

## INTRODUCTION

Christianity started penetrating the Baltic region rather early: at the beginning of the eighth century, the Anglo-Saxon missionary Willibrord baptised several dozen young people of Danish descent from Jutland, and started training them for missionary work in their native land.<sup>1</sup> The same practice in training missionaries chosen from among the local people was carried out in Friesland (Frisia) in the eighth and ninth centuries, and in other European oecumene.<sup>2</sup> Laymen were also involved in missionary work, as is laid out in the hagiography devoted to St Anskar. The Birka city prefect Herigar (Herigarii), baptised by St Anskar, as a representative of power, preached to people who gathered at a meeting.<sup>3</sup> Also, as is mentioned in Rimbert's *Vita Anskarii*, a school was established to train ordinary people, and even slaves.<sup>4</sup> The training of widows and peasants was referred to in hagiographies devoted to St Otto of Bamberg.<sup>5</sup> Efforts were made to explain the truths of Christianity and standards of Christian life in the local language. Thus, for example, in the 11th century, King Swen (Sweyn) of Denmark encouraged sending missionaries who came from local tribes, rather than foreigners.<sup>6</sup> In the first half of the 13th century, St Otto of Bamberg, who carried out missions among the Polabian Slavs, addressed them in the local language.<sup>7</sup> The education of local catechumen and their training for missionary activities was referred to in a papal bull by Pope Innocent III in the early 13th century devoted to Godfrey, Abbot of Łęknio, who carried out missions among the Prussians, and in other bulls devoted to the Cistercian Christian, a future Prussian bishop.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SULLIWAN, Richard E. Early Medieval Missionary Activity: a Comparative Study of Eastern and Western Methods. *Church History*, 1954, vol. 23, no. 1, p. 24. Cf. GELTING, Michael H. The Kingdom of Denmark. In *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy. Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900-1200*. Ed. by Nora BEREND. Cambridge, 2007, p. 75; KULESZA, Przemysław. *Normanowie a chrześcijaństwo. Recepcja nowej wiary w Skandynawii w IX i X wieku*. Wrocław-Racibórz, 2007, s. 42-48.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. SULLIVAN, Richard E. The Carolingian Missionary and the Pagan. *Speculum. A Journal of Medieval Studies*, 1953, vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 737-738.

<sup>3</sup> *Vita Anskarii auctore Rimberto. Accedit vita Rimberti* (Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, 55). Ed. Georg WAITZ. Hannoverae, 1884, § 19, p. 39-44.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, § 8, p. 30; § 15, p. 36-37.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Herbordi Dialogus de Vita S. Ottonis episcopi Babenbergensis* (Pomniki dziejowe Polski, seria II, t. 7, cz. 3). Przygotował Jan WIKARJAK, wstęp i komentarz Kazimierz LIMAN. Warszawa, 1974, Lib. II, § 35, s. 128; Lib. III, § 19, s. 181.

<sup>6</sup> *Magistri Adam Bremensis Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum* (Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, 2). Ed. Bernhard SCHMEIDLER. Editio tertia. Hannoverae et Lipsiae, 1917, Lib. III, § 72, p. 220.

<sup>7</sup> *S. Ottonis episcopi Babenbergensis Vita Prieflingensis* (Pomniki dziejowe Polski, seria II, t. 7, cz. 1). Przygotował Jan WIKARJAK, wstęp i komentarz Kazimierz LIMAN. Warszawa, 1966, series II, t. 7, vol. 1, Lib. I, § 7, s. 7.

<sup>8</sup> *Preußisches Urkundenbuch. Politische Abteilung*. Bd. 1: *Die Bildung des Ordensstaates*, 1. Hälfte. Hrsg. von Rudolf PHILIPPI. Königsberg, 1882, Nr. 4, S. 2-4. Cf. *Ibid.*, Nr. 23, S. 17. For details about convert involvement in the mission activity on the east Baltic coast in the 12th and 13th centuries, see: ŠČAVINSKAS,

