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THE TEUTONS IN THE WEST

Teutonic Cavalry in the Baltic

(13th-15th centuries)

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For Niko

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RESUMO

A presente tese procura um melhor entendimento sobre a cavalaria Teutónica na região do mar Báltico entre os séculos XIII a XV, particularmente porque a Ordem Teutónica e todo o processo das Cruzadas no Báltico recebem pouca atenção, sendo um tema que não é estudado em Portugal. Este trabalho, para além de contar com bibliografia secundária sobre as Cruzadas, a cavalaria medieval, as Ordens Militares e o cavalo durante aquele período da Idade Média, baseia-se sobretudo na consulta, tratamento e interpretação crítica de fontes primárias traduzidas, entre as quais se destacam as Regras do Templo e da Ordem Teutónica, e as duas principais crónicas desta segunda organização monástico/militar. Sempre que possível, a Arqueologia virá em socorro da História.

De forma a que o tema seja devidamente exposto, procurou-se contextualizar aqueles cavaleiros e os seus cavalos no seu espaço e tempo, isto é, desde a fundação da Ordem na Terra Santa durante a Terceira Cruzada até à Batalha de Grunwald/Tannenberg na Polónia em 1410. Porém, dada a natureza da Ordem (composição maioritariamente germânica e sua ligação ao Sacro-Império), será dada especial atenção aos acontecimentos no Báltico, dado que foi naquela região, nomeadamente na Prússia, que a Ordem Teutónica conseguiu desenvolver o seu ‘Ordensstaat’ e prolongar a sua existência até se tornar completamente anacrónica; também, pelo facto de as cruzadas contra os pagãos no Báltico se terem tornado preferíveis para os cristãos da Europa central e do norte por causa da proximidade geográfica (e, por isso, por acarretar menores custos). Para além desta contextualização, procurou-se também conhecer com mais profundidade os cavaleiros e cavalos teutónicos: as suas origens, o seu treino e a relação entre o cavaleiro e a sua montada. De igual forma, o espaço onde viveram e lutaram, o seu sistema logístico e a panóplia de equipamento serão abordados. E, para uma imagem mais completa e coerente, para além do combate propriamente dito, serão analisados, dentro do possível, o tipo de traumas, sobretudo os físicos, com que estes cavaleiros e cavalos tiveram de lidar.

Palavras-chave: Teutões; Ordem Militar; Cavalaria; Cavalo; Cavaleiro

ABSTRACT

The following thesis aims at a better understanding of how Teutonic cavalry conducted warfare in the Baltic between the 13th and 15th centuries. Not only are the Teutonic Order and the Baltic Crusades given less attention in comparison to other subjects in the same field of study, they are subjects that are not studied in Portugal. This work features bibliographies pertaining the Crusades, medieval cavalry, the Military Orders and the medieval horse; it most predominantly relies on the critical consulting, treatment, and interpretation of translated primary sources, from which the Templar and Teutonic rules, as well as the main Teutonic chronicles are highlighted. Whenever possible, Archaeology will aid History.

To fully explore the subject at hand, it was attempted to contextualize these knights and their horses in their space and time; specifically, from the Order's foundation in the Holy Land during the Third Crusade to the Battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg in Poland (1410). However, given the nature of the Teutonic Order (mainly Germanic and linked to the Holy Roman Empire), special attention will be given to the Baltic, as it was in that region - namely in Prussia - that the Teutonic Order succeeded in creating the 'Ordensstaat' and managed to prolong its own existence until it became anachronistic. Another reason the Baltic will be featured in this thesis is because the act of crusading against the Baltic pagans became a preference to Northern and Central European Christians given their geographical proximity (and, consequently, was a cheaper endeavour). Beyond this contextualization, the design of this thesis is to understand as much as possible the Teutonic knights and horses: their backgrounds, their training, and the relationship between knight and mount. Similarly, the space where they lived and fought, their logistics, and their equipment will also be explored. And, for a complete and coherent picture, the types of trauma and the repercussions – especially physical – that these knights and horses dealt with will also be discussed, within reason.

Keywords: Teutonic Knights; Military Orders; Cavalry; Horse; Knight.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMH – *Das Ausgabebuch des Marienburger Hauskomturs*

CLP – *Chronicle of the Land of Prussia*

DMT – *Das Marienburger Tresslerbuch des Jahre 1399-1409*

LRC – *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*

MHG – Middle High German

NHO – New High German

OHG – Old High German

WWI – World War One

WWII – World War Two

OVERTURE

“If there is no path before you, create your own.”¹

¹ Star Wars: The Clone Wars, season seven, episode five.

When one thinks of a medieval cavalry charge, the first image that comes to mind is something like the cavalry clash in the motion picture *Kingdom of Heaven*: a line of charging knights, manoeuvring in an open space and on even ground, riding full speed ahead.

Yet, how did a cavalry charge take place in the forested and swampy Baltic terrain? And not just any cavalry charge, but one undertaken by the Teutonic Order: professional knights, with access to quality warhorses, excellent weaponry, used to fight side by side and aiming at something greater than themselves. And after the charge and initial impact, what followed? Or... were there charges at all? Cavalry was mostly employed on raiding, foraging, protection of lines of communication and logistics, and reconnaissance; it also played a part during sieges - the main military actions during the Middle Ages - by reinforcing the blockade against the besieged target and by conducting foraging and reconnaissance². But, when in battle, cavalry units also performed in a compact formation³, which would require space for the horses to manoeuvre and for the knights to avoid knocking their knees together and break them. Considering that “Layers of dead wood, luxuriant undergrowth, lakes, bogs and hills confined human settlement to the coastal strip and the valleys of the Vistula, Niemen and Dvina (...)”⁴, one can surmise that there was not much space at all in the Baltic region.

The Customs of the Teutonic Order, following the Rule of the Templars, indicate how the Brothers should behave on horseback. The oldest surviving manuscript of the Teutonic Order’s Statutes dates from 1264⁵ – by then, the Order was already active in the Baltic region. While some terms like ‘turcopole’ are linked to the Order’s activity in the Middle East, the text was certainly adapted to the realities of the Baltic. As for the Order’s chronicles⁶, these frequently mention the Brothers riding around, through forests or along the Baltic coast, and even across the ice. In these texts, the Brothers ride out in orderly or knightly fashion, gather around banners, charge like they are one, and dismount to fight on foot – either when their horses are killed or the circumstances demand it.

² GASSMANN 2018:64.

³ VERBRUGGEN 1997:73.

⁴ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:61 (The edition used is in digital format and contains internal links to the various chapters; as such, the numbers from the pages not linked are provided by the PDF reader.).

⁵ STERNS 1969:197.

⁶ For this thesis, the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997) and *The Chronicle of Prussia* (FISCHER (trans.) 2010) will be used.

However, both in the chronicles and in the Statues/Customs, some passages regarding the knights' conduct and actions are vague or nondescript, and although the Teutonic Order appeared in the Middle East, following the recovery of Acre during the Third Crusade (1189-91)⁷, the Order's main theatre of operations was the Baltic, where terrain and climate differed from those in the Middle East. Adaptations to the Order's fighting techniques must have been made, and looking at the course of History, these were successfully employed. Hence, the primary objective of the following thesis is to understand how Western European cavalry tactics performed by an elite force were applied to the Baltic from the 13th to the 15th centuries, and what adaptations were made according to the environment – that was different from Western Europe and the Middle East. Additionally, this thesis also aims to explore how the Teutonic knight used his horse⁸ and what logistics were involved in keeping horses in the Order's territories in the Baltic. On a second note, though I cannot determine an individual⁹ to every Teutonic knight, within the following thesis I still try to thoroughly explore the knights' background before joining the Order and their time of service, thus trying to flesh out men instead of treating the knights like an anonymous mass. My goal is to document social backgrounds, geographical origins, ages, behaviours, motivations and the techniques they used to cope with trauma. This thesis also intends to explore the relationship between knight and horse; to try to better understand the intensity of the bond between them, how they worked together, and the identities of the warhorses themselves: though it is impossible to know each horse individually, there will be an attempt to portray them as more than mere tools for combat.

The main motivation for this thesis is my love for horses, and consequently, for knights. I find knights from the military orders most fascinating because these men and their horses, cohabiting the same space and almost kept apart from the rest of society, had their lives dictated by strict rules and somehow still managed to function. As I have always been drawn to the military aspects of History, and especially to the Middle Ages, a thesis featuring the horse-knight set was meant to happen. Secondly, my enthusiasm for the German language and culture led me to study the Teutonic Order and the Baltic Crusades. Through my

⁷ URBAN 2003:9.

⁸ This thesis will address mostly the warhorse.

⁹ Unless information from the chronicles allows me to.

enthusiasm, I find myself with a better understanding of European History in the following centuries, especially during the World Wars¹⁰, with the ‘Baltendeutsche’ and the ‘Heim ins Reich’ policy, as well as other elements that tried to bridge the new German Reich to the Teutonic Order.

The Baltic Crusades and the Teutonic Order brought Germans to settle the new conquered areas, and the descendants of these settlers, the ‘Baltendeutsche’, enjoyed a privileged position in the regions of Livonia and Kurland throughout time, either under the domain of the Polish-Lithuanian or the Swedish crowns, and even under the Czarist regime¹¹. During WWI, important Baltic Germans approached the Kaiser in 1917 with a suggestion of annexing Latvia and Estonia to the German Reich, whereas post – WWI and in the wake of Latvia’s declaration of independence, the Latvian parliament did not take punishing measures against this minority group for the attempted annexation (though the land reforms, which affected ancient properties the landowners regarded as birthrights, seemingly displeased the Baltic Germans) and the Baltic Germans continued to enjoy several privileges, such as their own German-speaking schools, serving in the army and receiving the same pensions as ethnic Latvians, German-spoken mass, representation in the universities and capability of forming political and cultural groups¹².

In WWII came the ‘Heim ins Reich’ policy, all Germans in a great Germany, and consequently these ethnic Germans in the Baltic had to be reached for¹³. The younger generations of Baltic Germans in Latvia and Estonia admired Hitler and his idea of uniting all Germans in a grand empire¹⁴. For this, ethnic Germans in the Baltic were parted into categories by the Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationhood

¹⁰ ”(...) by the 1860s the Baltic crusades were seen in processual terms as the start of Germany’s timeless and historic mission to civilise and settle the Slavic lands of the East and the expression *Der Drang nach Osten* was given currency. Within forty years this simplistic model was used by the Nazis to justify their territorial designs on Czechoslovakia, Poland and Russia (...)” (LOCK 2006:214).

¹¹ PLAVNIEKS 2008:28.

¹² Idem, *ibidem*:31/32.

¹³ There were other elements besides people that winked at the ‘Ordenstaat’: the ‘Gott mit uns’ in Wehrmacht belt buckles comes from the Latin expression ‘Nobiscum Deus’, a war cry used by the Teutonic Order (LUZIA (trad.) 2017:18), and the shape and size of the German ‘Eiserne Kreuz’, the Iron Cross decoration, have been based on the Teutonic Order’s black cross pattée (MUNRO 2009:6).

¹⁴ PLAVNIEKS 2008:33/34.

(Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums/ RKFDV): entire families could be rejected for relocation in the new conquered territories of Eastern Europe, and would therefore have to be ‘Germanized’ in Germany; or these families could be apt to be sent to a new settlement¹⁵. About 90% of the Baltic Germans accepted, without coercion, to be relocated in the winter of 1939-40 into Polish homes that had belonged to Poles or Jews, and to switch Estonian or Latvian citizenship for German¹⁶ – the acceptance to be relocated stemmed from diverse reasons, such as escaping an eventual Soviet invasion or a quest for a missing identity¹⁷.

After WWII, whereas the Baltic Germans tried to reorganize in Western Germany, there are no records for this group in Eastern Germany; however, in Soviet-occupied Latvia and Estonia, elements linked to the Baltic Germans were destroyed (such as cemeteries, monuments, estates)¹⁸. In addition, the incorporation of the commanderies of Königsberg, Ragnit, Brandenburg, Balga and the former territories of the Sambian bishopric in the Soviet Union after WWII led to an anti-German, pro-Slavic resettlement program: “In 1945, the surviving German population was expelled and a year later the first wave of Russian, Ukrainian and Belarussian settlers arrived, followed by Lithuanians, resulting in the reduction of the modern German population to less than 1 per cent.”¹⁹.

In addition to the impact of the Crusades, medieval Baltic warfare presents unique perspectives that, comparing to other theatres of operation, are not given the same amount of attention. Through combining my love for horses and knights and German stuff, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of how Teutonic cavalry conducted warfare in the Baltic between the 13th and 15th centuries.

It is my intention to examine holistically these men who waged war (their horses, their background, the environment they were in) and thereby better understand their motivations and methods. Compared to the Crusades in the Middle East, there still are not

¹⁵ PLAVNIEKS 2008:45-46.

¹⁶ *Idem, ibidem*:65/ BRESINSKY:3.

¹⁷ BRESINSKY:14.

¹⁸ PLAVNIEKS 2008:68-69.

¹⁹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:7. The author refers to the modern Kaliningrad Oblast.

many works on the subject of Teutonic cavalry during the Baltic Crusades²⁰, which I consider to be a missing piece in the big picture as, in the long run, the Baltic Crusades and the Teutonic Order both helped to shape Europe as we know it today, with consequences that remain relevant to the 20th century. Even to this day, the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg (1410) is “(...) a symbol of national ascendancy for both Poland and Lithuania. In 2010, exactly 600 years after the battle, the almost frenzied sequence of celebrations, conferences, exhibitions, publications, media coverage and even diplomatic meetings between Polish and Lithuanian ministers clearly testified to the enduring cultural significance of this event.”²¹ There are some works in English that go beyond an entry in an encyclopaedia or scattered mentions in a monography about the Crusades, and there have been recent important publications by Polish authors, but the subject has not yet reached Portugal²².

To achieve as complete a view as possible on Teutonic cavalry, I have selected some works – generalist and specific – whose information I have considered essential. Verbruggen’s *The Art of Warfare in Western Europe During the Middle Ages* presents several examples from chronicles and literature pertaining to the application of strategic and tactical concepts as well as the organisation of medieval forces, but it is mostly focused in the Middle East and Western Europe. Forey’s *The Military Orders from the Twelfth to the Early Fourteenth Centuries* is a survey on the history, action and organisation of the military orders, though Templars and Hospitallers take the foreground. Christiansen’s *The Northern Crusades* presents a geographical description of the Baltic and describes the events of the Baltic Crusades, starting with the Crusades against the Wends and encompassing the Livonian Crusade pre- and with the Teutonic Order, as well as the Prussian Crusade also pre- and under the Teutonic Order; however, it is more political than military. On the other hand, Urban’s *The Teutonic Knights – A Military History* tells the history of the Order, from its foundation in the Holy Land to its end in the Baltic, and is fun to read. A more detailed work on the Order is Pluskowski’s *The Archaeology of the Prussian Crusade – Holy War and*

²⁰ Polish researchers, like Nowakowski, Zabinski and Pluskowski, have been publishing important work in English.

²¹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:21.

²² Though in his *Crusading at the Edges of Europe: Denmark and Portugal c.1000 – c.1250* (2016), Jensen compares Denmark and Portugal and their actions, respectively, during the Baltic Crusades and the Reconquista.

Colonisation, which covers diverse material evidence from both Germans and natives (fortifications, animal remains, pottery), unravelling the dynamics of sites mentioned (and not) in the *CLP*, allied to the historical context of Prussia pre-and during the Crusades under the Teutonic Order, thus providing a more complete picture of the area; it also contains important references to horse remains found in Teutonic castles and convents that reveal the size of the animals and indicate their likely function. But Nicolle's *The Teutonic Knight* - an overview of the Teutonic Order's history, organisation, theatres of operation, and the knights' equipment and background - is perhaps the most well-known work on the subject. Because knights needed horses, Davies' *The Medieval Warhorse – Origin, Development and Redevelopment* presents information about the breeding of horses, the tacks used and their purpose, the training and riding styles available for the knights according to their weapons of choice and the type of combat they will engage in. Hyland's *The Medieval Warhorse from Byzantium to the Crusades* is particularly important when regarding the transportation of horses (in ships) and the consequences of said transportation upon their health; it also provides information on the general size of medieval horses and their military functions, but focused in the Crusades in the Holy Land and the Templars.

On the contrary, Ekdahl's article *Horses and Crossbows: Two Important Warfare Advantages of the Teutonic Order in Prussia* addresses the importance of the crossbow and of bigger horses in the Baltic, which provided the Teutonic Order with technological advantage over the natives. It also contains important information on the breeding and maintenance of horses under the Teutonic Order in Prussia. For this last aspect - as well as for conduct on horseback – information can be ascertained through the Order's sources. Stern's translation of *The Statutes of the Teutonic Knights*, the medieval German manuscript from 1264 (*The Book of the Order*) that comprises The Prologue, The Rule, The Laws, The Customs and The Admission Ritual, contains information about the number of mounts the knights were allowed and how they should behave while on campaigning. Smith's and Urban's translation *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, the medieval German chronicle from the late 13th century most likely written by a Teutonic knight, describes the beginning of the Christianisation of Livonia, the arrival of the Teutonic Order and its endeavours up until 1290 (the last year mentioned in the chronicle).

This contrasts with Fischer's translation *The Chronicle of the Land of Prussia* – that is in itself a translation of and addition of the Latin chronicle – which was written by a priest of the Order during the decade of 1331-1342, and tells the history of the Christianisation of Prussia, the arrival of the Order to Prussia and the actions of the knights throughout the 13th and 14th centuries; yet, the narrative content and detail on warfare is less detailed than in the *LRC*. Anything else regarding knights and horses can be deduced from Boléo's translation *A Regra dos Templários*: considering that the Teutonic Order based their rules and statutes off those of the Templars, to understand the Teutonic Order's conduct in battle and dealing with horses it is necessary to draw information from the Templars – too, one must keep in mind the differences in terrain and weather conditions between the Baltic and the Middle East.

The picture would not be complete, however, without first attempting to understand the toll that battle exacted on these knights and horses. Heebøll-Holm's research found medieval symptoms and stressors similar to those of PTSD, and Eickman's article *MIRACLES, VISIONS AND ST. BARBARA'S HEAD – TEUTONIC KNIGHTS AND PTSD* has brought a new approach to the *CLP* through linking certain narratives of the chronicle to psychological trauma²³. In a more generic approach, Turner and Lee's (eds.) *Trauma in Medieval Society* addresses not only physical trauma in medieval societies through archaeology, but also argues the representation of psychological trauma in literary sources.

²³ It cannot be assumed that people in the past processed in the same way as we do today (METZGER 2014:44-45), and PTSD is a phenomenon associated to the Vietnam and following conflicts (CROCQ et CROCQ 2000:53). As such, I do not agree with the usage of 'PTSD' for the Middle Ages; instead, in the following thesis the broader term 'trauma' will be used.

PART 1

THE TEUTONIC ORDER

*“Dich heizet vater maniger vil,
swer mîn ze bruoder niht enwil.”²⁴*

²⁴ “For many call Thee Father, who/ Will not own me as brother too.” (Walther von der Vogelweide).

The Third Crusade (1189-1191) had seemingly started well for the Germans²⁵ under the command of Friedrich Barbarossa, until he drowned on the way to the Holy Land – this caused part of the army to disperse and another to continue and join the English and French crusading forces at the siege of Acre: these Germans suffered from the heat, from diseases spread through the camp, and from Richard the Lionheart's bullying²⁶. Furthermore, regular hospital units were too crowded²⁷, and the Hospitallers favoured Frenchmen and Englishmen - without a German authority to ensure a better treatment for his subjects, it was up to Crusaders²⁸ from Bremen and Lübeck to establish a hospital for the Germans²⁹. This episode was further illustrated by René-Aubert Vertot, historian of the Hospitallers, who pointed the segregation of the Germans based on the linguistic barrier, and its contribution to the foundation of the German hospital:

“To make the misfortune still greater, the wounded soldiers of the Germans, whose language was not understood, laboured under great difficulties, not being able in so melancholy a situation, to make either their ails or their wants known. Some German gentlemen of the towns of Bremen and Lübeck that had arrived by sea, moved with the misery of their countrymen, took the sails of their ship and made a large tent in which they put immediately the wounded of their acquaintance and attended them with great charity. Forty persons of quality of the same nation joined themselves to them and formed a sort of hospital in the camp.”³⁰.

These ‘forty persons of quality’ are listed in the *CLP*³¹. In fact, despite the role played by the linguistic barrier, it seems that it was this early connection between the German field hospital and German nobility that had a bigger part in the foundation of the Teutonic Order: Duke Frederick of Swabia (a Hohenstaufen³²), son of the deceased Friedrich Barbarossa, participated in the siege of Acre, wrote highly of the German hospital to his brother, Emperor

²⁵ For commodity, people from the Holy Roman Empire will be called ‘Germans’, unless they come from non-German speaking areas.

²⁶ URBAN 2003:9.

²⁷ Sources state nothing about this, though it was possible that a field hospital for the besiegers was run by the Hospitallers (MUNRO 2009:2).

²⁸ These were the northern Germans, Frisians and some English associates that stopped in Portugal to aid to the conquest of Silves on their way to the Holy Land (CUSHING 2010:1).

²⁹ URBAN 2003:11.

³⁰ MUNRO 2009:2.

³¹ Vide Addendum, Pt. I, *CLP* – Foundation of the Teutonic Order:305.

³² URBAN 2003:11.

Henry VI, and after becoming ill requested to be buried within the hospital³³. The Duke also seems to have convinced the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Great Masters of the Temple and of the Hospital to request Pope Celestine III to approve the German hospital as a new Order, doing hospital work according to Hospitaller rules and living according to the Templar rule³⁴. Besides Duke Frederick, other German Crusaders, important elements of German society, defended the militarization of the hospital, which linked the to-be Order to the house of Hohenstaufen³⁵: when the Order was recognised by the Pope as a military order, in March 1198, it is likely that the imperial chancellor Conrad von Querfurt intervened in the Order's behalf³⁶; the Order's independence from the Hospitallers was due to imperial support from Otto IV and Frederick II³⁷; and, lastly, it was Frederick II who bestowed the Great Master of the Teutonic Order with the title of Imperial Prince and a seat at the imperial court³⁸. However, as Franke sustains:

“It is often argued that [German] manpower and force-projection issues were eased by the militarization of the German Hospital at Acre, transforming it into a fully-fledged military order dominated by the Staufeu political interests. However, as Nicholas Morton has shown, while the order certainly benefitted from imperial patronage, other patrons' “donations generally seem to have been made in the wake of a pilgrimage or a crusade, not in reaction to an act of imperial benevolence”. The Order's reaction to the split royal election in 1198 and the subsequent war between Otto IV Welf and Philip of Swabia indicates that, rather than being a Staufeu auxiliary, it was “an institution which represented the combined commitment of the German people to the recovery of the Holy Land.”³⁹.

Even so, it is undeniable that it was fortunate for the Order to have Hohenstaufen supporters, and that Emperor Frederick II and Great Master Hermann von Salza were contemporaries. Under von Salza (1210-1239) the Order flourished, enjoying imperial

³³ MORTON 2016:53.

³⁴ URBAN 2003:11.

³⁵ FISCHER 1984:3.

³⁶ NICOLLE 2007:5. Though Pope Clemens III had emitted the bull *Quotiens Postulator* in February 6th, 1191, that granted the new Order similar privileges to the Templars and Hospitallers (MUNRO 2009:4).

³⁷ MUNRO 2009:4.

³⁸ *Idem, ibidem*:7.

³⁹ FRANKE 2016:135.

favours from Frederick II⁴⁰. Von Salza succeeded in acquiring more prominence for the Teutonic Order in the Holy Land in the wake of Frederick II's successful enterprise in Jerusalem in 1229: from the Emperor, the Order received Toron, Joscelin, Montfort (Starkenber) and the old German hospital in Jerusalem⁴¹ – like the two bigger Orders, finally the Teutonic Order, too, had possessions in the Holy City. In the Mediterranean, the Order acquired and administered possessions with the help of the Hohenstaufen dynasty and their supporters, like the Venetians, even though this put the Order against the Genoese and the Welfs, supporters of the papacy⁴². It was also under von Salza that the Teutonic Order had its first European enterprise in the Burzenland, to where Andrew II of Hungary invited them in 1211 to defend the land from pagan Cumans – though the king expelled the Order in 1225⁴³. Andrew II seems to have chosen the Teutonic Order after Hermann von Salza had been introduced to him through the overlord of the Salza family, Count Hermann of Thuringia, who had witnessed the German hospital become the Teutonic Order⁴⁴. It is also possible that the Teutonic Order, not as powerful as Templars and Hospitallers, had felt less of a threat to the king⁴⁵ – who later authorized their expulsion by force, after the Order had successfully pacified, colonised, built fortresses and declared the Burzenland property of the Holy See⁴⁶.

⁴⁰ FISCHER 1984:4. The Order also gained privileges and acknowledgment from Pope Honorius III who, in 1221, finally attributed the Teutonic Order a legal status like that of Templars and Hospitallers, and who allowed the Teutonic Order to exchange indulgencies for donations (*idem, ibidem*:4).

⁴¹ MUNRO 2009:7.

⁴² BORCHARDT 2016:119.

⁴³ FOREY 1999:180.

⁴⁴ URBAN 2003:31.

⁴⁵ NICOLLE 2007:7.

⁴⁶ URBAN 2003: 34/35/36. Urban also refers that, even though the Order was expelled, the German settlers remained, until their descendants were expelled by the Romanian government in 1945 (2003:36).

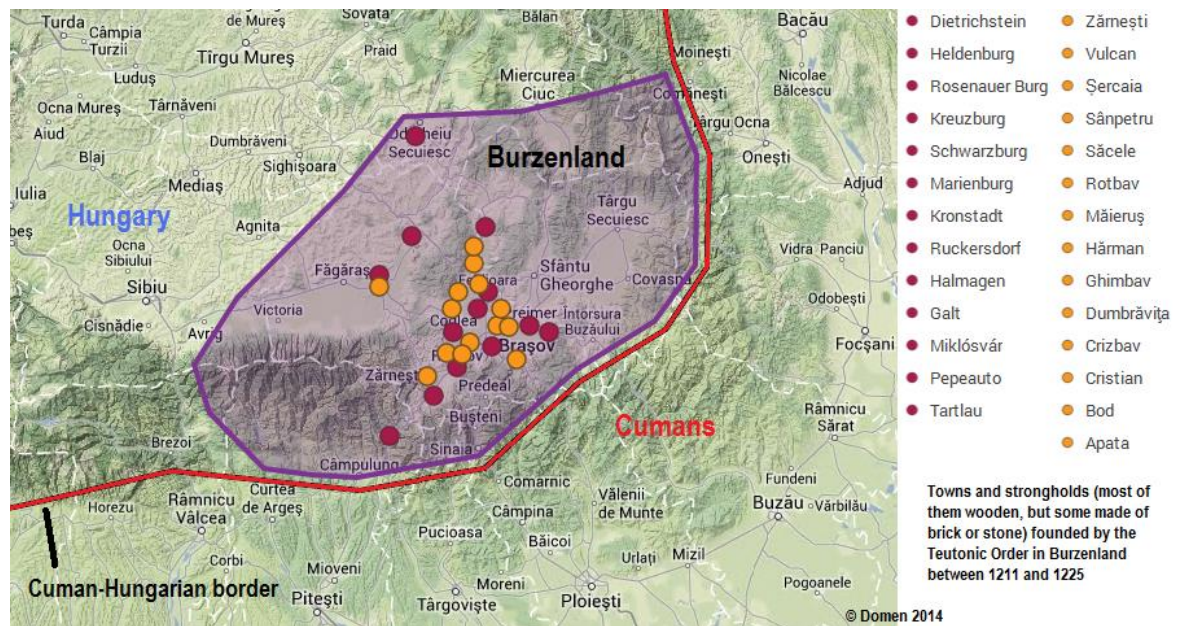


Figure 1: The Burzenland, south-eastern Transylvania ([Burzenland2.png \(903×477\) \(bp.blogspot.com\)](#)) [18/1/22]

It was also in 1225 that the Teutonic Order was requested in the Baltic region⁴⁷. Conrad I of Masovia, son of the Polish king Casimir and in conflict with the pagan Prussians, sought the Order's assistance⁴⁸ due to "A combination of factors – civil war in Poland, Prussian raids on the Kulmerland and ambitions for continuing territorial expansion (...)"⁴⁹. Negotiations for the Order's establishment in Prussia involved Frederick II and ultimately resulted in the creation of an independent state of the Teutonic Order in Prussia⁵⁰, the 'Ordensstaat'. The Order was invited to stabilise the frontier in return for territory in the Kulmerland, and given the result of the Hungarian experience, von Salza approached Frederick II for support, who in March 1226 issued the Golden Bull of Rimini, "(...)" which

⁴⁷ NICOLLE 2007:15.

⁴⁸ FOREY 1999:180/PLUSKOWSKI 2013:11. There was already a Military Order in Prussia that was then integrated in the Teutonic Order: the Order of Dobrin, created c.1228 by Bishop Christian of Prussia and Duke Conrad of Masovia (FOREY 1999:180). The same author calls to attention that, even though Templars and Hospitallers were given possessions and called to Poland and Hungary, the first did not settle permanently in the eastern border of Poland and the latter didn't permanently defend the region of Severin, from the Transylvanian Alps to the Danube, that was given to them in 1247 by king Bela IV of Hungary (1999:181).

⁴⁹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:11.

⁵⁰ FOREY 1999:181.

authorised the invasion of Prussia, conferred land offered by Duke Konrad and all land subsequently conquered in Prussia to the Order, along with the rights to govern it.”⁵¹.

But in the Holy Land the Teutonic Order never acquired the same importance as that of the Temple and of the Hospital. While Acre was still under siege, Guy of Lusignan had promised the Armenian hospital in the city as the permanent headquarters for the German hospital - however, following the capture of the city, it was the Hospitaller Order that kept the Armenian hospital, and only in the 13th century did the Pope recognise the Teutonic Order as a truly autonomous entity⁵²; furthermore, after the Teutonic Order supported Frederick II while he had been excommunicated by Gregory IX, which led to the Hospitallers not recognising the treaty that the Emperor arranged with the Sultan al-Kamil, and to the Templars complaining about how their possession of the Temple Mount had not been confirmed and had been returned to the Muslims, the opinion of the Vatican and of the two other Orders was that the Teutonic Order belonged to the imperial house⁵³. Later, this connection to the imperial house led Pope Gregory IX to issue the bull *Dilecti filii* on 12th January 1240, that confirmed the subordination of the Teutonic Order to the Hospitallers – though Great Master Gerhard von Malberg⁵⁴ (1240-1244) worked to improve the relationship with the papacy⁵⁵. Afterwards, with the fall of the Hohenstaufen and the Bohemian Premysl dynasties, the Order lost its main patrons in central Europe, and with the hostilities with Poland and the Papal Curia moved to Avignon (1305), the Order had to rely on its own resources⁵⁶.

But in the 13th century the Order had become internally divided among brethren who supported a presence in the Holy Land, brethren who preferred expansion in the Baltic, and

⁵¹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:12.

⁵² MUNRO 2009:3-4.

⁵³ *Idem, ibidem*:8.

⁵⁴ Because Great Master Gerhard von Malberg supported the pope during the conflicts between the Hohenstaufen and the papacy, he was forced to resign in 1244, which led to a schism between the Hohenstaufen supporters in the Order and those that supported Pope Innocent IV (Prussia, Livonia, Venice and some Italian houses); it seems that from 1250 to 1252, there were two opposing Great Masters: Günther von Wüllersleben (Hohenstaufen supporter) and Wilhelm von Urenbach (Pope supporter), though the supporters of the papacy gradually gained ground, and after Great Master Poppo von Osternohe (elected 1252) resigned in 1256, the Great Masters were papal supporters from then on (BORCHARDT 2016:118).

⁵⁵ MUNRO 2009:8.

⁵⁶ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:18.

even brethren who would rather turn to the Holy Roman Empire – a situation that began to ebb away following the fall of Acre in 1291 and had the Order focusing its resources in the Baltic⁵⁷. After the loss of Acre, the Order’s headquarters were moved to Venice, and in 1309 Great Master Siegfried von Feuchtwangen (1303-1311) moved to the Marienburg, in Prussia; however, only the successors of Great Master Karl von Trier (1311-1324) resided permanently at the Marienburg⁵⁸.

Incursions the Baltic had begun with the Saxon Duke Lothar of Supplinburg in 1106, when winter campaigns began to push Christianity into Slavic territory east of the Elba river: in the winter, the marshes east of the Elba could be crossed, and by 1125 the Germans had established themselves in the Oder region⁵⁹. The *Magdeburg Charter* of 1108, against the Slav Wends, “(...) is evidence of the spread of the idea of crusade to North Central Europe within a decade of the First Crusade and is an example of the adaptation of the idea of crusade in the form of missionary war to suit a local environment.”⁶⁰. This situation was repeated when Bernard of Clairvaux preached the Second Crusade in the Holy Roman Empire, in late 1146, and was confronted with disappointing recruitment among the Saxons, the impossibility of the Hohenstaufen and Welf families to crusade together, and a request in 1147 to allow north Germans to engage against their neighbour pagan Slavs instead of joining the Crusade to the Holy Land – this led Bernard to confer with Pope Eugenius III, who issued the bull *Divina dispensation* on the 13th April 1147, thus extending the same privileges of a Crusade to the Holy Land to those who wished to fight against the pagans for the defence of northern Christendom⁶¹. The issuing of bulls continued with the bull *Non parum animus* (September 1171 or 1172), that offered the Scandinavians indulgences for support in the military campaigns in Estonia⁶², until the Baltic Crusades became an established event with the start of the Livonian Crusade:

“The Baltic crusades became perpetual annual campaigns underpinned by the papal bulls of 1195 and 1198. Celestine III granted full crusading privileges to all who took the vow to join the Dvina

⁵⁷ URBAN 2003:28-29.

⁵⁸ BORCHARDT 2016:119.

⁵⁹ GRAVETT 1997:6.

⁶⁰ VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:145-146.

⁶¹ LOCK 2006: 217.

⁶² VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:149.

campaign, and this was reiterated by Innocent III three years later. From 1204 the idea of perpetual crusading in the north was given wide currency when Innocent III authorised Albert of Buxhövdén's annual recruitment drives. Although they became to be regarded as second-rate crusades, something of the poor man's crusade, they were effective nonetheless."⁶³

The Baltic Crusades can thus be divided in five: roughly from 1147 to 1185, against the Wends between the Elbe and the Oder; from 1198 to 1290, the Livonian and Estonian Crusades; from 1230 to 1283, the Prussian Crusades; from 1280 to 1435, the Lithuanian Crusades; and from about 1243 to the end of the 15th century, the conflicts between the Teutonic Order and Novgorod⁶⁴.

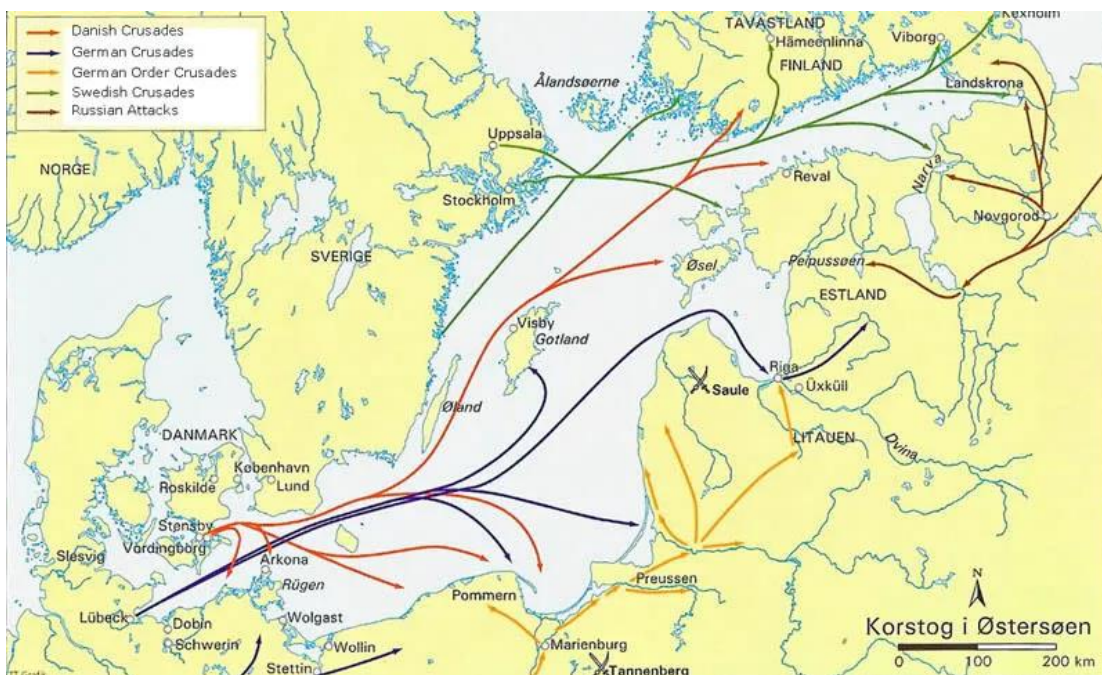


Figure 2: Northern Crusades (<https://hosting.photobucket.com/albums/f363/Atterdag/Korstog.jpg>) [18/1722].

Before a military expansion, however, there had already been missions in the Baltic undertaken by Scandinavian, German, Polish and Bohemian churchmen⁶⁵. The Baltic Crusades have been looked at as a process of Germanization, following the ‘Drang nach Osten’/’Ostsiedlung’ - the expansion of German-speaking peoples to the east, during the 12th

⁶³ LOCK 2006:218.

⁶⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:216. Finland has not been included in the current thesis.

⁶⁵ URBAN 2006:145.

and 13th centuries - which has linked this process with political agendas of the 20th century, eventually leading to the invasion of Poland in 1939 by Nazi forces; it is an association that has remained, and after the war, in Poland, the Teutonic Order became linked with German militarism and expansion⁶⁶. However, despite the distinct German inclination of the Order's recruitment base and settlers, "(...) there is no evidence for a 'German agenda' of colonisation. Instead, the region is considered by modern historians as a frontier: a meeting point and crucible of contrasting social and economic systems, languages, religions and political agendas."⁶⁷.

Though a military expansion served local political and ecclesiastical ambitions⁶⁸, other factors – broader political, economic and religious ones – intertwined and led to the expansion of the crusading movement, such as: expulsion or death of German and Scandinavian missionaries; German and Scandinavian merchants who wanted better protection against Baltic pirates and access to trading centres in the Baltic coast and Russia (Novgorod, Pskov, and Polotsk); German prelates, and Scandinavian and Polish princes who wanted to expand their territory; concerns from the Catholic Church that the Baltic peoples would remain pagan or be converted to Orthodoxy⁶⁹. Though the Church sustained that non-Christians should not become Christians by force, campaigning in the Baltic was regarded as a war of conversion⁷⁰. To further help expanding the crusading movement, indulgences for crusading in the Baltic were granted by Pope Celestine III (1191-1198)⁷¹, even though the conflicts between Saxons and Wends (the Slavs east of the Elba) had already been elevated to a crusade by Pope Eugenius III in 1147⁷². Since 'crusading' met political interests of Poles and Danes in the 12th century, even engagements against the pagans that were not sanctioned by the papacy were portrayed as proper acts of crusading; however, these unsuccessful expeditions resulted in Prussian retaliation in the border areas of Masovia, Kulmerland and

⁶⁶ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:5.

⁶⁷ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:5.

⁶⁸ URBAN 2006:145.

⁶⁹ URBAN 1998 <https://department.monm.edu/history/urban/articles/VictimsBalticCrusade.htm> (last accessed 27/2/20).

⁷⁰ FOREY 1992:46-47.

⁷¹ SCHMIDT et NIELSEN 2006:412.

⁷² LLOYD 1999:39.

Pomerania, regardless of an increasing missionary effort in Prussia led by the Cistercian monk Christian, appointed Bishop of Prussia in 1215⁷³.

The Baltic natives⁷⁴ practised different religions that shared a few aspects and had a militaristic society that lived off feuds, pirate raids and preying on weaker peoples; however, the tribes on the eastern shore of the Baltic were not organized enough for powerful chieftains to become kings⁷⁵. Furthermore, these peoples hadn't started any process of nation building, unlike the Lithuanians, and this is an important factor as to why the beginning of the crusades and the expansion of numerically inferior Christians was successful⁷⁶. In the late 12th century, crusaders from Saxony and Gotland went to Livonia⁷⁷, while Scandinavians went to Finland and northern Estonia⁷⁸; Poles⁷⁹ were involved with Pomeranians and Prussians, and even Russians acted in Estonia and Finland⁸⁰.

In what would become Livonia, the religious and economic factors appear in a prominent role for the expansion of the crusading movement, namely the little success of the German missionary Meinhard:

“Like the merchants accompanying Meinhard’s mission who bargained for goods, Meinhard bargained for souls by showing the Livs how to build fortifications to defend themselves from the fellow pagan Lithuanian and Estonian raiders. Shortly after being baptized and learning how to build better fortifications, the majority of Livs discarded all pretense of conversion.”⁸¹.

As such, in the beginning of the 13th century, Saxon and Scandinavian Crusaders had the theological pretext and military capability to impose Christianity by force because “Forced conversion to Christianity contradicted canon law, but once former pagans became

⁷³ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:10.

⁷⁴ Vide Addendum, Pt. I, fig.7: Baltic tribes:307.

⁷⁵ URBAN 2006:145.

⁷⁶ EKDAHL 2006: 1241.

⁷⁷ Modern Estonia and northern Latvia (NICOLLE 2006:411). The Baltic Crusades mark the transition from the Iron Age into the Middle Ages in Latvia and Estonia, whereas in Poland the Crusades mark the transition from the Early Middle Ages into the Late Middle Ages (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:5).

⁷⁸ URBAN 2006:145.

⁷⁹ By 1265 the Polish involvement in the Prussian Crusade was decreasing significantly, which meant the Teutonic Order relied on military support from the Empire and that the crusade was becoming mostly a German endeavour (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:6).

⁸⁰ VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:144.

⁸¹ ENGE:1.

baptized and subsequently rejected the faith they became apostates under the jurisdiction of the pope.”⁸². Furthermore, some territory beyond the Elbe targeted by Crusaders had already been occupied by the Ottonian emperors⁸³ before they were driven out after the Slav revolt of 983, and so were areas that could be accused of apostasy⁸⁴. With the addition of a call to protect the missionaries in the Baltic, it served as the foundation of the crusades in that area⁸⁵. Crusading in the Baltic was a different concept than that of crusading in the Middle East, since it included the conversion of pagans, the re-purposing of the Crusade to a territory that had no Christian geography⁸⁶, and conquest – moreover, many of the expeditions were not explicitly sanctioned by the Pope⁸⁷.

After Meinhard’s unsuccessful missions, Hartwig II (1185-1207), the archbishop of Bremen, called for a crusade that left from Lübeck, a port in northern Germany, since the missionary settlement founded by Meinhard on the Daugava river, Üxküll, was only reachable by sea because the pagans in Lithuania controlled the land access⁸⁸. Hartwig II appointed Meinhard bishop of Üxküll and, when he died in 1196, Berthold of Loccum was appointed as Meinhard’s successor, but died in confrontation with the pagans in 1198; Hartwig II then appointed his nephew Albrecht the new bishop (1199-1229) and sent him to Livonia in 1200 with around 500 crusaders⁸⁹. There, Albrecht founded Riga in 1201⁹⁰, and around 1202 his brother Dietrich created the Order of the Swordbrethren, though it never

⁸² Idem, *ibidem*:1.

⁸³ Two margraves were established between the regions of the middle Elbe and the Oder in 937 by Otto I, who, between 948 and 968, founded six bishoprics along the rives Elbe, Saale, and Havel to Christianise the local Slavs (LOCK 2006:214).

⁸⁴ TYERMAN 2004:176-177.

⁸⁵ ENGE:1.

⁸⁶ FRANKE 2016:135-136.

⁸⁷ VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:144. In this aspect, the Baltic Crusades can be seen under a pluralist scope, as, according to Lock, “The former [traditionalist] hold that only those expeditions aimed at the recovery or defence of the Holy Land should be considered crusades, whilst the latter [pluralist] maintain that all expeditions authorised by the papacy with the concomitant crusade privileges, preaching and recruitment should be considered crusades. The first approach privileges place – that is, the Holy Land. as the destination that made a true crusade. The second approach emphasises the procedural and organisational nature of crusading expeditions regardless of their destination.” (2006:289).

⁸⁸ ENGE:1.

⁸⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:2.

⁹⁰ GRAVETT 1997:21.

exceeded 120 brethren⁹¹. The Order was established to provide a permanent crusading force, considering that, after the summer, Crusaders left Livonia to return home; these knights became familiar with the native costumes and ambioned to make themselves independent from the bishops of Riga, Tartu and Leal⁹².

By 1206, the Livs had accepted Christianity and had allied themselves with the Crusaders⁹³, an alliance caused by the several tribes' disunity and need for protection against more powerful enemy tribes. Most of the Crusaders' campaigns were done in the winter, by small forces, since the Crusaders used frozen rivers as roads; raiding in the summer, though less frequent on the Crusaders' behalf, was done by larger forces⁹⁴. Warfare mostly consisted of expeditions for raiding and destruction, while decisive battles were rare⁹⁵. Conquest was accompanied by baptizing the natives⁹⁶. However, in the peripheral borderlands of Livonia, the natives' rights remained extensive, as demonstrated by finds from the cemetery of Siksälä (Estonia): "There, grave goods – axes, spears and spurs – point to the warrior status of the local men up to the fifteenth century."⁹⁷, and even though Livonia was Christianised, pagan practises and beliefs continued to occur: "Sacred natural sites remained in use in Estonia and Latvia, despite the crusades and Christianisation. Sacred groves, trees, hills, stones and springs are remembered until the present day, on the basis of continued use, and their networks existed in parallel to and independently of the network of churches and chapels."⁹⁸ In the same way, local village cemeteries remained in use in parallel to new churchyards: papal letters from 1214/1215 obliged the Bishop of Riga and the Swordbrethren to give the natives the right to choose burial practices according to their will, and though large grave goods disappeared and a Christian orientation became predominant in Livonia, small grave goods can still be found; and whereas in Estonia there was a decrease in cremation, this

⁹¹ LOCK 2006:219.

⁹² URBAN 2006:145.

⁹³ ENGE:2.

⁹⁴ NICOLLE 2007:46.

⁹⁵ EKDAHL 2006:1241.

⁹⁶ FOREY 1999:183-184.

⁹⁷ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:576.

⁹⁸ *Idem, ibidem: 577.*

remained in practice in Curonia up to the 15th century (occurring sporadically up to the 15th century in eastern Latvia and southern Estonia)⁹⁹.

While what is now southern Estonia was conquered and submitted by 1218, northern Estonia was still resisting conversion, with the natives sometimes allying themselves with the Russians of Novgorod; in addition, there was a clash of interests among the Crusaders, as well as with the Russians¹⁰⁰. These conflicts eventually led to the Swordbrethren, Danes and Bishop Albrecht to divide Estonia, though conflict between the Swordbrethren and the Danes continued, forcing the papal legate William of Modena to intervene and confiscate the disputed areas of Vironia, Jerwia, Harria and Wiek¹⁰¹, since the actions of the Swordbrethren posed a threat to the crusading movement in Livonia, considering that Riga could only be reached by sea:

“Livonia’s existence, expansion, and survival depended on Danish cooperation as Waldemar II of Denmark (1202-1241) could readily cut off Riga’s survival sea connection to Lübeck, incorporating the local and newly converted natives into their forces, and utilizing military technological advantages against resistant pagans.”¹⁰².

In spite of the papal legate’s intervention, in 1227 the Swordbrethren captured the fortress at Reval, in the hands of the Danes; the conflict was only solved by a papal ruling of 1236 in the Danish king’s favour, allied to the defeat of the Swordbrethren at the battle of Saule against the Lithuanians that same year¹⁰³. After the battle, the only surviving Swordbrethren were those who had stayed behind on garrison service¹⁰⁴. In a delegation sent to pope Gregory IX in Viterbo, von Salza and the remaining Swordbrethren petitioned the Pope for the Swordbrethren and their possessions to be incorporated in the Teutonic Order¹⁰⁵. The request was accepted and announced in a papal document from 12th May 1237, but Estonia would have to be returned to Denmark¹⁰⁶. At the chapter meeting of Marburg in June

⁹⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:577.

¹⁰⁰ NICOLLE 2006:412/TYERMAN 2004:74.

¹⁰¹ SCHMIDT et NIELSEN 2006:412.

¹⁰² ENGE:2-3.

¹⁰³ SCHMIDT et NIELSEN 2006:413/ LOCK 2006:221.

¹⁰⁴ TURNBULL 2004:17.

¹⁰⁵ URBAN 2003:90.

¹⁰⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:90.

1237, it was agreed that Hermann Balk (the Prussian Master) would become the Livonian Master and that sixty knights (more or less 650 men) should be sent to Livonia immediately¹⁰⁷. The Treaty of Stensby (1238), between the Teutonic Order and Denmark, returned northern littoral Estonia to Denmark in exchange for Danish support for expansion in other areas of the Baltic¹⁰⁸— displeased, former Swordbrethren within Teutonic ranks drew back from the reformed convents in southern Livonia to the ones in the Russian border, refusing to recognise Balk's authority¹⁰⁹, which in turn led the Teutonic Knights in Livonia to join the crusade against Novgorod, that resulted in the defeat at Lake Peipus¹¹⁰. Thus, the Teutonic Order now had branches in the Holy Land, in the Holy Roman Empire, in Prussia, and in Livonia – even though the latter two were connected, the Livonian branch was independent from the Prussian and the relationship with the natives was different¹¹¹; for instance, given the little intermarriage between the German minority and the natives, the Russians posed the main threat¹¹². By the 14th century, the Order had three provincial masters ('Landmeister') for Livonia, Prussia, and the Holy Roman Empire, and land commanders ('Landkomture') for the commanderies in the Holy Roman Empire (Franconia, Alsace, Burgundy, Lorraine, Koblenz, Netherlands, Westphalia, Marburg, Thuringia, Saxony, Bohemia, Moravia, Austria, Bozen on the Etsch) and in the Mediterranean (Sicily, Apulia, Lombardy, Spain, Romania, Cyprus and Armenia)¹¹³.

¹⁰⁷ URBAN 2003:91/TURNBULL 2004:17.

¹⁰⁸ TURNBULL 2004:17.

¹⁰⁹ URBAN 2003:91.

¹¹⁰ TURNBULL 2004:17.

¹¹¹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:6.

¹¹² LUTTRELL 1999:333.

¹¹³ BORCHARDT 2016: 113-114.

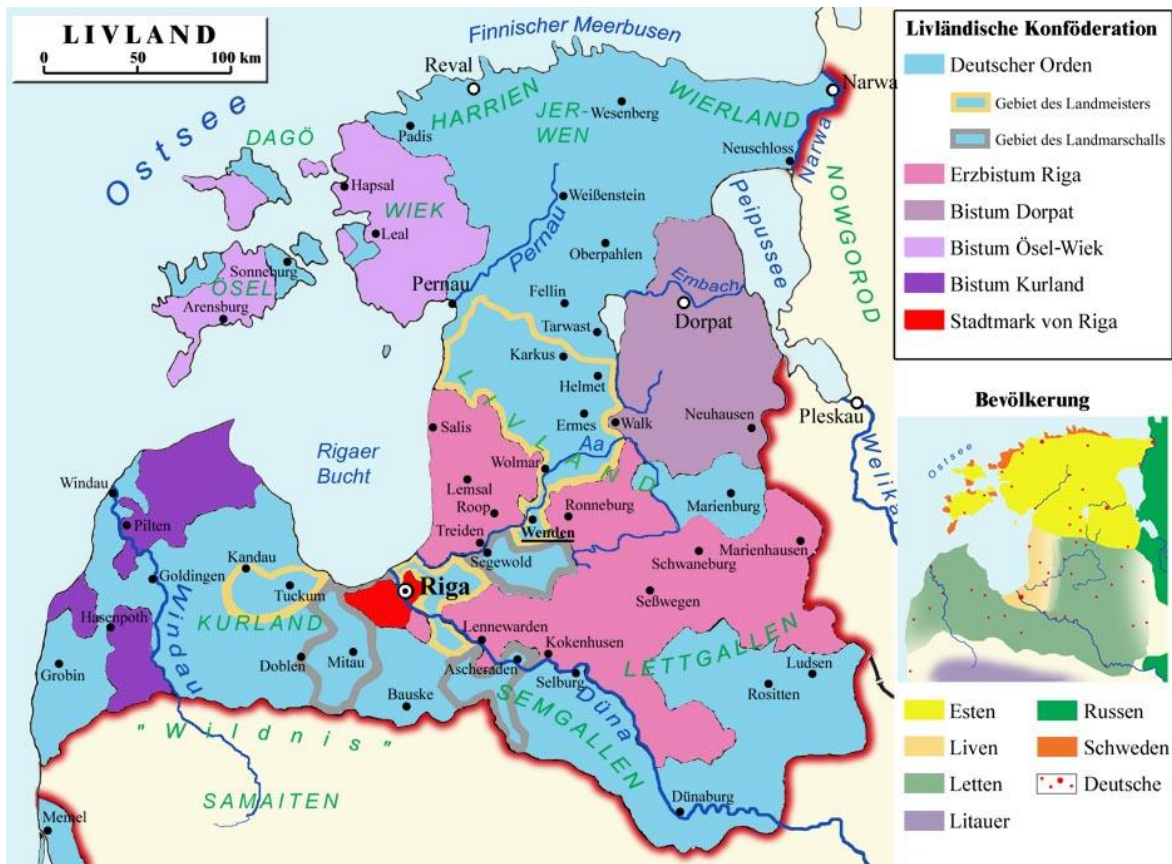


Figure 3: Livonia. The Order's possessions are represented in blue. The smaller map represents ethnic distribution (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/03/Livland_gross.jpg) [18/1/22].

Unlike in Livonia, there was no superior power in Prussia to subject the Teutonic Order: the removal of Bishop Christian and the Cistercians from all positions of authority in Prussia had the Order gaining domination and control of the Prussian Crusade¹¹⁴. And though the Teutonic Order was not as independent in Livonia, there was no authority to restrict its military actions there¹¹⁵. In Prussia, despite Bishop Christian's claims for territory, the Golden Bull of Rimini issued by Frederick II released the Order from any episcopal

¹¹⁴ VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:152.

¹¹⁵ FOREY 1999:183.

authority¹¹⁶, even though the direct superior of the Order was the Pope, which made the Order's lands a papal fief¹¹⁷:

“Papal documents revoked its blanket support for the Cistercian mission [Bishop Christian] and in 1231 the pope authorized the Dominicans to preach and organise crusades against the remaining pagan Prussians, further limiting the scope of Bishop Christian's authority. Between September 1230 and January 1232, Pope Gregory IX issued a number of documents which subordinated the crusading effort in Prussia to the Teutonic Order. In October 1233 and again in September 1234, Gregory IX repeated his directive that all crusaders in Prussia (and this time also the converts) support and follow the command of the Teutonic Knights.”¹¹⁸.

Later, in 1245, Pope Innocent IV granted the Order the recruitment of crusaders without public preaching, though it was probably limited to operations in Prussia; notwithstanding, the Order gradually gained complete control over the recruitment process for crusades, and by 1260 the Order's clerics could preach the crusades¹¹⁹:

“In theory, the Teutonic order could at times claim authority over all crusaders fighting in Baltic campaigns, not just over those who entered into particular agreements, for contingents going to Prussia or Livonia were sometimes instructed by the Pope to place themselves under the command of the Teutonic order: thus in 1260, Alexander IV named the order's provincial master in Prussia as the captain and ‘principal leader’ of the crusaders who were then preparing to fight against the Mongols in that region. In practice, however, leading crusaders appear to have been reluctant to accept a subordinate position. Peter of Dusburg gives the impression that Ottokar of Bohemia was in command during his expedition to Prussia in 1255, and was even giving advice to the brethren of the Teutonic order. The authority and independence of leading crusaders were assured both by their rank and by the size of their following.”¹²⁰.

The first contingent of Teutonic knights arrived to the Masovian frontier in the spring of 1228 and stayed at Vogelsang, a small castle on a hill that served as base to launch incursions into Prussia: raiding into the Kulmerland allowed the Order to gather information about the peoples and about the terrain, and in 1230, under Hermann Balke, the castle's

¹¹⁶ Two hundred years later, when the Order had its activities contested, it was concluded that Frederick II had intended to create a permanent and independent state for the Order, that would be a vassal (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:12).

¹¹⁷ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:12.

¹¹⁸ VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:152.

¹¹⁹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:14.

¹²⁰ FOREY 1992:56-57.

garrison was strengthened, and defences began to be extended to create a secure harbour by the river, so that supplies could be shipped¹²¹.

Initially, crusading in Prussia was not too troublesome. The First Crusade in Prussia recruited from Medgeburg, Hamburg-Bremen, Poland, Pomerania, Moravia, Suravia, Holstein, Gotland, Bohemia and other parts of eastern and northern Europe; and with the end of a civil war in Poland, the dukes were able to contribute to the crusading effort, which, allied to the animosity among tribes and their lack of union, allowed the crusaders to be successful, and by 1232 most of the Kulmerland had been occupied – in 1231, the Order had already managed to build a castle at Thorn (Toruń), across the Vogelsang on the other side of the Vistula¹²². The building of fortifications matched the progression of territorial expansion¹²³: “As the frontier advanced so did the line of forts that defended it, and as time went by and newly conquered lands became permanent possessions, so temporary forts gave way to permanent castles.”¹²⁴. Between the mid-13th and the mid-15th centuries there were 218 fortifications built within Northern Poland, the modern Kaliningrad Oblast and South-Western Lithuania – what once was medieval Prussia¹²⁵. Securing the land with fortifications was important, because the knight-brethren were few¹²⁶: as such, after the crusading army returned home, the Order could not continue operations. It could, however, remain in the conquered territories of Western Prussia to secure the land: for that, the Order invited German and Polish peasants and knights into the Kulmerland to colonise the territory, though the majority of the colonists came from the Empire¹²⁷. Even though noble Prussians that

¹²¹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:12.

¹²² PLUSKOWSKI 2013:13.

¹²³ FOREY 1999:185.

¹²⁴ TURNBULL 2003:5.

¹²⁵ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:1.

¹²⁶ The chronicles inform that the number of knight-brethren was smaller than troops raised among the locals, and so advances were dependent on the aid of Crusader contingents: “A chronicler reports that only seven brethren were left at Thorn, on the Vistula, after the Teutonic Order had fortified it in 1231. And some minor fortifications had no permanent garrison of brethren.” (FOREY 1999:186-188). The number of garrisons needs to be ascertained from the chronicles; these numbers are small and apparently unbiased, given that the numbers provided by the *CLP* are paralleled in the *LRC*: “It appears, therefore, that in defending strongholds in the Baltic region the military orders, as in Syria, relied heavily on what were presumably paid troops, and that the manpower of an order itself comprised in numerical terms only a small proportion of defenders.” (FOREY 1992:69-70).

¹²⁷ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:15. “This process saw the Order issue its first foundation charter, granted to the town of Kulm in 1233 (...). Influenced by imperial town charters, this document would form the blueprint for

surrendered their lands and joined the crusaders had their lands returned as fiefs¹²⁸, the local populations became serfs to work the land and construct fortifications, which prompted revolts and uprisings¹²⁹, until eventually, in later centuries:

“The Prussians were annihilated; their culture and language vanished and their name was appropriated by a German dynasty. Among the Balts, the Lithuanians survived by forming an alliance when its ruler accepted Christianity, delivered his people and territories into a union with Poland and in exchange was crowned the king of Poland.”¹³⁰.

The next crusade focused on the Ossa (Osa) river valley due to the Pogesanian fortifications there that were used as bases to raid Kulm – this crusade was led by Count Henry of Meissen and saw the building of an earth-and-timber fortification that allowed the subsequent construction of castles in Balga (Veseloe) and Schinckenberg¹³¹.

During the 1230s, the civil war in Catholic Pomerania, between Duke Sventopelk and his brother Sambor, led the Duke’s garrisons to attack ships on the Vistula and disrupt the Order’s communications and supplies, which led Sventopelk to ally himself with the pagan Prussians, fearing a combined attack from the Order and other Polish dukes¹³².

More crusades against the Prussians¹³³ were launched during the 1240s and the 1250s, accompanied by the building of castles to the north, into Sambia, and into the east, towards Nadruvia and Sudovia¹³⁴. In 1252 the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order constructed a castle at Memel¹³⁵ to provide a base for expeditions from the north, and in the winter of the same year the largest crusader army to ever go into Prussia, led by the Bohemian king Ottokar II, joined the Order against the Sambians – the crusade lasted for a few days and the king

settlements within the entire region. It established a set of rights and liberties, outlining in some detail the privileges of the Order as sovereign rulers.” (*idem, ibidem*:15).

