

*Reysa in laudem Dei et virginis Marie contra paganos:*\* The Experience of Crusading in Prussia during the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

**Abstract**

This article analyzes crusading in Prussia (present-day Poland, Lithuania, and parts of Russia) as a specific form of experience, specifically by examining two elements to that experience: the use and function of relics, and the perception crusading in Prussia as a pilgrimage. While the expeditions have been previously cited for their brutality and lack of connection to the 'real' crusades to Jerusalem or other theatres, like Spain (due to the lack of holy shrines in the region, and the motivations of their participants), this article presents a challenge to that narrative: relics and pilgrimage formed key elements to the crusading experience in Prussia from an early stage, developing over the course of a century. This article first addresses the contested issue of whether or not relics were used in the military expeditions by consulting not only the extensive primary sources available, but also the most recent and up-to-date scholarly research, concluding that they were, indeed, used on the battlefield. It also analyses the role of other objects, namely banners and images, to assess the religious elements of the crusade experience in Prussia. It then proceeds to the veneration of relics at shrines throughout Prussia by crusaders, demonstrating the role of these shrines in reinforcing the religious experience of crusading in Prussia. What emerges is a more complete picture of how people in the middle ages perceived crusading and holy war on the last pagan frontier of Europe.

Key Words: Prussia; Military Orders; Baltic Crusades; Holy War; Relics

Contact: [gregjleighton@gmail.com](mailto:gregjleighton@gmail.com)

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## **1 Introduction**

On 10 October 1233, Pope Gregory IX issued an indulgence to the Christian army in Prussia of 40 days if they would venerate a relic of the True Cross, held in the Teutonic Order castle of Elbing (Elbląg, Poland).<sup>1</sup> Nine years later, on 3 December 1242, Dietrich of Bernheim (d. 1244), Marshal of the Order, led the siege of the castle at Sartowitz (Sartowice). During that siege, the party discovered the relics of St Barbara (d. 304) in the castle.<sup>2</sup> With a great procession, the victorious army took the relics to the city of Althaus Kulm (Stargoród Chełmiński), placing the relics in the castle church. This became one of the most significant pilgrimage shrines in the southern Baltic, thus directly linking the Order's crusading missions and pilgrimage.<sup>3</sup> St Barbara's relics continued to be held in great esteem, and inventories of the shrine taken in the fifteenth century indicate the reverence with which they were kept by the brothers in the Order, in addition to their veneration by the local Christian population, and international crusaders.<sup>4</sup> Relics and the associated acts of veneration that accompanied their presence in the landscape thus played a key role in the early development of the crusading movement in the southern Baltic region, and formed an important element of the experience of crusading there. And yet, the sources for the active conquest period of Prussia in the thirteenth

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<sup>1</sup> PrUB 1.1, pp. 76-17 (no. 104). The present article will use the historical, German place names with present-day names in parentheses when first mentioned. The article uses the following abbreviations: CDP: JOHANNES VOIGT (ed.): *Codex diplomaticus Prussicus: Urkunden-Sammlung zur älteren Geschichte Preussens aus dem Königl. Geheim-Archiv zu Königsberg*, 6 vols, Königsberg 1836-1861; CDW: CARL PETER WOELKY AND JOHANN MARTIN SAAGE (eds.): *Codex diplomaticus Warmiensis*, vol. 1, Mainz 1860; HCL: LEONID ARBUSOW AND ALBERT BAUER (eds.): *Heinrici chronicon Lyvoniae*, Hannover 1955; HvSB: ERNST STREHLKE (ed.): *Hermann von Salza's Bericht über die Eroberung Preussens*, in SRP, vol. 5, Leipzig 1874, pp. 158-66; LUB: FRIEDRICH GEORG VON BUNGE (ed.): *Liv-, Est-, und Curländisches Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1, Dorpat 1853; PDC: KLAUS SCHULTZ AND DIETER WOJTECKI (eds.): *Petri de Dusburg Chronica terre Prussie*, Darmstadt 1984; PrUB: RUDOLF PHILIPPI (ed.): *Preußisches Urkundenbuch. Politische Abteilung*, Königsberg 1882; SDO: MAX PERLBACH (ed.): *Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens nach den ältesten Handschriften*, Halle 1890; SRP: THEODOR HIRSCH, MAX TÖPPEN, et al. (eds.): *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum. Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit bis zur Untergange des Deutschordensherrschaft*, 6 vols., Leipzig 1861-1968; UB Samland: CARL PETER WOELKY, HANS MENDTHAL (eds.): *Urkundenbuch des Bisthums Samland*, 3 vols., Leipzig 1891-1904; WIGAND: THEODOR HIRSCH (ed.): *Die Chronik Wigands von Marburg*, SRP 2, Leipzig 1863, pp. 453-662.

<sup>2</sup> HvSB, pp. 160-161.

<sup>3</sup> PDC, pp. 168-170 (3.55).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 138-140 (3.36). Also see footnote 71 below. For the veneration of St Barbara by the Christian population, see JOHANN VON POSILGE: *Chronik des Landes Preussen (von 1360 an, fortgesetzt bis 1419)*, ed. by ERNST STREHLKE, in: SRP 3, pp. 13-464, here pp. 238, 357.

century (1230-1283) are evasive in determining a variety of issues on the topic, namely the regular veneration of relics by crusaders and whether or not they accompanied armies on campaign. The fourteenth-century evidence is somewhat clearer, suggesting that these practices were indeed established by that time.

Despite the vagueness of the written sources, the topic of relics and crusading in Prussia has been explored with some remarkable results, particularly by Polish and German historians. This research highlights the importance of relics in the religious life of medieval Prussia, particularly in the later middle ages, namely amongst members of the Teutonic Order and the local Christian population.<sup>5</sup> English-speaking scholarship, on the other hand, has only recently begun to consider the role of relics and the military orders in the region, with notable exceptions being the work of Alan V. Murray, Aleksander Pluskowski, Tomasz Borowski and Christopher Gerrard, and the publications coming from the Nicholas Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland. These publications have added greatly to our understanding of holy war, crusader society, the military orders, and a variety of other aspects concerning the expansion of Christianity in the medieval Baltic region.<sup>6</sup> However, little remains to be written in English on

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<sup>5</sup> (Polish) MARIAN DYGO, *Studia nad Początkami Władztwa Zakonu Niemieckiego w Prusach (1226-1259)* [Studies on the beginnings of the Government of Teutonic Order in Prussia (1226-1259)], Warszawa 1992, especially pp. 336-338; KRYSZYNA ZIELIŃSKA-MELKOWSKA: 'Średniowieczne miejsca pielgrzymkowe w ziemiach chełmińskiej, lubawskiej i michałowskiej' [Medieval pilgrimage places in the Kulmerland, Iławaland and Michałowo region], in: HALINA MANIKOWSKA and HANNA ZAREMSKA (eds.): *Peregrinationes. Pielgrzymki w kulturze dawnej Europy* [Peregrinationes. Pilgrimage in the Culture of Old Europe], Warsaw 1995, pp. 242-251; and WALDEMAR ROZYNKOWSKI: *Omnes Sanctae et Sanctae Dei. Studium nad kultem świętych w diecezjach pruskich państwa zakonu krzyżackiego* [Omnes Sanctae et Sanctae Dei. A Study on the Cult of Saints in the Prussian Dioceses of the Teutonic Order], Malbork 2006, especially pp. 206-229; SŁAWOMIR JÓZWIAK and JANUSZ TRUPINDA: *Krzyżackie zamki komture w Prusach. Topografia i układ przestrzenny na podstawie średniowiecznych źródeł pisanych* [Teutonic Order commandery castles in Prussia. Topography and spatial layout based on the medieval written sources], Toruń 2012, especially p. 83, on relics and the spatial significance of the Teutonic Order's Prussian castles. (German) RAINER ZACHARIAS: *Die Marienburg als Wallfahrtsstätte*, in THOMAS BILLER (ed.): *Burgen kirchlicher Bauherren*, Munich 2001, pp. 49-60; IDEM: *Die Reliquienwallfahrt zur Hochmeisterresidenz Marienburg*, in: *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands* (2002), 50, pp. 11-35; KAZIMIERZ POSPIESZNY: *Orte der Reliquienpräsentation in den Deutschordensburgen in Preußen. Ein Beitrag zu neuen Forschungen*, in GERHARD EIMER, ERNST GIERLICH and MATTHIAS MÜLLER (eds.): *Ecclesiae ornatae. Kirchengestaltungen des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit zwischen Denkmalwert und Funktionalität*, Bonn 2009, pp. 311-326.

<sup>6</sup> ALAN V. MURRAY (ed.): *Crusade and Conversion on the Medieval Baltic Frontier, 1150-1500*, Aldershot 2002; IDEM (ed.): *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier*,

the function of relics on crusade, and the degree to which this reflects contemporary understandings of the crusade in Prussia, at least in some ways, as a form of pilgrimage. Therefore, the present article seeks to provide some material to help fill this gap. It assesses the roles of relics and relic veneration in the written sources, and emphasises their importance to studying contemporary perceptions of holy war on the frontiers of medieval Christendom during the active period of crusading in Prussia. It also provides a needed contribution to the recent boom in English-language scholarship on crusading in the Baltic, particularly Livonia (present-day Estonia and Latvia).<sup>7</sup>

Finally, while there were crusades to Livonia throughout the thirteenth century, and the Teutonic Order was involved in those crusades since 1237, the focus of this article is Prussia because of the longevity of holy war there. The conquest of Livonia was virtually complete by 1290, and Livonia was not a destination for European crusaders after this date.<sup>8</sup> Crusading continued in present-day Lithuania and the Kaliningrad *oblast'* into the fifteenth century, and participants continued to bring in relics and holy objects and venerate them. This gives a more nuanced meaning to the term “pilgrims” (*peregrini*) often used in the sources to refer to participants in the crusades. This article considers that process over the course of a century, in order to gauge the extent to which crusaders in the Baltic viewed “pilgrimage” as a component of the crusading experience in the region. It emphasises the role of a more “traditional” form

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Farnham 2009; IDEM (ed.): *The North-Eastern Frontiers of Medieval Europe: The Expansion of Latin Christendom in the Baltic Lands*, Farnham 2014. Also see ALEKSANDER PLUSKOWSKI: *The Archaeology of the Prussian Crusade. Holy War and Colonisation*, London 2012. Though, again, it should be noted that this English-language scholarship is, in fact, largely composed of the translations of Polish scholars' works. See JAROSŁAW WENTA, MAGDALENA KOPCZYŃSKA (eds.): *Sacred Space in the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia*, Toruń 2013, which has a fair amount of research done by Polish academics in English. Other recent examples include the recent publication of TOMASZ BOROWSKI, CHRISTOPHER GERRARD: *Constructing identity in the Middle Ages: Relics, Religiosity, and the Military Orders*, in: *Speculum* 92 (2017), 4, pp. 1056-1100.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, MAREK TAMM, LINDA KALJUNDI et al. (eds.): *Crusading and Chronicle Writing on the Medieval Baltic Frontier: A Companion to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, Farnham 2011; TORBEN K NIELSEN, IBEN FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT (eds.): *Crusading on the Edge: Ideas and Practice of Crusading in Iberia and the Baltic Region, 1100-1500*, Turnhout 2016, especially the contribution of KURT VILLADS JENSEN: *Crusading at the End of the World. The Spread of the Idea of Jerusalem after 1099 to the Baltic Sea Area and to the Iberian Peninsula*, pp. 153-176; MURRAY: *Heathens, Devils and Saracens. Crusader Concepts of the Pagan Enemy during the Baltic Crusades (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries)*, pp. 199-224.

