

# CHRISTIANISATION AND *CURA ANIMARUM* IN THE FIRST CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES IN LIVONIA AND PRUSSIA DURING THE PERIOD OF THE CRUSADES

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## Abstract

The paper deals with the relationship between Christianisation and the pastoral care in the first Christian Balt communities on the east Baltic coast during the period of the Crusades. It has to be noted that at the turn of and throughout the 13th century, Christian missions were influenced by the attitudes of the new religious movements of the 12th and 13th centuries proclaiming the 'humanisation' of the idea of God, and the efforts of the human soul to seek the 'individualisation' of salvation. Given these ideas, the paper analyses the forms in which Christianity spread in the Baltic communities, and the impact the inception of the Crusades had on these communities. The research proves that the spread of Christianity took place not only in a 'theologised' and therefore 'difficult' to understand form, but also in common, knightly (during the Crusades), and other forms of piety. These forms unfolded through the Christian missions and the pastoral care that were carried out in parallel, so that they functioned in the first Christian Balt communities in the 13th century.

Key words: Christianisation, Christian communities, *cura animarum*, *militia Christi*, Crusade.

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## Anotacija

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas christianizacijos ir sielovados santykis Kryžiaus karo epochoje Baltijos jūros rytinės pakrantės pirmųjų baltų krikščionių bendruomenėse. Konstatuotina, kad XII–XIII a. sandūroje ir XIII a. krikščioniškosios misijos buvo paveiktos XII–XIII a. naujųjų religinių judėjimų nuostatos apie Dievo idėjos „sužmoginimą“ ir žmogaus sielos pastangas siekti išganymo „individualizavimo“. Atsižvelgiant į šias idėjas, straipsnyje analizuojama, koku pavidalu krikščionybė plito į baltų visuomenę ir kokią įtaką šioms bendruomenėms darė samprata apie Kryžiaus karą. Tyrimas rodo, kad krikščionybės plitimas vyko ne tik „teologizuotu“ ir todėl „sunkiai“ suvokiamu pavidalu, tačiau ir liaudiška, riteriška (per Kryžiaus karą) ar kitokiomis pamaldumo formomis. Šios formos skleidėsi vykdant krikščioniškas misijas ir lygiagrečiai – sielovadą, taigi funkcionavo jau XIII a. pirmosiose baltų krikščionių bendruomenėse.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: christianizacija, krikščioniškos bendruomenės, *cura animarum*, *militia Christi*, Kryžiaus karas.

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In historiography, the process of Christianisation is perceived as a range of complex phenomena, which predetermined the transition from one religion to another, i.e. from one world-view and lifestyle to another world-view and lifestyle (with all the resulting consequences). The transition has not been interpreted equally by historians, sociologists, psychologists and cultural anthropologists. The differences are revealed when discussing conversion as an instant process, in which an important role was played by man's socio-cultural and psychological environment, his hitherto prevailing world-view, and certain archetypes or stereotypes, etc.<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that different scientific disciplines have presented different conversion models which highlight different *foci*, related both to the changes in the societies adopting Christianity and in the moral attitudes of its disseminators.<sup>2</sup> These attitudes serve as a key when answering the question what kind of Christianity spread to different geographical and cultural regions of Europe in different periods, and what kind of Christian societies formed specifically in the Baltic and neighbouring communities. In the case of the appearance of the first Christian Balt communities, we cannot ignore the Christian ministry (pastoral care) there, or the 'care' of souls (in Latin *cura animarum*), while understanding that the pastoral care was carried out in parallel with the Christian missions and the establishment of the first parishes.<sup>3</sup> Through the pastoral care and the Christian missions, communities of Balts experienced certain spiritual and mental influences from Latin Europe. By understanding these experiences, we can deal with the question of the depth of Christianity in Balt communities and the neighbouring lands during the first stage of Christianity, at the time of the Christian missions.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> CUSACK, Carole M. *The Rise of Christianity in Northern Europe, 300–1000*. London, New York, NY, 1998, pp. 2–18. Cf. MacMULLEN, Ramsay. *Christianizing of Roman Empire (A.D. 100–400)*. New Haven, CT, 1984, pp. 5–6; BEIT-HALLAHMI, Benjamin. Conversion. *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion*. Ed. by David A. LEEMING, Kathryn MADDEN, Stanton MARLAN. New York, 2010, pp. 180–182. For more details, see: ŠČAVINSKAS, Marius. Pirmųjų baltų krikščionių sociopsichologinis paveikslas: problemos ir modeliavimo galimybės. In *Krikščionių visuomenės raidos atodangos LDK vakarinėje dalyje ir Prūsijoje: nuo užuomazgos iki brandos*. Skiriama prof. Stephen C. Rowell 50-mečiui. Sud. Marius ŠČAVINSKAS. Klaipėda, 2015, p. 37–38, 44–47.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. RUSSELL, James C. *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity. A Sociohistorical Approach to Religious Transformation*. New York, NY, Oxford, 1994, p. 11; BROWN, Peter. *The Rise of Western Christendom. Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200–1000*. Tenth Anniversary Rev. Ed. Chichester, 2013, pp. 17–20.

<sup>3</sup> WIŚNIEWSKI, Eugeniusz. Badania nad początkami i rozwojem średniowiecznej sieci parafialnej na ziemiach polskich. *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska. Sectio F, Historia*, 1990, vol. XLV, s. 45–48; DYGO, Marian. *Studia nad początkami władztwa zakonu niemieckiego w Prusach (1226–1259)*. Warszawa, 1992, s. 234–235.

<sup>4</sup> On the periods of Christianisation and the historiography on the issue, see: ŠČAVINSKAS, Marius. *Kryžius ir kalavijas. Krikščioniškųjų misijų sklaida Baltijos jūros regione X–XIII amžiais*. Vilnius, 2012, p. 36–45.

There is a common agreement in historiography that missionaries came to the east Baltic shores together with soldiers and merchants.<sup>5</sup> At the turn of the 13th century, missionaries who adopted the spirit of the new and reformed religious movements, primarily Cistercians and Augustinians, were active on the east Baltic shores.<sup>6</sup> Later, they were joined by the new religious orders of Franciscans and Dominicans, which expanded their activities in 13th-century Lithuania.<sup>7</sup> We can guess at the concept of Christianity disseminated by them among the Baltic pagans merely from details. These details could be considered a common model for propaganda by Christian missions in the Late Middle Ages; however, this model was specifically predetermined by the new religious movements of the 12th and 13th centuries. Therefore, the model (or models) of the new religious movements and those of the Christian missions were closely related. We should not assume that the new religious movements determined the emergence of a completely new model (or models) of missions. Rather, since the new religious movements claimed to go back to the old (and therefore good) times of early Christianity, the model (or models) of missions had to find a connection with the attitudes of the time. True, the 12th to 13th-century Christian missions took place in new conditions, and in a new period. Compared to the Early Medieval missions, they acquired some new features in spreading the Gospel; however, they were not completely different because of that.<sup>8</sup>

The Christian missions of the 12th and 13th centuries aimed not so much at martyrdom (as declared by the hagiographers of St Adalbert-Wojciech of Prague and St Bruno of Querfurt, the first Baltic missionaries in the first half of the 11th century<sup>9</sup>), but rather at the salvation of souls, both their own and those of the people

<sup>5</sup> Cf. MUNZINGER, Mark R. The profits of the Cross: merchant involvement in the Baltic Crusade (c. 1180–1230). *Journal of Medieval History*, 2006, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 164–165.

<sup>6</sup> On the nuances of the Cistercian and Augustinian missions' activities in Livonia, based on the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, see: JENSEN, Carsten Selch. 'Verbis non verberibus': The Representation of Sermons in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. In *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, pp. 181–183, 185–204; TAMM, Marek. Communicating crusade. Livonian mission and the Cistercian network in the thirteenth century. *Ajalooline Ajakiri*, 2009, no. 3–4 (129–130), Special issue: *Communication in the early modern Baltic Sea region = Kommunikatsioon varauusaegses Läänemereuumis*. Ed. by Enn KÜNG, Mati LAUR, Kersti LUST, pp. 345–354.