The chronicler Adam of Bremen, when describing the broad missionary activities of Adalbert, Archbishop of Hamburg, around the middle and in the second half of the 11th century, mentioned the building of Christian churches in Curonia and Pomerania (the town of Wolin).<sup>9</sup> As is indicated in historiography, the first missionary monastery in Estonia was also established in the late 11th century.<sup>10</sup> A Benedictine abbey was established in Mogilno (Great Poland) in 1065, with the aim of christianising the Prussians.<sup>11</sup> Around the mid-12th century, (the date is still disputed),<sup>12</sup> the Diocese of Włocławek in Kujawy also nurtured plans to convert the Prussian tribes through missions (it must have included the territories of the Prussian tribes).<sup>13</sup> In the second half of the 12th century, the first churches appeared on the River Dūna (Daugava).<sup>14</sup> As is believed in historiography, the first churches were multifunctional: buildings were used as fortifications, warehouses for goods, and most importantly, as sacred places for prayer.<sup>15</sup>

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All the examples mentioned above demonstrate how Christianity penetrated the Baltic region. Some contemporary historiography talks about the independent adoption of Christianity by the Scandinavian countries; that is, Viking society was interested in adopting Christianity, and therefore, in response to their desire, missionaries started evangelisation activities among the Vikings.<sup>16</sup> In that way, Christianity was adopted by local communities, it integrated naturally into local customs, and

Marius. *Kryžius ir kalavijas. Krikščioniškųjų misijų sklaida Baltijos jūros regione X–XIII amžiais*. Vilnius, 2012, p. 117–120, 151–154. For more about the missions' methods in Medieval Europe, see: PADBERG Lutz E. von. *Die Christianisierung Europas im Mittelalter*. Stuttgart, 1998, S. 202–210.

<sup>9</sup> *Magistri Adam Bremensis Gesta...*, Lib. II, § 22, p. 79; Lib. III, § 77, p. 222–224.

<sup>10</sup> ANDERSON, Edgar. Early Danish missionaries in the Baltic countries. In *Gli inizi del cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia: atti del Colloquio internazionale* (Atti e documenti del Pontificio Comitato di Scienze Storiche, 1). Ed. Michele MACCARRONE. Città del Vaticano, 1989, p. 254–255.

<sup>11</sup> For more details, see: ŚLIWIŃSKI, Błażej. The Christianisation of Prussia: the Polish contribution until the introduction of the Teutonic Order. In *Castrī Domināe Nostrae Litterae Annales*. Vol. I: *Christianization of the Baltic Region*. Red. Jerzy GAŚSOWSKI. Pułtusk, 2004, p. 49.

<sup>12</sup> LABUDA, Gerard. Zamierzenia organizacji diecezjalnej na Pomorzu w roku 1123 (przed misją chryścijańską biskupa Ottona z Bambergu). In *Instantia est mater doctrinae: księga jubileuszowa prof. dr. hab. Władysława Filipowiaka*. Red. Eugeniusz WILGOCKI et al. Szczecin, 2001, s. 328–329.

<sup>13</sup> POWIERSKI, Jan; ŚLIWIŃSKI, Błażej; BRUSKI, Klemens. *Studia z dziejów Pomorza w XII wieku*. Słupsk, 1993, s. 45–54.

<sup>14</sup> *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae* (Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, 31). Ed. Leonid ARBUSOW, Albertus BAUER. Hannoverae, 1955, cap. I, § 6, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> For more details, see: WIENBERG, Jes. Fortresses, Storehouses and Symbols – ambiguous churches of the Baltic Sea. In *Der Ostseeraum und Kontinentaleuropa 1100-1600. Einflußnahme – Rezeption – Wandel* (CCC papers, 8). Hrsg. von Detlef KATTINGER, Jens E. OLESEN, Horst WERNICKE. Schwerin, 2004, S. 36–47.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. WINROTH, Anders. *The Conversion of Scandinavia. Vikings, Merchants and Missionaries in the Remaking of Northern Europe*. London, New Haven, CT, 2012, pp. 6–10, 103–104, 128–144, 161–168. I shall just recall that the baptism of Jagiełło, the ruler of Lithuania and King of Poland Władysław, as well as the conversion of the public, was also believed to be the outcome of the independent adoption of Christianity, cf. GUDAVIČIUS, Edvardas. Lietuvos krikščionybės priėmimo politinė problema. *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis*, 1987. Vilnius, 1988, p. 14–22.

