

**On the Crusades and Coercive Missions
in the Baltic Region in the Mid-12th Century
and Early 13th Century.
The Cases of the Wends and Livonians**

by
Marius Ščavinskas*

1

The annals of Magdeburg give an extensive description of what is called the Crusade to the Wendish Slavs in 1147, which has remained a source of controversy from its origins even up to present day historiography: was there missionary activity during this Crusade, what kind of missions can be qualified as military/coercive, and was this Crusade part of the Christian missions?¹ The fact that the annalists and chroniclers of the 12th century were already in dispute about the meaning and necessity of the Crusade the absence of unanimity on the issue of crusades across all strata of civic and clerical power.² Hans-Dietrich Kahl examines how the negative approaches of 12th century chroniclers towards the Wendish Crusades should be assessed. He points out that in their chronicles Helmold of Bosau and Vincent of Prague mainly expressed their negative attitude not towards the crusades and coercive actions against Elbian Slavs but more towards *inappropriately* performed crusades, insufficient care for the conversion of the pagans by the

* The research was funded by the Research Council of Lithuania within the framework of the Postdoctoral Fellowship Implementation in Lithuania Project (Vilnius, Lithuanian Institute of History).

¹ See these points of view: MIKOŁAJ GLĄDYSZ: *Zapomniani krzyżowcy. Polska wobec ruchu krucjatowego w XII-XIII wieku*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 73-78, 84, 90; English version IDEM: *The Forgotten Crusaders. Poland and the Crusader Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, Leiden 2012; JONATHAN PHILLIPS: *Second Crusade. Extending the Frontiers of Christendom*, New Haven et al. 2007, pp. 228-243; JAN-CHRISTOPH HERRMANN: *Der Wendenkreuzzug von 1147*, Frankfurt a.M. et al. 2011.

² Helmoldi Presbyteri Bozoviensis *Chronica Slavorum*, 3rd ed., Hannoverae 1937 (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica* [later abbreviated as MGH] SS rer. Germ. [32]), LXV; *Annales Bohemorum Vincentii Pragensis*, in: GEORG HEINRICH PERTZ (ed.): MGH SS rer. Germ. [17], Hannoverae 1861, pp. 658-683; *Annales Rodenses*, in: IDEM (ed.): MGH SS rer. Germ. [16], Hannoverae 1859, pp. 688-723, here pp. 718-719. *Annales Magdeburgenses*, in: IDEM (ed.): MGH SS rer. Germ. [16], Hannover 1859, pp. 105-196, here p. 188.

secular power and the baptism of Wendish Slavs in a deceptive way.³ This crusade has also puzzled historians today. Undoubtedly, the most important problem related to this crusade is the following question: why did the period of crusades in the Baltic region begin with this one, which, as is often stated, replaced the peaceful evangelization of the pagan nations?

The historiography shows that the crusading spirit was already felt but not yet realized in the Baltic region in 1108, when the so-called “Magdeburg Charter” was announced and the idea of redirecting the crusades against the Elbian Slavs was raised. This “charter” was written between 1107/08 and 1110, most probably in early 1108. Scholars disagree whether it was a private letter (addressed by Archbishop Adalgot of Magdeburg and other bishops), or an official summons (possibly a draft).⁴ The Magdeburg Charter is considered to be ideologically based not only on the crusading perspective but also on the perspective of Ottonian war with the Elbian Slavs, foreseeing that restoring Elbian Slav church structures also implied restoring the Ottonian imperial relationship with the pagan Slavs.⁵

Even Kahl, discussing the controversy of the concept of Christianization in the Middle Ages, finds evidence for Christianization and a kind of “en-churching” (“Einkirchung”).⁶ Modern historiography classifies the missions

³ HANS-DIETRICH KAHL: Zum Ergebnis des Wendenkreuzzugs von 1147. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des sächsischen Frühchristentums, in: HELMUT BEUMANN (ed.): Heidenmission und Kreuzzugsgedanke in der Deutschen Ostpolitik des Mittelalters, Darmstadt 1963, pp. 275-316, here pp. 279-280, 283, 285, 290. In contrast he shows (pp. 299-313) why in 1147 the spirit of the crusades was lost: The aim was not to convert the Slavs, but to conquer their land, which perfectly matched the aims of the crusaders in the Holy Land. MARGRET BÜNDING-NAUJOKS: Das Imperium Christianum und die deutschen Ostkriege vom zehnten bis zum zwölften Jahrhundert, *ibidem*, pp. 65-120, here pp. 107-108, also repeats that the crusaders “lacked the spirit of the crusades”. The criticism of the crusades in the 12-13th centuries is extensively analyzed in ELIZABETH SIBERRY: *Criticism of Crusading 1095-1274*, Oxford 1985; cf. JOHN H.E. COWDREY: Christianity and the Morality of Warfare during the First Century of Crusading, in: MARCUS BULL, NORMAN HOUSLEY (eds.): *The Experience of Crusading*. Vol. 1: Western Approaches, Cambridge 2003, pp. 175-192.

⁴ GILES CONSTABLE: Early Crusading in Eastern Germany: The Magdeburg Charter of 1107/8, in: *Idem*: *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*, Farnham et al. 2008, pp. 197-214, here pp. 199-205.

⁵ HELMUT BEUMANN: Kreuzzugsgedanke und Ostpolitik im Hohen Mittelalter, in: *Idem*, *Heidenmission* (as in footnote 3), pp. 121-145, here pp. 136-137.

⁶ HANS-DIETRICH KAHL: Zur Problematik der mittelalterlichen Vorstellung von “Christianisierung”, in: HUBERT Z. NOWAK (ed.): *Die Rolle der Ritterorden in der Christianisierung und Kolonisierung des Ostseegebietes*, Toruń 1983, pp. 125-128, here p. 126. Cf. KAHL, *Zum Ergebnis des Wendenkreuzzugs* (as in footnote 3), p. 287. In modern German historiography “Einkirchung” is perceived as the enforcement on converts (through evangelization) of the norms of Christian life (*christianae religioni subiungere*), see: HORST FUHRMANN: *Deutsche Geschichte im hohen Mittelalter*, Göttingen 2003, pp. 147-148; MICHAEL BORGOLTE: *Die mittelalterliche Kirche*, München 2004, p. 11.

themselves in a different way. Polish researcher Jerzy Strzelczyk, for example, classifies the missions according to who inspired them and who put them into practice: 1) missions begun by the rulers of neighbouring countries; 2) missions inspired by the ruler of their own land; 3) missions carried out by a missionary and not supported by any ruler.⁷ The most popular of all, however, is the classification of the missions into peaceful and military/coercive ones. Another Polish researcher, Błażej Śliwiński, in his generalizing work on the missions in Prussia, also discerns three groups of missions: 1) early (peaceful) mission; 2) later missions, when a missionary was followed by an armed guard; 3) military missions, which had the status of crusades.⁸ Christianization could be carried out by peaceful missionary means, which are fully described by Herbert Achterberg, who already in 1930 provided the terms “Wortmission” (“evangelization by word”) and “Tatmission” (“evangelization by deed”).⁹ The third identified method – “Schwertmission” (“evangelization by the sword”) – has received most attention.¹⁰ This particular term has been used to explain how the conversion of the heathens has become, in Kahl’s words, the work of military orders. Hermann Dörries tries to identify places in Medieval Europe where the “Schwertmission” took place, adding that the missions to the Saxon tribes, begun by Charlemagne, also materialized in Livonian missions by the River Daugava at the beginning of the 13th

⁷ JERZY STRZELCZYK: Niektóre problemy chrystianizacji Europy wczesnośredniowiecznej [Some Problems of Christianization in Early Medieval Europe], in: IDEM, JÓZEF DOBOSZ (eds.): *Nihil superfluum esse. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza ofiarowane profesor Jadwidze Kryżaniakowej* [Nihil superfluum esse. Studies of the Medieval Age Dedicated to Professor Jadwiga Kryżaniakowa], Poznań 2000, pp. 61-84, here pp. 73-75.

⁸ BŁAŻEJ ŚLIWIŃSKI: The Christianization of Prussia. The Polish Contribution until the Introduction of the Teutonic Order, in: JERZY GAŚSOWSKI (ed.): *Castri Dominae Nostrae Litterae Annales. Vol. I: Christianization of the Baltic Region*, Pułtusk 2004, pp. 39-63, here p. 58.

⁹ HERBERT ACHTERBERG: *Interpretatio Christiana. Verkleidete Glaubensgestalten der Germanen auf deutschem Boden*, Leipzig 1930, p. 87. The works of Kahl (now collected in HANS-DIETRICH KAHL: *Heidenfrage und Slawenfrage im deutschen Mittelalter. Ausgewählte Studien 1953-2008*, Leiden 2011) undoubtedly had some influence on such a classification, compare his classification of missions in IDEM: *Compellere intrare. Die Wendenpolitik Bruns von Querfurt im Lichte hochmittelalterlichen Missions- und Völkerrechts*, in: *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 4 (1955), pp. 360-401, here pp. 363-370. For a more recent confirmation of this classification based on the example of Prussia see HARTMUT BOOCKMANN: *Der Deutsche Orden. Zwölf Kapitel aus seiner Geschichte*, München 1981, pp. 108-110.

¹⁰ MANFRED HELLMANN: *Altlivland und das Reich*, in: INGE AUERBACH, ANDREAS HILLGRUBER et al. (eds.): *Felder und Vorfelder russischer Geschichte. Studien zu Ehren von Peter Scheibert*, Freiburg 1985, pp. 61-75, here p. 65, argues against the use of the term “Schwertmission” which was not used by the Church of the Middle Ages, but this has been criticized, see SVEN EKDAHL: *Die Rolle der Ritterorden bei der Christianisierung der Liven und Letten*, in: *Gli inizi del Cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia*, Roma 1989, pp. 203-243, here pp. 205-206.

century.¹¹ Therefore there is no doubt in historiography that the first military/coercive missions began in Carolingian times¹², while some forms of coercion are detectable even in Merovingian times.¹³ After the conquest of the Elbian Slavs (which began in the 10th century, when Otto I subdued the western Slavs and established six bishoprics, although the war continued until the second half of the 12th century)¹⁴, “Schwertmission” spread to the east of the Elbe River¹⁵, until, at the beginning of the 13th century, it reached the waters of the River Daugava.¹⁶

¹¹ HERMANN DÖRRIES: Fragen der Schwertmission, in: REINHARD WITTRAM (ed.): *Baltische Kirchengeschichte. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Missionierung und Reformation, der evangelisch-lutherischen Landeskirchen und des Volkskirchentums in den baltischen Landen*, Göttingen 1956, pp. 17-25, here p. 17.

¹² RICHARD SCHNEIDER: Karl der Große – politisches Sendungsbewußtsein und Mission, in: KNUT SCHÄFERDIEK (ed.): *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte. Band 2: Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters. Halbband 1*, München 1978, pp. 227-248; LUTZ E. PADBERG: *Die Christianisierung Europas im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1998, pp. 102-108; on the relationship between the theory and practice of missions in the time of St Boniface (Winfried) and Alcuin see CHARLES H. TALBOT: St. Boniface and the German Mission, in: *Studies in Church History* 6 (1970), pp. 49-55; RICHARD E. SULLIVAN: The Carolingian Missionary Theories, in: *The Catholic Historical Review* 42 (1956), 3, pp. 273-295, here pp. 273-274, 277-280. The latest literature includes LUTZ E. PADBERG: Bonifatius – Missionar und Reformer, in: FRANZ J. FELTEN (ed.): *Bonifatius – Apostel der Deutschen. Mission und Christianisierung vom 8. bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart 2004, pp. 39-51. Recent work is dedicated to the relationship between coercive missions and war in the Carolingian period: MATTHIAS BECHER: Der Prediger mit eiserner Zunge. Die Unterwerfung und Christianisierung der Sachsen durch Karl den Großen, in: HERMANN KAMP, MARTIN KROKER (eds.): *Schwertmission. Gewalt und Christianisierung im Mittelalter*, Paderborn et al. 2013, pp. 23-52.