<sup>7</sup> For more details, see: BARONAS, Darius. *Vilniaus pranciškonų kankiniai ir jų kultas XIV–XX a. Istorinė studija ir šaltiniai* (Studia franciscana Lithuanica, 4). Vilnius, 2010, p. 32–71; KUBICKI, Rafał. Remarks on the Process of Institutionalisation of Mendicant Orders and their Role in Pastoral Work Based on the Example of the Dominion of the Teutonic Order in Prussia from the 13th to the Early-16th Century. In *Mobility in the Eastern Baltics (15th–17th Centuries)* (Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis, vol. XXIX). Ed. by Dainius ELERTAS. Klaipėda, 2014, pp. 16–32.

<sup>8</sup> ŠČAVINSKAS, M. *Kryžius ir kalavijas...*, p. 49–54, 100–167.

<sup>9</sup> SIKORSKI, Dariusz. Model misji za czasów św. Brunona. In *Święty Brunon. Patron lokalny czy symbol jedności Europy i powszechności Kościoła*, Red. Andrzej KOPICZKO. Olsztyn, 2009, s. 51–71; TYSZKIEWICZ,

around them, and also of converts. This aspiration was closely related to the concept among the new monastic movements of the 'individualisation' of salvation in the 12th and 13th centuries. Thanks to this 'individualisation', priority was given to private prayer, coming from the depths of the soul, contemplation, meditation, and 'good deeds' for the soul. Thus, 'individualisation' had nothing to do with the individuality that emerged in Europe during the *devotio moderna* religious movement in the second half of the 14th century and the 15th century. It is not surprising that the chronicler Henry of Livonia, when describing the conversion of the Estonians on the island of Ösel, notes that the missionaries were evangelising for the sake of the salvation of their own souls.<sup>10</sup> In another place, when describing the monk Alebrand's missionary activities, the chronicler also notes that the missionary was acting for his own salvation.<sup>11</sup> This approach reflected the saying emphasised by the Cistercian St Bernard of Clairvaux, and first found in the Scriptures, to the effect that *pauci electi sunt*: few are chosen<sup>12</sup> ('For many are called, but few are chosen,' Matthew 22: 14). It was the increase in the number of the chosen (and not of those called), thus contributing to the salvation of the world and to the victory of the Kingdom of God (*civitas Dei*) over the earthly kingdom (*civitas terrena*), that accounted for the nature of the new *spirituales novi* religious movements (in the Cistercian sense, without identifying it with the new wave of piety that arose during the *devotio moderna* movement).

The striving to perform good deeds was declared by admonitions (*exempla*) that were didactically processed and understandable to ordinary people, which were especially popular in the 12th and 13th centuries. They provided more than one example of the fate of the soul of a deceased person being dealt with by putting good deeds and bad deeds on a scales, thus allowing those who were doomed to improve, or those living to correct the wrongs committed by the deceased.<sup>13</sup> This kind of understanding can be seen in the chronicle of Peter of Dusburg. When describing the conquest of the Prussians, he tells a story about a Crusader from Meissen who died in the first half of the 13th century and was buried in Prussia. His skeleton allegedly appeared to the faithful with the request to remedy the evils

Jan. Brunon z Querfurtu w Polsce i krajach sąsiednich. W tysiąclecie śmierci. Pułtusk, 2009, s. 171–177; ZAGRODZKA, Alicja. Ideał eremity, misjonarza i męczennika w Polsce na przełomie X i XI wieku. In *Staropolski etos wychowania*. Red. Elwira J. KRYŃSKA. Białystok, 2006, s. 18–26; WOOD, Ian N. *The missionary life: saints and the evangelisation of Europe, 400–1050*. Harlow, 2001, pp. 234–236, 239–240.

<sup>10</sup> *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae* (Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, 31). Ed. Leonid ARBUSOW, Albertus BAUER. Editio altera. Hannoverae, 1955 (hereafter, *HCL*), cap. XXX, § 5, p. 144: '*quos cum summo gaudio videbant ad baptismi sacramentum properare, gavisii sunt et ipsi, sperantes eundem laborem in suorum remissionem peccatorum*'.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. X, § 15, p. 46.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. BERNARDUS. Tractatus de Ordine vitae. In *Sancti Bernardi abbatis Claræ-Vallensis Opera omnia*. Vol. 2. Ed. Joannis MABILLON. Editio quarta. Paris, 1839, cap. III, line 733.

<sup>13</sup> ГУРЕВИЧ, Арон. *Культура и общества средневековой Европы глазами современников (Exempla XIII века)*. Москва, 1989, s. 101–135.

he committed against a neighbour, for his soul was stuck in Purgatory and was suffering.<sup>14</sup> *Exempla* undoubtedly imparted a simplified approach to the aspiration to save souls. On the other hand, *exempla* had an edifying impact on Christians of all social strata, and contributed to the formation of 'folk' religiosity.<sup>15</sup> These stories were expected to reach converts in Prussia through the Crusaders, other Christians and missionaries, and to form their understanding of the Christian God as being just, but strict. Next to such traits of God's 'character', missionaries (and Crusaders) maintained the image of an Almighty God who helped not only in battles, but also in 'driving away' pagan gods.<sup>16</sup> This 'characteristic' of God determined the forms of piety among converts.

The aspiration to demonstrate the might and the power of the Christian God over the pagan gods was part of Christian missionary activity carried out as early as the Early Middle Ages, which was applied in the 12th and 13th centuries and later. In pagan communities, the articulation of that kind of godly power resulted in a certain henotheistic approach, when the most powerful god was lifted above all other gods.<sup>17</sup> This position is illustrated very well by St Angar's hagiography, which notes that the Swedish Vikings who attacked the Curonian castle at Apuolė acknowledged the Christian God as the most powerful, who, unlike the pagan gods, had helped the Vikings.<sup>18</sup> Any miracle that happened during a mission was presented by missionaries as 'tangible' proof of the might, the justice or compassion of the Christian God, with the aim of making pagans convert to Christianity, although missionaries themselves did not deliberately seek miracles as part of their missionary activity.<sup>19</sup>

Next to idealised examples of the clergy in Livonia, we should note the missionary and secular activity of the monk Alebrand among the Livs, taking care of converts, stopping them from quarrelling or doing harm to each other, and encouraging them to be just, by living a Christian life,<sup>20</sup> referred to by Henry of Livonia. It is

<sup>14</sup> PETER von Dusburg. *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*. In *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Ordensherrschaft*. Bd. 1. Hrsg. von Theodor HIRSCH, Max TÖPPEN, Ernst STREHLKE. Leipzig, 1861 (hereafter, *PDC*), Lib. III, cap. 54, S. 81.

<sup>15</sup> For more details, see: AMES, Christine Caldwell. *Authentic, True and Right. Inquisition and the Study of Medieval Popular Religion*. In *Christianity and Culture in the Middle Ages. Essays in Honor John Van Engen*. Ed. by David C. MENGEL, Lisa WOLVERTON. Notre Dame, IN, 2015, pp. 91–110.

<sup>16</sup> *HCL*, cap. XIV, § 11, p. 85; cap. XXX, § 5, p. 212.

<sup>17</sup> WEST, Martin L. *Towards Monotheism*. In *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity*. Ed. by Polymnia ATHANASSIADI, Michael FREDE. New York, NY, 1999, pp. 21–40; VAN NUFFELEN, Peter. *Pagan monotheism as a religious phenomenon*. In *One God. Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire*. Ed. by Stephen MITHHELL, Peter VAN NUFFELEN. Cambridge, 2010, pp. 18–33; NORTH, John. *Pagan ritual and monotheism*. In *One God. Pagan Monotheism...*, pp. 34–52.

<sup>18</sup> *Vita Anskarii auctore Rimberto. Accedit vita Rimberti* (*Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, 55). Ed. Georg WAITZ. Hannoverae, 1884, cap. 11, p. 32–33; cap. 14, p. 36; cap. 19, p. 39–44; cap. 25–29, p. 53–60. For more details, see: ŠČAVINSKAS, M. *Pirmųjų baltų...*, p. 48.

<sup>19</sup> ŠČAVINSKAS, M. *Kryžius ir kalavijas...*, p. 53, 74–78, 108–110, 139–141.

<sup>20</sup> *HCL*, cap. X, § 15, p. 46; cap. XXIX, § 3, p. 209–210.

interesting that Henry also presents some examples of the improper behaviour of Christians, such as the abuse of power, bad court decisions, and greed.<sup>21</sup> He wanted to show that all these evils alienated Christians from the *civitas Dei*. The example of the Christian life led by Alebrand was to help the Livs seek salvation, and thus increase the number of the chosen, and not that of the called. It also showed that the very act of baptism (next to depaganisation, *abrenuntiatio diaboli*) was only one stage in the reinforcement of the faith (*confesio fidei*),<sup>22</sup> which did not end efforts at salvation.

