

## ORGANIZATION OF TEUTONIC MILITARY INFRASTRUCTURE ON CURONIAN SPIT FROM 1283 A.D. UP TO 1525 A.D.

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### ABSTRACT

Curonian Spit played a key role in medieval transport for Teutonic Order in 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> C. It ought to be presented again, since last essays about this subject originate from before the Second World War. The given term ‘infrastructure’ should be explained as castles or hostels (German: *nachtleger*) and other important points of military activity and thus all problems that refer to their functionality. Those subjects cannot be properly described without referring to written administration sources. Also organization of the Church on Curonian Spit will be presented, as it will contribute greatly to final conclusions. This work does not cover Lithuanian achievements in this field of interest, with exclusion of Nijole Strakauskaites’ recent work about the Spit (2004), which however isn’t about this subject. It is not a widespread subject of scholarship nowadays and it is also hardly known in Poland. This article is also a leap to create a monograph about Curonian Lagoon and it’s similarities to Vistula Lagoon as well as Hel Peninsula in the future.

KEY WORDS: medieval transport, Teutonic Order, military infrastructure, Curonian Spit, Vistula Lagoon, Hel Peninsula, Lithuanian history of 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> C.

### ANOTACIJA

Kuršių nerija Kryžiuočių ordinui viduramžiais buvo labai svarbi transporto linija. Derėtų dar kartą atlikti šios tematikos analizę, nes paskutiniai darbai šia tema yra skelbti dar prieš Antrąjį pasaulinį karą. Karinės infrastruktūros sąvoką šiame aprašyme reikia suprasti kaip pilių geografinį išsidėstymą ir visas su tuo susijusias problemas. Kartu tai yra ir ekonominės bei socialinės struktūros (dvarai, stovyklavietės (vok. *nachtleger*), laukai, arklių keitimo punktai, etc.), kurios garantuodavo maisto tiekimą kryžiuočių kariuomenei. Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjami klausimai, susiję su XIII–XVI a. Ordino administracijos ir religinės veiklos problemomis. Šis darbas neapima pasirinktos tematikos lietuvių mokslininkų tyrimų, išskyrus neseniai publikuotą Nijolės Strakauskaitės darbą apie Kuršių neriją (2004), kuris tiria kitus Kuršių nerijos istorijos aspektus. Be to, reikia pabrėžti, kad ši teritorija nėra dažnai minima šių laikų Lenkijos istorikų darbuose. Straipsnis šiek tiek užpildo šią spragą ir aprašo viduramžių laikų Kuršių neriją ir jos panašumus su Vyslos delta ir Helio pusiasaliu.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: viduramžių transportas, Vokiečių (teutonų) ordinas, karinė infrastruktūra, Kuršių nerija, Vyslos delta, Helio pusiasalis.

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### Earlier studies

This subject has not been in the spotlight through ages and there is a need to promote it further as most of the conclusions in German (and thus Polish) scientific society have been formed in late sixties of recent century. Most of the works used in this article refer to historians, who had their interest in the Spit in XIXth and XXth century (up to 1943).

First serious monograph about the Spit is Adalbert Bezzenbergers’ tribute to the subject (Bezzenberger 1889). The work has been published in 1889 and it took almost half of a century for a new one to be created by Friedrich Mager (Mager 1938). Both of those works don’t show the problem properly, but because of their significance they have been used in this article.

Most of the works that are about military infrastructure are in fact tiny articles. First of them was written by G. T. Hoffheinz (Hoffheinz 1878). It was about the location of castle "Neuhaus", also documents are cited in whole. This work started scientific discussion about the subject (Beckherrn 1898; Siegmund 1928). This subject has been later continued and extended by Kurt Forstreuter (Forstreuter 1931). His conclusions are respected in science society nowadays. Curonian Spit as military road, however in the background of the entire Teutonic-Lithuanian conflict in XIVth century was also presented by Dariusz Prekop (Prekop 2004).

Next work, though earlier than the cited articles and which has a minor impact on this work, is J. Benders' article about the bishops' castles in Samland (Bender 1874). Also an identification of Prussian language in topographic and settlement places has been used here as it is necessary ([R. J.] 1881). Other valuable works are Max Toeppens' achievements and they are about Teutonic administration regions (Toeppen 1857), settlements in historic-geographical aspect (Toeppen 1858) and about differences between medieval rents in Teutonic Prussia (Toeppen 1867). In 1939 Otto Kleemann published an article about depths and breakthroughs in Curonian Spit as well as the location of Wiskiauten (Kleemann 1939). Some of his conclusions are mentioned here.

Another works are about archeology. It is necessary to present them here. First of them was a summary of archeological sites in Samland done by Emil Hollack (Hollack 1908). This work has been later used and continued by Carl Engel (Engel 1931).

One of the most competent works about the Spit is Gerard Willoweits' synthesis about the economy of Klaipeda region (Willoweit 1969).

Due to conflict about the Spit between the bishop of Samland and Teutonic Order in XIVth century also a work regarding to this problem ought to be used, which was written by F. Rediger (Rediger 1907; also: Długokęcki 1996).

Works about administration of TO state has been also continued by P.G. Thielen (Thielen 1965) and J. Sarnowsky (Sarnowsky 1993).

This work also uses geographic summary maps made by Hans and Gertrud Mortensen (Historisch-geographischer... 1968-1879).

### Published and written sources

Main purpose of used documentaries is to control the aforementioned historians and to correct their errors but new conclusions have been given where possible (Codex diplomaticus... 1836; Urkundenbuch... 1891-1905). Economic sources from different Teutonic offices have been used in the same way (Das Marienburger... 1913; Der Große Ämterbuch... 1921; Das Große Zinsbuch... 1958).

„*Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*” have been used as well, but partially where proper information were given (Scriptores Rerum... 1861-1874)<sup>1</sup>. Peter von Dusburg chronicle is also available in Polish language version (Dusburg 2004). Bishops of Samland Visitation Records (1569 A.D.) from the Spit have been also included (Wizytacja biskupstwa... 2001).