¹²⁸ “The Sambian nobility who had sworn loyalty to the Order had their lands and privileges confirmed, serving under the same conditions as immigrant German knights.” (*idem, ibidem*:15).

¹²⁹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:13. Uprisings consisted in the slaughter of priests, merchants, German colonists and native Prussians considered loyal to the Order (*idem, ibidem*:16).

¹³⁰ VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:145.

¹³¹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:13-14.

¹³² *Idem, ibidem*:14.

¹³³ As for Livonia, conflicts with the Curonians went from 1210 to 1267, and with the Semigallians from 1220 to 1272/1290 (PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:570).

¹³⁴ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:14.

¹³⁵ In 1254 the Livonian branch attacked through the woods, but the expedition failed (*idem, ibidem*:15).

sponsored the construction of a fortification by the river Pregel (Pregolya), that ran from Lithuania – Königsberg, that by 1255 was a fortified convent with an associated settlement¹³⁶.

The Treaty of Christburg (1249) consolidated the Order's hold over Western Prussia¹³⁷, though conflict with Eastern Natangia dragged until 1253, and in 1254 Barta and Galindia had been officially included in the 'Ordensstaat'; Sambia was initially occupied in 1255 with the aid of Ottokar II, though the region took ten years to pacify, and Natangia was overwhelmed by the Order in 1256; though during the Great Prussian Uprising¹³⁸ (lasted until 1274) the pagans allied themselves with Christian Pomerelia/Eastern Pomerania, Nadruvia and Scalovia were occupied and the Order advanced further inland, having occupied Sudovia by 1283¹³⁹. Though the revolts were contained by 1277, only by 1293 was Prussia pacified and Prussian aristocracy lost their privileges and freedoms from 1249: "German law was enforced over native law. The clergy and Church hierarchy were German and the land of Prussia passed firmly into German ownership, as the native Prussian aristocracy were judged contumacious and denied a place in the new order."¹⁴⁰

To add to the success in Prussia, the Order then intended to expand across Samogitia, aiming at connecting its Prussian and Livonian territories; however, lacking the coalitions that had made the Prussian Crusade possible, war against the Samogitians lasted into the 15th century¹⁴¹. The area of Memel, that, secured, aimed to unite the Order's Livonian and Prussian lands, remained a military and volatile frontier into the 15th century, and due to constant Lithuanian raids, the convent had to import food; these Lithuanian raids into Eastern Prussia and Southern Livonia impacted settlement because in Eastern Prussia the

¹³⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:15.

¹³⁷ Between the Order and Prussian aristocracy, it agreed on generous conditions of the grounds that the Prussian aristocracy fought for the Order, and that there would be no revolts and apostasy (LOCK 2006:222). But despite the prohibitions of the treaty, a continuation of native traditions can be ascertained from five cemeteries with burials with weapons and equestrian equipment (PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:585).

¹³⁸ The Great Prussian Uprising (1260) was led by the son of a Natangian noble, Henry Monte: in 1240, during a campaign, Monte and other Prussian nobles had been captured and taken to Magdeburg for re-education, and in the 1250s Monte obtained military experience by fighting alongside the Order against eastern Prussians; it was this experience and understanding of the Order's methods and mentality that allowed him to pose a threat for the garrisons in the castles and the crusading forces (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:16).

¹³⁹ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:578.

¹⁴⁰ LOCK 2006:222.

¹⁴¹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:17.

colonization process was only stabilised in the second half of the 14th century, while settlements in Southern Sudovia and Semigallia that were abandoned in the end of the 13th century were only reoccupied in the 15th century¹⁴².

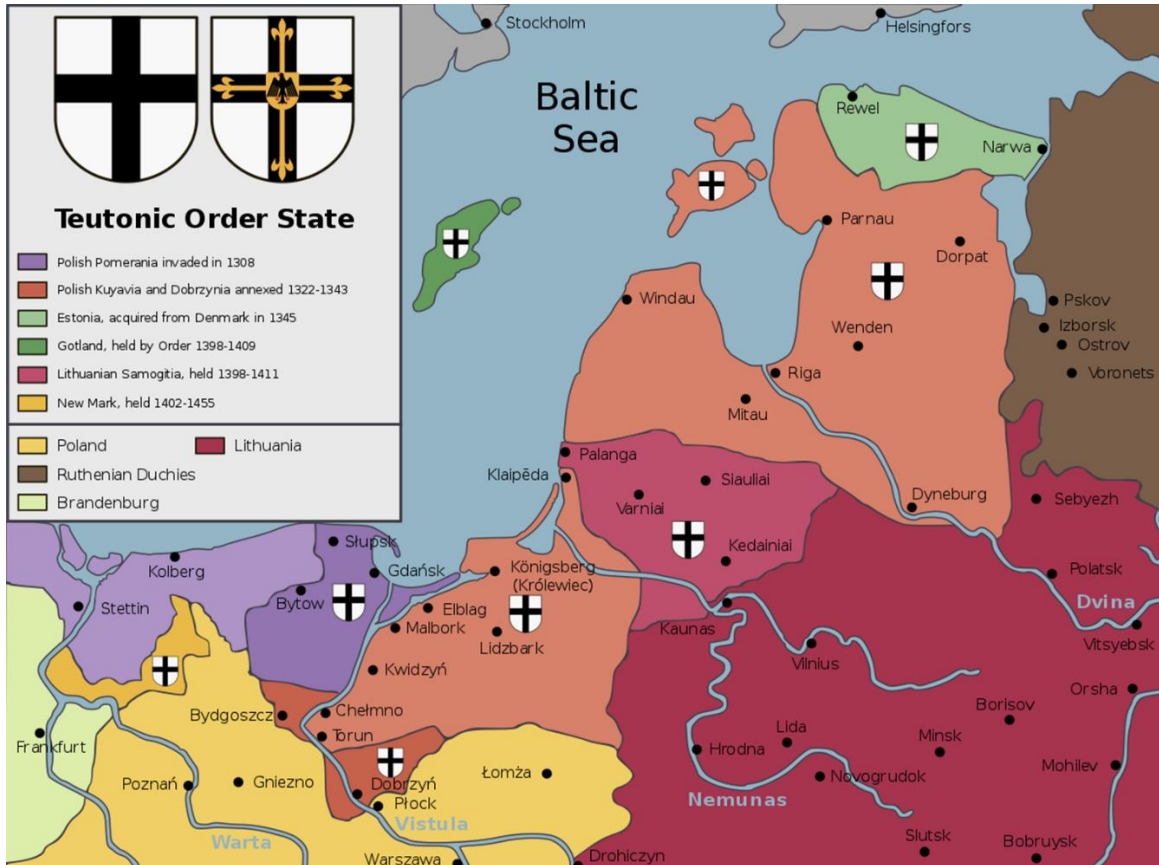


Figure 4: Map of the 'Ordensstaat' (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/6a/Teutonic_state_1308-1455.svg/1200px-Teutonic_state_1308-1455.svg.png) [1/1/22].

These Lithuanian 'Reise' were a lengthy war of attack and reprisal, consisting mainly of minor raids across the borderlands, usually during November, February, and June; some raids targeted strategic points, though usually the raids aimed to steal livestock, destroy settlements and crops, and kill or imprison people with the objective of preventing Lithuanian attacks in Prussia¹⁴³ – this led to the depopulation of borderlands that appears in written

¹⁴² PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:586.

¹⁴³ These campaigns ('Litaurreisen') differed from those elsewhere in Europe on the brutality practised by both sides ("(...) which had been the rule of the day even before the arrival of the Teutonic Order in the whole of the Baltic area (...)", and the costume of enslaving prisoners of war; in this aspect, the Order was on the

sources as a belt of wilderness separating Southern Livonia and Eastern Prussia from Samogitia and Lithuania, as well as in the archaeological record: “(...) settlements in southern Sudovia and Semigallia abandoned at the end of the thirteenth century would not be reoccupied until the fifteenth century.”¹⁴⁴. Yet the Lithuanians posed difficulties, having defeated the Order in three major battles: Schoden (1259), Durben (1260) and Karusen (1270) – these prompted the Prussians into the aforementioned Great Prussian Uprising¹⁴⁵.

The change of headquarters from Venice to the Marienburg and the full commitment of the Order to Prussia and Livonia make “Many historians see this as the pivotal turning point in the development of the Teutonic Order; a transformation from idealistic crusaders into territorial landlords.”¹⁴⁶. When, in 1346, Denmark sold its Estonian territories to the Teutonic Order, the Order consolidated its dominion in the Baltic,¹⁴⁷ followed by the occupation of Gotland in 1398¹⁴⁸.

However, the Order’s ambitions turned against it. In 1306, the Polish king Ladislas was met with opposition in Pomerania, which led the dukes of Brandenburg and Pomeranian rebels to occupy most of the land – though Gdańsk/Danzig resisted and remained loyal to the Polish king, for which Ladislas recommended the city to request help from the Teutonic Order, that expelled the Brandenburg forces from Pomerania – however, after Ladislas refused to pay the 10.000 marks that the Order demanded for its aid, the Order kept Pomerania – the dukes of Brandenburg sold their sovereignty over the land to the Order: “The annexation of Pomerania became a point of contention between the Kingdom of Poland and the Order, resulting in intermittent hostilities into the fifteenth century.”¹⁴⁹ From 1298 to 1299, the Teutonic Order conflicted with the archbishop of Riga¹⁵⁰. The brethren there

canonically right side, as long as the prisoners were pagans: “According to the schoolmen and canonists it was permissible to enslave heathens but not Christians.” (EKDAHL 2016:265).

¹⁴⁴ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:18.

¹⁴⁵ LOCK 2006:222. Early works on the Order are marked by Occidentalism and portray the knights as models of western European chivalric culture and armed with state of the art technology, above their Baltic and Slavonic enemies (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:10), but the relates in the Order’s chronicles about the knights’ several defeats indicate the Baltic peoples were a good match. The subject will be further developed in Part III.

¹⁴⁶ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:18.

¹⁴⁷ VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:150.

¹⁴⁸ LOCK 2006:223

¹⁴⁹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:18.

¹⁵⁰ LOCK 2006:223.

became almost independent of the ‘Ordensstaat’, and after 1438 the Livonian branch could choose their own Master without confirmation of the Great Master; even so, the Teutonic possessions were not a unitary state like in Prussia, given that secular knights in Estonia were powerful and the three Livonian bishops controlled a wide territory¹⁵¹ – though in Prussia, too, the Order faced powerful neighbours. The Lithuanians outsmarted the Order by uniting with Poland when Grand Duke Jogaila married the Polish queen Jadwiga in 1386, under the condition that Jogaila and Lithuania became Christian: “At a stroke, Jogaila removed the pretext for Teutonic raids and became king of Poland as Władysław II Jagiełło (c. 1351/1362-1434) and Jadwiga secured vast new territories making the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth the largest political unit in Europe.”– yet, the Order continued to dispute lands, having taken Samogitia in 1405 and thus achieving an uninterrupted coastline from Memel, to Riga, to Reval¹⁵². Though Clement IV (1265-1268) was seemingly the last pope to support the crusading endeavours of the Teutonic Order, the last Lithuanian ‘Reise’ was held in 1423: its participants still viewed themselves as Crusaders, taking vows and receiving spiritual rewards, seen as participating in a holy war in the eyes of chroniclers like Peter of Dusburg and writers like Chaucer¹⁵³.

The ‘Ordensstaat’, an efficient centralized economic system that comprised circa a hundred towns, founded during the 13th and 14th centuries and colonized mostly by Germans, resulted in the most highly urbanized area in north-eastern Europe¹⁵⁴. In Prussia, a stronger colonization began only at the end of the 13th century¹⁵⁵, and throughout the next century, the Order elaborated its administrative structure and developed urban expansion¹⁵⁶. Crusading events at Königsberg were popular among English and French aristocracy, as they offered opportunities to fight in the summer and winter, and chances for younger men to earn a reputation or be knighted there and have their armorial bearings depicted on the murals of the cathedral¹⁵⁷. As for Livonia, there was not a large-scale settlement of westerners¹⁵⁸, who

¹⁵¹ LUTTRELL 1999:333.

¹⁵² VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:152/ LOCK 2006:223.

¹⁵³ LOCK 2006:222.

¹⁵⁴ TORBUS 2014:220.

¹⁵⁵ FOREY 1999:186.

¹⁵⁶ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:18.

¹⁵⁷ LOCK 2006:222.

¹⁵⁸ FOREY 1999:186.

remained in small numbers and were limited to castles, manors, and semi-urban settlements that appeared with the castles¹⁵⁹. It is possible to observe that:

“The old society adapted to the new situation and continued its existence in parallel to the newly introduced centres and networks of “European” society – those of a colonising origin. An important reason for this lack of assimilation was the segregation of society into German and non-German (Estonians, Latvians, Livs) groups – the *Undeutsch*.”¹⁶⁰.

The ‘Ordensstaat’ began to decline in the 15th century, due to a conjugation of various factors: internal structural issues; the defeat at Tannenberg in 1410, that resulted in the loss of hegemony in favour of the Polish-Lithuanian crown¹⁶¹; the unbettable decline from 700 brethren in 1410 to 300 by 1453¹⁶²; the great commercial towns in the Order’s state that turned against the Order and that led to yet another defeat at the hands of the Polish-Lithuanian crown in 1466, which subsequently resulted in the ‘Ordensstaat’ being divided in two: a western part that was incorporated in the kingdom of Poland, and an eastern part, with the capital in Königsberg, that became a secular duchy under Polish suzerainty in 1525, with the last Great Master Albrecht von Brandenburg¹⁶³. The secularisation of Livonia came in 1561¹⁶⁴.

Given the importance of castles for the expansion of the Order’s domains, due to the control they exerted through their location¹⁶⁵ and their contribution to the Christianization of the landscape¹⁶⁶, the last part of this chapter covers the subject, albeit briefly, since the

¹⁵⁹ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:571.

¹⁶⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:57

¹⁶¹ Following the battle of Tannenberg (the 15th July, 1410) the First Peace of Thorn (1411) ended most of fighting; in 1415, the Order and the Poles took their quarrels over land to the Church; but it was only in 1422 that the eastern border of Prussia was stabilised with the Treaty of Melno, remaining so until WWI; between 1454 and 1466 the Order and Poland fought over territory in Prussia during the Thirteen Years War, eventually agreeing to the frontier being adjusted in Samogitia and Prussia in 1466 (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:21/LOCK 2006:223).

¹⁶² BRADBURY 2004:168.

¹⁶³ TORBUS 20014:220/VON GÜTTNER-SPORZYŃSKI 2016:153. After 1410, the Order’s poverty is exemplified by the sale of horses: brethren from Schlochau (Człuchów) sold their horses at Danzing, after Tannenberg and the fall of the convent at Mewe (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:356).

¹⁶⁴ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016: 587.

¹⁶⁵ TURNBULL 2003:23.

¹⁶⁶ Castles were named after saints, angels, the Virgin and Christ; their chapels served as repositories of relics; and the standardized rectilinear plan adopted and used in most convents promoted a corporate identity around the ideology of holy war and monastic life (PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:582).

Order's castles are not the focus of this thesis. The whole of the Crusades, starting with the offensives against the Wends and the expansion eastwards, saw wooden fortifications being demolished at times, rebuilt in stone at others, or remaining of wood¹⁶⁷. Several theories have been made concerning the source of inspiration for the Prussian castles¹⁶⁸, and the most common is that of a geographical transfer with several researchers pointing different sources, such as Apulia, Spain, the Crusader States, Thuringia, Saxony, England and Bohemia; another line of research, that of function¹⁶⁹, explains the origins of castrum-type¹⁷⁰ castles in Prussia based on the terrain or building material, and hypothesis of monastic architecture influence fit this category¹⁷¹. There is no simple answer due to the scarcity of sources, and there were certainly several aspects to take in consideration when building a castle: especially, that the castrum-type was never forgotten¹⁷². Archaeologically, three diachronic phases can be identified regarding the design of castles: usage of earlier structures; introduction of transitional buildings that mix elements of early medieval fortifications with elements of later constructions (for instance, residential towers); and the convent, built with stronger materials¹⁷³. Another feature of the Order's fortifications is that they "(...) punctuat[ed] the nexus of commanderies that reorganised conquered tribal territories and channelled people, resources and commodities throughout and beyond the Teutonic Order's state. They were also major stimulants for settlement and secure points for the unfolding parochial network."¹⁷⁴. This (re)organisation of space also required another type of structure, the law:

¹⁶⁷ JENSEN 2016:254.

¹⁶⁸ Castles in Prussia will be given more attention than those from Livonia given that "A defining feature of the Prussian Crusade was a deliberate, sustained process of colonization linked to the gradual development of an administrative structure to manage the conquered territories." (PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:582); furthermore, owing to the fact that, in Livonia, the Order acquired the Swordbrethren's possessions, it did not need to build as much.

¹⁶⁹ "The variety of forms during the crusading period indicates the construction of fortifications was tailored to the specific needs of the Order's garrisons and associated settlements. These included relatively simple, moated and embanked ring-works enclosing a courtyard with a timber-framed building constructed on stone foundations. Some had fortified outer baileys; others contained *mottes* of various sizes. Occasionally gate houses or perimeter towers were located at the edges of embankments." (PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:580).

¹⁷⁰ Following Torbus, 2014.

¹⁷¹ TORBUS 2014:247.

¹⁷² TORBUS 2014:248.

¹⁷³ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:581.

¹⁷⁴ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:32.

“Individual settlements were organised (and re-organised) under a series of laws, two drawn from the Holy Roman Empire – the Magdeburg and Lübeck laws – and two particular to Prussia – the Kulm law and the Prussian law (...). The latter governed settlements of indigenous Prussians, who were treated differently to incoming Christian colonists. There is in fact relatively little written data on the ethnic diversity within medieval Prussian settlements and disagreement between scholars on the levels of segregation. In the commandery of Balga and in Sambia it appears that Prussians also lived in settlements under the Kulm Law, and in the latter region they even functioned as colony locators.”¹⁷⁵.

These might have also worked together with another aspect linked to the *castrum*-type, its political iconography:

“Not the *castrum* type proper, which has also appeared in other European countries, distinguished the Order’s castles, but the exclusiveness of its use. All *Konventshäuser* built from the beginning of the fourteenth century onwards were erected as quadrangular structures. The commandery castles were the outright centre of power of the respective administrative district. Such a concentration of political, religious, juridical and economic power was unique. The *castrum*-type castle was thus turned into the symbol of power of the sovereign. During the thirteenth century, Frederick II in Apulia, Edward I in Wales and Přemysl Ottokar II in Bohemia built *castrum*-type castles as symbols of their power, although the choice of this type was connected to them personally. The Teutonic Order, however, used the *castrum* type for more than hundred years as a mirror of identity, independent of the person of the respective Grand Master. Thus a uniquely homogenous group of structures was generated.”¹⁷⁶.

In Prussia, since the Order did not have an overlord, the construction of fortifications did not depend on grants of land like in the Holy Land and in Spain; yet, in Livonia, the Order was more limited¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷⁵ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:585.

¹⁷⁶ TORBUS 2014:248-249.

¹⁷⁷ FOREY 1992:67-68.



Figure 5: Map of the Order's most important castles in Prussia (TURNBULL 2003:6).

Native fortifications in the Baltic were made of wood, on mounds or hills, protected by palisades, and could consist of inner and outer walls of interlocked timber of large dimensions that were filled with dirt; traditionally, these could be destroyed with fire or torn

apart with iron hooks – but the Crusaders employed siege engines normally used against stone castles, a novelty in the Baltic¹⁷⁸ alongside stone fortifications built with lime mortar¹⁷⁹.

In Livonia, the Crusaders adopted the wood fortresses to secure positions before stone castles could be built; the wood fortresses also provided the Crusaders with temporary bases to launch operations and to support campaigns¹⁸⁰. The first stone castles took advantage of natural defences provided by the terrain, which were considerable, given that most sites had been occupied with pagan fortresses; waterways were important and castle locations were frequently promontories near the confluence of two rivers; the main defences were provided by thick and upright stone walls, protected by ditches; a mix of stone and timber was used and there were not many positions for flanking fire; the design of the castles was that of a stone tower with either adjoining walls or enclosed by walls with other buildings, and native construction techniques were incorporated into the wooden parts of stone castles¹⁸¹. Another feature in Livonia was that native allies supported the Crusaders by operating from their own wood fortresses¹⁸². By the end of the 13th century, there were at least seventeen castles in modern Estonia; in modern Latvia there were around fifty, according to source mentions, including earth-and-timber fortifications and forts on the hill in use during the post-conquest period – while in Latvia several earth-and-timber castles belonged to the crusaders, in Estonia they belonged mainly to native nobility¹⁸³.

In Prussia, the conditions for building were different from those in the Holy Land: the Order's territory was cut from forests and swamps, and the knights experienced a shortage

¹⁷⁸ JENSEN 2016:254.

¹⁷⁹ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:574. The novelty of stone fortifications held together with mortar is noted by Henry of Livonia: "(...) this fact was unknown to the pagans, who presumed that the stones were piled one on top of another. It was only when they tried to pull the walls down using ships' ropes that they realised that the stones were bonded together." (TURBNBULL 2004:25).

¹⁸⁰ TURNBULL 2004:24.

¹⁸¹ Idem, *ibidem*:25.

¹⁸² TURNBULL 2004:24-25. Once the natives had accepted baptism, important fortresses were garrisoned jointly by Germans and natives, though the practice ended in Estonia after the uprising of 1223 (PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:574).

¹⁸³ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:574-575. "In western and northern Estonia where part of the local nobility obtained the status of vassals in the new feudal society, some of the strongholds remained continuously in use. The lack of traces of "European" cultural innovations in the archaeological record indicates these sites continued to be used in a traditional, native way." (idem, *ibidem*:575).

of labour force, no local building skills and lack of stone – though Denmark had showed the efficiency of building in brick, the Teutonic Order still did not have the conditions and means for that¹⁸⁴. As such, Prussian castles were first similar to the natives' fortifications, build in a haste and made of timber, usually oak¹⁸⁵, sometimes with stone foundations, since that was all that could be built with the available quantity of stone: “The forts were thus rough-hewn wooden blockhouses, sometimes built upon a crude and simple stone base of undressed boulders, encircled by wooden palisades and with the lay of the land determining the contour of the walls.”; considering the abundance of waterways and swamps, water defences were an important aspect of a castle's layout, since they acted as an obstacle in the summer and as a road in the winter – for this, castles were frequently built on a promontory where two rivers met¹⁸⁶, though the Order usually sought to construct castles on sites that had not been previously occupied¹⁸⁷.

The phases of castle-building in Prussia can be divided in three: 1230-1283, that encompasses the conquest of Prussia and the building of wooden forts, as well as their replacement by brick fortifications – these castles had defensive and offensive roles; the start of the Lithuanian Crusade (1283), when the castles served as bases to launch attacks into Lithuania; the union of the Polish and Lithuanian crowns in 1386, when Prussian castles were under attack of their Christian neighbours¹⁸⁸. The castles constructed in Prussia can be divided into categories according to function and significance: there were the residences of

¹⁸⁴ TURNBULL 2003:17.

¹⁸⁵ The Order also used trees as watchtowers and fortified structures (PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:580). According to the *CLP*, “Brother Hermann Balk, master of Prussia, set about the task of advancing the cause of the faith with great vigour. He took the duke of Poland with him, and all his forces, and together in God's name they crossed the Vistula to the Kulmerland and built a castle down on the shore, which he called Thorn. The castle was built in the year of our Lord 1231. This is how it was built: at that time a huge oak tree stood on a hill there; on its branches they built strong fortifications and battlements so that they could defend it. They also engineered the earth around the castle and constructed secure defences of stockades so that only a single path led to the castle. Only seven brothers were stationed there. They always had to keep boats at the ready, in case of attack by the Prussians.” (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:1642-1650 (Ebook position in Kindle Cloud Reader (laptop))).

¹⁸⁶ TURNBULL 2003:17.

¹⁸⁷ TORBUS 2014:228. Archaeologically it can be ascertained that “The impact of the crusades can be linked with a chronological hiatus representing the final occupation phases of many Prussian strongholds. A number of these sites appear to have been abandoned before the crusades, perhaps as the result of Polish or Rus' military activity.” (PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:579).

¹⁸⁸ TURNBULL 2003:5.

chancellors ('Großgebietiger') (the Marienburg, residence of the Great Master and Grand Commander ('Großkomtur'); Elblag (Elbing), the residence of the Grand Hospitaller ('Großspittler'); Dzierzgoń, the residence of the Grand Trapier ('Großtrappier'); and Königsberg, the residence of the Grand Marshal ('Großmarschall'))¹⁸⁹; the centres of commanderies ('Komtureien'), the highest administrative unit of the 'Ordensstaat', under the responsibility of the 'Komture' (commanders) – at the Order's highest, there were 25 commandery castles, that were both politico-economical centres as well as monasteries¹⁹⁰; the secondary administrative centres of the 14th century, such as the residences of bailiffs ('Vögte'), followed by the residences of procurators ('Pfleger'), bailiwicks ('Kammerämter') and forestry posts ('Waldhäuser')¹⁹¹. Teutonic castles were simultaneously administrative centres, frontier posts and military bases; depending on location, a commander was either the governor of a wide territory or responsible for border guards: "He would be expected to organize patrols, train militia, control mercenaries, practice both individual and unit military skills, and, when necessary, lead his brothers in war or siege.", while also making sure there were enough provisions and equipment in the castle, and that the castle defences were in good state¹⁹². The commander was head of a 'Konvent' (ideally twelve brother knights and six priests), and as such the castles were called 'Konventshäuser'¹⁹³: these were usually fortified, and whereas castles in the Middle East had more brethren than those in other Christian frontiers, those away from border regions usually had no more than thirteen members¹⁹⁴, as exemplified as follows:

"Although there were at least fifteen brothers resident in the Teutonic order's house of Altenburg in Thuringia in 1296, at Nägelstedt in the same region the highest figure recorded in the thirteenth century is three, and in most of that order's houses in Thuringia the largest number of brothers mentioned in thirteenth-century documents is less than ten."¹⁹⁵.

¹⁸⁹ TORBUS 2014:224-225.

¹⁹⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:225.

¹⁹¹ Idem, *ibidem*:226. The necessity to consider the knights' horses and horse-keeping in the castles are addressed in Part II.

¹⁹² TURNBULL 2003:47.

¹⁹³ TORBUS 2014:225. Sing. Konventshaus.

¹⁹⁴ FOREY 1992-150.

¹⁹⁵ Idem, *ibidem*: 150-151.

The principle of the Order's Prussian fortresses was that a small garrison would be able to resist until help was delivered – as such, the castles were required to store supplies for two years of continuous siege, and were built a day's march distance from each other¹⁹⁶. There were stables in nearly all outer baileys¹⁹⁷ and convents produced, stored and maintained weapons and armour, as well as provided training; convents were also rallying points for the Order's forces, organised centrally within the commanderies and based on the obligations of locals and vassal knights to provide military service, though mercenaries were housed in larger castles – this system allowed a military response to be systematically and quickly organised through the 'Ordensstaat'¹⁹⁸. Admission rituals were performed in a castle's chapel¹⁹⁹ and knights were mostly buried in the local parish church or in hospital chapels (for instance, the hospital of the Holy Spirit in Thorn), though it is uncertain that there were burial places in the castle grounds; however, burials in the Marienburg occur in the outer ward on the eastern side of the high castle²⁰⁰ – unfortunately, I have not found information about the burial of Teutonic knights.

Upgrading to brick was a means to create a defensive system that would withstand the developments of siege artillery and, with solid foundations allied to the proximity of another castle, mining operations would be dissuaded²⁰¹:

“(…) the approach to a castle was made so that an attacker could be observed at every stage. When he finally launched an attack he was faced with sheer brick walls and massive gates. The main gate to the quadrangle was always defended from inside a formidable gatehouse behind a drawbridge. If the courtyard was lost, the garrison could withdraw into the tower and keep

¹⁹⁶ TURNBULL 2003:24. However, that did not prevent the natives from besieging castles, and the chronicles provide many examples of castles that fell due to running out of provisions within months and help that was never delivered.

¹⁹⁷ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:151.

¹⁹⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:166-167.

¹⁹⁹ TURNBULL 2003:44.

²⁰⁰ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:179. Laws III, paragraph 20, “In each house there shall be a white cloth with a black cross for the burial of our brethren, who expire there.” (STERNS (trans.) 1969:253). The *CLP* tells that “During the course of the same year [1324] the Saxon Brother Johanen von Ilberstedt was buried at the house at Königsberg.” (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5795) and that “Brother Heinrich of Bohndorf was killed at Wissegrad and his grave can now be found at the nunnery in Kulm.” (idem, *ibidem*:6024).

²⁰¹ TURNBULL 2003:24.

assailants at bay with crossbows. Even the detached sewage tower that is found at most sites could provide a last line of defence.”²⁰².

Both in Livonia and in Prussia, castle-building accompanied the advance of the conquests while respecting the proximity to waterways:

“The Swordbrethren early established themselves to the north-east of Riga at Sefewold and Wenden, on the river Aa, and they also soon had a stronghold further north at Fellin. Yet the most heavily fortified frontier was the south. On the Dvina itself the Swordbrethren held Ascheraden, and much later in the century the Teutonic order built a castle at Dünaburg, much further up the river. But most of the Teutonic order’s castles in this area lay further to the west, in Semgallia and the more northerly districts of Kurland, while down the coast the fortress of Memel was established when the Livonian branch of the Teutonic order advanced that far in 1252. Apart from garrisoning their own castles, however, the brethren of the Teutonic order also at times assisted in the defence of those subject to other lords: this according to the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, in the 1280s a brother of the Teutonic order was in charge of the castle of Kokenhausen on the Dvina, which was under the lordship of the archbishop of Riga. (...) In Prussia during the early 1230s, forts were built by the Teutonic order along the Vistula at Thorn, Kulm and Marienwerder, and later in the decade along the Frisches Haff at Elbing and Balga. Further castles were constructed in the interior as this region was brought under control and also further north, as the Teutonic order advanced into the Samland peninsula. There the fortress of Königsberg was established in 1255. In the second half of the thirteenth century several strongholds were also built along the Niemen, as the Teutonic order extended its power into Lithuanian territory (...).”²⁰³.

However, about a half of all commandery castles are located in an area that is approximately ten per cent of the entirety of the ‘Ordensstaat’, the Kulmerland: “(...) the earliest castrum-type castles are gathered here, consisting of quadrangular buildings with four wings around a courtyard with a cloister (like Papowo Biskupie (Papau) (completed c.1290))”²⁰⁴. Inventories from the mid-14th and 15th centuries show that, in the Kulmerland and at the Marienburg, weapons and armour were stockpiled in preparation for war with Poland²⁰⁵.

²⁰² Idem, *ibidem*:24.

²⁰³ FOREY 1992:67-68.

²⁰⁴ TORBUS 2014:230.

²⁰⁵ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:167.

Once there were favourable conditions in Prussia, castles were re-built/built in more resistant material – though before 1280 there were already castles using a mix of stone and brick, while earth-and-timber fortifications continued to be built through the 15th century²⁰⁶. Considering that stone castles and wood fortifications are in use at the same time in the Baltic, it would be wrong to suggest that one type of construction was replaced by another²⁰⁷, thus showing flexibility and adaptability in the Crusaders' behalf.

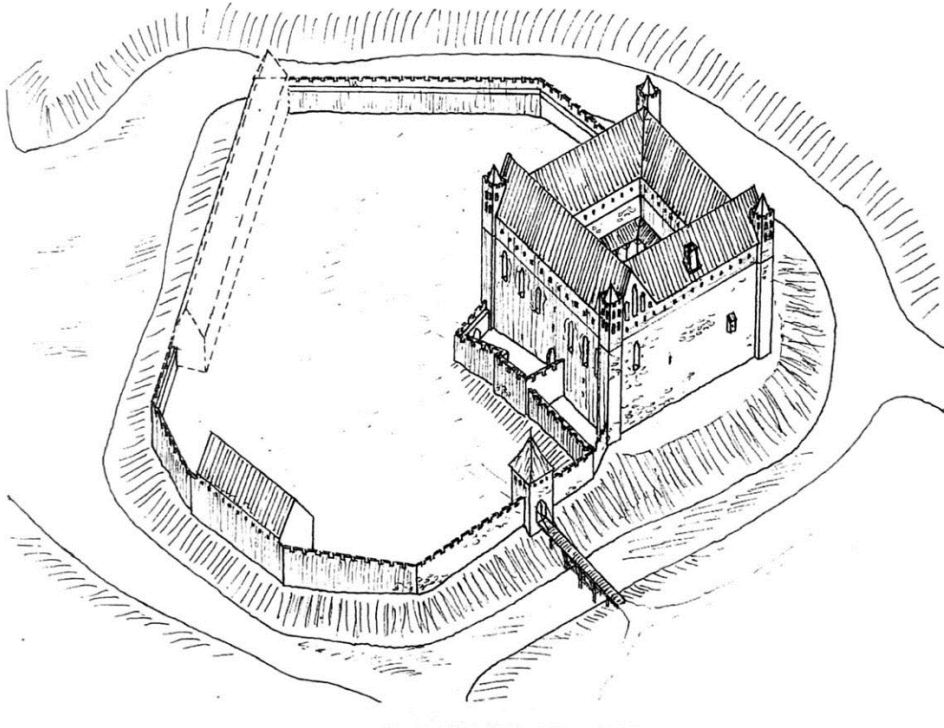


Figure 6: Convent castle of Papowo Biskupie (<https://medievalheritage.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Papowo-Biskupie-rekonstrukcja-14.jpg>) [20/1/22].

The similar decorations and the monastic ground plant in castles are important to consider the employment of a Cistercian workforce from Brandenburg in the ‘Ordensstaat’ by the end of the 13th century²⁰⁸, but the presence of other elements can also suggest a regionalist influence from the Holy Roman Empire. The architecture of Świecie (construction

²⁰⁶ PLUSKOWSKI et VALK 2016:580-581.

²⁰⁷ JENSEN 2016:255.

²⁰⁸ TORBUS 2014:229.

from 1335 until c.1350) shares similarities with architecture found in the Rhineland, such as flanking towers (common in crusader castles in the Middle East and spread in Western Europe from the 12th century onwards mostly in France, Normandy, Wales, and southern Italy, though rare in the Holy Roman Empire (except in the Rhineland) and in the ‘Ordensstaat’ in Prussia), machicolations (an element introduced in France before 1350 but with little expression in the Holy Roman Empire except for the Rhineland), plus its similarity with the Rhenish castles of the Archbishop of Cologne Walram von Jülich (1332-1349), especially with the castle of Zülpich; furthermore, the first two commanders – Konrad von Bruningsheim and Günther von Hohenstein – were Rhenish²⁰⁹. On the other hand, the castle of Czuluchów (1325-1365) presented a more traditional shape: the quadrangular main ward was surrounded by four wings, with no corner towers but with a recessed octagonal keep, in the corner next to the gate²¹⁰. Nevertheless, the Order’s castles also bore original traits related to the reality of its inhabitants, that could inspire them and provide a sense of unity; that can be seen, for instance, in decorations:

“A more popular decorative motif found in convents is the opposition between the Teutonic Knights and Prussians, clearly expressing the ideology of holy war waged by the military orders. A moulded brick tympanum from Birgelau castle (Bierzgłowo), dated c.1270-1280, shows a Teutonic Knight mounted on a horse flanked by two Prussian warriors, one standing upright interpreted as an ally of the Order (presumably a Christian convert) and another curled up, representing the defeated pagan enemy.”²¹¹.

We can only wonder about what crossed the knights’ minds upon looking at such motifs. The next chapter will attempt to address the matter within the possibilities provided by the Order’s sources.

²⁰⁹ TORBUS 2014:234.

²¹⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:234.

²¹¹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:163-164.

PART 2

THE TEUTONIC KNIGHT

*“Let me mention his name. He was Brother John von Ochtenhausen and he was famous in Lithuania and Russia. He displayed great virtue and led a temperate and proper life. When he first entered the Order, he was sent to Kurland by his Master. He performed such worthy deeds there that his fame began to spread at once.”*²¹².

*“However, one very doughty man, Brother Heinrich Ullenbusch, did not give up defending himself valiantly. He on his own caused such difficulties for the Prussian army that his comrades recovered their nerve, returned and fought the enemy with great ferocity, killing a large number of Sambians and leaving them dead on the battlefield.”*²¹³.

²¹² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:109.

²¹³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010: 3156.

The men named above certainly did not sprout from the ground onto the Order's ranks, and there must have been a reason for John to go to Livonia and for Heinrich to go to Prussia. Without a time-travel machine, I cannot know their background and personal motivations in detail. However, there is enough information from the Order's records to ascertain that the knights had mostly come from *ministeriales* families, and even from what parts of the Empire they originated from – and, thus, the dialect they spoke. The chronicles might not always provide this kind of background information, but they let us know the names of some knights and slices of their lives. In this chapter, I will try to flesh out individuals in the anonymous Teutonic Order.

The military orders needed lay and clerical recruits, the first for military duties, for charitable and property administering functions, and the latter for spiritual matters; there were also paid auxiliaries and secular men who volunteered to help with military affairs for a period of time, “But the functioning of a military order depended in the first instance on the recruitment of individuals who took the normal monastic vows and promised to spend their lives serving an order.”²¹⁴. Teutonic vows went as follows:

“The first is perpetual chastity, the second is renunciation of one's own will, that is, obedience unto death, the third is the assumption of poverty, that is living without property after entering this order. These three things fashion and make dedicated men like unto the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ (...)”²¹⁵.

1. Background

Military orders could be linked to a certain region and, as such, attract recruits from a limited geography²¹⁶, like the Teutonic Order did. Though manpower was not exclusively recruited from a particular area, the Order attracted mostly from German-speaking territory²¹⁷. In 14th century sources it is hard to find non-Germans among the knights, and in

²¹⁴ FOREY 1986:139.

²¹⁵ STERNS (trans.) 1969:226-227.

²¹⁶ FOREY 1986:140.

²¹⁷ FOREY 1992:132. Even though there were Teutonic knights that were not from German-speaking areas, only the Templars and the Hospitallers regularly recruited from all parts of western Christendom – still, France

the 15th century access to the Order was increasingly restricted to German-speaking nobility: Germans had always been predominant within the Order, but in the 13th century there were a few non-Germans among the ranks, namely Livs, Prussians, Poles, Swedes and Italians (it is likely that there were also French and Spanish brethren) – yet, in the 15th century, Great Masters resisted the admission of nobles from non-German-speaking countries, and while this principle was never written down as a law or custom, it became common law within the Order²¹⁸.

As for social background, it is hard to trace it for most knights, but so far conclusions indicate that lesser nobility was predominant in the military orders; in this case, Teutonic ranks were mostly dominated by the *ministeriales*²¹⁹:

“(…) an examination of the origins of members of the Teutonic order in Thuringia during the thirteenth century has revealed that, of 105 brethren, nine came from comital families and eleven from the free nobility (*Edelfreie*); eighteen were *reichsministeriales* and fifty-six *ministeriales*; one came from a family of free knights and ten belonged to patrician and burgess families.”²²⁰.

Livonian data for the period of 1237-1309 indicates that twelve of 75 (16%) of identified knights can be traced to German dynasts/ high nobility families; small propertied gentry and low nobility made up the majority of knights; 12% of the knights came from the urban patriciate; most of the Masters descended from *ministeriales*, and in later periods no member of the high nobility became Master²²¹. However, this is limited information: the social background of those responsible for high offices in the military orders does not mirror that of the whole members, and more evidence is difficult to gather due to the difficulty in tracing the origins of a sufficient proportion of knights – for instance, the 105 knights in Thuringia enumerated above represent only 31% of 340 knights mentioned in 13th century

seems to have been their main source of recruits (idem, *ibidem*:133). Besides, most of the Order’s supplies and donations came from the Holy Roman Empire, and purchases were mostly from the Hohenstaufen, ecclesiastical and lay princes, nobles and lesser knightly families, the *ministeriales* (BORCHARDT 2016:118).

²¹⁸ MILITZER 1991:9-10.

²¹⁹ FOREY 1992:134. Not to forget Great Master Hermann von Salza, whose role has been previously addressed, was a Thuringian *ministerialis*.

²²⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:134. Meaning that sixty-four percent of the knights came from the lesser nobility and twenty-six percent from the upper nobility. (FOREY 1986:143).

²²¹ MILITZER 2016:275-276.

Thuringian sources; another 89 Hessians represent little more than half of the total knights recorded in that area in the first half of the 14th century²²².

In the 12th and 13th centuries, admission into a military order was limited to freemen, though in the 13th century knightly descent was required for those filling the ranks of knights²²³. Difference of rank in military orders was first based on function and not in family background – though, as the later recruitment trends for the Teutonic Order indicate, family background did play a role:

“Chaplains were mainly concerned with spiritual matters, while non-military sergeants were employed in various tasks within convents or on the land. Knights and sergeants-at-arms did not, of course, differ in function, but here the orders were apparently adopting a distinction made in the secular world, which at that time probably had its basis in wealth. The group to which a fighting brother was assigned in the twelfth century presumably depended on his earlier military status, which was in turn determined by his material standing.”²²⁴.

For the Teutonic Order, the 13th century Rule does state that “(...) this order is specially founded for knights fighting the enemies of the Cross and of the faith (...)”²²⁵ and shows no restrictions to recruitment; however, in the early 14th century, Great Master Dietrich von Altenburg was the first to demand that recruits should be of noble birth (though exceptions were admitted) – as such, through the 14th and 15th centuries, recruitment of non-nobles became more difficult and by the end of the 15th century the Order demanded proof of four noble ancestors²²⁶ – without this ‘nobility certificate’, recruits were hardly accepted into the rank of knights (though education was not required)²²⁷.

²²² FOREY 1986:143-144.

²²³ Idem, *ibidem*:141.

²²⁴ FOREY 1992:176.

²²⁵ STERNS (trans.) 1969:226-227. For the paragraph regarding probation, vide Addendum, Pt. II, *Rule*, paragraph 29. *Of the probation of those who wish to enter this Order*:308.

²²⁶ MILITZER 2016:28.

²²⁷ MILITZER 1991:9.

In the beginning, however, it was the lesser knightly families, the *ministeriales*²²⁸, “whose sons dominated the order as milites.”²²⁹. For this, and for the importance these *ministeriales*²³⁰ had in the Empire, the subject deserves some development.

Feudal organization in the Empire cannot be compared to that of England or France – instead, it can be understood in terms of ‘allodialism’, as in “(...) aristocratic domain independent of kingship and feudal tenure.”²³¹. 13th century western European retinues were smaller than those of an important secular or ecclesiastical German lord, who could retrain hundreds of knights – more important lords could afford larger numbers²³²:

“The appearance of servants armed as knights is primarily the result of the massive increase on power, both economic and political, of the highest levels of the nobility, which is now rich and powerful enough to equip its people with armor and horses. Similarly, the appearance of mercenary armies can hardly be sufficiently explained on the grounds that there were so many “landless knightly *ministeriales*” and so many “landless free knights”, who could no longer find a livelihood. The decisive reason can rather be found in the fact that the financial strength of the princes had increased so much that they could buy themselves the services of soldiers in large numbers.”²³³.

²²⁸ An 11th century scribal experiment that prevailed in the early 12th century to signify ‘unfree knight’ within the Holy Roman Empire: it worked because of the nature of the Empire, where the crown had not imposed itself over nobility (ARNOLD 1985:19-20). During the 12th century, the term *ministeriales* describes the great majority of German knights: they had servants and were equipped to war with warhorses, mail, weapons, and pack-horses with necessary goods like provisions, money, and extra horse-shoes with nails - they were provided by their lords, for they were not expected to cover the costs of warfare with just the income from their fiefs (idem, *ibidem*:23-24). That is, the lords that could afford to provide for their *ministeriales*, and the *ministeriales* who had sufficient income. Hohenstaufen – 13th century – documents in Latin show that *ministerialis* is the prevalent form for knight in the Holy Roman Empire: “The word referred not to his most characteristic function, that of fighting on horseback, but to his hereditary status, and was therefore applicable to his womenfolk, children, and relatives in holy orders. In other words, *ministeriales* look like a social class, with the hereditary profession or function of knightly cavalymen.”: the term reflects the importance of the knight in the Empire’s society, as well as the expansion of military retinues by great secular and ecclesiastical lords, and by the Salian imperial house (ARNOLD 1985:24).

²²⁹ BORCHARDT 2016:118. *Ministeriales* and *milites* are the Latin form for ‘dienestman’ and ‘ritter’ (JACKSON et al (trans.) 1982:38), but since *ministeriales* is the most widespread term, I will use it.

²³⁰ JACKSON et al (trans.) 1982:38.

²³¹ Idem, *ibidem*:38.

²³² ARNOLD 1985:19-20.

²³³ JACKSON et al (trans.) 1982:43-44.

Though the legal and social regulations for the *ministeriales* were similar to vassalage²³⁴ and had little in common with serfdom, the ties of personal and hereditary dependence between the *ministeriales* and their lords formed a proprietary right that meant the lords owned their *ministeriales*, who as such had a servile legal status²³⁵ – thus, when a lord joined the Order, his *ministeriales* usually accompanied him²³⁶ or, when a lord went crusading, he could donate his *ministeriales* to the Order, like in the following episode from the *CLP*:

“When this well-born prince [Margrave Dietrich von Meissen], God’s chosen warrior, had completed his campaign in such a laudable way, among the many other acts of benevolence he performed for the order he had 24 of his bold, noble men fitted out in the robes of the order and provided them with a superfluity of everything appropriate to them as members of the order and as knights. Having done this he left them there and he himself set off for home.”²³⁷.

Since these knights were property of their lords, they could be bought but could also be emancipated, though it was rare²³⁸ and depended on a lords’ will to allow *ministeriales*, in this case, to enter a military order: for instance, “(...) in 1313, the abbess of Wetter was willing to free Gerard of Oberwetter when he wanted to join the Teutonic order, but this would not be the reaction of all lords.”²³⁹.

Besides the manpower provided by the *ministeriales*, a significant number of properties was donated to the Order by imperial *ministeriales*, though they did not join in²⁴⁰.

²³⁴ *Ministeriales*, unlike free vassals, did not own the estate they administered (GRAVETT 1997:18).

²³⁵ ARNOLD 1985:25.

²³⁶ FOREY 1986:164. 12th and 13th century sources make it clear that *ministeriales* knights were not considered free men: “(...) their lords had hereditary, proprietary rights over their actual persons, services, and possessions. This is, of course, a fundamental difference from knighthoods in other west European, Mediterranean, and Crusader kingdoms, where knights were free men constrained by their oaths of homage (...) For German *ministeriales*, their obligations were personal, hereditary, inescapable, not contractual or dependent upon oaths of homage, although these were generally given as well.”; a *ministerialis* belonged from birth to their lord, and they could be given to another lord and could be “(...) transferred *in proprietatem* or ‘into ownership’ (ARNOLD 1985:53-54/58).

²³⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3430.

²³⁸ ARNOLD 1985:64/67.

²³⁹ FOREY 1992:133. *Ministeriales* were named after the castle/ property they were born at, and they could not leave their territories or marry without permission; their purpose was to carry arms, and they were not subject to manorial jurisdiction, barely paid taxes, and attended courts as litigants, witnesses, magistrates, and jurors (ARNOLD 1985:54).

²⁴⁰ NICOLLE 2007:21.

The term *ministerialis* applies both to the rich ones, like those of the imperial house or of a great bishop, and to the poorer ones under the service of local magnates in remote areas of Saxony²⁴¹, for instance. Evidence for the 12th century shows that these professional knights were given fiefs as a reward for their services, which allowed them to be a hereditary landowning order, but were also restricted by several rules imposed by their lords²⁴². *Ministeriales* could serve multiple lords, though only one lord effectively owned the *ministeriales*²⁴³.

These background trends are mirrored in the Order's chronicles. Given the initial predominance of Saxon and Thuringian *ministeriales* in the Livonian branch, in the 13th century it was "(...) fertile ground for the development of a regionally and institutionally specific collective martial ideology.", this because recruits brought with them elements of chivalric mentality, thus monastic chivalry was probably conditioned by the attitudes these knights had towards war and violence: "It is useful to appreciate that the collective character of the German *ministeriales* of the thirteenth century is therefore an integral influence upon the mentalities reflected in the [LRC]."; in fact, and according to Peyper, "(...) the [LRC] does display a popular-level interpretation of Christian chivalry, and that this form of Christian chivalry had digressed from the Teutonic Order's ideals of military monasticism, creating the ideological problem that needed correction in von Jeroschin's time."²⁴⁴. Though violence and confrontation are also present in the 14th century *CLP*, combat scenes are not as detailed and religious elements abound, thus presenting the narrative in a more pious tone.

²⁴¹ ARNOLD 1985:27.

²⁴² Idem, *ibidem*:21.

²⁴³ GRAVETT 1997:19.

²⁴⁴ PEYPER:7-8/12.

2. Recruitment:

Now, these *ministeriales* came from somewhere within the Empire. Analyses²⁴⁵ to the Order's sources reveal recruitment trends that varied between the Livonian and Prussian branches. For Livonia, recruitment trends seem to have been inherited from the Swordbrethren, "(...) men of mixed social origins. They, and their successors, tended to be recruited from the Lower German areas disregarded by Prussia such as Westphalia, the Ruhr and the Netherlands. Many were from the ministeriale class (...)"²⁴⁶. The Livonian branch evolved from depending on a central leadership to nearly autonomous units with its own agenda, which had consequences for the mobility of its knights: while in the 13th and early 14th century knights could be rotated to and from Livonia, Prussia, and the Order's bailiwicks elsewhere, through the 14th century knights stayed in Livonia – this also meant the administration in Livonia began to organise its own recruitment independently from Prussia²⁴⁷. There are four main periods in the recruitment of knight-brothers²⁴⁸:

- from the incorporation of the Swordbrethren into the Teutonic Order in 1237 and until 1309: about 200 knights lived in the castles in Livonia each year, and as such it can be assumed that the Livonian branch probably comprised 1200 – 1400 knights, though only the names of 215 are known and only 85 can be identified; thus, only 6%-7% of the knights can be traced to a particular family or region of birth; most of the identifiable knights were officers (masters, marshals or commanders) and the regular knights are mostly unknown, though sometimes their forenames are revealed (this alone does not help to identify them); even so, it is possible

²⁴⁵ Klaus Militzer has thoroughly worked the subject.

²⁴⁶ TURNBULL 2004:45. I disagree with the usage of the term 'class', given that men could pay money or land, or offer services, to change their previous condition and become a *ministerialis*; an example of this situation comes from 1123, "(...) when a free-born family surrendered 'the temporal freedom of the flesh to the ownership and service of the Church, and gave themselves into the property of the church of Paderborn as *ministeriales*.'" (ARNOLD 1985:45/58-59). As has been said, a *ministerialis* could also be emancipated. If the two branches and two specific geographic origins are compared, it is noticeable the beginning of the 14th century continues the 13th century trend of *ministeriales* majority: "An investigation into the origins of brethren of the Teutonic order in the first half of the fourteenth century has similarly shown that of sixty-four brothers in Prussia and Livonia who came from the Saxon province, fourteen belonged to the higher nobility, forty-three to the lesser nobility and seven to patrician and burgess families; and also that of eighty-nine brethren in the district of Hesse whose origins are known, one came from the higher nobility and fifty-one from the lesser nobility; thirty-six were of urban origin and one had been unfree." (FOREY 1986:143).

²⁴⁷ MOL 2015:125.

²⁴⁸ From now referred to only as 'knights' for commodity.

to conclude that three Livonian Masters came from Franconia and from the archbishopric of Salzburg; two other masters, seven commanders and four knights came from the low plains of what is today northern Germany (these thirteen men alone comprise 15% of all identified knights); a few knights came from the Rhineland (areas north of Cologne, towards the Netherlands and Belgium); most came from the Middle Rhine (Hesse and areas near what is now southern Germany); Westphalians made up less than 20% of the identified brethren and their numbers were small; there are no traces of knights coming from the Mark (Westphalia), though in a later period sons of families from the Mark ruled the Order in Livonia; there was a noticeable high number of masters originating from families from the territories around the Harz mountains, Thuringia, and areas along the Baltic coast east of the Elbe²⁴⁹. In a later period, the principal region of recruitment became Westphalia, and the first Westphalian knight to become Livonian Master was Heinrich von Dincklage (1295-1296) (though he was born in the bishopric of Münster and grew up in the borders of Westphalia)²⁵⁰. There was a slight decrease between the Low German element, dominant for the Sworbrethren, and the early dynamic transfer and promotion policies of the Teutonic Order²⁵¹;

- from 1310 to 1410, a phase of structural changes in the Livonian branch: 36% of all identified knights were Westphalians, 28% were Rhinelanders; Saxons and those coming from the territories along the Baltic coast maintained the same proportions as in the first period, but those from what is now southern Germany and Thuringia practically disappeared; a Scandinavian knight named Otto, son of the Danish king, and a knight from a German-speaking noble family settled in Livonia were identified – this shows the Livonian branch had found a base of recruitment comprising Westphalia, Rhineland, and the nearby territories north and east; 40% of officers came from this region; there was an identifiable master from

²⁴⁹ MILITZER 2016:271-272. Most knights in the early period of the Crusades came from Saxony (URBAN 2003:83-84).

²⁵⁰ MILITZER 2016:272. “The majority of the first masters, vice-masters, marshals and commanders of the first period came from Thuringia, Saxony, Hesse or south Germany, precisely those regions in which the Order already held territories, had founded commanderies and had recruited brothers. Therefore, after the incorporation of the Swordbrothers, the Teutonic Order filled the leading positions with brothers from bailiwicks in the German Empire, from Prussia or even from Palestine, rather than use surviving Swordbrothers, most of whom came from different regions. Nor did they recruit from the local population, for during this period there is only one known native, a Livonian called Ykemele, and he did not become a commander but remained a simple brother.”; if other natives were recruited, there is no information about them and none became a commander or held other office - these were reserved for Germans, though officers did not usually stay long in Livonia, instead returned to their bailiwicks in the Empire, Prussia or Palestine, a pattern seen in the other branches of the order in the 13th century (idem, *ibidem*:272-273).

²⁵¹ MOL 2015:125.

the Mark for the first time, Goswin von Herreke (1341-1359), born in Opherdicke near Unna or Dortmund; most identified commanders were Westphalians, but masters were usually Rhinelanders²⁵²;

- from Tannenberg in 1410 until the death of the Livonian Master Walter von Plettenberg in 1535 saw the Westphalians dominate the branch: more than half, and sometimes more than 60% of identifiable knights were Westphalians, while in contrast the Rhinelanders made up 30% of the knights; recruits coming from the regions along the Baltic coast were few and the number of Saxons dropped, with few holding office; the Livonian branch became divided between the Westphalian and Rhenish factions, as is illustrated by the case of the Thuringian marshal Heinrich von Nottleben, who was candidate to master of the Rhenish faction (that was supported by the Great Master in Prussia), but was defeated by the Westphalian majority; thirteen knights from Livonia were identified, sons of German-speaking noble families settled in Livonia and most times affiliated to Westphalian noble families; there were also knights from now southern Germany, though most were transferred by the Great Master for disciplinary reasons and thus could not hold offices nor stay in Livonia for long²⁵³; throughout the life of the Livonian branch, 77 named knights were from the Low Countries – Dutch²⁵⁴ knights were well represented around 1430, making up about one sixth of the Livonian knights, but their numbers decreased quickly after 1450²⁵⁵.

The dominance of Westphalians in the Livonian branch contrasts with the situation in the Prussian branch. During the 13th century, over 60% of the knights came from Central-Eastern Germany and Eastern Saxony, though there were smaller percentages from Franconia, Swabia, Hesse, Rhineland, Westphalia, the Netherlands and Austria²⁵⁶. Most

²⁵² MILITZER 2016:273. In this period, Masters held offices for longer and it became usual for a Master to be appointed/elected by the Great Master for life, as well as unusual for commanders from other bailiwicks to be sent to Livonia to perform offices for a short term; furthermore, if a son from a family in Low Germany entered the Livonian branch, he remained in this branch until death – unless an unusual circumstance caused him to rotate (idem, *ibidem*:273). Great Master Ludolf König (elected June 1342) was from Lower Saxony and was stationed in Prussia, something unusual given that knights from Low German-speaking regions went to Livonia (URBAN 2003:136).

²⁵³ MILITZER 2016:274.

²⁵⁴ For commodity, knights from the Low Countries are referred to as ‘Dutch’. The Low Countries consisted of the bishopric of Utrecht, divided in Nedersticht and Oversticht (englobing the modern provinces of Drenthe and Overijssel), the duchies of Guelders and Brabant, and the counties of Limburg, Loon, and Valkenburg; in this case, the Low Countries can be confined to the east: the lands around the rivers Ijssel, Rhine and Meuse, that made up the second most important recruitment zone for the Livonian branch (MOL 2015:127-128).

²⁵⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:124.

²⁵⁶ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:90.

officers came from Thuringia, modern southern Germany and the Rhineland; some Great Masters, like Paul von Rusdorf, attempted to strengthen their influence in Livonia with the aid of Rhenish knights and their supporters, though the Westphalian majority prevented that and these politics led to friction between factions²⁵⁷. In Prussia, after the defeat at Tannenberg, “Factions began to rise, often based around regional origins – Bavarians and Austrians were suspicious of Rhinelanders, and vice versa.”²⁵⁸. Mol considers that language does not seem to have been an issue in Livonia, because knights from the Lower and Middle Rhine could understand the Westphalians and vice-versa, and because the Rhineland was not an entity on itself given that kinship relations between knights from the Northwest, Middle Rhine, and Hesse would have been nearly impossible – thus, “(...) the ‘Rhinelanders’ made up a broad non-Westphalian rest category. The members then might have tended to seek each other’s help against exclusion by a Westphalian core group.”; yet in Prussia, Westphalians and Rhinelanders tended to unite against knights from High Germany, who spoke differently²⁵⁹. In his English translation of the Order’s Statutes²⁶⁰, Sterns indicates that “The Dutch text is the closest to the Middle German and often helped in interpreting obscure passages.”, but also that the Low German text was useful as well²⁶¹. Even though there are differences between the MHG and the Low German texts, there are also similarities – at least,

²⁵⁷ MILITZER 2016:274. There was a period of civil war between Westphalian and Rhineland knight factions that ended in 1450 (URBAN 2003:236): The Westphalian faction sided with the interests of the Livonian cities; on the contrary, the Rhineland faction stood with the Great Master and Prussian interests, even when these could be disadvantageous for the Livonian branch: Prussian policy aimed at preventing a structural alliance between Poland and Lithuania by having the Lithuanians siding with the Livonian branch against Pskov and Novgorod – which was contrary to the interests of Riga merchants, who profited greatly by trading with the Russians (MOL 2015:134).

²⁵⁸ URBAN 2003:230.

²⁵⁹ MOL 2015:140.

²⁶⁰ The oldest manuscript of the Statutes is the Middle German manuscript from 1264 (*Mss. Borussica 79*) in the State Library in Berlin; the oldest Dutch manuscript is a copy from the 14th century (*Ms. 1121*), in the Royal Library at the Hague; the only French manuscript (*Ms. 1574*) is a 14th century copy that was formally in the Royal University Library of Königsberg; and the only dated Latin manuscript (1398) was also in the Royal University Library of Königsberg (*Ms. 1564*) – these latter manuscripts were in Königsberg at the time that Perlbach published his edition of the Statutes, that can be considered the definitive edition: this because Perlbach published the German, Latin, Dutch and French manuscripts in parallel columns and combined them with later manuscripts, having also included the text of a Low German manuscript from the 14th century (STERN (trans.) 1969:197-198).

²⁶¹ Idem, *ibidem*:200.

in writing²⁶². I believe linguistic differences²⁶³ among knights played a role, even if small, in the Order's internal dynamics. Kinship, pointing out accents, being confused over different words for familiar items and being drawn to familiar sounds is only human, and despite their holiness, Teutonic knights were but men. Nevertheless, paragraph 26 of the Rule, *How the brethren shall live in friendship and brotherhood*, is a long paragraph exhorting the knights to be civil around each other²⁶⁴. With this in mind, it is fascinating how the Teutonic Order survived so long, and functioning. More elements about the knights' background need to be analysed to understand how, despite everything, they still somewhat stuck to rules²⁶⁵.