It was no accident that Henry of Livonia referred to convert souls being carried by angels to heaven.<sup>23</sup> The image of souls being carried to heaven had been known from before the times of Henry;<sup>24</sup> however, that was not the most important thing. It was more important that this image, which was popular with all social strata in the Middle Ages, could be conveyed to the first converts, as is ultimately indicated by another chronicler, Peter of Dusburg.<sup>25</sup> It was an 'obvious' illustration of what awaited the soul if it contributed to the establishment of *civitas Dei* in the soul by means of an honest Christian life and unshakeable faith, which made the world a better place. And it was the earthly world that God, 'humanised' by the *spirituales novi* movement, was to step into against the background of ideas of Christianity presented that way (particularly through the *compassio* made important by Bernard of Clairvaux). It was no coincidence that Peter of Dusburg finished his account of the conquest of the Nadruvians with an idealistic passage about the Nadruvians and their families converting to Christianity and starting to serve the *living* God Jesus Christ (in Latin '*servierunt deo vivo Jesu Cristo*').<sup>26</sup> Peter of Dusburg, who represented the ideas of the 'living' God matured by the religious movements of the 12th and 13th centuries, never doubted that the feeling of the 'living' God was possible through the 'vitality' of the soul, seeking in it (the soul) to approach the *civitas Dei*.

In another typical example, the Cistercian monk Theodoric healed a Liv, who was then baptised.<sup>27</sup> On one hand, that story by Henry of Livonia was similar to the stories appearing in hagiography, and popular with the general public, about people being healed by their faith and trust in God, which, in favourable circumstances,

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> For more details, see: ROSIK, Stanisław. 'Abrenuntiatio diaboli' in *Missionary Practice during the Conversion of Pomerania*. In *Meetings with Emotions: Human Past between Anthropology and History (Historiography and Society from the 10th to 20th Century)*. Ed. by Przemysław WISZEWSKI. Wrocław, 2008, pp. 41–49; ROSIK, Stanisław. *Conversio gentis Pomeranorum. Studium świadectwa o wydarzeniu (XII wiek)*. Wrocław, 2010, s. 23–24, 286–290, 466–476, 570–598, 605–615. Cf. ŁOWMIAŃSKI, Henryk. *Religia słowian i jej upadek (w VI–XII)*. Warszawa, 1979, s. 271.

<sup>23</sup> HCL, cap. I, § 10, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> ГУРЕВИЧ, А. Op. cit., c. 128–135, 140–145.

<sup>25</sup> PDC, Lib. III, cap. 86–87, S. 98–99; cap. 91–92, S. 100–101, etc.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., cap. 175, S. 131.

<sup>27</sup> HCL, cap. I, § 10, p. 4.

were part of missionary activity.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, the converted Liv may have thought that his disease was healed miraculously by the Christian God himself. We can believe this, since another ailing Liv called for Theodoric, and asked to be baptised. All this was directly related to Gospel stories about Christ healing. In that way, the evangelical Christ emerges as a 'humanised' God, healing the sick, and continuing to do so in the period described by the chronicler. In the above case, the missionary just 'repeated' the healing actions of Christ, and thus followed Christ, *imitatio Christi* (which again was nothing specially new in the context of the 12th and 13th-century religious movements). We shall only remind the reader of Peter of Dusburg's repeated statements about the hardships and sufferings experienced by the knights of the Teutonic Order (and by all Christians in Prussia), allegedly recalling the sufferings and misery experienced by Christ himself.<sup>29</sup> Thus, the knights themselves declared they were followers of Christ. In that case, suffering is inseparable from repentance, since, as people believed in the Middle Ages, only through repentance and humility could one reduce the suffering of the soul in the human world, that is, in the human body.

As can be seen from these examples, missionaries who grew up with the ideas disseminated by 12th-century religious movements brought the concepts of the efforts by the human soul to seek the 'individualisation' of salvation, and of the 'humanised' God, to the east Baltic shores. These concepts, along with the truths of the Gospel and standards in Christian life, were conveyed by missionaries to converts in Livonia and Prussia. Concepts through the ministry (as referred to by Henry of Livonia<sup>30</sup>) were also disseminated among Christian arrivals, with the aim of building a *homo christianus* community.<sup>31</sup> This meant that, as early as the first Christian missions, converts were introduced not only to the 'theologised' idea of God, but also to the 'simplified' or the 'folk' one, which led to the formation of local folk piety. Stories of the souls of righteous Christians being carried by angels, miraculous healing, and the revelations of God and the saints contributed to the emergence of forms of local folk piety. Converts learned about Christianity in its entirety, including forms of folk piety, and not only from fragmentary Christian truths.

<sup>28</sup> KLANICZAY, Gábor. Dreams and Visions in Medieval Miracle Accounts. In *Ritual Healing. Magic, Ritual and Medical Therapy from Antiquity until the Early Modern Period* (Micrologus' Library, vol. 48). Ed. by Ildikó CSEPREGI, Charles BURNETT. Firenze, 2012, pp. 149–150; ŠČAVINSKAS, M. *Kryžius ir kalavijas...*, p. 76, 108–109, 139–140.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *PDC*, Lib. III, cap. 30, S. 66: '*Ipsi enim ducebant pro deliciis, cum talia pro Cristi nomine paterentur, aut eciam si biberent calicem salutifere passionis.*'

<sup>30</sup> *HCL*, cap. X, § 15, p. 46; cap. XXIX, § 3, p. 209–210.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *Livländische Reimchronik*. Hrsg. von Leo MEYER. Paderborn, 1876, Verse 5834–5838, S. 134: '*sie behütte got von himele / mit sîner grôzen majestât. / sîn helfe sunder zwîvel stât / allen den gerechten bie, / von welchir hande zunge er sie.*'



The fact that converts should have treated the superficiality of Christianity with caution is illustrated by another story by Henry of Livonia about the aforementioned monk Theodoric. The chronicle says that, ordered by Bishop Meinhard, he pretended to be on his way to visit the sick. In this way, he escaped persecution by the hostile Livs, and arrived in Rome to meet the Pope.<sup>32</sup> It is not really important whether the story described by Henry of Livonia took place. More important is the idea that Theodoric managed to deceive the Livs by a 'holy lie'. This meant that the Livs knew and understood the meaning of the anointing of the sick, otherwise Theodoric would never have slipped past them. We should remember that during the Christian missions in Livonia and Prussia, cemeteries were consecrated,<sup>33</sup> and Christian burial customs, Christian marriage, and the Christian lifestyle, and so on, were established.<sup>34</sup> A similar process took place during the missions of St Otto of Bamberg in Pomerelia.<sup>35</sup> True, it is not clear how much the view of the adoption of Christianity, usually idealised, coincided with reality. However, these examples are enough for us to be able to discuss Christianity coming to the east Baltic shores with the ideas of the religious movements of the 12th and 13th centuries, and in a form brought by the clergy and those around them. The matured ideas, along with folk piety, influenced the religious attitudes of the first converts in Livonia and Prussia. This has to be understood and evaluated in terms of the Christian missions in Baltic societies.

## II

What kind of concept of Christianity and what idea of God could have been brought to the east Baltic shores by the Crusaders and members of the military orders, and how did the ideas brought by them contribute to the formation of the first local Christian communities in Livonia and Prussia? At first glance, the answer to the first question should be obvious: a military concept and a 'military' idea of God, directly related to the idea of the Crusades. This way of thinking suggests the answer to the second part of the question: the Crusaders could have formed 'militaristic' Christian communities in Livonia and Prussia. However, was it really so?

<sup>32</sup> *HCL*, cap. I, § 12, p. 6–7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. II, § 2, p. 8–9; *PDC*, Lib. III, cap. 54, S. 80.

<sup>34</sup> *Preußisches Urkundenbuch. Politische Abteilung*. Bd. 1: *Die Bildung des Ordensstaates*, 1. Hälfte. Hrsg. von Rudolf PHILIPPI. Königsberg, 1882, Nr. 218, S. 159–164; *Liv-, Est- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch*. Bd. 1. Hrsg. von Friedrich Georg von BUNGE. Reval, 1853, № 159, Sp. 220–221; BRUNDAGE, A. James. Christian Marriage in Thirteenth Century Livonia. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 1973, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 314–322.