<sup>8</sup> ANTI SELART: *Livonia, Rus' and the Baltic Crusades of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. FIONA ROBB, Leiden 2015, p. 259.

of crusade pilgrimage, evinced by the veneration of relics in the region, and reflects on the role of these objects and associated practices as important sources for how contemporaries understood holy war.

## **2 Relics and Crusading in Prussia (Thirteenth – Fourteenth Centuries)**

The present section discusses the history of relics in crusader Prussia and how contemporaries used them. The relic of the True Cross is a well-known example of how contemporaries used these holy objects on both crusading frontiers to give sacral dimensions to the conflicts in which they fought.<sup>9</sup> The discovery of the Holy Lance at Antioch (1098) and the loss of the True Cross at Hattin (1187) reflect the significance of relics to the idea of crusading, namely their role in reflecting the divine nature of warfare.<sup>10</sup> The discovery of the Holy Lance inspired the crusaders to take on the lengthy siege of Antioch and was carried before their armies on the First Crusade.<sup>11</sup> In losing the True Cross, the salvation of the crusaders and the fate of the Holy Land was under threat.<sup>12</sup>

Relics in medieval Prussia were physical, tangible elements of sanctity which sacralised the military conflicts against the pagans. However, they took on a special importance for one specific reason. In the Holy Land and Spain, where relics were connected to the deep religious history of the landscape (i.e. they had been deposited in certain churches or associated with

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<sup>9</sup> CHARLES WENDELL DAVID (ed.): *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*. The Conquest of Lisbon, New York 2001, 146-147. See ALAN V. MURRAY: *Mighty Against the Enemies of Christ: The Relic of the True Cross in the Armies of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, in: JOHN FRANCE, WILLIAM G. ZAJAC (eds.): *The Crusades and their Sources. Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton*, London 1998, pp. 217-238; JONATHAN RILEY-SMITH: *Aspects of Templar and Hospitaller Memory*, in: NICHOLAS PAUL, SUSAN YEAGER (eds.): *Remembering the Crusades. Myth, Image, Identity*, Baltimore 2012, pp. 233-51, here p. 234; Also J. DELAVILLE LE ROUX (ed.): *Cartulaire general de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem 1100-1310*, vol. 1, Paris 1894, pp. 360-361.

<sup>10</sup> For example, see SUSAN B. EDGINGTON (ed.): *Albert of Aachen, Historia Hierosolymitana. History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, Oxford 2002, pp. 316-317; HEINRICH HAGENMEYER (ed.): *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacri spectantes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Hildesheim 1973, p. 163.

<sup>11</sup> ALBERT OF AACHEN (as in footnote 10), pp. 317, 331, and HAGENMEYER (as in footnote 10), p. 163.

<sup>12</sup> MURRAY, *Might* (as in footnote 9), pp. 217-238; STEPHEN J. SPENCER: *The Emotional Rhetoric of Crusader Spirituality in the Narratives of the First Crusade*, in: *Nottingham Medieval Studies* (2014), 58, pp. 57-86.

specific places for a long time), the opposite is the case for Prussia.<sup>13</sup> Since there were no sacred shrines connected to relics, the war against the pagans formed the strongest component in terms of motivation, rationale, and justification for holy war both within the ranks of the Teutonic Order in addition to secular crusaders.<sup>14</sup> It likewise served as a defining component of the experience of crusading in the region. In this light, relics served to legitimise those conflicts as sacred causes with divine support, but they played a perhaps more significant role in that they were key components to sacralising the pagan landscape and the surrounding spaces *ex nihilo*.<sup>15</sup> Prior to the arrival of the Teutonic Order in the thirteenth century, there were few (if any) shrines of pilgrimage for the local Christian population in the lands of Konrad of Masovia, which were associated with the Virgin Mary.<sup>16</sup> The veneration of specific cults of saints were present since the arrival of the Teutonic Order, and this was largely because of relics.

The first relic to arrive in Prussia was that of the True Cross, referenced in the introduction above.<sup>17</sup> The indulgence of ten days for worshipping the relic, directed specifically at “the Christian army set up in Prussia” (“christiani exercitus in Pruscie patribus constitutes”), indicates that it was an early element in the experience of holy war in Prussia in the 1230s.<sup>18</sup> In this light, crusaders specifically were encouraged to venerate the relic and visit the castle of

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<sup>13</sup> HAGENMEYER (as in footnote 10), pp. 142-43. Also see MURRAY: Sacred Space and Strategic Geography in Twelfth-Century Palestine, in: WENTA/KOPCZYŃSKA (eds.), Sacred Space (as in footnote 6), pp. 13-38. For relics and their history in the Holy Land, see RILEY-SMITH: The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading, London 2003, pp. 11-12, 94; ANNE E. LESTER: Remembrance of Things Past. Memory and Material Objects in the time of the Crusades, 1095-1291, in: MEGAN CASSIDY WELCH (ed.): Remembering the Crusades and Crusading, London 2017, pp. 84-86.

<sup>14</sup> See ERICH WEISE: Der Heidenkampf des Deutschen Ordens, in: *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 12 (1963), 1, pp. 420-473; JÜRGEN SARNOWSKY: Der Deutsche Orden, Munich 1998, p. 66; ROMAN CZAJA: Das Selbstverständnis der geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter. Bilanz und Forschungsperspektive, in: CZAJA, SARNOWSKY (eds): Selbstbild und Selbstverständnis der geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter, Toruń 2011, pp. 7-21; IDEM: Die Identität des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen, in: STEFAN SAMERSKI (ed.): Cura animarum. Seelsorge im Deutschordensland Preußen, Cologne 2013, pp. 24-25; MARCUS WÜST: Studien zum Selbstverständnis des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter, Weimar 2013, pp. 56-66.

<sup>15</sup> See GREGORY LEIGHTON: Did the Teutonic Order Create a Sacred Landscape in Thirteenth-Century Prussia?, in: *Journal of Medieval History* 44 (2018), 4, pp. 457-483.

<sup>16</sup> ZIELIŃSKA-MELKOWSKA (as in footnote 5), pp. 243-244.

<sup>17</sup> PDC, p. 32 (1.5).

<sup>18</sup> PrUB 1.1, pp. 76-77 (no. 103).

Elbing as part of their journey.<sup>19</sup> As we see in the coming segment, this forms a significant component to viewing the development of pilgrimage shrines in Prussia as a part of the crusade experience there. While there was clearly a linguistic borrowing of the term “pilgrim” (“peregrini”) to refer to crusaders in the Baltic, the connection here between a relic of the True Cross and crusader armies in the Baltic already necessitates a re-assessment of the crusading experience in the region. Should we define war against the pagans alone as the defining factor of these crusades, or did it involve ceremonial and ritual aspects associated with pilgrimage?<sup>20</sup> This is discussed in the next section at greater length.

The relic of the True Cross held a key position in the spiritual life of the Teutonic Knights throughout the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth century.<sup>21</sup> The Order held its main chapter meetings (where it elected its Grand Masters) on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (3 May),<sup>22</sup> and in 1297 the Feast of the True Cross was celebrated at *totum duplex*, the highest mass in the Dominican Rite.<sup>23</sup> At these high masses there was a specific liturgy for the cross, in which participants were to kneel before it and kiss it.<sup>24</sup> The Battle of the Streba River (2 February, 1348), was fought against ‘the enemies of the crucified one’, becoming one of the most important victories for the Order in the fourteenth century.<sup>25</sup> To commemorate this event, an altar to the holy cross was dedicated in a nunnery near the city of Königsberg (Kaliningrad, Russia).<sup>26</sup> Clearly, the cross and its symbolism was a key element to religious life in Prussia

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<sup>19</sup> See PLUSKOWSKI (as in footnote 6), p. 102.

<sup>20</sup> For example, see HvSB, p. 159, which first mentions ‘noble pilgrims’ (*eylender pilgeram*).

<sup>21</sup> PDC, p. 32 (1.5).