A military order consisted of monastic communal life together with performing military duties in the outside world²⁶⁶. This must have appealed to some, but certainly not every knight joined the Order's ranks on his own free will and rather content about his life choices. The reasons for a knight to leave the world and join a military order certainly were many, varied and too personal to have left traces for posterity. Some might have been bored and wanted a new experience, some might have been idealists, some might have wanted to escape trouble at home, maybe some lost a bet, and probably there were the romantic few who thought becoming a holy knight would heal a broken heart²⁶⁷. Wild guesses aside, there are identifiable reasons as to why one became a Teutonic knight.

For instance, when incorporating one order into another, which was usually opposed by the knights of the order losing its identity²⁶⁸, like the case of the Teutonic Order and the Swordbrethren. The aforementioned Treaty of Stensby, the consequent refusal of former Sworbrethren in acknowledging Hermann Balk's authority, and ultimately the disaster at Lake Peipus are good examples of what dissatisfied knights might do. However, since these incorporations happened mostly when one of the orders was too small, it did not provide

²⁶² For an example between written Middle German and Low German, vide Addendum, Pt. II, fig. 8: *Prologue*:311.

²⁶³ I am not a linguist, yet I consider it necessary to look at the language Teutonic knights spoke. A brief explanation can be found at Addendum, Pt. II, German language:308.

²⁶⁴ Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *Rule*, paragraph 26. *How the brethren shall live in friendship and brotherhood*:311.

²⁶⁵ According to the Order's penal code, and as is only natural, unruly knights were inevitable.

²⁶⁶ BRADBURY 2004:236.

²⁶⁷ "Another joined in 1288 at the minimum age of 14, although he had had decided upon this course of action when he was jilted at the age of seven by his five-year-old fiancée!" (TURNBULL 2003:44).

²⁶⁸ FOREY 1986:162.

sufficient manpower and thus recruiting from the secular world was the best option. A knight's reasons to join a military order do not always come in the sources (and are not always free from religious contamination when they do), but it is still possible to ascertain influential factors over individuals²⁶⁹. There was the influence of having relatives or acquaintances in an order; an individual could also enter an order that his family donated to²⁷⁰. Meddling parents and peer pressure are not modern inventions, nor are financial problems and self-interest. The Order did not allow professions until the recruit had completed fourteen years, though the Rule allowed parents and guardians to leave children under fourteen in the Order's convents, maybe to cover the early death of one or both parents, though it could also have been common for the sons of nobles to be brought up and trained in a convent of a military order instead of in another noble household²⁷¹. According to paragraph 30. *How children shall be received into the Order*:

“We will likewise that no child be given the habit or received into this order before he has reached his fourteenth year. But should it happen that fathers or mothers or guardians bring a child to this order before his fourteenth year, or the child come of his own accord, he, if the brethren wish to receive him, shall be well brought up until the prescribed age, and then, if he and the brethren consent, he may be received into the order in the customary manner.”²⁷².

These children²⁷³ were not obliged to join the Order; for example, when in 1256 a widow in Mainz “(...) had her son received by the Teutonic order *in futurum fratrem*, it was made clear that he was to be free to leave when he reached an age of discretion.”²⁷⁴ Other examples come from 1267, when “(...) Walter of Nordeck offered his son to the brothers of the Teutonic order at Marburg (...)” and from 1288, when “(...) Manfred of Lonnig, a citizen of Coblenz, dedicated two sons to Christ and the Virgin Mary in the local house of the

²⁶⁹ FOREY 1986:162.

²⁷⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:170.

²⁷¹ Idem, *ibidem*:148-149.

²⁷² STERNS (trans.) 1969:234.

²⁷³A parent deciding to give away a child to an order could stem from the wish of getting rid of physically/mentally handicapped children, keeping the family estates united by providing a career to younger sons, and maintaining tradition; but according to contemporary sources, devoting a son to God could be done solely to get spiritual rewards (FOREY 1986:163). Later, though the Order required nobility, it did not become an institution for the nobility to dump their infirm children – the Order demanded healthy recruits because it needed men capable to fight (MILITZER 1991:11).

²⁷⁴ FOREY 1986:149.

Teutonic order.”²⁷⁵. Even though these children had the choice of becoming brethren or leaving the convent, they might have been aware of their parents’ expectations and that probably had a role in their final decision – the document that accompanied Walter’s son stated “If indeed, which God forbid, he refuses to remain with the brethren in that house, when he reaches years of discretion (...)”²⁷⁶. Another form of family pressure resulted from several members of the same family joining an order, all at the same time – it is doubtful everyone shared the same enthusiasm and probably some were grudgingly persuaded by their relatives²⁷⁷ – this same system and dubious commitment can be applied to those who joined alongside or under orders of their lords²⁷⁸. Examples of this are given by Dusburg, who reports that Conrad of Thuringia entered the Order with many of his knights²⁷⁹, and by the recruitment of knights into Livonia:

“Brethren from Low Germany were thus always dominant in the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order. It is true that in the first period of consolidation knight brothers originating in other regions had had leading positions, but they could not change the regional composition of the brethren. Probably the surviving Swordbrothers – the majority of whom came from Low Germany and who had entered the Teutonic Order in 1237 – maintained their tradition that members of families from Low Germany had to serve in the Order in Livonia. It may be that the German-speaking noble families in Livonia supported the idea because they came from Low Germany too, and often still had relations there.”²⁸⁰.

Other factors that may have influenced the decision of becoming a Teutonic knight had to do with the material world. It might have been that, for some recruits (like younger sons), life in a military order could bring a more comfortable life than the secular world; plus, it was a widespread view that the military orders led an easier life²⁸¹. Paragraph 29 of the Rule, *Of the probation of those who wish to enter this Order*, states that a candidate “(...)

²⁷⁵ FOREY 1986:162-163.

²⁷⁶ FOREY 1992:140.

²⁷⁷ The *CLP* provides some episodes featuring siblings, usually an older brother and his younger brother. For example, Heinrich and Hermann Stange. Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP1* – Stange siblings:312.

²⁷⁸ FOREY 1986:164.

²⁷⁹ FOREY 1992:140.

²⁸⁰ MILITZER 2016:275. The Livonian Master had a tendency to recruit mostly from Low Germany, most times from his area of birth; there, families who supported the Order were certain that their relatives would have a lifelong career if they joined the Livonian branch (MOL 2015:125).

²⁸¹ FOREY 1986:164.

shall be given a suitable period of probation, so that he may learn the hardships to be undergone in this Order, and the brethren may find out his character (...)”²⁸². The *CLP* tells an educational story about the ‘nourishment of the soul’ and a knight convinced the Order did not give it to him²⁸³. Even so, for some the promise of roof, food, and clothes²⁸⁴ was probably enough, and for others it could have meant an improved social status:

“Some may have thought merely of escaping from serfdom; but for others, entry to a military order offered further possibilities. Those who have drawn attention to the influx of *ministeriales* into the Teutonic order have argued that the taking of vows often led to a marked change in social standing. It has been pointed out that the *ministeriales* of the abbey of Reichenau and of other lords who became members of the convent at Mainau not only acquired control of considerable property rights at the abbey’s expense but also in standing came to equal the aristocratic inmates of the abbey.”²⁸⁵.

Besides looking for status, men could be also trying to escape financial problems – yet, recruits were asked about their finances, because the military orders did not want to be responsible for debts the recruits might have contracted²⁸⁶. In the same way, knights were asked about their marital status – if a knight was married, he needed the consent of his wife or fiancé to join a military order²⁸⁷. For instance, the *CLP* tells the story of Heinrich von Kunzen, whose wife’s refusal into letting him join the Teutonic Order led to a divine intervention to change her mind into giving Heinrich her permission²⁸⁸.

Knights could be also running from justice: “(...) by promising to join the Teutonic order Bruno of Berlingerode in 1266 sought to avoid the death sentence which had been

²⁸² STERNS (trans.) 1969:233-234. This probation was optional, as can be seen in the full paragraph at Addendum, Pt. II, *Rule*, paragraph 29. *Of the probation of those who wish to enter this Order*:308.

²⁸³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:1819. Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP2 – Nourishment of the soul*:313.

²⁸⁴ Paragraph 22, *Of the things which pertain to the knights*, will be addressed further in this chapter. But there were always those who appreciated every little comfort too much: “Indeed many, after they have joined an order, want to have the things which they were unable to enjoy in the world... I have heard of one man, who during the whole of his life in the world had never rested his head on a pillow but who, after joining an order, disturbed the whole convent by his grumbling and complaints, when he was lacking a pillow for just one night, because the linen pillow case was being washed.” (FOREY 1992:141).

²⁸⁵ FOREY 1986:165.

²⁸⁶ FOREY 1992:138.

²⁸⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:137.

²⁸⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5135-5179.

imposed upon him at Duderstadt.”²⁸⁹. According to Bumke²⁹⁰, during the Hohenstaufen period, ‘ritter’ meant anyone armoured on horseback, and though retainers of *ministeriales* were politically valued, they were also a nuisance to public order²⁹¹: thus, “(...) the secular knights, from which the Teutonic Order recruited (...), embraced a bellicosity that cannot be underestimated as an influential component of their chivalric ethos.”²⁹² In the 1250s, Pope Alexander IV had given the Order’s priests privileges to absolve a recruit’s previous crimes and sin, “(...) making the Teutonic Order a sanctuary for malefactors and an attractive option to those wishing to escape secular punishment.”²⁹³. I doubt everyone was a rotten apple, for human beings are more complex than that. Documents from the 15th century contain parameters that the Great Masters thought fitting for suitable candidates; for instance, in 1406 Konrad von Jungingen commissioned the Vogt of Leske, Siegmund von Ramig, to recruit knights in the Empire, but only the noble-born, young, healthy, and who led an honourable life (‘ehrenhaften Lebenswandel’): the elderly and the unhealthy were to be excluded, for they could not perform military duties, and swordsmen who were defeated in duels or were threatened with imprisonment should be excluded as well²⁹⁴.

Another reason to join an order could be to atone for an offense: “In 1233 Conrad of Thuringia had been in open conflict with the archbishop of Mainz and had attacked the town of Fritzlar; and it was this event which occasioned his entry into the Teutonic order.”²⁹⁵. It could also be that a sinner had to join an order to redeem himself, “(...) although it is difficult to accept as literally true Peter of Dusburg’s story that John of Ilberstedt promised to enter

²⁸⁹ FOREY 1986:166.

²⁹⁰ “The Latin concept *miles* no more designates a social quality than does the German word *ritter*. The two words have in common the fact that they are not primarily concerned with the type of armament: both can designate fighting-men of any type as well as the special group “armoured cavalry”. In both cases the stress is laid rather on the personal obligation of the armed man, on the dependence of the warrior on a lord. (...) Among the *milites*/knights there are free and unfree, landed and landless, men of high and low birth. These concepts do not permit of a unified social interpretation.” (JACKSON et al (trans.) 1982:39).

²⁹¹ *Ministeriales* were known to take over offices, lands, revenues, to engage in feuds that could turn into extended banditry and to plot conspiracies to expel/murder their lords; because they had castles, a network of kindred *ministeriales*, and armed followers, feuds could reach levels that threatened the whole of local society (ARNOLD 1985:225).

²⁹² PEYPER:9/11.

²⁹³ Idem, *ibidem*:19.

²⁹⁴ MILITZER 1991:8.

²⁹⁵ FOREY 1986:167.

the Teutonic order when demons were casting him and the bed in which he was lying into a bog (...)”²⁹⁶. Or, a knight might have just wanted to provide himself for his older years: since joining an order was a decision for life (that, of course, if the knight was not expelled or left by his own), Teutonic knights could expect to be taken care of when they were too old to fight. Paragraph 25, *Of the old and infirm brethren*, states that “The old brethren and the infirm shall be generously cared for according to their infirmity; they shall be treated with patience and diligently honored; one shall not in any way be rigorous as to the bodily needs of those who bear themselves honorably and piously.”²⁹⁷.

Finally, a factor that should never be discarded is religion, for a knight could be simply wanting to save his soul: “In whatever way it was described, the desire for salvation was the motive most commonly expressed in documents concerning admissions to the military orders, and this aspect was further emphasized by offers of crusading indulgencies to brethren who fought against the infidel.”²⁹⁸ Again, the story of Heinrich von Kunzen, who “(...) had outdone all his companions in evil when he was in the world, so he outdid all the others in the order he had joined in piety and the virtue of his life.” serves as example – Heinrich was so bad the devil appeared to him, he had accusatory visions and greedy dreams, until he had the epiphany of joining the Teutonic Order to cleanse his soul. For many, actual action against the perceived enemies of God probably made more sense than closure in a monastery, thus a task “(...) more demanding and therefore of greater spiritual value.”²⁹⁹ Geoffroi of Charny’s statement on how the dangers of a righteous life of combat were superior to the safety of a monastery probably echoed the thoughts of many who joined the ranks of military orders³⁰⁰. Thus, the military orders had the advantage of not completely abandoning the world, considering that a major occupation from secular life – fighting – could be pursued; furthermore, there was not such austerity and asceticism as in

²⁹⁶ FOREY 1986:167. For the episode vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP3* – Johannes von Ilberstedt:314.

²⁹⁷ STERNS (trans.) 1969:229. The *CLP* tells of an elderly knight’s deeds during a siege and the fate he met – vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP4* – Elder knight:314.

²⁹⁸ FOREY 1986:161/168.

²⁹⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:168.

³⁰⁰ KENNEDY (trans.) 2005:98/99.

monasteries³⁰¹, and the orders were not as exclusive as monasteries since they did not impose educational qualifications³⁰². But there could be restrictions, at least a theoretical some.

13th century admission rituals for the Temple and the Hospital required not only knightly descent but also legitimate birth (though a Hospitaller statute of 1270 that imposed this made an exception for bastards of princes and greater lords);³⁰³ there were also restrictions to age of acceptance, and though the Templars required only that recruits were old enough to bear arms to be able to make a final decision by themselves³⁰⁴, it has been referred above the Teutonic Order did not accept recruits under fourteen. But age aside, social origins could not always reflect in the ranks of brethren, such as all knights being of knightly descent and all sergeants being simply free men – the Teutonic Great Master could accept non-knights as knights, and undoubtedly there were ‘knights’ who lied about their origins (“One who was discovered was a Templar called Oliver, who was sentenced to be expelled from the order, although it was later decided that he could remain with the rank of sergeant.”), but it seems that no proof of noble birth had been requested³⁰⁵, at least until Great Master Dietrich von Altenburg. Even though the Teutonic Rule states the Order was for knights, the admission ritual asks nothing of it from recruits:

“The brethren have hearkened to your prayer, if there is no impediment against you as to the things we shall ask you. The first is, whether you have obligated yourself to another order, whether you are bound by a vow to any woman, or whether you are the serf of any lord, or whether you have incurred any debt, or whether you have any obligations to settle with which the Order might be burdened, or whether you have any secret disease; (...) But if they say that they have

³⁰¹ The *CLP* tells about some knights particularly determined in punishing their flesh in their pursuit of virtue (vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP5* – Engelkin/6-Brother Thamno/7-Hermann von Lichtenburg:316), and in Laws II, paragraph h) *How and when the brethren shall receive their discipline* (vide Addendum, Pt. II, *Laws II*, paragraph h):317). However, the type of injury related to flagellation and the associated risk of infection are incompatible with carrying armour and with the fitness required for knights in an active warzone. Therefore, I believe that flagellation was not common practice in the Order.

³⁰² FOREY 1986:170. Laws III, paragraph 1. *That the illiterate brethren shall not study without permission* indicates that those with instruction are free to use it if they want (the *LRC* was written by a knight), but a lay brother would not become a clerk, and a clerk would not pursue higher education without the Great Master’s avail (STERNS (trans) 1969:248).

³⁰³ FOREY 1992:135.

³⁰⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:135-136.

³⁰⁵ FOREY 1986:145.

none of these impediments, then the master shall put to them these vows which will bind them to the Order.”³⁰⁶.

Simply put, as long as a knight had already been knighted, was not an apostate from another order³⁰⁷, was single/widowed/had obtained permission from his partner, was a freeman, was healthy, and had no debts or other problems that might cause trouble in the future, he could enter the Order’s ranks as a knight. However, as has been mentioned above, knights could have tried to escape their secular problems by joining an order, and Teutonic Laws confirm it was a possibility:

“39. Herein are contained the most serious offenses of all and their punishment. The most serious offense is:

- (1) If a brother enters the order through simony or through lying.
- (2) If a brother receives someone through simony.
- (3) If a brother, when questioned at the time he is to become a brother, keeps silent about things which would impede his entrance into the brotherhood.”³⁰⁸

The state of ones’ finances³⁰⁹ seems to have been the preferred omission on the behalf of recruits, according to contemporaries:

“(…) in 1222 Frederick II conceded that no one who had been admitted to the Teutonic order should be liable for debts contracted before entry: his heirs and not the order were to be responsible for repayment. The ineffectiveness of the precautions taken is illustrated in a different way by a papal bull issued in 1255 which mentions brothers of the Teutonic order who had

³⁰⁶ STERNS (trans.) 1969:322-323. The admission questions were “Do you belong to another Order? Are you married? Have you any hidden physical deformity? Are you in debt? Are you a serf? Are you prepared to fight in Palestine/or elsewhere/to take care of the sick/to practice any craft you know, as ordered/to obey the Rule?” and the formula to reply was “I x do profess and promise chastity, renunciation of property, and obedience to God and to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to you, Brother x Master of the Teutonic Order, and to your successors, according to the Rule and Institutions of the Order, and I will be obedient to you, and to your successors, even unto death.” (NICOLLE 2007:22).

³⁰⁷ However, just like amalgamations, transferences could occur – as seen from papal letters and admission ceremonies, transferences could be arranged if permission was given (FOREY 1986:153).

³⁰⁸ STERNS (trans.) 1969:277. For these, the culprit could make amends and retain his habit if the Great Master and his brethren allowed him to (idem, *ibidem*: 277-278).

³⁰⁹ According to Urban, joining the Order eliminated a knight’s debts (2003:18.).

become conscience-stricken because of the nonpayment of debts incurred before they had taken the habit (...).”³¹⁰.

Simony seems to have been related to a recruit (or his family, or lord) donating to the Order or bringing gifts for the Order upon joining in. Knights were expected to contribute with 30 to 60 marks, usually in the form of land, a remarkable sum that would be probably considered worth it by families, considering the increase in prestige and political profit for having a relative in the Teutonic Order³¹¹. The *CLP* tells of how Polish nobles donated their possessions to the Order, so that they would be received into it³¹², but while canonists began to question this practice, the military orders continued to expect them and the inability to make a proper donation hindered admission; this was replaced by simony being an impediment to acceptance in a military order³¹³:

“In response to a petition from the Teutonic order, Alexander IV in 1258 agreed to moderate the severity of the Lateran decrees both for those who had entered that order simoniacally and for those who had admitted them. He conceded that some should be allowed to remain in their own convents, while the remainder were to be sent to other houses of the order; if these houses objected, the offenders (...) were to be admitted “tamquam de novo” and assigned the lowest places in choir and refectory.”³¹⁴.

Bringing gifts and making donations raises the question as to whether the knight joined an order with his own equipment³¹⁵, or, in case he had not yet been knighted or was too poor to afford good equipment, could be given equipment by the Order. Dietrich von Meissen equipped his knights upon offering them to the Order, and it has been pointed that *ministeriales* were provided by their lords – however, when one joined the Order, maybe it would be his lord’s choice on what he could and what he could not take with him. From the

³¹⁰ FOREY 1986:154-155.

³¹¹ URBAN 2003:18.

³¹² Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP8* – Polish donations:318.

³¹³ FOREY 1986:155.

³¹⁴ Idem, *ibidem*: 155-156.

³¹⁵ The Hospitallers stated in the Statutes of the Chapter-General of 1292 that “It is decreed that all the brother knights, who shall come from beyond the sea, should bring with them all their equipment [*arnois*] complete, that is to say, three beasts; and he who shall bring less, that the said brother be taken and sent back beyond the sea.” (HYLAND 1996:154-155). It seems that at least horses were a must for the Hospitallers, and perhaps the same applied to the Teutonic Order. I doubt, however, that a knight bringing only one horse – a warhorse – with him would be refused in the Baltic.

trial of the Templars it can be ascertained that “Some postulants were admittedly given clothing and equipment by patrons (...)”³¹⁶, and the developments in the Livonian branch suggest that “Provided they enjoyed the right patronage, ambitious and able knights could reach attractive positions of power.”³¹⁷. After an oath formula of 1450, recruits had to bring with them three horses worth twenty florins or 60 florins instead of the horses, 25 florins for the travel to Prussia, and knightly equipment – armour included; when the candidate could not afford the journey money, the bailiwicks where he had been recruited had to cover travel expenses, which was costly; for instance, Sweder Cobbing, Land Commander of Westphalia in 1411, recruited 33 knights and transferred them to Livonia in behalf of the Livonian Master Konrad von Vitinghof: it is unknown whether von Vitinghof, the knights or their relatives ever repaid Cobbing’s expenses³¹⁸.

This again brings up the amount of recruits that were someone’s younger sons, and the average age of these recruits: since there was little material advantage to gain in entering an order, not all recruits could have been younger sons³¹⁹, and positions of power must have been appealing regardless the number of a knight’s siblings. It has been asserted that the minimum entry age in the Teutonic Order was fourteen. Interrogation files from the Templars in the 14th century show the average entry age of a group of 224 knights:

“(...) of 224 brethren appearing before the papal commissioners in Paris in 1310-11, only thirty-three had joined the order when they were below the age of twenty, and the average age of entry of this group was twenty-seven and a half. These figures cannot, of course, be taken as being absolutely accurate, as it is clear that some brothers had only an approximate notion of their own ages, but brethren would have known at what stage

³¹⁶ FOREY 1986:157.

³¹⁷ MOL 2015:125.

³¹⁸ MILITZER 1991:9. The charter from 1422 where the Land Commander of Utrecht, Sweder Cobbing, declares the profit gained in 1411 as Land Commander of Westphalia by recruiting knights from Utrecht: it was a request from the Livonian Master Konrad von Vietinghoff for Cobbing to recruit knights in his surroundings and send them to Lübeck – this was after Tannenberg, because even though no Livonian knights died in the battle because they were late, the Livonian branch had a crucial role in reconquering the Prussian ‘Ordenstaadt’, thus Livonian knights lost their lives and maybe Prussian ranks were then filled with Livonians, meaning that the Livonian branch needed manpower (MOL 2015:130-131).

³¹⁹ FOREY 1986:166.

in their lives they had joined the Temple, and their testimony can be taken as a general indication of recruitment patterns.”³²⁰.

In some areas, the average age of Templar recruits was 27/28, because younger sons might not have immediately committed to a life in a military order: “(...) it has been demonstrated, for example, that it was common for groups of young nobles, the *juvenes*, to spend several years seeking adventure and glory in war and tournament.”³²¹. According to Militzer, over the centuries, the Order primarily demanded from candidates health and youth; however, he defends that knights did not join as youths, but as older and ‘seasoned’ men³²². The eternal struggle between physically fit for a job and experience to perform said job. Considering that a child could be raised – and thus trained – in a Teutonic convent, and that the *ministeriales* were professionals of war, and that a knight³²³ could either enter the Order on his own or in the company of family or a lord, and that health was a decisive question at entry, it seems to me that most recruits should already be relatively experienced fighters when they joined the Order, perhaps not under the age of 25 and not above their 30s. Unfortunately, the Order’s chronicles do not go into detail when it comes to the knights’ age, referring to them only as either young or old, and I have not found information on the subject; thus, these are only my suppositions. It seems, however, that young knights could be entrusted with leading roles³²⁴ and that their counsel was sought when necessary³²⁵ – and that they were, of course, ready for action:

“Meanwhile the Brothers in Kurland (...) heard that the Samogithians were out to do them no good. They hastily conferred and sent messengers to Memel to tell the Brothers and the Germans to come quickly and to bring the Kurs with them. When the courier came to Memel, he delivered the message to the Brothers, and the group of young men who were there rejoiced.”³²⁶.

³²⁰ FOREY 1992:136-137.

³²¹ FOREY 1986:164.

³²² MILITZER 1991:9/11.

³²³ According to Milliken, men were knighted at the age of 21 in a ceremony, or could be dubbed after a battle: “The squire [around fourteen] who had distinguished himself in battle was called forth (...) and simply knelt before the commander of the army, who *dubbed* him (...)” (1968:21/24/26).

³²⁴ For example, the young commander of Brandenburg, Gebhart von Mansfeld, who will be mentioned in Part III.

³²⁵ Like in the *LRC*, when “The Master took counsel with them, asking both young and old whether or not they should fight.” (SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:134).

³²⁶ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:100.

It has been estimated that, in Livonia, the average ‘life span’ of a knight would be ten years due to campaigning³²⁷; perhaps the same could be applied to Prussia.

The subject of age at date of entry rises yet another question that has been already partially answered by the *ministeriales* phenomenon: the knights’ training.

3. The Knights’ Training:

However, just like it was necessary to analyse the relevance of *ministeriales*, it is also necessary to dedicate a few paragraphs to the meaning of the original German term, ‘ritter’. The distinction between ‘rîter’ (mounted warrior) and ‘ritter’ (someone from the knightly class) came later in the 13th century from examples in poetry³²⁸, as, according to dictionaries “*Ritter* originally designated the heavily armored horseman; later it became a ‘class – designation’.”³²⁹.

I will not, however, linger on aspects of secular knighthood, as the focus of my thesis is Teutonic cavalry. This background context is simply to provide a better picture of who Teutonic knights might have been, though it is undeniable that there needs to be more research on secular German knighthood. During the Hohenstaufen period, anyone who fought on horseback with armour was a ‘knight’ (either king, prince, vassal or a mercenary), though the uniformity of weapons did not erase the differences between lords and servants: horse and armour became part of the equipment of unfree cavalry soldiers and mercenaries around 1200, though being armed with a horse and armour did not always mean that the man who fought with that equipment owned it³³⁰.

³²⁷ MOL 2015: 126-127.

³²⁸ Distinguishing knights from non-knights based on their weapons and way of fighting can be ascertained through ‘Blütezeit’ poetry (MHG classical period): for instance, in Hartmann’s *Iwein*, “(...) nû sich wie ich gewâfent bin: ich heize ein rîtr (...)” (“now look how I am armed: I am called a knight”) and also in *Parzival*, “(...) mich hiez ein kûnec ritter sîn: swaz halt druffe mir geschiht, ine kum von disem orse niht.” (“A king told me to be a knight: whatever happens to me as a result, I shall not get off this horse.”) (JACKSON et al (trans.) 1982:24-25).

³²⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:12/22.

³³⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:43-44.

“In very general terms it may be stated that in the century of the classical period, between 1150 and 1250, the terms *dienestman* and *ritter*, just like the corresponding terms *ministerialis* and *miles* are to some degree interchangeable and applicable to one and the same group of people and that after this time they gradually separate into designations of a hierarchy of rank, in which the *ministerialis-dienestman* ranks higher than the *miles-ritter*.”³³¹.

As such, it is necessary to keep in mind that not all German ‘knights’ were noble. I believe that, in the Order’s context, this aspect can be directly related to what being a noble-born knight entailed.

Laws from the mid-14th century explicitly required that a candidate to the rank of knight had to be of noble birth; however, a paragraph in Dietrich von Altenburg’s laws allows the acceptance of men who had promised to take over certain tasks, which indicates that the Order looked for specific recruits to be assigned to determined tasks³³² – it seems to me that generally recruits were expected to be professionals already, and most that has been previously enumerated about the *ministeriales* points this way.

From the beginning, the Order needed knights who were physically agile and able to handle weapons and fight, but the Order also introduced knights to administrative practices, which allowed the knights to gain experience in war, people, and that meant that young recruits could later advance into higher offices – when recruits went to Prussia at fourteen or little more, they received training in the convents³³³. According to Milliken, a knight’s training began at the age of seven: he had to learn the arts of horsemanship (“(…) he learnt to guide a horse with grace and dexterity, to jump it over walls and ditches, and to spring into the saddle without touching the stirrups³³⁴.”), swordsmanship and archery, and wielding a lance by training against a quintain; he also had to exercise by running and by training hand-to-hand combat; he was also taught to hunt, in order to learn how to cope with fatigue, hunger, and thirst, to become alert and to develop confidence in the use of weapons, to observe the disposition of the terrain, to learn how to orientate himself, and to develop attention; as a squire, training became more physically demanding and his duties included not only aiding

³³¹ JACKSON et al (trans.) 1982:62.

³³² MILITZER 1991:8.

³³³ Idem, *ibidem*:10.

³³⁴ Agility required for when there is no time to have the horse stationary and hold the stirrup in the right position.

his master with his armour and maintaining it, but also supervising the care of his horses and breaking in young horses³³⁵ - in this aspect, however, I believe the knight himself would train his horse once it had been taught to tolerate tacks and a rider, or would have someone experienced doing it. Militzer presents a more cryptic view by considering that it is unknown how the recruits were trained before entering the Order, though assuming that, first, they were trained among their family in the profession of weapons and in the exercise of power – he also adds that details of this training are unknown, especially if the recruits were given to the Order as children³³⁶. Nicolle reinforces that little is known about specific aspects of training within the Order, but defends it was likely to be similar to that of other orders and would reflect the martial developments in the Empire³³⁷.

The *CLP* tells that Ludwig von Liebenzell came from nobility, and thus already had knightly training before his profession: “Brother Ludwig [von Liebenzell] was from a branch of a noble family, had learned the arts of war from an early age and performed many miraculous, valiant deeds in battle, which this book will describe later.”³³⁸.

It is my opinion that training reflected the trends of warfare, as well as the economic power of a family: thus, it could not be entirely homogenous through space and time, but it certainly implied horsemanship, fighting, endurance, and handling weapons. As for training in a convent, it would probably be more rigorous and would include collective training, which is something that would not happen in a noble household, given that knights in a military order were bound by vows of obedience and had to perform as a tight unit. The 14th century laws mentioned above probably aimed at ensuring the Order was receiving men who already had a relatively uniform training and were thus ready to be deployed, in contrast to more varied degrees of readiness of knights who might have come from non-noble families, whose

³³⁵ MILLIKEN 1968:19-22. The more demanding training required that the squire “(...) spring upon a horse *armed at all points* [fully equipped]; to exercise himself in running, to strike for a length of time with the axe or club; to dance and to throw somersets [somersaults] entirely armed except the helmet; to mount on horseback behind one of his comrades, by barely laying his hands on his sleeve; to raise himself betwixt two partition walls to any height, by placing his back against the one, and his knees and hands against the other; to mount a ladder, placed against a tower, upon the reverse or under side, solely by the aid of his hands, and without touching the rounds with his feet; to throw the javelin, to pitch the bar.” (idem, *ibidem*:21).

³³⁶ MILITZER 1991:11.

³³⁷ NICOLLE 2007:44.

³³⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4221.

training had been poor and who had not yet experienced combat by the time of their profession.

Though not very explicit on how the knights continued training, the Rule provides a few hints on how the knights kept exercised and sharpened their martial skills in paragraph 23. *Of the chase*:

“The brethren shall not participate in the chase (...) But if they have or acquire in the future in some regions thickly wooded lands from which they may gain great profit in game and skins, then they are allowed hunters whom, with others also, the brethren may accompany for defense and protection against evil men. However, they shall not go rushing over fields and through woods with arrows and other weapons on purpose after wild animals. Further we allow them to harry wolves, lynxes, bears and lions, without hounds, and to destroy them, not as a pastime but for the common good. Meanwhile, the brethren may also shoot birds to practice shooting and increase their skill.”³³⁹.

On the other hand, in paragraph 28. *How the brethren shall set people a good example*, the knights are advised against engaging in secular knightly activities, such as tournaments: “Weddings and gatherings of knights and other assemblages, and frivolous amusements, by which through wordly pride the devil is served, the brethren shall rarely attend, though they may attend for the affairs of the Order or to win souls.”³⁴⁰ In theory, the knights’ permitted amusement was woodcarving³⁴¹.

The Order not only needed healthy and (young) experienced knights, but in Prussia and Livonia also needed knights capable of exercising lordship, command people and administer offices - there are some knights who went to Prussia whose whereabouts before they entered the Order are known: Konrad Ottinger was a ‘Landrichter’ in Sterzing, before taking the habit in Bozen in 1452 and being sent to Prussia; Jörg Ramung served for a long time in the court of Duke Siegmund of Austria before joining the Order in 1452 and going to Prussia; Gotthard Kettler served as squire in the electoral court of Köln; other examples from the 15th and 16th centuries show that, in general, knights in Prussia and Livonia had received training outside their family households, in larger courts of landlords, or had themselves

³³⁹ STERNS (trans.) 1969:228-229.

³⁴⁰ STERNS (trans.) 1969:233.

³⁴¹ NICOLLE 2007:30.

performed administrative offices — thus the later demand for noble candidates, for they were expected to know about the ‘craft of war’, since noblemen were raised to exercise power and to fight³⁴².

For the current thesis, however, fighting takes precedence over bureaucracy. A knight specialised in mounted combat, and as a professional warrior, he had certain equipment and a comrade-in-arms he had to know how to work with. But being a professional warrior implied experience in combat, and that might have taken a toll on a knight’s body – and psyche. This is a subject I believe to be essential for a broader perspective on Teutonic knights and on how they waged warfare. A Teutonic knight was not simply a knight, but a warrior fighting for God. First and foremost, I believe it is important to understand how this knight viewed his role. The creation of the military orders intertwined religion, warfare, knighthood, and monasticism in an innovative and appealing manner, justifying knighthood ethically and morally by replacing the pragmatism that justified the existence of knights and laying the foundations of the new chivalrous ideal that would develop over the following centuries due to the spiritualisation of warfare³⁴³. Yet, it is necessary to keep in mind that chivalry within a military order was not a unified nor stationary concept and could vary according to region, wealth and individuals, and as Peyper puts it in her thesis, “How a monastic knight, who had been recruited from the secular knighthood, applied his secular chivalric values to his Christian calling was critical to his interpretation of Christian chivalry.”³⁴⁴. Once again, it is important to keep in mind that, until the mid-14th century, most

³⁴² MILITZER 1991:11-12. The *CLP* tells the following about the background of the first knights sent there by Hermann von Salza: “According to my sources, as soon as the house of Vogelsang was completed Brother Konrad sent messengers to the Grand Master Brother Hermann von Salza to inform him of what had been done, that he had completed what he had been asked to do, and he pleaded with him to send him more brothers and men. The Grand Master did this willingly. He sent him Brothers Hermann Balk to be master, (...) Along with Brother Hermann Balk he sent a praiseworthy knight, Brother Dietrich von Bornheim, as marshal. Brother Konrad von Tautleben was also sent with them. He had previously been a highly regarded chamberlain to the sweet St Elizabeth. With them they had another two knight brothers, both called Heinrich. One was a Thuringian called Heinrich von Berge and the other came from Zeitz [Saxony-Anhalt] and was called Heinrich von Wittgendorf. These brothers were accompanied by a great many armed men and they were all sent to Prussia to help Brother Konrad as he had requested.” (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:1430-1440).

³⁴³ LOCK 2006:353.

³⁴⁴ PEYPER:2. This, of course, could lead to a variety of interpretations, though common points must have been shared. In his article *The Sense of Humor among the Teutonic Knights of the Thirteenth Century*, Urban tells one episode that probably resulted from this very same interpretation: “One gibe that was repeated often was

of the knights came from *ministerialis* backgrounds: these knights were expected to be experts in mounted combat, were obliged to garrison castles, administer lands and jurisdictions, or all of these³⁴⁵; as a landowning group with their own interests, and thus imbued, as Arnold calls it, in ‘the German political mentality of conflict’, it made the *ministeriales* dangerous for the use of violence on behalf of their lords, or on their own³⁴⁶: “[*Ministeriales*] were used in all affairs, and might suffer torture, mutilation or death if captured. Many were held for ransom for many were actually seized (...)”³⁴⁷. According to Urban, potential recruits for the Order in the mid-14th century responded more to chivalric aspects than to the traditional crusading call to defend Christendom, and thus the Order made chivalry its *raison d’être* – crusading in the Baltic became a matter of gaining secular chivalric glory instead of matters of spirituality³⁴⁸.

This situation brings another instance that should be observed for the Teutonic knight: initially, the bulk of the Order came from small, socially and politically unimportant families close to traditional culture, and as such close to pre-Christian traditions³⁴⁹. According to Hartmut Kugler, the *LRC* can be used to access the mentality of the regular knight, given the highlights in mutual martial values between the knights and their enemies, as well as pagan practices being accepted by the knights³⁵⁰: “(...) The Germanist Hartmut Kugler explains the respective passages in the Chronicle with reference to the extremely close link between Christian and pagan forms of culture, especially as regards the sacrifice of horses to God³⁵¹,

first made during a confrontation at Dünamünde when a monk threatened to appeal to the Pope for help against the crusaders' oppression; a Teutonic Knight responded that they already had a Pope among them, and when the monk asked where he was, the knight pulled out his weapon and said, "the sword is our Pope and it is never far from you." This statement damned the reputation of the crusading order for all subsequent generations, being repeated by enemies as proof that the order was nothing more than a pack of land-hungry, irreligious troublemakers; and the knights repeated it, too, apparently persuaded that it was a great joke.” (https://department.monm.edu/history/urban/articles/humor_of_Teutonic_Knights.htm) [13/10/20].

³⁴⁵ ARNOLD 1985:25.

³⁴⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:22.

³⁴⁷ GRAVETT 1997:19-20.

³⁴⁸ PEYPER:7.

³⁴⁹ KĻAVIŅŠ 2006:266-267.

³⁵⁰ PEYPER:5.

³⁵¹ It is never stated the horses captured by the Order’s knights are sacrificed, only that some are set aside for god. For instance, vide Addendum, Pt. II, *LRC1* – God’s share:318. On the other hand, Kļaviņš defends that there is one particular passage that, in the original German, can be considered suspicious: “Here, God is “justly rewarded” with horses and weapons for his help in a campaign. It is not known, of course, what happened to

which was an enduring tradition also in Medieval Germany.”³⁵² Another instance of Teutonic knights in the presence of pagan practices can be found in another episode from the *LRC*³⁵³ – “However, in this case, the English translation of the Chronicle is not precise, and a closer examination of the Chronicler’s narration reveals that [the narrator] is in fact referring to all those assembled, including Germans.” and not only to the habits of the native allies; the original MHG refers to the whole group without distinction, and the translators (Urban and Smith) point at how Christianized allies maintained pagan customs while being fully integrated in the Order’s system³⁵⁴.

It could have happened that the knights were influenced by living in proximity with the natives and their ancient customs³⁵⁵. The natives served with the Order and it has also been suggested that some brethren were locals (though only one brother knight is known, Ykemele)³⁵⁶, given that “Archaeological investigations of the Livonian castles suggest that a certain proportion of the Brother Sergeants may have been of local Baltic origin, for alongside various items of western European origins, excavations also turned up numerous artifacts (...) that were specifically characteristic of local people.”³⁵⁷; graveyards near castles also provide indirect evidence that native servants lived near the Order’s castles; Prussian nobles allied themselves with the knights and the native noblemen who had achieved a high status and were integrated as officers in the Order were called ‘Withinge’ – they had special tables to eat at the castles, as well as a special form to dress that included the use of their traditional weapons³⁵⁸.

these horses and weapons. In the Middle Ages it would not be unusual to share booty with the Church. The source, however, does not say anything in this regard. It quite simply speaks about “allocation” of weapons and horses “to God”.” (KĻAVIŅŠ 2006:265). The *LRC* describes pagans doing the exact same for their gods.

³⁵² KĻAVIŅŠ 2006:266. A significant cultural role was played by the horse in pre-Christian and Teutonic period Prussia, and though horse remains are rare in Prussian settlements, they abound in cult sites (for instance Poganowo) and cemeteries (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:319).

³⁵³ A military expedition in 1265 to the castle of Gresen/Grieze. Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *LRC2* - Divination:319.

³⁵⁴ KĻAVIŅŠ 2006:263/268/273.

³⁵⁵ Urban points out that, with varying degrees of fluency, Teutonic knights learned the local languages, while natives, too, learned German (URBAN 2003:21).

³⁵⁶ KĻAVIŅŠ 2006:274.

³⁵⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:271.

³⁵⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:269/271.

A tolerance for (and seemingly an adoption of) certain practices continued into the 14th century, judging on complaints against the Order: the Archbishop of Riga (formal accusation in 1305) and the city of Riga accused the Order of pagan practices in the 14th century, similarly to the papal legate Francis of Moliano in 1312: “(...) accusations of heresy and witchcraft leveled in relation to the burning of dead bodies (a pagan practice) and the killing of wounded Brothers in Livonia.”³⁵⁹ It is necessary to keep in mind the accusations have political weight³⁶⁰, but present a valuable insight into the knights’ lives. The sources from Francis of Moliano indicate the knights practiced pagan rites – especially fortune telling – that resembled the traditions of the Baltic natives: according to a Cistercian monk that complained of a knight who supposedly predicted the future with a pork bone, “(...) he said that he had heard said that a certain brother of the order of the said brothers of the Hospital, looking in the scapular bone of a certain pig, predicted to the other brothers certain future things that after happened, as that brother foretold.”³⁶¹.

In the beginning of the 14th century the Order was also accused several times of killing their injured troops and burning the dead bodies, according to a document issued by Pope Clement VI in 1310 (“Following the worst practice of the same pagans, they slay their own Brothers with a kind of impiety of savage ferocity, if it happens that they are afflicted with wounds in any hostile encounter or conflict, against the custom of orthodox faith while still alive, burning their bodies by the fire of flames.”) and in a papal ordinance from 1336 (“Further, so that you do not slay your Brothers, wounded in a fight, while still alive, nor cremate their bodies, pass a decree imposing punishment in such things, also do not exercise auguries and fortune telling or divination, but prohibit such things to be done through statutes passed in your chapters.”)³⁶².

³⁵⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:260/261/262.

³⁶⁰ “Complaints had been leveled against the Teutonic Knights on 230 counts. A total of twenty-four witnesses were heard, mostly monks. Further testimonies of nine other witnesses are related in a Königsberg source publication of 1912.” (idem, *ibidem*:262).

³⁶¹ Idem, *ibidem*:262.

³⁶² Idem, *ibidem*:263/273.

The Order's sources also mention the subject. The 14th century Livonian chronicle of Herman von Wartberge³⁶³ tells that the knights burned twenty-five of their dead, killed in battle during an expedition into Lithuania: considering the Christian doctrine regarding resurrection, burning the dead infringed the teachings of the Church – furthermore, different funerary practices are considered a turning point between Christianity and paganism³⁶⁴. Besides, burning the dead also conflicted with what was stipulated in the Statutes³⁶⁵, but considering that a battlefield was different from a piece of parchment, killing the wounded could have been an act of mercy³⁶⁶. As for divination, the *CLP* mentions the subject³⁶⁷ without any judgmental commentary, which might indicate that, at least in the eyes of the Order's clergy, some practices were tolerated; for instance, it is told that Dietrich von Esbeck knew he would die in campaign:

“(…) Brother Dietrich von Esbeck had foretold his death to Brother Konrad Rot; when the latter had offered him his horse for the campaign Esbeck had turned him down, telling him to keep his horse: ‘My horse is enough for me, and the blessing of God on high be on us both, because I am going away and you will not see me alive again, whatever the outcome of the campaign.’”³⁶⁸.

Hence, I believe it can be stated that Teutonic knights were not impermeable to the environment surrounding them. As such, it seems logical to examine the equipment that the knights had at their disposal to conduct warfare in the Baltic.

³⁶³ For instance, the following episode: “When morning had come, the lantmarsaculus with his own people found dead bodies, stripped naked, which they burned, as they went further”, from *Hermann de Wartberge Chronicon Livoniae* (idem, *ibidem*:273). However, the *CLP* seems to indicate that bodies could be left behind for scavenging – one can only wonder how many had Ludwig's luck: “On this same campaign against the Sudovians [Ludwig] von Liebenzell was so seriously wounded in the fierce fighting that he was left for dead in the snow. However, he was found by some Sudovians who took him, sick as he was, and loaded him sideways across a horse like a sack and took him away at a fast trot. The shaking and swinging stimulated his blood flow again and flushed it out of his wounds, and in this way Brother Ludwig recovered from his injuries; otherwise he would certainly have died, as he himself said afterwards. Since he was now their captive, as you have heard, they gave him to Cantegerda, the most noble of them all, to guard.” (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4241.

³⁶⁴ KĻAVIŅŠ 2006:264. Burning the dead could be explained as a Baltic influence, since the natives had the custom of burning the dead (idem, *ibidem*:264).

³⁶⁵ Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *Laws III*, paragraph 20:319. In addition, the Prussian Master Hartmann von Grünbach was expelled from his office after the Pope discovered he had executed two knights by burning them – vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP9* - Hartmann:319.

³⁶⁶ KĻAVIŅŠ 2006:264.

³⁶⁷ For example, vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP10* – Divination II:320.

³⁶⁸ FISHER (trans.) 2010:4805.

4. Equipment

The type of equipment, its' usefulness, and employment were developed according to the knights' experience during conflicts – though the years of prosperity also played a role on the organisation of the Order's forces, its' numerical strength, and composition, and these in turn also influenced equipment³⁶⁹. The majority of this equipment was imported mostly from the Holy Roman Empire, where there were main production centres in the South and West, though equipment was also produced within the Order's territories³⁷⁰.

Sources are varied and can be written, such as account books, lists of expenses, reports of inspection of castle armouries, municipal records, and official and legal documents – one of the most important sources is the *Das Marienburger Tresslerbuch der Jahre 1399-1409*³⁷¹: “(...) which contains lists of sums spent by the Order, mainly the Marienburg convent and the Grand Master, on buying and repairing arms and armour. (...) the information it provides is direct. (...) it records current prices of arms and armour and sometimes even enables us to discern their variety or differences in quality of the same kind of weapon or equipment.”³⁷². The pieces of armour recorded in the *DMT* are mail and plate (some are discriminated as iron, steel, white or coloured), and helmets (accounted in greater number than armours) that included dogface visors³⁷³; there is also information on elements of horse harness, warhorses, supply columns, and references to fixing equipment, such as “(...) *item 7 scot dem sarewechter vor unsers homeysters rinkenharnasch zu bessern* (...)”³⁷⁴.

Another important written source is *Das Grosse Ämterbuch des Deutschen Ordens*³⁷⁵, that contains information from the second half of the 14th century to the secularization of the

³⁶⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:12.

³⁷⁰ NICOLLE 2007:31.

³⁷¹ The Treasurer's Book from Marienburg pertaining the years 1399-1409.

³⁷² NOWAKOWSKI 1994:19-20.

³⁷³ NICOLLE 2007:41.

³⁷⁴ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:20 [auch 7 Scot für den Waffenschmied zur Verbesserung der Rüstung/der Kettenrüstung unseres Großen Meisters/ also 7 scots for the armourer to improve our Great Master's armour/hauberk].

³⁷⁵ *The Great Book of Offices of the German Order*. The centralisation of the Ordensstaat's administration in the 14th century required accurate registry of income and resources, which resulted in officials leaving their posts having to make an inventory of the resources at their disposal – one copy was kept locally and the other was sent to the Marienburg; the copies sent to the Marienburg were then kept in the Great Book of Offices, that

Order in 1525, though there are gaps in information regarding the second half of the 15th century: it lists inventories from commanderies³⁷⁶, ‘Voigteien’, particular castles and smaller territorial units — since most castles had two armouries, one for the arms and armour of the commander and Voigt, and the other for mobilization weapons, this leaves out the knights’ equipment, since it was personal and therefore not registered³⁷⁷. The problem with inventories is that only selected categories of weaponry are recorded: “These usually were parts of armour (mail hauberks, aventails, coifs, coats of plates, helmets, parts of plate armour, etc.); crossbows with bolts, guns with ammunition, gunpowder, sulphur, saltpetre, sometimes other equipment, and equestrian equipment (chiefly saddles).”³⁷⁸.

Lastly, the Statutes also provide information about equipment, especially the latter additions by Great Masters, that allow a glimpse into the knights’ real lives given the necessity of reminding them of their duties³⁷⁹ — from these additions, it can be understood the knights enjoyed decorated weapons and tacks.

Despite the limitations, I believe it is interesting to see what the Rule stated the knights could have, not only regarding their armour, weapons and horses³⁸⁰, but also their

even though was only started in 1400, includes older records - the oldest inventories are from 1364 (ŽABIŃSKI 2013:199). There is also the *Das Marienburger Ämterbuch* (The Marienburger Book of Offices), that contains the inventories of the offices from the Marienburg commandery (Grand Commander and Treasurer) for the years 1375-1452 (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:22).

³⁷⁶ The *Das Ausgabebuch des Marienburger Hauskomturs* (The Output Book of the Marienburg House Commander) mentions the same equipment as the *MTB*, though entries about horse harness and artillery increase because the supervision over the workshop where these items were produced and stored was the duty of the castle commander (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:20-21).

³⁷⁷ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:20-21.

³⁷⁸ ŽABIŃSKI 2013:201.

³⁷⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:22.

³⁸⁰ While the Rule forbade the knights of viewing their armour and horses as possessions, I believe this was intended as a dissuasion in case the knights decided to leave the Order, given that they would have to leave the armour and the horses. In addition, researchers such as Nowakowski and Žabiński have explained that the knights owned their equipment. Remarks such as follows indicate that the knights owned their swords: “The commissions given to craftsmen, and the records of purchase always say who the weapon is made for: (...) *item 2 sc. vor her Hartman swert zu machen*. It is obvious that each made or repaired sword had its owner.” (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:88) (*auch 2 Scot um Herr Hartmann ein Schwert zu machen/ also 2 scots to make Sir Hartmann a sword*). I too share the opinion, and I believe the situation was the same in the 13th century, before the later decrees requiring that the knights brought their equipment. Regarding the knight’s horse, I believe he owned it as well, for it would not make sense to go into combat with an unfamiliar animal. Response ‘at home’ under training and ‘outside’ in a real situation differs, and it does not make sense that a knight would go into

clothes and bedding. Since the inventories of convent armouries do not register the knights' equipment³⁸¹, it is my opinion that it is worth spending some paragraphs with what the Rule dictated for the matter (while keeping in mind that the reality out in the field demanded different things). According to the Rule, paragraph 11. *How and with what the brethren may clothe themselves, and what they may have for bedding*³⁸², the brethren were given uniform garments, with only the knights' white mantles as a sign of their knighthood; fancy fabrics were forbidden³⁸³, as were any type of decorations. However, judging by regional variations regarding equipment observed in paragraph 22 of the Rule, *Of the things which pertain to the knights*³⁸⁴, it seems the redactors took in consideration the Order's different theatres of operation when acknowledging the need of the knights to adapt to different means of warfare.

Now, the knights wore armour. The Drapier was in charge of distributing pieces of armour to armed brethren, and though the knights probably had their own equipment with them, knightly equipment did not vary greatly from that of sergeants. Military service was performed by knights and sergeants, but: "Although there was a clear-cut distinction of rank between the two groups, in military matters they different in degree rather than in kind.": the different equipment maybe facilitated fighting on foot for sergeants, and the limited attribution of horses probably meant that they could have been needed to fight on foot more often, "Yet the weapons and equipment of both groups were essentially similar, and the sergeants-at-arms did not constitute a light cavalry of the kind found in some Muslim armies."³⁸⁵. As such, I think it is still useful to see what the Drapier held, for it can help paint

action with an animal he did not know how to control and that he could not predict with a minimum certainty. The subject will be further discussed.

³⁸¹ These armouries were not where the Order's knights stored their weapons, for they had their own supplies: the knights' equipment is usually mentioned in visitation records, albeit generally: "Normally, they simply stated that a given convent member had a certain number of horses and his weaponry (*harnasch*)."³⁸¹ (ŽABIŃSKI 2013:205).

³⁸² Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *Rule*, paragraph 11. *How and with what the brethren may clothe themselves, and what they may have for bedding*:320.

³⁸³ According to Urban, the knights could find an opportunity for humour in the quality of the fabrics they were given (https://department.monm.edu/history/urban/articles/humor_of_Teutonic_Knights.htm [25/11/20]). It is worth noting the pun made with the name of the fifth Prussian Master, Hartmann von Grünbach ('tough man'), whom the knights nicknamed 'Watmal' after the piece of clothing he ordered the men to wear. 'Watmal', 'wāt māl' in MHG, is a rough or harsh cloth (https://www.koeblergerhard.de/mhd/mhd_w.html) [25/11/20]. Hartmann also had two knights burned to death at Elbing (Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP9* - Hartmann:320).

³⁸⁴ Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *Rule*, paragraph 22. *Of the things which pertain to the knights*:321.

³⁸⁵ FOREY 1992:54-55.

the picture of a knight's armour. According to *Costumes*, 35. *What pertains to the drapier's office*, "To the drapier's office pertains the drapery; coats of mail, shoulder pads, knee guards, standards, helmet crests³⁸⁶, gauntlets, girdles and other garments which the drapier shall give to the brethren, these pertain to his office."³⁸⁷ It is important to keep in mind, however, that there were still differences between a knight's and a sergeant's armour, given that knights were supposed to fight on horseback. The *CLP* includes several remarks about the weight of the knights' armour and weapons: for instance, during a campaign in 1260, the Danish knights that accompanied the Order were reluctant in fighting on foot due to the weight of their armour:

"When they had begun, Brother Heinrich, the marshal, asked a man called Matto, who I had heard was a Pomesanian and Pippin's son, how they should go about attacking the heathen's army. The man replied with this advice: 'I suggest that we dismount and send the horses so far away from us that no-one will have the chance to flee back to them, and that we should fight on foot. Since the men do not have horses they will be forced to defend themselves and to stay in the battle; otherwise they would undoubtedly flee.' The knights of Reval, who were in the service of the king of Denmark at this time, disagreed with this advice, along with many others. They were of the opinion that it was not possible to fight without horses because of the weight of the armour."³⁸⁸

Several experiments have demonstrated that amour (mail or plates or both) does not prevent freedom of movement. It is possible that the chronicler was trying to make a division between the Order's knights – who are not shown opposing to Matto's advice of fighting on foot – and the Danes and 'many others', a division based on physical strength and martial prowess. It might have sounded comical to the knights hearing the story.

³⁸⁶ The Teutonic crests immortalized by the Tannhäuser depiction in the *Codex Manesse* and Eisenstein will be discussed in the 3rd part of this thesis. It is worth noting already, however, that ornamentation of ceremonial great helms, indicated by references to silver rivets and nails or in studded faces to create patterns, can be found in written records; for instance, in the *DMT* for the year 1399: "(...) item 7 scot von silberynne nelechin zu den 3 helm (...)" (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:48) (auch 7 Scot von silbernen Nägelchen für 3 Helmen /also 7 Scots from silver nails for 3 helmets).

³⁸⁷ STERNS (trans.) 1969:305.

³⁸⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2896-2906.

Unfortunately, the Order's chronicles³⁸⁹ do not have detailed descriptions of the knights' appearances. The *LRC* contains a few allusions to armour, such as "The Brothers came to the Master with many proud troops, and all of the Teutonic Knights rode there together. One could see helms and shields glistening on the field and countless breast-plates shining like glass. The army was great and powerful and ready for combat."³⁹⁰ Due to this, it is necessary to observe what more bureaucratic material might tell, though information about the early years of the Order in the Baltic is not available. For Nowakowski, the author I relied mostly upon, his study on Teutonic equipment comprises 'Teutonic troops', that is to say Teutonic knights, sergeants, members of garrisons, Polish/German/Prussian feudal lords vassals of the Order, urban and rural levies, and mercenaries³⁹¹.

To complement the written records, there are also archaeological and iconographic sources though, as with everything in life, these too have their limitations. The main problem with archaeology is that the findings recovered cannot be ascribed as belonging to a Teutonic knight³⁹², even if found in a Teutonic site:

"Fragments of arms and armour have been recovered from numerous excavations of the Order's sites in Prussia, and a number of pieces have survived extant in private collections, and are now on display in museums. Crossbow bolts and arrowheads are found most frequently, sometimes in large quantities. Armour is comparatively rarer; fourteenth-century helmets derive from Toruń, Olsztyn, Melno (allegedly found on Grunwald battlefield) and Wystruć; breastplates have been recovered from Wielka Nieszawka near Toruń and at a huge range of other sites across Prussia; fragments of a scale armour at Radzyń Chelmiński and two pavises (large, full-body shields) painted with black crosses survive in collections in Nürnberg and Warsaw (...)"³⁹³.

Iconographic, numismatic and sphragistics sources are limited as well due to schematic representations³⁹⁴.

³⁸⁹ Polish chronicler Jan Długosz is also a relevant source for Teutonic equipment, being especially reliable for the early 15th century – however, descriptions of the knights' equipment are rare (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:27-28).

³⁹⁰ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:45.

³⁹¹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:10-11.

³⁹² Idem, *ibidem*:39.

³⁹³ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:167.

³⁹⁴ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:30.

Nicolle remarks that, despite the lack of information about the knights' armours, late in the 13th and 14th centuries armours were undergoing experimentation in the Empire³⁹⁵. Considering that the majority of recruits were German, and that it was likely that 13th century knights joined the Order with their own equipment, and that in the 14th century admission required that knights brought their own equipment, and that the Order imported equipment from the Empire, it seems safe to deduce that the equipment of Teutonic knights did not differ much from what knights in Western Europe had. It seems there was not a uniformity in equipment, given that efforts towards were apparently made during the 14th century when, for instance, Great Master Luther von Braunschweig decreed that the equipment was to be "(...) 'according to the customs of the country', which would have meant mail hauberks and coats-of-plates."³⁹⁶:

"(...) defensive armour in Prussia developed on the same lines as that in all parts of Europe. The armouries of the Order's State probably did not generally differ from those of Central and Western Europe as far as the stories of arms and armour are concerned. Certainly the arms and armour of the Order's State did not surpass in quality those of its neighbours."³⁹⁷.

Regardless of the 'Western' trends³⁹⁸ that might have dictated battlefield fashion, it must be questioned if the knights' equipment was permeable to Baltic influences, since it has been demonstrated the knights themselves were. Because I am limited by length and the

³⁹⁵ NICOLLE 2007:32.

³⁹⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:41.

³⁹⁷ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:59. This leads to the assumption that, if it was not the superior quality of the knights' equipment, then their successful (yet bumpy) establishment in the Baltic was due to other factors – or a conjugation of factors, such as cavalry tactics and the use of warhorses. This will be further developed in Part III.

³⁹⁸ Early literature about Teutonic equipment was characterized by a great deal of Occidentalism, with the knights depicted as representing Western chivalric culture, way better equipped than their Baltic or Slav opponents: "This gave rise to the following formulations: "Die Litauerreisen... waren... nur ritterlicher Sport" [The 'Reise' were but chivalric sport] or "Für die Ritter ... war diese sogar nicht mehr, als seine frühliche Jagd [For the knight this was no more than an early hunt] encountered on the works of otherwise serious scholars.", thus showing no regard towards the natives' equipment and military prowess; furthermore, this same perspective sustained that the superiority of the Teutonic Order lasted throughout the Ordensstaats entire existence (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:10).

spotlight is on the Teutonic knight and his horse, I will only refer the type of equipment from the armouries that is reported to have been adopted by the Order's knights³⁹⁹.

A crucial element of the knight's equipment was the helmet⁴⁰⁰ – even so, that did not prevent injury. For the occurrence of head wounds despite the helmets, it is likely it was due to the necessity felt by the wearer to remove his headgear or to open visors/bevors to see, breathe or talk; helmets could have also been discarded in a flight, knocked off or forcefully removed⁴⁰¹. The following excerpt from the *LRC* is pertinent for the subject at hand, as it describes blows to the head and how 13th century gear protected its wearer:

“The Brothers were fighting on foot as were all the Sengallians. Men on both sides became overheated, and red sweat spurted through the chain armor. Swords clanged, helmets split, and men on both sides fell dead upon the field. Many sank to the ground, knocked unconscious by the blows and stabbings.”⁴⁰².

³⁹⁹ Żabiński defends that the inventories do not always contain types of weapons that could be used by knights, and to the question as to whether the knights would occasionally use the weapons from the armouries, he defends that probably no, though this answer could be related to disciplinary issues within the Order following Tannenberg: “(...) Thorn commandery in 1437, where 4 brethren-knights with no weaponry were recorded.” (2013:205). It seems that misbehaved knights had their equipment confiscated and could not even use that of lower ranks. In the *Customs*, paragraph 67, *Of the brother who is doing penance*, it is stated that “(...) when the brother receives the penance, then he shall hand over animals and arms to the marshal, and have no control over them before he has completed his penance, unless the marshal gives him permission to care for and guard the animals, though he may not in any circumstance even ride them.” (STERNS 1969 (trans.):321). I believe the fact that a penitent could be authorized to ‘care for and guard the animals’ indicates there was a bond that was necessary to maintain (for instance in the case of a sergeant, who I doubt could afford a mount of his own), and that, in case of a knight, he owned the animals.