<sup>35</sup> ROSIK, S. *Conversio gentis Pomeranorum...*, s. 591–601.



The ideology of the Crusades emphasised images of a vengeful God,<sup>36</sup> and of Christ as the commander of the troops of Heaven, a kind of a feudal lord. The Teutonic Order took the concept from the Templars.<sup>37</sup> Images of the latter were directly associated with images of God as the ruler of the world (*dominus mundi* or *Deus Pantocrator*), and the king of kings (*rex regnum*). Missionaries presented converts with an image of a 'humanised' Christ, which, in terms of the change in the concept of the idea of God in the context of the 12th-century religious movements, was 'more modern' than the image of *Deus Pantocrator*. However, the latter image was closer to the heart of the promoters of the ideology of the military orders. This should be particularly taken into account when speaking about the legitimisation of the power of the Teutonic Order in Prussia: this power, considered as a service, was allegedly granted to the Teutonic Order in Prussia by God himself.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the Teutonic Order considered itself a tool of God in the lands entrusted to it<sup>39</sup> until the eschatological coming of Christ. Thus, the Teutonic Order, through the *Deus Pantocrator* image, perceived itself as Christ's 'earthly' vassal, entrusted with a fief, i.e. Prussia (as well as Livonia through the Brothers of the Sword).

Still, it should be understood that the image of *militia Christi* emerged before the Crusades. Therefore, the image did not have any direct relationship with physical 'militarism', as it is understood by present-day researchers.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the very ideology of the Crusades was not homogeneous throughout the Middle Ages. As the image of the *militia Christi* changed, the ideology changed as well. The most notable change in the formation of the image was the attempt by St Bernard of Clairvaux to merge the ideals of monk and of knight.<sup>41</sup> The merger did not come from nowhere. Even before the 12th century, the Church had over a dozen warrior-saints, whose

<sup>36</sup> THROOP, Susanna A. *Crusading as an Act of Vengeance, 1095–1216*. Farnham, 2011, pp. 16–19, 31–40, 74–76, 88–96; JENSEN, Kurt Villads. Bring dem Herrn ein blutiges Opfer. Gewalt und Mission in der dänischen Ostsee-Expansion des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts. In *Schwertmission. Gewalt und Christianisierung im Mittelalter*. Hrsg. von Hermann KAMP, Martin KROKER. Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich, 2013, S. 153–154.

<sup>37</sup> MENTZEL-REUTERS, Arno. Der Deutsche Orden als geistlicher Orden. In *Cura animarum. Seelsorge im Deutschordensland Preußen* (Forschungen und Quellen zur Kirchen- und Kulturgeschichte Ostdeutschlands, Bd. 45). Hrsg. von Stefan SAMERSKI. Köln, Weimar, Wien, 2013, S. 27–28.

<sup>38</sup> See PDC, Prologus, S. 23: '*Ecce mirabilia forcia, quomodo per fratres predictos omnes gentes, que inhabitabant terram Prussie*'.

<sup>39</sup> KWIATKOWSKI, Stefan. Auf der Suche nach den moralischen Grundlagen des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen. In *Selbstbild und Selbstverständnis der geistlichen Ritterorden* (Ordines militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica, XIII). Hrsg. von Roman CZAJA, Jürgen SARNOWSKI. Toruń, 2005, S. 163–164, 170, 174. Cf. DYGO, Marian. Ideologia panowania zakonu niemieckiego w Prusach. In *Państwo zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach. Władza i społeczeństwo*. Red. Marian BISKUP, Roman CZAJA. Warszawa, 2008, s. 358–364.

<sup>40</sup> COWDREY, Herbert E. J. Pope Gregory VII and the Bearing of Arms. In *Montjoie: Studies in Crusade History in Honour of Hans Eberhard Mayer*. Ed. by Benjamin Z. KEDAR, Jonathan RILEY-SMITH, Rudolf HIESTAND. London, 1997, pp. 21–35; ROBINSON, Ian S. Gregory VII and the Soldiers of Christ. *History*, 1973, vol. 58, no. 193, pp. 177–192.

<sup>41</sup> BARBER, Malcolm. The Social Context of the Templars. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth series*, 1984, vol. 34, p. 35; BULST-THIELE, Marie Luise. The Influence of St. Bernard of Clairvaux on the

popularity reflected the growing social role of the knighthood in society.<sup>42</sup> However, the main question which did not get an unambiguous answer was the following: how did the spiritual battle taking place inside the human being (and thus between the soul and the body, between the *civitas Dei* and the *civitas terrena*<sup>43</sup>) exceed the boundaries of the spiritual, and turn into a physical fight, by means of physical and not merely spiritual arms, against physical and not merely spiritual enemies? The question was directly related to the issue of war being considered a sin in the Middle Ages,<sup>44</sup> and the interpretation of war as defence (a just war).<sup>45</sup> Thus, the *militia Christi*, or rather the *militia nova*, propagated by the Cistercians, had to combine in themselves the sin of warfare with the concept of *spirituales novi* (in the Cistercian sense) for the sake of good deeds for the soul necessary for Christians.<sup>46</sup> In the first half of the 13th century, the Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach, when telling the story of a Crusader, stated that the principal motive for going on a Crusade was the desire to save one's own soul. When the Crusader perished, he allegedly joined the residents of the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>47</sup> All this gives us a different view of the 'self-evident' idea of a 'militarised' God carried by the military orders to the east Baltic shores.

The reception of the image of *militia Christi* in the Baltic region is a separate story. One thing should be understood: the image that was brought to the east Baltic coast was ideologically motivated rather than canonically static (Canon Law never provided a single, canonical definition of a holy war<sup>48</sup>). It should be emphasised that

Formation of the Order of the Knights Templar. In *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*. Ed. by Michael GERVERS. New York, 1992, pp. 58–62.

<sup>42</sup> ERDMANN, Carl. *The Origins of the Idea of Crusading*. Princeton, NJ, 1977, pp. 87–88; MacGREGOR, James B. Negotiating Knightly Piety: The Cult of the Warrior-Saints in the West, ca. 1070–ca. 1200. *Church History*, 2004, vol. 73, no. 2, pp. 317–345; WARNER, David A. Saints, Pagans, War and Rulership in Ottonian Germany. In *Plenitude of Power. The Doctrines and Exercise of Authority in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Robert Louis Benson*. Ed. by Robert C. FIGUEIRA. Aldershot, 2006, pp. 11–35.

<sup>43</sup> AUGUSTINUS Hipponensis. *De Civitate Dei contra paganos* (Patrologiae Cursus Completus, series Latina, vol. 41). Ed. Jacques Migne. Paris, 1845, Lib. XIX, cap. 4–7, col. 627–634.

<sup>44</sup> COWDREY, Herbert E. J. Christianity and the morality of warfare during the first century of crusading. In *The Experience of Crusading*. Vol. 1: *Western Approaches*. Ed. by Marcus BULL, Norman HOUSLEY. Cambridge, 2003, pp. 175–192. Cf. ERDMANN, C. Op. cit., pp. 182–228.

<sup>45</sup> REID, Charles J., Jr. The Rights of Self-Defence and Justified Warfare in the Writings of the Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Canonists. In *Law as Profession and Practice in Medieval Europe. Essays in Honor of James A. Brundage*. Ed. by Kenneth PENNINGTON, Melodie Harris EICHBAUER. Farnham, 2011, pp. 77–83, 87.

<sup>46</sup> HEHL, Ernst-Dieter. Heiliger Krieg – eine Schimäre? Überlegungen zur Kanonistik und Politik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts. In *Krieg und Christentum. Religiöse Gewalttheorien in der Kriegserfahrung des Westens* (Krieg in der Geschichte, Bd. 50). Hrsg. von Andreas HOLZEM. Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich, 2009, S. 325, 327–329, 332, 335–336; BULL, Marcus. The Roots of Lay Enthusiasm for the First Crusade. *History*, 1993, vol. 78, no. 254, pp. 354–355.

<sup>47</sup> *Caesarii Heisterbacensis monachi ordinis Cisterciensis Dialogus miraculorum*. Vol. I. Ed. Josephus STRANGE. Coloniae, Bonnae et Bruxellis, 1851, Dist. XI, cap. 24, p. 291: 'Melius est ut illos deseram, quam animam meam perdam. Quid plura? Exaudita est oratio religiosi militis, et post paucos dies defunctus, coniunctus est civibus Jerusalem coelestis. Quam prope sit Dominus omnibus invocantibus eum in veritate, mors alterius cuiusdam demonstrat.'