Unused information have been extracted and show the settlements as well as functionality of the postal road (Liv-, Esth- und Curlandisches... 1857-1910; Liv-, Esth- und Curlandisches... 1900-1905). Some of the documents, that show various aspects of organization of infrastructure on the Spit (only Klaipeda region), have been used by Willoweit (Regesta historico... 1948-1973).

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this work were used: Dusburg, Petri de...; Jeroschin...; Die Litauischen Wegeberichte...; Die Jungere... .

On contrary to published sources also one written has been used. It is dated on 29.09.1444 A.D. and is a part of the Berlin-Dahlem archive (Geheimes Staatsarchiv...).

L. von Schroetters "*Karte von Preußen*" has been presented here as well (Schroetter 1796-1806). There is no need to use other maps, because most of them, which are needed to show this subject, have been already presented in the literature.

### Historical background

Curonian Spit was a point of strategic significance to the Order because it was the only land connection with from Samland through Kurland to Livonia. In the winter, when waters frozen uncontrolled and mostly safe passages to every location around the Curonian Lagoon were enabled (Prekop 2004:29).

The union of the Teutonic Order and Livonian Order in 1237 A.D. boosted the process of conquering the Prussian tribes and lands that had belonged to them earlier. Christianization has been a major cause, but also political and economic factors were important. The only possible connection in that time has been possible through the Baltic Sea.

When Sambia has been eventually conquered, and the last Prussians in Powunden and Laptau regions were slain in 1258 a free access to the Spit was possible. Teutonic Knights gained a fast link to Memel (Klaipeda) as well because this fort has been found in 1252 A.D. Livonian settlement had a strategic role with perspectives to become a local trade emporium (Willoweit 1969:40nn)<sup>2</sup>. Mentioned historians don't see that those two actions, somewhat coordinated enabled a partial military control over the Curonian Spit. Klaipedas' location is thought only to make a further expansion down the Memel River.

Military situation has been unclear however, because Klaipeda was razed soon after its founding. Knights' loss at Durba in 1260 A.D. made Prussians more hostile and aggressive towards Teutonic Order. Mutiny of Prussian tribes has been eventually broken in 1274 A.D.<sup>3</sup>

No signs of normalization were even in 1283 A.D. when the Order conquered the last independent Prussian tribes in the south-east. At that time that direction has been important for Teutonic Order, which didn't interfere much in Livonian-Lithuanian conflict. Despite this lack of activity Lithuanians organized a military action through Curonian Spit on Samland and they left without troubles (Dusburg, Petri... :144; Dusburg, Peter... :cap. 215)<sup>4</sup>.

As a response Knights built a castle on the Spit called „*Neuhaus*” in order to be aware of further attacks (Dusburg, Peter... :cap. 216). If we ought to believe Dusburg i Jeroschin, that castle stood „*in dicta Neria super litus maris sals*” (Dusburg, Petri... :144) or „*uf salzende se*” (Dusburg, Petri... :508). We can believe that there was a small defensive structure earlier as the name “*Neuhaus*” – “*Castrum Nova*” (New Castle) indicates. Peter von Dusburg could have passed on this subject as exposing losses of the Order was not the purpose of his work. During further fights Klaipeda has been destroyed in 1293 and 1323 A.D. (Willoweit 1969:47). The war ended in two years later and it enabled a military infrastructure development action before the next conflict arises (Prekop

<sup>2</sup> He sees the economic factors of founding this city. Military factors are shown by: Prekop 2004:40. Difference comes from the subject of their scholarship.

<sup>3</sup> In 1264 A.D. Lithuanians set their forces to Samland in order to strengthen the anti-Teutonic uprising (Prekop 2004:44-48).

<sup>4</sup> Most of Teutonic Knights' forces were in that time in the east-south fighting with the last independent tribes, thus Lithuanians wanted to distract Teutonic troops and weaken the Teutonic defenses in Sambia.

2004:159-162). The period of unsafe peace on the Lithuanian border between 1325-1343 A.D. is by no means accidental, as during that time TO was involved in a conflict with Poland.

In 1328 A.D. Livonians gave the control over Klaipeda to the Order. The main purpose was to get rid of financial problems, which were connected with the ongoing rebuilds after destructions (Willoweit 1969: 47n). On the other hand Teutonic Order has been involved more in eastern policy, as TO was then in possession of one of the most strategic ports in the region. Samogitians, who were allied with Lithuanians, inhabited lands near Klaipeda. Further events prove this thesis, as Klaipeda has been destroyed several times during Teutonic-Lithuanian conflicts about the territory of Samogitia in 1360, 1365, 1379, 1393 (only outskirts) and in 1401 A.D. (Willoweit 1969:48, 122, 137)<sup>5</sup>. The city itself has been destroyed in 1409 A.D., when the next Samogitian uprising took place (Willoweit 1969:87). This started the Great War between TO and Polish-Lithuanian alliance.

Those aforementioned damages up to 1401 A.D. forced TOs' elites to rebuild the city. Undertaken works, lead by specialists, covered up to 10% annual expenses of the Order in the years 1398-1409. Highest expenditures are proved for the years 1402-1403 and they fall constantly to 1409 A.D. when Klaipeda was destroyed again.

Soon after the wars between the opponents ended in 1422 A.D. the military position of the Curonian Spit begins to fade, giving up the first place to communication role. Historians see this fall of military position when the peace treaty near Lake Melno in 1422 A.D., between Order and allied Poland and Lithuania. Teutonic Order promised in it to leave its claims to Samogitia. After that knights never organized a full scale action in that region, as they had to tackle with the economic crisis. Military routes via Curonian Spit are known, because they are recorded in „*Litauische Wegeberichte*“, for the years 1384-1402<sup>6</sup>. Rossitten is mentioned there as a stopping point on the road to Windenburg. Traces of Rossittens' significance can be found in „*Die Jungere Höchmeisterchronik*“, where this city is mentioned among Teutonic castles during the conflict with Poland in 1454-1466 (JHC:143).

## Castles

Problems connected with the location of „*Neuhaus*“ castle have been analyzed very often. In the beginning historians were critical towards a castle on the Spit itself like Max Toeppen (Toeppen 1857:105) and G.T. Hoffheinz (Hoffheinz 1878:619nn). They opted for a location near Craz, but first of them made a fast revision of his model and started to say that there was a castle in Rossitten, which has been located 3-4 kilometers to the north, so near Pillkoppen (Toeppen 1858:205). J. Bender also believed that there was a castle on the Spit, but he went even more and believed that this structure has been a residence of the bishop of Samland (Bender 1874:286).