⁴⁰⁰ Written sources contain an abundance of helmets (and parts of helmets); however, this does not mean it is always possible to establish a typology – besides the scribal mistakes due to a lack of precise/established typology, there are also the ‘bastards’, intermediary forms without specific names (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:43-44).

⁴⁰¹ WOOSNAM-SAVAGE et DEVRIES 2015:55. My riding instructor made a pertinent remark on the common headgear sold in shops, available for all riders: unlike the headgear used by professional jumpers, more affordable helmets might not only break, but also slide forwards or backwards depending on how the rider falls, thus breaking the rider's nose or damaging the riders cervical. Though my German-made helmet is of enough quality to remain intact in case of impact, the thought that it could fail me other ways makes me wonder if the same happened to medieval knights. How many smashed their noses against their helms? Whereas mine is there to protect my skull from impact in a fall, theirs were there to protect them from blows to the head, and were perhaps unsafe in case of a bad fall from horseback? Would this be another reason for a knight to discard his helmet while in action?

⁴⁰² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:127-128.

The *CLP* describes how a knight's cheek was pierced by a spear, thus indicating that Friedrich was not wearing protective gear – yet he survived and continued to fight⁴⁰³.

The Order used several types of helmets, including older models⁴⁰⁴. At the end of the 13th century Teutonic knights wore Great Helms, that were worn over a coif or arming cap, plus the skull could be lined with fabric⁴⁰⁵. Even though Great Helms are present in iconography, they are absent from written records: Nowakowski attributes it to the fact that the available records are at the earliest from the second half of the 14th century, when the Great Helm was no longer used in the battlefield and thus no longer kept in the armouries: “Their frequent occurrence in iconographic material points to an artistic convention, current in Prussia, to represent knights wearing great helms. In this way their origin and status were emphasised.”⁴⁰⁶ 1298 is the earliest reference to Great Helms in Prussia: the seal of the Prussian Land Marshall depicts a knight wearing a one-sighted Great Helm with no mantlings; in a later period, there are possible references to Great Helms worn by Teutonic knights in the acts of the Polish-Teutonic process in Warsaw, according to the statement of the Polish knight Jan of Kisielewo, who failed to describe the faces of the attackers during the events of 1331 because the Teutonic knights were probably wearing Great Helms⁴⁰⁷ - thought a bascinet with a closed visor could have had the same effect. This is the opportune moment to address the matter of the Teutonic crests, forever immortalized by the *Codex Manesse*'s depiction of Tannhäuser and by Eisenstein's *Alexandr Nevskii*⁴⁰⁸: a quick Google images research immediately shows a myriad of Teutonic knights wearing horns, wings, and the like on top of their Great Helms:

⁴⁰³ Vide Addendum, Pt. III: *CLP3* - Sailing:350.

⁴⁰⁴ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:168.

⁴⁰⁵ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:46. Despite its impressive looks, it was not a practical headpiece due to its construction: the skull was made of several, riveted plates, reinforced with hoops, and closed with only a single/double sight and ventilation holes – it was heavy, it made breathing difficult and limited the range of vision; due to its construction, it did not effectively resist to blows (idem, *ibidem*:46).

⁴⁰⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:46-47.

⁴⁰⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:47. Later versions of the Great Helm depicted on the seals of the Grand Marshall, on some municipal seals, and on the frescoes at Königsberg show that the skull was no longer cylindrical and that the top was domed, with elongated side walls that rested on the knight's shoulders, and sporting a double sight (idem, *ibidem*:47).

⁴⁰⁸ The Polish motion picture *Krzyżacy* (1960) chose to embellish the Teutonic commanders with peacock feathers.

“The Teutonic Knights surmounted their elms with a crest in the shape of a circle with a black cross or with white pennons also with the cross. The first version is worn by the Grand Master on the miniature of the *Apocalypse* (...) and by the Grand Marshall on the seal of 1344 and 1416. Pennons on the helmets of the Teutonic Knights are shown on the painting in the church at Bunge, Gotland. It is interesting to note that bunches of two or three pennons are fixed to the side of the skull. (...) During the already mentioned process of Warsaw, one of the witnesses, Mikołaj, prior of the Dominicans of Sieradz, stated that certain Teutonic Knights ... *habebant crucem nigram super caput in galeis.*”⁴⁰⁹.

Nowakowski attributes these crested helms to high-ranking officers. However, the Order’s chronicles make no mention of helms surmounted with crests and pennons. Regarding its representation in art, it could be attributed to artistic liberty to identify the depicted knights. If the logic that crests identified the wearer is applied, then the crests announced who was inside the helm, and would thus be another link in the chain of command by identifying a figure of authority and by making said figure’s movements and directions more noticeable⁴¹⁰. The problem lies in prior Mikołaj’s account. I can accept those ‘certain Teutonic knights’ to have been commanding figures that did not go near where action took place because, for practical reasons, I firmly believe that these helms were not used in battle, by fighters. The brethren wore a uniform already, the white surcoat with a black cross, and as long as there was enough light, I do not think it would be too hard to see a white surcoat moving about. The Baltic was not a Middle Eastern desert with dust: visibility conditions could be hindered by foliage and thick fog, as the *CLP* tells:

“(…) two powerful noble men, Scumo and Stucze, gathered a huge army to attack the Christians and went to Balga, where the brothers met them with their troops and mounted a vigorous defence. Two bold young noblemen in the Prussian army were killed. According to what I have heard there was such a thick fog that day that no-one could see anyone else at any distance. The bad visibility deceived the brothers. The Prussians had positioned half of their army for an ambush but they could not see this and pushed forward to attack those who

⁴⁰⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:48. The picture from the *Apocalypse* (1334-1336) is already in fig. 10; for the mural of Bunge vide Addendum, Pt. III, fig. 17:350.

⁴¹⁰ Cliff Repicky, in his *Fact or Fiction; the horned “Teutonic” helmet* makes interesting points, especially regarding how messy close-quarters can become, and thus the need for yet more identification of allies and commanding figures. Unfortunately, the laidback discourse in which the text is presented led me to keep it off my bibliographical references. The text is available at https://www.academia.edu/42871830/Fact_or_Fiction_the_horned_Teutonic_Helmet [2020].

were fleeing from them across the bog. Then those who were lying in wait ambushed them and killed 40 men and three brothers. May God have mercy on them all!”⁴¹¹.

Thus, with thick fog, a knight would not see a thing unless being right upon it, which rendered both banners and hypothetical crests and pennons useless. To my understanding, voluminous additions to headgear (that, as has been argued previously, the knights could discard for a myriad reasons) would not be practical to riding and fighting in confined spaces – and even in open spaces, a knight with a horned/winged/pennoned helm would be providing more area to get stuck/grabbed and subdued, not to mention the weight placed on the cervical and resulting injury to it.

Teutonic knights also wore kettle-hats, mainly in the 14th century – Great Master Dietrich von Altenburg issued an order by 1349 stating that, when in the field, the knights should have “(...) ire schilde, wopen noch ysenhute abe legen durfen (...)”⁴¹². Iconographic evidence in the miniatures of the Berner chronicles show most of the Teutonic knights at Grunwald wearing kettle-hats⁴¹³. The knights also wore bascinets, but there are no direct references in the written records: the terms ‘hube/huwe/hauwe’ appear repeatedly in the sources, yet it is not possible to identify the helmet because, aside the Great Helm, in medieval German all headpieces of organic material or metal that protect the top of the head, cheeks and neck of the wearer are thus called, so it is not possible to determine what type the scribe wrote about - though a reference from 1402 at the Marienburg for four ‘sломhuben’ is an exception, because ‘sлом-‘ suggests a conical shape and Slavonic influences⁴¹⁴. However, iconographic evidence such as the frescoes of Lochstedt indicate that high-raking knights wore bascinets: the frescoes represent the Great Master, the Grand Marshall and the Grand Drapier with bascinets with a pointed skull (‘sломhuben’) and an aventail that falls to the shoulders⁴¹⁵. Besides the ‘sломhuben’, the Order’s knights also wore bascinets with a ‘Klappvisier’, that was fixed to the skull via a front pivot and could be lifted or removed –

⁴¹¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3470.

⁴¹² Idem, *ibidem*:50 ((...) ihre Schilde, sich waffnen auch mit Eisenhut aber dürfen legen (...)/ (...) their shields, arm themselves with a kettle-hat, but should (...)).

⁴¹³ Idem, *ibidem*:51.

⁴¹⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:51-52.

⁴¹⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:52. Some Teutonic knights are depicted in the Schilling’s Chronicle, at Tannenberg, wearing a bascinet with an ovoid/conical skull, convex visor and two circular ear-guards (idem, *ibidem*:56).

there is iconographic material and a surviving helmet; in the 15th century these are designated as ‘helmen’, according to the inventory of the Great Commander from 1404: “(...) 248 isenhute [kettle-hats], bosze und gut, 145 helme [probably bascinets with visor], bosze und gut, 53 helme mit berten [probably more bascinets with visor], 127 storczhelme [conical helmets], 4 slomhuben [bascinet], 15 genwische huben (...)”⁴¹⁶.

Lastly, Teutonic knights also wore a helmet referred to in the sources as ‘pekilhube’ – the earliest mention is from 1364 at the castle armoury of Starogród, and the latest from 1451 at the armoury of Pašeski: “At first they were worn by the Prussians, and from them borrowed by the Teutonic Knights. Thus the *pekilhuben* were typical helmets, yet not in Western Europe but in the Baltic area where both the occidental and oriental characteristics were combined in the production of arms and armour.” – the fact that in the early 15th century the term ‘prewsche hube’ occurs in the written sources favours this theory⁴¹⁷.

In the battlefield, trauma consisted of sharp-force trauma from cuts or stabs, penetration-force trauma from projectiles, and blunt-force trauma from bashing or smashing⁴¹⁸. As such, the knight’s torso and limbs required protection as well. The hauberk was popular in the 13th century, then progressively combined with and then replaced by plate armour in the mid-14th century⁴¹⁹. Teutonic knights wore hauberks with hose – for instance, the seal of the Prussian Marshal in a document of 1282 shows a knight wearing mail⁴²⁰. With the hauberk, the knights also wore a coat of plates, that became popular in the ‘Ordensstaat’ at the end of the 13th century and was worn over a hauberk or between it and another garment – in the written sources of the Order it is designated as ‘plate/plata’ and appears until the

⁴¹⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:53-54.

⁴¹⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:55.

⁴¹⁸ WOOSNAM-SAVAGE et DEVRIES 2015:28-29. Unfortunately, I have not found material for evidence of knightly remains with broken knees. The knee is a ridiculously fragile joint that would have been easily damaged if knights/horsemen knocked against each other knee-to-knee or if their legs got stuck between their horses and something solid - depending on the force of impact, life could go on with no significant impairments until wear or age caught up with them. I have also been unable to find evidence of osteological trauma due to falls from horseback, and I have also found nothing regarding blisters on the fingers – the bane of gloved (or not) riders, quite the bothersome and potentially dangerous injury, for it infects easily.

⁴¹⁹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:168.

⁴²⁰ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:63. Mail armour is recurrent in the inventories: for example, at Königsberg in 1379 there were 32 ‘panczir’; mail was kept in almost all armouries of convents and ‘Voigte’ and made up 10% of all types of armour stored within the Ordensstaat (idem, *ibidem*:63-64).

mid-15th century: “It seems feasible to surmise that the term *platen* occasionally means a white breastplate composed of several plates arranged either horizontally or vertically, possibly polished. This suggestion is based on references to *blanke platen*.”⁴²¹ Coats of plates were numerous and before Tannenberg accounted for 41% of all types of defensive equipment stored in Prussia, which according to Nowakowski means that “(...) This indicates that the dominant type of armour was by no means the latest.”⁴²² It means that coats of plates, as a relatively simple defensive element, were easy and cheap to produce, and accordingly Nowakowski points that “(...) the simplest and cheapest specimens were most numerous, which is obvious in the light of the fact that they were not used by warriors occupying the higher ranks in the Order’s hierarchy.”⁴²³ However, the *LRC* seems to indicate that the knights wore polished coats of plates, which I believe was also the case in Prussia: “The Brothers came to the Master with many proud troops, and all of the Teutonic Knights rode there together. One could see helms and shields glistening on the field and countless breastplates⁴²⁴ shining like glass.”⁴²⁵

Small plate armour was also in use, likely due to Baltic influences, yet by the end of the 13th century the coat of plates was mostly used, until it was replaced by breastplates⁴²⁶. Teutonic knights wore mail and breastplates with closed leg-harnesses, such as depicted in the fresco at the cathedral in Königsberg: “(...) they are clad in full mail armour over which they wear spherical breastplates covered with cloth, plates of cuisse and greaves and full poleyns as well.”⁴²⁷ The tombstone of Kuno von Liebenstein, from c. 1391 shows the globular outline of a breastplate over a mail shirt, under the surcoat used by Teutonic knights – closed leg-harnesses are also represented⁴²⁸. According to Nicolle, Teutonic knights also used

⁴²¹ Idem, *ibidem*:66-67. The same author indicates that military duty, owed by the Order’s vassals, was designated as ‘platendienst’ (idem, *ibidem*:66) (lit. plate service).

⁴²² Idem, *ibidem*:67.

⁴²³ NOWAKOWSKI 1991:86.

⁴²⁴ MHG ‘plate’ is ‘Platte’ in NHG, which means a metal sheet. Though I have no knowledge on linguistics, I assume it was probably easier to translate the MHG ‘plate’ as ‘breastplate’, in English.

⁴²⁵ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:45.

⁴²⁶ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:168.

⁴²⁷ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:63.

⁴²⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:69. In the written sources, breastplates appear as ‘brust/brustblech’, a term that goes unchanged in Prussia until the 16th century and thus makes it difficult to understand evolution in this piece of armour (idem, *ibidem*:68).

Maximilian armour⁴²⁹. Though the written sources do not call it as such, they do indicate that plate was in use:

“Written sources provide evidence that the Teutonic warriors wore either full plate armour, i.e. a breastplate and a backplate, so-called *gancze brost* or only breastplates *halue borste*. The term *stelynne broste* indicates that also steel breastplates were in use. In 1404 in the Marienburg armoury *gewiste broste* were stored. These were probably Italian armours consisting of a breastplate and skirt riveted to its lower edge.”⁴³⁰.

Within the ‘Ordensstaat’, adding plate elements to the limbs began in the second half of the 15th century, though full plate armour was owned mostly by Teutonic knights and important feudal lords: as such, “(...) it should be remembered that the character of armour worn by all the troops was not determined by the knights, as they were the least numerous category of combatants.”⁴³¹ Arms in the armouries were mobilization equipment, thus not meant for the knights, who had their own equipment⁴³².

From the plate elements, pauldrons (‘armleder’ in 14th and 15th century written sources) are worn by Teutonic knights in the miniature of Schilling’s Chronicle⁴³³. Other plate elements, such as rerebraces (‘vorstollen’), cowters (‘elpuckel’), vambraces (‘musysen/mauwischischen’) and gauntlets (‘hanczken’/‘wopenhanczken’/‘blechhanczken’) appear in iconographic sources: cylindrical rerebraces and vambraces consisting of two plates held together by straps and buckles are depicted in the tombstone of Kuno von Liebenstein; cowters with single aletters are also depicted in his tombstone, and so are ‘hour-glass’ (following Nowakowski) gauntlets⁴³⁴.

⁴²⁹ NICOLLE 2007:32. Together with ‘regular’ plate armour, smaller plate armour was also in use, appearing in written sources as ‘bronye/bronie/bronge/bruninge’, though it is impossible to distinguish between scale or lamellar armour: “It was worn already in the early 14th century not only by members of the castle garrisons but also by local knights obliged to serve clad in *gut pancer oder Brunie* (...) [good mail or good armour]” (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:64-65). However, due to being impractical, small plate armour does not seem to have been preferred in Prussia (idem, *ibidem*:66).

⁴³⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:69.

⁴³¹ Idem, *ibidem*:70.

⁴³² NOWAKOWSKI 1991:75.

⁴³³ Idem, *ibidem*:74.

⁴³⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:75.

“Experiments carried out by the Royal Armouries in England and elsewhere have confirmed how difficult it was to penetrate a moving target covered by mail or plate armour (...)”⁴³⁵, and to add to defence, Teutonic knights carried shields. Those who had a coat-of-arms were not allowed to display it⁴³⁶ and as has been demonstrated earlier by the Rule, decorated shields were forbidden, though this was ignored even by high office holders, such as the case of the Great Commander at the Marienburg (according to the *Ausgabebuch*) in 1419: “(...) *item 1 1/2m. 1 sc. der molem czu molen einen schilt mit silber und 1 tartsche dem groskompthur.*”⁴³⁷.

Shields of Teutonic knights and sergeants were white with a black cross⁴³⁸. Through the 13th and the first half of the 14th centuries, triangular shields from Western and Central Europe were common in Prussia; triangular shields with slightly rounded sides appeared in the early 14th century and were in use up to the 15th century – in iconography they are used both by footsoldiers and horsemen, with Teutonic knights depicted with this type of shield in the combat scene against the Prussians in the column from Kwidzyń⁴³⁹. In the 14th century the Order’s cavalry began to use a large rectangular shield due to Lithuanian javelins and arrows, similar to a shield in use by Prussians and Lithuanians since the early 14th century⁴⁴⁰. What Nicolle calls shield is likely what Nowakowski calls pavise. Nowakowski points that the pavise probably originated in the Baltic area: Polish sources call it ‘scutum Pruthenicum’, ‘littische schild’ and ‘clipeus Litwanicus’, and in Bohemian sources they are designated as ‘paweska’ and ‘paveska litevska’⁴⁴¹, pointing towards Lithuania. In the Order’s written sources this pavise appears as ‘prusche schild’/‘scutum Pruthenicum’, this latter term featuring in the “(...) acts of the Polish-Teutonic process of 1339, in the testimony of Czesław Wojassa who, when asked how he had recognized the Order’s units which were robbing Sieradz, answered: *sed bene scit quod essent Cruciferi et ipse testis ... qui logitur habuit*

⁴³⁵ WOOSNAM-SAVAGE et DEVRIES 2015:54.

⁴³⁶ NICOLLE 2007:30.

⁴³⁷ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:79 (auch 1 ½ Mark 1 Sc. für den Maler zu malen einen Schild mit Silber und 1 (einer) kleinerer länglichrunder Schild des Großkomturs/ also 1 and a half marks and 1 scot for the painter to paint one shield with silver and one smaller oblong shield of the Great Commander).

⁴³⁸ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:79.

⁴³⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:80.

⁴⁴⁰ NICOLLE 2007:41.

⁴⁴¹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:81.

unum scutum Pruthenicum ad eis quando obviaverunt eis in campo.”⁴⁴². Comparing the equipment between Teutonic and Polish knights, the essential difference consisted in this pavise – with exception of Masovian warriors, who also wore pavises given their proximity to Prussia, Lithuania, and Yatvingia⁴⁴³. Around the mid-14th century, a small quadrangular shield with rounded corners and a notch to support the couched lance began to be used: “That lances were propped on shields just before the charge is recorded in the *Cronica conflictus* describing the battle of Grunwald during which the Teutonic Knights *lanceas hastaque depositas scutis iunxerunt.*”⁴⁴⁴.

Knightly shields were designated as ‘herrenschild’/’rynetartsche’/’rennetarcze’; another type of equestrian shield was the small pavise – ‘ritterpavese’/’kleine Pavese’⁴⁴⁵. This seems like a good opportunity to evoke an episode from the *CLP* about the von Boland siblings⁴⁴⁶, especially the moment when Philipp ditches his shield: “When the advocate saw his relative die he was so grief-stricken and furious that he put his shield on his back, took his sword in both hands and gave the murderer such a blow that his head came off.” This was in the year 1305, the type of shield is not discriminated, but since Philipp held the sword with both hands, it seems the fight was on foot. It is clear, however, that knights could opt for discarding their shields for various reasons – here, it seems that Philipp chose to put more agility and strength into his blows by holding his sword with both hands. The amount of sword injuries⁴⁴⁷ in osteological data reveals that armour alone was insufficient protection,

⁴⁴² Idem, *ibidem*:81.

⁴⁴³ Idem, *ibidem*:113.

⁴⁴⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:80.

⁴⁴⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:81.

⁴⁴⁶ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5219-5229.

⁴⁴⁷ The *CLP* contains a curious episode about a massive sword blow that did not cause much damage. “During this same year [winter of 1283] Brother Friedrich Holle set off from Brandenburg with 100 horsemen on a campaign into Sudovia, where he entered the region of Kirsovia and made off with a great quantity of plunder. When he was returning with his plunder the people of that region overwhelmed him and killed him along with 30 men. The others escaped. During this same battle an armed Sudovian came riding up to attack Brother Friedrich and struck such a hard blow with his sword on the back of his neck that both he and his horse were knocked to the ground. Despite this, as he himself said and as he and many other Sudovians who had also been involved in the fight confirmed when they later converted, they were not harmed or wounded by the brutal blow. I have heard it said of this Friedrich that he was born the brother of Brother Marquard of Röblingen.” (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4297-4307). The fact that both knight and horse fell when the knight was struck on the back of the neck seems, to me, that the knight completely lost his balance and toppled to the side, pulling at

and the chronicler tells us that Philipp died, maybe because without his shield, he became a more accessible target.

Excavations at the 12th century Templar site of Le Petit Guerin revealed 34 young adult and six adult individual remains: one of the adults, in his twenties and buried in the Christian graveyard, showed two sharp-force traumas on his left shoulder – sword cuts, probably – though these showed signs of having started to heal and allowing the individual to survive for another week⁴⁴⁸. I chose this example because, since he is from a Templar site and shows cut injuries, he could have been a knight. Another relevant example are the remains found at the abbey at Øm, in a rural area in the central part of the Jutland peninsula, that was founded by Cistercian monks in 1172 - the male individual was discovered in 1934 (out of 668 skeletons): based on the placement of the arms (folded across the lap), it was estimated he was buried between 1250 and 1350⁴⁴⁹. He was a young adult between the ages of 25-30 at death, approximately 162.7cm tall and of normal to slender built⁴⁵⁰:

“The bones of the skeleton have nine lesions, five cranial and 4 postcranial, with no signs of healing and fractures consistent with fresh bone breakage, indicating they were inflicted perimortem and all of them had typical characteristics of sharp force trauma. The directions of the inflicted lesions are given with the body in an anatomically normal position as is the standard. The body could have been in any other possible position when the lesions were inflicted.”⁴⁵¹.

The lesions are compatible with sword cuts: the lethal injuries are on the skull, three of which fatal, that could have caused intracranial bleeding and momentary loss of consciousness; there are also defensive wounds on the lower arms, but that could have also been inflicted with both arms raised up to strike, and these lesions cut through skin, muscle, smaller blood vessels and hand and finger nerves; there were also blows to the lower legs – one cut through skin, muscle, tendons, smaller blood vessels and probably the tibial artery, and the other blow cut through skin and probably severed the patellar tendon – the arms and

the reins in such a way that the horse's head was completely turned to the side and raised to the point that it too lost balance and fell, probably on its side.

⁴⁴⁸ WOOSNAM-SAVAGE et DEVRIES 2015:39.

⁴⁴⁹ FORSOM et al 2017:1.

⁴⁵⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:2.

⁴⁵¹ Idem, *ibidem*:2.

legs wounds were probably inflicted before the lethal skull injuries⁴⁵². The fact that the sword blow to the arm did not amputate the limb indicates the man wore armour⁴⁵³.

Even though the identity of this individual is unknown, given his injuries he could have been a warrior or could have died in battle, but since he was found in a coffin at the back of the church, that indicates a link to the monastery because burial in a Cistercian church was granted to only a few: “Hence, the individual 4.X.1 was probably a member of the local or regional elite whereby his family could afford to pay for his burial inside the church.”⁴⁵⁴. This is the reason why these remains were included in this thesis. Lastly, other examples can also be found on remains of knights found in the garrison of Vadum Iacob: the Vadum Iacob Castle, in the Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem (mod. Ateret), had a garrison of 80 Templar knights, 750 footmen (troops also from the king of Jerusalem) and many craftsmen who were still completing the construction of the castle – the outer wall had been finished by April 1179 (began October 1178), and when Saladin besieged it on 24 August 1179, the interior of the castle was only 15% complete, which resulted in the castle falling five days later⁴⁵⁵. The individuals, five adult males, ages estimated between 20 and 40 years, all found in a Frankish context, not formally buried and seemingly lying at a random orientation and position, were found “(...) within a layer of ash, beneath a collapsed building.”⁴⁵⁶.

Since one of the sword blows in an individual is only partial thickness, it is likely that the man was wearing mail; in total, “Four of the five wounds were in areas of the body that were not protected by the hauberk.”, which might indicate the attackers specifically targeted unprotected areas: “This would still explain the distribution of the wounds, but also result in less expenditure or energy with each effective blow, and reduce blunting of the swords against armour.”⁴⁵⁷. Also, the five sword wounds were on the front of the warriors, which indicates close-quarters combat facing the enemy; the wounds were all on the left side of the body, where a right-handed attacker would strike, and almost all cut through the bone: “It

⁴⁵² Idem, *ibidem*:5.

⁴⁵³ Idem, *ibidem*:7.

⁴⁵⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:7.

⁴⁵⁵ MITCHELL 2006:146/151.

⁴⁵⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:146-147. For the table showing the skeletons’ age and injuries, vide Addendum, Pt. II, Table I - Injuries:323.

⁴⁵⁷ MITCHELL 2006:153.

seems that those garrison soldiers who sustained sword wounds were not in disarray or trying to flee, but were standing their ground in an attempt to defend themselves.”⁴⁵⁸: this could be disciplined military training. Even though this event took place in Galilee, the fact that it is from the 12th century approaches it to the 13th century endeavours of the Teutonic Order in the Baltic, but especially because of the Templar garrison and small sample, that make the probability of these remains belonging to knights be higher in contrast to events such as Visby and Aljubarrota, where samples are too large and with no distinction made between knights and footmen⁴⁵⁹. Furthermore, the bone injury shows what could have been a disciplined resistance from a military order against an onslaught. Another advantage is that “(...) the area has been virtually undisturbed since the siege as it has not been used as a fortification since it was destroyed in 1179 (...)” which is a rare situation and means that the skeletal remains and other objects were all in situ - plus, there are contemporary records of what happened⁴⁶⁰.

The *CLP* also provides an example of sharp-force trauma that resulted in amputation, either because the blow was indeed powerful and accidentally hit such an odd target, or because Heinrich’s hands were insufficiently protected: “When Jesbuto realised he was mortally wounded he wanted revenge but he was too badly hurt to turn round. Nonetheless he lashed out wildly. One of the blows landed so as to hack off one of [Heinrich] Zuckschwer’s fingers. That was how the battle between them ended.”⁴⁶¹.

Nicolle states that close-quarter weapons used by Teutonic knights were identical to those in Germany and raises the question as to whether the lower ranks used captured Lithuanian swords⁴⁶². The Order’s chronicles indicate that captured weapons were seized by

⁴⁵⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:153-154.

⁴⁵⁹ But it should be mentioned, perhaps, that another possible injury for a knight to sustain were blows to the tibia. In *Armour From the Battle of Visby – 1361* (1939), Thordeman suggests that blows struck vertically from below, with preponderance to the right leg, could be attributed to mounted warriors because “In a struggle with cutting weapons between mounted men and men on foot, the former generally tries to turn the right side of his horse towards his opponent, in which case his left leg is protected from injury.” (THORDEMAN et al 1939:177-178).

⁴⁶⁰ MITCHELL 2006:146.

⁴⁶¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4614-4652.

⁴⁶² NICOLLE 2007:41.

the knights, thus they were certainly re-used by the Order's forces. According to one instance in the *LRC*:

“One Brother, three Germans, and a much greater number of heathens were killed in the battle. The Christians eventually forced them to flee from the battle. Maseke, their king, abandoned the booty and left helmets, shields, swords and over two hundred and fifty horses. (...) Some were fortunate enough to reach their horses and they dashed toward home. The Christians chased the heathens back and forth across the field, slaying whomever they encountered. Their king escaped, but he forfeited his son and left him lying dead on the battlefield. He fled grief-stricken back to his own land. Thus the heathens were vanquished. The Christians were all happy with the outcome. Those whom the Lithuanians had captured were released and joyfully set free. Then they took the heathens' horses, helmets, shields and swords and divided them all equally. God in heaven was given His share, for He had given them victory.”⁴⁶³.

15th century Prussian armouries stored defensive equipment (helmets, armour and shields), offensive and other equipment (such as crossbows, belts, artillery, gunpowder and ammunition); lances and swords are seldom mentioned and since the scribes did not mention them, it is possible to conclude they belonged to the knights⁴⁶⁴:

“(...) the Teutonic cavalry, which in addition to knights included feudal lords and certain burghers as well, was chivalrous in character. Thus it is not surprising that the sword held a specific position among arms and armour. This position is well illustrated by the order given by the Grand Master Winrich von Kniprode: *Die Brud'e sullen ouch mit vleise tragen ir sw't. Mann sal ouch keinen fremden Man gestatten, sin Swert zczu tragen ouch in Huz.* From this it follows that each Teutonic Knight possessed a sword which he should take care of. The important role played by the sword in the society of Prussia is indicated by the order forbidding to carry it on the street: *Item das nymand in den steten sal tragen swerth.* The purpose of this order was to prevent bloody disputes (...).”⁴⁶⁵.

References to swords are absent from documents, even from the most detailed records, such as one from 1332 that indicates what a warrior should be equipped with – this absence is due the fact that the sword, as property of a knight, was not included in

⁴⁶³ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:141-143.

⁴⁶⁴ NOWAKOWSKI 1991:75-76.

⁴⁶⁵ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:85 (Die Brüder sollen auch mit (...) ihre Schwerter tragen. Mann soll auch kein fremder Mensch zulassen, seine Schwert auch im Haus zu tragen./The brethren should also (...) carry their swords (with them). One should also allow no enemy to take his sword into the convent.).

documents⁴⁶⁶. Archaeology provided some examples of swords from different types and with religious decoration:

“Three swords have been found in connection with the battle of Plowce (1331), a complete hand-and-a-half sword dating from 1340-1400 was recovered from the River Tina which flows into Lake Družno near Elblag, with a pommel decorated with the Jerusalem cross and smaller gold crosses. (...) in 2011, a complete *koncerz* (or *estoc*, a long, straight, two-handed stabbing sword) was found under the bridge next to the New Gate at Malbork castle, dated by associated timbers to the mid-fifteenth century. The upper portion of the square, cross-sectioned blade was decorated with two gold crosses and may have belonged to a knight in the castle garrison, and the loss of the weapon in the ditch can most probably be linked to the events of the Thirteen Years War.”⁴⁶⁷.

There are other types of decorations attested in the sources. Ornamental sword-straps attached to the scabbard by a suspension-ring or leather pendant and ornamental chains on breastplates – especially gilded metals – were forbidden, as can be seen from Dietrich von Altenburg’s regulations: “(...) ouch sullen sein die swertvessele schlecht geryme ane spangen⁴⁶⁸.” – however, even the higher dignitaries tended to ignore the prohibition for decorations – for instance, the reference to the sword of Great Master Ulrich von Jungingen indicates that the scabbard and grip of the sword were covered with silver⁴⁶⁹. While swords of high-ranking officers could be ceremonial (which, judging by the fact that high office holders had more than one sword, is a very reasonable deduction)⁴⁷⁰, the regulations of Dietrich von Altenburg indicate that the knights had not given up wordly vanity.

Nowakowski established a typology for the swords found in the ‘Ordenstaat’ through archaeological and iconographic sources⁴⁷¹. The swords show variation in blades, pommels and guards, thus making it difficult to speak of a standardization of Teutonic swords – to add to this, the owners of said swords came from different places within the Empire, armed with

⁴⁶⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:85-86.

⁴⁶⁷ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:167.

⁴⁶⁸ “(...) auch sollen die Schwertgurt schlecht weit sein, ohne Spange.“/“(...) also the sword belts should be of poor width, without buckles.”

⁴⁶⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:88.

⁴⁷⁰ High office holders had more than one sword: for instance, the Grand Commander of the Marienburg had his five swords polished and sharpened in 1412, according to the *AMH* (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:88-89).

⁴⁷¹ Vide Addendum, Pt. II, Swords in the Ordensstaat:324. I did not have data for Livonian swords, though it can be assumed they would be as varied as those from Prussia.

swords produced in different centres of production; furthermore, swords were imported from abroad - the sword from the Marienburg armoury has the mark of an Hungarian producer on the blade; however, like other pieces of equipment, swords were also produced in the ‘Ordensstaat’⁴⁷².

The Order’s chronicles barely describe swords, but going back to Philipp von Bolen, who is said to have taken his sword with both hands after discarding his shield, he could have a bastard sword, that can be used either one- or two-handed. An iconographic source shows how the knights struck with their swords:

“The capital column at Kwidzyń shows a knight who, with his arm slightly bent, is about to strike his opponent with the sword raised above his head. A similar way of striking blows can be seen on the miniature of the *Apocalypse*. The warrior made a sweeping motion from behind his head, and straightening the arm that held the sword, hit the opponent, striking the so-called cutting blow, thus using the simplest of the possible fighting techniques. The miniature in the Schilling’s Chronicle indicates that the way of wielding swords did not change in comparison with earlier periods. The Teutonic warrior struck the blow with his arm fully extended.”⁴⁷³.

Another interesting indication on the usage of swords can be found in the tombstone of Kuno von Liebenstein: his sword, attached to the breastplate by a chain, is placed at his right while his dagger is at his left – according to Nowakowski, this might indicate that Kuno was left-handed⁴⁷⁴.

It is also pertinent to mention the knightly belt: it not only served practical purposes, such as suspending the sword and the dagger, but also asserted the wearer’s status as belonging to a group of dubbed knights – the Order required simple belts, for example Great Master Paul von Russdorf forbade “(...) gortele beslagen mit silber (...)”⁴⁷⁵, though decorated belts were used even by the highest ranks: Great Master Konrad von Jungingen had “(...) eynen sylberyn gurtel (...)”⁴⁷⁶, a belt that exceeded three marks (there are remarks

⁴⁷² NOWAKOWSKI 1994:87.

⁴⁷³ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:89.

⁴⁷⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:88.

⁴⁷⁵ (...) Gürtel beschlagen mit Silber (...)/ (...) girths coated/studded with silver (...).

⁴⁷⁶ (...) einen silbrig/silbern Gürtel (...)/ (...) a silvery/silver girth (...).

of belts worth ten scots: “(...) item 10 scot ... vor eynen gortel zu beslon.”⁴⁷⁷ Again, the exceptional belts of high ranking officers might have served ceremonial purposes – and yet again, the need to regulate the knights’ fashion sense points the way of wordly vanity.

Other pieces of equipment include daggers and battle-knives. The first sported a two-edged symmetrical blade, and the latter an one-edged asymmetrical blade; daggers were good for thrusting between the rings of mail and between the joints of plate, and especially in the 14th century were carried with the sword, suspended from the belt or attached to the breastplate by a strap or a chain⁴⁷⁸. Daggers were widespread in the 13th century, but do not always appear in sources; however, Nowakowski says that that Great Master Werner von Orseln was stabbed with a dagger by one of the knights⁴⁷⁹:

“This same year [1330] on the eve of St Elizabeth’s Day, which we celebrate in winter, a brother called Johannes, a Saxon born in Endorf was goaded by the devil and his own wickedness to commit a very evil sin. For reasons I do not know he completely lost sight of his own salvation, like one who has taken leave of his senses, abandoning his life, his virtue and his honour, and stabbed to death Brother Werner von Orseln, the grand master of the Teutonic Order. He killed him among all his men-at-arms in procession at the Marienburg as he was leaving the church after singing vespers.”⁴⁸⁰.

Contrary to Nowakowski’s statement, it is not said that Johannes had a dagger. Yet it can be assumed that, as a knight, he had one – Kuno, too, has one represented on his tombstone.

Besides the sword, knights also used polearms. The combat portrayed on the capital of the Marienburg column shows one of the Teutonic knights striking a Prussian with his sword while holding a pennoned spear in his left hand; another spear is portrayed in the seal of Chelmno and various Great Marshall’s seals, showing spears with rhomboid heads with a

⁴⁷⁷ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:104 (...) auch 10 Scot ... um einen Gürtel zu beschlug/ (...) also 10 Scot ... to coat/stud a girth.).

⁴⁷⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:89-90.

⁴⁷⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:90.

⁴⁸⁰ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:6063-6075. The translators of the *LRC* refer that in 1262, the Livonian Master, also named Werner, was wounded by an “(...) insane brother of the order.”, though the episode is merely told as the Master becoming ill (SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:84) and there is no indication of what weapon was used.

pennon – this type of spear was in use in Prussia until the early 15th century, while elsewhere in Western Europe and Poland lances were used, probably due to Baltic influence⁴⁸¹:

“Jan Długosz’s description of the battle of Grunwald contains two very interesting pieces of information. Namely, the Teutonic reserve units were mistaken by the Poles for Lithuanians because in their lines they saw the *sulice* – light lances of oriental origin – projecting above horses’ heads (...) Differences in arms are also seen in the description of the combat between Ulrich von Jungingen, who fought with a spear, and the Polish knight Dobiesław of Oleśnica, who carried a lance (...).”⁴⁸².

This light spear, still used by horsemen during the Great War (1409-1411), shows Baltic influence in the Order’s equipment: Teutonic cavalry did not consist solely of heavy-armoured lancers, for a long and heavy staff weapon was not very practical against the lighter and mobile cavalry of the natives, that avoided a frontal clash⁴⁸³. The subject will be addressed in the third chapter.

In the written sources, spears appear as ‘spyse’/’sper’/’reitspiss’⁴⁸⁴. Once more, the episode from the *CLP* about the von Bolands can be brought up: “(...) during the first attack the younger Boland was run through by a spear and killed.” The attackers were Lithuanians, and though the spear is not in Teutonic hands, the weapon features in one of the Order’s chronicles. However, the miniatures of the battle of Tannenberg in the Schilling’s Chronicle depict lances – even though the drawings are schematic, Nowakowski defends that the weapons illustrated seem to be fully in accordance to contemporary lances: “(...) it has a long shaft with a narrowing for grasp, and a small spike-like head.”⁴⁸⁵ Likely, the two weapons were contemporary, considering the illustration and the Polish account.

⁴⁸¹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:992-93. In one instance from the *CLP* it is told that “Brother Konrad, known as the Swabian, from Elbing, went down to this castle with many armed men and engaged in such a fierce exchange of spears with them that many on both sides were wounded.” (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3591).

⁴⁸² NOWAKOWSKI 1994:92-93.

⁴⁸³ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:94. Furthermore, native horsemen under the Order were obliged to serve with ‘Prussian arms’, which until the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries included a light spear (idem, *ibidem*:94).

⁴⁸⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:92-93. Records of polearms, commonly infantry weapons, usually concern the period from the 1430s to the early 16th century, which has been attributed to a change in warfare, given that the Order’s armies began to be dominated by infantry (ŻABIŃSKI 2013:202).

⁴⁸⁵ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:93.

Taking the example above from Philipp's younger brother, there are not many survival accounts of lance wounds to the trunk, whereas survival after arrow wounds and sword wounds abound: a disciplined cavalry charge caused the point of the lance to pass through and break the adversary's mail; the horse gave energy to the thrust, that could be aimed at the target until the moment of impact; arrows or bolts were also fast but lighter, which affected the momentum of impact – moreover, direction could not be adjusted: “Written accounts from soldiers on crusade mentioned how arrows could pass through chain mail but often embedded themselves in the padding of the gambeson underneath (...)”⁴⁸⁶, thus allowing the warrior to survive. For example, the *LRC* tells that “One Brother hacked his way through the enemy, as many Sengallians witnessed with their own eyes. He struck down one man and rode toward home. He was wounded by missiles, but recovered from his injuries.”⁴⁸⁷. On the other hand, the knight from the *CLP* did not survive being shot through the throat⁴⁸⁸.

The first references for crossbows in Prussia under the Teutonic Order date from the end of the 13th century⁴⁸⁹: an example can be found at the settlement complex at Unisław, a late 13th century earth-and-timber Teutonic fortification: “(...) presence of a metallurgical workshop suggested by the discovery of partially melted metal objects, iron slag and semi-finished crossbow bolt heads (...) in trench 2, in direct association with the stronghold.”⁴⁹⁰. The crossbows were used on battlefields (heavy types for the infantry and lighter types for mounted troops), in hunts, in ambushes, and on fortifications⁴⁹¹. The most common type referred in records is the crossbow with stirrup (‘rytarmbrost’)⁴⁹²: this type of crossbow could be used and spanned on horseback – for example, the miniature of the Schilling's *Chronicle* depicts a lancer at Tannenberg in full armour with a crossbow⁴⁹³. Even though that in 14th century inventories the crossbows are not explicitly assigned to brother knights⁴⁹⁴, according

⁴⁸⁶ MITCHELL 20013:11 (page provided by PDF reader).

⁴⁸⁷ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:128.

⁴⁸⁸ Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP*11 – Knight shot:331.

⁴⁸⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:97

⁴⁹⁰ WIEWIÓRA et al 2019:757.

⁴⁹¹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:97.

⁴⁹² Idem, *ibidem*:98.

⁴⁹³ Idem, *ibidem*:98.

⁴⁹⁴ ŻABIŃSKI 2013:205.

to Customs, paragraph 31, *Of the marshal and the commander*, “The marshal can take from the armory (snithûs) the (...) crossbows (...) for the use of the brethren, as he has need for them.”⁴⁹⁵.

As for other weapons that Teutonic knights may have used, Jan Długosz describes that battle axes were used by Teutonic and Polish knights at Tannenberg, who used them when their lances broke⁴⁹⁶. The use of axes could have been a Prussian influence, considering that Prussian tribes were reported to use them: “The use of axes (...) has a small chronological and regional distribution, but it goes some way to explain why the Prussians were a significant military threat to neighbouring regions, and why their incursions onto the territories of the Duke of Masovia ultimately prompted such organised repercussions.”⁴⁹⁷ Maces, in the sources ‘kolben’ and that appear only in inventories, were also used by Teutonic cavalry⁴⁹⁸. But all things considered, Teutonic armour was not particularly distinctive: the same types of armour and weapons were also common in neighbouring Poland, as well as in other regions of Western and Central Europe; as such, “(...) there was no uniformity in the appearance of the Order’s armies, which consisted of an eclectic mix of knights, burghers, peasants and mercenaries.”⁴⁹⁹.

More insight into equipment can be provided by excavations at Tannenberg⁵⁰⁰. The excavations near the chapel on the battlefield discovered an important amount of bones,

⁴⁹⁵ STERNS 1969 (trans.):302-30. However, since the brethren were permitted to shoot birds, I wonder if this applies only to sergeants, or to knights as well. The conjugation of cavalry and crossbows will be addressed in the 3rd chapter. Some records discriminate to whom the equipment belonged to. For instance, the Ragnit inventory of 1412 indicates that every servant (‘dyner’) had his own crossbow and the Brandenburg inventory of 1392 mentions seventeen sets of armour for servants (‘dynerharnasch’); the Schönsee inventory from 1421 indicates that one ‘diener’ in Nessau had one hauberk, one kettle-hat, one mail coif, one breastplate, one pair of gauntlets and one crossbow (ŻABIŃSKI 2013:205-206). The original terms from the sources, ‘dyner’, ‘knechte’ and ‘gesellen’, are not very precise and though maybe these could be used interchangeably, it is necessary to have some reservations as some defend that ‘diener’ were young noblemen in court service of the Great Masters whereas others defend that ‘diener’ were servants who took perpetual or temporary vows and had several auxiliary functions (idem, *ibidem*:205-206).

⁴⁹⁶ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:95-96.

⁴⁹⁷ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:65.

⁴⁹⁸ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:96.

⁴⁹⁹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:169.

⁵⁰⁰ Excavations from 1958 to 1960 focused on the area that is traditionally associated with the battlefield, as well around the 17th century church at Stę bark – that could stand over the original medieval structure – and

fragments of melted metal, coins, and military artefacts probably relate to the battle; the chapel seems to have been a pilgrimage site shortly after being constructed in 1411, and excavations inside the chapel discovered two mass graves with healthy adult males that presented healed and fatal weapon injuries to the skull and long bones, predominantly from swords and axes, plus, to a lesser extent, from blunt weapons and projectiles (healed wounds probably indicated veterans); one of the graves was truncated by the foundations of the chapel, meaning the graves were there already before the chapel; the chapel was not in a particularly visible or accessible part of the battlefield, which suggests that it might have been built on a place of intense fighting where bodies of soldiers and horses were buried where they fell – and maybe even where the Great Master was killed (another and less likely explanation is that it was built on the Order's camp); excavations also uncovered burnt human bones with weapon injuries, mixed with rubble and some horse bones (apparently, these were re-deposited); excavations from 1979-1980 and through the 1980s on the battlefield and sites nearby led by Nadolski discovered more graves, crossbow bolts, and arrow heads, with a total of 28 military artefacts discovered during the excavations, most originating from the chapel or from near it⁵⁰¹.

With this in mind, it seems unlikely that it was the Teutonic knights' arms and armour that granted them an advantage during the Crusades, especially because the peoples they faced were not technologically handicapped:

“The Prussian elites were armed in a comparable way to the Polish elite, and perhaps even the knights of the Teutonic Order. Peter of Dusburg described the Prussian nobility as proud, well trained and not badly armed (...) Prussian tribes adapted to their experiences of the Teutonic Order, adopting new methods of warfare and new arms. However, the Order's discipline and its use of crossbows and war horses was gradually decisive. The tribal militarism of pagan Prussian society was superseded by the institutionalised militarism of the Teutonic Order's state, which also saw the replacement of one elite equestrian class with another.”⁵⁰².

around Grunwald and Lodwigowo (idem, *ibidem*:346-347). The bulk of information is in Polish, as well as in German with Sven Ekdahl as a prominent researcher.

⁵⁰¹ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:347.

⁵⁰² Idem, *ibidem*:65.

According to Laws III, paragraph 37. *Of punishment of serious offenses*, it is considered a serious offense “(9) If a brother for evil ends, knowingly or willingly, lends horses or arms or otherwise gives aid.”⁵⁰³ I believe the horses are listed first given their importance in warfare, but also because a horse – in this case, a warhorse – identifies a knight as such. Regardless of the issues around the *ministeriales* and the term ‘ritter’, within the Teutonic Order the distinction between those who were knights and those who were sergeants is made through the number of horses attributed to each rank. According to the Customs, paragraph 44. *Of the number of animals for the brethren at the discretion of the master*:

“If the master decides that the brother knights have four animals, then the other brethren who bear arms shall, at the master’s discretion, have two animals; if the convent brothers have two animals, the brethren in the higher offices, whom the chapter appoints, shall have three, when the convent brothers have three, then they shall have four, if convenient.”⁵⁰⁴

Thus, to better understand how Teutonic knights operated in the Baltic, it is necessary to become acquainted with their mounts. A knight must have invested a significant amount of time on his warhorse – the Templar Rule (paragraphs 283 to 285) states that between services the knights must check their equipment, and paragraph 283 specifically mentions that the knights should go see their horses after Matins⁵⁰⁵. Training for the knights and horses must also have happened between services, which translates into daily riding for several hours a day, with intervals for meals and offices.

All the time spent on horseback (training, riding to and from raids, fighting on horseback) must have reflected on a knight’s body. Unfortunately, I could not find specific information for the Baltic area and the Teutonic Order; notwithstanding, I believe that information can be extrapolated from 10th century Hungarian skeletons (in good conditions) from the cemetery of Sárrétudvari, that present articular and periarticular markers of activity

⁵⁰³ STERNS (trans.) 1969:272.

⁵⁰⁴ STERNS (trans.) 1969:309-310. For the number of animals attributed to office holders, vide Addendum, Pt. II, *Customs*, paragraph 47. *How many animals the commander and the marshal and the other office holders shall have*:332. However, reality must have been a different thing and there is evidence in this aspect from the 15th century. The subject will be addressed later.

⁵⁰⁵ BOLÉO (trans.) 2006:112. Knights were also allowed to leave the table during meals (and to not return to the table) to check on their horses, if the horses were restless (paragraph 145) and to skip Nones and Vespers if they were taking their horses to the farrier (paragraph 146) (*idem, ibidem*:78-79).

such as riding on horseback⁵⁰⁶. In fourteen skeletons, the researchers detected a lesional unity in male skeletons only – it was concluded these skeletons showed the ‘horseback-riding syndrome’, which was further confirmed by the discovery of horse bones and weapons in the male graves: the skeletons are particularly robust and share skeletal changes to the hips and femurs, with the muscular insertions presenting a hypertrophic character⁵⁰⁷.

5. The Teutonic Horse

5.1. Background

Several types of horses appear in medieval sources, mostly in literature. In French, these types can be traced back to the late 12th/early 13th century, with identic correspondence and meaning in several European languages, thus demonstrating the cultural importance of the horse in medieval Europe, as well as the propagation of chivalric romance⁵⁰⁸. The association of these types of horses to a certain social standing was due to the monetary value of different horses, which meant that only the highest nobility could afford quality warhorses and riding horses⁵⁰⁹. This hierarchy was reinforced through legislation of ownership appearing after 1250; for instance, “Oakeshott describes the French Royal Ordinance of 1265

⁵⁰⁶ PÁLFI et DUTOIR 1996:41-42. The Hungarian skeletons also present macro-traumas of combat injuries, like cranial lesions and cases of muscular sprains in six male skeletons (ligament ossifications, more frequently ankle sprains); there are also frequent traces of fractures in the lower limbs corresponding to accidents, such as falls; as for spinal degenerative processes, the sample shows lesions to the thoracolumbar border and to the lumbosacral border, which could indicate the functional overuse of the spine for riding on horseback; the frequency of extraspinal injury in the elbows and wrists could stem from warrior activity (idem, *ibidem*:43/46).

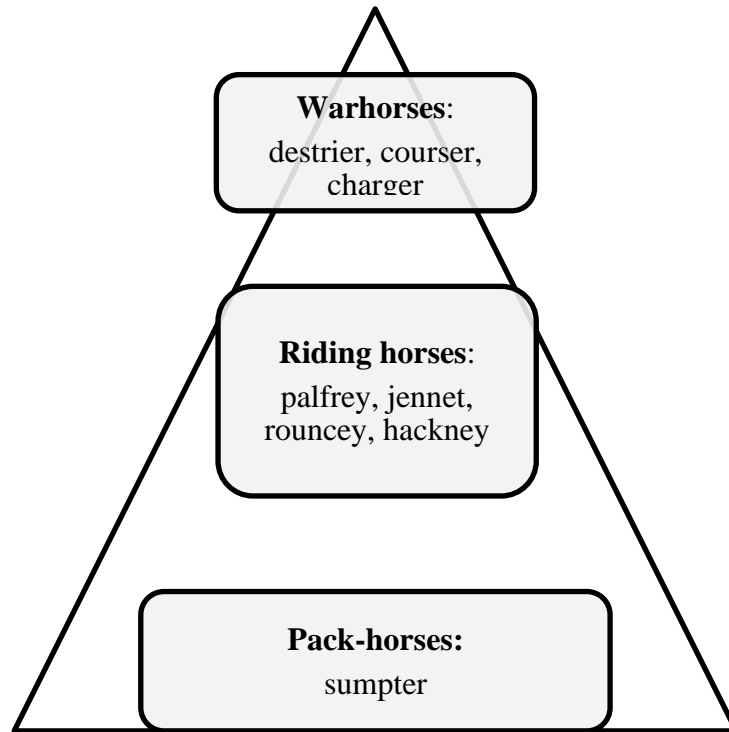
⁵⁰⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:45-46. Vide Addendum, Pt. II, Hungarian skeletons:332.

⁵⁰⁸ BONIFACE 2015:5-6. A significant cultural role was played by the horse in pre-Christian and Teutonic period Prussia, and though horse remains are rare in Prussian settlements, they abound in cult sites (for instance, Poganowo) and in cemeteries (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:319). “Horses are well represented in the pre-crusade assemblages in both Livonia (8.5% of all mammals) and Prussia (3.2%; excluding Gdańsk 3.7%), after which the numbers drop to just over 1% in the medieval period and then just below in the post-medieval. This reflects changes in the role – and therefore depositional contexts – of the horse, rather than relative abundance of the equine population. Horse meat was widely consumed in the pre-crusade period, particularly in Livonia, whilst whole individuals and disarticulated parts were also deposited within cemeteries in parts of Prussia, Lithuania and southern Livonia.” (PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:13-14).

⁵⁰⁹ HERBERT-DAVIES 2018:18/21.

(...) This ordinance was part of a “series of reforms” by ‘Saint Louis’, and may imply that a man buying a horse valued above his own rank was a mark of corruption.”⁵¹⁰.

Broadly speaking, types of warhorses, riding horses and pack-horses⁵¹¹ were as follows⁵¹²:



These types are not breeds – in spite of the observation of certain breeding standards (such as choosing animals of similar types for breeding), there were no restrictions as to the horses’ origins⁵¹³. “If a horse more suitable for cavalry were to be found, it was essential to import livestock from abroad, and then to practice selective breeding on a very large scale.”: to successfully breed horses, it was necessary to keep good quality mares in a separate space

⁵¹⁰ BONIFACE 2015:15.

⁵¹¹ Given the subject at hand, I chose to leave out working horses.

⁵¹² BONIFACE 2015:89-70/ JENEY 2010:6. Except for the palfrey, other riding horses could be trained for war. In the Baltic context, native horses were used as an all-purpose horse, as will be shown.

⁵¹³ BONIFACE 2015:58.

from males; a breeder also needed mares with as many of the required qualities, and also a stallion to complement those qualities (and though the resulting foal could inherit less desirable traits, a foal could also combine the best traits)⁵¹⁴.

Even though horses did not yet have ‘breeds’ in the modern sense, a certain type of horse – especially warhorses – had to meet determinate standards. Evidence from burial sites of knights and nobility show a predominance of chestnut horses, a selective preference that researchers say could have been influenced by the red colour of the Second Horseman of the Apocalypse (War), as well as for the association of chestnut horses to a more courageous personality, which was important in a warhorse; following this same practical line, a predominance of chestnut horses could also be related to the fact that spotted or dilute coats could be easily spotted⁵¹⁵. Teutonic knights seem to have preferred black and white horses, though other colours and markings feature in the records as well.⁵¹⁶ An entry from 1450 in the *Ämterbuch* shows a list of named horses, most of them named after their place of origin, such as ‘der brune Königsberger’ (the brown/the dark⁵¹⁷ Königsberger) or ‘der swartz Benhofer’ (the black Benhofer, after the Ordenshof Benhöf) – this horse is also listed by his name, Ottekolner; other horses are recorded by their training or by whom they had belonged to, such as ‘das schimmelechtige dreberchen, das des groskomphturs gewest ist’⁵¹⁸; in many instances physical peculiarities are used to name the horses: “So findent sich hier ‘der groe

⁵¹⁴ DAVIES 1989:31/36-38.

⁵¹⁵ WUTKE et al 2016:5-6. As for Prussia, regional equestrian classes can be ascertained through the ritual killing and ritual burial of horses into the 13th century (though these practises are centralised in Lithuania); furthermore, the presence of arms and armour in male graves indicate that Prussian society had developed a militaristic culture by the 6th-8th centuries, comparable to other European societies: “(...) evidence from weapon burials (predominantly consisting of small blades referred to as seaxes with no surviving armour) suggests the existence of warfare organised by an equestrian elite class. By the eleventh century, warrior burials included swords, scabbard fittings, knives, axes and spearheads.” – this is reinforced by findings of swords, helmets, spurs, stirrups, and saddles from between the 9th and 12th centuries, apparently prestige items, that indicate the presence of an elite equestrian class in Prussian society (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:64-65).

⁵¹⁶ Ekdahl 1998 (<https://deremilitari.org/2014/03/horses-and-crossbows-two-important-warfare-advantages-of-the-teutonic-order-in-prussia/>). I am always wary to refer to a horse as ‘white’, given that it can be an isabelline or a grey.

⁵¹⁷ ‘Brune/briune’ refers to brown and to a variety of other dark colours. Perhaps a seal brown or liver chestnut, for example.

⁵¹⁸ Das schimmelig Traber, das des Goßkompturs gewest ist/the small dapple-grey trotter, that was the Great Commander’s. ‘Schimmel’ designates a grey horse, whether dappled, fleabitten or with white predominance. But given that dapple is the most common association to ‘grey’, I opted for translating ‘Schimmel’ as dapple-grey.

Lieflender mit dem grosen sacke'⁵¹⁹, 'der hoge brune Benhoffer mit eime ogen'⁵²⁰ oder schliesslich 'der groe Konigisberger mit ufgewurffen nasselochern'⁵²¹. Schliesslich werden Vergleiche benutzt. Ein Pferd heisst einfach ,die Maws'⁵²², ein anderes ,der Narre'⁵²³ und ein drittes gar, der doctor'. – with this horse, Boockmann points to the knights' sense of humour for mocking the jurists that the Great Master had in his service⁵²⁴.

Archaeology indicates that, through the High Middle Ages, the average height at the withers of a warhorse was of 140-145cm, that it would be of medium built, and have a square conformation, which allowed the horse to carry an armoured rider and maintain agility⁵²⁵; in later periods, quality warhorses and quality riding horses sported an average height at the withers of 152cm-172cm and maintained a medium built⁵²⁶; on the other hand, riding horses of lesser quality and pack/working horses were pony-sized⁵²⁷. In the 4th century, Vegetius remarked that Hunnic, Thuringian, Burgundian, and Frisian horses were the best for

⁵¹⁹ Der große Livländer bei der großen Weidefläche/ the great Livonian at the/by the big pasture area.

⁵²⁰ Der lebendige braune/dunkle Benhoffer mit glutaugen/ the lively brown/dark Benhoffer with bright eyes.

⁵²¹ Der große Königsberger mit aufgeworfen Nasenlöcher/ the great Königsberger with flared nostrils.

⁵²² I could not find a translation, though it is tempting to read it as 'Maus' (mouse).

⁵²³ Der Narr/ the Fool/ Jester.

⁵²⁴ BOOCKMANN 1993:121.

⁵²⁵ GASSMANN 2018:70/87. "Historians and hippologists often argue about 'the medieval warhorse' as its conformation and size were constant throughout the Middle Ages. In fact they were not constant at all, but were being developed the whole time, the size of the best warhorses increasing almost beyond recognition between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries. The phrase 'great horse' (*magnus equus* or *grant chival*), which first appeared towards the end of the thirteenth century, rapidly became a technical term for a really good warhorse in the fourteenth." (DAVIES 1989:21). The ideal warhorse would have the following characteristics: "The neck of a knight's steed was often strongly arched [swan-neck] and this increased the certainty of its stride. The breast was broad and muscular, the back had to be short, that is, strong enough to carry an armed rider. The strong and arched croup was split and bound with a deep-lying tail. For such a heavy body, powerful extremities and joints were necessary which, however, were not to appear awkward and crude. They had to be strong and at the same time dry, with firm knees and short fetlocks. These war-horses were different from modern heavy workhorses in that they had to possess a special temperament as well as ability and ease of movement, notwithstanding their heavy build." (EKDAHL 1998). Generally, modern draught horses are known for their gentleness.

⁵²⁶ A horse should not frequently carry more than 20% of its body weight: a warhorse would weight about 400kgs, which make the weight/load ratio of 30% of the horse's body weight, "(...) which accords with academically conducted experimental archaeology, Napoleonic cavalry manuals and common sense." (GASSMANN 2018:71) It can also explain injuries found in skeletal remains that will be addressed in the last part of the present subchapter. Thus, the development of plate armour required the breeding of stronger warhorses to be able to carry the extra weight, though Pluskowski remarks that, in later periods, armour became lighter in Poland due to oriental influence (PLUSKOWSKI et al 2009:203-204).

⁵²⁷ JENEY 2010:15.

warfare⁵²⁸, and indeed Northern Europe was one of the main suppliers of heavy warhorses⁵²⁹: for instance, Denmark was one of the most important countries associated to the warhorse trade, and through the 13th century exported 8000 horses per year, by ship⁵³⁰, from the city of Ribe alone; other thousands of horses were exported from other ports or driven over land to the horse markets in Holstein and in other areas of northern Germany⁵³¹. The size of the horses could increase if horses were bred on fenland or on watery pastures – yet, to prevent the horses from growing weak, a compensating genetic factor was required (alternatively, horses grazed on limestone or chalk to build up bone, due to the calcium in the grass)⁵³².