<sup>48</sup> MULDOON, James. Crusading and Canon Law. In *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*. Ed. by Helen J. NICHOLSON. Basingstoke-Hampshire, 2005, pp. 37–57. Cf. REID C. J., Jr. Op. cit., pp. 77–88.

the image of *militia Christi*, which had certain points in common with the Cistercians' concept of *militia nova*, was changing as much as the concepts of both the new knighthood and also of *spirituales novi* inside the religious movements. The Teutonic Order, which started the conquest of the Prussians in the first half of the 13th century, was the most important conveyor of this image of *militia Christi* to the Baltic communities.<sup>49</sup>

It is true that, even before the Teutonic Order, attempts at establishing such a concept were made by the Bishop of Plock Alexander of Malonne,<sup>50</sup> relating to the Cistercians and the Premonstratensians, in the mid-13th century. However, it was the Teutonic Order that justified and actually implemented the idea. The Teutonic Order took up the concepts of both *militia Christi* and *spirituales novi* (in the Cistercian sense).<sup>51</sup> The same can be said about the Brothers of the Sword in Livonia, who were presented in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, in the words of the Holy Scriptures, as new Israelites fighting against the enemy.<sup>52</sup> It should be emphasised that the new Israelites fought not only against their enemies, but were also struggling against their own weaknesses, and were going through a 'wandering', which metaphorically meant ongoing soul-searching.<sup>53</sup> This quest was linked to the aforementioned repentance, which alleviated the suffering (as was mentioned). Not only did converts search for Christ, but so did newcomer Christians, as is accentuated by Henry of Livonia in his description of the pastoral and missionary activities of the papal legate Wilhelm, Bishop of Modena, and of other missionaries (cf. the aforementioned monk Alebrand) in Livonia.<sup>54</sup> Thus, the Crusades (through the changing meaning of the *militia Christi*) should be understood not as an eschatological mission fighting against enemies of the faith,<sup>55</sup> but as a kind of repentance which alleviated the sufferings of a soul in search of God. A typical story about the Crusader Albert winning all tournaments with the assistance of the Devil is presented by Caesarius of Heisterbach. It was specifically participation in a Crusade to the Holy Land that allowed the

<sup>49</sup> KWIATKOWSKI, S. *Auf der Suche...*, S. 171.

<sup>50</sup> For more details, see: GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI, Dariusz. *Poland, Holy War, and the Piast Monarchy, 1100–1230* (Europa Sacra, 14). Turnhout, 2014, pp. 69–74.

<sup>51</sup> KWIATKOWSKI, Stefan. „Devotio antiqua“, ihr Niedergang und die geistigen Ursachen der religiösen Krise des Deutschen Ordens im Spätmittelalter. In *Deutscher Orden 1190–1990* (Tagungsberichte der Historischen Kommission für ost- und westpreußische Landesforschung, Bd. 11). Hrsg. von Udo ARNOLD. Lüneburg, 1997, S. 110–111, 114–121; TRUPINDA, Janusz. *Krucjatowe poglądy świętego Bernarda z Clairvaux a ideologia zakonu krzyżackiego zawarta w kronice Piotra Dusburga*. In *Cystersi w społeczeństwie Europy Środkowej*. Red. Andrzej Marek WYRWA, Józef DOBOSZ. Poznań, 2000, s. 190–204.

<sup>52</sup> For more details, see: UNDUSK, Jaan. *Sacred History, Profane History: Uses of the Bible in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*. In *Crusading and Chronicle Writing...*, pp. 55–57, 68.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Caesarii Heisterbacensis...*, Dist. 4, cap. 1–2, p. 171–174.

<sup>54</sup> For more details, see: JENSEN, C. S. *'Verbis non verberibus'...*, pp. 191–192.

<sup>55</sup> KANGAS, Sini. *Militia Christi meets the Prince of Babylon. The Crusader conception of encountering the enemy*. In *Frontiers in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of the Third European Congress of the Medieval Studies (Jyväskylä, 10–14 June 2003)*. Ed. by Outi MERISALO, Päivi PAHTA. Louvain-la-Neuve, 2006, pp. 107–119.

knight to escape God's punishment for his friendship with the Devil. Among other things, on returning from the Crusade, the knight declared that the knights, but not the clergy, should be considered as saints: '*nos milites tornamentis operam dantes sancti sumus*'.<sup>56</sup>

A similar parallel between the Teutonic Order and the Israelites was drawn by Peter of Dusburg.<sup>57</sup> However, it is not completely clear whether the image of the Teutonic Order as the God-entrusted 'fief' manager can be identified with the image of the Teutonic Order as the creator of the *civitas Dei* on Earth, as is sometimes presented in historiography.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, it is not clear whether the images were affected by the same concept of *spirituales novi* as that referred to by St Bernard of Clairvaux when he was writing the Templar Rules. The Teutonic Order probably 'grew out' of the Templars, as the latter did not have the aim of building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. St Bernard emphasised the 'spiritual' concept of the fight when creating the Kingdom of God within the soul.<sup>59</sup> At the turn of the 14th century, a kind of revision of the knight-monk ideal took place in the ideology of the Teutonic Order, which was related to the entrenchment of the Teutonic Order's in Prussia.<sup>60</sup> At that time, the idea finally formed that the Teutonic Order represented God in Prussia; therefore, it ruled Prussia as its 'fief' on behalf of God. As the Holy Land, in accordance with the belief in the first half of the 13th century, was lost due to the sinfulness of Christians,<sup>61</sup> apologists for the Teutonic Order sought to demonstrate exclusive *militia Christi*, i.e. the piety and virtue of members of the Teutonic Order. Only those virtuous people had been entrusted by God to rule Prussia on His behalf, i.e. to carry out the intended divine plan by including converts in it.<sup>62</sup>

It should be noted that this kind of ideology was brought to the Baltic region not merely by the knights, but also by the clergy in charge of ministering to the latter, and the summons to the Crusades (primarily by the priests and chaplains of the Teutonic

<sup>56</sup> *Caesarii Heisterbacensis...*, Dist. X, cap. 11, p. 224–226. For more details, see: PURKIS, William J. Crusading and crusade memory in Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus miraculorum*. *Journal of Medieval History*, 2013, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 109–110.

<sup>57</sup> *PDC*, Lib. I, S. 24–25.

<sup>58</sup> MENTZEL-REUTERS, A. Op. cit., S. 16–17.

<sup>59</sup> HOUBEN, Hubert. Eine Quelle zum Selbstverständnis des Deutschen Ordens im 14. Jahrhundert: der Codex Vat. Ottobon. lat. 528. In *Selbstbild und Selbstverständnis...*, S. 143–145; MENTZEL-REUTERS, A. Op. cit., S. 24–25. Cf. GRABOIS, Aryeh. *Militia* and *Malitia*: the Bernardine Vision of Chivalry. In *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians...*, pp. 49–56.

<sup>60</sup> ARNOLD, Udo. Von Venedig nach Marienburg. Hochmeister und Deutscher Orden am Ende des 13. / Beginn des 14. Jahrhunderts. In *Kirche und Gesellschaft im Wandel der Zeiten: Festschrift für Gabriel Adriányi zum 75. Geburtstag*. Hrsg. von Hermann-Josef SCHEIDGEN, Sabine PROROK, Helmut RÖNZ. Nordhausen, 2012, S. 75–90.

<sup>61</sup> For more details, see: PURKIS, W. J. Op. cit., pp. 105–108.

<sup>62</sup> KWIATKOWSKI, S. Auf der Suche..., S. 171.

Order<sup>63</sup>). Among them were representatives of the new mendicant orders, Franciscans and Dominicans, further carriers of the *spirituales novi* concept.<sup>64</sup> The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle characteristically emphasises that both Franciscans and Dominicans took part in the military campaigns in Žemaitija (Samogitia).<sup>65</sup> The mendicant monks, who were under the greater or lesser influence of the Teutonic Order, carried out the evangelisation of converts and the Christian ministry. Peter of Dusburg mentions the priests of the Teutonic Order who carried out evangelisation and pastoral care among converts.<sup>66</sup> Evangelisation and the pastoral care took place against the background of continuous wars.<sup>67</sup> We will not argue that the military background directly affected the Christian missions or the ministry to Christians (including converts). However, as the Teutonic Order was establishing its right to fight against the pagans, and to rule the conquered lands of the latter in the name of God, certain aspects of the image of the Church Militant and/or the ideology of the Crusade (without identifying the images) could have reached converts through the missions.

