

THE CHRISTIANISATION OF THE BALTIC SEEN FROM MEDIEVAL FRANCE

Loïc Chollet

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-6183-2252

ABSTRACT

The way the Baltic region was viewed in Christian Europe during the High and Late Middle Ages was strongly characterised by the fact that it was the land of the last pagans. Beginning with the crusade against the Wends (Polabian Slavs) in 1147, attempts to convert them in the region took the form of the Northern Crusades, authorised by the Pope. The Teutonic Order became the driving force behind these crusades from the 13th to the 15th centuries, and secured support in Christian Europe, including France. The representation of the east Baltic region, on which this article focuses, was mainly related to these crusades. The author's aim is to provide an overview of the attitude of the French-related nobility and intellectual elite towards the Christianisation of the Baltic from the tenth to the 15th centuries, with a special focus on Lithuania. In the first half of the 14th century, many crusaders from France and neighbouring countries backed the Teutonic Order's struggle against Lithuania. These expeditions, mostly a derivative of the crusades in the Holy Land, were seen as the epitome of the chivalric lifestyle. This view changed slowly after Grand Duke Jogaila acceded to the Polish throne in 1386 and a year later baptised the grand duchy. With the evangelisation of Žemaitija (Samogitia) in 1417, Lithuania was definitely considered a part of Christendom.

KEYWORDS: Northern Crusades, conversion of the Balts, Christianisation, Reisen, Prussia, Lithuania, Žemaitija (Samogitia).

ANOTACIJA

Požiūrį į Baltijos regioną Vidurinių ir Vėlyvųjų viduramžių krikščioniškojoje Europoje smarkiai veikė faktas, kad tai buvo paskutinių pagonių kraštas. Pradedant kryžiaus žygiu prieš vendus (Polabės slavus) 1147 m., bandymai atversti pagonis šiame regione įgijo popiežiaus sankcionuotų Šiaurės kryžiaus žygių formą. Svarbiausiu jų vykdytoju XIII–XV a. tapo Vokiečių ordinas, telkęs paramą krikščioniškojoje Europoje, taip pat ir Prancūzijoje. Daugiausia su šiais žygiais yra susijęs rytinio Baltijos regiono reprezentavimas, nagrinėjamas šiame straipsnyje. Jo tikslas – apžvelgti su Prancūzija susijusios diduomenės ir intelektualinio elito požiūrį į Baltijos regiono christianizaciją X–XV a., ypatingą dėmesį skiriant Lietuvai. XIV a. pirmojoje pusėje daug kryžininkų iš Prancūzijos ir kaimyninių šalių rėmė Vokiečių ordino kovą su Lietuva; šie žygiai, iš esmės atkartoję kryžiaus žygius Šventojoje Žemėje, laikytini riteriško gyvenimo būdo kvintesencija. Toks požiūris pamažu keitėsi po to, kai 1386 m. didysis kunigaikštis Jogaila įžengė į Lenkijos sostą ir po metų pakrikštijo Didžiąją Kunigaikštystę. 1417 m. apkrikštijus Žemaitiją, Lietuva neabejotinai pradėta laikyti krikščionijos dalimi.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Šiaurės kryžiaus žygiai, baltų konversija, christianizacija, reisai, Prūsija, Lietuva, Žemaitija.

Loïc Chollet, Dr., postdoctoral researcher, Chair of Medieval and Renaissance History, University of Neuchâtel, Espace Tilo-Frey 1, CH-2000 Neuchâtel, Switzerland. E-mail: loic.chollet@unine.ch.

During the 14th century, many noblemen from France and the neighbouring countries travelled to the Baltic in order to wage war against the Lithuanian ‘Saracens’. The latter, one of the last pagan peoples of Europe, were targeted twice a year by the Knights of the Teutonic Order and their guests from Western Europe. From the mid-12th century, a crusade was directed against the pagan tribes living in the Baltic realm for the purpose of defending and expanding the Christian faith.¹ Although it remains unclear whether the Teutonic Knights were explicitly backed by papal privileges after the late 13th century, the Baltic crusades were regarded in most parts of Catholic Europe as an extension of the crusades in the Holy Land, which became virtually impossible after the fall of Acre in 1291.²

The chivalric fashion, consisting of crossing all of Europe to raid Lithuania alongside the brethren of the Teutonic Order, came to an end at the turn of the 15th century, when Grand Duke Jogaila received baptism, married Queen Jadwiga of Poland, and proclaimed the Christianisation of Lithuania in 1387.³ The new religious status of the Grand Duchy was recognised only slowly in France: some sources still call the Lithuanians ‘Saracens’ when the authors recount the Battle of Žalgiris in 1410.⁴ One may thus pose the question: what did the French know of the evangelisation process in the Baltic area? Theological treatises, chronicles, travel accounts and diplomatic material may help to answer this complex question. The aim of this paper is to survey the attitude of the French nobility and intellectual elite concerning the Christianisation of the Baltic rim from the tenth to the 15th centuries, with a special focus on Lithuania.

At the beginning came two missionaries

The first attempts at Christianising the Balts were noted by French chroniclers writing in France.⁵ Adalbert of Prague and Bruno of Querfurt both achieved martyrdom at the hands of Baltic pagans, in 997 and 1009 respectively, in a context character-

¹ On the origin of the Baltic crusades, see *inter alia* FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT, Iben. *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147–1254* (The Northern World, Vol. 26). Leiden, Boston, 2007; TAMM, Marek. Inventing Livonia: The Name and Fame of a New Christian Colony on the Medieval Baltic Frontier. *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, 2011, Bd. 60, Nr. 2, pp. 186–209; BLOMKVIST, Nils. *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)* (The Northern World, Vol. 15). Leiden, 2005.

² EHLERS, Axel. The Crusade of the Teutonic Knights against Lithuania Reconsidered. In *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*. Ed. by Alan V. MURRAY. Aldershot, 2001, pp. 21–44.

³ BARONAS, Darius; ROWELL, S. C. *The Conversion of Lithuania: From Pagan Barbarians to Late Medieval Christians*. Vilnius, 2015.

⁴ CHOLLET, Loïc. *Les Sarrasins du Nord. Une histoire de la croisade balte par la littérature (XII^e–XV^e siècles)*. Neuchâtel, 2019.

⁵ ADEMAR de Chabannes. *Chronicon*. Publiée d’après les manuscrits par Jules CHAVANON. Paris, 1897; ADEMAR de Chabannes. *Chronique*. Trad. par Yves CHAUVIN, Georges PON, introduction par Georges PON. Turnhout, 2003; RAOUL Glaber. *Histoires*. Trad. et prés. Mathieu ARNOUX. Turnhout 1999.

ised by the recent evangelisation of northern and eastern Europe.⁶ Adalbert, also known by his Czech name Vojtěch, was a member of a noble Bohemian dynasty known as the Slavník family. His 966 mission to Prussia, one of the still-pagan lands situated beyond newly Christianised Poland, was backed by Emperor Otto III and the Polish Duke Bolesław, who would later be crowned the first King of Poland (1025). Adalbert was killed in 997. Duke Bolesław had his body buried in Gniezno, where an archdiocese was created. Adalbert's half-brother Radzim Gaudenty became the first archbishop. A few years later, the monk Bruno, apparently a relative of the imperial court, followed in the footsteps of Adalbert, and met the same fate in 1009, in a place between Lithuania and Prussia. Bruno's mission received support from Otto III and Duke Bolesław, but also from Vladimir, the Grand Prince of Kievan Rus'.⁷

Adalbert and Bruno were not only devoted missionaries, but also members of the senior nobility or the imperial entourage. Thanks to their social status, and above all to the efforts made by the imperial and the Polish courts to give publicity to these events, their deaths had reverberations around a large part of the continent: we find accounts of the martyrdom of the 'apostles of Prussia' in Saxon, Italian and French narratives. As Darius Baronas has shown, the French chronicler Adémar de Chabannes (d. 1034) may have heard of Bruno's death from Greek monks who visited Aquitaine during his lifetime. The French author indeed mentions elements that do not feature in the Saxon narratives.⁸ However, the general interest in the wide process of the Christianisation of northern and eastern Europe engaged before the year 1000, not to forget the dynastic, diplomatic and monastic networks covering all of Christian Europe, explains why the deaths of Adalbert and Bruno, quite close in time, feature in chronicles written in France as well as in Italian *vitae*.⁹

Adémar de Chabannes recounts the martyrdom of both Adalbert and Bruno, not without confusion with regard to places and peoples. His analysis is quite simple:

⁶ *Europe around the Year 1000*. Ed. by Przemysław URBAŃCZYK. Warsaw, 2001; *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*. Ed. by Martin CARVER. Woodbridge, 2003.

⁷ On the general context, MICHALOWSKI, Roman. *The Gniezno Summit. The Religious Premises of the Founding of the Archbishopric of Gniezno* (East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, Vol. 38). Leiden, 2016; WOOD, Ian. *Missionary Life. Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe, 400–1050*, New York, 2001; MAŽEIKA, Rasa. Pirmojo Lietuvos vardo paminėjimo ir šv. Brunono biografijos šaltinių interpretacijos problemos = Probleme der ersten urkundlichen Erwähnung Litauens und der Interpretation der biographischen Quellen des Heiligen Brun. In *Lietuvos krikščionėjimas Vidurio Europos kontekste*. Sud. Vydas DOLINSKAS, Vilnius, 2005, p. 61–85, 86–108; BARONAS, Darius. The Year 1009: St Bruno of Querfurt between Poland and Rus'. *Journal of Medieval History* 2008, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 1–22.

⁸ BARONAS, D. Op. cit., pp. 9–13.