¹³ JAMES C. RUSSELL: The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity. A Sociohistorical Approach to Religious Transformation, New York et al. 1994, pp. 154-155, 158-160. Cf. IAN WOOD: *The Merovingian Kingdoms 450-751*, London et al. 1994, pp. 161-163.

¹⁴ On conquest until Wendish Crusade see FRIEDRICH LOTTER: The Crusading Idea and the Conquest of the Region East of the Elbe, in: ROBERT BARTLETT, ANGUS MAC KAY (eds.): *Medieval Frontier Societies*, Oxford 1989, pp. 267-306, here pp. 267-283. On Danish expeditions to the Wendish Slavs and conquest see ANE L. BYSTED, CARSTEN S. JENSEN, KURT V. JENSEN, JOHN H. LIND: *Jerusalem in the North. Denmark and the Baltic Crusades 1100-1522*, Turnhout 2012, pp. 23-88.

¹⁵ LOTTER (as in footnote 14), pp. 267-273. In hagiographies dedicated to Otto of Bamberg the activities of Polish Duke Boleslaus the Wrymouthed and Wratislaw, the Duke of Pomerania, are critically assessed. It becomes clear from the hagiographies though that Otto of Bamberg was followed by the warriors of Boleslaus and/or Wratislaw and that Boleslaus himself was not reluctant to apply certain forms of coercion, most often during the Pomeranian War. For more on this see the latest study by STANISŁAW ROSIK: *Conversio gentis Pomeranorum. Studium Świadectwa o wydarzeniu (XII wiek) [Conversio gentis Pomeranorum. Study on the Testimony of One Event (12th Century)]*, Wrocław 2010, pp. 134-152, 170-172.

¹⁶ ALBERT BAUER: Der Livlandkreuzzug, in: WITTRAM (as in footnote 11), pp. 26-34, here pp. 27-28.

Undoubtedly, the appearance of such derived terms as “direct coercive mission” and “indirect coercive mission” (“indirekter Missionskrieg” and “direkter Missionskrieg”)¹⁷ was influenced by the particular role of the missionaries during certain military actions against the pagans (or expressing approval of those actions).¹⁸ Thus Bruno of Querfurt was announced as the initiator of the crusades against pagan Slavs.¹⁹ Carl Erdmann found evidence for this in the letter of Bruno to King Henry II of Germany, in which the famous words “compellere intrare” (“to enter by force”) were used. Later historiography suggested that Bruno had not applied the words “compellere intrare” to all heathens in general but to apostates in particular.²⁰ Despite this, the idea that Bruno initiated the crusading against heathens persisted.²¹ Other researchers deny any link between this particular mission and coercive missions in general.²² Yet it should be taken into consideration that Bruno’s words “compellere intrare” concerned the return of lay political power to the apostates, not the means of the mission. In this letter, the words “compellere intrare” are directly followed by an encouragement to “work in order to baptize the pagans” (“hoc laborare, ut baptizaretur paganus”). Thus, Bruno’s ultimate goal was not “compellere intrare”, as a technique to fight against the pagans (“pugnare cum paganis”), but work to baptize them by a definite means which “would force them to convert according to the commandment of the Gospel” (“quod est iubente evangelio compellere intrare”).²³

In fact historiography has discerned both lay and clergy missionary roles in the crusades and coercive missions.²⁴ When lay rulers’ desire to expand the

¹⁷ KAHL, *Compellere intrare* (as in footnote 9), pp. 374-378.

¹⁸ CARL ERDMANN: *The Origins of the Idea of Crusading*, New Jersey 1977, p. 105.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 107-108.

²⁰ REINHARD WENSKUS: *Studien zur historisch-politischen Gedankenwelt Bruns von Querfurt*, Münster et al. 1956, pp. 149-152.

²¹ JAN TRUPINDA: *Ideologia krucjatowa w kronice Piotra z Dusburga* [The Idea of Crusading in the Chronicle of Peter of Dusburg], Gdańsk 1999, pp. 48, 56; MICHAŁ TOMASZEK: *Brunon z Kwerfurtu i Otton II. Powstanie Słowiańskie 983 roku jako grzech cesarza* [Bruno of Querfurt and Otto II. The Slav Uprising of 983 as the Emperor’s Sin], in: *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 109 (2002), 4, pp. 5-23, here p. 11.

²² JAN TYSZKIEWICZ: *Brunon z Querfurtu w Polsce i krajach sąsiednich. W tysiąclecie śmierci* [Bruno of Querfurt in Poland and Neighbouring Countries. On the Millennium Anniversary of his Death], Pułtusk 2009, p. 171.

²³ *Brunonis Querfurtensis Epistola ad Henricum Regem* [Bruno of Querfurt’s Letter to King Henry], in: JADWIGA KARWASIŃSKA (ed.): *Żywot Pięciu Braci pustelników [albo] Żywot i męczeństwo Benedykta, Jana i ich towarzyszy*, Warszawa 1973 (Pomniki dziejów Polski / Monumenta Poloniae historica. Seria 2, 4,3), pp. 97-106, here p. 104 [emphasis by M.Š.].

²⁴ ERDMANN (as in footnote 18), p. 64, thinks that possibly between the 10th and 11th centuries war became a means of serving God. This idea received support, see: JONATHAN RILEY-SMITH: *The Crusades. A Short History*, New Haven et al. 1987, p. XXVIII. This however neglects the fact that the system of absolution designated to knights going to the Holy Land to fight against Muslims was only introduced at the

boundaries of their states coincides with efforts to impose Christianity on pagan tribes, political and secular components can be identified.²⁵ The historiography often calls this mission practice in contrast to the mission theory that the conversion to Christianity should be peaceful and voluntary. Such a mission programme was proposed by Gregory the Great in the early 7th century,²⁶ and was also applied in the early 8th century.²⁷ Yet by 830 Rudolf the monk of Fulda reproached St Boniface for baptizing the friars by force, in his *Vita Leobae*, for which he was killed.²⁸

It seems that mission theory and practice were not contradictory because they were kept separate by commissioning some to preach peace, and others to conduct coercive missions, whether directly or indirectly. This raises the question as to why missionaries did not perceive any kind of inconsistency between the declared theory and performed practice of mission. How could the same missionary participate in the crusades against the pagans, follow the crusaders in their actions, perform the duties of a chaplain, etc. and take part in the christening of the pagans at the same time?²⁹ The chronicler Henry of Livonia presents an image in which a missionary participates in military action, and then grants “prima signatio” (“first signing” with the cross before baptism), catechizes or even baptizes.³⁰ Does this also apply to the 12th cen-

end of the 11th century and did not yet exist in the 10th century: JOHN GILCHRIST: The Papacy and War against the Saracens 795-1216, in: *The International History Review* 10 (1988), 2, pp. 173-197, here p. 189.

²⁵ ARNOLD ANGENENDT: *Kaiserherrschaft und Königstaufe. Kaiser, Könige und Päpste als geistliche Patrone in der abendländischen Missionsgeschichte*, Berlin et al. 1984, p. 164.

²⁶ ROBERT A. MARKUS: Gregory the Great and Papal Missionary Strategy, in: G.J. CUMING (ed.): *The Mission of the Church and the Propagation of the Faith*, Cambridge 1970, pp. 29-38, here pp. 33-37; IAN WOOD: The Mission of Augustine of Canterbury to the English, in: *Speculum* 69 (1994), 1, pp. 1-17, here pp. 3-7, 12-13.

²⁷ TALBOT (as in footnote 12), pp. 49-55; PADBERG, Bonifatius (as in footnote 12), pp. 39-51.

²⁸ IAN WOOD: *The Missionary Life. Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe 400-1050*, London 2001, pp. 67-68. Alcuin also admitted the need to strive for peaceful mission: KATE RAMBRIDGE: Alcuin's Narratives of Evangelism. “The Life of St. Willibrord” and the Northumbrian Hagiographical Tradition, in: MARTIN CARVER (ed.): *The Cross Goes North. Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe AD 300-1300*, New York 2003, pp. 371-381, here pp. 372-377; WOOD, *The Missionary Life* (as in footnote 28), pp. 80-81, 85-86.

²⁹ This problem is also presented by CHRISTOPH T. MAIER: *Preaching the Crusades. Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century*, Cambridge 2006, pp. 48-52, where he discusses the sermons, preached to the knights; cf. BEVERLY M. KIENZLE: *Preaching the Cross. Liturgy and Crusade Propaganda*, in: *Medieval Sermon Studies* 53 (2009), pp. 11-32, here pp. 16-31.

³⁰ LEONID ARBUSOW, ALBERT BAUER (eds.): *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae* [later abbreviated as HCL], Hannover 1955 (MGH SS rer. Germ. [31]), XXIII, 7, pp. 161-162: “Unde nos confestim proiecto sacrosancto crismate ceterisque sacramentis ad clypeorum gladiatorumque ministeria cucurrimus et festinavimus in campum.” Detailed com-

ture, when crusades were announced against the pagans or the apostates who were considered to be pagans?³¹ In this case it is worth comparing three periods of missionary activity among the Polabian Slavs, Balts, and Livonian tribes: the middle of the 12th, the end of 12th and the beginning of the 13th centuries. The first case deals with the Wendish Crusades, the second, with the activities of Livonian Bishops Meinhard (and Bertold) of Livonian, and the third, with the activities of the first Bishop of Riga, Albert von Buxhövden.

2

Not only clergy – the chaplains of the crusaders – took part in the crusades, but also those who had received the sign of the cross. Though the latter were few, they were present. Popes Urban II and later Innocent III repeatedly encouraged them to fight using not real, but spiritual weapons.³² Historiography discusses a certain militarization of the Western Church, which allegedly began in the Carolingian period.³³ As the struggle for resources continued, this

mentary on this episode can be found in JAMES A. BRUNDAGE: Introduction. Henry of Livonia, the Writer and his Chronicle, in: MAREK TAMM, LINDA KALJUNDI et al. (eds.): *Crusading and Chronicle Writing on the Medieval Baltic Frontier. A Companion to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, Burlington 2011, pp. 1-19, here pp. 17-18. On “prima signatio” in Northern Europe see FJODOR USPENSKIJ: The Baptism of Bones and Prima Signatio in Medieval Scandinavia and Rus’, in: LESZEK P. SŁUPECKI, JACUB MORAWIEC (eds.): *Between Paganism and Christianity in the North*, Rzeszów 2009, pp. 165-178, here pp. 169-174.

³¹ RILEY-SMITH, The Crusades (as in footnote 24), pp. 37-39, states that the crusades against Muslims, pagans, heretics, the political opponents of the Holy See were shaped before the 13th century; SIMON LLOYD: The Crusading Movement 1096-1274, in: JONATHAN RILEY-SMITH (ed.): *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, Oxford 1999, pp. 34-65, here pp. 38-41; NORMAN HOUSLEY: Crusades against Christians. Their Origins and Early Development, c. 1000-1216, in: THOMAS F. MADDEN (ed.): *The Crusades. The Essential Readings*, Oxford et al. 2002, pp. 71-97. See the historiographic constant established by the pluralists regarding the crusades against Muslims, pagans, heretics, and political opponents: C. RILEY-SMITH: Kreuzzüge, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. Vol. 5: Hiera-Mittel – Lukanien, München 1991, cols. 1508-1519.

³² CHRISTOPHER TYERMAN: Henry of Livonia and the Ideology of Crusading, in: TAMM/KALJUNDI (as in footnote 30), pp. 23-44, here p. 40; JAMES A. BRUNDAGE: Crusades, Clerics, and Violence. Reflections on a Canonical Theme, in: BULL/HOUSLEY (as in footnote 3), pp. 149-150, 154.