<sup>22</sup> SDO, p. 161.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, p. 144.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 123-124

<sup>25</sup> PDC, p. 128 (3.27), recounts the foundation of Kreuzburg. For Streba, see CDP 3, p. 80 (no. 58): ‘the said Master Heinrich was moved to avenge the dishonour done to the crucified one (*bewegt worden zu rechen die schmach des gekreuzigten*), and with a great army of Christians he went into the Land of Lithuania, namely Aukstaiten (Upper Lithuania.)’ All translations are those of my own, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>26</sup> CDP 3, p. 81 (no. 58): ‘At this consecration [of the monastery of Lobenicht] there were dedicated two altars, the first one at midnight to the honour of St Catherine, St Margaret, and the 11,000 Virgins, the other at midday to the honour of the Holy Cross (*der ander gegen Mittag zu ehren dem heyligen Creuz*).’

and campaigning against the pagans. The banner for the city of Elbing depicted in the *Banderia Pruthenorum* (1448), had two crosses (figure 1), providing a visual link to the relic.<sup>27</sup>

The relic was also of considerable significance to those who came to participate in the Prussian crusades during the thirteenth and fourteenth century, not just members of the Teutonic Order. Relics of the Cross were placed in various centres throughout the conquest period and later on, which demonstrates their function in creating new shrines of pilgrimage.<sup>28</sup> Some of the oldest castle chapels in Prussia were dedicated to the True Cross.<sup>29</sup> Aside from Elbing, there was a fragment at Rehden (Radzyń Chełmiński) already in the 1250s, likely held in the Church of the Holy Cross mentioned in a 1285 deed.<sup>30</sup> In 1263, another fragment was in the chapel at Thorn (Toruń). Christians and “devout visitors” (“devoti visitanti”) were encouraged to venerate it while helping to rebuild the new castle chapel.<sup>31</sup> By the late thirteenth century, there was clearly a network of shrines in Prussia that were associated with the True Cross which crusaders would visit. Thorn, Elbing, Rehden, and Marienwerder (Kwidzyn) were the main stops for crusaders journeying toward the frontier in Lithuania.

Veneration of the True Cross continued in the fourteenth century in the establishment of churches with that dedication, though Roman Czaja has argued that at this time, the cult of the relic was of little importance to the spiritual life of the Order.<sup>32</sup> There was a fragment at Brandenburg mentioned in 1322. In 1325, a charter issued by the bishop of Samland (a member of the Order) refers to “the new church of the Holy Cross” (“nova ecclesia sancte crucis”) about 40km north of Königsberg, at Bieskobnicken (Okhotnoie).<sup>33</sup> The Chapel of St Anne, constructed in 1344, also had a scene of St Helena's discovery of the relic on the western tympanum to the burial chamber of the Grand Masters (figure 2). It was also visited by the

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<sup>27</sup> ERNST STREHLKE (ed.): JAN DŁUGOSZ: *Banderia Pruthenorum*, in SRP 4, Leipzig 1870, pp. 9-37, here 20 and 22. Also see pp. 15 (Kulm), 17 (Königsberg), 23 (Elbing), 28 (Danzig).

<sup>28</sup> ZACHARIAS (as in footnote 5), pp. 16-17.

<sup>29</sup> See DYGO, *Studia* (as in footnote 5), pp. 336-338; CZAJA, *Die Identität* (as in footnote 14), pp. 47-48.

<sup>30</sup> ZIELIŃSKA-MELKOWSKA (as in footnote 5), pp. 243-244.

<sup>31</sup> CDW, pp. 82-83 (no. 42). For the 1285 deed, see PrUB 1.2, pp. 292-293 (no. 485).

<sup>32</sup> CZAJA, ‘*Die Identität*’ (as in footnote 14), p. 48 ff.

<sup>33</sup> UB Samland 3, p. 292 (no. 425).

Order's guests, namely the crusaders who came to Prussia.<sup>34</sup> A monastery at Löbenicht (a district of Königsberg), founded by Master Winrich Kniprode (d. 1382) to commemorate the victory in the Battle of the Streba River (discussed previously) had an altar dedicated to the Holy Cross.<sup>35</sup> Fragments of the True Cross could be found at other important centres throughout the fourteenth century, particularly Marienburg (Malbork). In 1358, an indulgence letter called on pilgrims to visit the Chapel of St Lawrence and venerate the "wood of the Holy Cross" ("lignum sancte crucis").<sup>36</sup> In 1375, the King of France gave a piece of the relic to the Master of the Order, who then took it to Marienburg.<sup>37</sup> It thus appears that while the True Cross may not have been as prominent an element of religious life on the wars against Lithuania, it still formed an important part of the religious geography of Prussia and as an object associated with the religious life of the local population, and crusaders.

While much recent literature has addressed the spiritual life of Christians in medieval Prussia (especially the spiritual life of the Teutonic Order), the topic of relics and the ways in which they were actually used has been addressed primarily in the work of Polish researchers. We know that the presence of relics, in some cases, provided a link with the crusades to the Holy Land themselves. The Order did not miss the opportunity to make that connection clear in re-framing its conflicts with the Prussians and the Lithuanians to its supporters (crusader-pilgrims).<sup>38</sup> The portal to the Chapel of St Anne at Marienburg just mentioned, depicted the discovery of the True Cross. Another example of the Order's favour for the cross was depicted at the castle of Lochstedt (Pavlovo), where a scene of the Crucifixion (c. 1390) adorned the walls of the castle's commander's private rooms.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> STEFAN KWIATKOWSKI: *Devotio antiqua, ihr Niedergang und die geistigen Ursachen der religiösen Krise des Deutschen Ordens*, in: UDO ARNOLD (ed.): *Deutscher Orden 1190-1990*, Lüneburg 1997, pp. 107-130. For visitors to the Chapel of St Anne, see PLUSKOWSKI (as in footnote 6), pp. 179-82.

<sup>35</sup> WIGAND, pp. 510-513. CDP, pp. 80-81 (no. 58), records the foundation of the monasteries and the altar.

<sup>36</sup> JOHANNES VOIGT: *Geschichte Marienburgs, der Stadt und des Haupthauses des deutschen Ritterordens in Preußen, Königsberg* 1824, pp. 536-537.

<sup>37</sup> WIGAND, pp. 574-575.

<sup>38</sup> KWIATKOWSKI, *Devotio antiqua* (as in footnote 34), pp. 107-130.

<sup>39</sup> See CONRAD STEINBRECHT: *Die Baukunst des Deutschen Ritterordens in Preussen 3: Schloss Lochstedt und seine Malereien*, Berlin 1910, pp. 21-22. Also see CHRISTOFER HERRMANN:

The Order's inventories from the late fourteenth and throughout the fifteenth centuries show a rich variety of relics in Prussia, demonstrating their role in the spiritual lives of the brethren.<sup>40</sup> Relics also appear to have functioned as objects primarily associated with veneration by the Brethren, in addition to veneration by the local Christian population and crusaders, who would visit as pilgrims. The relics associated with prominent saints to the Order were essential to the developing identity of Prussia as a new Christian landscape, reflected in the shrines and altars patronised by crusaders, especially those associated with St George and St Catherine. There was an eternal lamp in honour of St George in the Königsberg cathedral, to whom "noble knights and pilgrims" on the *Reisen* founded an altar in 1336.<sup>41</sup> William IV of Holland, on his second *Reise* in 1344, visited the church of St George in Königsberg, in addition to the church of St Catherine at Arnau (Rodniki), and the monastery at Wehlau (Znamensk), which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary.<sup>42</sup> On his return from the frontier, "he rode to Elbing" ("ghereden was ten Elúinghen"), where he made an offering (presumably) to the True Cross.<sup>43</sup> Formularies from the period indicate that liturgical celebrations took place among those before, during, or returning from a *Reise* ("pro expeditione et reysa facienda contra Litwinos"), in addition to the Christian population, who was expected to pray for them.<sup>44</sup> Religious services in the region were therefore connected to the seasonal expeditions, and relics, as part of those services, formed part of the regional liturgy. The high feasts codified in the Order's statutes were centred on important Marian feast days, which were also when the Order (and its guests), launched their *Winter-* or *Sommerreisen*.<sup>45</sup> In this context, William would have had an incentive

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Mittelalterliche Architektur in Preussenland. Untersuchungen zur Frage der Kunstlandschaft und -geographie, Petersberg 2007, pp. 571-573.

<sup>40</sup> WALTHER ZIESEMER (ed.): *Das Marienburger Ämterbuch*, Danzig 1916, p. 129, for example, lists a 'jawbone' (*kybacke*) of St Anthony kept at Marienburg castle.

<sup>41</sup> UB Samland 1, pp. 204-205 (no. 278), 221 (no. 295).

<sup>42</sup> SRP 2, p. 745.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 755: '...daer bi jeghens mijn heere ghereden was *ten Elúinghen*, ii scot prus valent iii grote.'

<sup>44</sup> AUGUSTIN KOLBERG: *Ein Preussisches Formelbuch des 15. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands* (1891), 9, pp. 273-329, here p. 294; WILHELM WATTENBACH (ed.): *Das Formelbuch des Domherrn Arnold von Protzan*, Breslau 1862, p. 307. Also see RADOSŁAW BISKUP (ed.): 'Formularz z Uppsali' *Późnośredniowieczna księga formularzowa biskupstw pruskich* [The Uppsala Formulary. The Late Medieval Formulary Book of the Prussian Bishoprics], Toruń 2016, pp. 252-528 (nos. 322-326)

<sup>45</sup> KOLBERG (as in footnote 44), p. 295; CDW, vol. 2, p. 316 (no. 12). For the liturgy in medieval Prussia, see ANNET LÖFFLER: *Die Liturgie des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen*, in: *Cura*

to venerate the relic at Elbing for the successful completion of his crusade, which is recorded in other accounts of the *Reisen*.<sup>46</sup> An indulgence for visiting the relics of St Catherine at Brandenburg (Ushakovo) in the fourteenth century also highlights that the veneration of these objects was part and parcel of fighting the Lithuanians.<sup>47</sup>

Clearly, relics were key to the spiritual life of crusader Prussia 'off the battlefield', for both the brethren in the Teutonic Order, visiting crusaders, and the local Christian population. However, the function of relics on campaign is still difficult to determine. We do know that relics were associated with military action from St John Chrysostom's *Laudatio martyrum Aegyptorum*, reflecting a long tradition of carrying sacred objects into battle or on campaign. This can actually be traced to the Old Testament, and the imagery associated with the military orders. The prominence of themes like the Litter of Solomon ("lectulum Salomonis") reflect the association of sacred objects to religious wars and holy warriors.<sup>48</sup> From the origin of the crusading movement in the late eleventh century, crusaders in the Holy Land frequently carried relics on campaign. Murray counts no less than 30 instances between 1099-1187 of the Cross relic being carried into battle and noting parallels to other sacred objects in Europe, such as the *oriflamme*.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, on other crusading frontiers, like Spain, we can use the example of the *Cristo de las batallas*, an eleventh-century cross associated with the conquests of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar and housed in the *Catedral Nueva* in Salamanca, Spain. Indeed, there are a few references in the Order's inventory books from the fourteenth and fifteenth century to 'reise wagons' ("reysewayn") and 'reise altars' ("reysalter"). In addition to weapons and the necessities for war, these also held objects for celebrating mass on campaign ("reyszeperate").<sup>50</sup>

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animarum (as in footnote 14), pp. 161-184, here p. 166. For the feast days and the *Reisen*, see WERNER PARAVICINI: *Die Preußenreisen des europäischen Adels*, vol. 1, Sigmaringen 1981, pp. 289-290.