It was Bezenberger, who turned the attention towards the name of Pillkoppen on the Spit and also tried to connect it with Hennebergers hints. This XVIth century historian and mapmaker located the castle there, however Bezenberger was skeptical towards this statement (Bezenberger 1889:183n, 207n). He still believed that the castle stood near the Spit (Bezenberger 1889:183). In 1898 Carl Beckherrn returned to Hoffheinz statements and corrected his errors (Beckherrn 1898:164-174). His work wasn't free from them and Paul Siegmund had to correct Beckheern in one point (Siegmund 1928:299n). This hasn't affected the location of „*Neuhaus*“ in historians' eyes however.

<sup>5</sup> In 1401 A.D. Lithuanians troops razed the city and killed the inhabitants (Willoweit 1969: 50n, 138).

<sup>6</sup> Rossitten was a passage point to Windenburg (por.: *Die Litauischen...* :665; Mager 1938:101).

K. Forstreuter was the first to believe that the castle stood near Cranz, as historical records indicate, but its origins were in his eyes near Pillkopen (Forstreuter 1931:48). So the castle ought to be translocated. Mager used this idea as well. All he added to the subject was weak that infrastructure lead to translocation, he also indicated that the soil near Pillkopen contains almost no clay needed to build the castle (Mager 1938:101). Traces of Forstreuter's statement can be found in later publications, such as mentioned historic maps made by Mortensen (Historisch-geographischer... 1868-1879:1).

There is only one historian, who (like Toeppen) believes, without giving any reasons that the castle stood from the beginning in Rossitten (Prekop 2004:40).

Hoffheinz used two documents from 1258 and 1300 A.D. in which TO and bishop divide whole Samland between themselves, as they were obliged by Papal States. He thought that castle ought to stand near pagan settlement ruins located on a hill called „*Garbick*”<sup>7</sup>, which guarded whole region near the Spit (Hoffheinz 1878:621). If Curonian Spit hasn't been mentioned in those documents, this means that it hasn't belonged to the TOs' administration in 1258 A.D, and thus bishops' demands were rejected.

In XIXth century „*Garbick*” was an island laying in the delta of „*Wosegauer Beek*” and „*Bedauer Beek*” - two local rivers, thus there was no place for the salt water.

That forced Beckherrn to correct Hoffheinz (Beckherrn 1898:164n), who located the castle on the ruins not near them. He indicated that the castle stood 1,5 kilometers to the north from „*Garbick*” near Cranz. He also indicated that the border ended on that island because in 1330 A.D Curonian Lagoons' shore was in that place. We can see those shore changes on Henneberger and Schroetter maps.

There is one detail, which allows us to think that this statement is true. On Hennenberger map an island „*Rodahn*” is marked, and on Schroetter map it lays in a distance from the shore, as Kleemann indicates (Kleemann 1939:7).

An inn called „*Nuwehaus*” can be also found in economic records (Das Große Zinsbuch... 1958:56). It stood in Cranz in 1437 A.D. Not only Teutonic Order wanted to have a castle in that place. Bishop of Samland wanted to build a castle of a similar name in 1352 A.D. An inn has been also mentioned in location document. Historians identified it with Cranzkrug (Beckherrn 1898:171-174) or with Wiskiauten (Siegmond 1928:299n). Beckherrn mentions that bishop wanted to improve his incomes, but it is more possible for him that the castle has been washed away by the sea (Beckherrn 1898:173n).

There is also one possibility however. In 1352 A.D. Lithuanians crossed the frozen Lagoon and launched an attack against Schaaken and Powunden region (Wigand... :519n). Wigand von Marburg wrote that Knights were surprised and unaware of the raid and that they've only managed to catch one group of the retreating raiders. It is possible that the castle has been destroyed during that raid. It is likely for the Lithuanians to pass through the Spit as earlier.

One thing ought to be added here. There was no need for the Order to locate the castle on the Spit. Distances from Cranz to Königsberg and to Rossitten reach approximately 30 kilometers, so if „*Neuhaus*” was located in that particular place this would have been the best location. This allowed to communicate fast between the points.

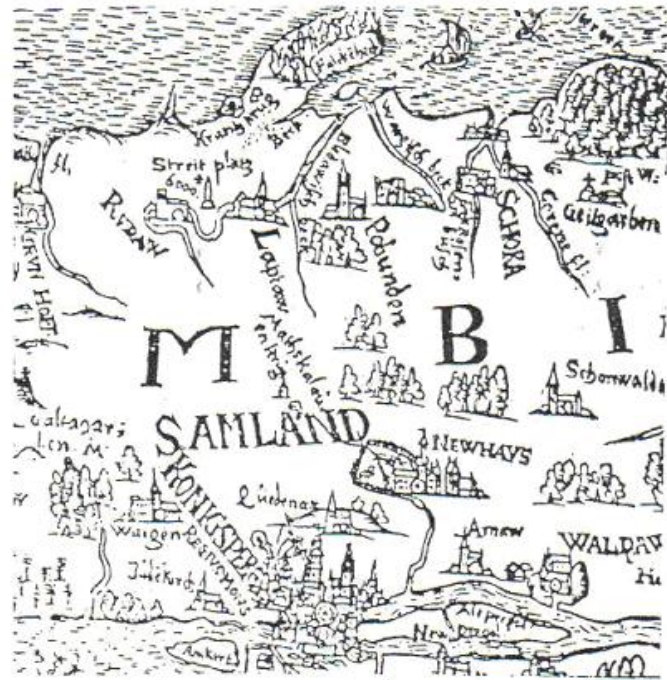
If we put all the facts together there is no thing that makes us think, that the castle Neuhaus has been translocated from Pillkopen to Cranz. Maybe Pillkopen consists of the Prussian words “city” (keep) and “wall” (Germ.: *Burgwall*) ([R.J.] 1881:40-46; Forstreuter 1931:48), but in this

<sup>7</sup> „...preussisch Dome genannt, steht, **nicht fern** (A.G) von der Burg, welche Neuenhus gennant wird.” (see: Hoffheinz 1878:620).