³³ JOSEF FLECKENSTEIN: Das Großfränkische Reich: Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Großreichsbildung im Mittelalter, in: *Historische Zeitschrift* 233 (1981), pp. 265-294. By the way, it is impossible to relate this militarization directly to the development of the concept of holy war. It is problematic to analyze the crusading mission before the crusades and the militarization of the Church in the Carolingian period, see GILCHRIST (as in footnote 24), pp. 180-184, 187-189, 196. Yet ERDMANN (as in footnote 18), pp. 92-94, considers that the concept of holy war was finally formulated not in the Carolingian period, but at the end of the 10th century.

militarization intensified, and the first warrior-saints (such as St Erlembald)³⁴ appeared. By the age of the crusades and when these reached the Baltic region in the 12th century, high ranking clerical participation in military action or possession of weapons did not cause any problems,³⁵ even though canon law forbade it.³⁶

The crusade to the Wendish tribes (Western Slavs) in 1147 encompassed both military expedition and mission.³⁷ Furthermore, it is often pointed out that the early 12th century "Magdeburg Charter" was the first attempt to conquer the Slavic tribes through a crusade. The charter itself, however, does not mention the conversion of the Western Slavs.³⁸ Researchers have already noted that the thoughts about the pagans and their impiety in the Magdeburg Charter are taken from biblical verses including Psalms 27, 65, and 79; the call to defeat the pagans with spiritual weapons is founded on the Bible.³⁹ This raises the question whether the crusaders against the Wends resorted to any particular actions to convert pagans or/and apostates. Such a formulation allows us to put forward another, more fundamental, question: was crusading a method of mission practice?⁴⁰

Firstly, we encounter the problem of terminology, which is ambiguously used in describing the propagation of Christianity in the context of crusading. For example, in the famous bull of Eugene III, *Divina dispensatione* (April 1147) or in the letter of Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux to the meeting in Frankfurt, where the encouragement is abstract, it is written as motivation to cru-

³⁴ Analecta de S. Herlembaldo. Ex antiquis chronologis apud Puricellum, in: JACQUES P. MIGNE (ed.): *Hermani Contracti monachi Augiae Divitis, Humberti S.R.E. cardinalis Silvae Candidae episcopi opera omnia*, Paris 1882 (*Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina*, 143), cols. 1485-1504, here cols. 1498-1504. See JAMES B. MACGREGOR: *Negotiating Knightly Piety. The Cult of the Warrior-Saints in the West, ca. 1070 – ca. 1200*, in: *Church History* 73 (2004), 2, pp. 317-345. On the worship of the warrior-martyrs see DAVID A. WARNER: *Saints, Pagans, War and Rulership in Ottonian Germany*, in: ROBERT C. FIGUEIRA (ed.): *Plenitude of Power. The Doctrines and Exercise of Authority in the Middle Ages. Essays in Memory of Robert Louis Benson*, Aldershot 2006, pp. 11-35.

³⁵ See BENJAMIN ARNOLD: *German Bishops and Their Military Retinues in the Medieval Empire*, in: *German History* 7 (1989), 2, pp. 161-183, here pp. 164-168.

³⁶ BRUNDAGE, *Crusades, clerics* (as in footnote 32), pp. 149-151.

³⁷ PEGATHA TAYLOR: *Moral Agency in Crusade and Colonization. Anselm of Havelberg and the Wendish Crusade of 1147*, in: *The International History Review* 22 (2000), 4, pp. 757-784, here p. 757; IBEN FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT: *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147-1254*, Leiden et al. 2007, pp. 30-34. Compare the latest literature: HERMANN KAMP: *Der Wendenkreuzzug*, in: KAMP/KROKER (as in footnote 12), pp. 115-138, here pp. 119, 127, 131; HERRMANN (as footnote 1).

³⁸ CONSTABLE, *Early Crusading* (as footnote 4), pp. 198, 204-205.

³⁹ MARIAN DYGO: *Crusade and Colonization. Yet Another Response to the Magdeburg Charter of 1108*, in: *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae* 6 (2001), pp. 319-325, here pp. 321-324; CONSTABLE, *Early Crusading* (as in footnote 4), pp. 206-210.

⁴⁰ FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT (as in footnote 37), p. 37.

sade “against pagan Slavs [...] to subject them to Christian religion [...] to consolidate Christianity” (“contra Sclavos paganos [...] eos Christianae religioni subjugare [...] depromovenda Christiana religione”).⁴¹ Apart from the word “subjugare”, terms such as “dilatatio” “subderet” or “compellere” are used, but they do not always mean the attempt to convert the pagans (or Muslims, who were considered to be pagans). On the contrary, these terms mean the subordination of the pagans to Christian rule, which, in the medieval understanding, also meant the establishment of Christianity. Benjamin Kedar’s research shows that the aim of the crusades was not to convert Muslims to Christianity; the defensive aspect of crusading came first.⁴² This attitude is evident in *Divina dispensatione*, which is directly based on another papal bull by Eugene III, *Quantum praedecessores*, addressed to all the participants in the Second Crusade.⁴³ Therefore in this context the word “subjugare” means subordination to Christian rule and defence against the pagans.

Yet it is doubtful whether by using these words the Pope and Bernard of Clairvaux were expressing their disapproval of coercive conversion. Historiography is not unanimous on this issue. Some researchers find in the words “subjugare/dilatatio” coercive conversion, allegedly supported by the Pope himself, as Bernard puts it: “until, with God’s help, either the rituals or the nation are destroyed” (“donec, auxiliante Deo, aut ritus ipse, aut nation deleatur”).⁴⁴ Others interpret it as depaganization, in which the aim is not coercive baptism, but the destruction of pagan artefacts,⁴⁵ which, one might concur, is not the same thing.

In his latest work on the Wendish Crusade Hermann Kamp considers that Bernard raised the idea of destroying the pagan Slavs.⁴⁶ The author states that by saying “to destroy totally” (“delendas penitus”) Bernard talks about the complete destruction of the pagans, which even Eugene III stopped short of,

⁴¹ MIGNE (as in footnote 34), cols. 1203-1204.

⁴² For more on this see BENJAMIN KEDAR: *Crusade and Mission. European Approaches toward the Muslims*, Princeton 1984, pp. 57-74. On 12th century documentation of interfaith dialogue between Christian crusaders and Muslims who are being converted or are interested in Christianity, but have not yet received it, see: SUSANNA THROOP: *Combat and Conversation. Interfaith Dialogue in Twelfth Century Crusading Narratives*, in: *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007), pp. 310-325.

⁴³ One of the latest discussions on this bull is PHILLIPS (as in footnote 2), pp. 38, 50-59.

⁴⁴ JEAN LECLERCQ, HENRI ROCHAIS (eds.): *Sancti Bernardi Opera*. Vol. 8, Romae 1977, no. 457; HANS-DIETRICH KAHL: *Crusade Eschatology as Seen by St. Bernard in the Years 1146 to 1148*, in: MICHAEL GERVERS (ed.): *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, New York 1992, pp. 35-47, here pp. 37-38; RILEY-SMITH, *The Crusades* (as in footnote 23), p. 96; PHILLIPS (as in footnote 1), p. 239.

⁴⁵ LOTTER (as in footnote 14), pp. 287-291; TAYLOR (as in footnote 37), pp. 757, 762-763, 770-773.

⁴⁶ KAMP, *Der Wendenkreuzzug* (as in footnote 37), p. 133: “Für Bernhard geht es um ein Kämpfen bis zur Bekehrung, nicht um ein Kämpfen, um zu bekehren”.

seeking to deal with the Wends in a less radical way.⁴⁷ Accepting this assumption raises doubt as to who could possibly receive the Christian religion if it appeared to be seeking to destroy them physically. The Abbot of Clairvaux used the words “subjugare” and “promovenda” to encourage two actions proposed in a special bull by Eugene III on the Wendish Crusade, *Divini dispensatione*⁴⁸: to subdue the Slavs and to then promote the Christian faith among them. The action “subjugare” in particular could be carried out by the secular power, which the Pope and Bernard were addressing. This subjugation was to take place in the form of a crusade, but the crusade was not to become a part of the mission.

Yet Bernard’s words “aut natio deleatur”, mentioned above, are often taken out of context and are more likely to refer to the alleged pagans in general than to the Elbian Slavs in particular.⁴⁹ Medieval theologians/canonists and writers did not make a distinction between pagans (adherents to a polytheistic religion), Muslims and even Jews.⁵⁰ All these were referred to firstly as pagans, not true Christians or heretics, who worshipped God incorrectly or in a different way. They were therefore to be fought as the devil was fought, with spiritual weapons, i.e. disputes and preaching, drawing a clear distinction between the following antitheses: “milites Christi – inimici Christi” (“soldiers of Christ – enemies of Christ”), “fideles – infidels” (“faithful – infidels”), and “Dei gesta per Christianus – Satani gesta per Sarracenos” (“Acts of God by Christians, Acts of Satan by Saracens”).⁵¹ It should be emphasized that Ber-

⁴⁷ Ibidem, pp. 128-129, 131.

⁴⁸ PHILLIPS (as in footnote 1), pp. 238-239.

⁴⁹ Commenting on Bernard’s concept of the word “nation”, LOTTER (as in footnote 14), pp. 287-291, is striving to prove that it relates to a rather homogenous group, i.e. all non-Christians in general, the relationship of Christians to non-Christians has been discussed by the most famous 12th century specialist in canon law, Gratian. Cf. JAMES MULDOON: *Crusading and Canon Law*, in: HELEN J. NICHOLSON (ed.): *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*, Basingstoke 2005, pp. 37-57, here pp. 37-45.

⁵⁰ SUZANNE CONKLIN AKBARI: *Idols in the East. European Representations of Islam and the Orient 1100-1450*, Ithaca et al. 2009, pp. 200-279.

⁵¹ NORMAN HOUSLEY: *The Crusades and Islam*, in: *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007), pp. 189-208, here pp. 197, 202. Further evidence that Muslims were considered to be pagans (infidels) or heretics, who worship God “in a wrong way” can be found in JAMES KRITZECK: *Muslim-Christian Understanding in Medieval Time. A Review article*, in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 4 (1962), pp. 388-401, here pp. 391-395 (reprint: JAMES MULDOON (ed.): *The Expansion of Latin Europe 1000-1500. Vol. 10: Travellers, Intellectuals and the World Beyond Medieval Europe*, Farnham 2010, pp. 65-78, here pp. 68-72); JOHN V. TOLAN: *Saracens. Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, New York 2002; JAMES KRITZECK: *Peter the Venerable and Islam*, Princeton et al. 1964, pp. 129-131; LIESELOTTE E. SAURMA-JELTSCH: *Saracens. Opponents to the Body of Christianity*, in: *The Medieval History Journal* 13 (2010), 1, pp. 55-95, here pp. 66-73, 83-89; BENJAMIN Z. KEDAR: “De Iudeis et Sarracenis”. On the Categorization of Muslims in Medieval Canon Law, in: ROSALIO I. CASTILLO LARA (ed.): *Studia in honorem Eminentissimi Cardinalis Alphonsi M. Stickler*, Rome 1992,

nard himself, who actively preached to the Cathars (whose leaders were called apostates and worshippers of Satan) in the region of Occitania in Southern France in 1145, spoke against the use of force to convert the Cathars to the true faith.⁵² His famous sermon on the Song of Songs, which stresses peaceful evangelization, was written approximately in 1143/44, i.e. slightly later than another famous tractate, *De laude novae militiae*, dating from 1128-1136. Even though certain ambiguities are visible in his speeches about the recatholicization of heretics, when speaking about the conversion of the heretics of Occitania Bernard does not raise any recollection of the alternative of "either death or baptism."⁵³ On the contrary, he encourages his audience to discuss, to preach, to teach, and to explain by applying spiritual weapons.