⁹ The Life of Saint Adalbert, Bishop of Prague and Martyr (transl. by Cristian Gaspar). In *Saints of the Christianisation Age of Central Europe (Tenth–Eleventh Centuries)*. Ed. by Gábor KLANICZAY. Budapest, 2012, pp. 79–181; *Petri Damiani Vita beati Romualdi*. A cura di Giovanni TABACCO. Roma, 1957. On the wider context, SIDOROVA, Vasilina. The Slavic World in French Historical Writings of the Eleventh Century. In *Slovakia and Croatia*. Vol. 1: *Historical Parallels and Connections (until 1780)*. Ed. by Martin HOMZA, Jan LUKAČKA, Neven BUDAK. Bratislava, Zagreb, 2013, pp. 97–101.

the pagans were 'rendered most fierce by the idols' when they killed Adalbert, and were 'enraged by a diabolical furor' when inflicting horrible torture on Bruno.¹⁰ In his depiction of Adalbert's martyrdom, the Burgundian chronicler Raoul Glaber (d. 1047) gives a detail which reveals a persistent perception of Baltic paganism that would be encountered much later in several Western literary sources:

One day, he ordered a profane tree situated on the bank of a river to be cut down, to which the people made sacrifices by superstition. Having erected and consecrated an altar in this place, the bishop got ready to say Holy Mass. But when he celebrated the sacrament, he was struck by arrows fired by the unbelievers, and the end of the celebration was also the end of his own life.¹¹

126

According to Raoul (and maybe his informers), before being put to death, Adalbert ordered a tree that the Prussians considered a holy tree to be destroyed: his death looks like vengeance by outraged pagans. To link paganism with the worship of nature (and especially woods) is a very long literary tradition, going back to late Antiquity.¹² Quite logically, the missionaries were supposed to take down or burn the idols of these nature lovers, but to spare the very temples and turn them into Christian churches, exactly what Adalbert is said to have done before his death.¹³ Here, we can draw a comparison with one of the Italian *vitae* dedicated to his memory, which explicitly says that the Czech missionary had been warned by the Prussians:

We, and all the inhabitants of this realm, of which we are guarding the entrance, obey one and only one religion, and we live according to only one custom. But you, who are from a foreign and unknown religion, if tonight you do not go away, you will be decapitated tomorrow morning.¹⁴

¹⁰ ADEMAR de Chabannes. *Chronicon...*, p. 153: '*Illā gens nimium idolis effera [...] diabolico furore sevientes*'.

¹¹ RAOUL Glaber. Op. cit., livre I, 10, p. 60–61: '*Contigit enim ut die quadam, precipiente eodem episcopo, quedam profana arbor, sita iuxta fluvium, cui etiam supersitiose immolabat universum vulgus, videlicet excisa convelleretur. Constructoque ac sacrato in eodem loco altare missarum sollempnia per se episcopus explorare paravit. Qui, dum in ipsis sacramentis peragendis esset constitutus, ictibus iaculorum ab impiis perfoffusus, tandemque sacrum sollempne peractum simulque presentis vitę imposuit terminum.*'

¹² FILOTAS, Bernadette. *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures in Early Medieval Pastoral Literature*. Toronto, 2005, pp. 120–152, 195–200. On the Baltic, see PLUSKOWSKI, Aleksander. *The Archaeology of the Prussian Crusade: Holy War and Colonisation*. London, 2013, pp. 68–75; *Baltų religijos ir mitologijos šaltiniai*. Sud. Norbertas VĖLIUS. T. 1. Vilnius, 1996, p. 70; ROWELL, S. C. *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295–1345*. Cambridge, 1994, pp. 120–122.

¹³ JUDIC, Bruno. Le corbeau et la sauterelle. L'application des instructions de Grégoire le Grand pour la transformation des temples païens en églises. In *Impies et païens entre Antiquité et Moyen Âge*. Textes réunis par Lionel MARY, Michel SOT. Paris, 2002, p. 97–125.

¹⁴ The Life of Saint Adalbert, pp. 172–173: '*Nobis et toto huic regno, cuius nos fauces sumus, communis lex imperat et unus ordo uiuendi. Vos uero, qui estis alterius et ignotę legis, nisi hac nocte discedatis, in crastinum decapitabimini.*'

The idea according to which paganism means nothing more than adoring nature and keeping faithful to one's ancestors' customs is a very persistent one in Christian Medieval thought.¹⁵ This key to interpretation was to structure the West European discourse on the Baltic religious question until the very end of the Middle Ages.

The Baltic crusades' French connection

Despite the fact that the first missions to the Balts were backed by the Polish and imperial powers, French chroniclers describe them as pious actions inspired by the grace of God. The launch of the first crusade in 1095 had an impact on the process of evangelisation in the Baltic region: while the customary local rivalries between pagan chieftains, Orthodox grand princes and Catholic kings or dukes often turned to war on a limited scale, the attempts by Catholic powers to conquer the pagan lands became more and more justified by the rhetoric of holy war.¹⁶ At the beginning of the 12th century, a group of bishops and rulers wrote, and apparently sent as far as Flanders, an appeal to Western princes to join forces in the conquest of Baltic Slav territory, '*Hierusalem nostra*'.¹⁷ The wording and arguments are very close to the appeal of Pope Urban II at Clermont (1095), which seems to prove that the rhetoric of crusades was already used in relation to Baltic affairs.¹⁸

However, the character usually considered to be the 'patron' of the Baltic crusades is a Frenchman, Bernard de Clairvaux (1090–1153). This influential abbé, who was also a writer and preacher, whose word usually reached the ears of the Pope and the King of France, encountered the reticence of several German barons when he preached the Second Crusade in 1147 before the Diet of Francfort. His interlocutors

¹⁵ ROWELL, S. C. Customs, rites and power in mediaeval and early modern Lithuanian society. In *Kultūry sankirtos. Skiriama I. Lukšaitės 60-mečiui*. Sud. Zigmuntas KIAUPA. Vilnius, 2000, p. 46–64.

¹⁶ BLOMKVIST, N. Op. cit.

¹⁷ A printed edition features in WATTENBACH, W. *Handschriftliches. Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, 1882, Bd. 7, S. 624–626. For an English translation, see RILEY-SMITH, Louise; RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan. *The Crusades. Idea and Reality, 1095–1274* (Documents of medieval history, Vol. 4). London, 1981, pp. 75–77. The letter is usually dated to 1107 or 1108, but Richard Fletcher proposed a later chronology, between 1120 and 1125 (FLETCHER, Richard A. *The Conversion of Europe: From Paganism to Christianity, 371–1386 AD*. Roermond, 1998, pp. 486–487). The author of the document may be a cleric of Flemish origin; however, it remains unclear whether the letter remained a draft or whether it was actually sent. See also CONSTABLE, Gilles. The Place of the Magdebourg Charter. In *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Kaspar Elm zum 70. Geburtstag* (Berliner Historische Studien, Bd. 31). Hrsg. von Franz J. FELTEN, Nikolas JASPERS. Berlin, 2000, pp. 283–299; JENSEN, Kurt Villads. Crusading at the End of the World. The Spread of the Idea of Jerusalem after 1099 to the Baltic Sea Area and to the Iberian Peninsula. In *Crusading on the Edge. Ideas and Practice of Crusading in Iberia and the Baltic Region, 1100–1500*. Ed. by Torben K. NIELSEN, Iben FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT. Turnhout, 2016, pp. 168–170.

¹⁸ See also GŁADYSZ, Mikołaj. *The Forgotten Crusaders. Poland and the Crusader Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (The Northern World, Vol. 56). Leiden, Boston, 2012; GÜTTNER-SPORZYNSKI, Dariusz, von. *Poland, Holy War, and the Piast Monarchy, 1100–1230*. Turnhout, 2014.

told him that they agreed to fight for Christ and to receive indulgences, but not in the Holy Land. They were interested in using the spiritual and juridical benefices of crusading, but they intended to march against their Slavic neighbours, who were still pagans at the time. Bernard agreed, and had Pope Eugenius III publish the bull *Divini dispensatione* (11 April 1147), which gives the same status to those who went fighting in the Baltic as in the Middle East.¹⁹ According to Bernard, the war should go on 'until, with the aid of God, their religion or their nation is destroyed'.²⁰ Forced Christianisation is officially forbidden by canon law, but one has to understand that military strength must be used to sweep out paganism and make impossible any kind of resistance to missionary activities. The concept of a 'mission protected by swords' was, so to speak, the ideological foundation of the Baltic crusades.²¹

128

The cultural influence of France in the central Middle Ages and its key role in the crusading movement explains how several characters involved in the Christianisation of the Baltic were linked to the Capetian Kingdom and its peripheries. For example, Archbishop Eskil of Lund lived in France when he was exiled from Denmark. There, he planned a missionary campaign to Estonia, with the support of several French prelates. The idea was to send to the pagans a bishop called Fulco, accompanied by an Estonian native, who would probably have worked as a translator, and by armed men, whose task was to secure the mission. The enterprise received the support of the Papacy in 1171–1172, thanks to the French abbé Peter of Moutier-la-Celle, and to Archbishop Henry of Reims, the brother of the French King Louis VII. Indulgences were promised for those who joined the project; however, it seems that nothing much came of it.²²

Another example may be the personal investment of Westerners in the campaigns against the Pomeranians and the Prussians. When the Polish dukes engaged in military expeditions against their pagan neighbours in the 12th century, a few bishops and noblemen from France and Flanders travelled personally to Poland as legates, while others settled there and became involved in the fighting against the Prussians: these travellers and arrivals from Western Europe probably brought with them their own conceptions; consequently, they may have spread the crusading ideology in Polish ruling circles.²³

¹⁹ FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT, I. Op. cit., pp. 29–37.

²⁰ *Sancti Bernardi Opera*. Vol. 8. Romae, 1977, No 457, quoted by DVORNIK, Francis. *Les Slaves. Histoire et civilisation, de l'Antiquité aux débuts de l'époque contemporaine*. Paris, 1970, p. 267: '... donec auxiliante Domino aut ritus ipse aut natio deleatur'.

²¹ TAMM, Marek. How to justify a crusade? The conquest of Livonia and new crusade rhetoric in the early thirteenth century. *Journal of Medieval History*, 2013, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 441–444; MAŽEIKA, Rasa. Granting Power to the Enemy Gods in the Chronicles of the Baltic Crusades. In *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*. Ed. by David ABULAFIA, Nora BEREND. Aldershot, 2002, pp. 154–156.

²² FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT, I. Op. cit., pp. 52–56; BLOMKVIST, N. Op. cit., pp. 411–412.

²³ GŁADYSZ, M. Op. cit., pp. 20–24.

The military orders: agents or hindrance to *propagatio fidei*?

The Christianisation of the Baltic rim accelerated with the settlement of the military orders.²⁴ The Brothers of the Sword, created in Livonia in the very first years of the 13th century, quickly began to wage war not only against the pagans but also against the Archbishop of Riga and his suffragans. The fighting attracted the attention of the Papacy, which sent delegates with the task of pacifying the rivals and guaranteeing the recognition of the political rights of the neophytes.²⁵ One of the delegates was a Cistercian from Liège, Baudouin d'Aulne. Not satisfied with playing a diplomatic role, he became involved in the local political game, and was elected Bishop of Courland and Semigallia. This position made him a victim of the Brothers of the Sword, who expelled him. Baudouin returned to his native land, where he had the chance to complain in front of the chronicler Alberic de Trois-Fontaine (d. circa 1252). Not surprisingly, the latter described the Brothers of the Sword as 'all of those who have been banished from Saxony for their crimes' and who 'believe that they will be able to live without law or King'.²⁶

The replacement in 1237 of the Brothers of the Sword by the Teutonic Knights, who settled in Prussia in the decade from 1220 with the task of protecting the frontiers of Mazovia, did not bring peace to the region, at least according to the famous theologian Roger Bacon.²⁷ This Englishman, who worked partly at the University of Paris, described Prussia in his *Opus maius* (1268). For him, 'the Prussians, and those of the neighbouring nations', who are 'used to living according to custom and not the law of reason'²⁸ (a classic Western explanation of paganism) are confronted with violent invasions launched by the Teutonic Knights:

There is no doubt that all the infidel nations beyond Germany would have converted a long time ago if there had been no violence on the part of the brethren of the

²⁴ On the military orders in the Baltic, GOUGUENHEIM, Sylvain. *Les Chevaliers teutoniques*. Paris, 2007; MILITZER, Klaus. *Von Akkon zur Marienburg: Verfassung, Verwaltung und Sozialstruktur des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1309* (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, Bd. 56). Marburg, 1999; BENNINGHOVEN, Friedrich. *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder: Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* (Ostmitteleuropa in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, Bd. 9). Köln, 1965.