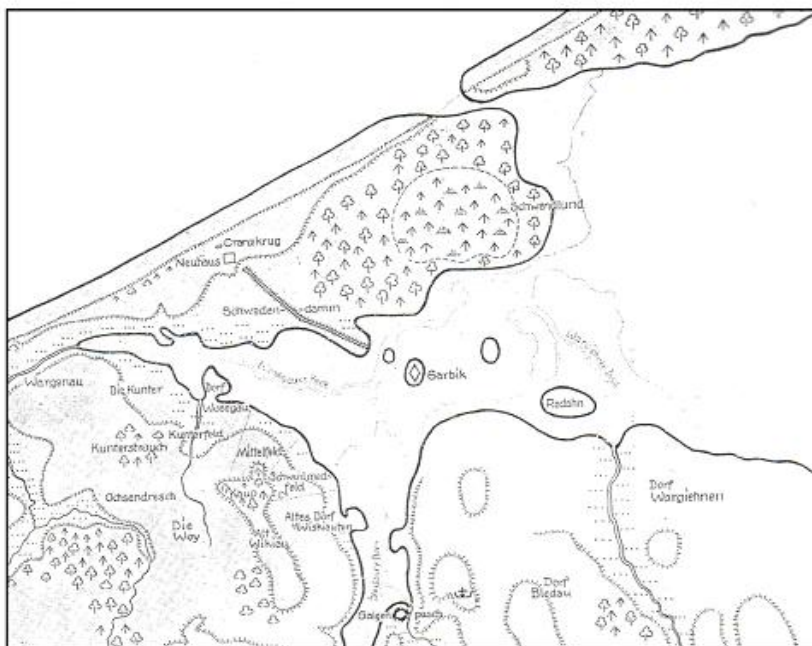
particular case this means rather nothing, as will be proven later in this work. Castle “*Neuhaus*” stood in the same place for almost 70 years.



"Garbick in XIXth century  
source: L. von Schroetter, Karte von Ostpreussen..., 1796-1806.



The isle drawn on the Lagoon by Henneberger was named "Rodahn"  
source: O.Kleemann, Ueber die wikingische Siedlung von Wiskiauten..., 1939, p.8.



"Garbick" and the area surrounding it in IX-XIth century. Lines visible cover the shape of XXth century shore.  
Source: O. Kleemann, Über die Wikingische Siedlung von Wiskiauten..., 1939, p. 7.

Records also indicate that the Spit itself has been incorporated rather late. Administration has been reorganised since 1309 A.D., when Marienburg has been erected as capital of the state and when Pomerania has been conquered. Those changes occurred also in Samland after 1312 A.D., when big units like commendatories have been divided into smaller districts (Toeppen 1858:209). We can also believe that the Spit has been divided between Königsberg and Memel since its incorporation. The border ran on a hill called „*Cropstein*” which cut the Spit almost in half (Bezenberger 1889:184).

In 1258 A.D. as it was written earlier bishop of Samland demanded 1/3 of the Spit, which he ought to receive by law. This one ought to be divided „*in tempore*” (SUB, no. 57), so this might mean that the bishop wanted to receive terrains that were to be incorporated soon. It is also hard to say whenever he wanted to divide the whole Spit, but Klaipeda belonged to bishopric of Curland (Forstreuter 1931:47n).

It is very likely that the Spit has been incorporated near 1321 A.D., as no there were no demands from the bishop of Samland during this period. This term “*in tempore*” ought to be taken as a request, which were to be realized when there will be a suitable chance to do so. Demands started soon after Johannes I Clare took over the post of bishop of Samland in 1322 A.D. Those demands (CDP, Bd. 2, no. 99, 100) are rather unlikely to be an effect of bishops’ temperament, but they ought to be connected with incorporation of the Spit, which gave an opportunity to receive his part (Rediger 1907:67n)<sup>8</sup>. Also a revision effort on Vistula Spit was undertaken. As we may see Lithuanian attacks ended earlier (Prekop 2004:132). However that action failed. New demands were stated in 1366 A.D. and they were only about the southern part, which belonged to Königsberg (CDP, Bd. 3, no. 93; SUB, no. 495; Długokęcki 1996:36)<sup>9</sup>, what indicates that the Spit has been divided earlier, probably from the beginning. This action finally ended up as a loss again, as it was repeated in the beginning of XVth century (RHD, P. 2, no. 1448). In 1444 A.D. bishop of Samland renewed his demands over „*beyde Nerygen ken Dantezgk und ken Memel*” and „*das Kewerissche Hab*” (OBA, no. 8559). 1/3 of the incomes from Vistula Spits’ „*kretzmern, dorffern und gartenern ausgenomen wasser czins vischereye und den... bornsteyns*” were demanded. There were no similar demands regarding to Curonian Spit, but the bishop wanted a permission for his fishermen to use „*allerye genewe und en den (the bishop) czins davon geben und auch das sie (fishermen) selbst also visscher mogen zur irer notdorff*”.

As we can see all efforts were failures. However the bishopric received incomes from „*Cuntzkrug*” in 1506 A.D., as records indicate. Payment has been given to authorities in the district of Schaaken and to priest (parish) of Rossitten (RHD, P. 2, no. 3863).

Archbishopric in Riga had a guarantee to receive 1/3 of the land as well, but no demands over the Spit are known. The one, which is recorded is dated 1392 A.D. and concerns territories on eastern Curonian Lagoons’ shore, so in the same year when mentioned bishopric ceded this region to bishopric of Samland (LEC, Bd. 3, no. 1319).