The fact that the ideology of the Crusades could have directly affected converts is shown by the description of the Battle of Durbė (1260) in the Chronicle of Peter of Dusburg.<sup>68</sup> In his description, the Prussian noblemen who remained loyal to the Teutonic Order and who perished together with the knights of the Order were called the new Maccabees. There is no doubt that the speech of the nobleman Sklod calling on people to fight against the enemies of the faith, even if it could have reached the time of the writing of the Chronicle as an oral tradition, was didactically processed and presented as was required by the objectives of the Chronicle and the ideology of the Crusade that was promoted.<sup>69</sup> However, that was not the most important thing. Much more important was the fact that some Prussian noblemen and the people close to them, along with the knights of the Teutonic Order, in the description mentioned of the Battle of Durbė, were perceived as *militia Christi* and equated with Maccabees. Moreover, the souls of the perished new Maccabees were carried

<sup>63</sup> FAVREAU-LILIE, Marie L. Znaczenie rycerskich zakonów duchownych dla misji w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej XIII wieku. In *Chrześcijańskie korzenie. Misjonarze, święci, rycerze zakonnicy (eseje i szkice)* (Tropami Pisarzy na Kresach Zachodnich, t. 6). Red. Sergiusz STERNA-WACHOWIAK. Poznań, 1997, s. 65–80.

<sup>64</sup> For more details, see: FEISTNER, Edith. Zur Katechese der Ritterbrüder in den Anfängen des Deutschordensstaates. In *Cura animarum. Seelsorge...*, S. 107–109; MAIER, Christoph T. *Preaching the Crusades. Mendicant friars and the cross in the thirteenth century*. Cambridge, 1994; DEKAŃSKI, Dariusz A. Cystersi i Dominikanie w Prusach – działania misyjne Zakonów w latach trzydziestych XIII wieku. Rywalizacja czy współpraca? In *Cystersi w społeczeństwie Europy Środkowej*. Red. Andrzej Marek WYRWA, Józef DOBOSZ. Poznań, 2000, s. 230–248.

<sup>65</sup> *Livländische Reimchronik...*, Verse 4235–4240, S. 97–98.

<sup>66</sup> *PDC*, Lib. III, cap. 90, S. 99–100.

<sup>67</sup> TYERMAN, Christopher. Henry of Livonia and Ideology of Crusading. In *Crusading and Chronicle Writing...*, pp. 26, 32, 35–39, 41–42.

<sup>68</sup> *PDC*, Lib. III, cap. 84, S. 96–97.

<sup>69</sup> For more details about the Crusade ideology in the Chronicle of Peter of Dusburg, see: TRUPINDA, Janusz. *Ideologia krucjatowa w Kronice Piotra z Dusburga* (Peribalticum Meridionale, vol. 1). Gdańsk, 1999, s. 99–120, 176–196.

by angels directly to paradise; or, in another episode, the Virgin Mary herself (the patroness of the Teutonic Order) and the saints<sup>70</sup> sprinkled incense over the bodies of the deceased.

We can judge the character of the *militia Christi* from some stories presented by the same chronicler, including one of the most characteristic stories about the knights who lived in Balga Castle.<sup>71</sup> The chronicler writes that the Prussians were very surprised by the pious way of life of the knights, and by their limitless trust in God. Of course, these contacts between members of the Teutonic Order and the Prussians (in our case, the still pagan Sambians) suggest reflections of both an ideologised and a rather realistic description of the relations and the way of life of members of the Teutonic Order.<sup>72</sup> However, we would not be completely right to believe that by such passages, Peter of Dusburg just wanted to glorify the culture and piety of the Teutonic Knights in the early 14th century. We can agree with the idea that, having related their existence to the fight against the pagans in Prussia (and later, in Lithuania), the Teutonic Order found it important to sustain an old model of piety (*devotio antiqua*), coming down through tradition, and the ideology of the holy war incorporated in it,<sup>73</sup> which ultimately formed the basis of the Teutonic Order's identity.<sup>74</sup> However, all this does not make sense if we lose sight of the concept of God's 'humanisation'. That specific concept is revealed in the passages by the chronicler Peter of Dusburg on the virtuous brethren of the Teutonic Order and Christ's revelation to them. The possibility for the concept to find resonance in the hearts of converts is witnessed by another characteristic example found in the Chronicle of Peter of Dusburg.

In his account of the pious life of Heinrich Stange, the Komtur of Christburg, the chronicler describes a miracle when a Crucifix allegedly came alive and blessed the praying Komtur.<sup>75</sup> The chronicler notes that news of the miracle was disseminated by the priest Heinrich of Christburg.<sup>76</sup> In another place, the chronicler writes that the Crucifix wanted to embrace another knight, but the latter stepped away modestly as if unworthy of such a noble gesture.<sup>77</sup> There is no doubt that these stories, known

<sup>70</sup> PDC, Lib. III, cap. 41, S. 74; cap. 86–87, S. 98; for more details about the image of the new Maccabees in the Crusade ideology of the Teutonic Order, see: FISCHER, Mary. The Books of the Maccabees and the Teutonic Order. *Crusades*, 2005, vol. 4, pp. 59–71; TRUPINDA, J. *Ideologia krucjatowa...*, s. 106–111, 160, 175–177, 186–189.

<sup>71</sup> PDC, Lib. III, cap. 70, S. 90.

<sup>72</sup> WENTA, Jerosław. Der Deutschordenspriester Peter von Dusburg und sein Bemühen um die geistige Bildung der Laienbrüder. In *Selbstbild und Selbstverständnis...*, S. 116–117.

<sup>73</sup> For more details, see: KWIATKOWSKI, S. „Devotio antiqua“..., S. 117–128.

<sup>74</sup> CZAJA, Roman. Die Identität des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen. In *Cura animarum. Seelsorge...*, S. 47–50.

<sup>75</sup> PDC, Lib. III, cap. 69, S. 90.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.: *'Hoc vidit et publicavit frater Heindricus ejusdem castris sacerdos'*.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., Lib. III, cap. 64, S. 86. For more examples, see: WENTA, J. Op. cit., S. 117–122.



from different *exempla*<sup>78</sup> of the 13th century, were intended to strengthen the spiritual resolution of readers and listeners of the 14th-century Chronicle to fight God's fight, and to sustain the idealised identity of the pious knight-monk.

Echoes of such miracles (actual or alleged ones) must have reached the ears of converts. Therefore, the message to converts (as well as for all Christians) was that God could only appear to especially pious Christians, exactly in compliance with the ideological provisions of *spirituales novi*.<sup>79</sup> Members of the Teutonic Order could become the ones chosen by God (*militia Christi*), not just because they fought God's entrusted earthly fight against pagans, and, like good vassals, took care of God's 'fief' in Prussia, but also due to their special piety, which raised their deeds to the level of the sacred. The story of the miracle widely disseminated by the priest Heinrich was supposed to be a witness to closeness to God, and the humaneness which was felt by the *militia Christi* through prayer. This concept was also important to the Cistercians, and primarily to St Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>80</sup> It was vital to emphasise that only the most pious and virtuous, but not all the members of the Teutonic Order *in corpore*, could become the chosen few.<sup>81</sup> Only they could experience the revelations of the 'humanised' God, and only they tried to follow the *living* Christ by their pious life. Thus, one knight made a vow to the Virgin Mary, as the lady of his heart, that he would not take off his chainmail shirt as long as he lived.<sup>82</sup> The vow was accompanied by constant prayers to the Virgin and to Christ. Another knight sought to get five wounds, like Christ, who also had five wounds.<sup>83</sup> Prussian noblemen and their society undoubtedly had a chance to learn about these examples of piety. However, the piety still did not expose the grotesque character of the knights' vows, or the aspirations noted by Johan Huizinga when describing the knightly society of the 'autumn of the Middle Ages'.

The fact that all these ideological attitudes were supplemented by the concept of the Crusades indicates a somewhat simplified understanding of the spiritual fight for *civitas Dei* by European Christian society. First of all, the simplified concept was conveyed to participants in the Crusades to the Holy Land.<sup>84</sup> In the ideologically engaged fight of the Teutonic Order against the pagans, the struggle for *civitas Dei* developed into a physical fight, as had previously happened in the Holy Land, and in a similar way. Relics of the True Cross and the saints were supposed to reinforce this impression,<sup>85</sup> which reached the ears and hearts of converts, in the eyes of the

<sup>78</sup> *Caesarii Heisterbacensis...*, Dist. VIII, cap. 13, p. 92–93.