<sup>46</sup> For example, WIGAND, p. 500.

<sup>47</sup> CDW 2, p. 316 (no. 306).

<sup>48</sup> JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: *Laudatio martyrum Aegyptorum*, in J. P. MIGNE (ed.): *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 50, Paris 1862, col. 694. For the Litter of Solomon, see BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX: *De laude novae militiae sive liber ad milites Templi*, in MIGNE (ed.): *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 182, Paris 159, col. 927.

<sup>49</sup> MURRAY, *Mighty*, (as in footnote 9), pp. 218-220 and 232-238.

<sup>50</sup> For example, see ZIESEMER, *Marienburger Ämterbuch* (as in footnote 40), pp. 102 (line 9), 103 (line 1), and 104 (line 18); IDEM: *Das Grosse Ämterbuch des Deutschen Ordens*, Danzig

However, in the narrative sources for Prussia during the thirteenth century, there is no direct mention of any relic accompanying an army into battle, though there are hints that they would have been carried by armies. Mikołaj Gładysz has suggested that the True Cross might have carried into battle on the 1233 crusade of Burchard IV of Magdeburg (d. 1243), as his army left Marienwerder. However, there is no record of a relic of the Cross being held there, or Burchard's army carrying the relic.<sup>51</sup> Henry III of Meissen (d. 1281), who arrived in Prussia in 1234, stopped at Elbing, too. We know this because he left men there to finish building the castle. While it may be possible that he visited the relic there and made an offering, this is not present in any of the written material.<sup>52</sup> A 1249 letter attributed to Grand Master, Hermann of Salza (d. 1239), describes in detail the Order's early conquests of Prussia (it was Peter's source) but does not mention the True Cross at all. The only relic that the letter mentions is that of St Barbara, discussed in greater detail below.<sup>53</sup> The Treaty of Christburg (24 November 1248), does include the Teutonic Knights and Swantopolk of Pomerania (d. 1266), swearing on a relic of the True Cross, and according to Borowski and Gerrard, the knights carried the cross relic in a battle at this time. However, we do know that on the famous 1255 crusade of Ottokar II of Bohemia (d. 1278), that the king carried with him the relics of St Hedwig and St Stanislaus indicating that they, too could have been deposited in Prussia.<sup>54</sup> The function of relics in the thirteenth-century sources is thus still hazy, though it is clear that the True Cross played a significant role in the development of a spiritual landscape there and was present at various centres throughout the conquered region, discussed in the coming segment of this article.

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1921, pp. 35 (line 8), 430 (line 8); ERICH JOACHIM (ed.): *Das Marienburger Tresslerbuch aus den Jahren 1399-1409*, Königsberg 1896, pp. 15 (line 26), 63 (line 7), 174 (line 1), 402 (line 14).

<sup>51</sup> MICHOLAJ GLADYSZ: *The Forgotten Crusaders: Poland and the Crusader Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, Leiden 2012, p. 249, citing DYGO, *Studia* (as in footnote 5), p. 336, though there is no account of the relic going into battle (see PDC, pp. 110-112 (3.9-11)).

<sup>52</sup> PDC, pp. 114-116 (3.14-5).

<sup>53</sup> HvSB, p. 160.

<sup>54</sup> PrUB, 1.1, p. 150 (no. 213). Also see BOROWSKI/GERRARD, (as in footnote 6), p. 1060. However, there is no record to support this in the narrative sources (PDC, p. 174 (3.58)). For the relics of St Hedwig, see JOSEPH SEEMÜLLER (ed.): *Ottokars Osterreichische Reimchronik*, Teil. 1, MGH Dt. Chron. 5.1, Hahn 1890, pp. 126-128. For St Stanislaus' relics, PrUB, 1.1, pp. 233-234 (no. 320).

The fourteenth-century material offers some glimpses to the possible use of relics in battle. Armies on the *Reisen* did celebrate mass on campaign. For example, Peter of Dusburg's record of the foundation of Christmemel castle, in Easter of 1311, notes how the company marked the foundation with "a procession of relics" ("processio reliquiarum"). In 1344, Pope Clement VI (d. 1352) wrote to the Master of the Order, Ludolf König (d. 1348), and the Grand Marshal, Winrich Kniprode that referred to the use of portable altars ("altari portatili") while fighting pagans.<sup>55</sup> Pope Urban V (d. 1370) extended the same privileges to the Order in 1368.<sup>56</sup> There was a stipulation that services be held in appropriate and upright places, and by the Order's own priests or other appropriate priests (i.e. priests in the retinues of knights on the *Reisen*).<sup>57</sup> Those 'appropriate places' mentioned in Urban V's letter certainly could be on the battlefield, based on the long tradition of celebrating masses before battles in the Holy Land, and other crusading theatres, like Spain.<sup>58</sup>

There are some instances in the sources where we learn that crusader armies in Prussia participated in battlefield mass and processions, but the strongest example is Wigand of Marburg's account of siege of Kaunas on Easter of 1362.<sup>59</sup> The victory over the Lithuanians by a large pilgrim army from England, Italy, and France is expressed in very sacralised terms, reflecting not only the perception of the battle by Wigand, but the rituals associated with this chivalric period of holy war. With respect to relics, Wigand mentions that the bishop of Samland, Bartholomew (d. 1378), dispensed indulgences of the Order to the crusaders ("hospites") who were on the campaign in Kaunas. This was followed by a mass and a solemn procession, very likely on the battlefield itself, commemorating the resurrection of Christ and the triumph of Christianity over paganism.<sup>60</sup> This was celebrated with a *totum duplex* mass,

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<sup>55</sup> See PDC, pp. 424-426 (3.315); CDP 3, pp. 71-72 (no. 48).

<sup>56</sup> CDP, p. 126 (no. 91).

<sup>57</sup> Ibidem, p. 72 (no. 48). Also see PARAVICINI, *Die Preußenreisen* (as in footnote 45), pp. 178, 221-23.

<sup>58</sup> ROSALIND HILL (ed.): *Gesta francorum et aliorum Hierosolymatorum. The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, London 1963, pp. 78-79; *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* (as in footnote 9), pp. 147-159. For Spain, see JOSEPH F. O'CALLAGHAN (ed.): *The Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile*, Tempe 2002, pp. 140-141.

<sup>59</sup> WIGAND, pp. 531-358.

<sup>60</sup> KRZYSZTOF KWIATKOWSKI: *Die Selbstdarstellung des Deutschen Ordens in der Chronik Wigands von Marburg*, in: CZAJA/SARNOWSKY, (as in footnote 14), pp. 127-138; IDEM: *Christ ist Erstanden...and Christians Win! Liturgy and the Sacralisation of Armed Fight against the*

and the chanting of *Christus surrexit / Christ ist erstanden*, and *kyrie eleison* by the army in front of Kaunas. Such a celebration and its importance to the liturgical cycle of the Order, in addition to its connection to a key victory of the Order and the crusaders, points to the presence of relics or other sacral objects on campaign.

Other specific objects were brought on the fourteenth-century campaigns which provide parallels to how relics or holy objects were part of the crusading experience in Prussia. This is especially true for images and banners, both of which were carried on campaign and had a distinct function in battle. Wigand of Marburg mentions “an image” (“*imago*”) of the Virgin in his account of a battle between the Order and Lithuania in 1311, near Insterburg (Chernyakhovsk).<sup>61</sup> Later, at the Battle of Streba, the crusaders saw “our Lady’s image” (“*unser wrowen bilde*”) in the sky, which was followed by a victory of the Order. A near-contemporary account of the battle written in 1350 states that “the Lord and the Virgin were fighting ahead of the army” (“*der herre und seine gebenedeite gepererin die Jungfrau Marie vor sie fechtende*”).<sup>62</sup> This could refer to the banner of the Order, which bore an image of the Virgin Mary, or to a tradition that the Virgin and Christ actually appeared, which is a common theme in crusading chronicles, situating the image within the context of *hierophany*.<sup>63</sup> This is also connected to the date of the battle, 2 February (the Feast of the Presentation of Christ). Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the function of the Order’s banners in the texts documenting the *Reisen* reflect medieval views of the wars in sacralised and ideologised terms, especially the banners of the Virgin and St George. One can see this element in the way that Wigand of Marburg records by name those who bore them and the order in which they were led into battle, highlighting the importance of martyr saints to the self-image and group-image

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Pagans as Determinants of the Identity of the Members of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, in: WENTA/KOPCZYŃSKA (as in footnote 6), pp. 122-127.

<sup>61</sup> WIGAND, p. 456.

<sup>62</sup> Ibidem, p. 512. Also see CDP 3, pp. 80-81 (no. 58).

<sup>63</sup> For example, see STEPHEN LAY: Miracles, Martyrs and the Cult of Henry the Crusader in Lisbon, in: Modern Humanities Research Association 24 (2008), 1, pp. 7-31; JAY RUBENSTEIN: Miracles and the Crusading Mind: Monastic Meditations on Jerusalem’s Conquest, in: SANTHA BHATTACHARJI, ROWAN WILLIAMS, et al (eds.): Prayer and Thought in Monastic Tradition: Essays in Honour of Benedicta Ward SLG, London 2014, pp. 197-210. For *hierophany*, see MURRAY, Sacred Space (as in footnote 13), pp. 13-15.

of crusaders and knights in the Order.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, inventories reflect that banners (of the Grand Master) were kept in the Order's main chapel at Marienburg, also the centre where the majority of relics were held.<sup>65</sup> It appears, therefore, that the Order (and crusaders) placed significant value upon holy objects whilst on crusade in Prussia and on some occasions did take them into battle, but the silence of the sources also suggests relics were primarily kept static.