Such a definitely spiritual fight against pagans was declared by two participants in the crusade against the Wends – papal legate Anselm, the Bishop of Havelberg, and Henry Zdík, the Bishop of Olomouc. The former tried to establish missions to the Polabian Slavs in their lands, designated to his diocese, where he established the first Premonstrant monasteries.⁵⁴ The latter also intended to establish missions, though in Prussia (a destination which he actually did not reach). As the bulls of Pope Innocent II, written for this particular purpose, make clear, evangelization should have been only by peaceful means, as is evident from the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to Ephesians.⁵⁵ St Paul exhorts to arm with spiritual weapons and spread the Gospel of peace, naming the sword as a spiritual weapon (Ephesians 6:13-18). The Church already denied coercive mission during the crusades to the Holy Land.⁵⁶ One of the church authorities of the 12th century, Peter the Venerable,

pp. 207-213, here pp. 207-208, 211-212; DEBRA H. STRICKLAND: *Saracens, Demons, Jews. Making Monsters in Medieval Art*, Princeton et al. 2003, pp. 166-172.

⁵² Sources and their concise analysis in BEVERLY M. KIENZLE: *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade in Occitania 1145-1229. Preaching in the Lord's Vineyard*, Rochester et al. 2001, pp. 83, 85-87, 90, 93-96, 100, 106.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, pp. 83, 85-87, 90, 95, 106-107.

⁵⁴ JAY T. LEES: *Anselm of Havelberg. Deeds into Words in the Twelfth Century*, Leiden et al. 1997, pp. 71-73; TAYLOR (as in footnote 37), pp. 768-769; SEBASTIAN SIGLER: *Anselm von Havelberg. Beiträge zum Lebensbild eines Politikers, Theologen und königlichen Gesandten im 12. Jahrhundert*, Aachen 2005. Historiography depicts Bishop Anselm of Havelberg as close to the Holy See.

⁵⁵ RÜDIGER PHILIPPI, CARL P. WÖLKY (eds.): *Preußisches Urkundenbuch. Politische Abteilung. Vol. 1: Die Bildung des Ordensstaates. Erste Hälfte*, Königsberg 1882, p. 2.

⁵⁶ LOTTER (as in footnote 14), p. 287. It is worth noting what the 12th century authorities on canon law, and not only Gratian, had to say concerning peaceful evangelization; however, the final opinion was not unanimous, for a concise account see KEDAR, *Crusade and Mission* (as in footnote 42), pp. 72-74. Cf. JAMES A. BRUNDAGE: *Holy War and the Medieval Lawyers*, in: IDEM: *The Crusades, Holy War and Canon Law*, Aldershot 1991, pp. 99-140. PETER HERDE: *Christians and Saracens at the Time of the Crusades. Some Comments of Contemporary Medieval Canonists*, in: GIUSEPPE FORCHIELLI (ed.): *Collectanea Stephan Kuttner. Pt. 2*, Roma 1967 (*Studia Gratiana*, 12), pp. 361-

Abbot of Cluny, in his work *Liber contra sectam sive haeresim Saracenorum*, stated that pagans (i.e. Muslims) should be converted to Christianity peacefully.⁵⁷ In fact he understood Islam as a Christian heresy.⁵⁸ The Bishop of Havelberg not only maintained a close relationship with Peter the Venerable, but he was also a disciple of Norbert, the Archbishop of Magdeburg and founder of the Premonstrant Order. Bishop Henry was also closely connected to the Premonstrants, Norbert and other reformers, especially the Cistercians. Not only the famous Bernard of Clairvaux but also Pope Eugene III belonged to the Cistercian Order. Finally, it should not be forgotten that in 1146, i.e. just before the Wendish Crusade was declared, the Abbot of Kiev conducted a very active correspondence with Matthew, Bishop of Kraków, about the Cistercian missions in Kievan Rus, i.e. in the land of the “schismatic” Orthodox.⁵⁹ All these relationships show the general inclination of the church towards non-coercive baptism. This complicates research on the crusades, especially the correlation between the military expedition and the missions.

None of the sources relating the crusades against the Wends mention any kind of missionary work. The Annals of Magdeburg and the above mentioned bull of the Pope *Divini dispensatione* state a concise goal for this crusade: “to subjugate them to the Christian faith” (“ut eos aut christiane religioni subderet”).⁶⁰ Such a loose definition does not indicate that crusaders were commissioned to perform missionary actions.⁶¹ The annals of Vincent of Prague (written around 1167)⁶² traditionally also indicate that “the majority of the Saxon bishops and the majority of Saxon knights left for Pomerania to force the Christian faith on them” (“plurimis Saxoniae episcopis et plurima Saxo-num militia ad fidem christianam pro convertendis Pomeranis Pomeraniam adiit”).⁶³ In his chronicle Helmold of Bosau describes the hardships of the

376. JAMES MULDOON: *Popes, Lawyers and Infidels. The Church and the Non-Christian World 1250-1550*, Pittsburgh 1979, pp. 4-17.

⁵⁷ TOMAŻ MASTNAK: *Crusading Peace. Christendom, the Muslim World and Western Political Order*, Berkeley et al. 2002, pp. 169-170, 178; KRITZECK, *Peter the Venerable and Islam* (as in footnote 51), pp. 141-152.

⁵⁸ MASTNAK (as in footnote 57), pp. 178-179; KRITZECK, *Peter the Venerable and Islam* (as in footnote 51), pp. 141-152.

⁵⁹ BRYGIDA KÜRBIS: *Cystersi w kulturze polskiego średniowiecza. Trzy świadectwa z XII wieku [The Cistercians in the Culture of the Polish Middle Ages. Three testimonies from the 12th Century]*, in: JERZY STRZELCZYK (ed.): *Historia i kultura cystersów w dawnej Polsce i ich europejskie związki*, Poznań 1987, pp. 321-342, here pp. 322-327.

⁶⁰ *Annales Magdeburgenses* (as in footnote 2), p. 188.

⁶¹ KEDAR, *Crusade and Mission* (as in footnote 42), pp. 65-67, cites many examples from papal bulls, chronicles or letters where such passages as “regio christiana per provincias dilatatur” etc. meant not Christianization but the establishment of Christian power.

⁶² GILES CONSTABLE: *The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries*, in: IDEM, *Crusaders and Crusading* (as in footnote 4), pp. 229-300, here p. 240.

⁶³ *Annales Bohemorum Vincentii Pragensis* (as in footnote 2) p. 663. The chronicler, while commenting on the reasons of the failure of the crusade to the Wends, suggests that Saxons are more interested in their lands than in their baptism: “Saxones potius

crusaders (the majority of which were the forces of the Dutch King and Saxon Duke Henry the Lion) in the onslaught of the castle of Obodrite Duke Niklot Dobin, – a Christian – and states that a peace treaty was made with the Obodrites, as they promised to get baptized “and the Slavs received the Christian faith” (“ut Sclavi fidem christianam reciperent”). After the crusaders left, however, the Slavs did not keep their promise: “The majority of them had a false baptism [...] did not keep their promise to receive baptism and did not stay the hand which robbed Denmark” (“Multi igitur eorum falso baptizati sunt [...] nam neque baptismum servaverunt, nec cohibuerunt manus a depredatione Danorum”).⁶⁴ The words “received baptism” need to be interpreted as an acceptance of “prima signatio” or the renewal of baptism, but not as real baptism⁶⁵, since the chronicler adds in the same place that the Slavs did not keep their promise to get baptized. Of course only those who had not been baptized yet agreed to it, since majority of Niklot’s nobility was already Christian. Otto, Bishop of Freising and cousin of Emperor Conrad III, who participated in the crusade to the Holy Land, states in his *Gesta Frederici primi* that the Saxon nobility, seeking to avoid a long and tiresome journey to Jerusalem, decided to start a war with neighbouring Western Slavs.⁶⁶ There is not even a hint of any intention to baptize the pagans. Finally, a little belated *Gesta Danorum* by the 13th century Danish chronicler Saxon Grammaticus, in which he describes the above mentioned onslaught of the castle of Dobin, depicts the case as a battle against pirates.⁶⁷ In the general European context of the second crusade it was common practice to call infidels pirates. For example, also in 1147, King Alfonso VI of Castile, together with crusaders from Italy and southern France, attacked the towns of Almeria and Tortosa, belonging to the Muslims, who are called pirates in the chronicle.⁶⁸ The baptism of pagans is not mentioned here either. Thus, for example by saying “fidem christianam pro convertendis”, the above mentioned authors had in mind the consolidation of secular power, which also entailed the ultimate consolidation

pro auferenda eis terra, quam pro fide christiana confirmanda militiam moverant” (ibidem). The reproach of the chronicler still does not prove that the crusaders’ aim was to baptize the pagans, but depicts the attitude of Vincent, as a cleric, who was more concerned with the baptism of pagans than in the occupation of their lands.

⁶⁴ Helmoldi Presbyteri Bozoviensis Chronica Slavorum (as in footnote 2).

⁶⁵ The historiography most often indicates that Obodrites got baptized again, LOTTER (as in footnote 14), p. 293.

⁶⁶ GEORG WAITZ, BERNHARD SIMSON (eds.): *Otonis et Rahewini Gesta Frederici I. Imp.*, 3rd ed., Hannoverae – Lipsiae 1912 (MGH SS rer Germ. [46]), I, 42.

⁶⁷ ALFRED HOLDER (ed.): *Saxonis Grammatici Gesta Danorum*, Strassburg 1886, p. 454: “Mox Dobinum, insigne piratica oppidum, ab utroque circumsidetur exercitu [...] Interea Danis obsidionem arcentibus, eorum classis piratico bello nunciatur oppressa.”

⁶⁸ CONSTABLE, *The Second Crusade* (as in footnote 62), pp. 243-247. The Muslims, against whom the crusades were planned, were also called “piraticis Saracenorum”, GIOVANNI D. MANSI (ed.): *Sanctorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*. Editio novissima, Venice 1692, col. 230.

of Christianity. This supports the assertion that in their works Helmold, Vincent of Prague, and the anonymous author of *Annales Rodenses* could really criticise the excessive lay influence on mission politics, which resulted in a distorted concept of Christian mission (but not because the crusaders acted in a way detached from the spirit of the crusades, as Kahl claimed⁶⁹). It should not be forgotten that all these authors represented the trend of church reform initiated by Gregory VII.

It is also noteworthy that when the crusaders turned towards Stettin (including the papal legate Bishop Anselm, Bishop Henry Zdík and the Archbishop Friedrich of Magdeburg) they also encountered not pagans, but Christians. Certainly the destruction of the temple by Lake Moritz could be viewed as an act of depaganization. The events in Stettin do not come close to the attempt to convert the Slavs to Christianity described in the Annals of Magdeburg. Many historians rightly observe that the crusaders in Stettin, especially clergy leaders (the Archbishop Friedrich of Magdeburg and the papal legate, Bishop Anselm) basically ignored St Otto's missionary work in Pomerania.⁷⁰ The Pomeranian Bishop Albert, who was residing in Stettin, reminded the bishops of all this.⁷¹ Even though the crusaders retreated, it was obvious that the attack on Christian Stettin moved Vincent of Prague to make negative statements about the whole crusade.⁷² Interestingly, in *Anticimenon*, his tractate written just after the Wendish Crusade and dedicated to Pope Eugene III himself, Bishop Anselm of Havelberg presents the activities of the Premonstrants among the Livonians without mentioning either the crusade or the baptisms taking place during it.⁷³

Finally, we cannot forget that shortly after the Wendish Crusade, in the same year and under the same pretext, a number of Polish dukes (firstly, Boleslaus the Curly, one of the sons of Boleslaus III the Wrymouthed) directed all their military energy against the Prussians – the Western Baltic tribes.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ KAHL, Zum Ergebnis des Wendenkreuzzugs (as in footnote 3), pp. 279-284, 314.