<sup>79</sup> HEHL, E.-D. Op. cit, S. 331.

<sup>80</sup> TRUPINDA, J. *Krucjatowe poglądy...*, s. 198–200.

<sup>81</sup> *PDC*, Lib. III, cap. 92, S. 101.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, Lib. III, cap. 131, S. 115–116.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, Lib. III, cap. 206, S. 141.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. BIRD, Jessalynn. *James of Vitry's Sermons to Pilgrims. Essays in Medieval Studies*, 2008, vol. 25, pp. 83–88.

<sup>85</sup> DYGO, M. *Studia nad pocztkami...*, s. 336–342.



public. On the other hand, the *militia Christi* had to embody the aspiration for the perfection of Christian life, which was usually overlooked when talking about the ideology of the Crusades. As the image of the *militia Christi* borne by the Teutonic Order also included the ideological attitudes of *spirituales novi* (in the Cistercian sense), this image had to be understood in its entirety.<sup>86</sup> After all, the religious movements of the 12th and 13th centuries, when discussing the knighthood, tried to resolve the problem of the relationship between *civitas Dei* and *civitas terrena* by offering society and the knights the concept of *novae militiae*. Thus, the new pious movements formed a new concept of chivalry (hence the image of the Virgin Mary as the lady of the knight's heart).<sup>87</sup> It was just this concept of *novae militiae* that the societies of Livonia and Prussia (usually the nobility and the people around them) had the chance to get to know about. As is shown by the examples from the Chronicle of Peter of Dusburg quoted above, in the 13th and 14th centuries, the *militia Christi* was not understood only/or merely from a 'militaristic' point of view, and therefore the idea of a Christian God presented by the knights to the first Baltic communities was not merely of a 'militaristic' nature. Thus, the first Christian communities were not ideologically 'militaristically' engaged.

### III

As was mentioned above, along with missionaries, knights and their retainers, merchants, townspeople, artisans, farmers and other people came to the east Baltic shores. All these people formed Christian communities in Livonia and Prussia together with converts. The understanding of the idea of God by all these social strata was affected more or less (and primarily through *exempla* and sermons) by the religious movements of the 12th and 13th centuries. I have already mentioned some aspects (such as the fact that ordinary people, including converts, must have been influenced by miraculous healings, revelations, or visions, of God, the Virgin Mary, or saints), but some moments should still be highlighted.

When describing the beginning of the conquest of Prussia, the chronicler Peter of Dusburg inserts a story about a Prussian Dorge from Sambia, who was helped to get rid of his fear of white horses. It was not the fact that the convert had a superstitious fear of white horses that is interesting, but more the fact that as soon as the fallacy of the superstition had been proven, Dorge became a devoted worshipper of God and the saints (*in devocione dei et sanctorum*).<sup>88</sup> On one hand, we can assume that

<sup>86</sup> For more details, see: KWIATKOWSKI, S. *Auf der Suche...*, S. 158–167, 169–172.

<sup>87</sup> DUBY, Georges. *The Three orders. Feudal society imagined*. Chicago, IL, London, 1980, pp. 224–227, 294–307.

<sup>88</sup> PDC, Lib. III, cap. 6, S. 38.

we are dealing with another passage by the chronicler that idealised people's conversion and the role of members of the Teutonic Order in the conversion. However, the 'domestic' character of the storyline suggests that such stories did not get into the chronicle by accident. The same chronicler mentions the presence of holy relics in castles or churches,<sup>89</sup> and therefore we should believe that converts were told stories about worshipping saints and their role in salvation and in everyday life. The worship of saints in Latin Europe was perceived as an integral part of the Christian devotion to God. Finally, time for the converts was organised around the liturgical calendar, which boasted a number of saints' names, and which was also used by other Christians in Europe. There are other aspects as well.

When describing the tour of Livonia by the papal legate Wilhelm, the Bishop of Modena, Henry of Livonia mentions that the legate prayed at the tomb of Meinhard, the first Bishop of Livonia, and the tombs of other martyrs.<sup>90</sup> Although neither the missionaries who died in Livonia nor the members of the Order of the Sword and the Teutonic Order who were killed in battle were recognised by the Church as official saints or martyrs, the desire of chroniclers to look for local defenders of the faith or martyrs, or to give prominence to local sanctuaries, was obvious.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, we can speak of the shaping of local forms of piety in Livonia in the first half of the 13th century. Christian communities needed people of local origin to set an example to other local people by their virtue and piety. For this reason, stories of souls (and especially of those killed in battle) being carried to Heaven, and descriptions of pious lives, had to show that every human being could, and had to, seek salvation, irrespective of social status or the language spoken. Even if we agree that Peter of Dusburg's *Chronicle* was first of all intended for members of the Teutonic Order, we should not forget that they lived in a certain social environment, and communicated not only with other members of the Teutonic Order. As is mentioned above, the image of the *militia Christi* promoted by the Teutonic Order could affect directly noble Prussian converts and their subjects. These also communicated with ordinary Prussians.

Let us recall once again the miracle widely recounted by the priest Heinrich, of the Crucifix allegedly blessing Heinrich Stange, the Komtur of Christburg. When ministering to the Prussians, this miracle could have been used not only to express the ideological position of *spirituales novi*,<sup>92</sup> but also to show what the Teutonic Order, whom the Prussians had to serve, really represented. There was still a long way to

<sup>89</sup> *PDC*, Lib. III, cap. 36, S. 69–70; cap. 121, S. 111–112. For more details, see: DYGO, M. *Studia nad poczatkami...*, s. 344–351.

<sup>90</sup> *HCL*, cap. XXIX, § 5, p. 212.

<sup>91</sup> JENSEN, Carsten Selch. How to Convert a Landscape: Henry of Livonia and the *Chronicon Livoniae*. In *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier*. Ed. by Alan V. MURRAY. Farnham, 2009, pp. 162–164.

<sup>92</sup> KWIATKOWSKI, S. „Devotio antiqua“ ..., S. 125–127.

go in order to reach the society which developed the cult of St Dorothea in Prussia.<sup>93</sup> Thus, when consolidating its rights as overlords in Prussia, the Teutonic Order was interested in keeping the desire for salvation, and subsequently the ministering to subordinates, in its own hands. The miracles that would happen to members of the Teutonic Order were supposed to signal to ordinary people that it was only members of the Order who were able to ensure the approximation of *civitas Dei* on Earth, and specifically in Prussia. By becoming part of the *militia Christi*, Prussian noblemen and their retainers could contribute to the approximation of *civitas Dei*.

This did not mean that the rest were given the role of passive observers. Ordinary Prussians, as well as newcomers to Prussia, had to contribute to the implementation of the divine plan carried out by the Teutonic Order by good deeds. In this sense, the Teutonic Order as a corporation remained a fairly closed organisation towards the conquered local Prussians, and showed other ways of living within the boundaries of the *spirituales novi* concept by choosing to guide souls towards their salvation. The ministering by the priests of the Teutonic Order (and also by the Franciscans and the Dominicans) to newly arrived Christians and converts was focused in that direction.

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## Concluding remarks

Without having any pretensions to drawing comprehensive conclusions, three points should be emphasised. The perception of Christianity, its theological essence, and the idea of the Christian God coming to the east Baltic shores, depending on the social status and the socio-cultural environment that formed them, were not identical. However, all these people (missionaries, knights, or 'ordinary' people) were united by the ideas of the new religious movements of the 12th century, reflected in one way or another the 'humanisation' of the idea of God, or the attempts by man's soul to seek the 'individualisation' of salvation. These ideas were reflected in the Christian missions at the turn of and throughout the 13th century (thus, primarily through missionaries), when establishing the first convert communities in Livonia and Prussia, and their pastoral care, *cura animarum*, to them.