While they may have accompanied armies on campaign, relics in Prussia also present some parallels to other regions of holy war, namely in that they were 'discovered.' This served to sacralise the mission and legitimise the presence of the Teutonic Order as the favoured organisation responsible for the conversion of the Prussians and the leader of the crusades there. Most famous was the discovery of the head of St Barbara in 1242 during the siege of Sartowitz.<sup>66</sup> The group of knights who discovered the relics promptly fell to their knees and took it back with them to Kulm (Chełmno) in a religious procession with great honour and adoration.<sup>67</sup> The most important sacral event in medieval Prussia, from the Order's perspective, involved the discovery of a relic.

The story of the relic (and its discovery) had a significant impact on regional history writing and was part of the Order's collective identity as an institution of holy war in Prussia.<sup>68</sup> It was recorded in Peter of Dusburg's chronicle, and further elaborated by his successor, Nicolaus of Jeroschin, in addition to the anonymous author of the *Ältere Hochmeisterchronik* (c. 1440).<sup>69</sup> The cult of St Barbara was already established at Althaus Kulm in the 1240s, and throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth century it was one of the most powerful cult centres in Prussia.<sup>70</sup> It was also visited by local nobles and foreign crusaders. Inventories taken of the

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<sup>64</sup> PARAVICINI, *Die Preußenreisen des europäischen Adels*, vol. 2, Sigmaringen 1995, pp. 139-151.

<sup>65</sup> JOACHIM, (as in footnote 50), p. 586 (lines 23-5), lists the St George Banner (*sinte Jorgen banyr*), kept in Marienburg.

<sup>66</sup> HvSB, pp. 160-161.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, 161.

<sup>68</sup> THEODOR HIRSCH (ed.): *Die Chroniken von Oliva und Bruchstücke ältere Chroniken*, in SRP 5, Leipzig 1874, pp. 599-600.

<sup>69</sup> PDC, pp. 138-142 (3.36).

<sup>70</sup> MARIA STARNAWSKA, *The Role of the Legend of Saint Barbara's Head in the Conflict of the Teutonic Order and Swietopolk, the Duke of Pomerania*, in: JOCHEN SCHENK, MIKE CARR (eds.): *The Military Orders 6.2: Culture and Conflict in Western and Northern Europe*, London 2017, pp. 203-213.

shrine in the 15<sup>th</sup> century demonstrate that it was one of the most important relics for veneration in late medieval Prussia.<sup>71</sup> The discovery of the relic in Prussia was a monumental event in the Order's history that served to legitimise its campaigns and served as an important pilgrimage shrine for later nobility to visit and express their piety.

Maria Starnawska frames the discovery narrative within the serious political shifts taking place in Prussia during the early conquests of the Order, in which case it was used to legitimise the Christianity of Duke Swantopolk on one side, and the "true" faith expressed by the knights of the Teutonic Order. The relic played a significant role in the struggle for control of the Vistula River between the Teutonic Order and Duke Swantopolk of Pomerania, who led the first Prussian Uprising (mentioned above).<sup>72</sup> Both parties used the relic of St Barbara to legitimise their sovereignty in Prussia. The Order's emphasis on the 'discovery' of the relic was meant to emphasise that the Knights performed God's work and to bring it into the company of the true leaders behind the conversion of Prussia. In the so-called Hermann of Salza Letter, when the relics were discovered, the head of Barbara spoke that she wished 'to go to the city of Kulm and hear a mass there.' The relic in the Order's textual tradition legitimised it as the rightful possessor of one of the most important sacral objects in the region. It also shows the importance of the Order's cities within the formerly pagan landscape of Prussia and served to explain the origins of popular pilgrimage destinations. In addition to providing morale in battle, and creating pilgrimage shrines, relics played a wider role in cementing the Order's spiritual function in Prussia.

It appears that relics functioned in Prussia in a number of similar ways to how they did in the Holy Land, and even Spain. They may have been important in leading the pilgrims and knights in the Order to battle against the pagans, which brings to question the perception of the Prussian crusades by contemporaries who took part in them. Clearly, the wars were not merely excuses to raid and pillage, but had a specific sacral element evinced in the role played by relics and other objects, like images and banners. Cults developed around relics that had profound resonance to the crusade movement, the example of the True Cross being the most powerful. This developed into a major cult which had spread throughout the Order's territory by the fourteenth century. Specific saints also came to be associated with the wars in Prussia, and

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<sup>71</sup> ZIESEMER (ed.), *Das Grosse Ämterbuch* (as in footnote 50), pp. 514-515, an inventory from 22 July 1452.

<sup>72</sup> STARNAWSKA (as in footnote 70), pp. 203-213.

pilgrimage shrines developed around them. These cults legitimised not just the war against the Prussians, but also the idea that the Teutonic Order was the rightful leader of the crusades against them. This is most evident in the discovery of relics by the Order.

### **3 'Pilgrimage' and Crusading in Prussia (Thirteenth – Fourteenth Centuries)**

In order to assess the experience of crusading in Prussia, it is necessary to reconsider the part in that experience played by pilgrimage. From the inception of the crusades, pilgrimage was a multi-faceted element of how contemporaries experienced crusading and wrote about it. It involved a spiritual journey leading to the redemption of one's sins through taking a vow, a physical journey to a holy place, and (most uniquely) a commitment to fight the enemies of the church.<sup>73</sup> Sources for all crusading frontiers thus refer to crusaders as "pilgrims," although their pilgrimage was clearly of a special character. Fighting enemies of the church, receiving a remission of sins from the pope, and saving the holy places could be goals of the "pilgrimage," whereas traditional (i.e. pre-crusading) forms emphasised visiting holy shrines unarmed.<sup>74</sup> It is clear, though, upon examining the sources, that crusaders often engaged in acts associated with pilgrimage such as processions, hearing mass, and giving alms while on campaign.<sup>75</sup> These were key elements to the pilgrimage experience in general, thus linking crusading with more traditional pilgrimage elements.<sup>76</sup>

The Teutonic Order was directly associated to pilgrimage, evinced in its Statutes. In Acre, the knights hosted visiting pilgrims and crusaders from the German lands, while the Order's headquarters at La Mota (now in the province of Castilla y León) was located on the

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<sup>73</sup> GILES CONSTABLE: *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*, London 2008, p. 18; LÉAN NÍ CHLEÍRIG: *Nova peregrinatio: The First Crusade as a Pilgrimage in Contemporary Latin Narratives*, in: MARCUS BULL, DAMIEN KEMPF (eds.): *Writing the Early Crusades: Text, Transmission and Memory*, Woodbridge, 2014, pp. 63-74. Also see ALBERT OF AACHEN (as in footnote 10), p. 437, and RILEY-SMITH, *The First Crusade* (as in footnote 13), pp. 23-25. For a discussion of how scholars have interpreted crusading pilgrimage, see NÍ CHLEÍRIG, p. 68, also RILEY-SMITH: *The First Crusade* (as in footnote 13), pp. 84-85.

<sup>74</sup> RILEY-SMITH, *The First Crusade* (as in footnote 13), p. 24.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 84-5; NÍ CHLEÍRIG, (as in footnote 73), pp. 68-72.

<sup>76</sup> See DIANA WEBB: *Medieval European Pilgrimage c. 700-1500*, London 2002, p. 198, on processions. For the relationship between crusading and pilgrimage, see *Ibidem*, pp. 38-41.

route to Santiago de Compostela.<sup>77</sup> By the time of the Prussian crusade in the 1230s, however, the Order was faced with the obvious absence of any targets of pilgrimage to protect or encourage visiting. Though it could be argued that the association of Prussia with St Adalbert of Prague (d. 997) would be grounds for the development of shrines in the region, there is no evidence of the Order venerating that saint until the fourteenth century at the earliest (discussed below). In fact, the site associated with Adalbert's earliest shrine at Kaldus (Kaldus) fell out of use shortly before the arrival of the Order. This reaffirms that there were no active pilgrimage shrines or places being used by the local Christian population for the Order to defend when it arrived in Prussia.<sup>78</sup> There was thus a significant problem that needed to be remedied in order to legitimise the crusades in the region from an early period.

“Pilgrimage” in Prussia and the Baltic remedied this first by applying language and terminology associated with the crusades to the Holy Land. Papal letters endorsing the crusades employed specific language to frame and encourage further expeditions against the Livonians and Prussians, even if there were no shrines to visit.<sup>79</sup> In Livonia, Alexander III decreed in 1171 that those fighting against Estonians were to receive the same benefits as “those who visit the Holy Sepulchre,” though it is clear that there were no shrines there to visit as pilgrims.<sup>80</sup> Innocent III showed his support for the crusades in Livonia, though he did not liken the wars to a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre.<sup>81</sup> In 1199, he placed the crusade-pilgrimage to Livonia on equal footing with pilgrimage to Rome.<sup>82</sup> Narrative sources for Livonia continued this trend. The *Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* (c. 1227), likewise continued this language and terminology, as did the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (c. 1290), and other smaller reports, such

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<sup>77</sup> For Acre (Akko, Israel): SARNOWSKY, *Deutsche Orden* (as in footnote 14), pp. 10-15. For Spain: KURT FORSTREUTER: *Der Deutsche Orden am Mittelmeer*, Bonn 1967, p. 92.

<sup>78</sup> See PLUSKOWSKI (as in footnote 6), p. 85.

<sup>79</sup> SYLVIA SCHEIN: Pilgrimage, in: MURRAY (ed.): *The Crusades. An Encyclopedia*, vol. 1: A-C, Oxford, 2006, p. 960. Also, BURNAM W. REYNOLDS: *The Prehistory of the Crusades. Missionary War and the Baltic Crusades*, London 2016.

<sup>80</sup> LUB, col. 6 (no. 5). For early churches in the Baltic, see JES WIENBERG: *Conspicuous Architecture: Medieval Round Churches in Scandinavia*, in JANNE HARJULA, SONJA HUKANTAIVAL, et al. (eds.): *Sacred Monuments and Practices in the Baltic Sea Region: New Visits to Old Churches*, Newcastle 2017, pp. 2-31.