⁷⁰ Ibidem, pp. 310-311; VIRGINIA G. BERRY: The Second Crusade, in: MARSHALL W. BALDWIN (ed.): A History of the Crusades. Vol. I: The First Hundred Years, Madison et al. 1969, pp. 463-512, here p. 494.

⁷¹ Annales Bohemorum Vincentii Pragensis (as in footnote 2), p. 663; Annales Rodenses (as in footnote 2), pp. 718-719.

⁷² Annales Bohemorum Vincentii Pragensis (as in footnote 2), p. 663: "Sed quia Saxones potius pro auferenda eis terra, quam pro fide christiana confirmanda tantam moverent militiam." See the assessment of this part of the Annals in KAHL, Zum Ergebnis des Wendenkreuzzugs (as in footnote 3), pp. 285-286.

⁷³ LEES, Anselm of Havelberg (as in footnote 54), p. 82.

⁷⁴ GŁADYSZ (as in footnote 1), pp. 91-97; ŚLIWIŃSKI, The Christianisation of Prussia (as in footnote 8), pp. 53-54; MAGDALENA BINIAŚ-SZKOPEK: Bolesław Kędzierzawy [Boleslaus the Curly], 2nd ed., Poznań 2014.

This is mentioned in the *Annals of Magdeburg*⁷⁵ and in the early 13th century Polish Chronicle by the Master of Vincent⁷⁶, which mentions those “enslaved after a lot of wars” (“post multa bellorum discrimina subactis”)⁷⁷. The latter chronicle calls the Prussians apostates and rebels, referring to Boleslaus as the legitimate restorer of order.⁷⁸ The missions and baptisms are not mentioned in this context.

The above mentioned destruction of the temple by Lake Moritz remains to be considered. On the one hand, agreeing that in the Middle Ages conversion to Christianity has two parts, “abrenuntiatio diaboli” (“renunciation of the devil”) and “confessio fidei” (“the confession of faith”), which are completed after the renunciation of all pagan fallacies⁷⁹, it can be presumed that the destruction of the temple is precisely an example of “abrenuntiatio diaboli”. On the other hand, Kahl says that baptism was prior to renunciation of pagan practices.⁸⁰ This process could, however, be related to converts while exterior “abrenuntiatio diaboli” was designed for the pagans. Yet the physical destruction of the temple itself, without performing a “confessio fidei”, was of course a mere wartime casualty, not an act related to of the propagation of religion, and therefore cannot serve as proof of missionary activity during the Wendish Crusade. This leads us to the following question: if there was no missionary activity during this crusade and researchers see it as politically motivated⁸¹, why should it be called a “missionary” crusade at all?⁸² A “missionary” crusade in 1147 sounds even more strange with reference to Bernard of Clairvaux’ declaration to destroy all Western Slav pagans, and the first component of his statement “death or baptism”. If the aim is to destroy the

⁷⁵ *Annales Magdeburgenses* (as in footnote 2), p. 188: “Cuius etiam frater maior cum infinito exercitu adversus Pruscos crudelissimos barbaros venit.” [“The elder brother also came with an army against the most cruel Prussian barbarians”].

⁷⁶ For more on the message of the Magistrate of Vincent and whether the chronicles really had in mind the crusade of 1147 to Prussia see GŁADYSZ (as in footnote 1), pp. 93-95.

⁷⁷ MARIAN PLEZIA (ed.): *Magistri Vincentii dicti Kadłubek Chronica Polonorum / Mistrza Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem Kronika Polska*, Kraków 1994 (*Monumenta Poloniae Historica. Seria II*, 11), III, 30, 14.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, 30, 16. In Ebo and Herbord’s hagiographies of St Otto of Bamberg, although the war of Boleslaus the Whymouthed in Pomerania is described as waged by fire and sword, the restoration of righteousness and peace is emphasized as a glorious part of God’s plan: ROSIK, *Conversio gentis Pomeranorum* (as in footnote 15), pp. 135-139.

⁷⁹ STANISŁAW ROSIK: *The Pomeranian Mission of St Otto of Bamberg. Remarks on the Doctrine and Practice of Christianisation*, in: GĄSSOWSKI (as in footnote 8), pp. 167-173, here p. 171; ROSIK, *Conversio gentis Pomeranorum* (as in footnote 15), pp. 570-615.

⁸⁰ KAHL, *Zur Problematik* (as in footnote 6), pp. 126-127.

⁸¹ KAMP, *Der Wendenkreuzzug* (as in footnote 37), pp. 119, 126.

⁸² More discussion on the Wendish Crusade of 1147 in GŁADYSZ (as in footnote 1), pp. 74-76. New work: BYSTED/JENSEN/JENSEN/LIND (as in footnote 14), pp. 23-88.

pagans/apostates physically, why should such actions be treated as “missionary”?

3

Now let us analyze the missionary work of Meinhard, first Bishop of Livonia, by the River Daugava. Previous historiography has taken the view that Meinhard was performing peaceful missions, which cannot be said of his successor, Bishop Bertold.⁸³ According to some historians, in the second half of the 12th century the Baltic region became the dividing line between peaceful and coercive missions.⁸⁴ Carsten S. Jensen, based on the information provided by Henry of Livonia⁸⁵, has recently put forward the idea that the work of the first military coercive missions was carried out by Meinhard.⁸⁶ Barbara Bom-

⁸³ ERIC CHRISTIANSEN: *The Northern Crusades. The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier 1100-1525*, Minneapolis 1980, pp. 93-94; MANFRED HELLMANN: *Die Anfänge christlicher Mission in den baltischen Ländern*, in: IDEM (ed.): *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, Sigmaringen 1989, pp. 7-38, here p. 31; PETER REBANE: *Denmark, the Papacy and the Christianization of Estonia*, in: *Gli inizi del Cristianesimo* (as in footnote 10), pp. 171-201, here p. 180; BARBARA BOMBI: *Innocent III and the praedication to the Heathens in Livonia (1198-1204)*, in: TUOMAS M.S. LEHTONEN, KURT V. JENSEN et al. (eds.): *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, Helsinki 2005, pp. 232-241, here pp. 233-238, considers that the practice of Bishop Bertold differed from the programme of evangelization declared by Pope Innocent III and that he did not intend to declare any crusade until 1204. This idea recurs in BARBARA BOMBI: *Celestine III and the Conversion of the Heathen on the Baltic Frontier*, in: JOHN DORAN, DAMIEN J. SMITH (eds.): *Pope Celestine III (1191-1198). Diplomat and Pastor*, Farnham et al. 2008, pp. 145-158, here pp. 156-157.

⁸⁴ The first to claim this was BENNO ÄBERS: *Zur päpstlichen Missionspolitik in Lettland und Estland zur Zeit Innocenz' III.*, in: *Commentationes Balticae* 4/5 (1956/57), pp. 1-18, here pp. 5-9. See the latest positions supporting such an early chronology: FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT (as in footnote 37), p. 74; ŚLIWIŃSKI, *The Christianisation of Prussia* (as in footnote 8), p. 58; TYERMAN (as in footnote 32), pp. 38-39.

⁸⁵ Alberic of Trois-Fontaines gives two very brief mentions of the activities of Meinhard and the martyrdom of Bertold. The chronicle itself dates back to around the 13th century. See: PAUL SCHEFFER-BOICORST (ed.): *Chronica Albrici monachi Trium Fontium, a monacho novi monasterii Hoiensis interpolata*, in: GEORG HEINRICH PERTZ (ed.): *MGH SS* 23, Hannoverae 1874, pp. 631-950, here pp. 872, 887. Yet this does not include the details necessary for the research. For more about the chronicle itself, its author and his relationship to the Cistercians in Livonia see MAREK TAMM: *Communicating Crusade. Livonian Mission and the Cistercian Network in the Thirteenth Century*, in: *Ajalooline Ajakiri* (2009), 3-4, pp. 341-370, here pp. 355-356, 359-360, 365-369.

⁸⁶ CARSTEN S. JENSEN: *The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities and Crusades in Livonia, 1185-1201*, in: LARS BISGAARD, IDEM et al. (eds.): *Medieval Spirituality in Scandinavia and Europe. A Collection of Essays in Honour of Tore Nyberg*, Odense 2001, pp. 121-137, here pp. 125-130, 136; IDEM: *The Early Stage of Christianisation in Livonia in Modern Historical Writings and Contemporary Chronicles*, in: LEHTONEN/JENSEN (as in footnote 83), pp. 207-215, here pp. 207-213. The idea is first mentioned in English in JENSEN, *The Nature* (as in footnote 86), pp. 123-128, 133, 136.

bi confirms that Meinhard was active from 1185 to 1191 and from 1191 to 1195.⁸⁷ The arguments are as follows: Meinhard built a castle in Üxküll (Ikiskile), the defence of which was the responsibility of armed people from Gotland, while the pagans seeking to destroy the castle were abated by arrows. This argument is based on the bull of Pope Celestine III,⁸⁸ which has not survived, but was mentioned by the chronicler Henry of Livonia. The bull exhorted the Christians to take the sign of the cross and to receive absolution to go to Livonia.⁸⁹

In contrast, Marian Dygo demonstrates that Meinhard could have used certain coercive actions against the Livonians, but did not take advantage of this opportunity.⁹⁰ Mark R. Munzinger agrees, doubting Meinhard's intention to organize a crusade against the Livonians.⁹¹ Probably until the year 1197, the year of Pope Celestine III's bull mentioned by Henry of Livonia, the first Bishop of the Livonians was already in co-operation and negotiation with some of his flock. These were the first converts from Üxküll and Holm, the people who promised to take up the Christian faith (most likely they had received "prima signatio"), and, finally, the pagans. Meinhard allegedly sent his messenger, the monk Theoderic, to Rome to solve the issue of the apostasy of the converts.⁹² Thus coercion, if Bishop Meinhard wanted to apply it, was directed not against all pagans, but against disavowed Livonians and those who promised but did not receive baptism. Jensen does not make any distinction between the groups of people mentioned above.

Manfred Hellmann already doubted if the papal bull mentioned by Henry of Livonia was addressed to Meinhard⁹³, even though the latest historiography tends to state that such a bull existed.⁹⁴ Henry of Livonia's citation of this bull conveyed the oral tradition of the future Bishop of Estonia Theoderic, who went to Rome to see the Pope.⁹⁵ Bernd Ulrich Hucker also relates the bull not to Meinhard but to Theoderic, who later (in 1211) became the Bishop of Esto-

⁸⁷ BOMBI, Celestine III (as in footnote 83), pp. 146, 155.

⁸⁸ JENSEN, The Early Stage (as in footnote 86), pp. 209-211. In the latest historiography sometimes there is support for this attitude, e.g. TYERMAN (as in footnote 32), p. 39.

⁸⁹ HCL, I, 12, p. 7: "Remissionem quippe omnium peccatorum indulsit omnibus, qui ad resuscitandam illam primitivam ecclesiam accepta cruce transeant" ["The forgiveness of all sins, conceded by all who pass to restore the primitive church and accept the sign of the cross"].

⁹⁰ MARIAN DYGO: Mission und Kreuzzug in den Anfängen der Christianisierung Livlands, in: RITA REGINA TRIMONIENĖ, ROBERTAS JURGAITIS (eds.): *Kryžiaus karų epocha Baltijos regiono tautų istorinėje sąmonėje*, Šiauliai 2007, pp. 66-84, here p. 83.