Secondly, knights (the Crusaders, the Knights of the Sword, the Teutonic Order and others, and their retainers) brought the image of the *militia Christi* to the Baltic region, by combining the ideals of knightly and monastic life in accordance with the aforementioned 'humanisation' of the idea of God and the efforts of the human

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., S. 127. For more details on the worship of St Dorothea in the Teutonic Order's domains in Prussia, see: SAMERSKI, Stefan. Dorothea und kein Ende. Bemerkungen zur Prozess- und Kultgeschichte der hl. Dorothea von Montau. In *Cura animarum. Seelsorge...*, S. 201–213.

soul to pursue the idea of the 'individualisation' of salvation. These ideas were also conveyed to converts (albeit probably the nobility and people in their circle). These remarks help us to see the issue of the 'depth' of Christianity in the Baltic communities in a totally different way. Christianity penetrated Baltic society not only in a 'theologised' shape, which (as is believed by the present researchers) was 'difficult' to the pagan understanding, but also in the form of 'folk', knightly, or other forms of piety.

Thirdly, in order for 'folk' forms of piety to penetrate the consciousness of 'ordinary' people (the 'silent majority'), there was no need to wait for the moment of Christianity 'finally' (as is frequently imagined by today's researchers) being established among the socio-political elite, and later proceeding to the 'ordinary people'. The examples presented in this article show that Christian forms of folk piety in the first local Christian communities in Livonia and Prussia started to spread with the first Christian missions, as early as the 13th century, and not in the period of the 'deepening' of Christianity established by present-day researchers, after the 13th century.

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## CHRISTIANIZACIJA IR *CURA ANIMARUM* KRYŽIAUS KARO EPOCHOJE PIRMŪJŲ KRIKŠČIONIŲ BENDRUOMENĖSE LIVONIJOJE IR PRŪSIJOJE

Marius Ščavinskas

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėtas christianizacijos ir sielovados santykis Baltijos jūros rytinės pakrantės pirmųjų baltų krikščionių bendruomenėse XIII a. Tyrimė kėlėme du klausimus: kokia krikščionybė buvo skleidžiama Baltijos rytinėje pakrantėje ir kaip ji formavo pirmųjų krikščionių bendruomenes Livonijoje bei Prūsijoje. Manome, kad atsakymų į juos paieškos leidžia geriau suvokti christianizacijos procesą, krikščioniškųjų misijų kokybę, misionierių veiklą tarp konvertitų, sielovadą, taip pat krikščioniško tikėjimo „senbuvių“ santykius su konvertitais.

Nagrinėjant pirmąjį klausimą, paaiškėjo, kad XII–XIII a. sandūros ir XIII a. krikščioniškos misijos, vykusios į Baltijos regioną, buvo paveiktos šiam laikotarpiui būdingų naujųjų religinių judėjimų (*spirituales novi*), kurie didelį dėmesį skyrė Dievo „sužmoginimo“ idėjai ir žmogaus sielos „individualizacijai“. *Spirituales novi* reikėtų suprasti „cistersiška“ prasme, t. y. netapatinant jo su *devotio moderna* sąjūdžio metu kilusia naująja maldin-gumo banga.

Pirmieji misionieriai į Livoniją ir Prūsiją buvo reformuojamų vienuolių ordinų nariai – pirmiausia augustinai bei cistersai. Konvertitai Livonijoje bei Prūsijoje susidūrė su skirtingais požiūriais, kaip suvokiamas krikščionių Dievas, kaip galima siekti sielos išganymo ir kaip laikytis deramų krikščioniškojo gyvenimo normų, siekiant neatkristi į pagonybę. Požiūrių skirtybės priklausė nuo konkrečių žmonių grupių. Misionieriai, kaip dvasininkai, buvo ne tokie paveikūs liaudiškajam krikščionybės suvokimui, pamaldumui, šventųjų garbinimui. Tuo tarpu pasauliečiai, pirmiausia riteriai, pirkkliai bei kitų socialinių grupių krikščionys, savo religingumą išreiškė supaprastintomis liaudiško pamaldumo formomis ir požiūriu į krikščionybę.

Misionieriai, kilę iš reformuojamų vienuolių ordinų, nors ir laikėsi dar popiežiaus šv. Grigaliaus Didžiojo suformuluotų misijų veiklos principų, krikščioniškąsias tiesas (sielos išganymo principus, „sužmoginto“ Dievo sampratą) jau apmąstė naujai ir stengėsi tai perteikti konvertitams Livonijoje bei Prūsijoje. Todėl vienu metu jie vykdė ir misijas tarp pagonių, ir sielovadą (*cura animarum*) tarp konvertitų bei atvykėlių. Pirmuosius jie ragino neatkristi ir visavertiškai suprasti naujosios religijos esmę. Antruosius skatino atlikti tas maldingumo praktikas, kurios atitiko reformuojamų vienuolių ordinų skleistas idėjas. Šitaip misionieriai prisidėjo prie *homo christianus*, kaip Dievo tautos bendruomenės, kūrimo.

Svarbu pabrėžti, kad krikščionybės plitimas vyko ne tik „teologizuotu“ ir todėl „sunkiai“ suvokiamu pavidalu, bet ir liaudiška, riteriška (per Kryžiaus karą) ar kitokia pamaldumo forma. Šį liaudišką pamaldumą į Baltijos regioną atnešė pirkkliai, žemdirbiai, amatininkai, kitų socialinių grupių atstovai, įsikūrę užkariautose Livonijos ir Prūsijos žemėse. Tai leidžia konstatuoti, kad liaudiško pamaldumo formos Livonijos ir Prūsijos vietinėse pirmosiose krikščionių bendruomenėse pradėjo plisti kartu su krikščioniškomis misijomis. Paprastus Livonijos bei Prūsijos žmones, atvykėlius ir konvertitus, veikė žinios apie stebuklingus išgijimus, Dievo, Mergelės Marijos ar kitų šventųjų pasirodymus (ar vizijas) ir pan. Tai liudija Vokiečių ordino kronikos.

Konvertitams (kaip ir visiems krikščionims) skirta žinia skelbė, kad Dievas galėjo pasirodyti tik ypač uoliems krikščionims. Tai atitiko *spirituales novi* ideologines nuostatas. Viešosios opinijos akyse Vokiečių ordino nariai tapo Dievo išrinktais kariais (*militia Christi*): ne tik dėl to, kad vykdė Dievo patikėtą žemiškąją kovą su pagonimis bei, kaip dori vasalai, rūpinosi Dievo „feodu“ Prūsijoje, bet ir dėl savo ypatingo pamaldumo, kuris jų darbus pakylėjo iki sakralumo. Kronikose aprašyti stebuklai turėjo liudyti Dievo artumą ir žmogiškumą, kurį *militia Christi* juto per maldą. Konvertitai, norėję pritaipyti naujų gyvenimo sąlygų, taip pat siekė „neatsilikti“ nuo Vokiečių ordino brolių. Ypač tai pasakytina apie kilminguosius, puoselėjusius viltis savo rankose išlaikyti socialines garantijas ir, tampant *militia Christi*, prestižą. Per Vokiečių ordiną prūsų kilmingieji konvertitai ir jų aplinkos žmonės susipažino su *novae militiae* samprata. Kaip rodo straipsnyje aptarti pavyzdžiai iš Petro Dusburgiečio kronikos, XIII–XIV a. *militia Christi* nebuvo suvokiamas tik (ar vien) „militarinis“ aspektu. Todėl ir pirmųjų baltų visuomenei riterių pateikiama krikščionių Dievo idėja nebuvo vien tik „militarinio“ pobūdžio.

Atsakant į antrąjį straipsnyje iškeltą klausimą, konstatuotina, kad per krikščioniškas misijas ir sielovadą baltų visuomenės patyrė konkrečias dvasines bei mentalines įtakas iš lotyniškosios Europos. Pirmosios krikščionių bendruomenės, kurios skleidžiamos krikščionybės sampratą bei liaudiškąjį religingumą, atsineštą atvykėlių į Livoniją ir Prūsiją, patyrė

iš misionierių, vienu metu susidūrė ir su misijomis, ir su sielovada. Tai verčia kitaip vertinti christianizacijos ir sielovados santykio klausimą. Iš tiesų šie procesai vyko paraleliai, nes konversijos metu siekta išaiškinti bendrąsias krikščionybės ir krikščioniško gyvenimo nuostatas, o vykdant sielovadą – ne tiek pagilinti tikėjimo suvokimą, kiek parodyti įvairius būdus, kuriais galima pasiekti kokybiškesnį krikščionišką gyvenimą. Tai liudija, kad krikščionybės „gilinimas“ vyko jau krikščioniškųjų misijų metu, t. y. vadinamojoje pirmoje christianizacijos fazėje.