In the 12th century, besides the military orders, the Cistercians, too, began to breed horses:

“In 1152, the Cistercian general chapter decreed that the houses of the order could not sell any of the foals raised by the order. In 1157, it became forbidden to sell any foal that had been broken in and trained with saddle, so that it could be used in war. Only working animals could be sold, and only until they had changed the first four teeth. A number of prohibitions were promulgated year after year, which clearly indicate that the Cistercians had already

⁵²⁸ HYLAND 1996:3. I believe it is also important to consider the knights' size. The sight of a 180cm Icelandic man on a 142cm Icelandic horse is rather amusing, proportions-wise. But it seems to not stem too far off from what it would look like for a medieval knight, that with good warhorses averaging nearly 150cm and with the average male height in Northern Europe through the Middle Ages set at 171,4cm (STECKEL 2004:216). Though I did not find information specifically for the Baltic, it is my opinion that an average height of 171cm through the Middle Ages for Teutonic knights is reasonable, considering the knights' places of origin.

⁵²⁹ Horses from Holland, Frisia, and Denmark were bred on fenland, which would have made them large (DAVIES 1989:64).

⁵³⁰ Information regarding the Fourth Crusade and horse transportation by sea indicates that the horses were kept below deck, and once the horses were on board the entrance hatches were caulked to prevent flooding; to unload the horses it was necessary to lower ramps from the side of the ships; these ships had mangers, stall trails, bedding, rope and ringbolts to fasten underbelly slings to stabilize the horses (HYLAND 1996:144). A contract for a ship built specifically to transport horses (oared taride) provides dimensions: overall length of 35,71m; width on floor at waist of 3,48m; headroom in hold at waist above keel of 2,25m; camber in the deck from centre line to gunwale of 0,125m; beam in waist at the wale before the tumblehome of 4,10m, with the incorporation of stern ports, which shows the ships were meant to be backed on the beach to unload the horses - each ship could carry twenty horses, and the Statutes of Marseilles of 1253 declared that each horse was allotted 0,75m, which meant that the horses could be stabled in one row, at the centre of each ship; having 2,25m of headroom was enough to ride out of a ship (idem, *ibidem*:145).

⁵³¹ JENSEN 2013:104. In Schleswig, a toll of six pennies was charged for every horse, unless the rider was a crusader or an ecclesiastic (idem, *ibidem*:104).

⁵³² DAVIES 1989:42-43. The development of horses was equally greatly dependent on how countries valued horses and their roles in society and warfare, and so did climate, terrain, and usage play a role in the development of horsemanship (HYLAND 1996:4).

established a lucrative business providing warriors with fine horses. Eventually, in 1184, the general chapter gave up attempts to prohibit or delimit the Cistercian horse breeding and horse trade.”⁵³³.

Teutonic knights and Crusaders brought with them horses from various regions of the Empire⁵³⁴, and horse breeding in the ‘Ordenstaat’ became a distinctive feature; but large horses were also bred by western Slavs in Bohemia⁵³⁵, western Pomerania, and by Polabian Slavs⁵³⁶ in what is today modern East Germany – “(...) even in Poland, where horses were smaller, two sizes can be distinguished from the zooarchaeological data; pack and cart horses standing at 110cm-130cm at the withers and war horses and riding horses standing at 130-140cm.”⁵³⁷.

The conquest of the Baltic would not have been possible if the numerically inferior Christians did not have technological advantage over the natives: besides the introduction of stone/brick fortresses bound with mortar, heavy siege engines (later, introduction of fire weapons) and the crossbow, the Crusader’s and the Order’s heavy cavalry proved an advantage whenever fighting did not take place in boggy terrain or in conditions with poor visibility – the defeat of the Swordbrethren at Saule in 1236 is a good example⁵³⁸. Despite the adoption of crusading warfare by the pagans, in some situations their traditional methods worked better⁵³⁹:

⁵³³ JENSEN 2016:256.

⁵³⁴ The knights’ warhorses were first brought from the knights’ homelands, mainly Thuringia, Saxony, and Meissen; in the 14th century chargers were brought increasingly from Franconia, Swabia, Bavaria, and the Rhineland - these horses, and the ones brought by Crusaders, were probably mixed with Oriental blood (EKDAHL 1998). Even so, size varied. It is indicated that the horses ridden on the Lower Rhine for tournaments in the 15th century were bigger than the horses from Ansbach (MILITZER:60). Furthermore, not every knight would have the means to own outstanding warhorses. I believe it is worth wondering if breeding horses in the ‘Ordensstaat’, besides keeping the knights supplied, also aimed at achieving a certain homogeneity among the knights’ mounts, thus improving combat performance.

⁵³⁵ C. 903-6 AD, Slav merchants from Russia or Bohemia traded horses on Rafelstetten on the Danube, near Linz; it is also possible that, around this same time, horse breeding in the Holy Roman Empire was made from captured Hungarian horses, probably derived from the Tarpan (DAVIES 1989:54).

⁵³⁶ Umbrella term ‘Wenden’.

⁵³⁷ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:319.

⁵³⁸ EKDAHL 1998

⁵³⁹ JENSEN 2016:258.

“The heavy horses were decisive in open battles on firm ground, but they had problems on softer, swampy ground where the light cavalry of the pagans was far superior. This is probably one of the reasons why the crusaders, and especially the Order of the Sword Brethren, changed after a few years from summer to winter campaigns. The heavy horses were good on the frozen marches or lakes, much better than on the soft summer soil.”⁵⁴⁰.

If it is recalled that the Baltic natives lived in conflict with each other, perhaps the seasonal utility of big horses explains why the local peoples, despite having neighbours with bigger horses, kept their smaller horses as an all-purpose animal⁵⁴¹, the one change having occurred on a religious level: “The establishment of Christianity broke the link between the social and sacral role of the horse, which in itself hints at a religious dimension to warfare and military organization in pre-Christian Prussia.”⁵⁴². The *CLP* relates a sacrifice of a horse (and a Teutonic knight) to the pagan gods: both were burned alive⁵⁴³.

Thus, to better understand the ‘advantage’ provided by the Order’s warhorses, it is necessary to introduce the Baltic horses:

“The horse is a special case as it was widely bred by the Teutonic Order as both a pack animal and for heavy cavalry. The zooarchaeological data confirms that the equestrian culture in medieval Prussia and Livonia was similar, with the bulk of the population consisting of small,

⁵⁴⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:258.

⁵⁴¹ I do not believe the Baltic peoples were strangers to the concept of ‘big horses’, and Lithuania eventually adopted a heavy cavalry with big warhorses. Prussians must have seen Polish knights on bigger horses. I doubt that, before the Crusades, the natives would have refrained from plundering bigger horses whenever the opportunity presented itself (and so they did during the Crusades), but I wonder if, at least at an initial stage, these bigger horses were simply regarded as profit during commercial exchanges or as one of those prestigious possessions that looks lovely on display. Archaeology shows that bigger horse remains are fewer and belong to the medieval period (it should be remembered that the Crusades transition the Iron Age to the Middle Ages in Latvia and Estonia, and the early to the late Middle Ages in Poland): the cultic role of the horse was suppressed after the Crusades, that developed the intensive breeding of horses for various roles, from war to work: “This appears to have drawn predominantly on native stock with a small number of larger, imported individuals (noted for example in Greater Poland and Lower Silesia), reflected within the Livonian height range for adults of 107-149cms, and the Prussian range of 101-150cms, with the largest horses in the latter population (above 147cms) appearing in very small quantities only from the medieval period.” (PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:14). By the 14th century, the Order’s enemies were no longer strangers to the knightly culture of Western and Central Europe: “It is not without reason that in an anonymous address composed in 1415 for the Council of Constance (presumably, however, not delivered) the Order complained that ‘the non-believers of whom one is at present speaking now appear powerful everywhere, with shining armour, with warhorses [geroesse] and other military equipment’.” (EKDAHL 1998).

⁵⁴² PLUSKOWSKI 2013:65.

⁵⁴³ This episode features in the last part of the current chapter.

pony-sized animals comparable to pre-crusade individuals, and a comparatively small number consisting of larger stallions used as [crusader] cavalry.”⁵⁴⁴

Teutonic warhorses reached heights of up to 150cm, whereas native horses in Livonia and Lithuania could reach 112cm at the withers⁵⁴⁵. In Prussia, the Order found the small native horse, the Sweik⁵⁴⁶ (‘Schweike’), a name that probably comes from a Baltic word for ‘healthy’ or ‘strong’: these horses were stocky, muscular, and usually stood at 101.60cm at the withers⁵⁴⁷. In a letter of 1427 the Grand Marshall called them ‘little shaggy horses’ (‘cleyne gerugete pherde’), and though there is no reliable source for their colour, it is assumed these horses were light brown, fawn or grey, with a partial black dorsal stripe (“Interestingly, this old breed of horse is still reared on stud farms in Lithuania where they are known as Zemaitukai.”)⁵⁴⁸ – this dorsal stripe is considered to be a primitive marking, and it can be seen today, for example, in the Przewalski horses that roam Chernobyl, or in the Polish Konik.

The Sweik was swift and served the natives as an all-purpose horse, including as a warhorse, whose riders were lightly equipped with “(...) ‘the native Prussian weapons’ of spear, shield (scutum Prunenicum), plate armour (‘Brünne’) and the Prussian helmet (a specific variety of the conical helmet)”⁵⁴⁹.

⁵⁴⁴ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:24.

⁵⁴⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:358. Horses from neighbouring Russia were smaller than the crusaders’ horses, according to the data provided by remains from Novgorod (Troitsky site), that averaged 133cm (range between 117cm-153cm), or 144cm (Gorodishche site) (idem, *ibidem*:358).

⁵⁴⁶ It is worth mentioning that the crossing of finer horses brought from abroad with the Sweik eventually resulted in the Trakehner. The breed was established in the 17th century by decree at Trakehner, Prussia, as a military horse. WWII nearly extinguished the breed, for a large number of animals had to be evacuated before Soviet troops reached Prussia (a similar situation to the Lipizzaner), which resulted in the death of hundreds of animals before Germany was reached. With the loss of the Trakehner stud in Prussia, the breed was only re-established through a private enterprise – the Trakehner Verbannd. The Trakehner is now a sports horse.

⁵⁴⁷ EKDAHL 1998.

⁵⁴⁸ Idem, *ibidem*. Interestingly, the modern Žemaitukas lacks the dorsal stripe, and so does the modern Estonian Klepper – yet, both breeds are considered historical and they are both pony-sized.

⁵⁴⁹ EKDAHL 1998. Native nobility had to perform military service for the Order as light cavalry (equites Pruteni): “Like the turcoples in the Holy Land, they fought with their native weapons, with which they were familiar (...) The basis of such native Prussian service was the possession of a small farm, often no more than one or two hides of land, as the expense of horse and equipment was not very great. A hide corresponds to 16.8 hectares (...). It is to be assumed that these light troops used the horse primarily as a means of transport, while they themselves fought on foot.” (idem, *ibidem*). Large horses were also bred in the estates of German nobles

As a result from the confronts with the Order, the Lithuanians adapted themselves by the end of the 13th/early 14th centuries, and that entailed the development of heavy cavalry with large horses – this required the establishment of stud farms, about which the Order’s sources provide scattered information: around 1367, the Lithuanian prince Kestutis had a stud farm in Kaunas with 50 mares; there are also reports from 400 horses kept in a stud farm in Zemaitija around 1379⁵⁵⁰, and it is only logical the Lithuanians acquired breeding stock from pillaging the Order’s territories, given the enmity between the two and that:

“It was common practice in medieval times to forbid export of horses except under license; warhorses were regarded in much the same way as weapons and their falling into enemy hands was to be avoided. Unlike weapons it took many years to produce a warhorse of fighting age so warhorses were a very valuable commodity.”⁵⁵¹.

The *CLP* tells of several horse thefts, for example: “Shortly after these events [1295], (...) a force of Lithuanians secretly moved in on Ragnit and stole all the brothers’ horses and all the livestock. This was very serious but they were not able to prevent it and the heathens drove the animals off.”⁵⁵² Hermann of Wartberge provides the first detailed description of a stud farm near Insterburg that was captured by the Lithuanians in 1376: “It had fifty mares, two stud-horses and sixty war-horses and foals.” - according to Fritz Rüniger, c.1400 there over 30 stud farms in the Ordensstaat where the Order bred warhorses⁵⁵³.

The horses stolen from Ragnit and the stud farms pose some questions about equine management:

“Apart from thirteenth-century information that returning crusaders left their horses in Prussia, evidence is available from 1322 which indicates that the Teutonic Order was

under obligation of military service – anyone who held more than 672 hectares served with heavy armour on an armoured warhorse that had to be a stallion, and at least two other horsemen (‘Rossdienst’); those who held less land had to perform the ‘Platendienst’ on a sterilized/castrated horse (spado) (idem, *ibidem*).

⁵⁵⁰ Idem, *ibidem*.

⁵⁵¹ HYLAND 1996:148. “The ban on the export of horses and weapons following the Polish-Lithuanian Union in 1386 is well known. Similar prohibitions and regulations followed in 1394, 1400, 1418, 1432 and 1437. Horses were branded in order to prevent smuggling and illicit selling. Only the less militarily important Sweiks could be exported freely.” (EKDAHL 1998).

⁵⁵² FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4805. For other instances vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP*12 – Horse theft:333.

⁵⁵³ EKDAHL 1998.

breeding horses then. It deals with a pastura equorum in Heiligenfeld in north-western Sambia (Samland) on which the horses of the brethren grazed.”⁵⁵⁴.

Though there is evidence for the presence of horses in Teutonic castles⁵⁵⁵, horse breeding was not done in the castles, but in the Order’s estates (‘Vorwerke’) and stud farms that were mostly located in lowlands, deltas, and river valleys - the more important ones in the Vistula region, on the banks of the Frisches Haff, and in Sambia⁵⁵⁶. Though mares were at the studs, the stud-horses were kept mostly in the castles, for better supervision, care, and safety⁵⁵⁷: enclosures were bound to be destroyed during times of conflict (either by enemies or by terrified animals), thus allowing mares and stallions to escape, which in turn could result in the mares being covered by lesser horses, and in the stallions covering lesser mares. In addition, keeping a stud was expensive: “It cannot have been easy to find enough pasture, at any rate by the present-day standard of (...) (1.6 ha) for a mare and her foal, and the better quality horses had also to be fed on oats (...) In the fourteenth century the normal diet of horses included oats, hay, beans, pease and straw.”⁵⁵⁸. Indeed, when designing the ‘Ordensstaat’, the horses had to be taken in consideration:

“When fortresses were to be built there was always the question of whether the site had sufficient grazing and meadowland for the breeding of horses and if it was possible to cultivate the necessary oats. In addition, the soil needed to be as heavy and firm as possible for the breeding of horses for knights. If these conditions were not available, it was necessary to deliver horses and, if need be, fodder to the fortress. This was, for example, the case with the castle of Ragnit (north-east of Königsberg). Castle environs had to be laid out to accommodate stables for the number of war- and saddle-horses required by the brethren (Konventspferde). They also had to contain stores of fodder and the required number of saddles, pack-saddles, bridles, horseshoes, carts and sledges as well as the various devices,

⁵⁵⁴ Idem, *ibidem*.

⁵⁵⁵ The subject will be addressed further below. Horse remains from archaeological sites usually reveal the disarticulated and discarded carcasses of retired horses, though there are rare examples of horses buried in situ in battlefields (such as Tannenberg) and inside destroyed buildings (such as Cēsis castle), which in total represent only a fraction of the horses mentioned in documents; nonetheless, these remains provide important information concerning the relative size of the horses in the area in question (PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:14). I could not find detailed information pertaining the remains from Tannenberg.

⁵⁵⁶ EKDAHL 1998.

⁵⁵⁷ Idem, *ibidem*. For every stud-horse there were ten to seventeen mares, that were not used for anything else besides breeding (idem, *ibidem*).

⁵⁵⁸ DAVIES 1989:44.

weapons and equipment necessary for mounted warfare. In order to maintain these facilities and to protect and care for the horses, many stable hands and workers were required and their needs also had to be met. The surroundings had to be such that where possible hay could be harvested and delivery of taxes and dues in the form of oats made. Of all the dues paid to the Order, that paid in oats was the greatest.”⁵⁵⁹.

Archaeology tends to confirm the presence of horses in the outer baileys of Teutonic castles.⁵⁶⁰ Horse remains were mostly found in the northern part of the forecastle⁵⁶¹ at the Marienburg, in use by the Teutonic Order in the mid-14th century, with no 20th century buildings in that area: according to written sources of the late 14th and 15th centuries, the area in question was used to store building materials and there are imprecise references to stables⁵⁶². More horse remains were found at Cēsis castle (Vidzeme, central Latvia (German Wenden)): articulated and disarticulated bones, together with equestrian equipment, were found in stratigraphic horizons associated with a collapsed building, at the end of the southern outer bailey⁵⁶³.

Despite these examples of findings occurring in the outer baileys of castles, Pluskowski observes that, if castles were spacious enough, horses could be stabled in different areas:

“As in the case of the Teutonic Order’s other large fortified convents, horses were probably distributed across several areas of Wenden Castle, rather than being solely stabled in one building. There is some tentative evidence that the equine resources of Wenden’s commandery improved by the 16th century. In 1451, only 17 horses are listed at the castle, while by 1551 the commandery could field 300 horses. This may have been the result of the policies of the most famous Livonian master, Wolter von Plettenberg (c AD 1494-1535), who

⁵⁵⁹ EKDAHL 1998.

⁵⁶⁰ Pluskowski points that “(...) it is interesting to note that horses in particular could be buried within the lower castle.” (PLUSKOWSKI et al 2009:211). In other instances, excavations in towns and castles have discovered disarticulated remains of horses, which suggests that the bodies were broken and left in waste pits, and that horse meat was not consumed except during crises, especially in active military areas (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:320). For instance, vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP13 – Siege I*:334.

⁵⁶¹ ‘Vorburg’, the outer bailey. Malbork castle began construction as the fortified monastery of Marienburg in 1270, and while serving as headquarters for the Teutonic Order in Prussia between 1309 and 1457, the castle expanded, covering an area of about 20 hectares, and was sub-divided into three sections (PLUSKOWSKI et al 2009:191).

⁵⁶² PLUSKOWSKI et al 2009:195.

⁵⁶³ Idem, *ibidem*:352.

is known to have employed heavy cavalry in his wars against the Russian principalities (...)⁵⁶⁴.

The stabling of horses in one building would depend on the size of the castle: for instance, in the mid-15th century, the Marienburg stabled about 1000 horses in various locations⁵⁶⁵. According to the *Ämterbuch*, the Great Master's horse(s) had their own stables; yet the majority of the Marienburg horses were not stabled in the outer bailey, but rather in stables and pastures that belonged to the Order in the area of Marienburg⁵⁶⁶. According to Rügen, around 1400 there were 13 887 horses in the Order's castles, estates and farms, of which 7200 were used for military operations; adding to this number were the brethren's war and riding horses, that Töppen estimated at 2250 – around that time, the Order owned at least 16 000 horses⁵⁶⁷. I believe the small number of military horses mirrors the numerical inferiority of the Order's knights in the Baltic, and that it would not have oscillated through time.

Prussian sources provide most of the data regarding the Order's horses and there have been few comparisons with Livonian data: "Horse remains are typically found at the Teutonic Order's castles during excavations, but they are usually disarticulated and highly fragmented."⁵⁶⁸ Livonian sources are scarcer than Prussian⁵⁶⁹. Warhorses were presumably bred by the Order in Livonia, too, given that sea routes for provisions depended on the weather⁵⁷⁰ – Ek Dahl supports this assumption with Peter of Dusburg's remark about the

⁵⁶⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:368-369.

⁵⁶⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:369. "In some of the western Prussian castles such as Marienburg and Engelsburg (Pokrzywno), these stables were impressive buildings in their own right (...)." (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:320).

⁵⁶⁶ BOOCKMANN 1993:119-120. One of the Order's offices was the Pferdemschall (horse marshal), and he was responsible for the horses at the Marienburg – the *Ämterbuch* contains records pertaining to the Pferdemschall's office, but only the inventory of the Gorke estate (10km north of the Marienburg) is listed: the Gorke provided equipment for the Pferdemschall, though the inventory does not tell if he was in fact directly responsible for the horses (BOOCKMANN 1993:118).

⁵⁶⁷ EKDAHL 1991:33/EKDAHL 1998.

⁵⁶⁸ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:352.

⁵⁶⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:352.

⁵⁷⁰ Crusaders on horseback avoided transporting horses by sea, preferring land routes instead - though horses do not get sick, they are affected by sea travel: transporting horses to Palestine would have caused significant muscle wastage due to inactivity, plus the mental stress of the journey; this would have weakened the horses, thus making them prone to debilitation by local diseases and by effort in battle: "It takes at least five days for a horse to get back to full fitness after even a short 24-hour, albeit very rough, North Sea crossing, as I found

Livonian branch helping their Königsberg-based brethren against the Prussians in Sambia in 1262 and 1263 by going to their aid with many warhorses (“(...) cum multis et magnis dextrariis’).” Pluskowski states that each castle owned its equine stock, though it could acquire more animals from vassals through the obligations imposed on conquered natives and colonists⁵⁷¹.

Even though there are not many sources regarding horse breeding prior to the 14th century, many of the crusaders in Livonia came from Denmark and Frisia, famous for their horses: “The Danish horse was known for its steady neck and soft skin, and for its high groins and golden complexion.”⁵⁷² Jensen proposes that the Cistercians in Livonia might have helped to establish a systematic local breeding of warhorses, as well as functioning as intermediaries to dealing with monasteries in safe areas where horse breeding was already an established activity, for instance Esrum (Denmark)⁵⁷³.

More evidence for horse breeding in Livonia under the Teutonic Order can be ascertained through visitation records for Livonia in 1334, that state that commanders (‘Komture’) and bailiffs (‘Vögte’) could not sell or gift horses from the stud farms without permission of the Land Master⁵⁷⁴.

After Tannenberg, the Order’s losses of horses were significant and the devastation that followed the battle also had a negative impact in the stud farms, with much breeding stock being driven away and poor harvests that increased horse diseases⁵⁷⁵. Only gradually

when shipping fit endurance horses to Germany for a 100-mile race. Crusaders’ horses must have felt the effects much more in medieval vessels.” (HYLAND 1996:144/148).

⁵⁷¹ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:352. Losses of horses from the Kulmerland, Warmia, and Neumark had to be replaced by the Order, given that knightly privilege in those areas meant that obligation to military service was limited to its own territorial borders – participating in a campaign outside the borders was voluntary, and so food and damage had to be reimbursed by the Order; at Tannenberg, the small contingent from Neumark lost about 20 horses that the Order had to replace – at the end of December 1410, the Order made 4000 Marks available to the knights of Kulmerland for the damage on horses, weapons, and armour, and while the sum was not used, it gives an idea of how high the losses on horses must have been (though parts of the Kulmerland knights lowered their flags to flee the battle, and the fact that they were not obliged to fight outside their borders might have played a role) (EKDAHL 1991:35-37).

⁵⁷² JENSEN 2016:256. Perhaps the horses that became the Frederiksborg and the Friesian.

⁵⁷³ Idem, *ibidem*:257.

⁵⁷⁴ EKDAHL 1998.

⁵⁷⁵ Idem, *ibidem*

was it possible to replace the breeding stock, and though Great Master Heinrich von Plauen (1410-14) bought 140 heavy mares from peasants on the Vistula delta, given the lack of stud-horses, he had to buy some abroad and bring them into Prussia: “Considering the background situation, it is not surprising that the Order was no longer able to do without the help of mercenary troops, although as a result it experienced a severe financial crisis.”⁵⁷⁶.

Horses were expensive, which certainly did not help the Order’s post-Tannenberg dwindling resources. The *Tresslerbuch* provides the value for the horses used by the knights: the warhorses are valued between fifteen to twenty Marks; trotters (riding horses) are valued ten to fifteen Marks; pack- and cart-horses are valued five to ten Marks⁵⁷⁷.

What was asked of a warhorse certainly justified his price. Regardless of colour or size, what was truly important on a warhorse was its capacity to trust its rider (who should also trust his horse), courage to invade another horse’s personal space and noisy crowds, and intelligence to perform without commands⁵⁷⁸ — this because, usually, a warhorse was a full horse, and since they are naturally braver and aggressive, these traits were used to make the horse a warrior on its own:

“The connection between the removal of sexual organs and fearfulness was mentioned in the 13th century by Albertus Magnus, who wrote that ‘warhorses are not castrated as castration makes them timid’. (...) Albertus Magnus goes on to describe how destriers were used to ‘break battle lines by biting and trampling and striking out with their heels’, showing that their natural aggression was a decided benefit during combat.”⁵⁷⁹.

Teutonic warhorses, however, were neither geldings nor full horses – they were ‘monk-horses’ (‘Mönchpferde’/’Mönchhengste’): sterilization was mostly applied through strangulation of the spermatic cords (‘Auswürgen’), which resulted in the maintenance of most of a full horse’s characteristics, but prevented the use of that horse, in case of capture, for breeding; another procedure was to crush the spermatic cords with two sharp-edged pieces of woods (‘Kluppen’), yet it seems that strangulation was the preferred method; castration

⁵⁷⁶ Idem, *ibidem*

⁵⁷⁷ EKDAHL 1991:35. The highest price for warhorses in the *Tresslerbuch* is 30 Marks (BOOCKMANN 1993:125).

⁵⁷⁸ GASSMANN 2018:90.

⁵⁷⁹ HERBERT-DAVIES 2018:34.

occurred sometimes, and it is assumed the geldings were used as riding horses⁵⁸⁰. According to Davies, geldings were believed to lack dignity and courage⁵⁸¹, yet since supposedly a knight should have three horses - a warhorse, a riding horse, and a pack-horse, from which both warhorse and riding horse should be males, for it was considered dishonourable for a knight to ride a mare⁵⁸² — it would be more manageable if the two males were not full horses: firstly, it would be easier to prevent fights between them; secondly, if the pack-horse were a mare, only one of the other horses would show interest (most likely, unrequested on the knight's behalf). But not every knight would be able to afford three animals – and if he did, he certainly would not want to have a mare as a pack-horse for the trouble it would cause around the warhorse (and a hypothetical full riding horse). As has been discussed above, a knight most likely joined the Teutonic Order with his horse(s), even before Dietrich von Altenburg's stipulations. It has been ascertained that, in the Order's territories, mares were kept separately from the knights' horses, thus the knights' horses were all males. The Order's sources refer to the warhorses as 'hengste', and simply use 'horse' or 'trotters' for riding horses – for their size, Sweiken were not used for war, but were probably used as riding horses⁵⁸³.

If Ekdahl is right in his assumption that riding horses could be gelded, and that the small Sweik could have been used as a riding horse, then I am inclined to say both knights⁵⁸⁴ and sergeants could have used the Sweik as a riding horse, based on Boockmann's observations about the Great Master's horses entry in the *Tresslerbuch*: Boockmann proposes that the Great Master's riding horses were not always from the Order's stock, but were occasionally bought and thus accounted for in the *Tresslerbuch*⁵⁸⁵, which could mean that

⁵⁸⁰ EKDAHL 1998. Most colts were sterilized at the age of three to perform military service, and while there were full warhorses in the Teutonic cavalry, according to the account books, the majority of the horses were 'monk-horses' (idem, *ibidem*).

⁵⁸¹ DAVIES 1989:18.

⁵⁸² MILLIKEN 1960:36-37.

⁵⁸³ EKDAHL 1998. The Sweiks were purchased from native Prussians and used for various tasks – for instance, for courier service (post Sweiks – 'Briesweiken'), and on campaign the Sweiks were used as pack horses to transport provisions, fodder, and equipment (idem, *ibidem*).

⁵⁸⁴ At least, those who could not afford to bring their own riding horse. Or those who's 'better' riding horse was still under training.

⁵⁸⁵ The records (*Tresslerbuch*) show only when horses are bought or given as gifts (BOOCKMANN 1993:124).

the highest office of the Order did not always ride luxury horses⁵⁸⁶ and sometimes rode animals of equal quality to that of the wealthy vassals⁵⁸⁷.

When it comes to the number of horses a knight should have, it is worth reasoning that what is stipulated in the Rule should be read with caution, for sometimes reality was different. The entry from 1431 in the *Ämterbuch* registers the horses of sixteen office holders – there is a discrepancy between the number of horses indicated in the Rule and the list: whereas the Rule mentions two to four horses, in the list the number three is only reached twice; the other knights (who held no office) have one or two horses, and the second horse repeatedly shows as a foal – the knights themselves had to worry that a replacement was available when their horse was retired; five knights have only one foal, and Boockmann poses the question whether these knights could not be deployed; another entry from 1449 lists nine officers and six knights with a total of 32 horses⁵⁸⁸ — which means two horses per man.

This situation could be explained by its’ post-Tannenberg context: according to Rürger’s estimates, the decline of equine stock in the Order’s estates following the battle in 1410 was significant, as can be ascertain through the following table⁵⁸⁹:

Location	Number of horses pre-Tannenberg	Number of horses post-Tannenberg
Military studs in Samland	1407: 59 stallions and 407 broodmares	1414: 17 stallions and 210 broodmares
Leske	1390: 341 ‚Remonten‘ (young horses undergoing military training)	1423: 85 ‚Remonten‘
Komturei Mewe	1407: 505 horses	1416: 323 horses
Vorwerk Senskow (Komturei Engelsburg)	March 1410: 180 broodmares	1414: 43 broodmares

⁵⁸⁶ The Order’s horses made valuable presents: in 1429, Great Master Paul von Rusdorf offered the Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas one of the Order’s ‘monk-horses’: “(...) ein fröhlicher [a lively] Mönchhengst.” (idem, *ibidem*).

⁵⁸⁷ BOOCKMANN 1993:125-126.

⁵⁸⁸ BOOCKMANN 1993:118-119.

⁵⁸⁹ RÜGER apud EKDAHL 1991:37.

Military stud Sauerteig (Briesen)	April 1410: 92 broodmares	1421: 19 broodmares
Kuling stud (Bratia)	1401: 69 broodmares	1411: 47 broodmares

More information regarding the number of horses attributed to knights (and office holders) is provided by the first part of a list that shows information about horses, weapons, and food supplies in the castle of Człuchów (1446)⁵⁹⁰. According to this list, only two out of four knights have three horses – Dynyes has only two, whereas Johan has none (but since he has no armour, maybe the lack of equipment and horse can be interpreted as penitence); if Hose was just a knight, he also had three horses; out of six office holders, three have three horses – if some of these offices were held by sergeants, it could explain the difference in the number of horses; the kitchen master has no mount; and then there are three horses and the indication that no full armour (for a knight) accompanies those horses, thus I am tempted to interpret it as those horses no longer having a knight.

I sustain that, even before Tannenberg, Teutonic knights – at least, those in smaller castles – did not always have the number of horses stipulated in the Rule. The more the horses, the more is needed for them, and not every castle would meet the required facilities and house the required number of people. I also believe that, for certain operations, the knights went ahead on warhorses and rode riding horses under different circumstances⁵⁹¹. This, for the simple fact that a riding horse did not have the same training as a warhorse did, and I do not believe a convoy of knights would be willing to cross a forest in enemy territory, under the threat of ambush, astride horses who would not know how to respond to the situation.

⁵⁹⁰ KUBICKI 2017:110-112. For the list vide Addendum, Pt. II, Castle list:334.

⁵⁹¹ I will develop the subject in Part 3.

5.2. Training and Maintenance

Though graziers are not usually aggressive to other animals, and as such, a horse relies on speed to escape danger, horses can be extremely aggressive among themselves when territory or band is under threat, resorting to kicking and biting: “Rather than deterring the fighter pain spurs them on. Several natural vices are evident: rearing and striking with forefeet; biting, often delivered with snakelike speed and precision; and piledriver kicking with hind feet to deliver a crushing and well-aimed blow.”⁵⁹². This is what a warhorse should do, when required: “The warhorse was expected to fight in the battle himself, kicking, leaping and rearing at his opponents; he was encouraged to be ferocious, and for this reason was provided with a bit which was cruelly harsh on the mouth.”⁵⁹³. I doubt, however, a warhorse would be allowed to leap and rear with a knight on the saddle, for the reason that it would be awfully hard for the knight to do his part of the fighting – not to mention that a rearing horse might lose balance and fall on its’ back (and thus, on the knight). A warhorse would certainly bite, kick, and trample down while ridden, for these allow the knight to sit and move on his own without having to work on staying on the saddle. But a warhorse on the loose, with no knight to control it, would have been more destructive towards other horses and men – and in such a situation I can accept a horse would fight like it would naturally do, unrestrained.

A warhorse could begin training at the age of four⁵⁹⁴ — this training took two to three years, yet a warhorse needed regular training with its knight in order to form a solid set,

⁵⁹² HYLAND 1996:xi-xii.

⁵⁹³ DAVIES 1989:18. I do not agree with the statement about the mouthpiece. A horse whose rider pulls at his mouth will start a fight with his rider. Already Xenophon explained that a horse’s mouth should always be cared for, and suggested that harsher bits were used only in training (carefully as to not injure the horse) and then be replaced by softer bits, which the horse would appreciate: “The horse’s mouth must not be checked too harshly, so that he will toss his head, nor too gently for him to feel it.” (MORGAN (trans.) 2011:29/56-58). It should also be noted that an illuminated manuscript depicts a Teutonic warhorse with a snaffle: vide Addendum, Pt. II, fig. 15:335. The subject will be addressed further. Besides, many problems (a rider’s self-esteem included) start by pulling at the horse’s mouth, and it is both a skill and a necessity to ride ‘loose’. I am not saying accidental pulls or more urgent tugging at the reins did not take place, because it most certainly must have happened. There must have also been brutish knights. I also acknowledge different warhorses must have had different personalities, sensitivities, and mouthpieces.

⁵⁹⁴ But since Teutonic horses were usually sterilized at the age of three, it seems that is when their training began.

capable of feeling each other⁵⁹⁵ and thus avoiding accidents with other horses and knights within the same formation: the Carolingians set the basis for cavalry manoeuvres, during which knights should keep formation, hold their horses (collected, at a canter)⁵⁹⁶ until the enemy line was reached, execute turns⁵⁹⁷ whenever necessary, and perform in uneven terrain (and/or with obstacles) under attack⁵⁹⁸. Terrain is of especial importance in the Baltic, with its forests and swamps and ice. On the difficulty of the terrain, the *LRC* tells the following:

“The Master (...) sent four hundred and fifty mounted men riding along the coast toward Kurland. They did not pause until they reached Goldingen. They took from the cloister whatever Brothers, sergeants and Kurs they needed. The latter knew the lay of the land and the roads toward Gresen. They set out on the journey in high spirits, because they expected to succeed. Their oracle sticks fell propitiously, and their birds sang favourably, and from all this they concluded that everything would go well for them. On the journey to Gresen, they encountered many bad paths, swamps and difficult streams, and even an unmounted horse could barely negotiate them.”⁵⁹⁹.

The remark about unmounted horses shows that, for the safety of both knight and horse, during rougher patches of terrain horses were led by hand. This would have been difficult with many horses, not just because of the extra hands that would have been needed to lead, but also for the environment around the horses – the medieval horse was surely

⁵⁹⁵ The symbiose between horse and rider should never be overlooked: a rider who knows their horse (who is familiar with the horse’s movements, body language, and personality) has much greater chances of staying on the saddle. Feeling or predicting a behaviour allows the rider to correct the horse (or themselves), and to adapt their riding to the situation – for instance, the famous ‘more leg’. As Hyland puts it, “A horse trusting his rider will attempt things that others balk at. However, confidence takes time to build. The rider also has to be confident and must be the dominant one in the partnership, though without the need overtly to enforce his will.” (1996:xii). The Templar Rule (paragraph 50) forbids the borrowing of horses among brethren (BOLÉO (trans.) 2006:50), most likely to secure partnerships between horse and rider. Teutonic Statutes say nothing about it, and while the *CLP* mentions an episode of a knight willing to lend his horse (vide Addendum, Others – *CLP*1:385), I believe exchanging horses was not a common practice, even because there were penalties for having a horse injured – yet, I can still interpret the episode with Dietrich and Konrad as two close friends who trust each other enough to trade horses on occasion. One should always keep in mind, however, that there must have been knights with more utilitarian perspectives.

⁵⁹⁶ Collection requires the horse to ‘tuck in’ its’ hind legs under itself, in order to lift and lighten the forehand – as one of my instructors has put it, the horse is pushing itself from behind instead of dragging itself from the front. Collection makes for better responses, prevents injury, and is comfortable for both rider and horse. Collection is also incredibly hard to achieve and frustratingly easy to lose.

⁵⁹⁷ To prevent injury/slipping, turns require the horse to be collected.

⁵⁹⁸ GASSMANN 2018:72/87-88.

⁵⁹⁹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:89.

familiar with nature, but just because a horse is familiar with a place, it does not mean it will not suddenly see something that will spook it. In terms of mobility, it would have been impractical, which convinces me that, for certain operations, the number of horses involved was reduced as much as possible⁶⁰⁰ and thus knights went ahead on their warhorses. In the Baltic, horses in general must have had good endurance to withstand the terrain:

“The tremendous performance of the horses during these forays is difficult for us to imagine today, although authors such as the Austrian herald-poet Peter Suchenwirt as well as many other source documents report on their feats of endurance and prowess and the hardships they endured. Correspondingly the losses of horses were very high, as a result not only of their direct participation in warfare, but also of the harshness and privations of the journey itself. Particularly dreaded was the wild terrain of Grauden⁶⁰¹ which was east of Sambia.”⁶⁰²

Unfortunately, the Order’s chronicles do not provide insight into the process of training a warhorse to fight in the Baltic⁶⁰³. Neither does the *Book of the Order*, that gives more information about conduct on horseback than about the horses themselves. But it seems logical that information can be extrapolated from the Templar Rule, considering the influence it had in the Teutonic Statutes. Paragraph 315 from the Templar Rule is, in my opinion, the most pertinent for the subject at hand:

“315. Cada irmão deve cuidar zelosamente do seu equipamento e dos seus cavalos. Nenhum irmão pode fazer correr o seu cavalo sem que ele tenha repousado, nem andar com ele a

⁶⁰⁰ “About the middle of the thirteenth century a new technical term, the *lance garnie*, was used to denote the mounted knight together with all the equipment and assistants which he now required. His assistants would have been one squire and two mounted archers. (...) A horse for each of the archers, another for the squire, and a packhorse for the luggage made a total of four. But in addition, the knight had to have two for himself, a palfrey to ride in the ordinary course of events, and a warhorse for the battle. Since it was imperative that the warhorse should not already be tired before a battle began, it was never ridden on journeys, but led by the squire. When the battle approached the knight had to change both his clothes and his horse.” (DAVIES 1989:24-25). In the context of the Baltic Crusades, at least in earlier stages, a total of six horses per knight would have been very impractical due to the terrain. Not to mention that Teutonic knights stole horses (and cattle) as well, which meant more animals to drive across a forest. The subject will be discussed in Part III.

⁶⁰¹ North-east of Königsberg, the territory of the Samogitians, that from the 13th to the 15th century separated the Order’s territories in Prussia and Livonia, while also posing a barrier (a strip of land of varying width) between the Order and the Lithuanian heartland (NICOLLE 2007:46-47).

⁶⁰² EKDAHL 1998.

⁶⁰³ As Hyland puts it, “A knight learned to ride a warhorse as a matter of course; even if he did not initially break it in, he would have seen the job was done to his satisfaction.” (1996:158) – indeed, not everyone can break in a horse. If a horse catches any vices during the process, it will be much harder to correct compared to an educated horse that catches vices from a regular rider at a later stage.

galope sem permissão, e em especial o cavalo que ele não está a usar; pode sair a cavalo por prazer, a passo ou a trote. Nenhum irmão deve fazer correr o seu cavalo uma pista completa sem permissão. Se não transportar uma besta e desejar fazer correr um cavalo, pode fazer uma pista ou duas ou três sem permissão, se assim desejar. Nenhum irmão pode fazer correr impetuosamente o seu cavalo numa corrida com outra pessoa em mais de meia pista sem permissão. Nenhum irmão deve fazer correr o seu cavalo uma pista completa nem transportar armas sem as botas calçadas sem permissão; mas pode fazê-lo em meia pista. Quando os irmãos saem com a intenção de correr uma pista, devem calçar as suas botas. Quando os irmãos fazem justas, não devem atirar lanças, pois é proibido devido aos danos que isso poderia provocar.”⁶⁰⁴.

Though the type of horse is not specified, I believe this pertains the warhorse. The paragraph states that: brethren cannot make their horses run without the animals having rested beforehand (special note is given to the spare horse, that understandably is not ridden as frequently, and so would be more predisposed to injury); brethren can ride for leisure at the pace or at the trot; no brother should make his horse run a full track⁶⁰⁵ without permission; if the brother does not carry a crossbow and wants to run his horse, he can run one to three tracks without permission; no brother can race against another for more than half a track without permission; no brother should make his horse run a full track or carry weapons without his boots on, and without permission (though he can for half a track); when the brethren intend to run a track, they should have their boots on; when the brethren joust, it is forbidden to throw lances due to the damage it could cause.

The restraining measures regarding how much (and at what gait) a horse could be exercised served to prevent injury and needless exhaustion. These were warhorses and should be preserved. To some degree, these measures also viewed a knight’s safety as well, aiming at preventing unnecessary falls outside the battlefield⁶⁰⁶ – falling off a horse is an art, but given the knight’s training on leaping onto the saddle and the construction of combat saddles,

⁶⁰⁴ BOLÉO (trans.) 2006:119-120.

⁶⁰⁵ The translator noted that the original word (‘raviner’) meant ‘charging’. In the Portuguese translation I have read it as a ‘track’, for it makes more sense for me, but ‘charging’ will be considered as well.

⁶⁰⁶ The remarks about wearing boots and carrying weapons are probably related to a knight’s own protection: the boots, to protect his legs while riding; and carrying weapons only with permission, probably to prevent injury in case of a bad fall.

I am not sure knights viewed knowing how to fall as a worthy skill, compared to stubbornly remain on the saddle⁶⁰⁷.

But these measures also had didactic purposes:

“Testing a horse’s speed⁶⁰⁸ ensured it was fit and responsive; the mock joust and half-speed lance attack without casting weapons taught the rider to place his horse accurately; if the horse jinked off target⁶⁰⁹ the rider had advance warning of how his horse would react under pressure and could have reflexive counter-measures ready in battle. Horses who shy from a frontal object nearly always do so to the same side. This exercise built the horse’s confidence to charge as he never got hurt. Repeated often enough, with no harm ensuing, it could help restore a charger’s shattered confidence⁶¹⁰. Also, any bloody-minded horse⁶¹¹ would have the nonsense knocked out of him by a skilled rider. Such trails were a way of monitoring the safety and ongoing usefulness of a charger.”⁶¹².

Responsiveness is important when it comes to having a horse collected and engaged. The horse should act like a spring on command, extending and sprinting, or collecting and reducing. This would be crucial for the moment of the charge and for regrouping, when formation should hold. To keep formation and maintain freedom to manoeuvre, knights had to keep their horses at a collected canter, on the same lead⁶¹³: “ (...) being able to bring your horse into collection on command, and to control its lead while in movement, requires

⁶⁰⁷ The raised pommel and cantle depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry show that, by the second half of the 11th century, instead of rapidly dismounting and mounting the horse again in combat, the objective was to stay on the saddle (DAVIES 1989:15).

⁶⁰⁸ ‘Raviner’.

⁶⁰⁹ A horse had to be in motion (“(...) a stationary horse is a dead horse.”), but since it goes against a horse’s nature to charge into a solid obstacle, cavalry attacks were executed through turns before the horse met the target, though the horse could also pass the target (GASSMANN 2018:73) – barrelling onto the target is not the desirable option, for the horse might fall (and with it, the rider). Even though horses can be incited to trample down foot soldiers, Hyland’s statement most likely refers to the horse having to be in close proximity to something – most likely moving and noisy – and thus it would be necessary for the knight to be assured his horse would indeed approach; or, if it was reluctant, it would be important to know to where the horse would tend to run out to.

⁶¹⁰ Horses, too, are prone to trauma; behaviour alterations do show and might render a horse nearly impossible to work with if untreated or dealt with poorly.

⁶¹¹ There is always the horse that, with a little excitement, might attempt to bite other horses and/or run away with its rider. This kind of behaviour must be corrected, for it is dangerous in a charge. The subject will be addressed in the third chapter.

⁶¹² HYLAND 1996:159.

⁶¹³ The hand that advances first.

advanced horsemanship skills – not just an easy familiarity in the saddle (though that certainly helps), but acquired skill in horse and rider.” – for a knight, the ability to maintain formation and a collected canter would not only present a challenge in matters of holding position relatively to his comrades, but especially in terms of controlling his horse⁶¹⁴. In a mass, horses are harder to control due to herd instinct – plus, full horses tend to turn against each other. To overcome this, the knight would have to keep the horse focused on himself, mindful of the knights’ commands. Collection helps with this; it would be impossible to at an uncontrolled gallop, plus maintain the same lead and execute the manoeuvres safely.

Though I could not find through research the finer details regarding the training of a warhorse, I believe it is safe to assume the basics would lie in building muscle (dorsal muscle) and endurance through collection, plus desensitization to noise, sudden movement, and impact. However, it should be kept in mind that these were warhorses, meant for war: there would have been distractions, excitement, and their knights would have been busy with fighting, thus abandoning their horses and bidding collection farewell. According to Hyland:

“Horsemanship in Europe did not make significant advancement until after the close of the medieval period and the rise of the sixteenth century Italian masters. Although there was certainly skill in riding a destrier, or the lighter-built coursers and rouncies of less affluent knights and men-at-arms, it was a skill depending on punishing action of curb and spur.”⁶¹⁵.

While I agree that Teutonic knights were not dressage masters, and that there were knights opting for punishment instead of skill, I argue these were men dealing with an animal that might keep them safe through speed and prowess – there were certainly those who were interested in keeping a good relationship with their horses, and thus opted for skill whenever they could. This would require the warhorse to be ridden often, both for training and for more relaxing moments – or to walk on the lead rope with the knight.

All that has been exposed leads me to believe knights owned their warhorses and did not usually exchange them among each other: horses react differently to each person, and each person has their own sensibility, thus a less sensitive knight would not feel comfortable – and as such, have the peace of mind to fight – on a horse he could not feel in order to apply

⁶¹⁴ GASSMANN 2018:76-77.

⁶¹⁵ HYLAND 1996:8.

the reflexive counter-measures Hyland talks about⁶¹⁶. But it is possible that certain knights did not own their riding horses, nor the pack horses. If Rünge's and Töppen's estimates are kept in mind, and also Boockmann's statement about the Great Master not always riding the Order's horses, then it is likely that communal horses belonging to no knight (or sergeant) in particular were riding horses. A riding horse and a warhorse require different types of riding, and an experienced knight could have perfectly travelled from one location to another, through a predetermined and safe route, on an unfamiliar riding horse. But it could also be that some communal horses were also warhorses serving as spares. Based on the immobile knights mentioned before by Boockmann, there could have been an 'emergency stash' of riderless warhorses that knights rode while their own horses were recovering or undergoing training – a quick fix that would have not been ideal. Hyland, too, suggests that perhaps the extra horses were distributed in time of war, or if an animal was unfit due to illness, injury or lameness⁶¹⁷.

Customs, paragraph 29. *Of the marshall's office and of the distribution of animals*⁶¹⁸ states that "Whenever mules and horses arrive, the marshal shall not give them out before the master has taken the ones he needs, and then he may distribute the rest to the brethren." As will be mentioned in the third chapter, the Marshal kept a caravan⁶¹⁹ with horses, from where the animals were distributed according to necessity. I believe these horses were the 'emergency stash' of communal horses. About these, Boockmann states that, at the Marienburg, a system can be recognised because some knights had horses that were in a communal stable supplied by the 'Pferdemarschall', but not other horses – also, a considerable part of the knights' horses were kept in agricultural estates that belonged to the Marienburg, but the records do not show how this system worked⁶²⁰. The horses in this stable

⁶¹⁶ An experienced and trained knight would be able to perform on any horse, undoubtedly. Would he feel good on any horse? Unlikely, and it would probably show in his performance. In the same way, a professional jumper will not compete on a horse they cannot be sure which side it will run out to – for they will be riding in preparation for a certain side, allowing an opening to the other.

⁶¹⁷ HYLAND 1996:152.

⁶¹⁸ STERNS (trans.) 1969:302.

⁶¹⁹ Unworking Templar horses kept in the caravan had half rations: this could have prevented azoturia (HYLAND 1996:155-156). The condition may occur when horses are given rest without having their ration adjusted to the decrease in physical effort. The horse's muscles over the loins and quarters stiffen, causing cramps and thus difficulty to move – lameness and collapsing might occur.

⁶²⁰ BOOCKMANN 1993:120.

were, I believe, most likely to be the knights' own warhorses, for the reason that, in order to train together, men and animals had to be in the same space. Whether these horses stayed indoors or were allowed to graze near the castle and then driven back in, it is unclear⁶²¹ – however, the *LRC* mentions the Teutonic knights of Riga sending for their horses, that were in a pasture: “A messenger rushed there to inform the Brothers that their Master had arrived. Their horses were in the pasture, and they quickly sent for them. The townspeople were also informed. They were pleased at his arrival and rode out with the Brothers (...).”⁶²² It is then likely that the horses could be let out near the castle, and then brought in again.

To sustain my views, I must dedicate some time to the Templar Rule, that is much more telling when it comes to horse affairs. To begin with, the Templar Marshal, too, kept a caravan of horses to supply the brethren⁶²³: paragraph 105 indicates that, when there is war and the brethren do not have horses or mules, the Convent Marshal can order the Land Marshal to take from the caravan a certain horse for a brother, and that once the operations are over, the brethren must return the horses to the caravan, while paragraph 107 states that the Marshal can distribute caravan horses among the brethren whenever he deems it necessary⁶²⁴. Specific horses could not be requested⁶²⁵, but if a knight had a horse that was so unsettled that it was uncontrollable, or that pulled, reared or stumbled, the knight could complain to the Marshal, who could either allow a change of mount after ascertaining the horse's vices, or, if he did not allow for an exchange, he could not force the knight to ride the horse: “It was important that horses were always under control. The cited faults would put a Templar at great risk.”⁶²⁶. An uncontrollable horse not only destabilizes its' rider, but also other horses nearby (and might also run away with the rider); rearing is extremely dangerous,

⁶²¹ In Templar castles, horses were either stabled or let out to graze, conducted by squires probably supervised by the *gonfanonier* (HYLAND 1996:155).

⁶²² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:108.

⁶²³ BOLÉO (trans.) 2006:61. Paragraph 104 of the Templar Rule states that the Convent Marshal can give a caravan horse to a brother (idem, *ibidem*:67).

⁶²⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:67-68.

⁶²⁵ Though it seems the Templar Marshal could assign certain horses to determinate brethren (paragraph 105), which implies an extensive knowledge of both men and horses on the Marshal's behalf.

⁶²⁶ HYLAND 1996:159. I believe this refers to a temporary mount a knight would ride while his own warhorse recovered from injury or finished training, and I think the same applied to Teutonic knights. Hyland's statement reinforces my views that a knight's warhorse was his own: it is not like a private horse is free from vice – its owner is simply familiar with it and can act accordingly.

for a horse can lose balance past a certain point – especially with an armoured rider – and fall on his back, on the rider; pulling implies that the horse is fighting the rider’s commands and attempting to take the reins, which can unbalance the rider and break communication (besides, it is very annoying, though it is usually a vice that can be corrected via the famous ‘more leg’); stumbling can be due to a horse’s lack of focus or caused by bad legs, but a horse can be held up unless it goes down on its knees – nevertheless, it is dangerous given that both horse and rider can fall.

Lastly, still regarding a ‘stash’ of spare communal horses, paragraph 115 states that, if the Commander needed horses from the stables for the brethren, the Marshal should lend him foals or horses; but when the Marshal wanted, he could retrieve the animals to equip the convent brothers and the Commander must return the borrowed animals when they were necessary – though, if a brother asked the Marshal for a horse that was borrowed from the stables, the Marshal could give it to him; if the Commander bought foals and gave them to the brethren for feeding, the Marshal could not take these without permission from the commander or from the Great Master⁶²⁷. The possibility of a spare communal horse becoming a knight’s implies that the two worked well together, and also that the Marshal did not disregard the importance of a knight feeling comfortable on a certain horse (of course, there must have also been those who dismissed it). As for lending – and, more importantly, giving foals to the brethren to feed, it implies that creating a bond was expected, and that probably those same brethren would break in and train those foals to become their warhorses⁶²⁸. One should never underestimate the power of treats and tasty bribery on the journey to fall on a horse’s good graces and earn its trust.

Thus, it is possible, that besides feeding, the knights themselves performed certain tasks related to their horses outside of training. As has been mentioned, between offices knights should attend to their horses, and while in some instances they probably monitored

⁶²⁷ BOLÉO (trans.) 2006:70.

⁶²⁸ “Young colts were given to brother knights and sergeants to feed, showing some warhorses were allocated before riding age. A good partnership could thus be formed and a brother train the horse to his particular way of riding. The most telling reference to Templars’ breeding stock comes from the rule forbidding commanders of houses to take a brother’s horse away and send it to stud, unless permission had first been obtained from the Master and the full chapter. There would have been occasions when certain stallions proved to be exceptional and were worth more at stud than in battle.” (HYLAND 1996:153)

servants or squires, in other situations they must have personally dealt with the horses – again, the Templar Rule explicitly mentions a brother taking his horse to the farrier.

The Order's Customs, when describing the functions of the Master of the Esquires and of the brethren in charge of the small forge and of the saddlery⁶²⁹, make it look like it was the knights who groomed their horses and, like the Templars, Teutonic knights must have certainly checked their equipment frequently – equestrian equipment included.

5.3. The Horse's Equipment

In several of the Order's castles there were saddleries ('satelhus') that fabricated, fixed and kept tacks – the saddleries were financed either by the House Commander or by the convent⁶³⁰. Yet an essential part of equestrian equipment is that for grooming the horse. Currycombs and brushes are mentioned in the Order's Customs⁶³¹, and though nothing is said about hoof picks, considering that hoof care is essential to prevent lameness (or, in the worst case scenario, a horse's death) I assume it must have been a common tool for stable servants - or for the farrier, which implies that the horse would only have its hooves checked whenever new shoes were needed. This depends on how fast hooves grow and need trimming, and it varies from horse to horse, though it can also be influenced by the weather: "In the domesticated horse, heavy labour in haulage or carrying will cause additional wear, while the cold and damp conditions of northern Europe lead to softening of the horn of the hoof, which thus wears rapidly and is prone to damage."⁶³² Teutonic horses wore unhardened shoes in the summer and hardened shoes in the winter, which required castles to keep supplies of horseshoes⁶³³. It is likely these shoes had calkins - shoes with protruding nails and calkins

⁶²⁹ Their offices will be presented in Part III.

⁶³⁰ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:105. It is interesting to note how the losses of horses following Tannenberg were mirrored in equipment: "(...) the saddle and other parts of the harness were kept in saddle-workshops attached to castles. A record listing saddles at Marienburg is of considerable interest. In 1386 there were 53 saddles, in 1387 – 304, in 1388 – 427, in 1398 – 272, in 1402 – 298, in 1408 – 480, in 1411 – 120, in 1414 – 227, and in 1437 – 225. The number of saddles diminished strikingly after the Grunwald campaign, totaling only 1/4 of the stores before the Great War." (idem, *ibidem*:109).

⁶³¹ STERNS (trans.) 1969:308.

⁶³² CLARK (ed.) 1995:75-76.

⁶³³ EKDAHL 1998. A third type of horseshoe used was the 'schalwische' (EKDAHL 1991:35) (Scalovian) shoe, though I have not found information on the subject. Horseshoes were not used in Prussia prior to the

resulted on the horse standing on studs instead of on the flat shoe, serving to provide the shod horse with traction⁶³⁴.

Based on how strict Templar regulations about the care of equipment and horses were⁶³⁵, the Teutonic Order was probably rigorous in this aspect as well: “Given the investment in horse breeding, it is not surprising equine welfare was taken very seriously by the order: the earliest veterinary manual for horses in German, *Liber de cura equorum* (1408), was dedicated to Grand Master Ulrich of Jungingen.”⁶³⁶.

As for tacks, the items described in the Customs are saddles, saddle pads, bridles, reins, headcollars, girths, bits, and surcingles⁶³⁷. I assume lead ropes were part of the equipment, judging by the ‘campaign ropes’ that are mentioned in paragraph 156 of the Templar Rule⁶³⁸. Nowakowski mentions a strap to tie horses that appears in the sources as ‘rosstrenge’/’strycken’⁶³⁹, and that I think are lead ropes. Perhaps hobbles and muzzles were also part of a Teutonic horse’s equipment – though they are not mentioned in the Customs and the designations in the Portuguese translation of the Templar Rule⁶⁴⁰ are not the usual terms. According to Hyland, the usage of hobbles and muzzles can indicate a horse’s temperament and gender: hobbled horses are easier to catch if they wander off and muzzles

Crusades (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:112). Maybe because, in the winter, mud and ice compact more easily on shod horses. Maybe because the weight carried by the Baltic horses did not require extra protection for the hooves.

⁶³⁴ CLARK (ed.) 1995:75. It also offers some extra height to keep the frogs – the sensitive and infection-prone area in the hoof – above moisture, though flat shoes provide a little height as well.

⁶³⁵ For example, paragraph 283 states that equipment that needs fixing must be fixed – I believe this extended to horses as well.

⁶³⁶ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:320. The *Tresslerbuch* shows the Grand Master’s expenses with a veterinary (designated specifically as a ‘Pferdearzt’, literally a horse doctor), but since this veterinary was on wages, he did not work for the Great Master exclusively (BOOCKMANN 1993:124).

⁶³⁷ STERNS (trans.) 1969:308-309. Bridles and bits are two different kinds of mouthpieces that will be discussed with the bridle being referred to as snaffle. A headcollar is a type of headpiece without a bit/snaffle, and it is used to lead the horse by hand or to fasten it to a holding place – it can be used together with a regular headpiece. A surcingle is a type of girth that fastens over the saddle (or, in case of a pack-horse, over the saddle-pad. If worn with the girth, it could provide some extra safety in a combat situation, in case impact or the horse’s sudden expansion of the ribcage tore the girth. Girths were placed more centrally than nowadays, thus in order to prevent the saddle from sliding back, breast-collars were used, sometimes double girths and surcingles as well (HYLAND 1996:11).

⁶³⁸ BOLÉO (trans.) 2006:82.

⁶³⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1004:108.

⁶⁴⁰ BOLÉO (trans.) 2006:136.

indicate stallions in close proximities, since stallions frequently bite each other⁶⁴¹. But hobbled horses are very limited in their movements, thus it would be impractical in an emergency⁶⁴²; and a muzzle would prevent the warhorse from biting a hypothetical threat, so if Teutonic knights did use this equipment on their horses, it would have been under specific circumstances – most likely, when camping in safe territory.

As for mouthpieces, a bridle denominated ‘gebis’ was the most popular in Prussia - according to archaeology, these were made of iron, had rings instead of cheeks, and the part inside the horse’s mouth consisted of two articulated pieces⁶⁴³. Curb-bits were probably used on warhorses, following Nowakowski’s observation:

“(…) item 2 breketome und 2 slichte tome 15sc. in dy reyse. This record seems to confirm the custom prevailing in West European countries, of putting into the horse’s mouth a set consisting of a curb-bit (breketome) and bit⁶⁴⁴ (slichte tome). The term konventgebis might also denote the curb-bit.”⁶⁴⁵.

Nowakowski is describing a double bridle, that consists of a modified snaffle atop of a curb bit, combining the action of these different mouthpieces. Given Davies’ remark about harsh mouthpieces, it seems worth addressing the subject briefly. Mouthpieces act differently by exerting pressure in different nerves, and while bits are sterner, a mouthpiece is only as harsh as the rider’s hands⁶⁴⁶.

Snaffle bits act primarily on the tongue, lips, and bars (hard gums between molars and incisors, above the tushes), and control is exerted through a direct pull on the reins attached to the rings outside the mouthpiece – most snaffles are jointed, yet some have a straight bar; as for curb bits, these can be harsher: while the mouthpiece can be like that of a snaffle, the external part is composed by a vertical branch of metal above the mouthpiece,

⁶⁴¹ HYLAND 1996:153.

⁶⁴² Maybe it dissuaded theft, in case the enemy sneaked into camp at night? It would certainly be bothersome to have to unshackle a horse in a hurry.

⁶⁴³ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:108.

⁶⁴⁴ Nowakowski uses ‘bit’ instead of bridle, which is common in English. But by the description of the mouthpiece, it is most likely to be a bridle (as in a snaffle).

⁶⁴⁵ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:108.