⁹¹ MARK R. MUNZINGER: The Profits of the Cross. Merchant Involvement in the Baltic Crusade (c. 1180-1230), in: *Journal of Medieval History* 32 (2006), pp. 163-185, here p. 170.

⁹² DYGO, Mission und Kreuzzug (as in footnote 90), pp. 80-81.

⁹³ HELLMANN, Die Anfänge (as in footnote 83), p. 31.

⁹⁴ Cf. BOMBI, Celestine III (as in footnote 83), pp. 153-154.

⁹⁵ Ibidem, p. 154.

nia.⁹⁶ Henry of Livonia himself, soon after the mention of the bull of Celestine III, describes the arrival of the first crusader from Sweden and the crusade itself, including the figure of an anonymous bishop.⁹⁷ Even if this was not Meinhard, but the future Estonian Bishop Thoederic,⁹⁸ it remains an open question whether the bull was directed to the apostates according the formula “compellere intrare”.⁹⁹

As long as such doubts related to the bull of Celestine III remain¹⁰⁰, it cannot serve as proof that Meinhard was sought “direct missionary war” (“direkter Missionskrieg”) against the heathens and/or the apostates. Further events from Henry of Livonia’s chronicle are also noteworthy. Describing the construction of the Üxküll Castle the chronicler presented a minor episode related to pagans who wanted to pull down the walls of the castle.¹⁰¹ It is not clear what kind of pagans they were¹⁰², though Henry of Livonia indicates, that they were “local heathen Semigallians” (“Semigalli, pagani vicini”).¹⁰³ Thus the targets were not the Livonians shepherded by Meinhard himself, but the Semigallians, who were attacking the Livonians. Meinhard never carried out any missionary work among the Semigallians, so this episode does not indicate that the first Livonian bishop established his missions by military means. Henry of Livonia follows this episode with an account of an attack and possession of the property of both Meinhard and his household (i.e. servants and clergy) when the Livonians of Holm who had promised to receive baptism intended to drive him away and did not receive baptism.¹⁰⁴ If Meinhard was indeed taking military action to further his missionary work (even indirectly), such an attack on him should have provoked a military confrontation, but Henry of Livonia does not indicate this. After this attack Meinhard decided to leave the Livonians temporarily, but they did not let him go and the bishop was actually isolated in his castle at Üxküll.¹⁰⁵ In these circumstances the bishop sent his messenger, the above mentioned Theoderic, to Rome to solve the issue of Meinhard himself and of the Livonian Church. Thus there is no mention here of either indirect or direct military missions.

⁹⁶ BERND ULRICH HUCKER: Der Zisterzienserabt Bertold, Bischof von Livland, und der erste Livlandkreuzzug, in: HELLMANN, Studien (as in footnote 83), pp. 39-64, here pp. 54-56.

⁹⁷ HCL, I, 13, p. 7.

⁹⁸ HUCKER (as in footnote 96), p. 54.

⁹⁹ DYGO, Mission und Kreuzzug (as in footnote 90), p. 80.

¹⁰⁰ MUNZINGER (as in footnote 91), p. 170. This bull should not be confused with another bull of Pope Celestine III given to the second Livonian bishop, Bertold.

¹⁰¹ HCL, p. 3.

¹⁰² JENSEN, The Early Stage (as in footnote 86), p. 209.

¹⁰³ HCL, I, 6, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem, I, 10, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem, I, 11, pp. 5-6.

It is true that reading chronicler's account on the circumstances of Meinhard's isolation this statement stands out: "the cunning Livonians in fear of [...] Christian army" ("Unde Lyvonum astucia christianorum [...] exercitum").¹⁰⁶ Meinhard was not allowed to leave by the people of Üxküll for fear of the appearance of soldiers. The chronicler does not indicate what kind of soldiers he had in mind. Perhaps there was a fear that these were the soldiers who had shot at the pagan Semigallians attacking the castle of Üxküll, and more of them might return. Even if we affirm this speculation, it seems that Meinhard did not involve soldiers in missionary work, or at least tried not to. Yet merchants leaving for Gotland to celebrate Easter in 1195 promised to send Meinhard more soldiers.¹⁰⁷ It is doubtful, however, whether they kept the promise (nobody wanted to take responsibility for easing Meinhard's situation in the castle of Üxküll). Meinhard's successor, Bishop Bertold arrived in 1196 "first without an army" ("primo sine exercitu")¹⁰⁸ demonstrates that there was no military missionary activity of this kind. Thus, on arriving in Livonia, Bertold did not use "compellere intrare" either.¹⁰⁹

If we trust the words of Henry of Livonia, written quite a long time after Bertold's death, the Livonians, while negotiating with the bishop, definitely singled out Bertold's right to use "compellere intrare" against those who had already been baptized and had no intention to reject it.¹¹⁰ Here the Livonians most likely had in mind those citizens of Holm and Üxküll who already had been baptized during Meinhard's time and probably did not revert to paganism.¹¹¹ At this time Bertold himself understood that "compellere intrare" could be used not only against those who did not apostatize, but also the apostates, as he considered the citizens of the castle of Holm to be (at first Bertold specifically urged the citizens of Holm to return to Christianity, although they refused).¹¹² This is also evident from the bishop's demand to release hostages.¹¹³ To be more precise, the Livonians realized that the army was designated for all Livonians, regardless of whether they were pagans or apostates. The Livonians did not believe this should be the case; the famous statement

¹⁰⁶ Ibidem, I, 11, p. 5.

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem, I, 11, p. 6.

¹⁰⁸ Ibidem, II, 2, p. 8.

¹⁰⁹ There is no exact data on when Bertold came to Livonia as bishop for the first time because in 1196 he is still mentioned as residing in Hildesheim: HUCKER (as in footnote 96), pp. 40-42.

¹¹⁰ HCL, II, 5, p. 10: "ad eam servandam compellas".

¹¹¹ Henry of Livonia mentions the baptism of some citizens of Holm under Meinhard. Ibidem, I, 7, p. 3.

¹¹² KAHL, *Compellere intrare* (as in footnote 9), p. 179; DYGO, *Mission und Kreuzzug* (as in footnote 90), p. 71.

¹¹³ HCL, II, 6, p. 10.

“lead to faith by words not by beating” (“ad suscipiendam eam verbis non verberibus allicias”)¹¹⁴ communicates their reproach.

There is, however, a certain complexity here. Jensen is of the opinion that during Meinhard’s time the Livonians fell in apostasy – Henry of Livonia indeed refers to “the ones who renounced baptism” (“baptizati recidivant”).¹¹⁵ This is why the above mentioned bull of Celestine III was written.¹¹⁶ The words addressed to Bertold in particular, “you may force those who received faith to observe it” (“eos, qui fidem susceperunt, ad eam servandam compellas”)¹¹⁷, show that not all, if any, of the Livonians baptized in Meinhard’s time had yet reverted to their former beliefs.

Thus Meinhard’s experience differs from that of his successor. Moreover, Bertold’s actions, including his negotiations with the disallowed Livonians and their pagan allies, show that he tended to apply “compellere intrare” to apostates and other, supposedly apostate pagans who had not been baptized. This does not mean that Bertold’s principle of “compellere intrare” applied to all the pagans who lived on the Daugava. Of course Henry of Livonia did not leave any geographical data regarding the origins of the pagan Livonians, the allies of the apostates of Holm, but it is unlikely that they were from other faraway places, especially since the chronicler describes the Livonians from Holm and Üxküll punished by the crusaders in great detail. A generalized conclusion that Bertold’s entire missionary politics was founded on military/coercive actions cannot be drawn from this. Therefore a distinction must be made between the programme officially declared by contemporary missionaries, which was grounded in papal authority, and the concrete “compellere intrare”¹¹⁸ applicable during the period of apostasy. For this reason Bombi’s statement that Bishop Bertold’s call for a crusade against the Livonians did not take into account Pope Innocent III’s¹¹⁹ missionary politics is not convincing.

All these observations show that neither Meinhard nor, initially, Bertold intended to take any military or coercive action against the Livonians. Only when Bertold received the message of his probable assassination did he flee to Saxony.¹²⁰ We have seen that Meinhard also tried to escape, but unsuccessfully. From conversations by the ships setting off for Gotland, Meinhard believed once more in the Livonians’ intention to be baptized, designating a day

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, II, 5, p. 10.

¹¹⁵ Ibidem, I, 6, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ CARSTEN S. JENSEN: “Verbis non verberibus”. The Representation of Sermons in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, in: TAMM/KALJUNDI (as in footnote 30), pp. 179-206, here p. 184.

¹¹⁷ HCL, II, 5, p. 10.

¹¹⁸ BRUNDAGE, Holy War (as in footnote 56), pp. 106-107.

¹¹⁹ BOMBI, Innocent III (as in footnote 83), p. 234.

¹²⁰ HCL, II, 3, p. 9.

for the purpose.¹²¹ Bertold, having escaped from the Livonians, came back with an army.

Attention should be drawn to one more nuance. Unbaptized Livonians of Holm who were intending to receive baptism intended to kill Meinhard (most probably the ones who had beaten him). The citizens of Holm baptized during Meinhard's episcopacy wanted to kill Bertold – Henry of Livonia mentions them taking part in the ceremony of consecration of the Holm graveyard; the chronicler applied the words “force to respond to their call” (“ad eam servandam compellas”) to them.¹²² This leads to the circumstances whereby Bertold faced the first apostates with whom he negotiated near the castle of Holm. In contrast Meinhard faced those Livonians who continually promised to be baptized but never did so formally. The words “baptizati recidivant” arguably serve to convey the meaning of apostasy. After all, even after naming the concrete baptized citizens of Holm (Viliendi, Uldenago, Wade etc.) Henry of Livonia still writes “not even one of them received the faith” (“nec est usque ad unum, qui fidem suscipiat”).¹²³ How can apostasy be possible if none of the Livonians received baptism? This must refer to the Livonians who had promised to be baptized. We can only make a theoretical conclusion as to whether those Livonians who had promised to receive baptism were marked by “prima signatio”. The only possible evidence of “prima signatio” is Henry of Livonia's words “the baptism which was received by water they wanted to wash away by the water of the Daugava” (“baptismum, quem in aqua susceperant, in Duna se lavando removere putant”).¹²⁴

An additional problem still remains. If Meinhard had something to do with the people who received “prima signatio” (which is still not clear), was he able to exercise “compellere intrare” against them? Most probably not, since this was not envisaged by the canon law which dealt with the “enchurchment”¹²⁵ of the baptized but not of those intending to receive baptism. Yet those who received “prima signatio” were considered to be catechumens. They no longer belonged to the pagan world either, so canon law was rather careful with regard to them. Both the 1164 canon law collection *Summa decretorum* by Italian canon lawyer Rufin and later collections prescribe that catechumens eat separately from the baptized, while neophytes are ordered to share meals only with the baptized.¹²⁶ In any case, it is becoming clear that

¹²¹ Ibidem, I, 11, p. 6.

¹²² Ibidem, II, 5, pp. 9-10.

¹²³ Ibidem, I, 9, p. 4.

¹²⁴ Ibidem.

¹²⁵ KEDAR, *Crusade and Mission* (as in footnote 42), pp. 72-73.

¹²⁶ DAVID M. FREIDENREICH: *Sharing Meals with Non-Christians in Canon Law Commentaries, ca. 1160-1260. A Case Study in Legal Development*, in: *Medieval Encounters* 14 (2008), pp. 41-77, here pp. 52-55.