Let us return to Forstreuters’ statements concerning localization of „*Neuhaus*”. They don’t go well with demands from 1366 A.D. Following the treaty in Marienburg with the Grand Master of the Order Winrich von Kniprode, the bishop of Samland demanded territory between mountains „*Cropsteyn et Pillecop*”. If we consider the latter as the localization of Pillkoppen, than the part between “*Cropsteyn*” and “*Pillecop*” will be a mere half of the promised 1/3 of the whole southern

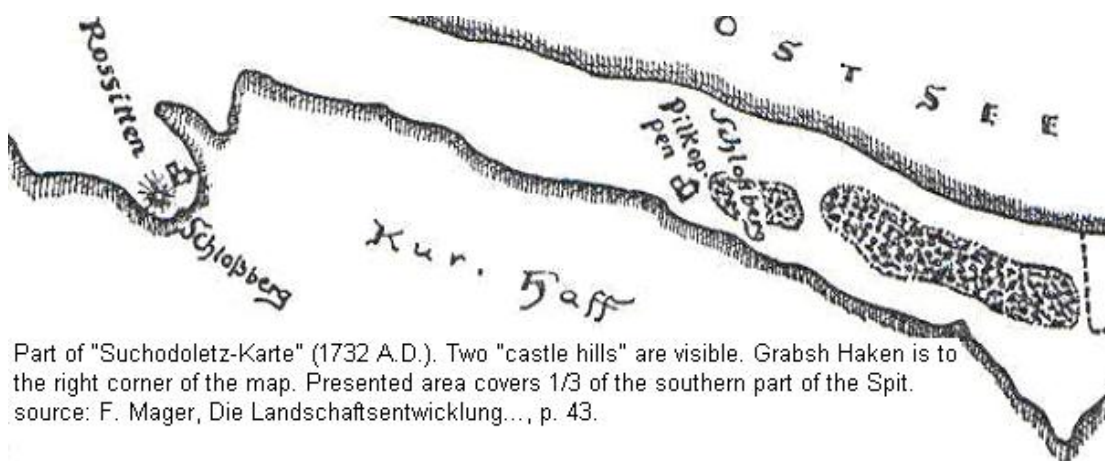
<sup>8</sup> He didn’t connect it with the incorporation of Curonian Spit.

<sup>9</sup> Voigt dates this document as it was in the original version, Woelky and Mendthal set it between years 1366-1370, and W. Długokęcki sets it the years 1358-1363 A.D.



Spit. If we measure the 1/3 of the distance between the beginning („*Cropsteyn*”) and ending of the Spit we will locate „*Pillecop*” near Rossitten. This proves that the castle stood there, but it ought not to be taken as „*Neuhaus*”.

The place in which castle has been located can be found in „*Suchodoletz-karte*” from 1732, where the structure is marked on the German „*haken*” with a signature „*Schloßberg*” (LEC, Bd. 3, no. 1319). Pillkopen is marked in the same way. If we look on the map again than bishops’ demands are very clear, as he demanded a part between two of the „*haken*”. Windenburg which stood on the opposite shore of the Lagoon was also located on „*haken*”. This ought to be connected with their role as strategic communication points in the region.



Part of "Suchodoletz-Karte" (1732 A.D.). Two "castle hills" are visible. Grabsh Haken is to the right corner of the map. Presented area covers 1/3 of the southern part of the Spit. source: F. Mager, Die Landschaftsentwicklung..., p. 43.

Such a identification will prove legends about the god „*Pilecob*”, and will make the role of „*Schwarzen Berge*” as a place of its cult possible. It will also solve the dating problem with the mentioned in Engels’ work „*Burgwall*”, which was marked nearby. He also proved that in Rossitten’s case the elder artifacts are dated near 1360 A.D., and ought to be connected with erection of the settlement (Bezenberger 1889:183)<sup>10</sup>.

Bezenberger saw a connection between names „*Pillkopen*” – „*Neustadt*” and „*Altdorfer Berg*” because of the name and marks „*Pillecop*” there (Bezenberger 1889:207), but this settlement isn’t mentioned in medieval records, though medieval artifacts have been found there (Engel 1931:116). It is later known under two names – „*Neustadt*” or „*Pillkopen*” (WBS:298), what started a series of mistakes. The origins of the name ought to be connected with migration of fishermen from overpopulated settlements like Rossitten. Than the name “New City” would be a good hint where to look for the place of exodus indicating on Rossitten of course.

Administration is a somewhat problematic case. If the castle stood there in 1360 A.D. we ought to believe that authorities resided there. No traces of them haven’t been found yet. Toeppen wrote that „*Nuwehus*” stood in Rossitten in 1330 A.D., but in cited document only the inn („*kregem*”!) is mentioned. He located Rossitten near Pillkopen as well (Toeppen 1858:215). However this statement is untrue as we have seen.

In 1397 A.D. the district of Schaaken has been created. „*Sarkauer Wald*” is a remnant of territorial reorganization, divided between Rudau, Schaaken and Rossitten, which was located near Craz (Mager 1938:50). We must refer to historic records again.

<sup>10</sup> This was in Bezenbergers’ eyes the location of castle in Rossitten. As we know this was a false statement.



First mention about a structure in Rossitten is dated 1372 A.D. (*Die Litauischen...* :665). But the castle is mentioned as „*nachtleger*”, so more like a hostel. This doesn't prove Toeppen's view (Toeppen 1857:105), but indicates that this point had also defensive properties. In further records from 1379-1389 A.D. „*husgesinde*” are mentioned, whom the commendator of Memel owed a certain amount of money (*Amterbuch...* :303). It is likely that they come from Rossitten as well as the innkeeper. As we can see on the map Rossitten has been covered by castles in Memel and in Windenburg, which has been built in second half of XIVth century (Toeppen 1857:105), as well as by castles in Sambia, so a powerful fortress was not needed there.

This structure probably has been erected near 1366 A.D., when „*Pilecop*” is mentioned. This would fit also to Engel's conclusions (Engel 1931:110)<sup>11</sup>. Such a location enabled normal control over the communication route to Windenburg and Klaipeda. In 1403 A.D. authorities were sent to Rossitten. They were called „*Pfleger*”, and as their name indicates they were sent by the Grand Marshall of the Order, thus we can expect a “kammeramt” there (Voigt 1828-1838, Bd.6:246), which would lead to seek the erection of a normal castle at that time. Rossitten doesn't appear in the list given in „*Ausgabebuch*” from 1404 A.D. (AGB, p. 462nn). Such an action is however logical, as most of the expenses for infrastructure development have been held at that time. Rossitten possessed also brick manufacture capable of producing a high amount of that particular merchandise (*Das Marienburger...* 1913:248). Only Bezenberger is against identification aforementioned office with “kammeramt”, he rather wants to see a sort of “local coordinator” with a title of “burggraf” (Bezenberger 1889:202). This particular office is mentioned in XVIth century, when he held it also with the post of fishing master (“*fischmeister*”) (*Wizytacja...* 2001:297; Bezenberger 1889:200). Bezenberger's point of view has been forgotten in recent publications (Thielen 1965:27; Sarnowsky 1993:473, 482).

