the island and demanded that the people of Cyprus submit to the new religion (Beihammer, 2004).[16] Perhaps this expedition, numbering as many as 1,700 ships, was in retaliation for the Byzantine raid made on Alexandria in 646 (Theophanes the Confessor, AM 6140, 61.8). As expected, the Cypriots rejected the terms offered by the Arabs which resulted in a devastating attack on the coastal cities (Hill, 1948, 1, pp. 284–285, 326–329) after which Muawiyah, who admittedly had no plans to occupy the island, imposed a yearly tribute on the islanders (Kaegi, 1988, pp. 5–6).[17] In 653, Muawiyah sent another expedition against Cyprus, which deepened the losses inflicted on the islanders a few years earlier[18]. At that time, the city of Constantia, later mentioned by Willibald, was completely destroyed (Kyrris, 1984, p. 164). An additional blow

15 From 673 to 677, the Arabs blockaded Constantinople every year, and it was only the extensive use of so-called "Greek fire" by the Byzantine fleet that forced the Arabs to give way.

16 This expedition became famous in history because of the death of the participating Umm Harâm, the sister of the mother of Anas Ibn Malik, a devoted friend of the Prophet Muhammad. This already elderly woman insisted on taking part in the expedition to Cyprus and she suffered a fall during a mule ride near a salt lake near Larnaca. She died as a result of her injuries, and a tomb built to honor her and a mosque called Hala Sultan Tekke still stands at the site of her death to this day. Cf. Misztal, 2013, pp. 121–122; Cobham, 1897.

17 Mariusz Misztal correctly draws a parallel with the year 1426, when the Mamluks did the same and invaded the island to then sail away; like the Arabs in 647 or 649, the Mamluks were not prepared for the physical subjugation of Cyprus and its subsequent defense. It is not difficult to find similar analogies in the history of Cyprus: the 1191 capture of the island by Richard Lionheart of England, the 1192 withdrawal of the Templars from the island after an unsuccessful attempt to subjugate the Greek population of the island, the aforementioned 1425–1426 withdrawal of the Mamluks, that of the Genoese in 1463, and that of the Venetians in 1489. It was only in 1571 that the Turks actually subjugated the island militarily. I present only selected literature on the subject in Polish: Misztal, 2013; Borowska, Kordos, & Maliszewski, 2014; Burkiewicz, 2013; Burkiewicz, 2017c.

18 We learned of the tragic consequences of the 653 invasion relatively recently through an inscription discovered in the church of Soli; cf. Neal, 2010.

to the Cypriots was the large Arab garrison left on the island and the colonists who began arriving from Syria (Kyrris, 1984, pp. 160–164; Misztal, 2013, p. 123).

After Muawiyah's attacks of 647/649 and 653 there was relative calm, but gradually the situation in the region became unfavorable for Byzantium. By the turn of the seventh and eighth centuries, heavy clouds had already gathered over Christianity, which had lost North Africa and Spain to Islam, and Byzantium itself had been undergoing palace revolutions since 695 and was in a state of lasting anarchy. After the fall of Justinian II in 711, Byzantium suffered a long internal crisis, which the Arabs attempted to exploit by launching a new offensive against Constantinople from both land and sea. The fortunate defense of Constantinople and fending off the Arabs in 717–718 marked a turning point in the struggle between Christianity and Islam; from then on, the Arabs never made any serious attempt to conquer the Byzantine capital (Zakrzewski, 1995, pp. 47–48).

The Arab expeditions to Cyprus in the mid-7th century and the expeditions to Asia Minor led to the establishment of a quasi-condominium in the disputed territories of Armenia, Iberia and Cyprus with Byzantine approval (Cecota, 2015, pp. 318–319). The island was supposed to remain neutral; however, Greek and Arab historians dispute which side actually prevailed during this period (Misztal, 2013, pp. 123–124). When the Byzantines drove the Arabs back from under the walls of Constantinople, a peace treaty was concluded (677/678) which also partly concerned Cyprus; according to Theophanes the Confessor, the Arabs had to withdraw their garrisons from the island (Theophanes the Confessor, AM 6169, 61.10). The island continued to be a condominium subordinate to the Byzantine Empire and the Umayyad Caliphate (Theophanes the Confessor, AM 6178, 61.9). Both superpowers were to share the tax revenue equally between them (Raszewski, 2014, p. 233). Despite this subordination, the Cypriots maintained a neutral status at the time, where sometimes the Byzantine side, and sometimes the Arab side played a stronger role according to the political situation in the region (Jenkins, 1970). The inhabitants of the island established their own laws, accepted Christian and Muslim merchants, and developed the island economically; they were allowed to do all this as long as they observed the principles of neutrality (Misztal, 2013, pp. 125–126).