Meinhard dealt not with the apostates¹²⁷, to whom he could have perhaps applied “compellere intrare”, but with the Livonians who had promised but failed to receive baptism. Of course Bertold also encountered the same Livonians, though a number of them had disavowed. Henry of Livonia singles out this category of people when through a messenger Bertold addresses the Livonians near Holm in these words: “sent a messenger [...] to ask if they want to receive faith, or they don’t want follow faith” (“Hic misso trans aquam nuncio querit, si fidem suscipere et susceptam servare decernant”).¹²⁸ Therefore, technically speaking, Bertold had subjects to whom he could apply “compellere intrare”, while Meinhard did not. This also explains why Bertold did not engage in coercion when he first arrived. He baptized the Livonians who had not yet disavowed. Concluding the discussion of Meinhard and Bertold’s missionary activity, let us not forget that after the death of the latter and having intimidated the Livonians, over one hundred citizens of Holm and Üxküll were baptized.¹²⁹

Dygo views this baptism as a result of direct coercive missions which were established for the first time on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea.¹³⁰ Yet the question remains whether Henry of Livonia was thinking of real baptism or a preparation for baptism, as recorded in Estonia in 1210 after the occupation of the castle of Vilende. In the case of Vilende, the chronicler states that after the taking of the castle, the clergy sprinkled holy water on its defenders and on their wives (together with all the buildings), i.e. they performed the act of depaganization (such actions were a common practice). They postponed, however, the real baptism for the next time (most probably until after catechesis).¹³¹ It is true that a concrete number of those who converted to Christianity in Holm and Üxküll are mentioned, and most likely this refers to those who had promised but never received baptism.¹³² On the other hand, it is doubtful whether the cleansing with baptismal water in the River Daugava was an actual baptismal rite performed by the clergy protected by Bertold’s crusaders, especially since the Livonians of Holm who had promised to receive baptism were cleansed in the same way while Meinhard was still alive.¹³³ Although the Livonians only promised to be baptized, however, describing the first scene of their washing, the chronicler used the words “bap-

¹²⁷ DYGO, *Mission und Kreuzzug* (as in footnote 90), p. 80, considers that the Livonians who “ut baptismum recipient, iuramento firmatur” (were promised and confirmed to receive baptism), see HCL, p. 3, were already no longer pagans. While this statement is reasonable, the question remains whether these people became apostates if they had not received baptism, as Dygo claims.

¹²⁸ HCL, II, 4, p. 9.

¹²⁹ *Ibidem*, II, 7, pp. 10-11.

¹³⁰ DYGO, *Mission und Kreuzzug* (as in footnote 90), p. 84.

¹³¹ HCL, XIV, 11, p. 85.

¹³² *Ibidem*, II, 7, pp. 10-11.

¹³³ *Ibidem*, I, 10, II, 8, pp. 4, 11.

tismum, quem in aqua susceperant".¹³⁴ This shows that, technically, the chronicler compared the promise of baptism and depaganization to baptism itself, and disavowal of apostasy.¹³⁵ In this case the return of the apostates to Christianity is also called baptism. In earlier sources describing the baptism of the people of the 12th century Pomeranian Duke Vratislav, it is also not always clear whether this refers to baptism or the action of depaganization, when all those gathered were sprinkled with water by the missionary, thus beginning their preparation for conversion.¹³⁶

Furthermore, we still need to look at the activities of the third Livonian Bishop and the first Bishop of Riga, Albert von Buxhövden. Since this comprises a much longer chronological period than the episcopies of Meinard and Bertold put together, we shall limit ourselves to only a few remarks concerning the period up until the foundation of the Livonian Brothers of the Sword.

4

After the retreat of the crusaders who were following Bertold, the Livonians who had been baptized (or received "prima signatio" and reverted from apostasy) in Holm and Üxküll disavowed and the remaining clergy were driven out.¹³⁷ Therefore Albert returned to Livonia with an army of crusaders.¹³⁸ After various confrontations the Livonians had no choice but to make peace, and, as chronicler Henry of Livonia puts it, "others were granted the grace of baptism" ("alii gratiam baptismi percipiunt").¹³⁹ Again it is not totally clear here whether these words are closer in meaning to a promise to be baptized, or specifically to the rite of baptism itself, or, which is also credible, to the renewal of baptism. If the chronicle refers to the Livonians in and around Holm who attacked the episcopal castle there, then these were most likely the same ones who, after the death of Bertold, were baptized or going to receive baptism, but, after the retreat of the army, washed away all promises of baptism with the water of the Daugava. After the situation had changed, they had to renew their promises of baptism. Henry of Livonia, who describes the events a few years later, points out that not all the Livonians of Holm and Üxküll were baptized that year. Then the Livonians wanted to kill the new suzerain Conrad of Meyendorpe appointed by Bishop Albert. The chronicler described them as "the Livonians who had accepted baptism [...] with the others who were still pagans" ("Lyvones ergo, qui post acceptam

¹³⁴ Ibidem, I, 9, p. 4.

¹³⁵ See the similar interpretation ibidem, I, 7-9, pp. 3-4.

¹³⁶ ROSIK, *Conversio gentis Pomeranorum* (as in footnote 15), pp. 589, 591.

¹³⁷ HCL, II, 7, pp. 10-11.

¹³⁸ Ibidem, IV, 1, pp. 13; FRIEDRICH G. BUNGE (ed.): *Liv-, Est- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch. Nebst Regesten. Abt. 1, Bd. 1: 1093-1300*, Aalen 1967 (Neudruck der Ausgabe Reval 1853), 12, cols. 13-15.

¹³⁹ HCL, IV, 3, p. 13.

baptismi [...] cum ceteris adhuc paganis”).¹⁴⁰ Therefore already around 1205 there were those who already were baptized, and others who were simply going to be (“alii gratiam baptismi percipiunt”). The word “others” (“alii”) implies that not many of the latter remained.

At this point it is worth considering how baptism became a condition for a peace treaty.¹⁴¹ Undoubtedly, baptism was a formal act securing independence from the Germans.¹⁴² Such a practice was first used in Livonia after the death of Bishop Bertold, but since there was nobody left to co-ordinate further actions, after the retreat of his crusaders, the practice itself was not fully actualized (there was an interregnum before the appointment of Bertold’s successor, Albert von Buxhövdén). After Albert’s arrival and his immediate establishment of a network of “ministers” (“ministeriales”)¹⁴³ the land began to be distributed among vassals (1201)¹⁴⁴, laying the foundation for a completely new kind of relationship with the local nobility and with the pagans of the region. For example, in the context of the plot against Conrad of Meyendorpe, Henry of Livonia describes the frightened Livonians of Aschrath (Ascheraden, Aizkraukle) Castle, who, after making a peace treaty with the bishop, promised to receive baptism.¹⁴⁵ Perhaps this happened because the Livonians of Aschrath, Üxküll, and other regions took part in the resistance against Conrad of Meyendorpe. Later, the Livonians from other regions also promised to receive baptism.¹⁴⁶ The miracle play performed in Riga was part of the missionary effort to explain Christian truths to the catechumens (they were translated into the Livonian language).¹⁴⁷

Interestingly, baptism was not always used as a condition for peace, showing that initially even Albert did not believe that military action was the most effective means of dealing with the pagans, viewing them as future converts. For example, peace was made with the Curonians in 1201 without the requirement of baptism, since they were not yet in Albert’s missionary jurisdiction: here the chronicler mentions that this treaty was “confirmed, according to pagan tradition, by the shedding of blood” (“sicut mos est paganorum, sanguinis effusione stabiliunt”).¹⁴⁸ A treaty with the Semigallians is similarly recorded: “confirming peace according to pagan’s tradition in this way” (“et ita

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem, IX, 8, pp. 29-30.

¹⁴¹ Such a condition was also presented to the Polabian Slavs and baptism itself was related to the establishment of peace; the characteristic examples are presented by BÜNDING-NAUJOKS (as in footnote 3), pp. 113-115.

¹⁴² BRUNDAGE, Introduction (as in footnote 30), pp. 12-13; TYERMAN (as in footnote 32), pp. 38-39.

¹⁴³ BRUNDAGE, Introduction (as in footnote 30), pp. 4, 18.

¹⁴⁴ HCL, V, 1, pp. 15-16.

¹⁴⁵ Ibidem, IX, 9, p. 30.

¹⁴⁶ Ibidem, IX, 13, p. 32.

¹⁴⁷ Ibidem, IX, 14, p. 32.

¹⁴⁸ Ibidem, V, 2, p. 16.

pace more gentiliū solidata").¹⁴⁹ This means that baptism was most probably used as a peace treaty only with those who were already seen to "support the faith" ("fidem suscipere"), as Bishop Bertold had already discerned. Let us not forget that these were the same Semigallians who helped the bishop to fight the unrelenting Livonians. Thus the bishop did not shy away from taking coercive action against those Livonians considered to be apostates.¹⁵⁰ Whether Albert truly embraced the idea of using "missionary war" against the Curonians and the Semigallians during the first stage of his bishopric (at the beginning of the 13th century) is not known. The above mentioned treaties show, however, that local conditions required more flexible politics than the present day historians envisage, blending the crusades with the missions.

The Livonians were treated differently. Of course the loyalty of some of the newly baptized Livonians to Bishop Albert von Buxhövdén determined this. There were Livonians such as Kaupas who lost their land and property. Their efforts to get back their wealth, therefore, coincided with Albert's attempts of "compellere intrare". The question of dating could be raised here: when Bishop Albert began directing the energy of the crusaders not only against the apostate Livonians but also against nearby pagans. The earliest date must have been the year 1205, when the crusaders, together with the nobleman Viestartas's Semigallian warriors, took part in a military campaign against the Lithuanians.¹⁵¹ This campaign had nothing to do with the spread of Christianity. Yet it is significant that together, Christians and pagan Semigallians attacked the invading Lithuanians and later took part in pillage attacks against Lithuania and Estonia.¹⁵²

The first occasion when baptism was made a condition for peace with the Livonians was in 1208. Accusing the Sēliai (Selonians) of providing shelter to the pillaging Lithuanians in Livonia, the crusaders attacked one of their castles. When the inhabitants of the castle asked for peace, they were offered it on the condition of baptism and surrender to the power of the Pope. After the peace treaty was signed, the Sēliai gave back the hostages and promised to receive baptism.¹⁵³ It must be recognized that this event initiated a totally different relationship with the future converts. It is important to emphasize that such conditions were put forward neither to the apostates, nor to those who received "prima signatio", but to pagans, over whom Albert von Buxhövdén had no jurisdiction either as a missionary or as a political leader.

The Order of the Brothers of the Sword was founded by 1208, by which time Bishop Albert von Buxhövdén had already begun to distribute land to his vassals. In other words, the political structures of the state were beginning to be established. No previous missionary had done this. For example, the

¹⁴⁹ Ibidem, VI, 5, p. 18.

¹⁵⁰ Ibidem, X, 10, p. 40.

¹⁵¹ Ibidem, IX, 2-3, pp. 26-28.

¹⁵² Ibidem, IX, 4, p. 28.

¹⁵³ Ibidem, XI, 6, p. 54.

first administrative structure, the institution of administrator (*procurandum advocato*) appeared under Albert.¹⁵⁴ Thus both as a cleric and as a missionary, Albert also became the founder and representative of political authority.

The Order of the Brothers of the Sword, or Livonian Order, gained predominance after the Pope had confirmed the division of the Livonian lands in 1210.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, in the first stage of the Christianization of Livonia, it was precisely Bishop Albert who held political power.¹⁵⁶ This allowed him to initiate the crusades against pagans, thus gradually expanding the territories under his rule. The Holy See supported this initiative, but did not inspire it.¹⁵⁷ Yet it is important to remember that the Holy See first tried to subjugate the conquered Livonia directly, and a number of Estonian noblemen surrendered on condition that they would come directly under papal rule.¹⁵⁸ The Curonian nobleman named as “*Lammecinus rex de Curonia*”, and known only from Pope Gregory IX’s bull of 1231, also surrendered directly to the papal legate.¹⁵⁹

5

Two key moments can be discerned in Albert von Buxhövden’s work in the eastern Baltic region: the missionary becoming the founder and manager of political structures, and the missionary’s coercive enforcement of conversion. Until 1208, the year of the occupation and baptism of the castle of the Sēliai, none of the missionaries demanded baptism as a condition and guarantee of peace from the pagans near the River Daugava. Certain of Meinhard’s actions could be placed in the category “*compellere intrare*”, but he did not consistently choose this option. Bishop Bertold tried some coercion after the appearance of the apostates, but Albert was the first to use coercion not against the apostates or those who had received “*prima signatio*”, but against “genuine” pagans. In this case the norm of canon law was applied according to which pagans attacking Christians could be repressed by announcing a military campaign against them.¹⁶⁰ It must be borne in mind that the pagans

¹⁵⁴ Ibidem, XI, 4, p. 50.