²⁵ See SELART, Anti. *Livonia, Rus' and the Baltic Crusades in the Thirteenth Century* (East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, Vol. 29). Leiden, Boston, 2015.

²⁶ Alberici monachi Triumfontium Chronicon (edidit P. Scheffer-Boichorst). In *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptorum*. T. 23. Ed. Georgius Henricus PERTZ. Hannoverae, 1874, p. 930: 'olim a Saxonia pro sceleribus banniti, iam in tantum excreverunt, quod se posse vivere et sine lege et sine rege credebant.'

²⁷ POWER, Amanda. *Roger Bacon and the Defense of Christendom*. Cambridge, 2013, pp. 238–239; URBAN, William. Roger Bacon and the Teutonic Knights. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 1988, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 363–370.

²⁸ *The 'Opus Majus' of Roger Bacon*. Ed. by John Henry BRIDGES. 3 vols. Oxford, 1897–1900; re-issued: Frankfurt am Main, 1964, Vol. 2, p. 369: 'Pagani vero puri qui consuetudine vivendi pro ratione legum utentes, ut Praceni et nationes confines eis.'

Teutonic Order, because the pagan people were often ready to receive the faith in peace after [hearing] the predication. But those of the Teutonic Order do not want to refrain, because they want to subdue them and reduce them to servitude.²⁹

130

The case of the Prussians allowed Roger Bacon to explain his views in favour of the peaceful evangelisation of the infidels, often at odds with the practice of the local powers in charge of Christianisation, as is recalled by the counter-example of the Teutonic Knights. Of course, Roger's conception does not reflect a 'French' or a 'Western' perspective, but rather a specific intellectual response to the problem of the use of violence during the missionary process. Furthermore, such a 'pacific' view is in the minority among authors dealing with Baltic affairs in 13th-century France. Bartholomeus Anglicanus, another Englishman who worked in Paris, wrote in his *Encyclopaedia* that the inhabitants of Livonia 'have been forced to pass from the service of the demons to the faith and the cult of the One true God by the Germans',³⁰ the reference to the Teutonic Order being clear enough. Almost in the same years, William of Rubrouck, a Flemish Franciscan who travelled to the Mongol Empire as an unofficial ambassador of King Louis IX of France (1253–1255), wrote that the Teutonic brethren converted all of Prussia and Livonia to the Christian faith.³¹ The Christianisation of the Baltic region under the leadership of the Teutonic Knights is thus noted by a few French-related writers, but its appreciation depends on the author's point of view and feelings concerning the use of violence in the process.

The methods of the Teutonic Order were investigated by the Avignon papacy after Archbishop Frederic of Riga complained in front of the curia in 1310.³² Frederic was engaged in a harsh dispute against the Teutonic Knights from Livonia, who challenged his political power; the rivalry went so far that he had to go into exile in Avignon, where he tried to regain his seat. The French Pope Clément V agreed to send

²⁹ Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 122: '*Non enim est dubium quin omnes nationes infidelium ultra Alemanniam fuissent diu conversae, nisi esset violentia fratrum de Domo Teutonica, quia gens paganorum fuit multoties parata recipere fidem in pace secundum praedicationem. Sed illi de Domo Teutonica nolunt sustinere, quia volunt eos subjugare et redigere in servitutem.*'

³⁰ BARTHÉLEMY l'Anglais. De proprietatibus rerum, lib. 15, cap. LXXXVII. *Bibliographie nationale française*, lat. 16098, quoted in TAMM, Marek. Signes d'altérité. La représentation de la Baltique orientale dans le *De proprietatibus rerum* de Barthélemy l'Anglais (vers 1245). 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. Turnhout, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2006, p. 169: '*... quorum ritus fuit mirabilis antequam a cultura demonum ad vnius Dei fidem et cultum per Germanicos cogarentur.*'

³¹ *Deux voyages en Asie au XIII^e siècle par Guill. de Rubruquis, envoyé de saint Louis, et Marco Polo, marchand vénitien.* [Ed. par Eugène MULLER.] Paris, 1888, p. 49.

³² See what follows for additional details: HOUSLEY, Norman. *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades, 1305–1378*. Oxford, 1986, pp. 266–281; ROWELL, S. C. Lithuania and the West, 1337–41 – A Question of Sources. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 1989, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 303–326; CHOLLET, Loïc. Cohabiter sur la frontière : l'Ordre teutonique et ses sujets de Livonie au début du XIV^e siècle. In *Ordres militaires et territorialité au Moyen Âge, entre Orient et Occident*. Sous la dir. de Marie-Anna CHEVALIER. Paris, 2020, p. 369–383.

the Italian Canon Francesco de Moliano to Livonia, and mandated him to collect testimonies of the Teutonic Knights' alleged misdeeds, including brutality against the neophytes and an obvious lack of zeal for evangelisation. The Grand Master and the knights from Livonia were excommunicated in 1312, but the sentence was reversed one year later. Although this trial, followed by others initiated by the Polish king,³³ may have darkened the image of the Teutonic Knights in the eyes of several individuals in the Church, it had little effect on the general perception of Baltic affairs.

The time of the *voyage de Prusse*

Since the martyrdom of Adalbert of Prague and Bruno of Querfurt, the situation in the Baltic region was essentially seen through the paradigm of conversion; even the crusading activity of the Teutonic Order was treated from the point of view of evangelisation. This may be explained by the fact that the people writing on the topic in France and in neighbouring countries were mostly monks and members of religious orders. Before the beginning of the 14th century, lay crusaders fighting in the Baltic were rather rare in the French-speaking world: except for the aforementioned individuals who moved to Poland in the 12th century, Humbert, the son of Count Thomas I of Savoy, who died in Prussia around 1235, is the only known example to date.³⁴ Most Westerners crossed the sea and fought in the Holy Land or in the Mediterranean, where the French nobility became involved in the Greek and southern Italian political game.³⁵

This situation changed after the fall of Acre to the Mamelukes in 1291. The storming of the last crusaders' stronghold on the Levantine shore meant that no campaign in the region was possible any more. Nevertheless, the chivalric ethos still claimed participation in crusading activities: many poems and exhortative texts in the 14th and 15th centuries encouraged noblemen seeking to enhance their status to set out on a long journey, risk their life in the service of God, and test their swords on the 'Saracens'.³⁶ After the outbreak of the Hundred Years War (1337–1453), it became

³³ GOUGUENHEIM, Sylvain. Le procès pontifical de 1339 contre l'Ordre Teutonique. *Revue historique*, 2008, t. 310, fasc. 3 (647), p. 567–603.

³⁴ PARAVICINI, Werner. *Adlig leben im 14. Jahrhundert. Weshalb sie fuhren: Die Preußenreisen des europäischen Adels*. Bd. 3 (Vestigia Prussica, Bd. 2). Göttingen, 2020, S. 130–133.

³⁵ See, among others, CHRISISSIS, Nikolaos G. Crusades and Crusaders in Medieval Greece. In *A Companion to Latin Greece* (Brill's Companions to European History, Vol. 6). Ed. by Nickiphoros I. TSOUGARAKIS, Peter LOCK. Leiden, 2014, pp. 23–72; RAPATOUT, Aude. Charles 1^{er} d'Anjou, roi d'Albanie. L'aventure balkanique des Angevins de Naples au XIII^e siècle. *Hypothèses 2005: Travaux de l'Ecole doctorale d'histoire*. Paris, 2006, p. 261–269.

³⁶ HOUSLEY, Norman. *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580: from Lyon to Alcazar*. Oxford, 1992; CHOLLET, Loïc. *Dernières croisades. Le voyage chevaleresque en Occident à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Paris, 2021.

quite common to present the engagement of a united, pan-Christian army against the infidels as an ideal for French and English chivalry.³⁷ Several examples show that these appeals were taken up among the nobility; individuals who actually fought on several crusading fronts were not rare.³⁸

However, the chances to fight a holy war were not so common. During all the 14th century, wide-scale expeditions against the Turks, Mamelukes and North African kingdoms seldom occurred in the Mediterranean. Scottish, English and French noblemen sometimes rode to the Iberian Peninsula, where they backed the Aragonese and the Castilians in the later episodes of the Reconquista; however, the chances of fighting there were rather rare. The Baltic front presented a contrasting image: after their conquest of Prussia and Livonia, the Teutonic Knights engaged in a long struggle against the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, a huge political entity stretching from the Baltic coast to present-day Ukraine, composed of Orthodox Christian Ruthenians and Lithuanians, ruled by a pagan dynasty.³⁹ In this context, Prussia soon became a choice destination for knights and squires in search of a chivalric ideal. The grand masters understood it, and organised frequent expeditions against the pagans, usually twice a year, in summer and winter.⁴⁰

The first important campaign by the Teutonic Order backed by Frenchmen occurred in the winter of 1328–1329, when King John of Bohemia, from the House of Luxembourg, led a party of English, German and French warriors to Poland and Lithuania. The event has its first echo in the Old French chronicle *Continuation de Jean de Saint-Victor* (1330). The anonymous author recounts the deeds of King John, a close ally of the French court:

Around last winter, he went into the land of the Saracens, and took a great country and many regions from them; and several people went to the Christian faith through him, because in these countries he was, and has been considered, pious, vigorous, brave and enterprising, loyal and generous, paying very liberally, charitable and valiant, in good conscience towards God.⁴¹

³⁷ For example, DELUZ, Christiane. *Croisade et paix en Europe au XIV^e siècle. Le rôle du cardinal Hélie de Talleyrand. Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales*, 1996, vol. 1, p. 53–64.

³⁸ See PARAVICINI, W. *Adlig leben...*

³⁹ For another view, see ROWELL, S. C. *Lithuania Ascending...*, and GOUGUENHEIM, Sylvain. *Les derniers païens : Les Baltes face aux chrétiens (XIII^e–XVIII^e siècle)*. Paris, 2022.