Such movements led to more efficient administration, as „kammeramt” was under the jurisdiction of Grand Marshall in Königsberg (Voigt 1828-1838, Bd.6:546nn; Sarnowsky 1993:116). We can also expect that this office operated as a local court apart from economic affairs.

### Hostels and other structures of military infrastructure

As we can see the Spit has been guarded by two castles Neuhaus and Rossitten, which never really filled in this role. Castle in Rossitten can be concerned as a castle only close to 1403 A.D., when it probably was expanded and further. It served as a hotel earlier, and thus its' military role wasn't exposed. Records show that a similar structure operated on the northern part of the Spit. It was called „*Treyeros*” identified with the village of Carwaiten.

It is mentioned in routes from 1414, 1431 and 1442 A.D. together with a place called „*Cusfelde*” (further Kunzen) (Bezenberger 1889:185; Forstreuter 1931:49; Mager 1938:111), where authorities and travelers stopped on their way to Samland or Livonia. It is very unprobable that they were settlements as some historians want (Forstreuter 1931:49; Mager 1938:111).

Apart from „*Treyeros*” another important point is mentioned, and which has been forgotten by cited historians. It was called „*pferdeheyde*” (*Das Marienburger...* 1913:487)<sup>12</sup>, as its' name indicates that horses were kept there. In 1408 A.D. an expenditure of ½ mark is noted for „*Kuvern, dy in der meyster gab of der pferdeheyde*” (*Das Marienburger...* 1913:487). This point belonged to the

<sup>11</sup> Dating of the structure was unclear to Hollack 1908:83, 205. There were two hill forts in the area one from Iron Age and the second was considered as pagan or medieval.

<sup>12</sup> This place is shown on Mager's map. “*Pferdeheyde*” is next to Carwaiten (see: Mager 1938).

Spit as earlier expenditures has been noted in Rossitten and further in Memel (Das Marienburger... 1913:487).

As Mager writes that in 1379 A.D. 40 horses („*kobeln*”) were sent „*off der Neringe*”. He also believes that it was of no logical explanation for the Order to send them on Vistula Spit (Mager 1938:119). This action can be connected with the breeding stables in Sztutowo (*Studhoff*), which makes this action more logical than Mager’s wants. However we can be certain that „*Pferdeheyde*” possessed horses as well.

This name as well as „*Treyeros*” can be two different names of the same location<sup>13</sup>. The latter is considered by Forstreuter as older, probably erected in XIVth century. He also believes that infrastructure was organized in medieval times (Forstreuter 1931:49). Distances are also similar as in case of „*Neuhaus*” and Rossitten and reach approximately 30 kilometers.

Bezenberger sees a hotel in this region as the name Perwelk indicates (Bezenberger 1889:187)<sup>14</sup>, as records dated 1431 A.D. show it (LEC, Bd.8, no. 531; also: Forstreuter 1931:49). This structure served travelers on their way to Windenburg and Klaipeda, as in this region Curonian Lagoon has its narrowest point (Bezenberger 1889:186n). In „*Litauische Wegeberichte*” only a route to Windenburg via Rossitten is mentioned in 1387 A.D., what gives the right to think that there was no hostel there at that time. It is rather more possible that „*Pferdeheyde*” served travellers in 14th century.

It was very difficult to travel during summer to Windenburg by Lagoon, so some sort of a carriage point ought to be located there. It wasn’t also a problem to sleep in the open air in the summer, so in the winter this castle served as a hostel. Frozen Lagoon in the winter enabled safe passages to the other shore, thus the road to Windenburg has been more important than to Klaipeda at that time. It is very likely that knight traveled to the latter from this hostel following the shore of the Lagoon, thus „*Pferdeheyde*” might be as old as Rossitten and Windenburg.

It is unlikely that „*Treyeros*” was located near a settlement, as it would have been mentioned like Rossitten in „*Litauische Wegebrichte*”. No inn operated there for sure as well. A record dated 1456 A.D. has been written by travelers, who complain about the lack of food and who demand a proper man to be sent „*der en denne eynen gutten willen mit essen und tryncken und kochen beweyszete und sust zeusach, das dy ding richtig zeugunk*” (LEC, Bd. 11, no. 573).

Soon after that event „*Treyeros*” is mentioned for the last time in 1459 A.D. (LEC, Bd. 11, no. 807)<sup>15</sup>. In the beginning of XVIth century route ran via Rossitten, Nidden and Negeln (LEC, Bd. 2, no. 319), what makes us believe that this place lost its significance. Sources mention an inn in Carwaiten in 1509 A.D. (Bezenberger 1889:185).

<sup>13</sup> „*Pferdeheyde*” wasn’t forested. „*Heide*” refers to forest clearings (see: Mager 1960:138n). This rather indicates that if horses were kept there this area would have been a meadow instead of forest. A privileg for inn in Carwaiten presented by Bezenberger doesn’t stand against this statement, as mentioned in it „*faule Wieck*” was a bay „*an krüge gelegen*”, thus „*Tregeras*” was located near (see: Bezenberger 1889:185nn). If we look closer at Rossitten and Nidden we can say that bigger meadows were to found only on „*haken*”, in this particular case on Birschnische Haken, and that’s „*Pferdeheyde*”. Perwelk, located on its’ place is a village from 19th century. There’s nothing against to connect those places in one.

<sup>14</sup> Historian noted that those distances were of similar length.