⁶⁴⁶ When it comes to reins, leather reins appear as ‘halsen’/‘halfertogel’; reins were also occasionally made of an eight-pattern-links chain (idem, *ibidem*:108).

plus a longer shank below the mouthpiece to where the reins are attached; a curb chain is attached behind the mouthpiece and fastened, resting in the chin groove; rein action causes the lower shank to be pulled backwards, the curb chain to tighten, and the upper branch to move towards the horizontal, which pressures over the horse's poll⁶⁴⁷ area – pressure is dictated by the height of the branch above the bit, for the longer it is, the harder the pressure; the pressure of the curb chain depends on how tightly it is fastened, and on the length of the lower shanks, meaning that a longer shank exerts more pressure; some pressure is also on the corners of the horse's mouth and tongue, in case the mouthpiece is straight – a porta U-shaped rising in the middle increases significantly the pressure, whereas high narrow ports press against the roof of the mouth and pinch the tongue⁶⁴⁸.

In contrast to frequent illustration in medieval art, curb bits are less common than snaffles in archaeology⁶⁴⁹, though knights riding with snaffles are also depicted – in this case, Teutonic knights⁶⁵⁰. However, the findings at Cēsis castle present an assembly that combines elements from a snaffle and a bit, though the medieval mouthpiece would be separated (but still require double reins). The equestrian equipment associated to horse remains was found below a burnt layer with charred timbers: “(...) elements from a stirrup, (...) four copper-alloy bridle bosses with associated textile/leather fragments, in one case connected to a fragment of curb chain, an iron saddle frame, five (possibly six) additional stirrups and a fragmented horseshoe.”⁶⁵¹. The prevalence of bits in art can be explained by the visual effect that a bit can more easily achieve than a snaffle – it is easier to collect a horse, and accordingly:

“The prevalence of curb bits in part was due, Ward Perkins felt, ‘to their exclusive use for riding in its more elaborate forms, which naturally bulks large in contemporary illustration.’ (...) the prevalence of the curb bit in art may reflect the taste of illustrations of quality people riding horses of quality.”⁶⁵².

⁶⁴⁷ Top of the head, between the ears.

⁶⁴⁸ HYLAND 1996:12-13.

⁶⁴⁹ CLARK (ed.) 1995:45.

⁶⁵⁰ Vide Addendum, Pt. II, fig. 15:335.

⁶⁵¹ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:364.

⁶⁵² CLARK (ed.) 1995:46.

Again, though probably there was the more talented knight and horse, Teutonic knights and their mounts were not dressage masters. On this regard, Hyland makes the following remark:

“Snaffles are used on horses that are easier to control, or when an instant response is not required. Rapid responses would have been essential with warhorses. That such was not always the case we know from Abou Bekr’s comment on the large space needed to turn a Frankish horse. This was the result of bad training, coupled with the horse being on the forehand.”⁶⁵³.

A horse on the forehead is not engaged, neither collected, and a faster response due to a bit would eventually result in a fall; in addition, a horse on the forehead carries the weight on its shoulders, which may result in injury to the front legs, tendons, and back⁶⁵⁴, plus it is an unbalanced animal – this, in turn, leads the horse to display insecure behaviour.

Injury to the back has been revealed through archaeological findings at the castles of Marienburg and Cēsis, and it appears to have been caused by load bearing⁶⁵⁵. The subject will be discussed last, after all the weight a warhorse had to carry has been listed. The majority of that weight would have been that of an armoured knight, whose combat saddle was designed to keep him in place, with a raised pommel and cantle. The front arch of the saddle had to be very strong, given that it was where the knight placed excessive stress by standing on the stirrups⁶⁵⁶ and yielding a weapon; greater stress was put on the stirrup tread, then transferred from the leather to the attachment to the saddle when the knight used a weapon in a downward or in a forward thrust – this pressure could result in the edges of the front arch digging into the horse’s upper shoulder, which “(.) argues for use of thick absorbent padding, as although the bars of medieval saddles were large and therefore able to

⁶⁵³ HYLAND 1996:13. It could also be due to the mouthpiece. Perhaps some knights preferred to use snaffles to protect the horses’ mouths, which implied their awareness on their lack of hand skills or that they knew their horses were sensitive, perhaps both. I do not think that, in case of the military orders, it had to do with the horse’s training. The subject will be addressed in the 3rd chapter.

⁶⁵⁴ Hollow back.

⁶⁵⁵ With plate armour, the knight’s horses had to carry about 150kgs during a fight (EKDAHL 1991:32).

⁶⁵⁶ “Stirrups gave riders greater stability, and a much-improved defensive and offensive capacity. The rider could use them as a brace from which to launch maximum poundage in lance, sword or mace attack. They reduced rider discomfort, especially on a destrier with a pounding gait.” (HYLAND 1996:12) The only way stirrups would reduce discomfort would be if the knight rode at a rising trot, or if he stood on the saddle and only sat for combat. Other than that, stirrups are of no use for comfort if a rider does not have a proper seating.

spread weight better than thin bars, they were not sufficiently contoured for individual fit.”⁶⁵⁷. To strike downwards with a sword, a knight stood on the stirrups, but in case of losing balance he would fall in front of the pommel and be unable to return to a correct sitting; to hurl lances, it was also necessary to stand on the stirrups; as for the couched lance, knights leaned forward, pressing on the stirrups⁶⁵⁸. Late medieval combat saddles had a high front bow that could be covered with plates and that protected the rider’s abdomen, and maintained a rear bow to provide support at impact; as for the legs, “If in the 13th century the rider’s legs were turned forwards, in the 15th century there were turned downwards and sideways.”⁶⁵⁹.

To withstand wear, good leather was required, yet the process of preparing harness leather took about a year and followed several processes, thus making it expensive⁶⁶⁰. Combat saddles were therefore specialised and expensive gear, and that explains why the Templars regulated its’ use⁶⁶¹ – probably, Teutonic knights also had regulations to use their combat saddles, but just as I argue that, in certain situations, the knights would be riding their warhorses instead of the riding horses, then they must have also used their combat saddles. Teutonic sources refer to combat saddles as ‘streitsetel’, ‘rittersetel’, ‘stechsettel’, ‘hengistesetel’, and ‘conventssetil’⁶⁶². Just as there were saddles for riding and saddles for combat, the Order’s sources make a distinction between types of stirrups in Prussia: in the records, some are called ‘conventstegereyfen’, which Nowakowski interprets as a type used in combat by Teutonic knights, whereas others used by lancers are called ‘stegereyfen czu

⁶⁵⁷ HYLAND 1996:10.

⁶⁵⁸ DAVIES 1989:16.

⁶⁵⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:107.

⁶⁶⁰ HYLAND 2006:11. According to the Order’s inventories, the frames of these saddles were made of birch and sometimes covered in birch bark to protect them against water; the saddles were usually covered with cattle-hide that was dyed at times (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:107).

⁶⁶¹ Paragraph 149 states that saddles – that I am assuming to be combat saddles – should be covered, and that brethren could not use a combat saddle without permission (BOLÉO (trans.) 2006:80). Covering saddles keeps them protected from dust and moisture, something that would be essential, given the combat saddle’s construction and function: “Although the following legal requirements come from the 1403 Statutes of the Saddlers Company of Limoges they are applicable to saddle construction both earlier and later. They stipulate that the joints of the tree be well glued and reinforced by rivets, and that it should be ‘well sinewed above, and below, and the underneath should be well covered so that the horse’s sweat shall not damage the sinews.’ This entailed encasing the tree with a web of shredded ox sinews, gluing them on, allowing the glue to cool, applying a second coat and then finishing off with a linen covering.” (HYLAND 1996:9).

⁶⁶² NOWAKOWSKI 1994:107.

strytsateln’, but “Unfortunately, nothing is known about their construction.”⁶⁶³ I assume that different stirrups meant a different placement of the leg – it might be exaggerated, but maybe similar to the difference between a dressage saddle and a jumping saddle, one requiring sitting and the other verticality.

Since it is the leg that commands the horse, mention should be made to spurs, that are called an artificial aid. Rowel spurs had been in use in Prussia since the end of the 13th century – the shank where the rowel was fitted to increased in length from the mid-14th century onwards⁶⁶⁴.

The last part of equestrian equipment in the ‘Ordenstaat’ is barding. Horse armour was introduced in Prussia in the second half of the 14th century, though its usage was limited and the sources are few and generalist, meaning that little is known about its construction: it is known, however, that mail or plate, or the two combined, were used, and that the elements were joined by hinges or straps; also, it was sometimes ornamented, for instance: “(...) item 4 m. vor eyn rosgezug unserm homeyster ... mit silber gemalet.”⁶⁶⁵

According to Nowakowski, horses wearing caparisons are depicted in the *Apocalypse* and in the seal of the Great Master; quilted caparisons are also mentioned in written sources: “(...) item 5 m. vor dy rosdecke⁶⁶⁶ or item 3 fird. und 3 sol. vor ... gewant dem meyster under eyne rosdecke zu futer.”⁶⁶⁷ In one instance, the *LRC* tells that “The Master assembled as many Brothers as he could, about one hundred and eighty. That pleased everyone. The army had about eighteen thousand mounted men, and there were many grey horsecovers to be seen, such as are commonly used by knights.”⁶⁶⁸ Whether the ‘grey horsecovers’ were mail, padded

⁶⁶³ Idem, *ibidem*:107-108.

⁶⁶⁴ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:109. Though decorated spurs were forbidden by the Rule, Great Master Ulrich von Jungingen’s pair of spurs was bought for one mark, whereas ordinary spurs were worth two or three Scotten (idem, *ibidem*: 109).

⁶⁶⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:105-106 (Auch 4 Mark für einen Rossharnisch unseres Hoch Meisterses... mit Silber gemalt. /also 4 marks for the Great Master’s horse armour... painted with silver). Armouring all of the knights’ and sergeants’ horses would have been too costly, but a wealthy incoming knight would most likely bring his own equipment (HYLAND 1996:154).

⁶⁶⁶ Auch 5 Mark für die Rossdecke/also five marks for the caparison.

⁶⁶⁷ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:106. Since I do not know what the abbreviations are, I decided not to translate. Nevertheless, it seems to refer to padding a caparison.

⁶⁶⁸ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:94-95. According to Henry of Livonia, the Crusaders’ armours and horses with trappings (*equis phaleratis*) scared the natives (“(...) dazzled by the brightness of the German arms.’ “),

fabric, or caparisons covering gear, it is not told. The findings at Cēsis revealed remnants of what are possibly small plates, probably from brigandines — 15th century barding consisting of small plates sewn into fabric⁶⁶⁹.

An armoured knight, a saddle, and on occasion armour, meant extra weight for the horse to carry.

From a total of 1719 animal bones recovered in a trench opened to dig at Cēsis castle⁶⁷⁰, 843 were identifiable at species level and 369 of these bones were associated to Teutonic periods; 251 remains belonged to four horses and were all found within the context of a phase of destruction; 134 of these bones were attributed to one individual horse⁶⁷¹:

“The horse lay curled on its left side on top of the destruction layer with the head facing towards the south-east, and its bones showed no signs of burning. The skull and atlas (first cervical vertebra) were heavily fragmented when the stove was subsequently constructed on the levelled surface. Some of the ribs had also been pushed to the west. One side of the mandible was complete, with intact cheek teeth (...) all showing signs of wear. Measurements of the crown heights of the third premolar indicated the articulated individual was aged 17-18 years. Visible portions of a femur and tibia, alongside the fragmented pelvis (...)”⁶⁷².

which would have taken a toll on them; heavy armour and horse armour were not common “(...) the Esthonians were unarmed, for they are not accustomed to use armor as much as other nations do.” (JENSEN 2016:257).

⁶⁶⁹ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:365. “In summary, the horse equipment associated with the destruction layer and fragmented horse bones can be broadly dated to the late 15th-/early 16th-century. Although a small element may represent a type of ornamental barding, it largely consists of a form of decorative tack that was popular among the aristocracy in other parts of Europe, including the Holy Roman Empire – the principal source of recruits for the Teutonic Order. Although no plate barding was uncovered in trench M, several pieces of shaffron (horse head armour) have been found during previous excavations at the castle.” (idem, *ibidem* 2018:367).

⁶⁷⁰ The castle saw surveys to the southern outer bailey and moat in 2010, followed by excavations in 2011 and 2012 of a trench in the moat, another trench in the southern outer bailey, and other three smaller trenches in the western part of the castle (PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:352-353). The horse remains were dated by accelerated mass spectrometry and U-Series dating, with results comprising 1480-1503, thus corresponding to the late phase of Teutonic rule in Livonia (idem, *ibidem*:368).

⁶⁷¹ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:355.

⁶⁷² Idem, *ibidem*:355. The other three horses were represented by an associated set of eighteen thoracic vertebrae, a set of three associated phalanges, and an assortment of incomplete and disarticulated bones, though all were recovered closely together within an area defined by burned timber – only eight lower limb fragments showed signs of charring, but not complete burns (idem, *ibidem*:355-357).

The articulated horse was identified as male due to the presence of canine teeth; another horse found in the destruction layer was aged ten to twelve years, based on measurements of the crown heights of the third premolar; the other three horses were aged to at least five years⁶⁷³. The estimate heights of the horses ranged between 135cm and 147cm, with an average 141cm, thus these horses were larger than the average in late-medieval Prussia, Latvia, and Estonia⁶⁷⁴ – furthermore, stable isotope data showed that the horses consumed local water and possibly grain (based on barium-magnesium data), which in comparison to other analyses of horses within the *Ecology of Crusading* project showed these horses had a different diet, which supports a former role as warhorses⁶⁷⁵. The injury on the horses points to the presence of warhorses as well. The most complete skeleton presented a pathology on ten out of the eighteen thoracic vertebrae (T8-T18) commonly called ‘kissing spines’⁶⁷⁶, due to the fusion of bones. This kind of injury affects flexibility, causes lameness, and varying degrees of pain depending on whether the horse is used or not. Another individual shared the same pathology, while a separate rib fragment showed a small amount of pathological bone growth⁶⁷⁷.

Findings at the Marienburg share similarities. Though there are no indications that the horse remains were butchered, it is clear that, after deposition, the carcasses became

⁶⁷³ Idem, *ibidem*:357.

⁶⁷⁴ Native horses are best represented at the cemeteries of Marvelè and Veršvai, with height ranging of 120-136cm, though the larger individuals (heights estimated of 136-144cm and 153cm) probably not belonged to local stock (idem, *ibidem*:14).

⁶⁷⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:358/364. Studies of stable isotopes in the Kulmerland revealed that the management of most horses between the early and late medieval periods remained unchanged, though some individuals were seemingly given a different treatment in the region in question, as well as in central Livonia, which corresponds to written evidence regarding the treatment of breeding stock and warhorses (idem, *ibidem*:15).

⁶⁷⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:358-359. “(...) consisting of overriding dorsal spinous processes, as well as spondylotic spurs of newly formed bone on the ventral and lateral surfaces of the lower vertebral bodies. (...) extensive chronic deformation of a single tarsal resembling spavin, and on the medial surface of a right metacarpal, which may have reflected the start of the ossification of the interosseous ligament.” (idem, *ibidem*:358-359).

⁶⁷⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:358-359. It is hard to understand if the horses died when the building collapsed or if they were deposited with the debris, though the lack of charring on most bones could suggest that the horses suffocated or were killed by the collapse; one of the animals was shod and the larger individuals were perhaps stallions (idem, *ibidem*:375). These are the same horses with whom tack was found, as has been mentioned above: “It is therefore entirely plausible that that the horse remains in the outer bailey derived from war horses, although the associated tack was largely ceremonial. The destruction of the ‘stable’ must have been so severe that, instead of searching through the debris and recovering what remained of the tack, a decision was made to cover the remnants, level the rubble and rebuild the structure.” (idem, *ibidem*:375).

disarticulated, and only two groups of articulated remains were found: one from a late medieval context and another from an 18th century deposit – both were pathologically fused, which prevented disarticulation⁶⁷⁸. Only the late medieval remains will be considered. These remains belonged to an adult animal and comprise three thoracic vertebrae (VT 16-18) and six lumbar vertebrae (VL 1-6) with severe exostosis, which resulted in the fusion of all the thoracic vertebrae, and in two sets of transverse articulations and ventral crests in the lumbar vertebrae⁶⁷⁹. The joints between L3-L4, L4-L5, plus L5-L6 were all fused: “Fusion on both ventral and dorsal facets had taken place (...) with near complete fusion of the lateral and ventral edges of the vertebral body of the joint between L5-L6 (...).”⁶⁸⁰. Again, ‘kissing spines’.

These injuries can be explained by load-bearing as a consequence of riding, though improper saddling also damages the vertebrae – yet, Pluskowski points that the injuries can result from the horse carrying a rider wearing plate armour, which would have increased the weight the horse had to bear⁶⁸¹. Barding, that combined metal plates and leather, was relatively light – for instance, a crinet was about four to five kilograms; however, the average weight of steel plate armour was of 20-25kgs, which, combined with the weight of a rider,

⁶⁷⁸ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2009:201. Fauna was recovered from three sets of excavations: 84 fragments came from a trench opened across the moat that separates the middle and low castles; 5040 bones were recovered in the low castle during campaigns between 2001 and 2003; 2856 of the bone fragments were identified to a species or species group, and were subsequently chronologically divided based on spot-dating of ceramic and coins finds, having been divided as early medieval (between the 9th and 13th centuries), medieval (14th and 15th centuries, which includes the Teutonic occupation), and early post-medieval (16th to 18th centuries) (*idem, ibidem*:193).

⁶⁷⁹ *Idem, ibidem*:202.

⁶⁸⁰ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2010:330-340. “Syndesmophyte formation was clear on the ventral surface of the other two joints within the range, but had not reached the same level of fusion on the ventral surface as the joint between L5-L6 (...) Lateral fusion, however, was similar over the range. Although visible ossification and the formation of a spondylitic crust was evident, particularly on the lateral spines and dorsal aspect of the vertebrae, this was not sufficiently advanced (...). The thoracic vertebrae and first and second lumbar vertebrae demonstrated advanced osteophytic projections beyond the edge of the vertebral body (lipping); however, there was no evidence to suggest that these vertebrae were ever fused.” (*idem, ibidem*:340).

⁶⁸¹ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2009:203. “A plausible interpretation of the pathology described above is that the animals acquired this condition as a result of functioning as heavy cavalry for the Order (...) Although the Order systematically bred the smaller, indigenous Sweik horse as a pack animal (even though it was used by local Prussian tribes as light cavalry), the warhorse hypothesis is lent further credence by the presence of robust and comparatively large horse bones in similar contexts – particularly hooves – as well as the presence of significant stables for warhorses in the outer bailey.” (*idem, ibidem*:204).

would have added a load of 70-90kgs to the horses' backs: "Such a weight would result in excessive dorsiflexion, causing the vertebrae to rub against each other. In modern horses, which carry lighter loads, such lesions are typically detected in the saddle-bearing part of the back, between vertebrae T12 and T18, and are commonly referred to as 'kissing spines'⁶⁸².

Comparing to other pathologically fused spines of horse findings in the Baltic⁶⁸³, these are relatively minor injuries; yet this type of injury has also been found at other castles associated with the Order, and "(...) given the large size of the horses and their association with luxury riding tack [the Cēsis horses](...) these pathologies may have developed because of the stresses of being ridden by heavily armoured knights."⁶⁸⁴ But warhorses obviously did not only develop injury to the back. Most of the injury suffered by warhorses in the 13th and 14th centuries was caused by spears, arrows, swords, and bolts⁶⁸⁵. Some of these injuries must have been incapacitating, but the lack of butcher marks on the remains from Cēsis and from the Marienburg might suggest that retired warhorses were not put down. Furthermore, "In a draft contract from 1433, there was an order that a wounded horse should be put out to grass if it was still not fit for service after six weeks of care."⁶⁸⁶ Perhaps, retired horses (at least, the full horses) were sent to the studs? Maybe retired 'monk-horses' were still kept in castles as the last resource of the stash of communal horses? It is extremely unwise to ride an incapacitated horse for something as demanding as warfare, thus this would be unlikely. Even

⁶⁸² PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:359-360.

⁶⁸³ Another Teutonic site where evidence pertaining warhorses was discovered is Biała Góra (Weissenburg): the site saw occupation during the transitional period ("The two phases of colonization – Pomeranian and German – are often treated separately, and the conquest of Prussian tribal lands is associated with an archaeological hiatus between the pre-Christian Baltic culture and the medieval Christian theocracy."), and is a one of a kind example of a medieval rural colony in the Vistula borderlands that survived into the 14th century; the site was first discovered through survey in 1972, and was excavated in 2007, 2008, and 2011, having been dated by AMS and by artifact typology to cal AD 1171-1268 and cal AD 1307-1421 (Pluskowski et al 2014:865/868-869). A military presence, expected at a frontier colony, is attested by tanged crossbow bolts, arrowheads, spearheads, caltrops, a small fragment of armour, bridle fittings, horseshoes, spurs, and bone remains point to the presence of warhorses: large roof bones were found, corresponding to those recovered from medieval contexts in the outer bailey of the Marienburg, while there were also pony-sized bones; a miniature bronze heraldic shield further suggested the presence of knights at the site: "The artefacts recovered to date from Biała Góra point to a composite community, with the presence of small-scale industry, commerce and military personnel." (idem, *ibidem*:874).

⁶⁸⁴ PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:359.

⁶⁸⁵ EKDAHL 1998.

⁶⁸⁶ Idem, *ibidem*.

though the discovered remains show no butcher marks, maybe retired horses would eventually be processed for meat⁶⁸⁷? The consumption of horse meat during times of hardship is documented in the *CLP*, as has been mentioned. Despite the more utilitarian approaches, it should also be kept in mind that at least some knights, including the highest office holders, must have been fond of their horses, and perhaps just having them at the castle, within reach (even though the horses could not be ridden anymore), gave them a little comfort through the process of adapting to a new comrade in arms, or the presence of their old, trusty warhorses would have simply felt right. Some knights probably wished to delay the inevitable. Strong bonds between people and animals are not modern inventions, and Teutonic knights certainly valued their horses:

“The Order’s text *Liber de cura equorum* (now in the Austrian National Library) bears witness to the great importance of the medical treatment of horses in Prussia. This work, written in 1408 and dedicated to Grand Master Ulrich of Jungingen (1407-10), who fell at Tannenberg, may be regarded as the oldest German equine veterinary encyclopedia.”⁶⁸⁸.

Despite the evidence for veterinary care, warhorses in the Baltic – on both sides – certainly suffered another kind of trauma:

“Among the hail of normal bolts it was also the practice to include Heulbolzen (whistling bolts) which produced a sharp whistling sound; in the Order’s records they are referred to as Bremsen (gadflies). Their purpose was to weaken the enemy and their horses psychologically, and to cause confusion. This effect was not produced by the sound as such, but by the fact that experience had shown that there was a relationship between the sound and pain (...).”⁶⁸⁹.

Horses, just like people, are prone to trauma and resilience differs among individuals, though the manner the issue is addressed plays a fundamental role on how a horse copes with psychological trauma. On a battlefield, there would have been many opportunities to develop

⁶⁸⁷ I do not know if the medieval man was aware that grey horses are not the best for consumption, given their tendency to develop melanomas (though this can also develop in other coats, with even greater risks). I do believe; however, the medieval man was acquainted with the issue. Though veterinary care for warhorses and warfare are linked, the first is not a subject I intend to develop in the current thesis, and as such, I will not dwell on it.

⁶⁸⁸ EKDAHL 1998.

⁶⁸⁹ Idem, *ibidem*.

trauma, despite Hyland's pertinent remark about how herd instinct and a warhorse's temper would have attenuated association⁶⁹⁰. It is also necessary to keep in mind that a horse's problems often start on who it carries, and no matter how courageous and helpful a horse is, it is still a herd animal that relies on its human for guidance – or it will take the reins: "Routs were not always due solely to human weakness. Horses know instinctively if riders are nervous. In battle the horse would not have reasoned why his rider was afraid but would join in any rout without the rider's urging."⁶⁹¹

It has been shown that, most likely, the majority of knights already had training in combat (mounted and on foot) and were used to (and maybe some appreciated) the violence of warfare prior to their admission into the Order – thus, at least some knights would already have tools to cope with the trauma of combat... or not. The knights hearing the *LRC* in the 1290s would have been familiar with the brutality of the Livonian campaigns in the end of the 13th century, and many of those serving in Livonia in the 1290s probably fought in the 1280s and knew knights who had died in the campaigns; plus, many of those knights came from conflictive regions of Saxony and Thuringia⁶⁹². A similar approach can be taken with the *CLP*, in that the knights listening would relate to the happenings in the chronicle, and

⁶⁹⁰ HYLAND 1996:xii. "In a massed charge, herd instinct masked individual animals that might have beat a hasty retreat in a one-to-one conflict. Stallion aggression was useful. Stallions saw other stallions as the enemy, not the riders. Rapid movements in battle incited horses to compete aggressively as individual combats succeeded a charge that had spent itself and lost cohesion. While a blow inflicted in cold blood can immediately rouse the horse to aggression against the rider, wounds received in the height of battle, when adrenalin is flowing and the temper aroused, unless they crippled the horse instantly, would not register until later and then not be appreciated as the result of the earlier conflict." (idem, *ibidem*:xii).

⁶⁹¹ Idem, *ibidem*:xii.

⁶⁹² PEYPER:35. The *LRC* is a piece of 'Deutschordens-literatur': literature written specifically for – and mostly by – brethren of the Teutonic Order; it was written in the last decade of the 13th century and is the oldest extant of history of the Order ('Ordensgeschichte'); though it covers the periods of 1180 to 1290, it is the primary source for the years of 1267-1290, covering the conflicts between the Order and the Kurs and Semgallians: "This restricted perspective may be explained by the author's specialized purpose. His book was written for the Teutonic Order and was intended as a source of information and religious inspiration for its members. Perhaps the chronicle was used as a Tischbuch, a book which was read aloud for the brothers during their meals." (SMITH et URBAN 1997 (trans.): xxi). The *LRC* is written in standard Middle High German epic verse form: short rhyming couplets with three to four stressed syllables per line; there is little organisation, as the *LRC* is a series of events told one after the other (idem, *ibidem*:xxiii).

some would be veterans from those same episodes and would have had brethren who died in the campaigns.⁶⁹³ The Baltic was not an easy place to live in⁶⁹⁴.

Now that the knights' background, the equipment they used, and the warhorses they rode have been discussed, it is time to move on to their theatre of operations and ascertain the hardships they faced – as well as the consequences that might have brought.

⁶⁹³ The *CLP* was written in the wake of the end of the Prussian Crusade, in the decade of 1331-1341 by a chaplain of the Order, Nicolaus von Jeroschin – as a translation and expanded version of the Latin chronicle *Chronicon Terrae Prussiae*, written by a priest of the Order, Peter von Dusburg, between 1326 and 1331; the Latin chronicle had been commissioned by Great Master Werner von Orseln, whereas the translation was commissioned by the following Great Master, Luder von Braunschweig, and finished during Dietrich von Altenburg's office (FISCHER (trans.): 152-164. The translation was written for the knights who could not understand Latin, and Jeroschin omitted many religious content from Dusburg's text, that he probably considered superfluous for the knights: "(...) his first editor, Franz Pfeiffer, suggested that the richness of his language is perhaps only exceeded by that of Wolfram von Eschenbach. In his study of Jeroschin's vocabulary, Evald Johannsson established that by far the largest number of loan or foreign words in Jeroschin's vocabulary is taken from French, and that, perhaps surprisingly in a work written by a priest for a military order, most of these relate to the vocabulary of courtly and chivalric life.", which was perhaps intentional on von Jeroschin's part to make the chronicle more accessible to the knights (idem, *ibidem*:178-190).

⁶⁹⁴ The subject will be further developed in Part III, mostly Prussia. The forests were adequate for the Prussian's guerrilla-style warfare, and remained so even during the 14th century; remnants of this forest survive today "(...) in a pocket of modern north-eastern Poland, a belt of woodland spills over the border from Lithuania and Belarus which is considered to include the last virgin 'wildwood' in Europe, untouched after the ice sheets receded; a haven for deer, elk, European bison and their predators – wolves, bears and lynx. Protected within the bounds of the Wigry, Biebrza, Nadry and Białowieski national parks the woods have their own mythology, but remain an evocative reminder of the type of land-scape encountered by crusading armies on the Baltic frontier." (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:294).

PART 3

TEUTONIC CAVALRY IN THE BALTIC

*“Nû zinsent, ritter, iuwer leben/ und ouch den muot/ durch in dâ hât gegeben/ lîp
unde guot./ (...)/ Wan swem daz ist beschert/ daz er dâ wol gevert,/ daz giltet beidiu teil,
der werlte lop, der sêle heil. “⁶⁹⁵*

⁶⁹⁵ “Now, oh knights, pay your tribute with your life and your courage to Him Who has sacrificed for you both His body and His riches (...) For he on whom the lot has fallen to depart thither, will be rewarded two-fold: with world’s acclaim and the soul’s salvation.” (Hartmann von Aue *apud* STERNS (trans.) 1969:180).

1. Command and Elements of Command

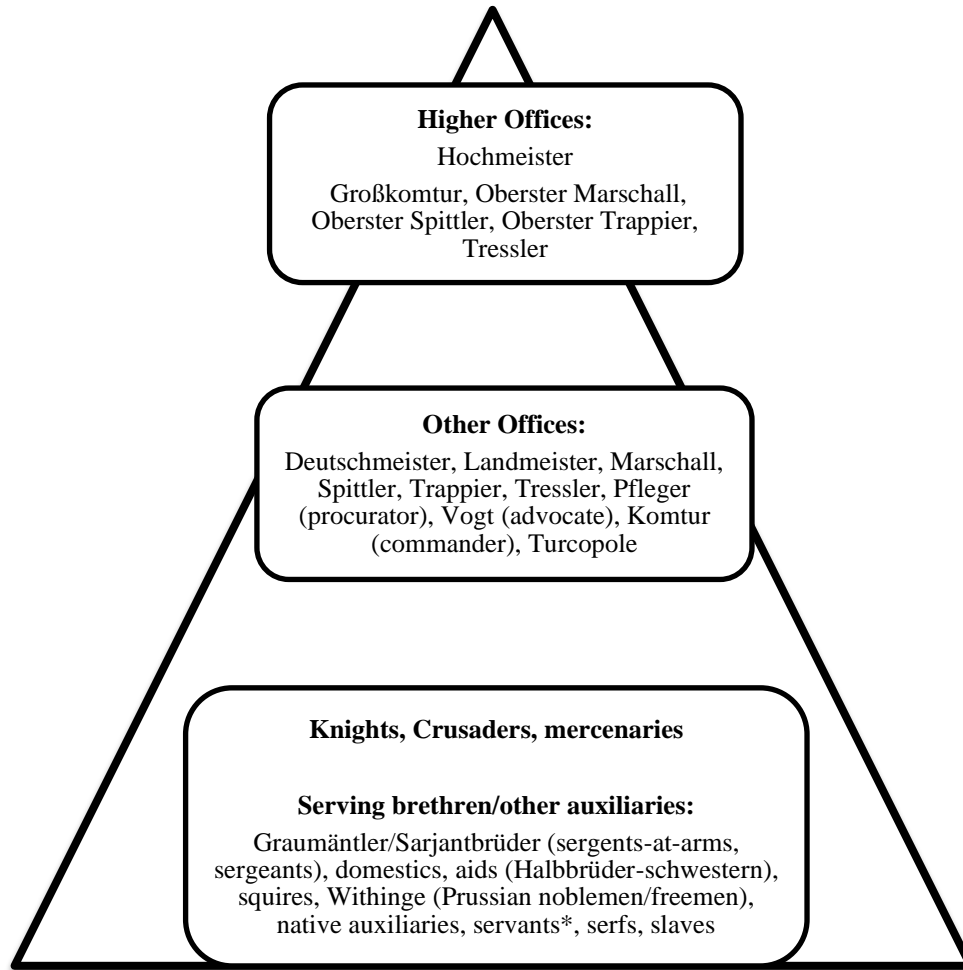
The generality of the fighting brethren is identified as follows in the Prologue:

“4. These struggles, this holy Knightly Order of the Hospital of Saint Mary of the German House has zealously imitated and has deserved to be graced with many honorable members, for there are knights and chosen fighters, who for love of honor and the fatherland have exterminated the enemies of the faith with a strong hand. They also, from abundance of love, receive visitors and pilgrims and the poor.”⁶⁹⁶.

These fighting brethren were then organised in several ranks⁶⁹⁷, though not all of these are included in the *Book of the Order* – some, I found mentioned only in the Order’s chronicles; in the case of the ‘Pferdmarshal’ mentioned above, that was the only instance I found the term, and because it was not clear if this rank was occupied by a knight or by a sergeant, neither where it fit in the Order’s hierarchy, I have left it out of the following scheme.

⁶⁹⁶ STERNS (trans.) 1969:204. The ‘chosen fighters’ probably refer to sergeants and other auxiliaries; ‘visitors and pilgrims’, in a Baltic context, mean seasonal Crusaders.

⁶⁹⁷ STERNS (trans.) 1969:187-194; MUNRO 2008:5; URBAN 2003:15-17; NICOLLE 2007:12-13; PLUSKOWSKI 2013:xix; FISCHER (trans.) 2010:493. *Sterns points that the original version of the *Book of the Order* uses ‘knechte’ (‘knecht’) for squires and domestic servants, thus posing difficulties to understand who is being referred to (STERNS (trans.) 1969:191). As for slaves, in Prussia and Livonia they were unconverted prisoners-of-war or criminals (idem, *ibidem*:194).



Even though the Customs do not present the Order's ranks in such an orderly and explicit fashion like the Templar Rule does, the importance of each rank can be ascertained through the number of people and horses attributed to the officeholder in question. Sterns has pointed that sergeants could hold ranks as well, and that non-military sergeants had functions according to the profession they might have exerted before joining the Order⁶⁹⁸. For the current thesis, offices more closely related to warfare – equipment and action in the field – and brethren directly related to military action will be in focus.

⁶⁹⁸ STERNS (trans.) 1969:188-189. "Tacked onto the Admission Ritual was a statement that "brethren who do not wish to practice their trade shall be kept on bread and water until they do it cheerfully." (idem, *ibidem*: 189).

The distribution, acquisition, and manufacturing of equipment pertained to the Marshal⁶⁹⁹, to the Great Commander⁷⁰⁰, and to the offices subordinated to the Marshal, such as the saddlery⁷⁰¹ and the ‘small forge’⁷⁰², each headed by an officeholder that, according to Sterns, could have been a sergeant instead of a knight⁷⁰³. If the Marshal or the Great Commander were absent, the remaining officer could carry on with the other’s duties; either Marshal or Great Commander could be appointed by the Great Master or Land Master⁷⁰⁴ to act in his behalf, if he had to be absent for long⁷⁰⁵. The Marshal could leave a knight in his place, yet that knight had “(...) no power to give anything to the brethren or to allow them to change anything.”⁷⁰⁶

During campaigns, the Marshal⁷⁰⁷ could not order an attack without permission from the Great Master or Land Master, “(...) unless forced by necessity which brooks no abstention or delay.”⁷⁰⁸ The Marshal also assigned a commander of the Turcopoles (with the knowledge of the Master): this Turcopole commanded the other Turcopoles and sergeants-at-arms, who rode under his standard in the march, or in the rear-guard⁷⁰⁹. For the Templars, the house commanders and the commanders of knights could act as officers in the battlefield,

⁶⁹⁹ Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Customs*, paragraph 21. *Of the marshal’s office, and how he shall be attended*:337.

⁷⁰⁰ Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Customs*, paragraph 30. *What pertains to the office of the grand commander*:337.

⁷⁰¹ Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Customs*, paragraph 42. *Of the office of the brother in charge of the saddlery*:338.

⁷⁰² Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Customs*, paragraph 43. *Of the office of the brother in charge of the small forge*:338.

⁷⁰³ STERNS (trans.) 1969:188-189. Another office that was probably held by a sergeant was that of Master of the Esquires, but it is unclear whether he had authority over knights, besides distributing material: vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Customs*, paragraph 41. *Of the master of the esquires, what he may do*:338.

⁷⁰⁴ The Customs refer only to a ‘Master’. Considering each branch of the Order was rather autonomous, while the supreme commander was the Great Master in the Holy Land and, later, in Prussia, elsewhere supreme authority belonged to the Land Master.

⁷⁰⁵ STERNS (trans.) 1969:303-304.

⁷⁰⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:310.

⁷⁰⁷ Though it was doable for Templars, the owner of the standard was not who effectively carried it on campaign, given that the commander of a large force – the Marshal – needed to be available to command, and as such a standard-bearer was nominated, whose function was to carry the standard (AFONSO 2018:365) The Teutonic Order also placed the standard with the Marshal, and in the chronicles, he appears, as well as the Landmaster, with the rest of the troops – sometimes, dying during a confront.

⁷⁰⁸ STERNS (trans.) 1969:301.

⁷⁰⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:310. Even though turcopoles are mentioned, it seems it was not a continuous position in the Teutonic Order, given that the office was appointed only when needed (FOREY 1992:57). According to Urban, in the Baltic the Order’s turcopoles were Germans born in Prussia and Livonia (URBAN 2003:14). The term seems unnecessary for the Baltic, considering the levies of native light cavalry serving under the Order.

and were allowed to carry a standard for status and for regrouping reference⁷¹⁰; it is likely the same applied to the Teutonic Order in the Baltic, considering that the knights operated by themselves, or with the aid of German and native vassals, and Crusaders and mercenaries⁷¹¹.

While the appointment for offices was regulated by a general chapter, it seems there was a system to nominate the command of specific missions functioning during campaigns. Theoretically, any knights from the Order of Santiago could be nominated to command a detachment for recognisance, or a conrois, which implied that the standard and banners could be carried by any knight⁷¹². Some passages in the chronicles make it seem like, when Teutonic forces split for strategic purposes or for raiding, a new chain of command was created on the spot, with knights being nominated responsible for a certain detachment. How this arrangement functioned is unclear, but for example, in the *LRC*, the following is told about an expedition into Sengallia:

“At daybreak, the Christians armed themselves, and grouped their army on foot. They left some Brothers behind to guard most of the horses. Some warriors, however, were ordered to mount so that they might lead the charge. Their assigned leader was named Brother Merkelein. He and his band of men became famous among the heathens that day and he had cause for great joy. Now the Lithuanians did not suspect that anyone would attack them, so they rode and marched openly across the river. Brother Merkelein took heart and charged with his men.”⁷¹³.

In this situation, the army was divided in three: one group, seemingly small and made up of knights (‘Brothers’, but maybe also lightly armed sergeants⁷¹⁴ and squires) stayed

⁷¹⁰ MONTEIRO 2011:22.

⁷¹¹ Gravett states that “Twelve brothers lived in each *Komtureis*, which could provide about 100 men. These included *gleven* of cavalry, the men from vassals of the Order (both horse and foot), mercenary units, town militias of German burghers, and native levies (...).” (1985:18). However, the *CLP* sometimes indicates that a smaller number of knights lived in the castles.

⁷¹² AFONSO 2018:368.

⁷¹³ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:142.

⁷¹⁴ For the Templars, sergeants wearing hauberks fought like the knights (MONTEIRO 2011:30). Additionally, sergeants equipped by the Order with knightly equipment and thus similarly armed to the heavy cavalry could not retreat from battle, whereas lightly equipped sergeants could (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:62). Presumably, the same applied to the Teutonic Order.

behind to guard the horses; another group made up of Teutonic troops, vassals⁷¹⁵, and Crusaders (all of them the ‘Christians’), certainly the largest, fought on foot, though the official commander is not introduced; a last group, apparently small, charged the enemy on horseback under an ‘assigned leader’. This leader, Merkelein, is referred to only as ‘Brother’, with no other title associated, which means he was a knight. The ‘warriors’ are not specified, but considering they were ordered to ride and are not presented as ‘Brothers’, they could either be native auxiliaries, ‘Christians’, or sergeants⁷¹⁶. Whether later Merkelein became an ‘official’ commander is unknown.

In another instance, from the *CLP*:

“This following summer on St John the Baptist’s Day the Marshal [Heinrich] von Plötzkau set off once more to Lithuania with men from Sambia. When the campaign reached the province of Pograuden he divided the army into four sections. Brother Hermann was sent with 60 men to destroy some of the villages in the region; however, this plan failed because he took a wrong turning. He commanded Friedrich von Liebenzell to ride with 150 men to Gedimin-Burg which he was to capture by covert means. When he approached, however, the castle had had advance warning and had its defence ready. Nonetheless he was able to burn down the outer bailey. The resourceful marshal then told Brother Albrecht von Hagen and 60 horsemen to attack Sudargus’s lands. They burned down his home and rampaged through nearby villages, killing many Lithuanians and capturing many women and children. He also took Sudargus’s wife and children prisoner with his whole household. The fourth group under the brothers’ banner also set off, but achieved nothing because their guides took them the wrong way. Soon after all this the four troops reassembled and set off for home.”⁷¹⁷.

In this episode there is a clearer chain of command: the army was commanded by the Marshal, then divided and put under the command of assigned leaders – Hermann and Albrecht von Hagen, who appear to be only knights, were sent with a force of 60 each to raid; Friedrich von Liebenzell was previously introduced as commander at Christmemel⁷¹⁸, thus holding an official position and perhaps the reason why he took 150 men with him to seize a fortification; it is unclear who commanded the last group, as well as its dimensions. Each

⁷¹⁵ Introduced in an earlier moment.

⁷¹⁶ As has been previously mentioned, sergeants were assigned horses.

⁷¹⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5582-5593.

⁷¹⁸ Idem, *ibidem*. It is never explained if he is related to Ludwig.

group had a distinct task, but it is not revealed what became of the careers of Hermann and Albrecht. It seems that the Marshal stayed at a meeting point to where the detachments should return after accomplishing their tasks. Also from the *CLP*:

“At the same time, Brother Volz, the commander of Ragnit, heard that the people of Karšuva were near the Memel with an army and intended to attack the brothers. He put a number of brothers and 80 of the men he commanded under the control of Brother Hildebrand von Rechberg, and this dauntless hero took them to Karšuva, which he attacked.”⁷¹⁹.

Here, the commander of Ragnit assigned an undetermined number of Teutonic knights, plus 80 of the men serving at Ragnit (unknown if sergeants, natives, Germans, or a mixture of all these) to the command of Hildebrand von Rechberg. Since Hildebrand was introduced only as ‘brother’, it means he was just a knight. Hildebrand was then sent to attack Karšuva while the people were near the Memel to launch an attack on the Order’s territories.

These nominations apparently on the spot seem to have also occurred when a new garrison was set up, according to the *CLP*:

“In the year of our Lord 1289 this same Master Meinhard turned his attention to how to strengthen Christianity in Prussia, to spread the faith and safeguard the land for those who had already converted to Christianity. He assembled his army and marched in force to Scalovia on St George’s Day and built a strong fortress which he called Landshut to the glory of God on a hill on the shores of the Memel. It is still standing to this day, but its name has been forgotten because everyone now calls it Ragnit. It takes its name from the river which flows beneath it. When he had finished building the castle the master selected 40 good brothers from the army and left them to defend the fortress, making the valiant Austrian Bertold Brühaven its commander and putting him in charge of them. In addition he left 100 armed men and then he left.”⁷²⁰.

The Prussian Master set out to build a fortress in Scalovia, and once it was completed, he selected 40 knights from the force he had brought (‘good brothers’, probably battle-tested already) plus another 100 combatants, and made an Austrian knight, Bertold Brühaven⁷²¹, the commander of the castle and responsible for the garrison.

⁷¹⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:5260-5270.

⁷²⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:4526-4536.

⁷²¹ There are some accounts to his name. Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP1* – Brühaven:339.

It is hard to gather the requirements for a knight to be nominated (officially or apparently temporarily) into a commanding position. Age seems to not have posed an obstacle, as the *LRC* tells that “There were many youthful Brothers who had joined the expedition, and one of these was selected to command the army.”: this expedition was a combined attack undertaken by Teutonic knights from Riga and Goldingen against the Kurs in the castle at Lasen⁷²². This ‘youthful’ commander went unnamed and nothing is told of what happened to him, namely if he became an effective commander; but I believe it can be assumed he was either of noble birth, or had already been through a few campaigns – maybe, both.

As for holding offices, age also seems to not have been an obstacle. According to the *CLP*, regarding a young commander:

“In the summer [of 1311] after these events Brother Gebhart von Mansfeld, the commander of Brandenburg, and a brave warrior in wars and battles, assembled 1,500 horsemen and many brothers and went to campaign in Pograuden, pillaging and burning, killing and fighting many of the people there. When they were about to leave the leading nobles among the people of Samogitia, having been forewarned of the brothers’ arrival, assembled all their forces and set out at them to attack them. When the commander realised they intended to fight he unhesitatingly slaughtered all his plunder, killing all the livestock and people they had captured in order to demonstrate that they were willing to fight. The evil Masion and Sudargus and others with them wanted to fight, but Mansto advised them against it. He said: ‘We should check in case the brothers have set a trap for us. They were boasting in front of us and I think this must mean there are more of them than we can see so we should turn back and not give battle.’ In this way the brothers escaped without any trouble. Afterwards the Lithuanians enquired as to who had been the commander of that army. They were told it was a brave young hero called Gebhart of Mansfeld, the commander of Bradenburg. One of them remarked, ‘He was very bold on this occasion. But tell him that if he attacks us often with so few men and behaves as he did today, he will not live to be an old man.’”⁷²³.

Though Gebhart’s age is not revealed, the remark about him risking a short life – whether real, imagined by the chronicler to praise Gebhart’s bluff or inserted there to moralise against reckless behaviour – indicates that he was young. Unlike in Ludwig’s⁷²⁴

⁷²² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:84. For the full episode vide Addendum, Pt. III, *LRC1* - Lasen:340.

⁷²³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5406-5417.

⁷²⁴ Ludwig’s progression is described below.

introduction, no information is given about Gebhart's background, and if he was not of noble birth, perhaps his 'brave' conduct earned him the rank of commander – however, unlike Ludwig, it is not possible to accompany Gebhart's progression before this. It is also interesting to notice how Gebhart commanded a force of 1500 horsemen plus 'many brothers', which seems a considerable number for a young commander to be responsible for, even though it is implied he could have been outnumbered by the Lithuanians.

Regardless of age, experience and perhaps battle conduct certainly had an impact when it came to progression within the Order: for example, according to the *LRC*, this wounded knight who escaped capture by force of arms is told to have progressed in his career:

“The total number of Brothers in the expedition was forty. Thirty-five died. Four lived, but were captured in the battle. The fifth escaped by force of arms, as I mentioned above, and with God's help he avenged the injuries he had suffered. Later he repeatedly led armies against them and ravaged their lands, as you will later learn.”⁷²⁵.

Another instance that demonstrates that, within years, knights could climb the hierarchy and receive offices based on experience and conduct can be found in the *CLP*, through Ludwig's accounts. Ludwig has already been mentioned throughout this thesis: he is told to have been born into a noble family and after some episodes of Ludwig getting captured in battle, befriending his captors, and in one memorable instance returning to his brethren with a household of pagans with him, he features once again after achieving the office of commander⁷²⁶:

“During the same year [1294 or 1295] Brother Ludwig von Liebenzell became commander at Ragnit. He was a bold, brave warrior in spirit and in deed whenever he took part in an attack on the enemy. With his brothers at Ragnit he now threw himself fearlessly with great cleverness and boldness into an unrelenting war against the heathens and took part in many laudable battles in many campaigns at sea and on land.”⁷²⁷.

The *LRC*, too, shows a pertinent example of how experience was important when it came to nomination for offices, in the mention of how “Grandmaster Hartman von

⁷²⁵ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:129.

⁷²⁶ For all of Ludwig's accounts, vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP2* – Ludwig von Liebenzell:340.

⁷²⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4772. The year of the events is unclear, given that no surrounding events provide a sure date.

Heldrunen gathered the young and old, as was proper, and when they had assembled, the Brother sent from Livonia stood up and delivered his message.” – according to the translators, Hartman, by then the Great Master, had witnessed the incorporation of the Swordbrethren into the Teutonic Order forty years before the episode described in the chronicle⁷²⁸. Another pertinent example is that of Burchard von Hornhausen. In the *CLP*, he was appointed commander at Königsberg in 1255⁷²⁹, but he also appears in the *LRC* to be nominated the next Livonian Master in 1257 due to his actions:

“When the letters were read, they all obeyed and came to the Master, Master Poppe von Osternach, and he received them lovingly. There had also come from Livonia a holy man of good repute named Brother Anne. He was Master in Livonia. When they had assembled and heard their Grandmaster’s intention, they found it ill-advised and many argued against it. But he informed them that he had already obtained permission to resign, so all the brothers fell silent and acquiesced. Then from among the many men under consideration, they elected Brother Anne of Livonia according to the custom of the order [July 1256]. Brother Poppe came forward and lay down the Grandmastership, and Master Anne of Livonia accepted it virtuously. Then they placed a very beautiful ring on his hand, the emblem which the Master always wore. As soon as Master Anne was chosen to replace him, Brother Poppe was relieved of the Mastership. Master Poppe then said, “You brothers, if you wish to please me, as I believe you do, and free me from worry, then send a Brother to Livonia to be Master.” The Brothers who were with him counselled him to install the commander of Königsberg. Not a heathen in the land could conceal himself from him, for he knew all the heathen customs and habits. This counsel pleased the Grandmaster, and he said, “He is my own preference, too.” At once the Master had letters written and sent to Prussia. The signet was also sent along. The letters soon came to Brother Burckhardt, surnamed von Hornhausen [in Saxony, near Magdeburg]. He was a man who knew how to spy out the heathen and come to terms with him. When Brother Burckhardt heard the news, he quickly replied, “I will obey what is written in these letters. Whatever is pleasing to my Mastership I will do unconditionally.” Then he put on the signet of Livonia which Master Anne, a fine man, had worn for more than

⁷²⁸ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:104.

⁷²⁹ “They called the castle Königsberg in honour of King Ottokar, who had first advised them to build it. It was known to the Prussians as Tvangste, after a nearby wood. The castle was built in the year of our Lord 1255. Brother Burchard von Hornshausen was installed as the commander of the castle. Brothers and many people were left there under his control.” (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2812).

three years. The good and virtuous Master Burckhardt von Hornshausen travelled to Livonia.”⁷³⁰.

Another factor that might have contributed to the progression of a knight’s career was his previous social status. In the Livonian branch, *ministeriales* and gentry pushed brethren of other social origins out of offices, especially those of Land Master, Marshal, and commanders; on the other hand, in contrast to sons from families of the lesser nobility or from the urban patriciate, the sons from families of the high nobility and from *ministerialis* serving the dynasts had better opportunities for nominations, even though that, from the 14th century onwards, they could no longer become Land Master; as for brethren from gentry backgrounds, members of important families advanced faster in the ranks, whereas sons of urban patricians (especially in later periods) had little chances of achieving the rank of commander⁷³¹. Sons of dynasts were preferred for the high offices – for instance, Konrad von Thüringen was elected Great Master after (the *ministeriale*) Hermann von Salza (d.1239) without having held any other office in the Order; Heinrich and Gottfried von Hohenlohe were also given leadership positions, likewise Luther von Braunschweig and Dietrich von Altenburg – however, there are also examples of sons of dynasts who did not achieve high offices: for instance, Otto, the son of Christoph II of Denmark and who had joined the Order in 1347, only made it to Vogt of Karkus⁷³². As Urban puts it:

“Few of the knights had sufficient intelligence and experience to hold high office or were of sufficiently high birth to be given responsibility without having proven themselves beforehand. Noble birth was almost essential to advancement. Nobles were assumed to have inherited ability in the same way that war-horses inherited strength and courage; and because they had important relatives and experience in court life, they could win advantages for the order that mere ability and piety could never achieve.”⁷³³.

⁷³⁰ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:56-57. Burchard died in battle in 1260.

⁷³¹ MILITZER 2016:276.

⁷³² MILITZER 1991:13.

⁷³³ URBAN 2003:17. There were highly educated knights in the Order, like Great Master Luther von Braunschweig, who was a writer and stimulated poetry production; or Great Master Karl von Trier, who spoke several languages and impressed the curia with his conversational skills – yet, in general, educated knights were an exception (MILITZER 1991:13). About von Trier, the *CLP* says the following: “In the year of our lord 1312 Brother Karl von Trier became thirteenth grand master amid much ceremony. (...) This pure man of God was clever; he could speak French very well and used to defend his own cases in front of the pope and his cardinals

Another factor that should be considered is how esteemed a prospect commander was⁷³⁴, and probably the way he treated others reflected at the time of being nominated. An example is provided by the *LRC*, that tells that, while the Livonian branch waited for a new Land Master to be nominated and sent to Livonia, the knights elected a temporary Master, Andreas of Westphalia, who they knew and who in turn knew them. This election followed Master Otto's and several other knights' deaths, and the chronicler states that, regardless of the reduced number, Andreas liked his troops, a feeling that suggests proximity and reciprocity: "(...) the Lithuanians were seen ravaging the Brother's land. When [Andreas] learned of this, he went in bold pursuit, hurrying after the heathens. His army was rather small, but he was fond of it nonetheless."⁷³⁵

Lastly, an individual's character must have played a role as well, and that is once again visible in the *CLP*, through Ludwig and how his neighbours liked him:

"[Ludwig] persecuted [the Lithuanians] so much with his strength and cunning during the six years that he was in command of Ragnit that he forced all the Lithuanians who lived along the Memel from the River Neris to the province of Lamotina to maintain peace with the Christians and to give the brothers at Ragnit an agreed yearly tribute. Note these wonders and note that however much suffering this Ludwig caused them during his wars, they still liked him, so that even the nobles in the province of Samogitia incited the common people to rebel against the king. (...) He was also able to use amazing cunning to foment trouble among the provinces, to the point that in his day the king of Lithuania could not persuade the people of Samogitia by threats or pleas to fight on his side against the brothers."⁷³⁶

Whether the seemingly temporary nominations to command specific operations attributed to rank-less knights during campaigns served to give a chance to those of lower birth to prove themselves or if that system worked based solely on an individual's merit, I was not able to discern. But the Order's theatre of operations was not an easy one, and

in his own words. He could talk so well, in such a lively manner, that even his opponents enjoyed listening to him and heard him out." (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5438).

⁷³⁴ The *LRC* contains several examples of 'good' Landmasters who were mourned after dying in battle, such as Otto, who was "(...) sincerely mourned throughout Livonia." (SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:97).

⁷³⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:98. Andreas and twenty other knights were killed when the Lithuanians attacked the Teutonic camp, and the chronicler's remark about how "They all died too young." (idem, *ibidem*:98), might suggest that both Andreas and the knights he commanded were still relatively young.

⁷³⁶ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4784-4792.

organisation must have been vital for the knights. Customs, paragraph 63, *Of the attack by the marshal and of the standard around which the attendants shall rally*, indicates that:

“Whenever the marshal or he who carries the standard attacks the enemy, then a brother sergeant shall carry a standard under which the attendants [‘knehte’ – probably squires according to Stens] shall rally and pray until God sends their lords back again. No brother without permission shall attack before he who carries the standard has attacked. Likewise, whenever he has attacked, then each one may do what God directs him in his heart to do, but he may also return to the standard, when it seems to him opportune. The brethren to whom the standard is entrusted, may fight with all their might around it, so long as they stand close by it.”⁷³⁷.

A commander needed to give orders to his force: he could do this before the engagement, yet there would have been several directions that could only be given on the march⁷³⁸ or in the battlefield, consequence of the moment – a system was needed for commanding, and in the context of the military orders, gestures and standards⁷³⁹ are of particular relevance⁷⁴⁰. Standards were associated to Masters or House Commanders, and were a reference for the troops to regroup, which assured unit cohesion and the bearer’s (Signifer) protection⁷⁴¹ – furthermore, the movement of the standard in a battlefield was an effective visual command, since it was a reference for manoeuvring and for positioning the commanders, plus its direction dragged the entire force with it⁷⁴². With the standard down, troops no longer had a rallying point, and as such new units could not be formed; with the

⁷³⁷ STENS (trans.) 1969:319.

⁷³⁸ On the march, the standard set the pace (according to the bearer) and when to stop (when the bearer dismounted) (AFONSO 2018:364).

⁷³⁹ The Order’s standards captured at Tannenberg (1410) can be found in the depictions of the *Banderia Prutenorum*, a manuscript by the Polish chronicler Jan Dlugosz (1415-1480), with an online English translation accessible at https://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/de_to_bp.html#ban [12/3/21]. For some of the standards vide Addendum, Pt. III, figure 16:345.

⁷⁴⁰ AFONSO 2018:340-341.

⁷⁴¹ A group of five to ten Templar knights had to remain close to the standard and never leave it, in order to defend it; the Marshal carried the standard and the commander of the knights, who must be one of the knights surrounding the standard, had to have a replacement standard with him that he used in case the Marshal’s was torn or lowered – this knight also must lead the attack if the Marshal no longer could (MONTEIRO 2011:29). The Teutonic Customs merely state that “The brethren to whom the standard is entrusted, may fight with all their might around it, so long as they stand close by it.” (STENS (trans.) 1969:319).

⁷⁴² AFONSO 2018:341-344.

connection between formations lost – an indication of defeat — men fled⁷⁴³: if a Templar knight strayed away, he should go to the first Christian banner he found, and could only flee the battlefield if all Christian banners were down⁷⁴⁴. This episode from the *LRC* shows that Templar regulations most likely applied to the Teutonic Order – in this case, the surviving knights had to fight their way out of the battlefield:

“Now the Brothers had fought bravely in the battle, but they were outmatched. The huge heathen army rallied, and there ensued a melee of Christians and Lithuanians. There was hacking and stabbing and rivers of blood spurted through the steel rings of armour. The Brothers were defeated. The flag of Our Lady was cut down without mercy, and the knight who held it, whose name was Johann, was killed. (...) Even after all these men had been slain, the Master and his Brothers remained undaunted. They suffered great and unbearable agony and fought a losing battle. The Semgallians fled and left not one of their men behind. This dismayed the Christian army, and when the heathens became aware of it, they advanced with their forces. The Brothers’ flag was down, and that was a blow to the Christians. Master Ernest and seventy-one good Brothers died in the battle. They shed their blood for God. After Eilard had pursued and slain the heathens, as I mentioned earlier, he hurried back to the Brothers. When he approached the battlefield and heard the news that the battle was lost, he was pained and angered. He deeply mourned the Master’s death. A large squadron of heathens held positions to either side of his escape route, and this was the hero’s undoing. He spoke to his knights, “For my sake, stand by me, to live or die. I am completely exhausted.” Some of the Brothers had dashed off with him earlier, and with these he now charged the heathen army. The heathens fought back. Lord Eilard’s horse was shot from under him during the escape, and he was mortally wounded. The others barely managed to cut their way out through the heathens. Lord Eilard was slain, and well may we mourn it.”.

The standard identified the bearer to friends and foe, thus working as a challenge, a threat or a target, and since it was carried by a commander or by someone on his behalf, the standard was also a symbol of authority to wage war; as for banners, these indicated tactical units and could show the size of a force: banners were used for ten to 50 knights and it is likely that these were the most common standard category for House Commanders at the

⁷⁴³ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:91. “This should effectively dispel the notion that the fighting took place in the form of duels. If it was not done in units, it would not have mattered whether the flag was flying or not, since each man had to choose only one opponent in order to go on fighting. Besides, it would have been unnecessary to draw units up in formation before the battle.” (idem, *ibidem*:91).

⁷⁴⁴ MONTEIRO 2011:30.

head of their troops, though there was also a smaller banner for forces of two to five knights⁷⁴⁵. Regarding the organisation of armies, Bradbury offers the following definitions: a banneret was a knight at the head of a group of about twenty other knights, and it was a higher rank that could be granted for feats of arms; a battle was the division of a medieval army, and one could be the vanguard while the other the rear-guard, each under the command of a leader but overall under the command of a supreme commander; a conroi was a small unit of ten to twenty knights, sometimes more, that allowed for the tactical deployment of small groups, “(...) suggesting greater sophistication in medieval armies than once supposed.”⁷⁴⁶. This last aspect has been exemplified above through Heinrich von Plötzkau’s campaign.

The conroi were square units, thus it can be assumed that formations with twelve to 24 knights bore six or eight on the front, while the others were lined up in a second or third rank; a great battle was made up of conrois closely together, that gave rectangular formations a depth of two to three men, with a front of fifty or more knights with squires⁷⁴⁷. In campaign, banners could be used only when necessary, as well as posing as a reference to all troops during the march and in all kinds of autonomous operations⁷⁴⁸. The following passage from the *LRC* illustrates the importance of banners to organise the forces in the march:

“Now after the native peoples of both regions [Kurland and Semgallia] had joined them, the Master and his advocates and the crusaders deemed it time to group the people under various banners, as is the custom in war. When they arrived at the borders of that land, the advocates regrouped their forces and drew them up for combat. The banners were entrusted to those who were eager for battle and who knew how to conduct themselves in such matters. There were many peoples there in formations which no foe could ever break. Although there were many banners, the natives were so well trained that they would not stray from their own. Their leaders also kept them under their constant care. The army arrayed itself in many proud formations, as should be done in battle. Guides were assigned to the leaders, and that

⁷⁴⁵ AFONSO 2018:342.