⁴⁰ PARAVICINI, W. *Adlig leben...*; PARAVICINI, Werner. *Die Preußenreisen des europäischen Adels*. Bd. 1–2. Sigmaringen, 1989–1995; CHOLLET, L. *Les Sarrasins du Nord...*, p. 141–346.

⁴¹ *Les grandes chroniques de France*. T. IX: *Charles IV le Bel, Philippe VI de Valois*. Éd. Jules VIARD. Paris, 1937, p. 334: 'Entour yver passé devant, estoit passez en terre de Sarazins, et prist grant pais et regions suz eus ; et en vindrent à foi de crestienté par lui pluseur, car il estoit et fu trouvés en ces fais preuz, vigreuz, hardis et entreprenans, loyaus et larges et très bons paiers [payeur], charitables et preudons, vers Dieu en bonne conscience ; et pour ce li asist en tous ses fais.'

According to the author, the chivalric character of King John helped to convert several 'Saracens', as the northeastern pagans were called in many French sources.⁴² The link between crusade and Christianisation in the Baltic also appears in the poem *Confort d'ami*, written by Guillaume de Machaut in 1356/7. Machaut, a musician and poet, was one of the most influential writers of the late Middle Ages.⁴³ He was personally involved in the 1328–1329 expedition, because at the time he was a courtier of the Bohemian king. The latter is said in *Confort d'ami* to have led a devastating raid and killed many people, but also offered baptism to a group of Lithuanians: 'He had six thousand unbelievers christened in one town, called Medouagle.'⁴⁴ This place has been identified as Medvegalis, in western-central Samogitia.⁴⁵ The Teutonic Order's chronicler Wigand of Marburg, although writing decades later in 1394, confirms that the king had the pagans baptised, while the Teutonic Grand Master had the intention to 'annihilate them totally'.⁴⁶

After the 1330s, many noble warriors from Western Europe would cross the continent and join the Teutonic Knights to back them during a campaign against the Lithuanians. After the outbreak of the Hundred Years War (1337–1453), the larger expeditions occurred during truces between France and England in the 1360s and 1390s. For both the French and the English, the war in the Baltic may have been perceived as a derivative of a 'dirtier' fight in the West, where fellow Christians were killed and mistreated.⁴⁷ Direct or indirect testimonies, as well as the habit of patronising the baptism of young Lithuanians, nonetheless indicate that the crusade was seen as a means to expand the Catholic faith in the Baltic region, but also to defend Christendom: some authors stressed that going to Prussia meant protecting it from

⁴² MURRAY, Alan V. The Saracens of the Baltic: Pagan and Christian Lithuanians in the Perception of English and French Crusaders to Late Medieval Prussia. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 2010, Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 413–429.

⁴³ For example, CALIN, William. Machaut's Legacy: the Chaucerian Inheritance Reconsidered. *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 1987, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 9–22.

⁴⁴ Le Confort d'ami, v. 3030–3035. In *Œuvres de Guillaume de Machaut*. T. III. Publ. par Ernest HŒPFFNER. Paris, 1921, p. 107: 'Crestienner fit en une ville, / Des mescreans plus de sis mille. / Li lieus avoit nom Medouagle.'

⁴⁵ ROWELL, S. C. *Lithuania Ascending...*, p. 240.

⁴⁶ Die Chronik Wigands von Marburg. In *Scriptores rerum Prusicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Ordensherrschaft*. Hrsg. von Theodor HIRSCH, Max TÖPPEN, Ernst STREHLKE (hereafter *SRP*). Bd. 2. Leipzig, 1863, S. 463: 'quo obtento, magnam multitudinem ibidem invenerunt, quam magister omnino perdere voluit, sed et rex Johannes precibus suis salvavit vitam eorum, et per baptismum incorporantur fidei catholice in die Virginis purificationis; et dederunt magistro obsides in robur fidei, quod placuit valde regi. Sed hyeme terminata ceperunt nauseam habere de baptismo et anhelare ad paganismum. Unde magister iudicavit hoc esse verecundum, quod ex pace firmata experiri posset. Sed cum rege Johanne expertus est ex conditione paganica pacem violatam.' See also PETER von Dusburg. *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*. In *SRP*. Bd. 1. Leipzig, 1861, S. 215.

⁴⁷ PARAVICINI, Werner. Litauer: vom heidnischen Gegner zum adligen Standesgenossen. In *Tannenberg-Grünwald-Žalgiris 1410: Krieg und Frieden im späten Mittelalter* (Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau. Quellen und Studien, Bd. 26). Hrsg. von Werner PARAVICINI, Rimvydas PETRAUSKAS, Grischa VERCAMER. Wiesbaden, 2012, S. 253–282; ROWELL, S. C. Unexpected Contacts: Lithuanians at Western Courts, c. 1316–1400. *English Historical Review*, 1996, Vol. 111, No. 442, pp. 557–577.

the onslaughts of the pagans.⁴⁸ However, the main motivation behind what French texts call the '*voyage de Prusse*' or '*Reise de Prusse*', after the German *Reise* (journey, or military expedition), was certainly to seek glory and honour.⁴⁹ Fighting for God and exercising proficiency with weapons in foreign lands was seen as the *nec plus ultra* in the chivalric culture of the late Middle Ages. The Baltic was thus depicted in many chronicles, poems and romances as a giant showplace for worldly heroism, often disconnected from the process of Christianisation. Several authors described epic engagements with the 'Saracens', and impressive landscapes, especially when recounting the winter *Reise*, during which the Teutonic Knights led their guests to Lithuania over icy rivers, frozen lakes and snowy forests.⁵⁰

134

This perception survived the baptism of Lithuania proclaimed by Jogaila, or King Ladislas of Poland, in 1387. For example, the biography of Marshal Boucicaut, one of the key figures of late 14th-century France, described his Lithuanian campaign in 1391 as resulting in '*grant destruccion de Sarrasins*'.⁵¹ Even the chroniclers Michel Poinot and Enguerrand de Monstrelet, who after 1410 described the battle of Žalgiris (known as Tannenberg in Western Europe, and Grünwald in Poland) indiscriminately defined all the Poles' allies, Lithuanians, Samogitians, Ruthenians and Tartars, as 'Saracens' or 'Turks'.⁵² One should note, however, that both of them explicitly mention obtaining their information from the Teutonic Order's envoys, or from lay guest crusaders who took part in the battle. The provenance of the information may indicate a hostile bias directed against the Lithuanians, described as pagans, or at least badly Christianised. That said, the fact that Samogitia was not yet baptised, and that

⁴⁸ For example, the chronicler Jean Cabaret d'Orville, who writes according to the testimonies of the *Preussenfahrer* Jean de Chastelmorand, stresses that the crusaders '*estoiient venus si bien à point que merveilles. Car le roi de Letho, sarrasin, avoit fort emprins de grever et conquerer l'ordre de Prusse*' ([JEAN Cabaret d'Orville.] *La Chronique du bon duc Loys de Bourbon*. Publ. par Alphonse-Martial CHAZAUD. Paris, 1876, p. 64); Jacques d'Esch, the author of the Metzler chronicle, says that the crusaders, including himself, retaliated against Samogitia in 1400 '*car lesdis Salmaite volxent combatre les Crestiens*' (*Die Metzler Chronik des Jaique Dex (Jacques D'Esch) über die Kaiser und Könige aus dem Luxemburger Hause*. Hrsg. von Georg WOLFRAM. Metz, 1906, S. 337). On the Samogitian context, see LEIGHTON, Gregory. Crusading and Holy War in the Teutonic Order's Struggle for Žemaitija. Written and Visual Perspectives. In *Aspects of South-east Baltic Social History: The 14th to the 18th Centuries* (Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis, Vol. 41). Ed. by Marius ŠČAVINSKAS, Jolanta SKURDAUSKIENĖ. Klaipėda, 2020, pp. 25–52.

⁴⁹ See lately, PARAVICINI, W. *Adlig leben...*

⁵⁰ CHOLLET, L. *Les Sarrasins du Nord...*, p. 353–383.

⁵¹ *Le Livre des fais du bon messire Jehan le Meingre, dit Bouciquaut, Mareschal de France et gouverneur de Jennes*. Éd. critique par Denis LALANDE. Genève, 1985, p. 77.

⁵² *La Chronique d'Enguerrand de Monstrelet : en deux livres, avec pièces justificatives : 1400–1444*. T. 2. Publ. par Louis DOUËT-D'ARCQ. Paris, 1858, p. 61–63, 75–77; *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denis : contenant le règne de Charles VI, de 1380 à 1422*. T. 4. Publ. par M. Louis BELLAGUET. Paris, 1842, p. 335–337; GOU-GUENHEIM, Sylvain. Das Echo der Schlacht bei Grunwald im Frankreich des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts. In *Conflictus magnus apud Grunwald, 1410. Między historią a tradycją*. Red. Krzysztof OŹÓG, Janusz TRUPIN-DA. Malbork, 2013, S. 192–206; EKDAHL, Sven, *Die Schlacht bei Tannenberg 1410: Quellenkritische Untersuchungen*. Bd. I: *Einführung und Quellenlage* (Berliner historische Studien, Bd. 8). Berlin, 1982, S. 183–184, passim; CHOLLET, L. *Les Sarrasins du Nord...*, p. 256–279.

the Polish and Lithuanian military leaders were allied with the Tartar Prince Jalal ad-Din, may have added confusion, leading to the idea that the Teutonic Knights and their guests were defeated by a party of 'Saracens', 'schismatic' Christians, and 'traitors' to the faith. However, a few texts, both narratives and diplomatic letters, prove that the baptism of 1387 did not go unnoticed at the French court.

A paradigm shift: Philippe de Mézières and Guillebert de Lannoy

Between 1386 and 1388, the French King Charles VI sent a letter to his counterpart King Ladislas of Poland, the former Grand Duke Jogaila of Lithuania: 'Through the relation of our dear Jean de Strate, knight of the distinguished Order of the Lords of Prussia, we have learned that your person, with four of your brothers, is worthy to be profitably, mercifully, elegantly and piously visited.' In other words, diplomatic relations should be established with the newly baptised ruler.⁵³ This document indicates that the conversion of the Lithuanian grand duke who became King of Poland was announced in France by a Flemish member of the Teutonic Order, a vassal of the French crown, whose personal background has been documented by the historian Werner Paravicini.⁵⁴ The baptism of Lithuania was thus known at the French court from 1388 at the latest.