<sup>81</sup> BRENDA BOLTON: *Innocent III: Studies on Papal Authority and Pastoral Care*, Aldershot 1995, pp. 113-34.

<sup>82</sup> LUB, col. 14 (no. 12).

as the *Lippiflorium* of one Master Justinian (c. 1250), documenting the career of Bernhard II of Lippe (d. 1244), a crusader and ecclesiastical figure in Livonia.<sup>83</sup>

The use of this sort of language with respect to the Prussian frontier continued with the pontificates of Gregory IX (1227-1241) and Innocent IV (1243-54).<sup>84</sup> In the early 1230s, Gregory encouraged the Dominicans of Northern Germany, Gotland, and Pomerania to preach taking the cross against the Prussians, while granting those who went an indulgence similar to that accorded to those going to Jerusalem. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Order and of its mission.<sup>85</sup> No less than twelve papal documents exist in which he called for the crusades, or preaching of the crusades, to Prussia.<sup>86</sup> Innocent IV continued to support the Order's campaigns, encouraging the preaching of the crusades by mendicant orders, and eventually granting the Order itself the right to recruit crusaders without public preaching, or papal approval, with the letter *De negotio Pruscie*, issued in 1254.<sup>87</sup> The Order thus had freedom to recruit crusaders for its campaigns, initiating what has been called a "perpetual crusade" in the Baltic. This explains, according to Axel Ehlers, the complete silence from the curia regarding crusade indulgences and benefits during the fourteenth century: it was a responsibility of the Order alone.<sup>88</sup>

The above-mentioned letter of 1249 attributed to Hermann of Salza refers to "pilgrims" (*pilgeram*) in the first wave of conquests, highlighting the continued use of this language and

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<sup>83</sup> HCL, pp. 9 (2.3), 50 (11.4); LEO MEYER (ed.): *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, Paderborn 1876, pp. 10 (lines 410-12), 13 (lines 535-537), and many others; HERRMANN ALTHOF (ed.): *Das Lippiflorium. Ein westfälische Heldengedicht aus dem dreizehnten Jahrhundert*, Leipzig 1900, p. 64 (lines 767-774).

<sup>84</sup> FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT: *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147-1254*, Leiden 2007, pp. 200-206.

<sup>85</sup> EADEM, pp. 196-206.

<sup>86</sup> PrUB 1.1, pp. 61-62 (no. 81); 65-66 (no. 85); 66-67 (no. 88); 68 (no. 89); 72-73 (no. 97); 73 (no. 98); 73-74 (no. 99); 74-75 (no. 100); 75 (no. 101); 88 (no. 114); 92 (no. 121); 93-94 (no. 123).

<sup>87</sup> FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT (as in footnote 84), pp. 224-230.

<sup>88</sup> EADEM, p. 228. Also see RILEY-SMITH: *What were the Crusades?*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Basingstoke 1992, p. 31; AXEL EHLERS: *The Crusade of the Teutonic Knights against Lithuania Reconsidered*, in: MURRAY (ed.), *Crusade and conversion* (as in footnote 6), pp. 24-25; NORMAN HOUSLEY: *Contesting the Crusades*, Oxford 2006, pp. 112-113; EHLERS: *Die Ablaßpraxis des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter*, Marburg 2007, pp. 38-50.

its use in contemporary narrative sources.<sup>89</sup> These “pilgrims” came to Thorn in 1231, before building the town at Althaus Kulm the following year. Those early conquests resulted in the construction of strongholds that in time became pilgrimage sites, namely due to the construction of churches and the depositing of relics there.<sup>90</sup> Shrines in existence before those castles included small timber chapels typically dedicated to the Virgin Mary, in addition to the sites of miracles attributed to her. These were likely used by the local Christian population in Masovia.<sup>91</sup>

Hermann of Salza managed to secure grants of land in Prussia from Konrad of Masovia (1230), which resulted in the construction of Thorn, Kulm, and other cities. He then gained papal (1234) and imperial support (1226), which laid the ground plans for the formation of the Order's monastic state, and thus the new pilgrimage landscape that emerged there. The area under control grew to include castles at Marienwerder, Rehden, Elbing, and Balga (Veseloe) by 1240. Kristina Zielińska-Melkowska has noted that a few pilgrimage areas predate the arrival of the Order, but both the written and the archaeological evidence points to the Teutonic Order actively developing pilgrimage shrines in Prussia.<sup>92</sup>

This period also experienced a development of specific shrines and spaces in the area, thus calling into question the idea that “pilgrimage” was merely a transfer of language, since there were clearly areas that hosted pilgrims and crusaders. Thus, a case for this more traditional form of pilgrimage as an element of crusading in Prussia is demonstrated in the construction of shrines commensurately with the conquest.<sup>93</sup> Crusaders would have indeed used them. Elbing had a pilgrim's hospital (“*hospitalis...pro peregrinis*”) already in 1242.<sup>94</sup> Heidenreich, Bishop of Kulm, issued an indulgence for helping to build the new cathedral in

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<sup>89</sup> HvSB, p. 169: ‘Darnach furen dy bruder in das lant und logen mith hulffe des hertzogen und andere *eylender pilgeram...yns lant*h zcum Colmen.’ For the dating of the text, see WÜST, (as in footnote 14), p. 98. The manuscript is currently housed in the Teutonic Order's Central Archive in Vienna (*Deutschordens Zentralarchiv in Wien*), Hs. 205, fols 108r-118v.

<sup>90</sup> TOMASZ TORBUS: *Die Konventsburgen im Deutschordensland Preußen*, Munich 1998. Also see PLUSKOWSKI (as in footnote 6), pp. 97-100.

<sup>91</sup> ZIELIŃSKA-MELKOWSKA, (as in footnote 5), pp. 243-244.

<sup>92</sup> EADEM, 242-251.

<sup>93</sup> SCHEIN, *Pilgrimage* (as in footnote 79), p. 960.

<sup>94</sup> CDW, pp. 3-4 (no. 3).

Kulmsee (Chełmża) in 1251.<sup>95</sup> In 1263, a new chapel was built in stone at the Thorn castle, which housed a relic of the True Cross and other saints. There was an indulgence issued to “all the faithful visitors” (“*omni devoti visitanti*”) for helping to build the chapel and venerating the cross.<sup>96</sup> In 1278, all who would the church of the Holy Spirit in Elbing earned an indulgence of 40 days, and a *carina* (fast of 40 days). This could have well included crusaders and pilgrims, in addition to the local population of the city.<sup>97</sup> As noted by Axel Ehlers, this is not necessarily an indication that pilgrimage was a motivator for crusaders journeying to Prussia, for this was common practice throughout Europe at the time. He does concede, however, that they were certainly used along the journey as a matter of convenience to gain spiritual salvation whilst on campaign.<sup>98</sup> In any case, the message expressed in letters, vows, and legal evidence from this period show a spike in calls for the crusades to Prussia coinciding in time with a more permanent built environment. This offers the opportunity to connect pilgrimage and pilgrimage practices with a rise in new, more permanent spatial structures, indicating that pilgrimage and the patronage of more permanent structures formed an important component to the experience of holy war life in Prussia.<sup>99</sup>

Between 1240 and 1280, these castles and cities were frequent stops for pilgrims going to the frontier, and that led to the development of a *sui-generis* pilgrimage route. However, there is little evidence connecting them directly to the locations. Elbing was the most famous among those stops. Unfortunately, nothing is known about Ottokar II of Bohemia's reasons to stop there in 1255, but it is likely that he visited the hospital of the Holy Spirit, since it had become customary for visitors (“*visitanti*”) to receive an indulgence for making offerings there since the time of its foundation in the 1240s (discussed above). Papal legate William of Modena confirmed the benefits for donating to the hospital, which set a precedent and formed an important element in the formation of crusade pilgrimage in Prussia because the offering of alms (in addition to venerating the relic of the True Cross there) was a foundational element of pilgrimage in the thirteenth century and beyond.<sup>100</sup> In 1282, Werner, Bishop of Kulm, offered

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<sup>95</sup> PrUB 1.1, p. 181 (no. 250).

<sup>96</sup> CDW, p. 82 (no. 45).

<sup>97</sup> Ibidem, p. 92 (no. 53).

<sup>98</sup> EHLERS, *The Crusade* (as in footnote 88), p. 39.

<sup>99</sup> PLUSKOWSKI, (as in footnote 6), pp. 152-158.

<sup>100</sup> CDW, pp. 3-4 (no. 3).

an indulgence of 40 days to anyone who would say mass for the dead at the hospital. The offer was renewed in 1323, when guests on the *Reisen* were indeed in Prussia.<sup>101</sup>

Later crusaders also stopped at Elbing because of its status as the Order's headquarters until 1309, when the Order moved the seat of its Grand Masters to Marienburg. It then became the residence of the Hospitaller (*Oberster-Spittler*). This would also mean that it served as a gathering point for the Order's supporters (i.e. seasonal crusaders coming to participate in the fight against the Prussians). Peter lists thirteen pilgrimages between 1233 to 1272, with enough information to indicate that crusaders stopped at Elbing on a regular basis.<sup>102</sup> Before the end of the century, therefore, there were physical places in the Prussian landscape that crusaders were visiting along the way, giving a more substantial and tangible definition to the term 'pilgrims' used regularly in the sources.

After 1300, chroniclers conceptualized the Prussian crusade in sacralised, ideological terms, legitimising the wars to outsiders and to brethren in the Order. This was needed at a time in which the military orders faced substantial criticism following the permanent loss of the Holy Land in 1291.<sup>103</sup> Peter of Dusburg records that the first crusaders on the *Reisen* arrived in the year 1304, when German pilgrims began to visit Prussia "inspired by the Lord" ("peregrini de Alemania inspirante Domino").<sup>104</sup> That group first came to Königsberg, the main centre for launching campaigns against the Lithuanians.<sup>105</sup> They went on to raid the Lithuanian strongholds in Garthen (Grodno), Pograudam (Pograuden), and Jedemine (Lida), before returning to Königsberg.<sup>106</sup> It is important to emphasise that the targets of these campaigns were not the incentive for pilgrimage, but that it is likely the crusaders engaged in activities associated with pilgrimage before departing and upon returning.