⁷⁴⁶ BRADBURY 2004:283-284.

⁷⁴⁷ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:76.

⁷⁴⁸ AFONSO 2018:342.

benefitted the entire expedition. These were native Lithuanians, fine heroes, and the army was well-protected.”⁷⁴⁹.

The moment of regrouping and drawing one’s forces for combat indicates that two different formations were in use – one for the march, and another for combat. It is interesting to notice how a battle formation was adopted despite no contact having been established with the enemy – Teutonic forces simply arrived at the borderlands. Adopting a battle formation there likely indicates they were entering dangerous territory, and also that, later, they would not have the opportunity or the necessary space to manoeuvre into a battle formation, given that “Most of the fighting was within an area of deciduous forest, heath and marsh. With their dense undergrowth, the Baltic forests were unlike the generally open coniferous forests farther north.”⁷⁵⁰. This passage also describes how the banners were given to knights who knew how to behave in the battlefield⁷⁵¹ – yet, once again, nothing else is said about how this promotion system worked. Importance is given to keeping formations tight at the remark about unbreakable formations: to prevent danger to an individual, increase his confidence in battle, charge effectively, and act as a tactical unit, knightly formations had to be tight ranks⁷⁵². Reference is also made to the division of the army into different formations. For tactical purposes, each unit had to have a banner – the knights, especially: to form in conrois in order to attack the enemy line; and to abandon close-quarter fighting and regroup, after the

⁷⁴⁹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:55. For other examples, vide Addendum, Pt. III, LRC2 – Organisation:345.

⁷⁵⁰ NICOLLE 2007:46.

⁷⁵¹ The commander’s example inspired, and it was necessary that the commander was at the danger spot at the critical moment – if needed, he should fight in the front rank, or in the rear-guard during retreats; not only was it chivalric, but also a natural consequence of the small size of knightly forces: “Because of this, the commander as a rule stayed very close to his knights. The hierarchy in such matters was not very strict: Tancred’s biographer, Ralph of Caen, says that he looked upon his knights as his treasure, and often took over guard-duty from wounded or exhausted men in his retinue, while never letting his own turn go by.” (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:52-53). A level of closeness among Teutonic knights was already a result from their life in the convents, and given how often they campaigned, the native auxiliaries were probably familiar with them (and were probably included in trainings) – this hypothesis is reinforced when the chronicler says that the natives knew under what banner to stay, and that their leaders watched over them. It is also worth recalling that, often, the chronicles introduce the commanders as ‘bold heroes’, or as brave or cunning.

⁷⁵² WILLARD (trans.) 1997:73. With a formation drawn so tightly, the horses touched each other in formation (idem, *ibidem*:74), which meant knights also knocked their knees against each other, and knocked stirrups too: this would result in injury to horses, men, and in the occasional (and very annoying) loss of a stirrup. One must ask when too tight is, in fact, too tight. The subject will be developed further in this chapter.

conroi broke through the enemy line and consequently loosened formation⁷⁵³. The *LRC* describes the following about charging and regrouping:

“Brother Bertold was the warrior chosen as banneret, and he took the flag in his hand and went onto a field. Without any urging the Brothers, townspeople and crusaders quickly gathered around the flag. The natives, however, were not ready, for they had camped off in the woods. Some of them even saw the enemy, but fled away toward home, leaving their horses in the forest. But many a chivalrous squire displayed proper courage and stood by his lord. Then the splendid force moved through the forest with their shields. The daring hero Brother Volmar von Bernhausen was compelled by his courage to boldly charge the enemy as soon as he saw them. He rushed toward them, and the banner followed after him. He alone was mounted. All the others fought on foot. There was slashing and stabbing, and the heathens retreated. More than twenty of them were killed, and the rest fled from the fight. Some of the soldiers were also killed. Brother Volmar returned like a hero to his banner, once again spurred his horse, and charged the enemy. This time the hero was slain. He died a brave man, and I wish his soul well. The Master shouted to the Brothers to move out onto the field, but it was too narrow for them and because of the crowding on the battlefield, they were unable to group themselves properly. A great band of men was seen approaching, and they had no choice but to fight. The Brothers needed no admonishment to fight by their banners, and the soldiers were also ready and willing.”⁷⁵⁴.

This passage is curious in several aspects, mostly because there seems to be no distinction between ‘flag’ and ‘banner’. Bertold takes the flag onto a field and presumably the Teutonic forces cross the forest to reach that same field – in a second moment the Landmaster commands the remaining of the forces to go into the field, so they were seemingly waiting in the forest⁷⁵⁵. Yet, since the knights ‘needed no admonishment to fight by their banners’, maybe Bertold, despite being appointed banneret, was carrying something else, meant for a bigger force. Even so, it is interesting to observe that, while Bertold was chosen as banneret, it is Volmar who charged on horseback – for he alone had a horse. When knights and infantry cooperated in battle, knights acted as the main force and infantry as

⁷⁵³ AFONSO 2018:344-345.

⁷⁵⁴ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:127-128. For the entire episode vide Addendum, Pt. III, *LRC3* – Bertold and Volmar:347.

⁷⁵⁵ The disadvantage of a broken line was its vulnerability against a second, organised charge, which is why reserves were kept – the collection around banners in order to regroup and counter-charge or make an organised retreat was crucial (GASSMANN:166). Reserves were not always necessary and depended on terrain, enemy disposition and numerical superiority (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:220).

support⁷⁵⁶, yet it is odd that the mounted knight does not carry the banner in this case. Both Bertold and Volmar are referred to only as ‘Brother’, so they were just knights; it is worth returning to the previous question as to how promotions worked, for Bertold was chosen for an unspecified reason⁷⁵⁷, yet it was Volmar initiating the attack and getting the praise. Secondly, Volmar charged, ‘compelled by his courage’, and the banner went after him: not only did Volmar break a rule⁷⁵⁸, he did something quite reckless⁷⁵⁹ considering that he was mounted, therefore he moved faster than his allies – unless Volmar charged at a trot, thus forcing everyone else to run after his horse, he would have been isolated at the moment of impact with the enemy. It is not very clear if Bertold’s and Volmar’s actions are connected, or where they stood in the battle in relation to each other. The most curious aspect of this episode is that Volmar’s eagerness for battle is not condoned, which is in accordance to Hartmut Kugler’s mention to the similarity between the *LRC* and heroic epic poetry, which suggests that the *LRC* aimed to heroically commemorate the actions of the knights⁷⁶⁰. Even so, and despite being the only one on horseback, Volmar returned to the banner, only to charge again one last time. As for the ‘crowding’ of the battlefield and how it affected manoeuvring, it will be discussed later in this chapter.

Besides visual signals, commands were also given through sound. Visual signals are associated to transmitting orders, and as such are an instrument to control the troops; but to

⁷⁵⁶ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:211.

⁷⁵⁷ Recalling Bradbury, a banneret was a commander who was given the rank by feats in battle. Could it be that Bertold had excelled in other battles, and this was his opportunity? Had he been in a commanding position before? Did he survive and remained a commander? The *LRC* does not tell.

⁷⁵⁸ Again, the Customs do state that “No brother without permission shall attack before he who carries the standard has attacked.”

⁷⁵⁹ Knights who had broken formation and were attacked by enemy troops were lost, which demonstrates the importance of keeping order in formation, for they were vulnerable when not packed together (WILLARD (trans). 1997:99-100). To begin with, while on horseback, a knight must consider the surface he must defend – his own and his horse’s: the issue can be mitigated by armour and by a moving animal, but armour was not always used, plus each attack the horse made exposed it to counter attack (GASSMANN:163). Besides, a horse cannot turn on itself as easily as a human, as such surrounding a horse on foot and numerically overwhelm a lonely knight – even when the horse kicks and bites – by pulling him off the saddle, is not impossible. In such a situation, the knight would be most likely grabbed by the belt and pulled down, while he would try to manoeuvre away by fighting and directing his horse, which would be difficult not only for being surrounded, but because there would be enemies grabbing his reins.

⁷⁶⁰ PEYPER:5. Yet, the *LRC* does contain the three aspects of religious warfare: labouring in god’s name, waging war to defend Christendom, and martyrdom (idem, *ibidem*:25).

exert the immediate and simultaneous transmission of orders, sound is more effective – the most obvious is that of the commander’s voice⁷⁶¹, yet that would be useless for a large force, given that the farthest, the hardest to hear; in addition, in a battle it would be muffled by the surrounding racket⁷⁶². In the Holy Land, the first trumpet blast meant that everyone had to arm themselves, at the second blast formations had to be made, and at the third the whole force was to be assembled⁷⁶³. The *LRC* tells that Teutonic knights used war-horns – a first blast for the men to gather and equip themselves, a second to break camp, and a third to initiate the march:

“The army spent the night under the protection of Our Lord and when the morning light appeared, the Master ordered the war-horn blown as a signal. The noise was grand and mighty, and the army quickly gathered itself together and made ready. Once again the war-horn sounded clearly, and then the army broke camp. When the third blast was blown, good Master Andreas of Livonia, like a bold hero, began the march with his entire army.”⁷⁶⁴.

For the military orders in the Iberian Peninsula, regarding small troops that moved by night and rested by day, voice commands would be preferable⁷⁶⁵. I believe the same applied to the Baltic, at least for situations when the knights would not want to give away their location – for instance, when chasing the enemy to catch him off guard, like in the *LRC*:

“The army was grouped under the banners in an orderly fashion for the journey into Semgallia. There is a river named Schenen, and at this time its waters were very high. The Brothers’ army halted in a forest near it and made camp. Scouts who knew the roads were sent toward Kurland in pursuit of the enemy. They soon came near enough to see the Lithuanian army. Their hearts rejoiced, and they returned without delay to inform the Brothers. They said, “The heathens are approaching, and they have taken a great amount of booty. They are very close to us.” Now one of the Lithuanians had suggested building a bridge over the river. The Brothers themselves could hear the noises the Lithuanians made

⁷⁶¹ Customs, paragraph 51, *How the brethren shall behave if an outcry or alarm is raised* informs that the brethren not present where the alarm is raised should “(...) hasten to the standard and listen for orders.” (STERNS (trans.) 1969:313).

⁷⁶² AFONSO 2018:345-346.

⁷⁶³ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:84. Singing seems to have occurred, judging by the *LRC*: “For the sake of God, the Christians sang the song, “Saint Mary, help us to victory,” and then beneath three banners they charged the heathens. The latter quickly took up arms and ran toward the Brothers’ army, which continued to charge, inflicting great damage.” (SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:142).

⁷⁶⁴ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:45. For the full episode vide Addendum, Pt. III, *LRC4 – War-horn*:349.

⁷⁶⁵ AFONSO 2018:370.

as they joyfully worked through the night to complete the bridge. (...) Now the Lithuanians did not suspect that anyone would attack them, so they rode and marched openly across the river. Brother Merkelein took heart and charged with his men. The heathens saw the Christian force coming and tried to get back to their booty, but the bridge collapsed beneath them.”⁷⁶⁶.

It seems plausible that, given the proximity of the two forces and how the Lithuanians were surprised by the knights, voice commands were used instead of war-horns. Customs, paragraph 56, *Of the office of the crier* states that “The crier shall be quartered with the marshal, and whatever he cries as an order shall be regarded and received as an order.”⁷⁶⁷.

Visual and sound signals could be mixed. March could begin with the sound of a trumpet-like instrument, or a voice command, or was given by a banner in the case of the Templars; halting was commanded by hitting on a shield, or by hand signs, or by a trumpet blast, or by a voice command, or by a banner; to make cavalry units into thinner lines in order to have a broader front, a voice command was used; to maintain close ranks, another voice command was used⁷⁶⁸.

But visual and sound signals can go beyond the scope of command. It should be considered that, as Jensen puts it, war also consisted of audio-visual elements⁷⁶⁹: Henry of Livonia describes the Crusaders singing on the march while accompanied by drums and pipes (“[a]fter all the men were killed there was great rejoicing among the Christians and they played upon the drums, pipes, and musical instruments because they had taken vengeance upon the malefactors and had killed all the traitors.”); Henry also mentions the war bell⁷⁷⁰,

⁷⁶⁶ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:141-142.

⁷⁶⁷ STERNS (trans.) 1969:316.

⁷⁶⁸ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:86. It is necessary to keep in mind that the larger the cavalry force, the harder to manoeuvre: since a charge should hit the enemy as one, the entire attacking line would be limited by the slowest horse, thus sacrificing speed and, consequently, force; besides, the oblong shape of the horse makes sharp turns hard to coordinate (GASSMANN:164). Turning a horse requires space, and while it is possible to execute turns in more confined spaces and with other horses nearby, that requires a level of horsemanship not every knight would have, plus the horse’s own training – again, there is a difference between warfare and haute école. A harsh mouthpiece and a harsh hand would not achieve anything safe for horse and rider if there was not enough space.

⁷⁶⁹ JENSEN 2016:260.

⁷⁷⁰ Customs, paragraph 55, *When the marshal should not send out the brethren without word from the master*, states that “The brethren shall also not go without permission so far from camp or from the house that they cannot hear the summons when in the army, or the bells, and, if needed, they cannot be reached.” (STERNS (trans.) 1969:315).

and the references to sound are so often described by him that sound most likely played an important role in warfare⁷⁷¹:

“It had a psychological effect in comforting the crusaders and stressing that they belonged to a shared community. But it also had a spiritual significance. The new sound took over and conquered pagan space. Just as the earth was cultivated and forests turned into fields, so the air was filled with heavenly Christian music.”⁷⁷².

2. Theatre of Operations

War in the Baltic was lengthy, laborious, and required detailed planning, given that a victory on a field or the conquest of a fortification was only a starting point in the process of seizing control of an area⁷⁷³.

A temperate sea, dense forest in the hinterlands, mountains, bogs, mild summers, and harsh winters gave the Baltic region a character of its own, differentiating it from other places – it was a region separated by natural barriers, though access to the south, east and west was easier⁷⁷⁴. Nevertheless, easier did not mean open. To approach west by the sea, the difficulties of the North Sea and the sandbanks north to the Jutland coast posed an obstacle, whereas an approach from the east faced a vast forest between the Vistula and the Gulf of Finland⁷⁷⁵.

The main bodies of water consisted of the Oder and the Vistula, coming from the Bohemian⁷⁷⁶ and the Carpathian Mountains, the Memel (or Nieman) and the Dvina, coming from the Russian Plain⁷⁷⁷. Waterways were especially important communication routes – for

⁷⁷¹ JENSEN 2016:261. As has been shown by the episode in *CLP4*, enemy troops besieging a Teutonic castle. were fooled for a while because of the ringing of the bell for offices.

⁷⁷² JENSEN 2016:261. In this regard, it should be pointed that the Teutonic portable organ from *Alexandr Nevskii* might have been based on facts: “(...) records from the end of the [13th] century list organs among the religious objects destroyed by Lithuanian pagans.” (URBAN 2018:98).

⁷⁷³ JENSEN 2016:259.

⁷⁷⁴ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:42 (eBook converted into PDF file – the pagination was provided by the PDF reader).

⁷⁷⁵ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:44-45.

⁷⁷⁶ In Czechia.

⁷⁷⁷ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:33.

instance, through the Dvina, the heartland of the Baltic was in contact with the East and the North:

“The upper reaches of the Daugava [Dvina] are in close proximity to the upper courses of three other rivers – the Volga, giving passageway to the Caspian Sea, the Dnieper, which flows to the Black Sea, and the Lovar, which allows access to the Gulf of Finland in the Baltic. Portages made it fairly easy to cross from one river to another. Contact between the Daugava and the Dnieper took place through at least four portages.”⁷⁷⁸.

Other rivers connected other regions with the Baltic. The Oder, the Saxon areas of Brandenburg, Meissen and Lusatia, the Polish areas of Silesia, and the Bohemian lands of Moravia; the Vistula, Poland and the Russian lands of Volhynia, plus the steppe; the Memel, Minsk and Lithuania; the Dvina, Polotsk; the Lovat-Volkhov-Lake Lagoda-Neva waterways, Novgorod and the Urals⁷⁷⁹. The Order’s theatre of operations and the growing ‘Ordensstaat’ in the 13th century was framed by two rivers: in the west, the Vistula, passing Cracow, entering Masovia, and splitting Western Prussia from Pomerania (Eastern Pomerania); in the east, the Nieman, dividing eastern Prussia (mostly Sudovia) and western Lithuania⁷⁸⁰. The Order in Prussia took the example of the Sworbrethren in Livonia by following the rivers to establish fortifications that served as bases to harass coastal tribes, followed by conquering, garrisoning and proceeding into the heartlands: “All previous invasions had gone eastwards into the forests of the interior, but the captain of the Knights at Chełmno, Hermann Balk, concentrated his efforts in the west, along the Vistula.” – Balk cut off Pomesanians and Pogesanians from trade routes⁷⁸¹.

Besides rivers, there were also the lakes in Masuria, and the bogs in Higher Pomerania; south to these and to the barren highlands of Outer Pomerania, from the North Sea to the Dvina, there was thick forest “(...) also interspersed with lakes and bogs, leached, acid and intractable (...) and baffled the cultivator until modern times.” — the dense deciduous forest in Lithuania; plus the Wilderness between Lithuania and the Order’s territories in Livonia and Prussia, that consisted of trees, undergrowth, thickets posing as

⁷⁷⁸ TURNBULL 2004:36.

⁷⁷⁹ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:36-37.

⁷⁸⁰ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:296.

⁷⁸¹ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:132-133.

barriers, marsh, bogs, lakes, and several tributaries to the great rivers, which posed problems of transportation and logistics that were too difficult for medieval forces⁷⁸² – when the Order began to utilize wagons in 1390, it was seen as an innovation⁷⁸³.

About this forest, it is worth recalling that some of it still survives today in areas of north-eastern Poland, in the border with Lithuania and Belarus⁷⁸⁴. Flora consisted of oaks, elms, ash, maples, and linden-trees; aurochs, bison, elk, and bears made up the resident fauna⁷⁸⁵. The wilderness of the Baltic, that was first described by Henry of Livonia, was presented as a place for the natives to hide from their neighbours and from the Crusaders: these hiding spots, described as dark, or in dense parts of the forest, "(...) appear to be established as carefully selected places of refuge. It is as if almost every village would have known one or several of these places in the woods, the location of which were very well known to the locals."⁷⁸⁶

This forest that the Teutonic knights encountered played a conditioning role in warfare. Knights who left established tracks or rode alone were often hunted down or got lost and starved to death; armies got lost and failed to find the enemy; travelling through the forest was very laborious (a good day's journey would be about 19.31km) – the Niemen and the Dvina were better for transporting⁷⁸⁷ bulky baggage and were frequently used to support operations (to carry supplies, building materials, siege engines, horses, troops); however,

⁷⁸² CHRISTIANSEN 1997:43/196. Most of Prussian land was not arable – too many forests and swamps, allied to long and rigorous winters and short growing seasons (TURNBULL 2003:42). Nevertheless, the Baltic peoples were farmers that cleared land by cutting trees and burning the land, used wood or iron-tipped ploughs, and planted crops on a two or three-field rotation – these crops consisted of spelt, rye and millet, legumes, oat, and barley; they also planted flax and wove linen, raised cattle and horses; they dealt with wax, furs, honey, and amber (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:63). Another profitable activity for some Baltic peoples was slave trade - yet the competition among slavers and traders of Scandinavia, Kurland (Curonia), Estonia, and Russia escalated, in the period of 1100 to 1250, to a series of conflicts "(...) involving the whole military resources of these countries and the permanent subjugation of peoples." (idem, *ibidem*:71) – that is, the Baltic Crusades. During the Middle Ages, agriculture intensified in Prussia due to clearance of woodland to cultivate cereal and livestock graze; the construction of castles was accompanied by the construction of stables, pigsties, cattle sheds, granaries, stores, and mills (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:313/316).

⁷⁸³ EKDAHL 1991:32.

⁷⁸⁴ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:294.

⁷⁸⁵ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:61-62.

⁷⁸⁶ NIELSEN 2011:163.

⁷⁸⁷ The *CLP* contains a few examples of troops transported in ships, but also of amphibious operations. Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP3* – Sailing:350.

there were rapids in many places of the upper Dvina, plus the southern tributaries that flowed into Lithuania were short and shallow⁷⁸⁸.

The Order's and Lithuania's operations took place mostly in the winter, given that it was easier to ride on frozen wetlands and paths⁷⁸⁹. The *CLP* tells how Balga was surrounded by marshland that could not be crossed in the summer without a bridge:

“The plain on which the house of Balga is situated is surrounded by marshland which is impassable by horse or on foot during the summer other than by a path across a bridge which is still there today. For their future safety, and to ward off any threat, the brothers built a castle on a hill in front of this bridge, which I heard they called Schneckenburg, and there they deployed a number of brothers and also a brave, noble man who was skilled in warfare (I have heard that his name was Hartwig, the father of Hartwig of Pokarwin), and more fighters whose duty it was to guard it and prevent the Prussians from attacking them.”⁷⁹⁰.

Because of the forest and marshes, moving in Prussia and Livonia was limited but, in the winter, with ice, troops could move about and winter campaigns became a practice⁷⁹¹. Nonetheless the weather was also very restrictive, and since the Baltic was prone to heavy rains and heavy snow, the lack of roads meant that dislocations were not feasible: the cold alone made it impossible for the Order to go into Lithuania in the winter of 1322-23; the snow was so deep in February 1376 that a Livonian expedition was forced to ride in single file⁷⁹², and in March the same year the Lithuanians accounted the loss of 1000 horses due to

⁷⁸⁸ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:197. Henry of Livonia portrayed the Germans as rarely entering the forests, and when they did, they were accompanied by natives: “(...) we read in Henry how the Germans almost always use the roads – at times even singing while marching! – while the pagans most often used the forests, when moving from one destination to another: ‘All the other Livs and Lettgallians returned without any wound. Many of them came again to the Germans, from the forests to which they had fled, as the Germans returned by the road.’ “ (NIELSEN 2011:167-168).

⁷⁸⁹ BIERMANN 2019:273.

⁷⁹⁰ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:1921-1931.

⁷⁹¹ FOREY 1992:49.

⁷⁹² Already in the winter of 1219-20, when the Germans were going to Estonia, riding single file had been imposed by the snow (FOREY 1992:49). Moving in single file was a disaster waiting to happen. A single file prevented the formation of tactical units, that entailed the vanguard (where most fighting usually took place, normally commanded by the operational commander, and where elite forces were deployed), the wings (to protect the flanks, and that could exert fire power through bows or crossbows to disorganise the enemy formation), the rear-guard (kept at a certain distance from the front line, and were elite forces and the commander stood) and baggage (placed on the far back with infantry and with bow/crossbowmen to protect it, plus the non-fighting servants) (MONTEIRO 2009:6-8). In addition, to avoid panic, two or three lines should be used in depth: if the first lined balked, it could be intercepted by the second or third lines, who, for being out

hardship; in 1387 the snow was so thick that everyone stayed home – on the other hand, a weak winter was much worse, for unless the ground froze it would not withstand men nor horses, thus there could be no fighting; rain caused flooding and soaked the soil; the ice melting and breaking in the rivers (March and April) made communications impossible, and autumn rain could be too heavy: “However eager the enemies were to fight each other, they were always apt to be kept apart by the weather.”⁷⁹³ This contrasts with the Middle East, where difficulties were caused by heat and aridity⁷⁹⁴. According to the *CLP*:

“In the same year, 1255, John, margrave of Brandenburg, a mighty lord in battle, came to Prussia with a great army of knights and fighting men all of them keen to fight in the name of God against the heathens, if it could be arranged. However, when they came, the winter was so mild that they were unable to get close enough to the enemy to inflict any damage on them; this is because the land in between is waterlogged and swampy and so difficult to cross that no army can travel there on horseback unless the winter is severe enough that it freezes hard enough to allow the army to cross.”⁷⁹⁵.

Henry of Livonia noted in the 13th century that the Lithuanians used sleighs to move within their operational area and to transport booty from incursions into Livonia⁷⁹⁶, and the *LRC* tells that sleds were used both by the Order and by the natives – for example, “Orders were given for a general attack, but the Brothers charged upon the heathens too soon. When they came dashing towards them, the heathens went behind the defensive line of their sleds, and the foremost Brothers, the flag-bearers, smashed into it.”⁷⁹⁷. The *CLP* provides an example about how proper ice was necessary for dislocations, describing as a ‘miracle’ that the knights were able to cross over thin ice – though it is not specified in what month this expedition occurred, it is likely that it was already late winter; mention is also made to how easily contingents became lost, even with guides, and to the natives’ hiding places:

“In the winter of this same year [1302] the master, Brother Konrad Sack, took a large force into Karšuva, but to little effect, because the guides became confused about the route. They

of danger, had a better morale: “The soldiers who are tempted to break ranks in a panic are usually then halted and rounded up not far from the front.” (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:46).

⁷⁹³CHRISTIANSEN 1997:198.

⁷⁹⁴FOREY 1992:50.

⁷⁹⁵FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2839-2848.

⁷⁹⁶BIERMANN 2019:273.

⁷⁹⁷SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:97.

led the army back and forth so that the heathens were warned of their arrival and crept off to places where they knew they were safe. So the master travelled the length of the empty land and achieved nothing other than starting some fires. He did a great deal of this, stayed overnight, and on the homeward journey they crossed the ice on the Curonian Lagoon, a great miracle, because the ice was so thin that it was bending like waves on the sea whipped up by a thunderstorm: the army was tossed upwards and then sank down into the next trough from wave to wave. However, God performed a miracle for them no one died.”⁷⁹⁸.

Besides forest, bogs, and ice, there were also peoples in the Order’s theatre of operations. From the Baltic coast to the western Russian uplands, settlements were confined to the coast and to the valleys of the Vistula, Nieman, and Dvina⁷⁹⁹. Numerous pagan tribes existed there: the Slav Wends (Abodrites, Wagrians, Polabians, and Warnabians in the region of Nordalbingia (Holsatia); Roganians/Rani, in the Rugen island; in the mainland, opposed to Rugen and down to Havelburg, were the Redarii, Kissini, Circipani, and Tolensani; in Lusatia there were the Serbs/northern Servians (that still exist today as an ethnic group in Spreewald); east of the Oder were the Pomeranians; east and north of the Vistula were the Prussians⁸⁰⁰, Lithuanians, Letts and Kurs (or Curonians)⁸⁰¹. For the current thesis, focus lies in the peoples east and north of the Vistula. Prussian tribes lived among the Lower Vistula, the Narew, the Niemen, and the Baltic coast; the Lithuanians, north and east of the Niemen, within the confines of the Nevezis and the Viliya; as for the Latvian tribes, in the lower Dvina they were known as Lettigallians/Letts (north of the river) and as Semigallians and Selonians (south of the river); lastly, the Kurs/Curonians (named Kurir by the Scandinavians), had their territory on the peninsula between the Baltic and the Gulf of Riga⁸⁰².

⁷⁹⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5180-5190.

⁷⁹⁹ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:61. Common religious beliefs and civilization allow to treat them as a unity, though they had always lived as different peoples in their own geographical place – in fact, some tribes, such as Galindians and Sudovians (Prussians), had already been mentioned by Ptolemy in the 2nd century AD (idem, *ibidem*:62).

⁸⁰⁰ “The issue of a larger tribal division, especially among the Prussians, is a bit confusing and may be misleading. This is so because some tribal names may more likely refer to regions rather than political entities. For example, according to Peter of Dusburg there were eleven major Prussian tribes, and the most prominent and strongest were the Sudovians (Yotvingians), Sambians, Nadrovians and Galindians. There is some evident trend that, during confrontation with the Teutonic Knights, some war-leader tried to grab more power and control over a number of pulkas. Consequently, during the 13th century some political and tribal consolidation was taking place in Bartia, Sudovia, Nadrovia and Galindia.” (ZAROFF 2019:185).

⁸⁰¹ LOCK 2006:214-215.

⁸⁰² CHRISTIANSEN 1997:62.

These peoples were associations of small groups – tribes – that were political units: tribes could have their own fortifications, were collectively responsible for keeping frontiers and could mobilize as an army or assemble in a meeting (‘wayde’), and naturally some were more powerful and more aggressive towards their neighbours than others, whereas others lost lands to non-Baltic peoples (like the Pomesanians and Pogesanians, who were pushed back from the Vistula before 1200 by the Poles; and the Letts of Jersika, whose overlords were Russian); yet other tribes combined, such as the Samogitians (Zemaiciai) and Aukstaiciai, that made up the Lithuanians⁸⁰³.

The smallest social unit was a ‘lauk’, a small family-oriented settlement, household, and surrounding fields – ‘laukses’ were ruled by the male head of the family, though larger political and territorial units existed in the 13th century, centred on fortifications; these were known as ‘pulka’, comprised about a dozen of ‘laukses’, could cover up to 300 square km and hold about 2000 inhabitants⁸⁰⁴. Assemblies of ‘pulkas’ were attended by all free men in holy groves and that was where decisions such as treaties, raids, elections of leaders and campaigning targets were taken⁸⁰⁵ – however, there is no available information to understand how the Prussians had conceptualised warfare before the Crusades⁸⁰⁶. Written sources⁸⁰⁷ mention that infantry was the basis of Baltic forces until the 13th century, with cavalry playing a minor role⁸⁰⁸ – still there are mentions of Baltic cavalry in the early 13th century armed with

⁸⁰³ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:62-63.

⁸⁰⁴ ZAROFF 2019:184.

⁸⁰⁵ *Idem, ibidem*:185. The forest was also a place of worship for the natives, and the Christians regarded the natives’ sanctuaries and pantheon as a powerful, harmful force to take in consideration: “Henry mentions pagan sacred groves several times in his chronicle. (...) apparently the sacredness of some of these groves consisted both of their form created *by* nature and their place *in* nature (...) pagans of the Baltic actually did not regard the groves and the gods as two different things. Apparently, they did not, as Christians do, distinguish between God and the place of His worship.” (NIELSEN 2011:173-176).

⁸⁰⁶ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:66.

⁸⁰⁷ Written sources for the Baltic Crusades consist of Christian material, which poses a problem to understand finer details about natives and, in this case, the Teutonic Order. 13th century Baltic peoples left no written sources, and the Russian chronicles make little comment about the fighting capability of Westerners, referring to them only as ‘Nemtsy’ (FOREY 1992:84), which makes it difficult to understand exactly about who the Russian sources refer to, given that the modern meaning of ‘nemtsy’ (Germans) is not the same as the medieval.

⁸⁰⁸ “(...) the Teutonic Order’s period of rule in Livonia bookends two formative periods in eastern Baltic horse culture – the introduction of heavy European cavalry with the Crusades and its transformation in response to changing battlefield technology (...)” (PLUSKOWSKI et al 2018:372).

spears and maces, added to the swiftness attributed to Lithuanian horses⁸⁰⁹. Even though the archaeological data is limited, the chronicles state that the Prussians could raise large numbers of cavalry⁸¹⁰. The *CLP* tells that:

“(…) when the garrison at Christburg and brothers from other places rushed off there with their troops in response to the war cries of this army, the Pogesanians, as Diwan had arranged in advance, came on foot and on horseback with all the force they could muster and attacked the area round Christburg.”⁸¹¹.

The Crusaders brought new technology that granted them only a temporary military advantage, because the natives, out of necessity, either learned how to defend themselves or adopted the new weapons; in addition, they kept traditional solutions that were better suited to the local context than those applied by the Crusaders: “(…) for example, continuing to use light cavalry in marshy areas where big war horses were less use.”⁸¹². The Baltic peoples were not primitive in their conduct of warfare:

“(…) it is important to stress that the transfer was not one of necessary diffusion from a civilized and technologically advanced centre to a primitive periphery. Different military equipment served different functions on different terrains, and local traditions of warfare, developed for local circumstances, enabled pagan rulers to keep their positions for decades against the crusader armies.”⁸¹³.

The natives had the numerical advantage, plus the experience in local conditions; they also began to use captured armour and to copy siege weaponry – thus, Crusader superiority relied on recruiting the natives to their side: by providing Livonians with protection against Russians and Lithuanians; by helping the Livs and Letts against the Estonians; but also

⁸⁰⁹ BIERMANN 2019:274.

⁸¹⁰ PLUSKOWSKI 2013:319.

⁸¹¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3522.

⁸¹² JENSEN 2016:247-248. The defeat at Saule was due to the unwillingness of the crusaders aiding the Sworbrethren to fight, for fear of losing their horses in the swamps – the Lithuanians attacked and the army was annihilated (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:129-130).

⁸¹³ JENSEN 2016:258. Though the tribes could combine for warfare, it was not until after the 12th century and the Crusades that they gathered for a common purpose: “What gave the nations their identity before that was their exploitation of broadly homogeneous settlement areas, a common language and common religious cults. The discernible social developments of the period 1000-1200 – militarization, lordship, class-distinctions, accumulation of heritable wealth – were not necessarily leading to greater cohesion or solidarity between the tribes.” (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:63).

because allying with the Crusaders facilitated trade with German merchants – meaning that baptism became a consequence of joining the Crusaders⁸¹⁴.

As has been stated in an earlier moment, the tribal disunity served the Crusaders well. The big tribes were not centralized political entities – more like an alliance formed among the Prussians; a similar situation could be seen in Livonia, with the Curonians, Semigalians, Selonians, and Latgalians; the Lithuanians were different, for they formed a nation.⁸¹⁵ The Lithuanians were peasantry under the rule of a mounted warrior class, living in the densely forested areas of the rivers Niemen, Neris, and Viliya; a hamlet community, apparently exogamous, was made up of five to eight homesteads, each with a holding of land; the hamlets paid food rents and accommodation to the land owners (‘boyar’); this boyar recruited kinsmen and more body-abled peasants into his retinue; all were led by an hereditary prince or kinglet of one of the nine Lithuanian districts, and groups went out raiding every spring (if neighbouring retaliation followed, the Lithuanians took refuge in the district forts)⁸¹⁶.

Baltic defences consisted of earthworks with wooden walls and towers; the fortifications were commanded by warlords, that appear as kings, captains, and dukes in the sources – these warlords headed the tribal aristocracy and were able to equip themselves with weapons and horses; before 1200, these warriors were most likely the most able-bodied men of the tribes, and whereas lower warriors protected themselves with only shields and helmets, the more important warriors wore better equipment, and were familiar with stirrups and with spurs; the warlords enhanced their power with loot and slavery, but the establishing of private estates was not developed⁸¹⁷. The dominant weapon in the Baltic during the 9th–13th centuries was the spear, though swords, arrowheads, and battle axes are also frequent

⁸¹⁴ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:128.

⁸¹⁵ ZAROFF 2019:185-186. Prussian tribes were disunited, likely because, until the Crusades, they were able to separately withstand aggression from outsiders; on the other hand, the Lithuanians were united under the leadership of a line of rulers that rose to power in the early 13th century (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:63). “While the medieval Samogitians (Lith. Žemaičiai) might have subscribed to some regional affinities they were fully incorporated into the Lithuanian state by 1240. By the middle of the 13th century the Grand Duke, later king Mindaugas, brought all Lithuanian lands under his control, creating a fully fledged mediaeval state.” (ZAROFF 2019:186).

⁸¹⁶ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:166-167. The Lithuanians were fewer and less prosperous than the Prussians, yet their inaccessibility and their horses granted them an advantage over their neighbours (idem, *ibidem*:167).

⁸¹⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:64.

archaeological finds – Lithuanians started using the crossbow at the latest during the second half of the 13th century⁸¹⁸.

These peoples and their homeland were who Teutonic cavalry had to face from the 13th to the 15th centuries. The question lies in how the Order's strategy and tactics morphed into matching both peoples and terrain, for as Nowakowski remarks:

“[Historians] were too much influenced by the idea that the Teutonic art of War was uniform in character. This is particularly noticeable in the earlier works, especially the German ones, which reconstructed its principles only on the basis of the Statutes of the Order, while the realities of the battlefields and the fact that the Teutonic written war laws concern specific areas of activity: Syria and Palestine, were ignored. Thus the Statutes are of little use in widely different ecological and landscape zones represented by lands where military activities of the Order were the most intense, that is in Poland, Prussia or Lithuania.”⁸¹⁹.

3. The *Book of the Order*

Notwithstanding, the *Book of the Order*, namely the Customs, gives information regarding order and discipline that one can attempt to cross with and compare to what the Order's chronicles provide. This is all limited information, and while Nowakowski makes an important point, I disagree with Nowakowski's opinion on the usefulness of the Statutes: the lesser the material available, the less one should discard it. I have already exposed information regarding the knights' and horses' equipment, command, and standards, and will now add the remaining instructions regarding discipline and conduct.

Paragraph 48, *How the brethren shall ride when ordered*, describes the procedures to leave quarters and ride in line: the brethren cannot saddle or pack their animals before ordered to do so; saddling takes precedence over packing, and only once the horses are saddled can pack-animals be loaded with things that require small straps – objects that need larger straps cannot be packed without an order; once the pack-animals are ready, the brethren cannot ride until ordered to do so; after the order to ride is given and everyone is on horseback at quarters,

⁸¹⁸ BIERMANN 2019:274.

⁸¹⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:9.

the brethren must look around and check if nothing has been left behind through negligence or forgetfulness; the brethren ride ahead of their squires to take their place in the line, but then the squires ride ahead of the brethren, so that the brethren can keep an eye on their equipment and stay in their place in the line; everyone should follow each other at even intervals and “(...) disorder in riding shall be avoided.”; when someone rides from the quarters and sees an empty place in the line where he and his animals can fit, he can take it; brethren can also take another’s place in the line when they have just been in quarters, yet a place that is assigned to someone cannot be passed to another⁸²⁰.

These measures aim at avoiding needless stress for men and animals: coordinating the saddling and packing of animals implies that the horses will be tended to at the same time, which decreases the chances of restlessness – some horses become nervous at being saddled, but not mounted after; saddling the horses first gives them time to relax their posterior pectorals, so that the girths can be properly adjusted at the time of riding; everyone riding at the same time prevents wearing the horses by just sitting on the saddle, which is harmful for a stationary horse’s back; riding at even intervals prevents biting, kicking, and stepping, as well as keeping the brethren from knocking against each other; fitting in a vacant space means joining the march without disrupting it; assigned places may imply the formation of the aforementioned tactical units – but particularly vicious horses that must be in a determined place in relation to other horses (namely, be the first, or have a specific horse nearby) should also be considered.

The Customs describe only mounted brethren, their squires, and the pack-animals. If one thinks of the riding horses ridden during the march while the warhorses were led by hand, it is a considerable number of animals. Paragraph 41, *Of the office of the master of the esquires, what he may do*, states that the master of the esquires can give the brethren in campaign tacks and also grooming equipment; he distributes “(...) fodder to the animals according to custom with heaped up measure not pressed down (...)”, though he cannot increase the fodder for anyone without permission⁸²¹. That ‘custom’ is not specified. In the

⁸²⁰ STERNS (trans.) 1969:311-312.

⁸²¹ STERNS (trans.) 1969:308-309. Also, Customs, paragraph 25, *Of the marshal’s office, what he shall and shall not do*, states that he can give to ‘intimates’ of the house fodder for four horses for one night, if deemed proper (idem, *ibidem*:300).

case of the Templars, during campaign they were permitted to forage for fodder (cut grass or hay), as long as they stayed within earshot; each Templar had a basin to measure the horse's grain and a sieve to sift it, and barley came from a general supply as a measured amount – if grazing was good, ration could be reduced⁸²²; if the horses were fed straw, Templars were not allowed to supply the straw with grass⁸²³. As for watering the horses, according to paragraph 50, *How no one shall water his horse while in battle array*, nobody in the Teutonic forces could water his horse when riding across a body of water – unless the standard-bearer watered his horse, or the body of water was wide enough for a warrior to water his horse outside the line without holding up the others⁸²⁴.

The Customs also describe procedures for emergencies and setting camp. Paragraph 52, *How the brethren shall await order, when in danger* states that, without permission, the brethren cannot unbridle or feed their animals; camp is to be pitched around the standard, outside the ropes for the chapel, in a ring, following the order in which the brethren ride on horseback; the horses and equipment must be in the interior of the ring, so that they are better protected⁸²⁵. The restrictions regarding unbridling and feeding have to do with readiness for combat and the horses' safety: with the horses standing bridled and saddled, it would simply be necessary to adjust the girths before mounting; as for feeding, it makes a horse unfit for action, given that sudden and demanding exercise may cause a colic on a horse with a full stomach – untreated, a colic can kill a horse within 24 hours. The *CLP* contains an episode that justifies the maintenance of discipline while camping: the Christian troops, probably

⁸²² “With six or more horses required for every knight, no army could rely on finding sufficient forage by the way; it had to carry a certain amount of fodder with it, this increasing still further the number of horses required.” (DAVIES 1989:26). This again supports my views in how, for certain operations, Teutonic knights had only their warhorses with them.

⁸²³ HYLAND 1996:155. “However, it is normal horsemen's practice to try to get that extra feed for a hardworking favourite mount. Templars were probably no different, and the incentive to boost a horse's energy and stamina would have paid dividends in increased safety in a hard-fought battle. The horses would have received adequate but not generous rations.” (idem, *ibidem*:156).

⁸²⁴ STERNS (trans.) 1969:313. It should also be kept in mind that, while some horses do not mind crossing water and do so without halting to paw at the water (or bolt away when stepping on it), others will refuse and need coaxing – with these, crossing is not orderly. It is a situation that not always depends on habituation and/or training.

⁸²⁵ STERNS (trans.) 1969:313-314.

feeling safe due to their location (protected by a river), laxed a little and were not ready for when some Prussians covertly crossed the river to attack them:

“(…) when the garrison at Christburg and brothers from other places rushed off there with their troops in response to the war cries of this army, the Pogesanians, as Diwan had arranged in advance, came on foot and on horseback with all the force they could muster and attacked the area round Christburg. As was planned, they overran a castle called Tranpere (…). As soon as the brothers at the fortresses of Posilge and Vischovia heard the news that the Prussians were threatening Tranpere they lost no time in coming to the assistance of the brothers and townspeople of Christburg, all of whom they found already armed and prepared for battle. They set off and when they were close to the aforementioned castle of Tranpere, which (…) was under siege, the enemy fled from the scene; the brothers went after them and killed many of them. Colte, too, met his end there. Those of them who escaped on foot met the troops on horseback who had devastated the region and they too were very shocked by the terrible defeat they had suffered. The Prussians on horseback and the foot soldiers joined forces and moved off towards the River Sorge, where they pitched camp, finding shelter and setting up their tents; the brothers pitched their camp on the other side of the river on the meadow outside the village called Paganstein. When the Prussians saw them there and that it was impossible to fight them there and that it was impossible to escape, they agreed on the following clever plan: when the Christians had set up camp, taken off their armour and unsaddled the horses, had stood down their look-outs and were completely care free, the Prussians secretly sent half of their army across the river. While the Christians thought it was safe to relax, half of the Prussians launched a ferocious onslaught from the front and half from behind, and before they were ready to defend themselves against the attack, twelve brothers and a good five hundred men lay dead and the others fled with all speed to Christburg. It too was besieged by the heathens who chased them back there.”⁸²⁶

As for paragraph 54, *How the brethren shall take their places before the chapel*, it instructs that the brethren cannot fetch wood or go foraging without permission; if they have permission, the saddles must be covered in order to not be damaged by what is brought⁸²⁷. Paragraph 55, *When the marshal should not send out the brethren without word from the master*, indicates that, without the Master’s consent, the Marshal cannot send out brethren (armed or unarmed), or let them ride so far they might happen into danger – or that they might become a danger for the remaining troops; brethren must stay within hearing range so

⁸²⁶ FISCHER (trans.) 2010: 3522-3534.

⁸²⁷ STERNS (trans.) 1969:314.

that they can hear cries, orders, and the bell ringing, and must also stay within reach; brethren cannot visit lay quarters or dwellings that are not close to their location, in order to prevent fatigue⁸²⁸. According to paragraph 62, *How the brethren shall await the orders of their superior*, the brethren cannot put on or remove their armour without permission, neither climb to the saddles; when riding in battle array, the squires ride in front of the brethren or near them “(...) with their chargers (...)”; when the brethren are on their chargers, they cannot, at any instance, turn their horses around without an order⁸²⁹. Turning may imply combat or flight; nevertheless, as has been mentioned, it is a manoeuvre that requires space. These measures all aimed at riding in ‘orderly fashion’, as the *LRC* has put it, and in addition to this, paragraph 49, *How the brethren shall behave when they ride in battle array*, can be mentioned: it states that if two or more brethren need to confer with each other while in battle array or in line, they are permitted to gather briefly, though they must return to their original places as soon as possible⁸³⁰.

However, the *Book of the Order* does not tell where the knights’ allies and auxiliaries should place themselves while camping and on the march. But through this episode from the *CLP*, it seems likely that the native auxiliaries set themselves apart from the knights’ camp, though the general perimeter must have been shared:

“In the year of our Lord 1292 Brother Meinhard, who always made strenuous efforts to protect Christendom and to subdue and destroy the devil’s men, assembled a large army of brothers and Prussians and went with them to Lithuania. When he and the army arrived at the border a Prussian covertly approached [Heinrich] Zuckschwert, took him to one side and said, ‘Lord, listen carefully: you and your brothers have unquestionably been betrayed, because when you reach the goal of this campaign you will find the Lithuanians assembled in force. But you should also be aware that if you turn back you will be killed by the Prussians, because they are now united in rebellion.’ Brother Heinrich said, ‘Since you know these things, advise us on how to escape.’ He replied, ‘Stop the campaign here, if you want my advice, and return home. On the way take care to carry weapons day and night and be ready to use them. The disloyal Prussians will see this and abandon their plans to attack you.’ After this brother Heinrich went at once to inform the master, and on the advice of the brothers he sent out spies. When he discovered that the situation was as the informant had described and

⁸²⁸ STERNS (trans.) 1969:315.

⁸²⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:318.

⁸³⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:312.

that the Prussians were preparing to rebel, he called for them to return home. They were instructed to carry their weapons; at the same time the master also secretly had those who had been most active in fomenting the rebellion taken aside and put under the constant watch of the brothers, so that they were unable to incite the rebellion and could not escape. The brothers kept them close and watched them day and night, making sure they never left the camp. When the ordinary people saw their leaders staying close to the brothers at meal times, while drinking, travelling or resting, day and night, they became afraid that their plans were known, that they had been betrayed, and the leaders had confessed their intentions. They began grumbling amongst themselves, but they could not carry out their evil intentions because they had no leadership. So by the grace of God the brothers were able to reach home unharmed.⁸³¹

According to Monteiro, some defend that the military orders' Rules held a symbolic value, and not so much a practical one, given that a number of norms would be impossible to enforce – in the case of the Templars in the Holy Land, due to the constant threat of war⁸³². I believe the same can be applied to the Teutonic Order in the Baltic, given the type of terrain, climate, peoples, and the knights' own fallible human nature – even so, there must have been written rules that were put to practice, or at least adapted to real life.

⁸³¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4674-4685.

⁸³² MONTEIRO 2011:15. The *Book of the Order* (and later additions by Great Masters) also provides a penal code. According to Sterns, the 13th century penal code was not very severe, but was “(...) certainly the best systematized of all the penal codes of the military orders in the Holy Land (...)” (STERNs (trans.) 1969:184). The same researcher has studied the Teutonic penal code, with later additions included, and has expressed doubt as to how discipline was enforced in the Baltic region, given that the Order needed all manpower available (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2847563?read-now=1&refreqid=excelsior%3A25d5353ebf371b5c0fe9da693cd2b9e6&seq=1> [6/1/21]).

4. Out in the Field

As stated by Forey, it is hard to understand how the military orders functioned in the field since most of the information comes from chronicles, and so must be treated carefully; he also sustains that the military orders rarely provide information about their numbers, that there is no distinction between brethren and secular troops when they fight together, and that rarely there is indication as to whether or not all manpower at their disposal was used (the size of the force should be proportional to the type of operation), though “(...) it is clear that the numbers of brethren who could give field service on the frontiers of western Christendom were relatively small, even by medieval standards, and that in the field – as in the garrisoning of castles – there was a heavy reliance on auxiliary troops.”⁸³³. Teutonic chronicles could be more explicit, yet they still provide manageable information – the *LRC* is more revealing than the *CLP*, but both chronicles make it clear that the knights operated in accordance to their context:

“(...) techniques of warfare were limited by natural obstacles which made large-scale campaigning and annexation virtually impossible. All over the North, it was accepted that there were two kinds of campaign. One was the summer raid, which went out either before or after the harvest, usually within the periods May-June and August-September. Since land communications were at their worst in March-April and October-November, with melting snow and autumn rains, it was essential not to exceed these limits, and the preferred method of fighting a summer campaign was always by the sea, when this was feasible. Winter campaigns usually went overland, taking advantage of frozen bogs and rivers, and went out and back either before or after the Christmas or Midwinter fest; cold spells and shortage of foodstuffs usually made them either small or short affairs.”⁸³⁴.

Thus, the weather imposed different types of operations. Winter campaigns⁸³⁵ had to be quick actions, consisting of 200-2000 men, carrying rations and fodder on their saddles, with the purpose of looting, destroying, and depopulating a certain area as fast as possible;

⁸³³ FOREY 1992:77. It is worth recalling footnote 710 from page 150, regarding the episode of a knight who had to carry the severed head of his commander into Lithuania.

⁸³⁴ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:73-74.

⁸³⁵ In the Middle East warfare took place between late March and mid-November, and though there were winter campaigns, these were usually avoided (LOCK 2006:349).

when enemy territory was reached, basic facilities⁸³⁶ to store provisions and loot were set up, then the forces split and spread to make as much damage as possible without building fortifications or stay long enough to risk a counter-attack; after each day of campaign the attackers returned to camp – where a stronger detachment had been left – to spend the night, then moved on the next day on a zigzag pattern, or going straight ahead, or even turning back to attack an already destroyed district; sometimes, smaller forces were sent as bait to lure the enemy into ambushes; a successful campaign had to be unannounced and had to return to safe territory before the enemy mobilized or the weather changed: “Hermann of Wartberg records one such success in 1378: the Livonians went into Lithuania in February, stayed there for nine *suwalky* (overnight camps) and came back with 531 head of cattle and 723 horses.”⁸³⁷.

Teutonic knights mostly acted through raids (‘*Stossreisen*’/‘*Ruckreisen*’), though there were weeks-long campaigns: in the winter, hay and oats could be transported in pack-horses or sledges, whereas in the summer stages had to be planned in order to allow the horses to graze, with fodder being transported on pack-horses or in carts drawn by two Sweiks, if necessary; provisions could also be found along the way in favourable conditions, or stored in stashes throughout the intended route⁸³⁸. Summer campaigns were normally bigger: the Landmasters mobilised all resources for a ‘*hervart*’ (offensive expedition), whereas the Lithuanian grand prince mobilized a ‘*karias*’ – a large army of boyars, castellans, and their levies; these campaigns intended to secure new territory by destroying an enemy fortification or building a fortification in enemy territory, yet these campaigns still involved destruction, plundering, and harassment, and were sometimes preceded by smaller expeditions with the intention to prepare and impoverish the area nearby the target: “(...) when von Kniprode

⁸³⁶ Christiansen calls them ‘cabins’ but given that tents – *gribellure* – are mentioned in the Statutes, maybe it was only tents that were set up.

⁸³⁷CHRISTIANSEN 1997:199/URBAN 2003:166. “This instilled such caution among defenders that occasionally very small parties were able to make daring raids deep into the heart of the enemy countryside and escape unharmed.”: both sides used the same tactics, given those were the only thing they could do since both had opted for a strategy of wearing off the enemy by attacking agriculture and trade (*idem, ibidem*:166).

⁸³⁸ EKDAHL 1998. The Order collected descriptions of routes into Samogitia from merchants and raiders, then named the different routes using the names of the men who had gone that way and added useful information such as the number of days for each stage of march (URBAN 2003:166).

went to besiege Kaunas in 1362, he was acting on the reports of a reconnaissance made the previous year.”⁸³⁹.

It should be noted that more detailed information regarding the Order’s logistics pertains to the 14th-15th centuries. In the absence of more details aside from the occasional mention to sledges (in the *LRC*) and to wagons (in the *CLP*), and considering Ekdahl’s earlier statement about how the Order’s utilisation of wagons was seen as an innovation, I believe that, as Christiansen said, provisions were mostly carried on one’s saddle. Baggage in a more Western European style⁸⁴⁰ seems to be a product of the late 14th/early 15th centuries, when the ‘Reisen’ covered themselves with chivalric ceremonial. The more the Order relied in knights from western Europe⁸⁴¹, the more it had to accept the conduct of war they preferred – for example, by 1350 both sides were ransoming prisoners, there were parleys on the battlefield and truces involving the exchange of prisoners⁸⁴².

⁸³⁹ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:200.

⁸⁴⁰ “Valuable insights into the composition of a baggage train are provided in an instruction concerning equipment for the journey to negotiations in Kaunas in Lithuania at Christmas 1407. In addition to the delegation’s 200 war-horses and saddle-horses there were between 450 and 500 draught horses to transport provisions and fodder in carts drawn by two animals. These were certainly Sweiks.” (EKDAHL 1998) – it should be noted that it took 93 years to advance from Ragnit to Kaunas, since the Order and Lithuania were fighting a war of attrition and strengthening themselves by expanding economy far from the warzones (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:201): “The Order’s western and northern commanderies developed extensive networks managing internal provisioning and the export of grain and timber, whilst the eastern border with Lithuania remained a depopulated, militarised zone for much of this time.” (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:18).

⁸⁴¹ The ‘Reisen’ were joined by Frenchmen, Englishmen, Scotsmen, Czechs, Hungarians, Poles, Italians and contained several aspects of religion and secular life mixed together in an appealing way: “(...) as sport, as war, as chivalric display, and as recognition of worthy achievement. The fourteenth century was an age that honoured accomplishments.” (URBAN 2003:174). However, by the end of the 14th century there were imperial and papal prohibitions regarding war between the Order and the by then Christian Lithuania, yet “(...) the Grand Masters continued their military efforts unabated, albeit now without the massive support previously rendered by crusaders from central and western Europe. This shows how closely the Order had identified itself with its military mission and how sensitively it would react to anything that might jeopardize the legitimacy of its existence.” (EKDAHL 2016:264).

⁸⁴² CHRISTIANSEN 1997:203. According to the Order’s chronicles, whoever was captured by the Lithuanians was driven into permanent slavery (‘ewige Sklaverei’), though little is known about Lithuanians and Russians taken into Prussia or Livonia (EKDAHL 2016:265). The Teutonic Order agreed to treaties that included exchanging their captive brethren (JASPERT 2017:14), in addition to the profit that could be made from selling or ransoming high-ranking prisoners (NICOLLE 2007:53).

Besides the summer and winter ‘Reisen’, there were constant smaller raids undertaken by frontier commanders, castellans, and bands of native guerrillas⁸⁴³. As such, despite the restrictions of terrain and weather, the Baltic was an active warzone⁸⁴⁴. Due to the war with Lithuania, that lasted for 140 years (1283-1411/1422), the Order’s way of conducting warfare took a personal twist into mutual devastation and pillaging: while battles were rare, there were siege operations, expeditions to build fortifications (‘Baureisen’) and defensive actions in one’s territory (‘Landswehr’/‘Geschrei’), though the most well-known feature of the Order’s strategy were the winter expeditions⁸⁴⁵. Usually there were two winter ‘Reisen’, one in December and the other in January/February, allowing an interval for Christmas – besides, a seven-hour day did not leave much time for raiding; the knights appear to have campaigned more in the winter than the Lithuanians, though the Lithuanians also made great winter expeditions, like in 1322-23, when in turn the knights decided it was too cold to attack Lithuania and so stayed home⁸⁴⁶.

Ekdahl claims that only when the Order’s heavy cavalry could not perform due to unfavourable external conditions, such as complicated or boggy terrain, was it possible for the native light cavalry and infantry to achieve important victories, and that the Order’s knights (‘Panzerreiter’, as Ekdahl calls them) were able to mostly run down everything in their way, armed with lances, swords, and maces.⁸⁴⁷ The main objective in knightly tactics

⁸⁴³ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:202. For this type of operations, that required high mobility, it is likely that provisions were carried by each man. War “(...) aimed at changing the enemy’s way of thinking – through scaring them by sheer terror and promising them salvation – and at changing the surroundings that formed their thoughts.” (JENSEN 2016:259), but war was also linked to the economy of the ‘Ordensstaat’ (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:18).

⁸⁴⁴ However, while some sites contain destruction horizons, the Order’s conflicts left very few traces: “(...) battlefield assemblages are difficult to locate, the Prussians are known to have cremated their dead and fallen crusaders would have been recovered for burial in consecrated ground.” (PLUSKOWSKI 2013:91) – that is, when they were not cremated, if one keeps in mind the accusations made about the Order’s disposal of bodies.

⁸⁴⁵ EKDAHL 1998.

⁸⁴⁶ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:199.

⁸⁴⁷ EKDAHL 1991:29-30. A massive Teutonic defeat at Durbe in 1260, (the Landmaster von Hornhausen and 150 knights were killed) caused the Lithuanians and Prussians to reject Christianity and declare war on the Order, followed by the Estonians of Ösel; with Lithuanian aid, the Russians captured Ösel – this led the Order in Livonia to fight (“(...) with unremitting savagery to achieve two goals: first, to regain unchallenged military supremacy; second, to deprive their former client-nations of political independence.”; in Prussia, a general revolt following Durbe led to the near collapse of the Prussian branch for “Many [Teutonic] garrisons and colonies were massacred, and the first reinforcement of crusaders was wiped out at Pokarwis.”; by 1264 the

was to break through the enemy line: first, a charge in close formation, then breaking through the enemy line, which could result in the complete destruction of the attacking units undertaking the charge, especially if they found troops from the enemy second line – as such, knights preferred to turn back right after breaking the enemy’s line, while on other occasions attacked the enemy from the rear⁸⁴⁸. Again, cavalry needed space to manoeuvre and the horses had to be in motion (“(...) a stationary horse is a dead horse.”), but since it goes against a horse’s nature to charge onto a solid obstacle, cavalry attacks could be executed through turns before the horse met the target, or the horse could also gallop past the target⁸⁴⁹. This, in the case of infantry formations. Knights were wary of facing well-disciplined infantry, waiting for the charge in thick formation and wielding pole weapons: “Not only fear for their own lives, but for their horses too and all that their loss would entail, sometimes made the knights refrain from pressing a charge against determined and closely-packed foot-soldiers.”⁸⁵⁰. What tended to work better was cavalry against cavalry, for both sides had the same problems of defensibility⁸⁵¹ and manoeuvrability; while a solid formation was crucial, each side still presented a loose enough array⁸⁵² required for the attack; though it is hard to know for certain what followed the first impact, it is likely that cavalry engagements functioned in an initial clash and a second phase of dynamic manoeuvring – though it could also comprise static fighting⁸⁵³.

Order had lost two Landmasters in battle and was reduced to a few of their strongest forts – Königsberg held up because of Livonian reinforcements (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:130-131/134).

⁸⁴⁸ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:103.

⁸⁴⁹ GASSMANN 2018:73. Knocking onto the target was not the desirable option, for while a horse can barrel through movable obstacles, that is a dangerous gamble given that the horse might stumble and fall (or simply get knocked down), dragging its rider along and, depending on how the horse falls, trap the rider with its height or crush him. The immediate danger for a fallen knight would lie in being trampled down by other horses (or his own, if it had to stand up after falling).

⁸⁵⁰ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:46-47. A warhorse’s useful life would be about fifteen years, and though it could still be ridden, it probably would not have been ridden for combat – however, it is necessary to keep in mind injury from accidents, combat, and illness, which would have made the average life of a warhorse about six to seven years: “Therefore, for every 100 cavalry, the remount service needed to graduate about 15 trained replacements every year.” (GASSMANN 2018:73).

⁸⁵¹ The already mentioned area the knight needed to protect: himself and his horse.

⁸⁵² Again, horses cannot be packed too tightly together.