Such precious information concerning the expansion of the faith was taken into account by Philippe de Mézières, a knight, writer and political adviser to the French King. In 1390, he offered the manuscript of his *Songe du Viel Pelerin* (1389) to his patron Charles VI. Later, he added a few notes in the margins of the manuscript, as he tried to actualise his opus. Two of these marginal notes, probably written by one hand, deal with the new religious status of Lithuania.⁵⁵ One of these notes features before a paragraph about sending ambassadors to fellow Christian sovereigns in order to unite all of Christendom under the guidance of the King of France, one of the key points in Mézières' political programme. Next to a sentence in the main body of the manuscript devoted to the Kingdom of Poland, the marginal note adds: 'In this

⁵³ *Bibliothèque Cambrai*, Ms. 940, n° 100, fol. 43 v., quoted in VALOIS, Noël. *La France et le grand schisme d'Occident*. T. 2. Paris, 1896, p. 311–312: 'ex relacione dilecti nostri Johannis de Strata, militis in religione eximia dominorum Pruscie militantium, didiscimus, personam vestram, una cum quatuor aliis fratribus vestris germanis, tam salubriter, clementer et eleganter et pie visitare dignatus est.'

⁵⁴ On Jean de Strate (or Jan van der Straten), see: PARAVICINI, W. *Die Preußenreisen...*, Bd. 1, S. 71. On the wider context, see: BŁASZCZYK, Grzegorz. *Dzieje stosunków polsko-litewskich*. T. II: *Od Krewa do Lublina*. Poznań, 2007, s. 445–444; MICKŪNAITĖ, Giedrė. *Making a Great Ruler: Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania*. Budapest, 2006, pp. 36–38; POLEJOWSKI, Karol. The Teutonic Order's Propaganda in France during the Wars against Poland and Lithuania (Fifteenth Century). In *Die geistlichen Ritterorden in Mitteleuropa. Mittelalter*. Hrsg. von Karl BORCHARDT, Jan LIBOR. Brno, 2011, pp. 233–242.

⁵⁵ PHILIPPE de Mézières. *Songe du viel pelerin*. T. 1. Éd. critique par Joël BLANCHARD. Genève, 2015, pp. xii–xxiii.

Kingdom of Poland, the King of Lithuania thanks his wife, the Queen of Poland, the daughter of the valiant King [Louis] of Hungary, became King and a good Christian, with four of his brothers and his people of Lithuania.’⁵⁶ The allusion to the marriage between Jogaila and Jadwiga of Anjou, the Queen of Poland, is clear enough. Another marginal note includes the Lithuanians among one of the Christian armies that Mézières dreams of sending against the Ottomans and Mamelukes, according to his plan for a large-scale crusade.⁵⁷ These two notes are integrated into the core of the text in another manuscript, probably composed at the beginning of the 15th century.⁵⁸ Although some chroniclers still consider the Lithuanians (at least partly) as pagans as late as 1410, Philippe de Mézières, who showed a great interest in the affairs of Christendom, was aware of the Christian character of Lithuania, and decided that it was worthy of being considered for his prominent *Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, a book destined to be a programmatic inspiration for King Charles VI.

If the royal chancellery and at least one courtier were informed of the Christianisation of Lithuania, the situation is less clear when one looks at the lower nobility. The travel accounts of Guillebert de Lannoy are very interesting in this regard. Born into a Flemish French-speaking family mixing with the Burgundian court, Lannoy wrote that he sailed towards the Baltic coast in 1413 in order to join ‘a military campaign led by the Lords of Prussia against the unbelievers’.⁵⁹ Did he answer one of the letters sent by the Teutonic Grand Master during the years following the Order’s defeat at Žalgiris? Or did he, which is far from being incompatible, pay homage to the tradition of doing the ‘*voyage de Prusse*’, a very firm one in his family circle and social milieu?⁶⁰ Guillebert’s notes allow a modern reader to approach his feeling regarding the conversion process going ahead in the Baltic. The document we will quote is a private account, not a literary work designed for a courtly audience; this should allow us to treat it as ‘raw material’ in which literary conventions may be less present than they usually are in late Medieval texts.⁶¹

In Prussia, Guillebert did not get involved in fighting against ‘unbelievers’. According to his travel account, he was led in a raid over Catholic Pomerania, ‘against the King of Poland and the Duke of Pomerania, who favoured the Saracens’.⁶² Despite being

⁵⁶ Ibid., T. 2, p. 1263: ‘*duquel royaume de Polone le roy de Laito [Lithuania], a cause de sa femme, roine de Polaine, fille du vaillant roy de Honguerie, est devenu rois et bon Crestien, avec .iiii. de ses freres et son peuple de Laito, par la bonté de mon Pere, a grant honneur de la foy crestienne.*’

⁵⁷ Ibid., T. 2, p. 1273. Cf. PARAVICINI, W. *Litauer...*, S. 258.

⁵⁸ PHILIPPE de Mézières. *Op. cit.*, T. 1, p. xxxv–xxxvi.

⁵⁹ *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy, voyageur, diplomate et moraliste*. Rec. et publ. par Charles POTVIN. Louvain, 1878, p. 20: ‘*en une armée que faisoient les seigneurs de Prusse contre les mescréans.*’

⁶⁰ PARAVICINI, W. *Die Preußenreisen...*, Bd. 1, S. 32–33, 101.

⁶¹ Cf. SVÁTEK, Jaroslav. *Prier, combattre et voir le monde. Discours et récits de nobles voyageurs à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Rennes, 2021.

⁶² *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy...*, p. 26: ‘*sur le roy de Poulane et sur le duc de Pomère qui favorisoient les Sarrasins.*’

injured in the fighting, the young squire was dubbed during the expedition; according to many aristocratic authors of the time, this was one of the most honourable ways to become a knight.⁶³ Soon afterwards, he left Prussia and travelled to Livonia, in order to take part in another *Reise*. Did he, as Oskar Halecki has suggested, feel misled to have been employed in a war against fellow Christians?⁶⁴ The narrative structure of his account may rather indicate that he was disappointed by the imprisonment of Grand Master Heinrich von Plauen (October 1413) and the subsequent political turmoil among the Teutonic officers.⁶⁵ Furthermore, when he described his visit to Königsberg, he mentioned 'the time of the Prussian *Reise*', meaning that it belonged to the past.⁶⁶ It seems that he was aware that no 'chivalric' raid against pagans would depart from Prussia any more.

The account of de Lannoy's travels further north reflects much more curiosity than a thirst for warlike exploits. He described all the lands he passed through on his way from Prussia to Livonia, mentioning the distance separating one place from another, the different languages spoken by the inhabitants,⁶⁷ and, when he felt it worthy of being reported, their customs. The most prominent of the latter are probably the Curonians' funeral pyres:⁶⁸

Although they are native Christians through force, the Curonians have a doctrine [*secte*] that after their death instead of receiving a proper burial, each dressed and adorned with their best adornment in one of the closest woods or forests they have, they are burned in a fire only made of oak wood. And they believe that if the smoke goes straight to the sky the soul is saved, but if it is blown laterally the soul is lost.⁶⁹

⁶³ HOUSLEY, N. *The Later Crusades...*, p. 394; PARAVICINI, W. *Die Preußenreisen...*, Bd. 2, S. 130–132.

⁶⁴ HALECKI, Oskar. Gilbert de Lannoy and His Discovery of East Central Europe. *Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America*, 1944, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 318.

⁶⁵ *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy...*, p. 27–28: 'Et tantost après le retour d'icelle [reise], fut le hault maistre, qui par maladie estoit demouré à Mariembourg, prins prisonnier par le mareschal et autres commandeurs, ses hayneurs. [...] Item, assez tost après, me partis de Dansicque en Prusse, pour m'en aller ou pais de Liufflant, pour estre dans la reise d'yver.'

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 25: 'et voit on en celle ville les armes, le lieu et la table d'honneur du temps des reises de Prusse.' Another manuscript contains more explicitly: 'où on solloit jadis couvrir la table d'honneur, au temps des rèses de Prusse' (*Ibid.*, p. 25, note 8).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29–30: 'Et par plusieurs villaiges des Zamegaelz, des Corres et des Lives, lesquelz ont chascun ung langaige à part eulz.'

⁶⁸ MAŽEIKA, Rasa; CHOLLET, Loïc. Familiar Marvels? French and German Crusaders and Chroniclers Confront Baltic Pagan Religions. *Francia – Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte*, 2016, Bd. 43, pp. 45–47.

⁶⁹ *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy...*, p. 30: 'Item, ont lesdis Corres, jasoit ce qu'ilz soient cristiens natifz par force, une secte que après leur mort ilz se font ardoir en lieu de sépulture, vestus et aournez chascun de leurs meilleurs aournemens, en ung leur plus prochain bois ou forest qu'ilz ont, en feu fait de purain bois de quesne. Et croyent, se la fumièrre va droit ou ciel, que l'âme est sauvée, mais, s'elle va soufflant de costé, que l'âme est périè.'

An interesting fact is that the Burgundian traveller does not situate this custom in pagan Samogitia (which he describes as uninhabited⁷⁰), but in Catholic Curonia, a province of southern Livonia, which had been conquered during the 13th century by the Teutonic Knights. For Guillebert, pagan customs are obviously still practised there. That said, it is possible to see his depiction of the funeral pyre as reflecting the religious and cultural syncretism that took place in the Order's territories, and mostly in Curonia, where the Teutonic officers gave important autonomy to the local warrior clans, refraining from imposing a strict Christianisation process on them.⁷¹

After crossing the territories of Livonia, Novgorod and Pskov in the winter of 1413–1414, the young knight entered Lithuania 'in order to see the Kingdom of Lithuania, toward Duke Witholt [Vytautas]'.⁷² On his way, he visited Vilnius, 'the sovereign city of Lithuania', where 'Witholt, prince of Lithuania, holds his court and has his residence'.⁷³ The city contained 'several brick churches'.⁷⁴ The Grand Duchy is not described as a pagan land any more: 'people of the said kingdom are recently born Christians under duress of the lords of Prussia and Livonia'.⁷⁵ This new religious character of the Lithuanians is shown by the changes occurring in the architectural landscape: 'and in good cities they found churches, and in the villages they found day after day, and in the said country of Lithuania, there are twelve bishoprics'.⁷⁶ The number is exaggerated, but the sentence proves that in Guillebert's eyes, the Grand Duchy was now definitely Christian. Nonetheless, when he visited Poland on his way back home, the Burgundian knight met King Ladislas, and noted that his royal interlocutor complained of not having been granted any formal embassy from the French King, although he had been baptised for years, which probably indicates that the envoys sent in answer to the letter quoted above did not reach Poland.⁷⁷

The Burgundian traveller refrained from condemning the Teutonic brethren for presumably having used force in order to evangelise the Curonians and the Lithuanians, although such a practice was not allowed by canon law. Furthermore, his mention of pagan funerals among the Curonians does not attract any condemnation; at this point, his account is close to an extract from the *Songe du Viel Pelerin*, where Philippe

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 28–29: 'quant on a passé oultre ledit Strang, on entre ou pais de Sammette, mais on treuve bien douse lieues de désertes solitudes, sans trouver quelque trace de humaine habitacion tousjours costoyant la mer à main senestre.'