¹⁵⁵ Ibidem, XI, 3, pp. 48-50; BUNGE (as in footnote 138), 16-17, cols. 22-24.

¹⁵⁶ BAUER (as in footnote 16), pp. 31-33.

¹⁵⁷ JAMES A. BRUNDAGE: The Thirteenth-Century Livonian Crusade. Henricus de Lettis and the First Legatine Mission of Bishop William of Modena, in: IDEM, *The Crusades* (as in footnote 56), pp. 1-9, here p. 4.

¹⁵⁸ HCL, XXIX, 6, p. 212.

¹⁵⁹ ALEKSANDR J. TURGENEV (ed.): *Scripta varia e secreto Archivo Vaticano et aliis Archivis et bibliothecis Romanis excerpta continens, inde ab anno MLXXV ad annum MDLXXXIV, Petropoli 1841* (*Historica Russiae Monumenta/Akty istoricheskii otnosyashchiesya k Rosii*, 1), no. XXXI.

¹⁶⁰ HERDE (as in footnote 56), pp. 365-370; BRUNDAGE, *Holy War* (as in footnote 56), pp. 106-108, 110, 113-114, 116, 123-124.

mentioned by Gratian very likely were identified as Muslims. Albert encountered pagans, not Muslims, but the point remains the same.

At this point we should take into account the early 13th century church attitude towards heretics and Muslims, who were considered to be pagans. Even though opinion was not unanimous, in 1179 the Third Lateran Council envisaged the possibility of taking military action against heretics in general¹⁶¹, promising absolution “when they resist, including absolution to defend the Christians with weapons” (“in remissionem peccatorum injungimus ut tantis cladibus seviriliter opponant, et contra eos armis populum Christianum tueantur”)¹⁶². Local French synods had envisaged this in local circumstances even earlier.¹⁶³ At the time when the castle of the Sēliai was first attacked, Innocent III declared the crusade against the Albigensians in the South West France. All this shows that the changes by the Daugava, when coercive missions (or “Schwertmission”) became the means of Christianizing the pagan tribes, came into being not in the time of Bertold (even less so under Meinhard), but during the episcopacy of Albert von Buxhövdn, after the establishment of the Order of the Brothers of the Sword and the recognition of Livonia as a part of the Roman Empire.¹⁶⁴

Were Albert’s coercive missions against the pagans an attempt to exercise political coercion? The difference between Bertold’s coercion of the Livonian apostates by Bertold and Albert’s enforcement of the condition of baptism against the Sēliai was that the second Livonian bishop was only acting against apostates, and not against all pagans. In the light of the events of 1205, the baptism episode with the Livonians in the Castle of Aschrath shows that Albert treated the slightest Livonian resistance as insubordination, justifying the use of force. The surrender of this castle shows a different type of coercion: this was exercised by a conqueror. Yet this political force was used against those who were still considered to be under Albert’s missionary jurisdiction. Perhaps the inhabitants of Aschrath had been involved in the previous promises to convert to Christianity (for example, they were probably present at Bertold’s talks with the Livonians on the site of what is now Riga). Yet, as part of a peace treaty, the inhabitants of the castle promised to be baptized and soon did so. Therefore the Livonians who resisted Conrad of Meyendorpe and Livonians from other regions who supported them could be treated as apostates. Thus apostasy becomes identified as resistance to political structures, i.e. as disobedience to the conquerors.

¹⁶¹ AUGUSTIN P. EVANS: The Albigensian Crusade, in: ROBERT L. WOLFF, HARRY W. HAZARD (eds.): A History of the Crusades. Vol. II: The Later Crusades 1189-1311, Madison et al. 1969, pp. 277-324, here p. 282.

¹⁶² MANSI (as in footnote 68), col. 232.

¹⁶³ KIENZLE, Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade (as in footnote 52), pp. 127-128.

¹⁶⁴ ECKHARD MÜLLER-MERTENS: *Regnum Teutonicum. Aufkommen und Verbreitung der deutschen Reichs- und Königsauffassung im früheren Mittelalter*, Wien et al. 1970, pp. 375-376.

So the case of the Sēliai castle in 1208 was not an encounter with apostates. This raises several questions. Why should different forms of coercion be given the same name? Why should the Wendish Crusade be seen as an example of coercive mission, if baptism did not take place during the crusade and the crusade itself was organized for a totally different purpose? Should the Wendish Crusade, arranged by the Saxon nobility, and the following crusades, organized by Bishop Albert von Buxhövden, be considered part of a coercive mission? Is there any difference between a crusade and a coercive mission?

The research indicates that there is a difference. Missionary work was not the crusaders' goal.¹⁶⁵ Even if we perceive crusading as "compellere intrare" performed *in another way*, the role of crusaders and military orders in coercive missions in the Baltic Rim remains unclear. In his bull of 12 October 1204 Pope Innocent III clearly stated the function of the crusaders in Livonia and who exactly was entrusted with the task of Christianization in Livonia:

"our brother Al[bert], their bishop [...] managed to put in order three spiritual orders, that is, Cistercian monks and regular canons, who [...] by using spiritual weapons would fight the beasts of the land, and lay believers, wearing the robes of Templars [Order of the Sword – M. Š.] manfully and bravely stand against the savages, who are attacking the roots of the faith of the new Christians".¹⁶⁶

The bull further distinguishes between clerical (*sacerdotes et clericos*) and lay (*nihilominus laicos*) crusaders, who also had to perform the above mentioned functions. Thus the clergy, armed with spiritual weapons, were to preach in Livonia while crusaders and the Order of the Sword were entrusted with the function of defence, not the practice of mission. In such cases, crusading should be treated as a part of war, not as a part of mission. Yet the crusaders could "clear the way" for the missionaries by force of arms.¹⁶⁷ Should this "clearing" be regarded as missionary activity, since it is identified as "Schwertmission"?

It is clear that in the Middle Ages church and secular power were very closely related, despite the fact that the reform of the Pontificate was designed to separate lay matters from spiritual ones. Nevertheless, it is important to separate military coercion from coercion performed by a missionary on the principle "compellere intrare".

¹⁶⁵ KEDAR, *Crusade and Mission* (as in footnote 42), pp. 57-74.

¹⁶⁶ BUNGE (as in footnote 138), 14, col. 19: "frater noster, Al[bertus], eorundem episcopus [...] tres religiosorum ordines, Cistersiensem videlicet, monachorum et canonicorum regularium [...] spiritualibus armis contra bestias terrae pugnent, et fidelium laicorum, qui sub templariorum habitu, barbaris infestantibus ibi novellam plantationem fidei Christianae resistent viriliter et potenter."

¹⁶⁷ KAHL, *Compellere intrare* (as in footnote 9), pp. 364-365.

Zusammenfassung

Zu den Kreuzzügen und Schwertmissionen im Ostseeraum zwischen der Mitte des 12. und dem Beginn des 13. Jahrhunderts. Wenden und Livländer als Beispiele

Dieser Beitrag analysiert das Problem der Wenden- und Baltenkreuzzüge (1147 bzw. 12.-13. Jahrhundert) und die Rolle der Missionare in der Kreuzzugsbewegung. In der Geschichtsschreibung wurden die Begriffe „Schwertmission“, „Kreuzzug“ und „compellere intrare“ („Sie nötigen hereinzukommen“) bislang synonym verwendet. Diese Schlussfolgerung beruhte auf mittelalterlichen Schriftstücken wie den Magdeburger Annalen, einem Aufruf, der dem Magdeburger Erzbischof Adalgod zugeschrieben wird, den Briefen Bernhards von Clairvaux, päpstlichen Bullen sowie den Chroniken Helmolds von Bosau, Vinzenz von Prag und Heinrichs von Lettland. In der Historiografie wurde darauf hingewiesen, dass mit dem Kreuzzug von 1147 im Ostseeraum die friedliche Missionierung der heidnischen Völker erstmals durch ein anderes Vorgehen abgelöst worden sei. Nachdem die Elbslawen bezwungen worden waren, breitete sich die Schwertmission östlich der Elbe aus, bis sie zu Beginn des 13. Jahrhunderts die Düna erreichte. Zusammen mit der Rolle der Missionare bei Kreuzzügen und Schwertmission wurde in der Historiografie auch der Anteil der Laien und des Klerus bestimmt. Traf die Absicht der weltlichen Herrscher, ihr Staatsgebiet zu vergrößern, mit den Bemühungen zusammen, heidnische Stämme zu christianisieren, lassen sich sowohl politische als auch weltliche Komponenten identifizieren. In den Quellen zum Wendenkreuzzug von 1147 werden jedoch Mission und Taufen nicht erwähnt. Wenn aber während des Wendenkreuzzugs gar nicht missioniert wurde und die Forscher nur über die politischen Gründe dieses Kreuzzugs sprechen, wieso sollte er dann als „missionarischer“ Kreuzzug bezeichnet werden? Die nächste Frage wäre, warum er ein Beispiel für die Schwertmission sein soll, wenn doch auf dem Kreuzzug gar keine Taufen stattfanden und der Kreuzzug selbst mit einer ganz anderen Absicht organisiert worden ist? Hinsichtlich des Livländischen Kreuzzugs zeigt sich, dass bis 1208, als eine Burg der Selen besetzt und getauft wurde, keiner der Missionare von den an der Düna lebenden Heiden als Friedensbedingung und -garantie die Taufe verlangte. Der livländische Bischof Meinhard hätte im Sinne des „compellere intrare“ vorgehen können, machte von dieser Option aber keinen Gebrauch. Bischof Bertold versuchte gegen Glaubensabtrünnige einen gewissen Zwang einzusetzen. Aber erst Bischof Albert von Buxhövdn setzte Zwang gegen echte Heiden ein und nicht nur gegen Abtrünnige bzw. solche, die das „prima signatio“ – also das Zeichen des Kreuzes – bereits empfangen und somit ihre Bereitschaft zur Taufe bekundet hatten.

Des Weiteren stellt sich die grundsätzliche Frage, ob der Wendenkreuzzug, der vom sächsischen Adel durchgeführt wurde, und die nachfolgenden, von Bischof Albert organisierten Kreuzzüge als Teil der Schwertmission angesehen werden sollten. Gibt es irgendeinen Unterschied zwischen einem Kreuzzug und einer Schwertmission? Die vorliegende Untersuchung belegt einen solchen Unterschied. In der Historiografie wurde bereits festgestellt, dass die Kreuzfahrer selbst keine Missionierung betreiben wollten. Immerhin machten sie aber den Missionaren mit Waffengewalt den Weg frei. Aber lässt sich dies bereits als Missionstätigkeit im Sinne von „Schwertmission“ verstehen? Es ist natürlich richtig, dass im Mittelalter die Kirche und die weltliche politische Macht eng miteinander verbunden waren, wenn auch die Reform des Pontifikats darauf abzielte, weltliche von geistlichen Angelegenheiten zu trennen. Aber sollte man nicht militärischen Zwang von Zwang unterscheiden, der von einem Missionar nach dem Prinzip „compellere intrare“ ausgeübt wurde?