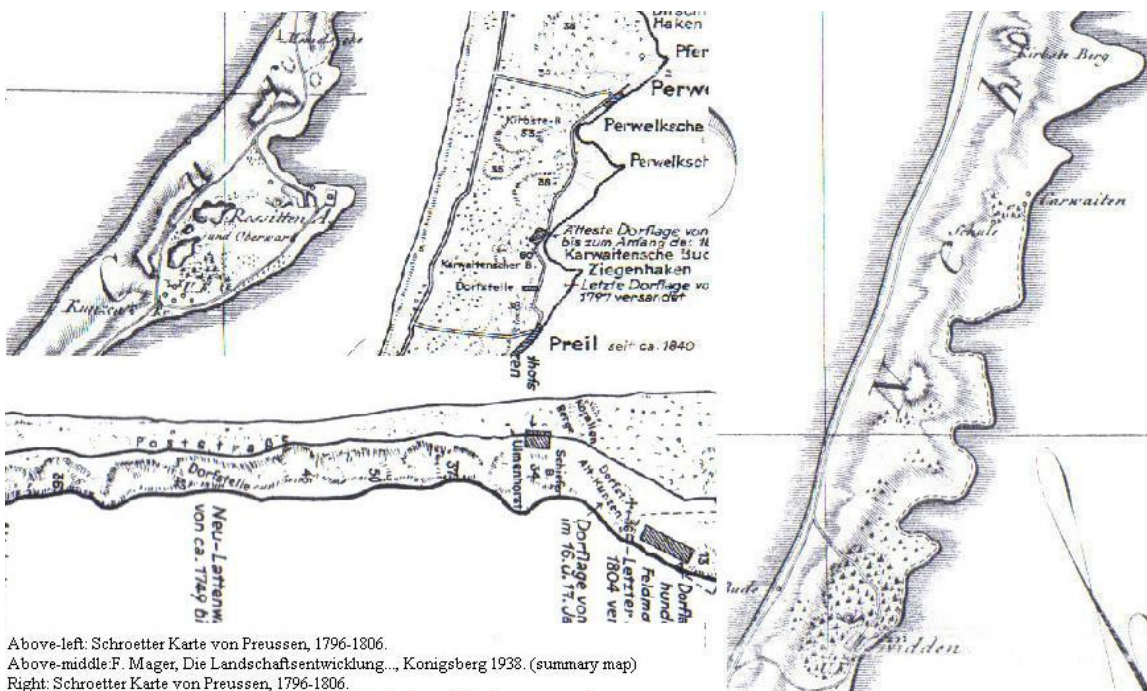
<sup>15</sup> It might have functioned later, see: LEC2, Bd. 2, no. 478. Document dated on the beginning of XVIth century is in shortened form. Teutonic authorities ask for inspection of a „*nachtleger*”, which ought to be done during travel to Klaipeda.

„Cusfelde”, which has been already mentioned, is probably younger than Rossitten. Its origins ought to be connected with works near Rossitten, which concerned chopping the forest near it in order to obtain building material. It is recorded in 1442 A.D. and in 1414 A.D. or even in 1431 A.D. the route ran still via Rossitten (Bezenberger 1889:49). However its origins can be found earlier.

In years from 1399 up to 1408 A.D. several big groups passed via Curonian Spit (Willoweit 1969:131n). In 1399 A.D. Samogitian nobles traveled with 82 people (probably soldiers) and in 1408 A.D. Livonian authorities traveled to Marienburg. There were more than hundred people there with same amount of horses. It is unlikely that they’ve stayed in the castle. Probably they’ve stopped in Rossitten or near it in “Cusfelde”. In 1427 A.D. Livonian Master asked for supplies from the Spit as his 80 heralds needed them (LEC, Bd. 7, no. 667).

This place might have been created in the beginning of XVth century. A hint, which allows dating its expansion more precisely, is connected with sending a raft („eyne flosze”) from Klaipeda to Rossitten in the years 1420-34 A.D (Amterbuch... :310). This activity could have taken place after 1431 A.D. as in that time Rossitten has been mentioned in records, but before 1434 A.D.

If we look on the names „Treyeros” and „Cusfelde”, they cannot be regarded as settlements. The latter ends with a „field”, and the first one is explained by Bezenberger as „dry meadow” (Bezenberger 1889:185). It is very unlikely that travelers were staying in inns for a night, especially where there were dozens of them. Only fields were the solution to this problem.



Above-left: Schroetter Karte von Preussen, 1796-1806.  
 Above-middle: F. Mager, Die Landschaftsentwicklung..., Königsberg 1938. (summary map)  
 Right: Schroetter Karte von Preussen, 1796-1806.  
 Bottom: F. Mager, Die Landschaftsentwicklung..., Königsberg 1938. (summary map)

Less problematic is the case of organization of military or postal road on the Spit. In medieval times road ran near the coast, though on “Schroetter Karte”, in the vicinity of Rossitten, it ran near the shore of the Lagoon (see picture above: upper-left corner). When the road passed Rossitten it ran all the way near the coast as marked in the vicinity of Carwaiten (see: right corner). The latter was connected with Nidden by a local road. In XXth century Perwalk and Preil have been connected with the

main road (see: upper row in the middle). Though those regions were covered by drifting sands, we can assume that this part has medieval origins. Probably in the XIVth century postal road ended in this place. In XVth century new settlements were created like Nidden, Negeln, Schwarzort and probably Sandkrug<sup>16</sup>, thus this part has been extended up to the Spits end in the north.

“*Pferdeheyde*” is marked above Perwelk (note: only “*Pfer*” is visible). “*Karwaitensche Bucht*” is marked and aforementioned “*Faule Wieck*” is above it. That makes the conclusion, that “*Pferdeheyde*” and “*Treyeros*” were in fact the same place. They were located on the biggest “haken” as well as castle Rossitten.

Points like Rossitten and „*Treyeros*” were significant points in Teutonic infrastructure, and thus we can expect that they’ve possessed churches or at least chapels.