⁷¹ KĻAVIŅŠ, Kaspars. The Ideology of Christianity and Pagan Practices among the Teutonic Knights. *Journal of Baltic Studies* 2006, Vol. 37, No. 3, pp. 260–276.

⁷² *Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy...*, p. 38: 'pour m'en aler veoir le royaume de Létau, devers le duc Witholt.'

⁷³ Ibid., p. 39: 'Et oudit chastel et fermeté se tient costumièrement ledit duc Witholt, prince de Létau, et y tient sa court et sa demeure.'

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 39: 'Et y a aucunes esglises de bricque.'

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 39: 'sont les gens dudit royaume cristiens nez nouvellement par la contrainte des seigneurs de l'ordre de Prusse et de Liuflant.'

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 39–40.

⁷⁷ CHOLLET, L. *Les Sarrasins du Nord...*, p. 245–248.

de Mézières treats the Prussians as still partly pagan, although ‘newcomers in the faith’,⁷⁸ despite the fact that Prussia had been conquered by the Teutonic Knights during the 13th century, roughly one century before Philippe’s diplomatic visit to Prussia (in the autumn of 1364). For Mézières, as for Lannoy, the Knights of the Teutonic Order were praised as valuable warriors, but their missionary task seemed to be only partially fulfilled.⁷⁹ None of these French authors explicitly state what they think of the situation. It seems that for them the Christianisation of the Baltic peoples was a long and complicated process, where the Teutonic Knights played an incentive role. The biggest event, however, was the conversion of the Grand Duchy, which was considered as acquired by Philippe de Mézières soon after 1390, and by Guillebert de Lannoy a decade later, when he crossed the Baltic region in 1413–1414.

Guillebert was not the last French-speaking crusader who came to Prussia, but he was among the last.⁸⁰ The baptism of Samogitia, confirmed by the Council of Constance in 1417, put an end to the Prussian *Reisen*. As this important forum gathering many prelates, lords and ambassadors from all over Europe officially and publicly backed the Christianisation of Samogitia by Lithuanian and Polish ecclesiastical hierarchies, it became clear that there were no pagans or ‘Saracens’ in the Baltic area any more.⁸¹ As the news progressively spread across all of Europe, the nobility understood that there was no more glory or honour to be won in waging war against the Balts, who were now fellow Christians.⁸² In French literature, Lithuania gradually merged with better-known Poland, which came to be seen as part of the *antemurale christianitatis* protecting the Catholic world from Russian, Tartar and Ottoman ‘schismatics’ or ‘infidels’.⁸³ Having lost its exceptional religious character, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania slowly disappeared from the mental horizon of the French literary milieu, until the 1570s, when Prince Henri de Valois accepted the Polish crown, which led to renewed interest in northeast Europe at the French court.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ PHILIPPE de Mézières. Op. cit., p. 215: ‘nouvellement venus a la foy.’

⁷⁹ CHOLLET, Loïc. Croisade ou évangélisation ? La polémique contre les Chevaliers Teutoniques à l’aune des témoignages des voyageurs français de la fin du Moyen Âge. *Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica*, 2015, Vol. 20, p. 175–203.

⁸⁰ PARAVICINI, W. *Die Preußenreisen...*, 1, S. 41–42. Noblemen from Hainaut, a French-speaking province, were seen in Prussia in 1419, and German noblemen in 1422, the latter wanting, in fact, to fight against the Hussites from Bohemia!

⁸¹ BARONAS, D.; ROWELL, S. C. Op. cit., pp. 366–378.

⁸² PARAVICINI, Werner. Vom Kreuzzug zum Soldzug: Die Schlacht bei Tannenberg und das Ende der Preußenfahrten des europäischen Adels. In *Conflictus magnus apud Grunwald...*, S. 119–126.

⁸³ CHOLLET, L. *Les Sarrasins du Nord...*, p. 311–331; SRODECKI, Paul. *Antemurale Christianitatis: Zur Genese der Bollwerkshetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit*. Husum, 2015.

⁸⁴ KŁOCZOWSKI, Jerzy; WOZNIWESKI, Muriel. Les premières histoires de la Pologne publiées en France, à l’occasion de l’élection d’Henri de Valois. In *Henri III et son temps. Actes du colloque international du Centre de la Renaissance de Tours, octobre 1989*. Etudes réunies par Robert SAUZET. Paris, 1992, p. 103–109; ROSSET, François. *L’Arbre de Cracovie. Le mythe polonais dans la littérature française*. Paris, 1996.

Conclusion

The Christianisation of the Baltic rim was first mentioned by Adémar de Chabannes and Raoul Glaber in the 11th century, when the chroniclers narrated the martyrdom of Adalbert of Prague and Bruno of Querfurt at the hands of local pagans. In their writings, as well as in several *Vitae* written in Italy, the Baltic religion was described as the adoration of nature, and fidelity to the customs of one's ancestors, according to the traditional image of paganism. Since the preaching of the Second Crusade by Bernard de Clairvaux in 1147, the evangelisation of the Baltic was more or less confused with the achievement of the Baltic crusade. The Teutonic Order, which spearheaded this movement, was both admired and criticised by chroniclers, theologians and travellers writing in 13th-century France. The ambivalent image of the Order changed into a positive one when lay crusaders went from Western Europe to support the Teutonic Knights in their *Reisen* against the pagan Lithuanians. The Order came to be seen as the quintessence of chivalry, and the expedition led in Lithuania as the *nec plus ultra* of a knightly career.

This perception evolved slowly after the baptism of Grand Duke Jogaila and his accession to the Polish throne in 1386, followed by the Christianisation of Lithuania a year later. Despite many crusaders raiding Lithuania and Samogitia alongside the Teutonic brethren up until mid-1390, the last being seen in Prussia well after the Order's defeat at Žalgiris (1410), one diplomatic letter proves that the French court became aware of the evangelisation of Lithuania as early as 1386 or 1388. This change was noted by the writer Philippe de Mézières after 1390. The Christianisation process in Lithuania is described by Guillebert de Lannoy, who was also one of the very last French noblemen to set out on the *voyage de Prusse*, in 1413–1414. From then on seen as a newcomer to the Christian faith, Lithuania progressively joined the huge border area that several French and other West European authors placed on the eastern fringe of the continent.

List of printed sources quoted in the article

- ADEMAR de Chabannes. *Chronicon*. Publiée d'après les manuscrits par Jules CHAVANON. Paris, 1897.
- ADEMAR de Chabannes. *Chronique*. Trad. par Yves CHAUVIN, Georges PON, introduction par Georges PON. Turnhout, 2003.
- Alberici monachi Triumfontium Chronicon (edidit P. Scheffer-Boichorst). In *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptorum*. T. 23. Ed. Georgius Heinricus PERTZ. Hannoverae, 1874, p. 631–950.
- Baltų religijos ir mitologijos šaltiniai*. Sud. Norbertas VĖLIUS. T. 1. Vilnius, 1996.
- Die Chronik Wigands von Marburg. In *Scriptores rerum Prusicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Ordensherrschaft*. Hrsg. von Theodor HIRSCH, Max TÖPPEN, Ernst STREHLKE. Bd. 2. Leipzig, 1863, S. 429–662.

- La Chronique d'Enguerran de Monstrelet : en deux livres, avec pièces justificatives : 1400–1444*. T. 2. Publ. par Louis DOUËT-D'ARCO. Paris, 1858.
- Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denys : contenant le règne de Charles VI, de 1380 à 1422*. T. 4. Publ. par M. Louis BELLAGUET. Paris, 1842.
- Deux voyages en Asie au XIII^e siècle par Guill. de Rubruquis, envoyé de saint Louis, et Marco Polo, marchand vénitien*. [Ed. par Eugène MULLER.] Paris, 1888.
- Les grandes chroniques de France*. T. IX: *Charles IV le Bel, Philippe VI de Valois*. Éd. Jules VIARD. Paris, 1937.
- [JEAN Cabaret d'Orville.] *La Chronique du bon duc Loys de Bourbon*. Publ. par Alphonse-Martial CHAZAUD. Paris, 1876.
- The Life of Saint Adalbert, Bishop of Prague and Martyr (transl. by Cristian Gaşpar). In *Saints of the Christianisation Age of Central Europe (Tenth–Eleventh Centuries)*. Ed. by Gábor KLANICZAY. Budapest, 2012, pp. 79–181.
- Le Livre des faits du bon messire Jehan le Meingre, dit Bouciquaut, Mareschal de France et gouverneur de Jennes*. Éd. critique par Denis LALANDE. Genève, 1985.
- Die Metzzer Chronik des Jaique Dex (Jacques D'Esch) über die Kaiser und Könige aus dem Luxemburger Hause*. Hrsg. von Georg WOLFRAM. Metz, 1906.
- The 'Opus Majus' of Roger Bacon*. Ed. by John Henry BRIDGES. 3 vols. Oxford, 1897–1900.
- Œuvres de Guillaume de Machaut*. T. III. Publ. par Ernest HËPFFNER. Paris, 1921.
- Œuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy, voyageur, diplomate et moraliste*. Rec. et publ. par Charles POTVIN. Louvain, 1878.
- PETER von Dusburg. *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*. In *Scriptores rerum Prusicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Ordensherrschaft*. Hrsg. von Theodor HIRSCH, Max TÖPPEN, Ernst STREHLKE. Bd. 1. Leipzig, 1861, S. 3–219.
- Petri Damiani Vita beati Romualdi*. A cura di Giovanni TABACCO. Roma, 1957.
- PHILIPPE de Mézières. *Songe du viel pelerin*. T. 1. Éd. critique par Joël BLANCHARD. Genève, 2015.
- RAOUL Glaber. *Histoires*. Trad. et prés. Mathieu ARNOUX. Turnhout 1999.
- WATTENBACH, W. Handschriftliches. *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, 1882, Bd. 7, S. 620–629.