enriched them with new experiences and spirituality. Therefore, Christianity was perceived as a process of acculturation, and an integral part of Europeanisation.<sup>17</sup>

Next to Christianity as a factor of integration, Christianity as the ideology of the conquest of lands came up, which assumes that the arrival of Christianity in the Baltic region took place through Crusades and by the sword. The latter approach formed in studies of the phenomenon of the Crusades both in the Holy Land (Levant) and in the Baltic region. By putting together Christian missions and Crusades, hybrid terms of Missionary Crusades or 'sword missions' appeared, which, as historiography went deeper into issues of the relationship between Christian missions and the Crusades, were further divided into narrower terms, such as 'indirect sword missions' (in German *indirekter Missionskrieg*) or 'direct sword missions' (*direkter Missionskrieg*), and others.<sup>18</sup> Thus, whereas Viking society in Scandinavia, to quote the latest historiography, was willing to adopt Christianity, the Balts, Livs, Western Slavs and Finns on the east and southeast Baltic shores had to deal with forced Christian missions. Even though it was stated that even in cases of coercive missions we should distinguish between social violence and political (conquest) violence, and not just talk about missions, given the categorisation of the wars,<sup>19</sup> it is obvious that the formation of Christian communities on the east and southeast shores of the Baltic Sea was different to the formation of Christian communities in Scandinavia.

Given the considerations presented above, questions naturally arose as to how Medieval Christian communities emerged, how they developed, and what they were like in the eastern Baltic. What patterns, similarities and differences can we identify in exploring the Christianisation of the east Baltic region, taking into account the fact that Christianisation was not a homogeneous process? The present publication is devoted to disclosing these issues. Although historiography has lately paid great attention to the process of Christianisation and studies of the Crusades in the east-

<sup>17</sup> The latest historiography on the issue was presented in: DYGO, Marian. Europäisierung des Ostseeraums im Hochmittelalter. Anmerkungen am Rande neuer Untersuchungen. In *Kultūra – ekonomika – visuomenė: sąveika ir pokyčiai viduramžiais ir ankstyvaisiais naujaisiais laikais Baltijos rytinėje pakrantėje*. Sud. Marius ŠČAVINSKAS. Klaipėda, 2015, p. 17–32. Plg. BLOMKVIST, Nils. *The Discovery of the Baltic. The Reception of a Catholic World-System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)* (The Northern World. North Europe and the Baltic c. 400–1700 AD. Peoples, Economies and Cultures, vol. 15). Leiden, Boston, MA, 2005, pp. 21–33, 35–40, 44–50, 60–73, 82–93.

<sup>18</sup> DÖRRIES, Hermann. Fragen der Schwertmission. In *Baltische Kirchengeschichte. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Missionierung und Reformation, der evangelisch-lutherischen Landeskirchen und des Volkskirchentums in den baltischen Landen*. Hrsg. von Reinhard WITTRAM. Göttingen 1956, S. 17; KAHL, Hans-Dietrich. Compellere intrare. Die Wendenpolitik Bruns von Querfurt im Lichte hochmittelalterlichen Missions- und Völkerrechts (II. Teil). *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung*, 1955, Jhg. 4, Hf. 3, S. 374–378; SCHNEIDER, Reinhard. Karl der Große – politisches Sendungsbewußtsein und Mission. In *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte*. Bd. 2, 1. Halbband: *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*. Hrsg. von Knut SCHÄFERDIEK. München, 1978, S. 227–248.

<sup>19</sup> For more details, see: ŠČAVINSKAS, M. *Kryžius ir kalavijas...*, p. 168–177; ŠČAVINSKAS, Marius. Forms of Coercion in Peaceful Christian Missions. *Lithuanian Historical Studies*, 2011, vol. 16. Vilnius, 2012, pp. 119–141.

ern Baltic,<sup>20</sup> the questions indicated above prove that not all answers have yet been found.