In 717, as a result of internal unrest, the emperor Theodosius III was removed from power (715–717). The Arabs, taking advantage of the weakness of the empire, again began the siege of Constantinople. Although the capital of Byzantium was successfully defended, as a result of Arab actions, Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia and Egypt fell into Muslim hands. From

this point on, a period of constant fighting between the Byzantines and the Arabs began, and Cyprus became the target of systematic attacks by the Arab fleet, which continued until 964 and the final capture of the island by Nikephoros II Phokas (Misztal, 2013, p. 129). It was at the beginning of this period that a pilgrim from distant England, the monk Willibald, arrived on the island.

Willibald on Cyprus (724)

Willibald's pilgrimage must also be seen in the context of the year 638 and the capture of Jerusalem by Arabs. This event was a great shock for Christians and caused the suspension of pilgrimage traffic to the Holy Land, which translated into the number of descriptions of peregrinations, which, as a result, are few and far between.[19] One of them is the account dictated by Willibald (McCormick, 2000).

Willibald reached Cyprus in early 724. At the beginning of the article, I mentioned how the bishop-to-be portrayed the relations existing on the island. Although the pilgrim stayed on the island for a relatively long time, most likely several weeks, his description of it is not very long. Let us see what Hugeburc of Heidenheim, the writer of the manuscript, says:

> … Inde insulam Cyprum inter graecos et sarraticos (sarracenos) sitam applicuerunt et paschale, quod jam instabat, festum apud Paphum[20] urbem agentes, sole jam circumvoluto, tres in ea hebdomadas steterunt.

19 One of the few pilgrimages from this period was one made by the Gallic bishop Arculf. There are many similarities between the account of his journey and Willibald's. Firstly, none of them was the author of the account of their peregrinations. Arculf told the story of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land between 660 and 687 to monks from the Hy monastery on the island of Iona. His account was then written down by Adomnán, the abbot of this monastery, and given the title of *De locis sanctis (Concerning sacred places)*. As we know, Willibald also told his account at the monastery in Heidenheim, which was later written down and published by the nun Hugeburc as *Hodoeporicon of Saint Willibald* (*Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi*). Secondly, both accounts convey an image seen with the pilgrims' own eyes along with their description and commentary. This sets them apart from other genres of travel literature of the time, such as guidebooks or descriptions of sacred sites, which were devoid of a personal dimension. Thirdly, in the works by Hugeburc and Adomnán, there is a specific merging between the roles of the author and the provider of the account; therefore, the author is an intermediary between the pilgrim and the reader. These accounts are not written in the first person and do not convey first-hand stories, but reflect a dictated story. Cf. Howard, 1980, p. 6; Limor, 2004, pp. 255–254.

20 Paphos – a city on the south-west coast of Cyprus. It grew in importance during the Hellenistic period, becoming the capital of all Cyprus in the 2nd century BC. It reached the height of its power under the rule of Rome, which took control of the island in 58 BC, being the political

> Inde ejusdem insulae urbem Constantiam,[21] sancti Epiphanii[22] praesulis miraculis et corpore gloriosam, adeuntes, sancti Johannis Baptistae nativitatem ibi egerunt. … (Willibaldus, 1874a, p. 21).

Hugeburc noted that the pilgrims reached Cyprus "situated at that time between the Greeks and the Saracens." There in the city of Paphos, they celebrated Passover, which therefore must have taken place between late March and April of 724. They spent three weeks in Paphos and then set out for another Cypriot city, Constantia, sanctified by the miracles of Saint Epiphanius. There they remained until the solemnity of John the Baptist (June 24).

Another passage concerning the Cypriots appears later in the account describing Willibald's journey.

> … Illi cyprii sedebant inermes fuerunt, quia pax maxima fuit et conciliatio inter sarracenos et graecos … (Willibaldus, 1874a, p. 24).

Looking at Willibald's itinerary from his time in Cyprus, it is worth recalling the topography of the island at that time. In order to explain it, we must go back several centuries earlier. The Romans retained the administrative division from Ptolemaic times, and the main cities of that period were Amathous, Kition, Paphos, Salamis, Tamassos, Soloi, and Tremithus. Roman rule was a period of prosperity and stability for Cyprus (Misztal, 2013, p. 81).