List of previous studies quoted in the article

- BARONAS, Darius. The Year 1009: St Bruno of Querfurt between Poland and Rus'. *Journal of Medieval History* 2008, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 1–22.
- BARONAS, Darius; ROWELL, S. C. *The Conversion of Lithuania: From Pagan Barbarians to Late Medieval Christians*. Vilnius, 2015.
- BENNINGHOVEN, Friedrich. *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder: Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* (Ostmittel-europa in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, Bd. 9). Köln, 1965.
- BLOMKVIST, Nils. *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)* (The Northern World, Vol. 15). Leiden, 2005.
- BŁASZCZYK, Grzegorz. *Dzieje stosunków polsko-litewskich*. T. II: *Od Krewa do Lublina*. Poznań, 2007.
- CALIN, William. Machaut's Legacy: the Chaucerian Inheritance Reconsidered. *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 1987, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 9–22.
- CHOLLET, Loïc. Cohabiter sur la frontière : l'Ordre teutonique et ses sujets de Livonie au début du XIV^e siècle. In *Ordres militaires et territorialité au Moyen Âge, entre Orient et Occident*. Sous la dir. de Marie-Anna CHEVALIER. Paris, 2020, p. 369–383.
- CHOLLET, Loïc. Croisade ou évangélisation ? La polémique contre les Chevaliers Teutoniques à l'aune des témoignages des voyageurs français de la fin du Moyen Âge. *Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica*, 2015, Vol. 20, p. 175–203.

- CHOLLET, Loïc. *Dernières croisades. Le voyage chevaleresque en Occident à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Paris, 2021.
- CHOLLET, Loïc. *Les Sarrasins du Nord. Une histoire de la croisade balte par la littérature (XII^e–XV^e siècles)*. Neuchâtel, 2019.
- CHRISSIS, Nikolaos G. Crusades and Crusaders in Medieval Greece. In *A Companion to Latin Greece* (Brill's Companions to European History, Vol. 6). Ed. by Nickiphoros I. TSOUGARAKIS, Peter LOCK. Leiden, 2014, pp. 23–72.
- CONSTABLE, Gilles. The Place of the Magdebourg Charter. In *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Kaspar Elm zum 70. Geburtstag* (Berliner Historische Studien, Bd. 31). Hrsg. von Franz J. FELTEN, Nikolas JASPERT. Berlin, 2000, pp. 283–299.
- The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*. Ed. by Martin CARVER. Woodbridge, 2003.
- DELUZ, Christiane. Croisade et paix en Europe au XIV^e siècle. Le rôle du cardinal Hélie de Talleyrand. *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales*, 1996, vol. 1, p. 53–64.
- DVORNIK, Francis. *Les Slaves. Histoire et civilisation, de l'Antiquité aux débuts de l'époque contemporaine*. Paris, 1970.
- EHLERS, Axel. The Crusade of the Teutonic Knights against Lithuania Reconsidered. In *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*. Ed. by Alan V. MURRAY. Aldershot, 2001, pp. 21–44.
- EKDAHL, Sven. *Die Schlacht bei Tannenberg 1410: Quellenkritische Untersuchungen*. Bd. I: *Einführung und Quellenlage* (Berliner historische Studien, Bd. 8). Berlin, 1982.
- Europe around the Year 1000*. Ed. by Przemysław URBAŃCZYK. Warsaw, 2001.
- FILOTAS, Bernadette. *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures in Early Medieval Pastoral Literature*. Toronto, 2005.
- FLETCHER, Richard A. *The Conversion of Europe: From Paganism to Christianity, 371–1386 AD*. Roermond, 1998.
- FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT, Iben. *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147–1254* (The Northern World, Vol. 26). Leiden, Boston, 2007.
- GŁADYSZ, Mikołaj. *The Forgotten Crusaders. Poland and the Crusader Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (The Northern World, Vol. 56). Leiden, Boston, 2012.
- GOUGUENHEIM, Sylvain. *Les Chevaliers teutoniques*. Paris, 2007.
- GOUGUENHEIM, Sylvain. *Les derniers païens : Les Baltes face aux chrétiens (XIII^e–XVIII^e siècle)*. Paris, 2022.
- GOUGUENHEIM, Sylvain. Das Echo der Schlacht bei Grunwald im Frankreich des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts. In *Conflictus magnus apud Grunwald, 1410. Między historią a tradycją*. Red. Krzysztof OŹÓG, Janusz TRUPINDA. Malbork, 2013, S. 192–206.
- GOUGUENHEIM, Sylvain. Le procès pontifical de 1339 contre l'Ordre Teutonique. *Revue historique*, 2008, t. 310, fasc. 3 (647), p. 567–603.
- GÜTTNER-SPORZYNSKI, Darius, von. *Poland, Holy War, and the Piast Monarchy, 1100–1230*. Turnhout, 2014.
- HALECKI, Oskar. Gilbert de Lannoy and His Discovery of East Central Europe. *Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America*, 1944, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 314–331.
- HOUSLEY, Norman. *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades, 1305–1378*. Oxford, 1986.
- HOUSLEY, Norman. *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580: from Lyon to Alcazar*. Oxford, 1992.
- JENSEN, Kurt Villads. Crusading at the End of the World. The Spread of the Idea of Jerusalem after 1099 to the Baltic Sea Area and to the Iberian Peninsula. In *Crusading on the Edge. Ideas and Practice of Crusading in Iberia and the Baltic Region, 1100–1500*. Ed. by Torben K. NIELSEN, Iben FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT. Turnhout, 2016, pp. 153–176.
- JUDIC, Bruno. Le corbeau et la sauterelle. L'application des instructions de Grégoire le Grand pour la transformation des temples païens en églises. In *Impies et païens entre Antiquité et Moyen Âge*. Textes réunis par Lionel MARY, Michel SOT. Paris, 2002, p. 97–125.
- KĻAVIŅŠ, Kaspars. The Ideology of Christianity and Pagan Practices among the Teutonic Knights. *Journal of Baltic Studies* 2006, Vol. 37, No. 3, pp. 260–276.

- KŁOCZOWSKI, Jerzy; WOZNIWESKI, Muriel. Les premières histoires de la Pologne publiées en France, à l'occasion de l'élection d'Henri de Valois. In *Henri III et son temps. Actes du colloque international du Centre de la Renaissance de Tours, octobre 1989*. Etudes réunies par Robert SAUZET. Paris, 1992, p. 103–109.
- LEIGHTON, Gregory. Crusading and Holy War in the Teutonic Order's Struggle for Žemaitija. Written and Visual Perspectives. In *Aspects of Southeast Baltic Social History: The 14th to the 18th Centuries* (Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis, Vol. 41). Ed. by Marius ŠČAVINSKAS, Jolanta SKURDAUSKIENĖ. Klaipėda, 2020, pp. 25–52.
- MAŽEIKA, Rasa. Granting Power to the Enemy Gods in the Chronicles of the Baltic Crusades. In *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*. Ed. by David ABULAFIA, Nora BEREND. Aldershot, 2002, pp. 154–156.
- MAŽEIKA, Rasa. Pirmojo Lietuvos vardo paminėjimo ir šv. Brunono biografijos šaltinių interpretacijos problemas = Probleme der ersten urkundlichen Erwähnung Litauens und der Interpretation der biographischen Quellen des Heiligen Brun. In *Lietuvos krikščionėjimas Vidurio Europas kontekste*. Sud. Vydas DOLINSKAS, Vilnius, 2005, p. 61–85, 86–108.
- MAŽEIKA, Rasa; CHOLLET, Loïc. Familiar Marvels? French and German Crusaders and Chroniclers Confront Baltic Pagan Religions. *Francia – Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte*, 2016, Bd. 43, pp. 45–47.
- MICHALOWSKI, Roman. *The Gniezno Summit. The Religious Premises of the Founding of the Archbishopric of Gniezno* (East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, Vol. 38). Leiden, 2016.
- MICKŪNAITĖ, Giedrė. *Making a Great Ruler: Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania*. Budapest, 2006.
- MILITZER, Klaus. *Von Akkon zur Marienburg: Verfassung, Verwaltung und Sozialstruktur des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1309* (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, Bd. 56). Marburg, 1999.
- MURRAY, Alan V. The Saracens of the Baltic: Pagan and Christian Lithuanians in the Perception of English and French Crusaders to Late Medieval Prussia. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 2010, Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 413–429.
- PARAVICINI, Werner. *Adlig leben im 14. Jahrhundert. Weshalb sie fuhren: Die Preußenreisen des europäischen Adels*. Bd. 3 (Vestigia Prussica, Bd. 2). Göttingen, 2020.
- PARAVICINI, Werner. Litauer: vom heidnischen Gegner zum adligen Standesgenossen. In *Tannenberg–Grunwald–Žalgiris 1410: Krieg und Frieden im späten Mittelalter* (Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau. Quellen und Studien, Bd. 26). Hrsg. von Werner PARAVICINI, Rimvydas PETRAUSKAS, Grischa VERCAMER. Wiesbaden, 2012, S. 253–282.
- PARAVICINI, Werner. *Die Preußenreisen des europäischen Adels*. Bd. 1–2. Sigmaringen, 1989–1995.
- PARAVICINI, Werner. Vom Kreuzzug zum Soldzug: Die Schlacht bei Tannenberg und das Ende der Preußenfahrten des europäischen Adels. In *Conflictus magnus apud Grunwald, 1410. Między historią a tradycją*. Red. Krzysztof OŻÓG, Janusz TRUPINDA. Malbork, 2013, S. 119–126.
- POLEJOWSKI, Karol. The Teutonic Order's Propaganda in France during the Wars against Poland and Lithuania (Fifteenth Century). In *Die geistlichen Ritterorden in Mitteleuropa. Mittelalter*. Hrsg. von Karl BORCHARDT, Jan LIBOR. Brno, 2011, pp. 233–242.
- PLUSKOWSKI, Aleksander. *The Archaeology of the Prussian Crusade: Holy War and Colonisation*. London, 2013.
- POWER, Amanda. *Roger Bacon and the Defense of Christendom*. Cambridge, 2013.
- RAPATOUT, Aude. Charles I^{er} d'Anjou, roi d'Albanie. L'aventure balkanique des Angevins de Naples au XIII^e siècle. *Hypothèses 2005: Travaux de l'Ecole doctorale d'histoire*. Paris, 2006, p. 261–269.
- RILEY-SMITH, Louise; RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan. *The Crusades. Idea and Reality, 1095–1274* (Documents of medieval history, Vol. 4). London, 1981.
- ROSSET, François. *L'Arbre de Cracovie. Le mythe polonais dans la littérature française*. Paris, 1996.
- ROWELL, S. C. *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295–1345*. Cambridge, 1994.