The Medieval Christian community first heard about Christianity orally, through sermons and the Liturgy, as not everybody was able to understand the written word. Therefore, the spoken word had to be effective, it had to move people, and examples had to be used to illustrate sermons and inspire people. This context prompted the first part of the publication's title: *verbum movet, exemplum trahit* (the word moves, example inspires). The second part of the title indicates what the publication is about: Medieval Christian communities on the east Baltic shores. The Christian word and examples were addressed to them. How they accepted the word and the examples, what kind of problems they faced, between what ideologemes they found themselves in the process of formation, what they adopted that was new and what was old, and what they looked like in the process, account for only some of the questions that the authors of the papers in this publication, specialists in Medieval history and archaeologists, have tried to provide answers to.

The key word in the publication is 'community'. We have in mind the Medieval Christian community taking root on the east Baltic shores being exposed to two universal Medieval processes: Christianisation, carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the missionary activities defined by Pope Gregory the Great, and the Crusades, with the ideologeme of the Holy War. This ideologeme implied an opportunity to fight against *civitas diabolica*, i.e., against evil (the kingdom of the devil), as was imagined by Medieval society and members of the Church, both with spiritual and physical weapons.

In other words, the Medieval Christian communities on the east Baltic shores, on one hand, formed under the noble proclamation of the Gospel, precisely according to the principle: 'How then shall they call upon him in whom they did not believe? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?' (Rom 10: 14). On the other hand, the formation of Christian communities was affected by another principle: 'For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach,

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology* (Studia Fennica. Historica, 9). Ed. by Tuomas M. S. LEHTONEN, Kurt Villads JENSEN, Janne MALKKI, Katja RITARI. Helsinki, 2005; FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT, Iben. *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147-1254* (The Northern World. North Europe and the Baltic c. 400-1700 AD. Peoples, Economies and Cultures, vol. 26). Leiden, Boston, MA, 2007; *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy...*; *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier*. Ed. by Alan V. MURRAY. Farnham, 2009; *Crusading and Chronicle Writing on the Medieval Baltic Frontier. A Companion to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*. Ed. by Marek TAMM, Linda KALJUNDI, Carsten Selch JENSEN. Farnham, 2011; *Crusading on the Edge. Ideas and Practice of Crusading in Iberia and Baltic Region, 1100-1500* (Outremer. Studies in the Crusades and the Latin East, vol. 4). Ed. by Torben Kjersgaard NIELSEN, Iben FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT. Turnhout, 2016.

and their glory is in their shame' (Phil 3: 18–19). Thus, the motif of the conversion of God's naive creatures was related to the wish to resist evil (as paganism was seen). To add the imperative of a defensive war, we face a Medieval way of thinking that is difficult to explain, which combined peaceful evangelisation and the Crusades into a single whole.

As is known, in the eastern part of the Baltic region, Medieval Christian communities at the beginning of Christianisation were in the stage of formation: ecclesiastical institutions were being established simultaneously with Christian missions, and processes of depaganisation and the consolidation of Christian life were taking place. When these communities integrated into the society of the eastern Baltic, we can talk about the second wave of Christianisation, also called Romanisation, and the stage of the final consolidation of the Christian truths and lifestyle, the 'inner' conversion. True, the diversity of names for the second stage is rather problematic, and suggests unnecessary associations: what kind of Romanisation or final consolidation can be discussed in a society where depaganisation had been completed long ago, the norms of Christian life had been established, and pagan practices (*ritus paganorum*) had turned into *superstitio*, i.e. various superstitions and folk beliefs?<sup>21</sup> Therefore, we refer to the second stage of Christianisation merely to follow the established historiographic tradition.<sup>22</sup>

We believe that identifying the second stage of Christianisation and calling it Romanisation, or the final consolidation, is not the same as the statement that in that second stage we face islands of paganism in a Sea of Christianity. That statement would be imprecise, and would allow us to mistakenly believe that the fight against paganism was still going on; it would be necessary to talk about the fight against superstitions of a Christian nature, mixed with folk beliefs and folk piety, which was not the same as the fight against pagan practices in the first stage of Christianisation. The number of artefacts of pagan origin in those superstitions and folk beliefs in the Middle Ages, as well as how much they were affected by Christianity, is another matter.