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<sup>101</sup> Ibidem, pp. 105 (no. 58), 372 (no. 218). See PARAVICINI, (as in footnote 45), p. 25, for crusaders in Prussia c. 1323.

<sup>102</sup> PDC, pp. 108-112 (3.8-11); 114-116 (3.14-15); 126-128 (3.25-26); 168-170 (3.55); 172-178 (3.56-3.63); 184-186 (3.67); 190-192 (3.71); 198 (3.77); 212 (3.91); (3.92-3.98); 218-220 (3.98); 246 (3.127-131); 252 (3.133).

<sup>103</sup> SARNOWSKY, *Deutsche Orden* (as in footnote 14), pp. 42-51.

<sup>104</sup> PDC, p. 402 (3.288).

<sup>105</sup> PARAVICINI, (as in footnote 45), p. 273.

<sup>106</sup> PDC, pp. 402-404 (3.288-289). The precise location of Pograuden has not been identified.

At the time of this expedition the Prussian tribes were subjugated to the Order and the process of colonisation with German settlers was under way. The Order's Prussian territory was organized into a system of commanderies, castles, churches, and bishoprics. While towns such as Thorn, Elbing, Kulm, and Königsberg became important economic centres for trade and commerce, they served as pilgrimage shrines.<sup>107</sup> It is throughout the fourteenth century that the peak in the popularity of the *Reisen* occurred, and therefore when many of Europe's noblemen were visiting Prussia to campaign against pagans and be hosted by the Order. When they were not receiving entertainment from the Order, armed crusaders venerated shrines connected to specific saints such as the Virgin Mary, St Barbara, St Catherine, and St George.<sup>108</sup> The conquests resulted in the development of a "pilgrimage landscape," since places associated with those cults were destinations for armed pilgrims going to Prussia in the fourteenth century.

A good example of that development is the cathedral in Königsberg. The army that came to Königsberg in 1304 most likely visited that church, which two years earlier had been dedicated to Prussia's first martyr, Adalbert of Prague, St Catherine, and the Virgin Mary.<sup>109</sup> In 1348, a list was drafted for the funeral procedures in the church for a knight or *peregrinus*, indicating the use of the status of Königsberg as a pilgrimage destination.<sup>110</sup> Frescoes in the cathedral were commissioned by guests from the mid-fourteenth century onwards who came for the *Reisen*. These served as commemorative memorials to crusaders and to their deeds fighting in God's service, on pilgrimage against enemies of the Church.<sup>111</sup> There were also several pilgrimage shrines in and around Königsberg visited by crusaders, too. The church of St George, in addition to the churches of Juditten (Mendeleyevo) and Arnau, were visited

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<sup>107</sup> PLUSKOWSKI, (as in footnote 6), pp. 208-225.

<sup>108</sup> PARAVICINI, (as in footnote 45), pp. 296-299, outlines the entertainment provided in Königsberg.

<sup>109</sup> UB Samland 1, pp. 108-110 (no. 200), 169 (no. 251).

<sup>110</sup> UB Samland 3, p. 266 (no. 380).

<sup>111</sup> PARAVICINI: Heraldische Quellen zur Geschichte der Preußenreisen im 14. Jahrhundert, in: ZENON H. NOWAK (ed.): Werkstatt des Historikers der mittelalterlichen Ritterorden. Quellenkundliche Probleme und Forschungsprobleme, Toruń 1987, pp.120-122; IDEM: Verlorene Denkmäler europäischer Ritterschaft: Die heraldischen Malereien des 14. Jahrhunderts im Dom zu Königsberg, in: ERICH BÖCHLER (ed.): Kunst und Geschichte im Ostseeraum, Kiel 1990, pp. 67-168.

frequently, and crusaders made offerings to those shrines when departing for the *Reise* and returning from one.<sup>112</sup>

Moreover, there were many pilgrim hospitals in the Order's main cities of Elbing and Danzig which were founded to aid the poor and support pilgrims. According to the foundation of the pilgrim's hospital in Danzig by Grand Master, Conrad of Jungingen (d. 1407), in 1394, it was "one of the six good works of mercy to house and provide for pilgrims" ("eyne von den sechs werken der barmherczikeit pilgerym gerne zu herbergen").<sup>113</sup> A letter of Pope Urban VI from 1386 points to not just the engaging in battle against the pagans as an incentive for going to Prussia on pilgrimage, but refers to protecting "the poor, the pilgrims and other persons passing through the lands [of the brothers]...so that they may visit annually the churches and chapels [of the Order]."<sup>114</sup> The experience of crusading in fourteenth-century Prussia, then, embodied a more standardized practice of visiting shrines and expressing piety, in addition to engaging in battle with pagans.

As in the title to this article, crusading in Prussia was often done in the name of the Virgin Mary. The cult of the Virgin was by far the strongest in Prussia and attracted pilgrims and noblemen from throughout Europe. There is nothing surprising about the Marian relationship to pilgrimage in Prussia, given the status of the Virgin for the Teutonic Order.<sup>115</sup> The Grand Master's seal depicted the Virgin and Christ enthroned, as did that of the Order's Prussian Masters, in addition to those a significant number of places associated with her.<sup>116</sup> Marienwerder was among the first settlements established by the Order in 1234, even though

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<sup>112</sup> PARAVICINI, (as in footnote 45), pp. 305-309.

<sup>113</sup> CDP 4, p. 171 (no. 121): '...Is ist eyne gut werk, und eyne guttige togunt, und ist eyne von den sechs werken der barmherczikeit pilgerym gerne zu herbergen, und dy togunt wirt so vil mee lobelicher und vordinlicher so man sy czu gotis dinste me wendet, das auch denne grosslicher geschit, wenne man dy elenden armen sichen, dy nicht eygens hy yn deser yomerkeit behalden, geherberget, gelabet, gestrost und czu raste gebrocht werden.' This was on 22 May, 1394 (Reminiscere Sunday).

<sup>114</sup> Ibidem, p. 41 (no. 34): '...et erga christi pauperes et peregrinos aliasque honestas personas per eorum loca transeuntes...necnon contra perfidos litwanos dicte fidei hostes ferventer exponebant prout exponunt se et sua christi fidelibus vere penitentibus et confessis qui huiusmodi ecclesias capellas...expressis devote visitarent annuatim.'

<sup>115</sup> See DYGO: The Political Role of the Cult of the Virgin Mary in Teutonic Prussia in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, in: *Journal of Medieval History* 15 (1989), pp. 63-80; Wüst (as in footnote 14), pp. 14-21.

<sup>116</sup> GERHARD BOTT (ed.): *800 Jahre Deutscher Orden*, Munich 1990, pp. 368-405.

much more significant were the later foundations in Frauenburg (Frombork) and Marienburg.<sup>117</sup> Later sites were replicated in the form of Marienburgs and Marienwerders founded later, in Lithuania.<sup>118</sup> These sites were important ecclesiastical centres situated along the routes going north and east, in addition to military bases. The cult of the Virgin experienced a significant increase in popularity throughout Europe, at the same time as the crusading movement in Prussia.<sup>119</sup>

Wigand of Marburg, a herald in the service of the Order, noted that pilgrims fought alongside brothers in the Order “under the banner of the Virgin” (“sub vexillum virginis Marie”), cementing the Marian element of pilgrimage in the fourteenth-century Baltic. The crusader victory in the Battle of the Streba (1348), discussed above, was attributed to her intervention.<sup>120</sup> After the victory, the Teutonic Knights (and the pilgrims) established two monasteries dedicated to the Virgin, one in Königsberg and the other in Wehlau (Znamensk). The Königsberg cloister was to be supported “by the alms of good people,” which very well could have included future pilgrims coming to fight the Lithuanians.<sup>121</sup> Marian pilgrimage badges dated to the mid- to late fourteenth century have also been found at Elbing, a main stop on the route to Lithuania discussed above.<sup>122</sup>

Other saints' cults reflect the fusion of the ideology of holy war against the pagans with pilgrimage at this time in Prussia. St George was a popular saint for noble crusaders coming to participate in the *Reisen*. His altar in Königsberg cathedral was founded in 1336 by “famous knights and other noblemen from parts foreign and remote, while they were congregated in our city of Königsberg for the unanimous purpose of seeking the salvation of their souls.”<sup>123</sup> In 1344, William IV of Holland heard a mass to St George in the town, most likely while visiting

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<sup>117</sup> PDC, pp. 110 (3.9), 324 (3.208); CDW, pp. 92-93 (no. 54).

<sup>118</sup> WIGAND, pp. 626-629.

<sup>119</sup> DYGO, *The Political Role* (as in footnote 115), pp. 71-72.

<sup>120</sup> WIGAND, p. 456.

<sup>121</sup> UB Samland 3, p. 269 (no. 383): ‘...darumb das das closter [at Wehlau] ouch *gebessert werde von guter lute almozen.*’ My italics.

<sup>122</sup> MARIAN RĘBKOWSKI: *The Finds of the Pilgrim Badges from the Polish Baltic Coast*, in: HARTMUT KÜHNE, LOTHAR LAMBACHER, et al (eds.): *Wallfahrer aus dem Osten. Mittelalterliche Pilgerzeichen zwischen Ostsee, Donau und Seine*, Frankfurt 2013, pp. 35-38. Also see PLUSKOWSKI (as in footnote 6), p. 281.

<sup>123</sup> UB Samland 1, p. 221 (no. 295).

his shrine and altar.<sup>124</sup> Throughout the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, there were pilgrimage shrines dedicated to St George in Marienburg, Königsberg, and Elbing.<sup>125</sup> Crusaders went into battle with the banner of St. George, who was associated in Europe at that time with the ethos of the knightly class.<sup>126</sup> The banner was in many respects a continuation of the earliest imagery associated with crusading since the eleventh century, and formed a crucial element of the war-oriented pilgrimage in the Baltic.<sup>127</sup>

Visiting shrines and paying alms was a distinct part of the crusade experience in Prussia, giving a deeper meaning to the reference of “the *pilgrimage way* against the Lithuanians” (“via peregrinationis contra Lythwanos”), which appears in a peace-making treaty of 1338.<sup>128</sup> By the end of the century, specific cases appear of a physical ‘way’ that likely included pilgrimage activities by crusaders on the *Reisen*. In 1391, Henry Bolingbroke (later King Henry IV of England) made offerings (“elemosina”) in the Königsberg cathedral, including money for a certain departed German who had died before the city.<sup>129</sup> Pilgrimage in Prussia by the late fourteenth century came to embody therefore a specific network of shrines, where pilgrim-crusaders could express their piety before going off to fight the Lithuanians. It should be emphasised, though, that it was the fight against the pagans that continued to be the main motivator for crusaders to journey to the southern Baltic. Pilgrimage and pilgrimage activities in the region formed an important part of that process.