A priest „*Pfarrer*” is mentioned in 1416 A.D. (RHD, P. 1, Vol. 1, no. 3628), so we can expect that a certain structure has been erected, it is very possible that the castle possessed a chapel in which the ceremonies were held. What is more interesting this priest has been sent from bishopric of Curland (Forstreuter 1931:59). It is very likely that Curonians migrated there, as they can be found in Klaipeda in the beginning of XVth century and in Rossitten in 1408 A.D. Visitation records indicate that parish of Kunzen reached to Carwaiten in XVIth century, thus Negeln, Schwarzort and Sandkrug ought to belong somewhere else<sup>17</sup>. The parish of Rossitten ought to have had similar size. It has been found so late, because Prussians, who inhabited this territory earlier, were free from payments to the church, inhabited this region (Toeppen 1867:10). It is likely that have vanished or have been wiped out and Curonians came in. Their remnants lived in the southern part of the Spit in XVIth century (Bezenberger 1889:259; WBS:294-298).

Little can be written about chapel in Carwaiten. It is certain that is stood there in XVIIth century and that it belonged to the parish of Kunzen (Forstreuter 1931:59; WBS:286). We can assume however that it is older and connect it with „*Treyeros*”, because it was the only place where a chapel ought to be found.

Forstreuter was uncertain if there was a parish earlier on the Spit in 1383 A.D. (RHD, P. 2, no. 1101), when he wrote about the parish of Kunzendorf (Forstreuter 1931:59). It can’t be identified with the Spit, as this settlement can be found near the Polish city of Elblag (RHD, P. 1, V. 1, no. 4923).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The oldest dated record mentions Nidden in 1429 A.D. (see: Regesta... P. 1, V. 1, no. 5140). There is an undated document, in which the commendator of Memel asks about sending 50 men to chop down the forest near Nidden (see: Regesta... P. 1, V. 3, no. 28495). Willoweit dates this document on first half of the 15th century (see: Willoweit 1969:112). We know that Negeln is mentioned later than Nidden on 1437-1447 A.D. (see: Amterbuch... :311, 313); but those two were probably built in the same time (see: Willoweit 1969:112). Schwarzort had been located before 1429 A.D. as losses due to storm were noted there (see: RHD, P.1., Vol. 1, no. 5176). Sandkrug is noted on 1525 A.D. (see: Forstreuter 1931:55). We can assume however that those place have been built up to 1409, when Curonians started to settle on the Spit and in area around Klaipeda, where they are noted in 1402 and 1403 A.D. (see: Das Marienburger... 1913:176, 261). This tribe is also noted in Rossitten probably in 1408 (see: Das Marienburger... 1913:547), and without any doubt on 1409 A.D. (see: Das Marienburger... 1913:548). That enables to date those settlements earlier. Sandkrug ought to be created in the first decade of the 15th century (or even earlier). It served probably as a carriage point to Klaipeda (see: Mager 1938:186).

<sup>17</sup> Visitation party hasn’t reached those settlements, so we can suppose that they’ve belonged somewhere else and extend this state of division to medieval times (WBS:301).

<sup>18</sup> Settlement named Kunzendorf was in located in Pomerania (RHD, P. 1, V. 2, no. 13683). Second Kunzendorf was located near Torun i Chelmo (RHD, P. 2, no. 97, 3800, 4088, 4093). Third near Dzierzgon (*Christburg*) (RHD, P. 1, V. 1, no. 8120).

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## KRYŽIUOČIŲ KARINĖS INFRASTRUKTŪROS FORMAVIMAS KURŠIŲ NERIJOJE (1283–1525 M.)

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### Santrauka

Kuršių nerija Kryžiuočių ordinui viduramžiais buvo labai svarbi transporto linija. Derėtų dar kartą atlikti šios tematikos analizę, nes paskutiniai darbai šia tema yra skelbti dar prieš Antrąjį pasaulinį karą. Karinės infrastruktūros sąvoką šiame aprašyme reikia suprasti kaip pilių geografinį išsidėstymą ir visas su tuo susijusias problemas. Kartu tai yra ir ekonominės bei socialinės struktūros (dvarai, stovyklavietės (vok. *nachtleger*), laukai, arklių keitimo punktai, etc.), kurios garantuodavo maisto tiekimą kryžiuočių kariuomenei. Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjami klausimai, susiję su XIII–XVI a. Ordino administracijos ir religinės veiklos problemomis. Šis darbas neapima pasirinktos tematikos lietuvių mokslininkų tyrimų, išskyrus neseniai publikuotą Nijolės Strakauskaitės darbą apie Kuršių neriją (2004), kuris tiria kitus Kuršių nerijos istorijos aspektus. Be to, reikia pabrėžti, kad ši teritorija nėra dažnai minima šių laikų Lenkijos istorikų darbuose. Straipsnis šiek tiek užpildo šią spragą ir aprašo viduramžių laikų Kuršių neriją ir jos panašumus su Vyslos delta ir Helio pusiasaliu.

Tik dviejų Kuršių nerijos gyvenviečių istorija siekia XV amžių. Tai Rasytė (*Rossitten*, dabar – Rybačyj), kur buvo pastatyta pilis ir dvaras, ir *Pferdeheyde*, vėliau žinoma *Treyeros* dvaro vardu. Atstumas tarp šių vietovių ir Klaipėdos, taip pat ir Kranto (*Cranz*, dabar – Zelenogradsk), yra apie 30 kilometrų. Šios vietovės buvo perstatytos ir pertvarkytos XV amžiaus pradžioje, t. y. tuo metu, kada buvo atstatytas ir išplėstas Klaipėdos (*Memel*) miestas. Didelė tikimybė, kad *Cusfelde* pradėta statyti tuo pačiu istoriniu laikotarpiu, tačiau *Treyeros* yra vėlesnių laikų gyvenvietė.

Vėliau, po Didžiojo karo kilusios ekonominės krizės metu, nebetekusi savo funkcijų Kuršių nerijos transporto infrastruktūra iš esmės sunyko. Buvusios savo svarbos nebeteko ir *Treyeros*. Nerija driekęsis kariuomenės kelias taip pat buvo užmirštas. Rasytės pilį XVIII a. irgi ištiko toks pat likimas.

Aptariamos pilys bei dvarai turėjo koplyčias, kurių liekanas galima atrasti Rasytėje ir *Treyeros*. Viena jų vėliau buvo minima Karvaičiuose (*Carwaiten*). Labai gali būti, kad šios koplyčios istorija siekia viduramžių laikus.

*Gauta 2007 m. lapkričio mėn.*