- ROWELL, S. C. Customs, rites and power in mediaeval and early modern Lithuanian society. In *Kultūrų sankirtos. Skiriama I. Lukšaitės 60-mečiui*. Sud. Zigmuntas KIAUPA. Vilnius, 2000, p. 46–64.
- ROWELL, S. C. Lithuania and the West, 1337–41 – A Question of Sources. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 1989, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 303–326.
- ROWELL, S. C. Unexpected Contacts: Lithuanians at Western Courts, c. 1316–1400. *English Historical Review*, 1996, Vol. 111, No. 442, pp. 557–577.
- SELART, Anti. *Livonia, Rus' and the Baltic Crusades in the Thirteenth Century* (East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, Vol. 29). Leiden, Boston, 2015.
- SIDOROVA, Vasilina. The Slavic World in French Historical Writings of the Eleventh Century. In *Slovakia and Croatia*. Vol. 1: *Historical Parallels and Connections (until 1780)*. Ed. by Martin HOMZA, Jan LUKAČKA, Neven BUDAK. Bratislava, Zagreb, 2013, pp. 97–101.
- SRODECKI, Paul. *Antemurale Christianitatis: Zur Genese der Bollwerksrhetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit*. Husum, 2015.
- SVÁTEK, Jaroslav. *Prier, combattre et voir le monde. Discours et récits de nobles voyageurs à la fin du Moyen Âge*. Rennes, 2021.
- TAMM, Marek. How to justify a crusade? The conquest of Livonia and new crusade rhetoric in the early thirteenth century. *Journal of Medieval History*, 2013, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 431–455.
- TAMM, Marek. Inventing Livonia: The Name and Fame of a New Christian Colony on the Medieval Baltic Frontier. *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, 2011, Bd. 60, Nr. 2, pp. 186–209.
- TAMM, Marek. Signes d'altérité. La représentation de la Baltique orientale dans le *De proprietatibus rerum* de Barthélemy l'Anglais (vers 1245). 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. Turnhout, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2006, p. 147–172.
- URBAN, William. Roger Bacon and the Teutonic Knights. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 1988, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 363–370.
- VALOIS, Noël. *La France et le grand schisme d'Occident*. T. 2. Paris, 1896.
- WOOD, Ian. *Missionary Life. Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe, 400–1050*, New York, 2001.

BALTŲ CHRISTIANIZACIJA ŽVELGIANT IŠ VIDURAMŽIŲ PRANCŪZIJOS

Loïc Chollet

Santrauka

Pirmosios misijos į baltų žemes minimos XI a. prancūzų kilmės kronikininkų Ademaro Šabaniečio (*Adémar de Chabannes*) ir Raulio Glabė (*Raoul Glaber*) veikaluose, užsimenančiuose apie Adalberto iš Prahos (Vaitiekaus) ir Brunono Kverfurtiečio kankinystes. Remdamiesi tradiciniu pagonybės vaizdiniu, abu autoriai baltų religiją apibūdino kaip gamtos garbiniumą ir ištikimybę seniesiems protėvių papročiams. Nuo 1147 m., kai Bernardas Klervietis (*Bernard de Clairvaux*) ėmėsi propaguoti Antrąjį kryžiaus žygį, baltų evangelizacija susiliejo

su Kryžiaus karo judėjimu, kurio ideologinė užduotis – ginti ir plėsti krikščionių tikėjimą tarp pagonių. Vokiečių ordinu, kuris atliko kovos su pagonimis ieties smaigalio funkciją, Viduramžių Prancūzijos autoriai, viena vertus, žavėjosi, kita vertus, kritikavo. Antai anglų vienuolis Rodžeris Beikonas (*Roger Bacon*), susijęs su Paryžiaus universitetu, savo veikale „Opus maius“ (1268 m.) polemizavo dėl smurto naudojimo christianizacijos procese. Norėdamas parodyti savo argumentų svarumą, jis Vokiečių ordiną pateikė kaip blogą pavyzdį, kaip krikščionių valdžia neturėtų elgtis netikinčiųjų atžvilgiu: Vokiečių ordino brutalumas, godumas žemių ir turtų atitraukia pagonis nuo tikėjimo. Tuo tarpu kitas Paryžiuje dirbęs anglų vienuolis Baltramiejus Anglas (*Bartholomeus Anglicanus*) savo „enciklopedijoje“ pripažino, kad Vokiečių ordino broliai Livonijos vietinius gyventojus sėkmingai atitolino nuo tarnystės demonams, t. y. pagonybės. Flamandų kilmės neoficialus Prancūzijos karaliaus Liudviko IX pasiuntinys pas mongolų (totorių) chaną Viljamas iš Rubruko (*William de Rubrouck*) labai panašiai apibūdino Vokiečių ordino brolių veiklą Prūsijoje.

145

Iki XV a. prancūziškai kalbančiame regione apie baltų konversiją daugiausia rašė dvasininkai. Taip nutiko greičiausiai dėl to, kad iki Šventosios Žemės praradimo Vakarų Europos riterija daugiausia keliaudavo į Artimuosius Rytus arba po Viduržemio jūros regioną, mažesnę dėmesį skirdami Šiaurės rytų Europos regionui. Didžiama kryžininkų, padėjusių Vokiečių ordinui, buvo kilę iš Vokietijos arba Vidurio rytų Europos. Ši padėtis pasikeitė žlugus Akruui – paskutinei kryžininkų tvirtovei Levante. Nors Šventosios Žemės užkariavimas tapo neįmanomas, riteriškas gyvenimo būdas kilminguosius vis tiek skatino kovoti už Dievą ir garbę. Daugelis to meto autorių, rašančių aukštuomenei, pabrėžė, kad jaunuolis ar riteris turįs keliauti į tolimus kraštus ir kovoti su Kristaus priešais. Toks kryžiaus žygių troškimas didino Vokiečių ordino organizuojamų žygių patrauklumą. Vokiečių ordino didysis magistras du kartus per metus šaukdavo milžinišką talkininkų armiją iš visos krikščioniškosios Europos, daugiausia iš Vokietijos (imperijos), Prancūzijos, Anglijos. Suvokimas apie Baltijos regiono christianizacijos procesą susiformavo didikams iš Europos masiškai pradėjus dalyvauti tokiose karinėse ekspedicijose, vokiškai vadintose *Reisen*, o prancūziškuose tekstuose – *Reise de Prusse* arba *voyage de Prusse*. Priešai pagonys pradėti vadinti „saracénais“, kas leido šias karines kampanijas susieti su tradiciniais Artimųjų Rytų kryžiaus žygiais, nors pats lietuvių pagonybės vaizdavimas liudija, kad baltų papročiais besidomintys vakariečiai žinojo, jog čia gyventa ne musulmonų, o savo religiją turinčių lietuvių. Akivaizdu, kad *Reisen* į Prūsiją tikslas – veržtis į lietuvių žemes ir atlikti didįjį saracėnų sunaikinimą (*grant destruccion de Sarrasins*), kaip teigė Prancūzijos maršalo Boucicaut biografas (XIV a. antroji pusė). Siekiant sustiprinti aristokratišką *voyage de Prusse*, kurią daugelis autorių laikė riterinio gyvenimo būtinu bruožu, pobūdį, pagonys vaizduoti kaip kilmingi priešai.

Toks suvokimas galutinai susiformavo po Lietuvos didžiojo kunigaikščio Jogailos krikšto ir Lenkijos sosto užėmimo 1386 m.; po metų prasidėjo ir visos Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės christianizacija. Šie įvykiai regionui neatnešė ramybės. Naujoji krikščio-

niška Lietuva audringai įsitraukė į kovas su Vokiečių ordinu dėl Žemaitijos, kuri buvo Lietuvos evangelizavimo proceso nuošalyje ir oficialiai liko pagoniška. Taigi daug kryžininkų veržėsi į Žemaitiją iki 1390 m. ir gerokai vėliau, nes paskutiniai kryžininkai iš Vakarų čia matyti 1419 ir 1422 m. Be to, keli šaltiniai lietuvius tebevadino „saracėnais“ dar ir 1410 m., pavyzdžiui, kai vienas prancūzų kronikininkas rašė apie Žalgirio mūšį. Tai, kad žinią apie Vokiečių ordino pralaimėjimą šiame mūšyje į Vakarų Europą atnešė Ordino pasiuntiniai, neabejotinai paaiškina šį prancūzų kronikininko šališkumą Vokiečių ordino naudai, nepamirštant ir musulmonų totorių dalyvavimo Lenkijos-Lietuvos koalicijoje, kuo pasinaudojo Vokiečių ordino pasiuntiniai.

Nepaisant to, Prancūzijos karaliaus dvaras apie Lietuvos evangelizaciją sužinojo 1386–1388 m. Apie tai dvarą informavo flamandų kilmės Vokiečių ordino brolis Žanas de Stratas (*Jean de Strate*). Jogailos, jo šeimos narių ir pavaldinių krikštą minėjo prancūzų autorius, riteris Pilypas de Mezjeras (*Philippe de Mézières*), netrukus po 1390 m. parengęs pasakojimą „Senojo maldininko sapnas“ (*Songe du Viel Pelerin*). Būdamas į „pensiją“ išėjęs diplomatas, Pilypas de Mezjeras plačiai apmąstė politinę ir dvasinę krikščioniškosios Europos reformą, domėjosi savo laikmečio religiniais reikalais ir, regis, svarbiu įvykiu laikė Lietuvos evangelizaciją. Svajodamas apie didžiulį būsimą kryžiaus žygį į Levantą, jis manė, kad krikščioniška Lietuva su Vokiečių ordinu turinti prisidėti prie telkiamų vieningų krikščionių pajėgų.

Christianizacijos procesą Lietuvoje po dviejų dešimtmečių aprašė vienas paskutinių prancūzų didikų, 1413–1414 m. dalyvavusių Baltijos kryžiaus žygyje Giliberas de Lanua (*Guillebert de Lannoy*). Kovojęs Lenkijoje ir Pomeranijoje, kurios esą buvo prielankios „saracėnams“, ir atvykęs į Karaliaučių, jis pažymėjo, kad *reises de Prusse* priklauso praeičiai. Netrukus jis aplankė Livoniją, Novgorodą, Pskovą ir Lietuvą. Keliaudamas po Lietuvos Didžiąją Kunigaikštystę jis pastebėjo, kad dėl Vokiečių ordino spaudimo gyventojai buvo sukrikščioninti ir „diena po dienos“ statė naujas bažnyčias. Netiesiogiai riteris turėjo pripažinti, kad nėra prasmės Vokiečių ordinui kovoti su Lietuva, nes Ordino tikslas – tikėjimo plėtra – yra pasiektas. 1417 m. Konstanco bažnytiniame susirinkime daugelis Vakarų prelatų, ponų ir atstovų oficialiai ir viešai parėmė Žemaitijos – paskutinio pagoniško krašto Baltijos regione – krikščionybę. Visa riteriškoji Europa dabar žinojo, kad kryžiaus žygiai šiame regione baigėsi. Nuo tol krikščioniškoji Lietuva pamažu buvo įtraukta į vėlesnių autorijų minimas batalijas, vykusias Rytų Europoje pasibaigus Vėlyviesiems viduramžiams.