Willibald's brief account of his stay on the island is closely related to places of importance for the Church of Cyprus, which has been present on the island since the beginning of Christianity (Burkiewicz, 2017a). Already under the rule of the Ptolemaic dynasty, the first Jewish settlers also began to arrive in Cyprus, and the number of Jews on the island increased significantly in the time of Augustus (27 BC – 14 AD). In the first century AD, almost every Cypriot town had a Jewish community, and those in Paphos and Salamis were particularly prosperous.[23] These cities later also became

and administrative center of Cyprus. In the early 4th century AD, the city was destroyed by an earthquake. Although the city was rebuilt it did not return to its former glory.

21 Salamis – an ancient city and port located in Cyprus, which became the main city of the island in the 7th century BC. In the first century A.D., apostle Barnabas lived there, who, together with Saul of Tarsus, called Paul, and John Mark, preached the word of God in the local synagogues.

22 Epiphanius of Salamis (ca. 315–403) – born in Palestine, early Christian writer, bishop in Cyprus, saint of the Catholic and Orthodox Church. In 367, he became bishop of Salamis. For information on Church on Cyprus cf., e.g., Hackett, 1972.

23 The numerous Jewish communities on the island became the focus of evangelism undertaken in A.D. 45 by the apostles Saul of Tarsus, the future St. Paul, and St. Barnabas, as well as by St. John Mark the Evangelist; cf. Englezakis, 1995.

important centers for the spread of Christianity on the island (Panteli 2004, pp. 16–19; Kuczara, 2014).

Paphos and Salamis were mentioned in the account of the journey that Willibald dictated to Hugeburc. Paphos was the first city which Willibald visited in Cyprus. The English monk spent three weeks there and also celebrated Passover there. The city was an important trading port and wealthy city during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, even being the capital of the island at the time. It also had the oldest bishopric and the first of the bishops had been appointed by Paul the Apostle himself. It was through him that the Roman proconsul Quintus Sergius Paulus, who was thus to be the first converted Roman official, embraced Christianity in that city (Kapera, 2009). After the destruction of the city in the 4th century due to earthquakes, the title of metropolis was given to Constantia (Hackett, 1972).

And namely, Constantia is the second city mentioned in the account. Once called Salamis, it is located on the east coast of Cyprus and is over 180–200 kilometers, depending on the route taken, from Paphos. In the 4th century, the city became the seat of the archbishop of the Church of Cyprus (until the 13th century) after Paphos lost it. In the period in which it was visited by Willibald, the city was slowly losing importance to the nearby town of Arsinoe, which the crusaders called Famagusta and which after 1192 became the largest port of Cyprus (Karageorghis, 1969).

The forces of nature did not spare the cities of Cyprus. The earthquakes of 15 BC, 76, 332, and 442 AD led to severe destruction in Cyprus: the city of Salamis virtually ceased to exist, while Paphos and Kition were severely damaged. Salamis was rebuilt as Constantia by Constantine the Great, but Paphos, battered by the earthquakes of 365–378, never recovered (Misztal, 2013, p. 93).

In essence, Willibald's itinerary matches the topography of the island at the time. The monk dictated the circumstances of his pilgrimage more than 50 years after he returned from it. Perhaps he relied on his notes, or perhaps only on his memory. No doubt he listed those places and cities that existed at that time and which were the most important places on the island, also from his point of view as a Christian monk who followed a religious purpose of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Willibald's observations

Looking at Willibald's account, the question immediately arises as to whether the English pilgrim was able to adequately assess the political, cultural, and social situation on the island. On the one hand, the account discussed here can be assessed from the perspective of an ordinary pilgrim

traveling to the Holy Land and not very familiar with the relations between Greek Cypriots and Arabs (Misztal, 2013, p. 128). On the other hand, we can cite facts that support the claim that Willibald accurately perceived these realities, and in this context, that Christians and Muslims coexisted in a kind of mutual agreement.

In earlier passages I mentioned that the mid-seventh century Arab expeditions to Cyprus and the expeditions into Asia Minor led to the introduction of a neutral status in Cyprus, called a quasi-condominium, with Byzantine acquiescence. Then, after the Arabs were driven back from under the walls of Constantinople, a peace treaty was concluded (677/678) under which the Arabs had to withdraw their garrisons from the island. From now on, Cyprus became fully neutral, and some form of cooperation and coexistence between Cypriots, Byzantines and Arabs was put in place. However, we must take into account the fact that the representatives of the first two groups shared a religion. It should also be known that the Cypriots were rather despised in Constantinople (Raszewski, 2014). Al-Mas'udi (ca. 896–956), the Arab historian, geographer and traveler, called by later scholars the "Herodotus of the Arab," wrote that the Cypriots, through a treaty imposed on them by the Byzantines and Arabs, were obliged to remain neutral in conflicts between Greeks and Muslims and pay tribute in half to the Greeks and the Muslims. In addition, he mentioned that regardless of religion, they should help each other in emergency situations (Kyrris, 1984). This state of affairs that Willibald described is interpreted by some historians as a form of symbiosis between the two social groups: the Greeks and the Arabs (Kyrris, 1984, pp. 158–159, 169). The Arab chronicler Ibn Haukal, who lived a few hundred years later in the tenth century, described the social situation on the island with a degree of satisfaction: the two communities, Christian and Muslim, lived side by side on good terms (Mansouri, 2001, p. 34).