To sum up, pilgrimage developed from an ideological application of crusading-themed terminology to concrete expressions of piety by those engaged in holy war in Prussia, and was encouraged by the Church and the Teutonic Order. It embodied movement toward shrines, a key to investigating the Holy Land crusades as a form of pilgrimage. This was present in Prussia from the thirteenth century. The primary movement and motivations always involved going out against the pagans, but by the end of the fourteenth century it also involved visiting

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<sup>124</sup> SRP 2, p. 745.

<sup>125</sup> ZIESEMER (as in footnote 40), p. 130; IDEM (as in footnote 50), pp. 12 (Königsberg), 94 (Elbing).

<sup>126</sup> PARAVICINI, *Die Preußenreisen* (as in note 45), pp. 308-309

<sup>127</sup> RILEY-SMITH, *The First Crusade* (as in footnote 13), p. 105.

<sup>128</sup> STREHLKE (ed.): *Tabulae ordinis Theutonici, ex tabularii regii Berolinensis codice potissimum*, Berlin 1869, p. 204 (no. 212).

<sup>129</sup> SRP 2, p. 792.

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specific shrines, making donations, and engaging in more traditional, traceable acts of pilgrimage reminiscent of the 'traditional' crusades to the Holy Land.

## **4 Conclusions**

The study of relics and holy objects provides illuminating conclusions with respect to the experience of crusading to Prussia in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. The arrival of the True Cross was a key element in garnering support of the wars of the Teutonic Order. This had an effect on drawing people to venerate it from the thirteenth century, at quite a few castles and churches. Relics also had uses in battle, too, something that has been taken as a given in recent research. While the expeditions took place in a land with no Christian shrines or pilgrimage routes, these were developed over time, namely due to the uses and functions of relics. Analysing these objects in detail reveals the deeper significance to the religious depictions of warfare in the written and visual culture of the region, in addition to the support of the Church for crusading in Prussia.

The present article also demonstrates the importance of “pilgrimage” to the experience of crusading in Prussia. It was essential to the framing and legitimising the wars, first employed by the use of language common to the Holy Land crusading experience. However, as the crusades in Prussia continued, more traditional elements of pilgrimage emerged, which this article has pointed out. This occurred commensurate with building of more permanent structures in the built environment, like cathedrals and churches. By the fourteenth century, the distinct network of places that served as a pilgrimage ‘route’ show the development of this process. Fighting the pagans remains a defining feature of the crusade experience in Prussia, but to disregard traditional pilgrimage elements results in an incomplete picture of those wars and how contemporaries understood them.

*Figures*

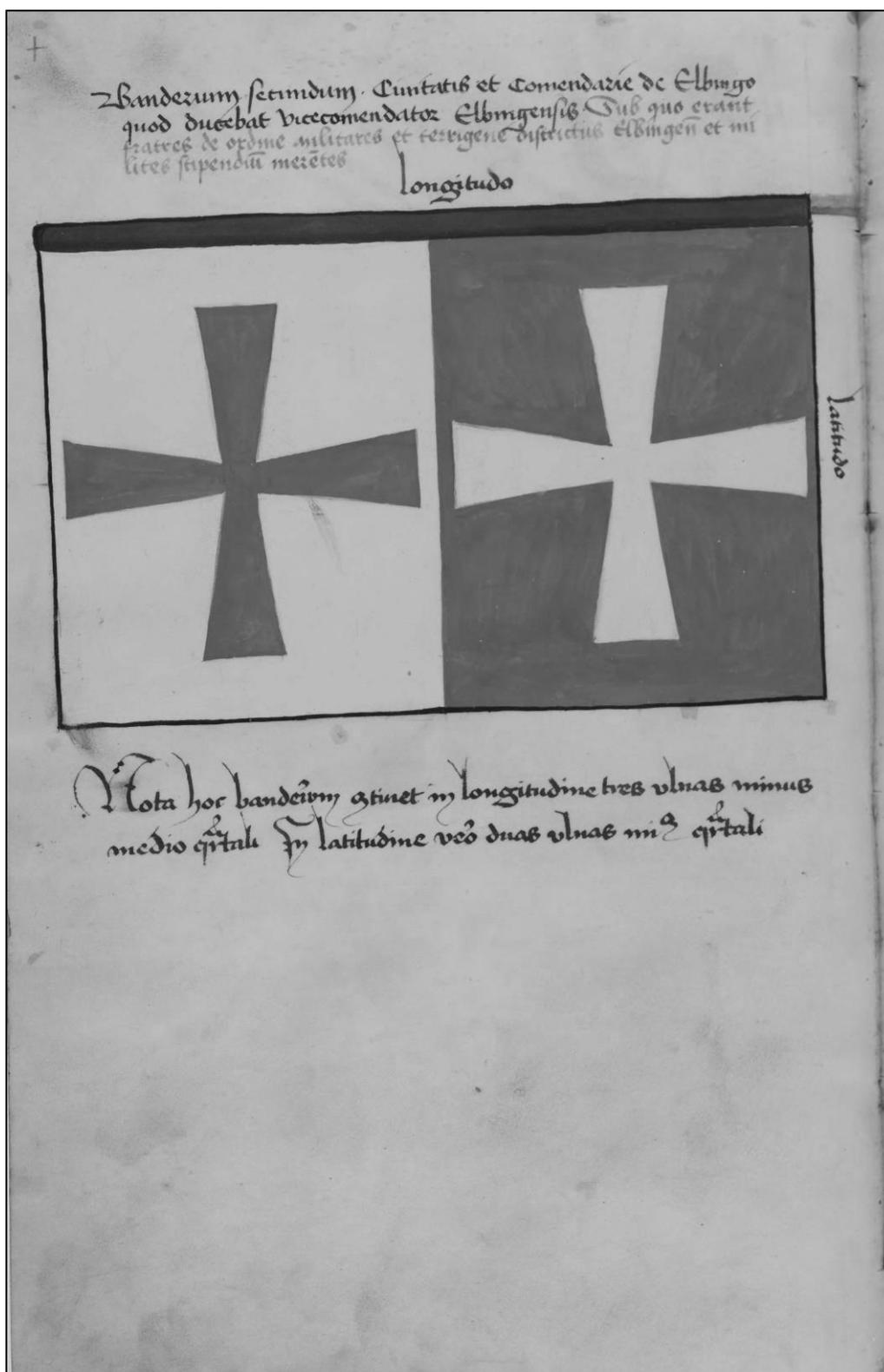


Figure 1. Second Banner of the City and Commandery of Elbing, *Banderia Pruthenorum*, fol. 19 v. Housed currently in the Jagiellonian Library, Kraków.

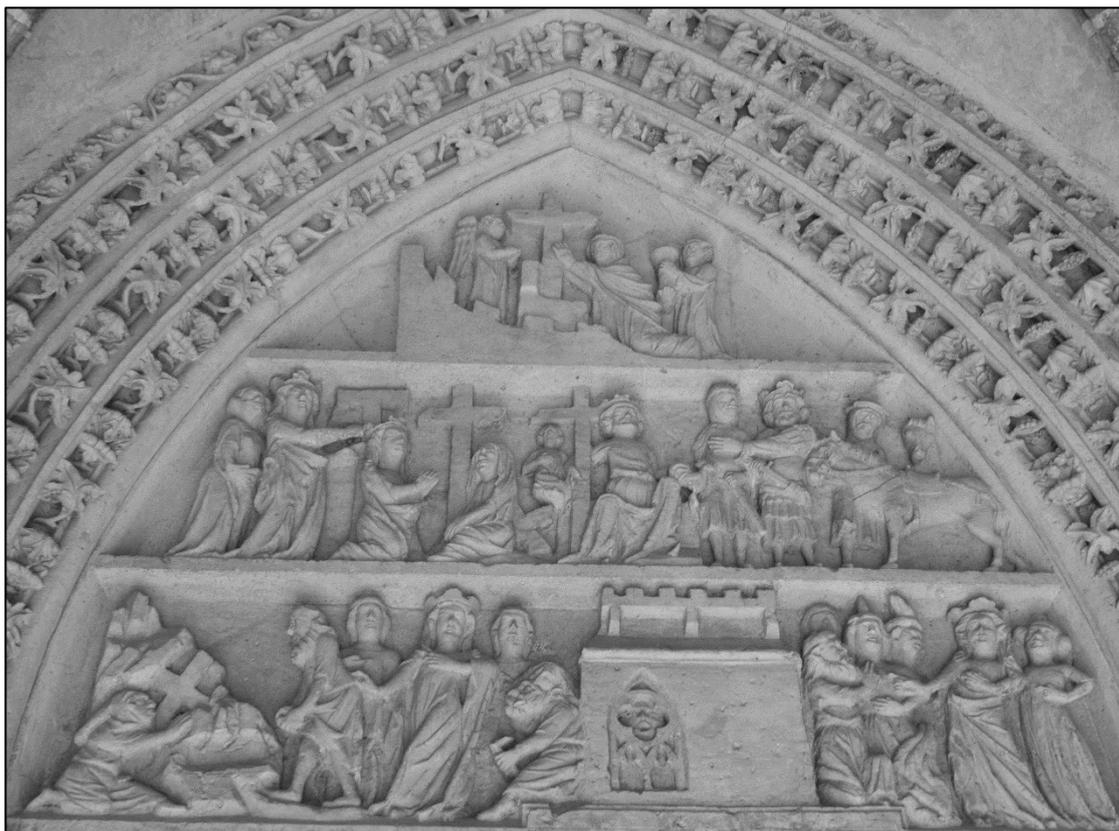


Figure 1. South Portal of the Chapel of St Anne, Marienburg, c. 1344. Photograph taken by Author.