<sup>21</sup> The situation becomes clear after the analysis of canon law collections on superstitions in Medieval society; for more details, see: HERSPERGER, Patrick. *Kirche, Magie und „Aberglaube“*. *Superstitio in der Kanonistik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*. Köln, Weimar, Wien, 2010, S. 21–22, 444–451. Cf. BYLINA, Stanisław. *Religijność późnego średniowiecza: chrześcijaństwo a kultura tradycyjna w Europie środkowo-wschodniej w XIV–XV w.* Warszawa, 2009, s. 91–97, 101–112.

<sup>22</sup> For more details on the stages and models of Christianisation and conversion and their perception in historiography among different scientific subjects, see: KAHL, Hans-Dietrich. Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters. Bausteine für eine Phänomenologie bis ca. 1050. In *Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters...*, S. 40; KŁOCZOWSKI, Jerzy. U podstaw chrześcijańskiej kultury: chrześcijaństwo zachodnie wczesnego średniowiecza. In *Narodziny średniowiecznej Europy*. Red. Henryk SAMSONOWICZ. Warszawa, 1999, s. 87–114; ŁOWMIAŃSKI, Henryk. *Religia słowian i jej upadek (w VI–XII)*. Warszawa, 1979, s. 246–318; CUSACK, Carole M. *The Rise of Christianity in Northern Europe 300–1000*. London, New York, NY, 1998, pp. 2–23; KULESZA, P. Op. cit., s. 13–19; ŠČAVINSKAS, M. *Kryžius ir kalavijas...*, p. 36–45.

The present collection of papers gives only a partial answer to the latter question. However, it gives a picture of how Christian communities formed in the east Baltic region during society's conversion. The issue is discussed in the first chapter 'First Steps towards Consolidation', consisting of two papers. Their authors (Kristjan Kaljusaar and Marius Ščavinskas) see the processes of formation and consolidation in different ways, and identify the different social groups that were the first to feel the impact of Christianisation. The researchers discuss the significance and the impact of hostages in Livonia and Prussia in the formation of Christian communities, as well as the forms of Christianity coming to the east Baltic coast, and its influence on the development of Christian communities in Prussia conquered and ruled by the Teutonic Order. These are important moments revealing the first steps of Christianity. This is significant, since we have very little research on the role of hostages in the Christianisation of Livonia and Prussia, and little reflection on the forms of Christianity that met the first Christian communities in Prussia.

The second chapter is called 'Lithuania's 1387 Conversion: before and after'. First of all, we have in mind the further development of Christian communities and the factors that affected it. The chapter includes two papers (by Irma Kaplūnaitė and Rytis Jonaitis, and Marian Dygo). They address a number of aspects of the development and functioning of Christian communities, starting with Christian communities in Vilnius (both the Western/Occidental and Orthodox/Oriental churches), and finishing with a reflection on Lithuania's conversion in the 'Annals' by Jan Długosz. Dygo shows what changes in the image of the internal conversion of Lithuania presented by Długosz in his 'Annals' formed the view of the conversion of Lithuanian society for a number of centuries. What the Christian community in Vilnius was before the baptism campaign in 1387, and how it changed afterwards, are other interesting issues that have not yet received sufficient conceptual attention.

The contributions in the third chapter focus on various practices in the emerging Christian communities. Rafał Kubicki analyses the significance of mendicant monks to the consolidation of Christian communities in urban and rural environments in Prussia and Livonia. S.C. Rowell examines the activities of missionaries in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Sigita Bagužaitė-Talačkienė, in her presentation of her findings on how the processing and use of amber changed, deals with cultural transformations in Catholic communities ruled by the Teutonic Order in Prussia.

The research in this publication reveals that the development of the Christianisation of the east Baltic region and of Christian communities that started at the turn of the 13th century was multifaceted, and covered various activities. The papers included in this collection seek to disclose the variety of the development of Christian communities. Moreover, we have sought to demonstrate the different approaches taken

by different researchers in the discussion of fundamental issues of Christianisation and the Crusades.

Naturally, the publication does not provide answers to all questions related to the topic. Some of them are merely touched upon. And some issues that at first glance seem to have been examined long ago are raised anew.

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