Did Willibald meet representatives of the Arab community in Cyprus or was he just talking about the general political situation? At first there were indeed Arab garrisons on the island, but after 677–678, Muslim soldiers were forced to leave Cyprus. From that time on, only Arab merchants came to the island, who in time surely had headquarters similar to the later merchant factories that the Genoese, Venetians, Occitans and others had in the Levant. However, there undoubtedly were not many Muslims on the island. Also in the later period, i.e., after the occupation of the island by King Richard the Lionheart (1191) and thus the final collapse of the Byzantine administration, and later during the Lusignan and Venetian periods (1192–1571), also few Muslims inhabited Cyprus. This changed in 1571 with the conquest of Cyprus by the Ottoman Turkey and the progressive colonization of the island by the Turks. Interestingly, Willibald

describes the Arabs only in terms of the problems they posed for pilgrims and Christians in the region. He does not mention Muslims in the context of their religion and culture, nor does he describe mosques and other issues related to Islam (Limor, 2004, p. 273).

However, there are at least a few testimonies which show that the relations between Christian Cypriots and Muslims were not as great. For example, Justinian II (685–695, 705–711) ordered the resettlement of a large part of the island's population to imperial lands in order to deprive the Umayyad caliphs of tax revenues from Cyprus (Raszewski, 2014, p. 233). Just a few years (726) after Willibald's visit, the island was invaded by Arab troops who raided the island in response to Constantinople's increased involvement in the island's internal affairs as well as the general situation in the region (Kyrris, 1984, pp. 169–170). The Muslims constantly accused the Cypriots of disloyalty to them and of favoring the Greeks, or Byzantines (Kyrris, 1984, p. 172). As years went by, the situation was not improving. In 806 there was another devastating Arab expedition against Cyprus; the reason was Emperor Nikephoros I's (802–811) refusal to pay the customary tribute from Cyprus that resulted from the agreements (Theophanes the Confessor, AM 6298, 61.18, AM 6305, 61.19).

Conclusion

Willibald was first and foremost a pilgrim, and in the narrative depicting his journey we do not find the spirit of a scientific observer. He does not provide a description of the places visited, the conditions in the given place, or in-depth characterizations of the local people. Of course, one must also take into account that the description was dictated more than 50 years after the pilgrimage.

Undoubtedly, the greatest value of the *Hodoeporicon* is that it is the only account of a pilgrimage to Palestine in the eighth century, and it provides a kind of link between the expedition of Bishop Arculf made between 660 and 687 and the peregrination of the Frankish monk Bernard the Pilgrim to Palestine between 867 and 870. In spite of a certain restraint in the descriptions, Willibald and the writer of the *Hodoeporicon* who recorded his account left some useful remarks, such as those about the holy sites in Jerusalem and the notes about Cyprus from the third decade of the eighth century that are the subject of this text. It must be admitted that Willibald's account contains many important insights

After 1571, Christians and Muslims lived side by side in Cyprus, inhabiting the same villages, towns and cities. Both cultures influenced each other, with one nation borrowing words, melodies, customs, and dishes

from the other, as well as drawing on the other's traditions and heritage. It is true that to this day historians are still discussing how strongly the lives of Greek and Turkish Cypriots intermingled, including the extent to which they intermarried, but without a doubt the two communities lived side by side and strongly influenced each other (Kordos, 2014, p. 257; Burkiewicz, 2017b, p. 508).

In mid-7th century, the Byzantines and Arabs imposed a certain pattern of functioning on Cyprus, stressing its neutrality. An analogy can be found in more recent times. In August 1960, the British administration, in view of the strong independence aspirations of the Cypriots, made it possible to proclaim an independent Cypriot state. The constitution of the resulting Republic of Cyprus, imposed from outside by England, Turkey, and Greece, instead of providing a basis for peaceful coexistence between the two conflicting national communities, has become the cause of problems (Adamczyk, 2011, p. 127).

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