⁸⁵³ GASSMANN:165/GASSMANN 2018:74. “Most medieval portrayals of cavalry charges depict the lines being broken through or the moments before the clash. Often, the lines of the charge are head to croup. This however stands in stark contrast to later cavalry manuals and practices, which by necessity leave a substantial gap between lines.” (GASSMANN:166) – this must be linked to manoeuvrability and the nature of warhorses:

With the progression of the charge, at the last minute the lances were couched, and to ensure that the weight of the lance and the force of impact would not unbalance the knights, the tip of the lance was held to the left of the horse's head: to take aim, the knight steered the horse or twisted his body in the saddle - if the target was hit, the lance could break or be whipped out of the knight's grasp due to the force of impact⁸⁵⁴. Successive charges, in the right timing, were technically difficult, for a charge usually ended up in a *mêlée*; a charge backwards was also not an easy technic, for it relied on the success of the first charge, on maintaining cohesion and regrouping, and in physical and psychological capacity to perform a new charge⁸⁵⁵.

Cavalry also had more options besides a break-through, as has been mentioned above: turn in front of a target, or gallop past the target. Performing a turn in front of a target was challenging in two ways: if done with speed, horse and rider must be prepared and perform deliberately and on the correct lead⁸⁵⁶, otherwise the rider, or horse and rider, will fall; on the battlefield, horse and knight were part of a larger unit, which meant that horses would bump into each other if executing a turn in tight formation and at the same time: "This manoeuvre can come in two forms – either a complete, 180° *volte-face*, or a 90° wheel to the right or left; in the case of the wheel, the entire file would need to pass in front of the enemy formation, exposing it to missile attack."⁸⁵⁷ On the other hand, passing the target required it to be arranged loosely, like a foot unit on the run or attacked from a flank, or another mounted unit; the attacking cavalry unit had to maintain a formation tight enough to look like a formation, that is, to allow the knights to protect and support each other, and to dissuade attackers – yet, it also had to be flexible enough for the knights to move and use their weapons: "Once (...) among their victims, the faster and elevated cavalry, fighting with lance

gaps between horses (the minimum is enough room for a horse between lined horses) prevent disorder, for the horse following can step on the horse ahead of it, or bite it, or try to shove past it to be first; in retaliation, the horse on the front can kick, or stop and attempt to kick/turn around to engage the other horse. Tails must have been trimmed or tied up for safety.

⁸⁵⁴ DAVIES 1989:19/21.

⁸⁵⁵ MONTEIRO 2011:39.

⁸⁵⁶ The hand (left or right) that advances forward to a greater extent.

⁸⁵⁷ GASSMANN 2018:73-74. Usually, horses were turned to the right, given that the shield was on the left and thus provided protection on that side. In addition, since horses naturally tend to turn to the left when spooked, it is common practice to get them used to turn to the right to prevent accidents when they are led by hand.

and sword, had the advantage.”⁸⁵⁸ On horseback, a lance could be used in four different ways: thrown like a javelin, thrust downwards, thrust upwards to lift an opponent off the horse, or held couched while charging at the target⁸⁵⁹. Besides lance and sword, cavalry could also use crossbows (and later pistols) or javelins to create openings, or to cause undisciplined counter-attacks: the manoeuvre would be performed by riding up to the infantry, throw the javelin, ride back to pick up another javelin or switch to the lance, and ride against the enemy again in formation – the sequence is described in the *Carmen de bello Saxonico* (1075/76): “The lively knights canter⁸⁶⁰ forward from the king’s host/Rejoicing and arcing the necks of their horses⁸⁶¹/Taking turns to advance and fall back/And double skilfully in fast mounted turns/And with their desire for fighting they provoke battles.”⁸⁶².

But cavalry did more than charge against a target. Offensive cavalry action consisted of acting in small independent units to take the enemy by surprise and gain access into a fortification; if access was not gained, then cavalry was to plunder until the enemy retaliated to fight on the attacker’s grounds, or in case of refusing to fight, eventually surrender (unless raiding proved to no longer be profitable, thus forcing the attackers to leave)⁸⁶³. Regarding defence, attacking forces could raid from a defensive position, or retreat into a defensive

⁸⁵⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:74.

⁸⁵⁹ DAVIES 1989:15.

⁸⁶⁰ The canter (three-beat gait) is a slower, controlled gallop (four-beat gait) in which the horse is both collected and engaged. If asked to increase the length of the stride, the horse naturally transitions to the gallop; if asked to reduce, a trained horse falls back into canter.

⁸⁶¹ In theory, the most obvious sign of collection is an arched neck. In practice, it takes much more from the horse’s muscles.

⁸⁶² GASSMANN 2018:75. Art depicts knights holding the reins (single or double) with mail mittens, gauntlets or gloveless: reins are shown passing under the little finger, instead of between the ring finger and the little finger. Nowadays, when riding with a double rein or a running/draw rein, the snaffle rein can pass between the ring finger and the little finger, while the curb bit rein or running/draw rein passes under the little finger; alternatively, the bit rein can pass between the middle and ring fingers, while the curb bit rein or a running/draw rein passes between the ring finger and the little finger, thus leaving the little finger free to eventually slip into the loop as well and aid the ring finger. This said, the reins (the horse) are actually held between the thumb and the index finger, while the other fingers work the reins in order to relax the horse and round it. Thus, the way that medieval knights are depicted holding the reins would not, in theory, hinder the horse’s manoeuvrability. I inquired my riding instructor about the subject, considering that warhorses could also wear snaffles, and was told that, in principle, it did not affect a horse’s performance. But knights would not always be able to work their fingers, and certainly the sensibility among mail mittens, gauntlets, and leather gloves varies – as well as the ease to articulate the fingers.

⁸⁶³ GASSMANN:161-162.

position; both sides could raid each other to make the other yield first⁸⁶⁴ – such was the case in the Baltic. Raids into pagan territory were frequent and aimed at developing the Order’s economy through the capture of cattle, booty, and slaves in order to weaken the enemy – but raids were also performed by the natives, with the same objective; in addition, plunder was also needed for the logistics of expeditions⁸⁶⁵.

Finally, cavalry could engage in field battles⁸⁶⁶, yet options were not limited to cavalry charges, for a combination with infantry, archers or crossbowmen could be used – the trick lied in acting accordingly to the available manpower, terrain, weather, weaponry and the men’s conditions⁸⁶⁷, as well as the horses’. In the Baltic, the setting was not good for fully armoured cavalry tactics⁸⁶⁸; hence, in order to avoid focusing solely in the better-known battle of Tannenberg, I propose to examine operations from Prussia and Livonia, described in the Order’s chronicles. Given the limitations of size for the current work, not all episodes from the *LRC* and from the *CLP* were used. My criteria for choosing examples from the chronicles falls on the mention and description of cavalry action; given the *CLP*’s less explicit nature, I left out episodes that did not even mention the verb ‘to ride’. In order to show the narrative contrasts between the chronicles, I opted to mix the episodes.

The chosen episodes can be found at *Addendum, Pt. III, Chosen Episodes:354*, and are organised according to the type of operation undertaken by the Teutonic cavalry: raids and expeditions (1-10); intercepting enemy raids (11-14); confronting/chasing after enemies (15-17); an instance of Teutonic cavalry being attacked after a raid (18); and deployment against castles/sieges (19-22).

⁸⁶⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:162.

⁸⁶⁵ JENSEN 2016:260.

⁸⁶⁶ The focus of medieval armies was siege warfare to castles and towns, for these were vital to the structure of a land (FRANCE 2016:72). Furthermore, the shortage of manpower conditioned strategic concepts and tactics – in fact, material of all sorts (weapons, horses, raw material) were in shortage; thus, pitched battles were avoided for their cost – for instance, “Knights, who were liable for military service between the ages of fifteen and sixty, spent their whole lives perfecting themselves as warriors, and any losses were difficult to replace in terms of lost skill.”(LOCK 2006:348), not to mention again what the loss of horses entailed. Besides, pitched battles were also rare due to involving exposure to danger for both sides and being subject to chance, plus sieges usually accompanied crusading campaigns; mounted raids could be conducted on the initiative of individual lords or commanders of military orders (LOCK 2006:348).

⁸⁶⁷ MONTEIRO 2011:9-10.

⁸⁶⁸ NICOLLE 2007:50.

1 – The *CLP* describes a campaign [1233 or 1234]⁸⁶⁹ undertaken by the Teutonic forces⁸⁷⁰. Favourable weather conditions permitted campaigning, but these could not be expected to last for more than two months⁸⁷¹: accordingly, this event was a winter campaign – a raid (‘stormed through the area’) that included the capture of natives, performed by Teutonic knights and Crusaders. Native auxiliaries are not mentioned. The narration makes it look like that by the river Sorge, the Christians found an assembly of Prussian cavalry to counter-attack them (‘powerful Prussian army which was riding to attack the Christians’), yet this cavalry force retreated, seemingly without a clash of cavalry since it is indicated that the Christians were approaching – it has been stated that the native light cavalry avoided frontal clashes with the Order’s heavy cavalry, thus it is possible to assume the heavy cavalry had enough space to form tightly. The Prussians retreated – presumably through forest, judging by how the Polish duke Swantopelk ‘set up road-blocks on the paths through the undergrowth’ to prevent the Prussians from escaping. It is worth noting that Swantopelk’s alliance with the Order is from an earlier moment, hence the chronicler’s remark about his familiarity with the Prussians.

It is not clear how the ambush took place, but it seems likely that the Prussians were caught in a more confined space. After the initial charge it is not mentioned whether fighting was on foot or on horseback. Due to the nature of the operation – a winter raid, during which no fodder could be found along the way and as such had to be transported – and given that the knights eventually confronted the Prussians in a confined space, it is possible that only pack- and warhorses were in the contingent. Furthermore, this was already a large force, for there were Crusaders among the Teutonic troops. The effectiveness of raids depended on overcoming problems of transportation, that could not be addressed like in Western Europe by a convoy of vehicles, supplies, and pack-animals⁸⁷². As has been stated, it was seen as an innovation when provisions were taken into Lithuania by wagons - thus, it is my opinion that, for the sake of swiftness to achieve success, knights rode their warhorses for these operations.

⁸⁶⁹ The specific date is unclear and the surrounding episodes provide no sure dating.

⁸⁷⁰ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:1796-1807. Vide Addendum, Pt. III, Chosen Episodes 1 – *CLP*:354.

⁸⁷¹ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:198.

⁸⁷² Idem, *ibidem*:75.

There does not seem to have been infantry or crossbowmen/archers supporting the Order's and the Crusaders' heavy cavalry; in addition, the aid of the allied native light cavalry is speculative.

2 – Also from the *CLP* is a raid from 1291⁸⁷³. Even though Heinrich was the commander at Balga, he had men from Ragnit with him – still, it looks like Heinrich was overall in charge of the expedition, judging by how the commander of Ragnit was not mentioned and it was Heinrich allowing the banner of Ragnit to ride up to the castle. The chronicler provides numbers for the Teutonic force, '1,500 horsemen and 20 brothers', which means the horsemen could be either native auxiliaries and/or vassals. The operation seems to fit the category of attacks undertaken by more enterprising commanders, and since men from another garrison were present, it seems likely to be a cooperation between the two castles. The Teutonic forces went to ambush a Lithuanian fortress, having tried to lure the garrison out by appearing to be a small force, since only the banner of Ragnit was allowed to ride up to the fortress – it is worth remembering that banners indicated tactical units of ten to 50 knights.

Goading enemies in fortresses into a fight was a type of operation well suited for small cavalry forces, given their mobility to harass and retreat⁸⁷⁴. The Lithuanians took the bait, yet the operation failed because the remaining Teutonic force left their hidden position too soon, which led the Lithuanians to retreat into the castle. The chronicler then reports that, upon setting camp in a safe location, Heinrich followed the standard procedure of taking counsel with his brethren: "Therefore, it is very fitting (...) for the commanders who are under [the Master], that they gladly and diligently seek counsel and patiently follow good counsel (...)"⁸⁷⁵, which led to the decision of raiding around Aukaimis, plundering and capturing prisoners⁸⁷⁶. Given that the Lithuanian horsemen had gone to the Order's original

⁸⁷³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4652-4662. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 2 – *CLP*:355.

⁸⁷⁴ GASSMANN:160.

⁸⁷⁵ Customs, paragraph 8, *How the master and the commanders shall follow good counsel*. (STERNS (trans.) 1969:289-290).

⁸⁷⁶ Captives were not always taken when there was no time, or when there were other complications that hindered the capture of prisoners of war; furthermore, if there were difficulties on the journey back, such as deep snow in the winter, the captives – loaded on sledges – were ran through with a sword, in the sources as 'durch das Schwert laufen'; most times it was enough to kill only the males and take the women and children, since males were killed to avoid insurgencies during captivity (EKDAHL 2016:265-266).

target, the Teutonic troops' departure was followed by Lithuanian footsoldiers that intended to block their enemies' route through the forest. The Teutonic forces somehow broke through the barricades – what these were, the chronicler does not tell, nor whether the captives were executed or not. The Teutonic forces then encountered the Lithuanians in an open area of heath and successfully dissuaded the enemy from continuing to pursue them.

Given that the Teutonic force consisted of brethren and horsemen, and considering the speed of the events, it is unlikely that there were footsoldiers with them. It is unclear how the fighting occurred in the heath, but since the chronicler points that it was 'an open area of heath', it seems reasonable that the cavalry formed and attacked the Lithuanians on foot. The events reported are fast: it should be noted that the region of Aukaimis was devoid of horsemen, for they had rode off to Junigeda 'the day before' the Teutonic raid, in order to respond to the assault on the fortress – thus, the Teutonic forces seem to have been one step ahead of the Lithuanians by a day, which required high mobility; in addition, the Teutonic force moved through the forest unnoticed by the Lithuanian horsemen from Aukaimis. For these reasons, I believe the knights only had their warhorses with them.

3 – A more unfortunate encounter can be found in the *LRC*⁸⁷⁷. As has been mentioned previously, the Baltic area lacked suitable communication routes. The Christian army was made up of Germans (Crusaders), brethren, and native auxiliaries, though numbers are only provided for casualties: 'ten brothers' and an unspecified number of 'other daring warriors' that probably encompassed the initial three dead Germans. The Livonian Master was in command of the raid, and on the way back to Livonia he rode ahead with a group of hand-picked men ('I will take such men as I need')⁸⁷⁸ to improve the road at crossings and bridges. This remark, plus the lack of mentions of snow, might point to the raid having taken place in another season other than the winter.

What kind of improving work the Master's group would undertake is not revealed – however, given how the knights were caught in ambushes through barricades, this work could have simply been clearing the path back to Livonia. Who the Livonian Master picked is also

⁸⁷⁷ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:91-92. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 3 – *LRC*:355.

⁸⁷⁸ Once again, taking counsel – the dialogue could be educational.

not revealed⁸⁷⁹. Before leaving, Master Conrad left instructions in case the Semgallians attacked – namely, that the remaining forces should assume a defensive position and blow the horn, which is in accordance with the usage of sound signals discussed earlier. Given that both the Master and the army ride, cavalry was undoubtedly present, yet it is unclear if there were footsoldiers, perhaps some the natives auxiliaries.

The distance between the Master's group and the remaining troops is also unspecified, but since it is said that 'he heard the Semgallians coming angrily through the forest' after crossing a meadow, the distance between the two groups could not have been too large. It also seems that the Semgallians were already approaching, for they appeared only after the Master and his group crossed a meadow before emerging from the woods and separate the two groups – the Master's group seems to not have been attacked, which I am tempted to interpret as, while the distance between the two groups was not too large, perhaps it was sufficient for the Master to be out of sight. The supreme commander would have been an enticing target and he should have had the standard with him. The Master's group is told to have been a squadron (*conroi*), thus comprising twelve to 24 knights that would have been certainly outnumbered by the Semgallians barring the way – perhaps the Master did not expect to be followed by a large force, or simply lacked the foresight to take more men with him in order to be able to successfully aid the remaining of his troops if needed. As the Land Master, and thus an important figure to the Livonian branch, Conrad was advised to retreat to Mitau, presumably escorted by the men with him⁸⁸⁰.

The remaining troops were still crossing the forest when the Semgallians attacked, and the indication that 'many of their horses were slain' points to mounted troops attacked by infantry or shooters and who were unable to manoeuvre⁸⁸¹ – correspondingly, since 'many

⁸⁷⁹ Since the raiding force comprised Germans, maybe the Master also took squires or servants – or even sergeants – with him.

⁸⁸⁰ In one episode from the *CLP*, a lament is made about the quality lost in a battle where the Prussian Master was killed: vide Addendum, Others – *CLP2*:385. It provides a good example as to why the supreme commander was not supposed to be in the front line. Yet, the Order's chronicles do report Land Masters fighting among their men. "It is difficult to determine how far ahead these leaders rode. The fact that they frequently fought at the head of their units explains why the poets of the epics allowed their descriptions of battles to end with the ultimate struggle between the two supreme commanders (...)" (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:106).

⁸⁸¹ "In a frontal assault, the horseman is obliged to expose the horse's neck and head to enemy attack, without the corresponding reach to defend them. This is usually equalized by giving the horseman a lance, which extends

of their horses were slain, and so they dismounted and fought against their attackers on foot' compels me to interpret that moment as the remaining mounted troops dismounting from their horses to fight on equal footing. The Semgallians had numeric superiority, though numbers are not given, and that caused the native auxiliaries to retreat through the forest. The Teutonic knights still held a moment longer, together with the Germans, who had already three losses. In the end, both Teutonic knights and Germans 'had to retreat into the forest', having eventually made it to Mitau. Whether the Christian banners fell or if the retreat was called, it is not specified.

It is unclear if there was light cavalry, footsoldiers, or shooters among the Teutonic forces. I sustain that, again, the knights and the Germans were riding their warhorses: to begin in, they were once more in a confined space, and as such, a reduced number of horses would permit better mobility; secondly, by being caught in an ambush, the knights would not have had the time to change mounts⁸⁸²: girths would need to be adjusted (and the more excited the horse is, which would be the case of a warhorse sensing action, the harder it is to swiftly adjust a girth) and sudden, demanding action on a horse that would have been following while led by hand could strain and damage the horse's joints, resulting in lameness and thus rendering the animal useless.

4 – More fortunate circumstances can be found in the *CLP*⁸⁸³, in an episode featuring Ludwig, this time as the commander of Ragnit. He conducted a series of operations against the Lithuanians that consisted of raids undertaken by a small, bait troop, which then lured the Lithuanian defenders into an ambush, since Ludwig kept himself and the bulk of his troops hidden. Given that ambushes were common⁸⁸⁴ in the Baltic, it is likely that Ludwig's success

his reach, and forces his opponent to address the threat before he is capable of attacking the horse. Lances however often broke in combat or could be discarded in order to fight at closer quarters, leaving them unavailable for the next action. Infantry could also be armed with spears or lances, bringing both parties to parity." (GASSMANN:163-164).

⁸⁸² Nor to equip themselves. The looming threat of ambushes led the knights to ride with their armours on (NICOLLE 2007:50).

⁸⁸³ FISCHER (trans) 2010:4782-4794. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 4 – *CLP*:356. The date for these events is unclear. Ludwig became a commander by the end of 1294/early 1295 and commanded Ragnit for six years. The narration does not specify if these events occurred at the beginning or throughout his entire career.

⁸⁸⁴ For more examples vide Addendum, Others – Ambushes:388.

was related to the quantity of operations he launched during his six years as commander⁸⁸⁵ – judging by the episodes he stars, he must have been quite the character. These raids were performed on horseback, given that to ‘rampage across the region, destroying and killing and then moving on’, required high mobility. The pursuits were also performed on horseback, considering that the strategy used in Pograuden was also employed in Vaikiai, and as such it is likely that the confrontation at the ambush site would result in cavalry fighting cavalry.

These raids aimed at submitting the area⁸⁸⁶: in spite of the establishment of the ‘Ordensstaat’, the combination of raiding and conquering undertaken by Canute and William in England was not doable in the North, given that large forces would not survive the entire winter in hostile territory; furthermore, looting and returning home was preferable to lordship and conquering of land⁸⁸⁷. Given that Ludwig ‘persecuted them so much’, it seems plausible that raids were frequently undertaken throughout the year, which fits what has already been mentioned regarding winter/summer campaigns and the enterprises of commanders.

This episode features once again an ambush, and, seemingly, simulated retreat. While confrontation probably opposed only cavalry forces, it is unclear how fighting occurred – namely if, given the surroundings (the ambushes must have happened in forests) the knights and Lithuanian horsemen fought on foot, or if fighting happened on horseback, but in close-quarters⁸⁸⁸. Besides the knights from Ragnit, it is not possible to know if auxiliary natives were present as well. For this kind of operation, relying on speed yet aiming at combat, I sustain that the knights would be riding only their warhorses, for the logistics required to bring a large number of horses would hinder mobility and hamper the establishment of a place of ambush because it would have been necessary to consider a secluded place to keep the spare horses and prevent detection by the enemy.

⁸⁸⁵ Unfortunately, Ludwig’s fate after becoming commander is not revealed.

⁸⁸⁶ Displacing civil populations was part of the strategy on both sides, thus making it more likely that those who could not defend themselves would die (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:202).

⁸⁸⁷ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:75.

⁸⁸⁸ That is to say, knights wearing armour (for protection) and riding warhorses (for an eminent conflict), but not equipped with lances. “The general operational doctrine seems to be one that could be described as direct action special warfare. (...) the methods employed suit neither heavy nor light cavalry, much more a mix of the above; the problem is further compounded by the fact that the unit composition meant that specialists were grouped together, instead of being separated into divisions.” (GASSMAN:162).

5 – In another instance from the *CLP*⁸⁸⁹ the Teutonic troops set out once again against their pagan neighbours. The chronicler refers to the mounted troops only as ‘horsemen’, which, allied to no reference to ‘the brothers’⁸⁹⁰, might indicate these horsemen were either native auxiliaries, Withinge, or maybe even German vassals. Infantry was taken as well, probably staying with whoever accompanied the Landmaster, while the horsemen went a separate way, under the Landmaster’s command, to raid. It is not told what the infantry did, but they were likely brought as support: given that eighteen Sudovian lords were killed, maybe the Landmaster expected retaliation. As raids usually went, prisoners were captured. Teutonic inventories list chains under warfare equipment, for prisoners of war: “Such a chain existed in 1440 for twenty-three captives in the fortress of Preussisch-Holland: Item eyne kethe czu gefangenen czu 23 mannen”⁸⁹¹.

Though the description of this episode is vague, it mentions infantry allied to mounted cavalry. For mobility, considering that the detachment comprised infantry⁸⁹², the horsemen must have ridden horses habituated to that kind of operation while the Landmaster must have ridden his warhorse.

6 – As for another episode from the *LRC*, from 1290⁸⁹³, there is a mention to squires and sergeants accompanying the Teutonic knights, as well as auxiliary Kurs. Manpower was set at 350 Kurs and ‘twelve brothers’, plus an unspecified number of squires and sergeants.

⁸⁸⁹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4126. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 5 – *CLP*:356. Though a precise date is difficult to ascertain, given that it happens during Konrand von Tierberg’s rule, it is from the 13th century.

⁸⁹⁰ Though at least a sergeant would certainly accompany the Landmaster. If it were a textbook retinue, I think the chronicler would mention brother knights.

⁸⁹¹ EKDAHL 2016:267. Ekdahl defends that the captives were enslaved in Prussia to work in cities, castles, estates, and farmstead of the Order and of nobility, and especially Lithuanian prisoners (males included) were settled in Prussia in order to fill the gaps in the native population, most likely after the mid-14th century, given that the number of settlers from the West declined due to a series of issues, like the plague (idem, *ibidem*:266).

⁸⁹² Since that in an episode from the *LRC* it is mentioned that the men who had no mounts went on foot alongside those on horseback, it should be considered that not all infantrymen could be transported on horseback. In addition, natives were more likely to move through the forest on foot to be able to navigate more difficult grounds: “Small companies of Old-Prussian irregulars, called *latrunculin* or *strutere*, had been allowed to terrorize the wilderness and adjacent lands since the 1260s, and, since they acted as guides and auxiliaries to the Order’s *reysen*, their dirty deeds were recorded with approval. (...) Since the *strutere* knew all the secret paths, and often went on foot, creeping up to villages through the forest, no settled community was safe from them.” (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:202-203).

⁸⁹³ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:139-140. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 6 – *LRC*:357.

The expedition was led by Helmicus, who seems to have been the commander at Goldingen – and an entrepreneur. On the march, the Teutonic force was arranged under banners ‘in an orderly fashion’ and travelled through swamps and forests. Already in enemy territory, sergeants were sent to ‘scout the roads and spy out on the region the Brothers planned to attack’. In the meantime, the Lithuanians found out about the approaching threat and set out to confront the knights – those with ‘the best mounts’ and infantry, though ‘the Lithuanians who were riding dismounted from their horses, as was their custom’.

The two forces advanced on each other: a foot charge was undertaken by the more experienced Teutonic knights and sergeants, but it is unclear if mounted troops took part in the fight, that occurred in the forest. The native auxiliaries did not flee. Eventually, the Lithuanians retreated through the forest, some choosing to escape on foot rather than on horseback, judging by how ‘many deemed themselves lucky if they managed to get away from there on foot’ and how the knights captured 160 horses. By the time the Lithuanians retreated it was night – as such, the encounter occurred at the end of the day. Since it was dark and the forest was deep, the knights gave up pursuing the Lithuanians and proceeded to loot. After this encounter, the Teutonic forces left Lithuania, ‘taking little rest’ probably to prevent being chased down, until they reached the castle at Amboten. It does not look like the knights ever got to raid, instead returned with booty after meeting the Lithuanian force.

There was no mention to shooters and it is unclear if there was infantry and light cavalry amidst the Order’s ranks. The chronicler also does not tell if those who were not so experienced in swordplay stayed on horseback. To reach Lithuania, the Teutonic forces ‘encountered many bad paths where neither bridge nor crossing had ever been made’, which must have made progression difficult. Slow progress was problematic if campaigning was fought a long way up- or downriver, and due to the weather, speed was essential: as such, a mounted expedition guided by experienced guides (‘leitzlute’) was the only effective way of entering enemy territory when there were tracks available – if there was none, the army had to go on foot⁸⁹⁴. Again, for mobility and to prevent an even slower march, it seems reasonable that the knights rode their warhorses. Furthermore, given that the Lithuanians went after

⁸⁹⁴ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:197.

them, being ready to fight as soon as contact was made would require the knights to ride their warhorses already.

7 – As for another instance in the *CLP*, in 1261⁸⁹⁵, the Teutonic knights were accompanied by German Crusaders. Numbers are not provided. The host went to raid in Natangia, then returned to a plain to pitch camp. There, it was decided that part of the army should go back into Natangia to wreak havoc in otherwise unscathed regions, while the remaining of the army stayed at the camp. Based on how, later, ‘Lord Reider himself was killed, and with him a large part of the army and all the brothers who were with him’, this remaining force comprised Teutonic knights and Crusaders. It is unclear who was in charge of the overall expedition and of the force that returned into Natangia⁸⁹⁶, as well as who was left in charge of the force that stayed behind, though it is likely that it was von Reider. While the separate force raided, the Natangians gathered and went to Pokarwen to meet the waiting Christian forces. It is hard to discern if the Christians were caught by surprise, since it is only said that the Natangians ‘attacked ferociously’ and that ‘the brothers and the Christians fought back valiantly’.

Even though Schenckel was not a Teutonic knight, his actions led me to choose this episode from the *CLP* because the charge he undertakes is (with the limitations the *CLP* has in regards of martial procedures) the clearest in the entire chronicle. Tactical figures are not mentioned, the position of the standard (or banners) is not given, and it is not said if Schenckel had his own troops (it can be assumed he had, since he is referred to as a ‘Lord’⁸⁹⁷). The way the chronicler puts it, Schenckel seemingly charged alone through the Prussian front line and into the main body of the enemy forces, ‘carrying his spear as knights do’⁸⁹⁸. He is

⁸⁹⁵ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2984-3001. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 7 – *CLP*:357.

⁸⁹⁶ Even though the Order could claim authority over the Baltic campaigns, it seems that crusader leaders, depending on their rank and the size of the forces they brought, could maintain their independence from the Teutonic knights, such as provided by Peter of Dusburg when describing the expedition into Prussia in 1255, where it looks like Ottokar of Bohemia was the commander and advisor of the Order (FOREY 1992:56-57). This campaign can be found at Addendum, Others – *CLP*3:386.

⁸⁹⁷ ‘Herr’ in German, and while it could be an honorific attributed to personalities (such as Walther von der Vogelweide), in this case it clearly has a hierarchic value.

⁸⁹⁸ Here, ‘spear’ probably means ‘lance’, thus Schenckel charged with his lance couched. To hold a lance horizontally and steadily while at the gallop, the lance needed to be held in more than one point: a well-balanced lance was held in one hand and the read was held under the armpit, yet the position was hard on the wrist and could not be held for long, so knights held their lances vertically on the march and at the start of the charge -

told to have ‘killed many on both sides’, probably referring to the separate front line and main body. Then Schenckel seemingly barrelled all the way through the enemy (‘he had charged through them’); afterwards, he turned around and tried to return to the Christian side (‘he was turning back and had reached the middle of the army’). This put him in the middle of the Prussian forces, which resulted in him never making it back to the Christian side (‘this laudable warrior of God was knocked down’). Schenckel’s fate perfectly illustrates why charges were undertaken in a tight formation, and why a lonely knight surrounded by infantry was poorly positioned⁸⁹⁹.

I am assuming the Prussians were on foot because of how they sought to attack the Crusaders in the camp: since the natives avoided cavalry clashes, it seems reasonable to assume they attacked on foot. The movement of forces in this episode is not very clear, but based on how ‘the Barthians on both sides attacked ferociously and many were seriously wounded or killed outright’, it seems that the Prussians somehow enveloped the Christian forces in a pincer movement after Schenckel’s charge. The fighting occurred on the plain where the Christians had pitched camp. Finally, von Reider, several Crusaders and all the remaining Teutonic knights were killed. Some men were taken prisoner while others managed to escape. The chronicler states that the raiding force returned at that occasion and found that, not only ‘the Christian army had conceded defeat’⁹⁰⁰, they were still helpless because they were outnumbered. As such, this force left by ‘secret tracks’, which indicates they made themselves scarce to avoid being chased.

Here, albeit undertaken by a seemingly lonely Crusader, there was a charge breaking through the enemy line. Since footsoldiers among the Christians were not reported, the force was probably composed by horsemen alone. There was no mention to shooters. Because the Crusaders and the Teutonic knights had been out raiding, they would have required mobility,

from the middle of the 12th to the 14th centuries, there was a support for the lance on the saddle bow (DAVIES 1989:19).

⁸⁹⁹ “A cavalry charge usually affects the first three ranks of an infantry body; in a formation eight ranks deep, this is not a large problem, as the cavalry will then start to flounder and the remaining ranks have the advantage. In a force of 20-80, such a deep deployment is nearly impossible.” (GASSMANN:167).

⁹⁰⁰ The standards must have been down. “The flag was not just a useful and practical assembly-point round which the troops re-grouped themselves, but also the symbol of resistance, for the troops fought on as long as the banner was flying.” – accordingly, the Rule of the Templars states that the knights could not leave the battlefield as long as Christian banners stood (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:89).

and as such I am convinced the knights rode their warhorses. In this instance, where the Prussians attacked the Christian camp, having only warhorses (and maybe packhorses and riding horses for squires and servants) would have also prevented a bigger loss of horses, though it is unquestionable a knight would much rather have his riding horse stolen instead of his warhorse. Lastly, the returning raiding force escaped through ‘secret tracks’, thus, they moved through the forest: having only warhorses would have given the knights more mobility and more chances of going unnoticed, in comparison with having a larger number of horses.

8 – Another episode from the *CLP*⁹⁰¹ pertains a winter expedition undertaken in 1304 by two Teutonic garrisons, accompanied by German Crusaders introduced in an earlier moment as count Werner von Hohenberg, lord Adolf von Windhövel (accompanied by his brother and a knight named Dietrich von Eller), and other lords from the Rhineland. The Prussian Master sent two separate forces into Lithuania, one under Konrad von Lichtenhain, the commander at Brandenburg, and the other under Eberhard von Virneburg, commander of Königsberg. Konrad’s force went first and attacked Gardinas by setting ‘the country ablaze’ – the chronicler’s remark about how ‘he did not achieve much’ besides raising alarm and causing the Lithuanian horsemen to chase him and his troops probably indicates that no booty was taken and no significant destruction was caused. On the third day after the attack on Gardinas, Eberhard ‘came riding up at great speed with 2,000 men and launched a surprise attack in Pograuden’, destroying and pillaging. Given the high mobility required for the two operations, only mounted troops must have taken part in it. Considering that this occurred in the winter, and that the Teutonic banner ‘was left unassailed on a hill opposite to Gediminsburg from morning until midday’, it is possible the raid occurred in this time window. After the raiding, some of the Crusaders were knighted – which, as has been mentioned in the first chapter, became part of the crusading experience in the late 14th and early 15th centuries. The fact that men were knighted after the raid and looting of the region of Pograuden suggests this was a more important undertaking. After the men had been knighted and the group was on their way back, they were followed by Lithuanians, that the Teutonic knights probably ambushed (‘tricked’), killing twenty of them.

⁹⁰¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5202-5210. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 8 – *CLP*:358.

These were lightning operations requiring high mobility. As such, I doubt there was infantry involved – the chronicler himself says nothing about it, neither about shooters. No details are given about the composition of the troops, but I assume there was light cavalry mixed with the Teutonic knights’ and Crusaders’ heavy cavalry. Given the high mobility required for the operations, and since the expeditions happened in the winter and, as such, there would be no grazing areas for the horses, it seems logical that the knights had a reduced number of animals with them and went already on their warhorses.

9 – A last example from the *LRC*⁹⁰² reports an expedition into Samogithia, yet numbers for the Christian forces are not provided. The Landmaster was present at the campaign, and so were advocates from unspecified garrisons – though it can be ascertained that the Teutonic knights from Riga were present, considering that the forces began to assemble there and the Landmaster went on the expedition. The force that left Riga comprised Teutonic knights, Crusaders, and native auxiliaries (Estonians, Livs, and Letts); it headed towards Seme-gallia, where Seme-gallian and Kur auxiliaries were called. The joining of these natives, as well as the arrival to the borders of Samogithia, prompted a change from marching order to battle order (‘the advocates regrouped their forces and drew them up for combat’). Banners were given to knights who acted as field commanders⁹⁰³ and ‘the army arrayed itself in many proud formations, as should be done in battle’ – how the forces were deployed, however, goes untold. Guides, who were native Lithuanians, were then assigned to the commanders – the chronicler makes it look like there were just three, introduced by name and qualities⁹⁰⁴. In battle array, the Christian forces entered Samogithia – the remark about

⁹⁰² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:55-56. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 9 – *LRC*:359.

⁹⁰³ It is interesting to notice that only the Landmaster and the advocates are mentioned, while ranks such as marshal and commander are absent.

⁹⁰⁴ Peyper’s remark about the praise of martial values in the *LRC* should be recalled regarding the way the guides are introduced. As has been previously mentioned, the Lithuanians did not convert before the 14th century with Jogaila, while the Samogithians were never subdued by the Order: “The Curonians were subjugated by 1263. The Semigallians were never subdued. Most of their nobles were kidnapped and beheaded; the people were driven from their lands into Lithuania, leaving a marshy waste overlooked by lonely castles. The Selonians continued to inhabit an unfortified forest, debatable between Livonian and Lithuanian raiders. The Samogithians remained unconquerable and aggressive enemies of the Teutonic Order. However, by 1290 there was a line of a dozen forts running from Dunaburg to Memel, and a ‘wilderness’ to the south of it. It was a stabilized frontier which kept the Lithuanians out, and the missionaries in, and committed the Order to a literal enactment of Luke 11.21: ‘When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him...’ “ (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:131).

the Kurs is linked to a previous episode in the chronicle, about a Samogithian raid into Kurland that devastated the land and that the Teutonic knights were helpless to act upon: the current episode is a retaliation for that. Churchmen were present amidst the Christian forces ('monks and friars in the army') and helped to set fires⁹⁰⁵ – their most obvious function, that of performing offices, is not reported⁹⁰⁶. While raiding across Samogithia, there was a division of forces: 'the main army remained well-protected and well-ordered at all points'⁹⁰⁷, most likely in preparation for an eventual Samogithian defence. Considering the disposition used for Lake Peipus, this main army was where the bulk of the Teutonic and Crusader forces were, together with native auxiliaries at the flanks. At the same time, 'ready for battle smaller groups rode here and there plundering', most likely native light cavalry under the command of Teutonic knights, who would have known the land (and the allied natives) better than the Crusaders. While most of the Christian forces made camp for the night (maybe an entrenched position, given how, at daybreak 'the sentries came in'), some groups continued to raid during the night. Considering the deployment of Prussian auxiliaries⁹⁰⁸, and since this expedition followed a Samogithian raid, it is compelling to read the Kurs and Semgallians as the 'heroes' who conducted nocturnal attacks – how these were achieved, in terms of movement and orientation in the dark, is not explained: it is likely there were campfires in the Teutonic camp, which must have signalled the location of the larger army; if each smaller raiding party

⁹⁰⁵ An important element of Baltic warfare, besides slaughter, was setting fire to places, since the "(...) constant burning may also have conveyed some notion of purification of the land – almost a purgatory on earth." (JENSEN 2016:260). But in practical terms, fire is simply very destructive.

⁹⁰⁶ The Order's liturgy, copied from the Templars, was further developed through the 13th century by adopting the religious observances of the Dominicans, which meant the knights received communion seven times a day, something hard to achieve during the short daylight time of winter (NICOLLE 2007:26). In campaign, offices had to be performed within hearing range of everyone in a portable field-altar (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:114). However, mass in the field, as well as communion, are not mentioned in the *LRC* and in the *CLP*, despite the singing of hymns and giving graces to God. In the *CLP*, the difficult juggling of attending religious offices and performing military service is portrayed in the account of the pious knight Albrecht and his finding of a floating holy host: vide Addendum, Others, *CLP*5:387.

⁹⁰⁷ In Palestine, the Orders were placed in the most critical spots: vanguard, rear-guard, but also the centre (AFONSO 2018:353). Since the Crusaders had Templars and Hospitallers in the vanguard or rear-guard of marching columns, the most vulnerable points in moving armies (MONTEIRO 2011:37), it is like Teutonic knights took the same positions with Crusader armies in the Baltic, even because some Crusaders who brought significant manpower commanded the operations in Prussia.

⁹⁰⁸ After the re-subjugation of the Prussians, war became guerrilla raids on the no-man's-land separating the Order from the pagans, performed not by Crusaders but by converted Prussians "(...) specialized in surprise attacks and furtive massacres." (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:135).

carried at least one torch, that would have announced them and given the Samogithians the cue to hide, even if in the nick of time⁹⁰⁹.

The chronicler makes it seem like the attacks stretched throughout the night, and it is unclear if the attacks were on foot or on horseback, but since the ‘ready for battle smaller groups rode here and there’ earlier, men and horses would need to rest during the night: thus, I suggest that there were no nocturnal attacks during the darkest hours of the night, providing men and animals with a chance to rest. There were also attacks to the Teutonic force’s watch posts during the night, but while the location of these watch posts is not provided, they must have stayed at least at hearing range from the camp, considering what has already been told about sound signals. The following morning ‘at daybreak’, the Teutonic force broke camp and continued to plunder and destroy for nine days, for the longer the campaign, the more chances of being caught by bad weather⁹¹⁰ and of being ambushed by the hostile peoples. According to the chronicler, the end of the campaign was signalled by the war-horn, which leads me to suggest that sound commands during the expedition might have been limited to voice commands – according to what has been already stated, it would have made sense for smaller raiding groups, and while (at least on the first day) the ‘main army’ was an unsplit force, it is possible it was not too large a force, relying in quality instead of numbers.

In this instance, it is unclear if there were footsoldiers with the mounted troops, while the presence of mounted troops can be ascertained through how the smaller battle-ready groups ‘rode here and there plundering’ and through the Landmaster’s statement of ‘ride for home’ after the war-horn was blown. The expedition consisted of raids to plunder and destroy, possibly a retaliation. As such, and given the variety of native auxiliaries, it is likely that the Teutonic knights resorted to light cavalry. Again, no shooters are mentioned. Given the size of the Teutonic force and how it headed for an assembly point in friendly territory until the native auxiliaries joined them, the knights rode riding horses before entering Samogithia, having switched for their warhorses there and leaving the riding horses behind when they crossed the border: this would make them ready for combat at any given moment,

⁹⁰⁹ Though the Baltic natives took refuge in hiding places in the forest, Henry of Livonia reports that natives were often caught in their hiding places, or killed or captured when they left them to collect provisions, which can be understood as the forest failing to provide protection (NIELSEN 2011:164-165).

⁹¹⁰ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:75.

and also allow for mobility. It is possible pack-horses followed the Christian force, which in turn makes it more likely for the knights to ride their warhorses already, since mobility would depend on a limited number of horses.

10 – Finally, a more unfortunate raid for the Teutonic knights can be found in the *CLP*⁹¹¹, in 1320. In this episode, Heinrich, the marshal, went on an expedition into Lithuania. The Teutonic force consisted of 40 Teutonic knights and ‘all the horsemen in Sambia’. They followed the Memel upstream to campaign in Medininkai, based on the later reference to the roads the Teutonic force used⁹¹². The dependence on the weather confined large-scale operations to areas along the Memel and Dvina rivers: the territory was familiar, for it was there most fighting took place, and it was safer to raid within reach of boats, castles, and bailey-bridges; warfare aimed at sieges and building castles as “Each side was trying to hold (in the case of the Dvina) or gain (in the case of the Memel) a stretch of river that could be fortified and garrisoned so as to serve as a reliable entry into enemy country beyond the wilderness.” – when bigger operations were launched, the invading force was split into detachments in order to reduce chances of disaster⁹¹³.

While the Teutonic force raided (though the chronicler does not tell if there were separate groups raiding different areas), the Lithuanians assembled to confront the knights, not out in the field, but by lying in ambush to catch the Teutonic force on its way back. The Lithuanians tampered with the roads the knights used by having them ‘blocked with trees and transformed into a thick forest to confuse the Christians as they returned’. As has been mentioned, one of the dangers of the Wilderness was that warriors could get lost and starve to death, or be hunted down. But it does not seem the Teutonic force had the opportunity to get lost. On the return to headquarters, some warriors went ahead with the plunder, but the majority stood by the banners behind the plunder. This disposition is similar to what the Customs state regarding the knights riding after the squires in order to keep an eye on their equipment.

⁹¹¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5636. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 10 – *CLP*:360.

⁹¹² There is an itinerary (*Littauischen Wegeberiche*) that describes the routes between Prussia and Lithuania written between 1384 and 1402 (NICOLLE 2007:47). Nevertheless, the *CLP* reports the Teutonic forces travelling by ship and engaging in combat in the rivers: vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP* – Sailing:350.

⁹¹³ CHRISTIANSEN 1997:199/201.

Thus, I believe it can be assumed most of the Teutonic knights were riding after the plunder, together with the other horsemen, but at least one knight was with whoever was driving the plunder. The distance between the two groups – plunder and warriors – is unclear, but since it would not make sense to raid and then risk losing the profit on the way back, I believe the two were not too far away from each other, and that at least visual contact could be made. Since the Lithuanians waited specifically for ‘the vanguard with the banners’ and let the plunder pass by, the two groups must have been separate and the intended target were the commanders, those who carried banners. As has been stated, the military orders were often placed in the vanguard, and it is likely that, in this situation, the Teutonic knights were positioned there; the chronicler does not say where the Sambian horsemen were.

Once the vanguard was in a narrow point in the wood, ‘In this cramped space the heathens attacked the brothers from all sides (...) in a place where they were unable to defend themselves’. Since the Teutonic force consisted of brothers and horsemen, the men must have been on horseback, which means that, caught in a choke-point, the knights would be unable to manoeuvre. It seems that the group with the plunder did not come to the vanguard’s aid; whether the vanguard with the banners also included the remaining tactical units and these were all encircled by the Lithuanians, or if the vanguard was cut off and the others fled, it is not told. The duration of the fighting, however, is reported to have been lengthy, given that the men were ‘so exhausted from trying to defend themselves and from the weight of their weapons that they were incapable of moving from the spot or defending themselves any more’ – as has been stated, the Order’s equipment did not differ significantly from that of its’ neighbours, especially in the 14th century and regarding the war with Lithuania⁹¹⁴.

The remark could be interpreted as the length of the fight having exhausted the men, and it might imply they were eventually on foot (dismounting on their own free will or forced to, is untold), as such they had the extra effort of sustaining the combined weight of their bodies and their armour; but it could also mean the Teutonic knights were ambushed by

⁹¹⁴ In the second half of the 14th century, the use of armour spread among Lithuanians: the most used were scales, plate, mail, and brigandines, which can be explained by eastern and western influences: “These changes were linked to transformations in Lithuanian tactics and combat methods. While the use of crossbows is mostly interpreted as a change in the defensive aspects, the rise of armour is explained by the increasing importance of cavalry in the grand duke’s army (...)” (BIERMANN 2019:275).

Lithuanians wearing lighter armour, though the chronicler suggests a greater level of organisation that could imply a number of men with equipment equivalent to that of the Order's knights. The mention of 'rested troops' also suggests that the fight dragged on and even the Lithuanians were exhausted, consequently employing reserves. 29 Teutonic knights and the Marshal, as well as other Christians (presumably, Sambian horsemen) were killed, apparently by these fresh Lithuanian troops. What happened to the plunder and to the survivors, is not revealed.

Considering that Heinrich took Teutonic knights and Sambian horsemen with him, it seems reasonable to assume only mounted troops were present and that the Marshal recurred to light cavalry. No mention was made to archers or crossbowmen. For better mobility, the knights would be riding their warhorses already. It is not revealed what kind of plunder was taken, yet it would have undoubtedly slowed down the march, which is another reason as to why the number of horses would have been reduced in the name of mobility. Lastly, the vanguard with the banners was ambushed in a narrow, cramped space where manoeuvring was hampered: it would have been impossible, in an ambush, for a knight to switch horses; besides, in a situation of immediate danger, it would have been safer if the knights were already astride their warhorses, given that the animals, specifically trained for combat, would have a better reaction than that of riding horses – even in a cramped space, horses used to be in close quarters to other horses and agitated people would be less likely to panic, compared to untrained riding horses⁹¹⁵.

11 – The *LRC* reports a battle from 1259⁹¹⁶. Here the Teutonic troops consist of brethren, German crusaders, and Kur auxiliaries. Bernhart von Haren took the banner, and though it is not said he is the commander, in a moment previous to the battle to intercept Samogithian raiders, when the knights from Memel joined those from Goldingen, the chronicle makes it look like Bernhart was the commander at Goldingen⁹¹⁷, and led both the

⁹¹⁵ Horses do not like to feel confined in crowded places (even if the crowd consists of another horse or a person gesticulating). While some ill-tempered horses react by trying to bite or trying to kick to clear up space, others raise their heads (thus becoming against the bit and out of the rider's immediate control) and either shy away, bolt, or prance.

⁹¹⁶ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:62. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 11 – *LRC*:360.

⁹¹⁷ It is difficult to understand if the Bernhart von Haren featuring a later episode and this Bernhart von Haren are the same man, or if they are two different men but related – they are both from Goldingen and both assume

Memel and Goldingen garrisons, plus the Crusaders and the auxiliaries. Before the battle, the chronicler tells that, among the Kurs, those who had nothing to ride on ran along with the remaining forces; in addition, since the Christians charged and later the Samogithians ‘divided their horses’ (plus, there are no mentions of someone staying behind to guard the horses), there was both cavalry and infantry on the battlefield. On a speech before the battle, Bernhart states that the fighting would be in the field of Schoten, that the translators suggest is Skuodas on the Barta⁹¹⁸.

Since the Christians charged and the Samogithians ‘quickly took up arms’, it seems likely that the Samogithians were surprised, though the battle was favourable for them. Whether they were mounted or not, is unclear. Part of the auxiliary troops fled, which contributed to the Christians’ defeat – 33 brethren and an unspecified number of Germans died. After the battle, when scouts saw the Samogithians return into their lands, the chronicler tells that at Goldingen “There were many downcast men there, who were dismayed by the still painful disaster that had happened so recently.” and that “When the cowards fled, the courageous were overwhelmed and had to bathe in blood, but some had been able to fight their way out and return honorably to their castles.”, which explained why their numbers were few and the moral was low⁹¹⁹. Considering that the combined forces of Teutonic garrisons, Crusaders, and auxiliaries were on the Samogithian raiders’ trail, it seems reasonable that they would have wanted to move as fast and as unnoticed as possible, which inclines me to assume the knights went already on their warhorses.

Given the presence of infantry, it is possible that it acted together with the mounted cavalry; in addition, probably the Kurs’ light cavalry was mixed with the Order’s and the Crusader’s heavy cavalry. Again, there was no mention to bowmen or crossbowmen.

leadership roles. If Bernec and Bernhart are the same, but the name appears under different forms, then he seems to have had a stable career from 1244 to 1259.

⁹¹⁸ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:62. Perhaps the proximity to the river would explain the reference to blood falling on the sand.

⁹¹⁹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:63. In the aftermath of this battle, the knights at Goldingen “(...) heard that the heathens were coming with an army, and they had often observed how the pagans cut off and carried away the heads of the Brothers they slew.” (idem, *ibidem*:63). This garrison had little time to recover from a traumatic event and was still dealing with it when more disturbing news came.

12 – Still from the *LRC*, about an encounter from 16th February, 1270⁹²⁰. To begin with, the most distinctive feature of this encounter is that it was fought on the Baltic Sea, sufficiently frozen at that time of the year. The Christian army aimed at intercepting⁹²¹ Lithuanian raiders who had crossed over to Ösel: in a previous moment the chronicler tells that the Teutonic troops were about to raid Semgallia when the Livonian Master, present with the force, was informed about the Lithuanians. The Master then returned with his force to Riga after sending messengers to the bishops and to the Danish king; from Riga, he set out once again with his same troops to Wiek, following the Lithuanian's trail. Wiek was the assembly point where the Teutonic forces met with their allies: 'the king's men came with many proud squadrons, and Bishop Frederick came from Dorpat with everyone he could bring', plus the Bishop of Leal's forces – the Livonian Master and the bishops were present, while the Danish forces were under Seivereith's command. Once assembled, the Christian forces set out onto the Baltic Sea to find the Lithuanian raiders, and both sides noticed each other at a distance, which allowed the Lithuanians to adopt a defensive position behind their sleds, while the Christian commanders conferred and organised their forces in battle order: 'the bishops were to defend the left flank, and they were given plenty of bold Brothers', 'Seivereith of Reval and his men were to fight on the right flank', which left the centre to the remaining Teutonic forces. It is likely that it was these forces who 'charged upon the heathens too soon'.

Before the clash, the Lithuanians withdrew behind their sleds, probably cavalry and infantry alike – though the composition of the Lithuanian force is not specified, I am inclined to believe it was a mix, and that perhaps the sleds were being pulled by the cavalry horses, considering that the Baltic horses were all-purpose. The Teutonic charge resulted in the flag-bearers, riding ahead, smashing into the sleds – as has been stated, charging onto a solid obstacle on horseback is not the smartest decision, but, in my opinion, a few factors could be behind that. The psychological factor of a heavy cavalry charge, first and foremost: the

⁹²⁰ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:96-97. According to the translators, the precise date of this encounter is provided by Wartenberg's chronicle. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 12 – *LRC*:360.

⁹²¹ Lithuanian and Kur raiding parties came from the south of the Dvina, an area of heavily forested territories – these raiders had to be confronted in the open by garrison troops, preferably when they were returning with loot, which slowed them down; it was too dangerous to pursue these raiders into their own territory (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:127-128).

Crusaders had a physical and psychological advantage in open combat due to theirs and their horses heavier armour⁹²². But given a warhorse's conformation, some might have hoped to barrel through obstacles. Lastly, it should also be considered that sometimes a knight could lose control of his horse – an excited horse, when in the open, has a tendency to speed up, and from that it is very easy to dart off with the rider⁹²³. However, charging against an infantry line that held off and stood behind defences endangered both horses and knights, for both were badly placed⁹²⁴. Cavalry would ideally attack only an infantry formation in disarray, as in flight, or attack it from the flanks or from behind – a charge might have a psychological effect and cause the formation to break and run, yet against a disciplined, tight, or entrenched infantry, “(...) the first piece of advice seems to have been “don't do it” (...)”, thus cavalry had to dismount, because the result of a frontal charge against a solid infantry formation would be the horse being impaled at impact⁹²⁵. And indeed, ‘the heathens rejoiced and stabbed their horses to death’, which resulted in some of the knights being immediately killed. The bulk of the main forces (that, judging by the later intervention of the bishops and Danes, was the remaining of the Teutonic troops) joined the knights, seemingly on horseback, though the Teutonic knights had to fight on foot given that most of their horses had been killed, which the chronicler considers having been an advantage for the Lithuanians⁹²⁶.

⁹²² NICOLLE 2007:49. As has been mentioned, the native's cavalry avoided frontal clashes with the Crusader's heavy cavalry. Henry of Livonia described from an encounter in 1207 that “The Lithuanians flew around on their speedy horses. As was their custom they rode about here and there, sometimes fleeing, sometimes pursuing, threw their lances and javelins and wounded many. The Germans, however, grouping themselves together into a single wedge and protecting the army from the rear, permitted the Sengalls [auxiliaries] to go ahead.” (idem, *ibidem*:50).

⁹²³ The more the reins are tugged at, the more resistance the horse will put up: measuring strength with a horse is not the wisest decision. This normally leads the horse to run away with the rider. Henry of Livonia tells that Berthold, Bishop of Loccum, died on the 24th July, 1198, because at the start of a battle against the pagans, his horse bolted with him into the enemy lines and so he was killed (SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:8). Moreover, some horses panic for feeling ‘stuck’ by the rider's hands and may rear up.

⁹²⁴ “The initial delivery of the charge can be enough to destroy the first lines of an enemy formation, demoralizing and disorientating them, provoking a rout; should this happen, a horseman is ideally placed to hack down his fleeing foes. Should the infantry hold, a horseman is very badly placed indeed, jabbing with his lance down at an enemy's well protected left side while his horse's most vulnerable area, the often unarmoured neck or bare legs, lies at the infantrymen's mercy. Should his lance have broken at the charge, he must draw his sword, which – even if of the longer variety – is not going to reach much past his horse's head.” (GASSMANN:164).

⁹²⁵ GASSMANN 2018:74.

⁹²⁶ Both mounted and on foot.

However, there were still mounted brethren who ‘performed heroic deeds here and there on the ice, slashing through many a band of heathens’, which indicates that at some point there must have been different groups of Lithuanians outside their formation, and as such mounted groups were able to act effectively against them. Though the Teutonic forces were ‘hard pressed’, the intervention of the bishops and of the Danes relieved their situation. It is unclear if these forces, that were on the flanks, were acting as reserves, or if tactical manoeuvring was in course⁹²⁷. There must have been movement in smaller yet organised units, judging by how ‘the Brothers fought as one man and inflicted much damage back and forth across the ice in many a bold band’, but it is unclear if this refers to the mounted knights, to those on foot, or to both. Even so, the Livonian Master died, together with 52 Teutonic knights; the bishop of Leal was injured, and 600 Christians were killed – as such, the ‘brother’s army rode away’. The bishops’ and Danish forces must have retreated as well.

There is no mention of infantry action or support from bowmen or crossbowmen, neither of light cavalry mixed with the heavy cavalry. I am inclined to believe the knights charged aligned in squadrons. Given that this seems to be a larger force, comprising the Order’s, the bishops’, and the Danish king’s men, I accept that, in the journey to Wiek, the knights rode riding horses. However, by setting off onto the Baltic Sea, it makes more sense that they rode their warhorses, for they purposefully intended to find the Lithuanian raiders, and thus knew that the chances of fighting were high. And while there must have been time – since the Lithuanians organised a defensive position and the leaders conferred – to change horses, it would have been more cautious to go already on warhorses, lest the time before the confrontation be short. What tires a horse is not carrying a weight at a constant rhythm – it is constantly changing that rhythm and being unbalanced. Thus, a warhorse ridden at a steady and collected trot would not have been exhausted before a battle (not to mention a warhorse, for its training and purpose, must have had high endurance).

⁹²⁷ The original battle formation is also unclear, despite the positioning of the Danes and the bishops at the flanks. Usually, auxiliaries were placed on the flanks while the Order’s knights were in the centre (NICOLLE 2007:50). The Russian accounts about the battle on Lake Peipus refer to the Crusades attacking in a ‘hog’ (wedge) formation. About the same battle, Nicolle remarks that a wedge was the standard for a unit of heavy cavalry, and as such was employed at Lake Peipus (NICOLLE 1996:71). It is possible the same formation was in use in this episode from the *LRC*, yet that initial clash of the flag-bearers against the Lithuanian defences makes it look like an extended battle line, thus a squarer formation.

13 – Another instance⁹²⁸ from the *LRC*⁹²⁹ tells that, once again, Teutonic troops go after Lithuanian raiders in the winter. The commander of Ascheraden summoned ‘all those who heard the news’, either natives or vassals (or both). The commander of Kokenhusen joined the garrison of Ascheraden, apparently without bringing troops of his own⁹³⁰. Though the Lithuanians had escaped by crossing over the Dvina, the knights still went after them and followed their trail – which would not have been too hard to do in the winter, with snow. The Lithuanians knew they were being followed and so waited for the knights in the forest, but built a ‘barricade around themselves and their horses’, most likely to further hinder a heavy cavalry charge. When both sides made contact, the Lithuanians ‘charged the Brothers as they dismounted from their horses’ – it is unclear if this charge was on horseback or on foot, but it seems to me it was done on foot and the horses stayed in the barricade, for if the Lithuanians had intended to fight on horseback, they would not have obstructed the space – a forest – with a barricade; moreover, the Baltic peoples primarily fought on foot⁹³¹.

The fact that the knights did not climb to the saddle again also compellingly points towards a Lithuanian foot charge, given that, if the knights had mounted themselves again, the Lithuanians could have simply retreated into the barricade. The distance separating the two forces is unclear, but it must have been close enough to establish good visual contact, yet far enough for the knights to dismount and presumably leave their horses behind. Eventually, the knights were able to advance into the barricade and the Lithuanians fled on foot – if all of them or just some, it is not clear. Though manpower is not provided, the chronicler set casualties at six Lithuanians and two Teutonic knights.

There is no explicit mention of infantry, shooters, or light cavalry among the Teutonic troops. Since the knights were chasing after the Lithuanians with the intention to confront

⁹²⁸ It seems this happened anywhere between 1283-86, according to the translators.

⁹²⁹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:119-120. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 13 – *LRC*:361.

⁹³⁰ In the 13th century a knight was accompanied by a squire and a servant (*GASSMANN*:156). Perhaps he brought a sergeant as well.

⁹³¹ Though the Lithuanians adapted the most due to confrontations with the Order, as it would become obvious at Tannenberg: “Chivalric values and the art of jousting emerged among Lithuania’s elite at that time [14th century], but the Teutonic knights also adopted weapons common in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and further east. In the course of the endless wars between them, both sides assimilated to each other. Thus, at the 1410 Battle of Tannenberg (Grunwald/Žalgiris), for example, it was nearly impossible to distinguish the best-equipped Lithuanian units from their German opponents.” (*BIERMANN* 2019:274).

them, and given that they dismounted, I believe they were already riding their warhorses for practical reasons. The fact that the Lithuanians attacked when the knights were dismounting is another reason as to why I firmly believe knights had only their warhorses with them in situations that were likely to result in fighting, such as raiding, ambushes, or pursuing raiders: these men were attacked when dismounting, and even if there was enough distance between the two forces for the knights to change horses, they would have had to adjust girths, climb to the saddle, adjust the reins, control excited horses while arranging their shields and (optionally) taking their lances, and finally ride together to amass into a solid formation at the same time they brought their horses into collection (or something remotely similar to keep the formation united).

The knights' training included climbing to the saddle without the stirrups, which would have come in handy in hasty situations – but then the knight would have had to put his feet on the stirrups, probably with the horse already in movement, and even if the knight mounted already holding the sword in his hand, he would still have his surcoat⁹³², scabbard, and saddle-bows in the way of sitting. It would not be too much of a struggle for a 170cm knight to mount a 150cm horse, but this knight and horse would not be alone in the instant before the fight, and a simple procedure on one horse can become quite tricky even if only another nervous horse stands nearby. Lastly, the moment of mounting/dismounting is when a rider is more vulnerable, especially when the motion has been started: any sudden movement from the horse is destabilising, and if the rider does not succeed in completing the motion, he can either be thrown off or, if stuck on a stirrup, be dragged along.

14 – Lastly, a final example⁹³³ from the *CLP*, from 1311⁹³⁴. After wreaking havoc through Warmia, the Lithuanians, numbered by the chronicler as 4000 and under the command of king Vytenis, intended to return to Lithuania with all the plunder they had collected. They were unopposed, for as has been stated earlier, Teutonic knights generally

⁹³² As for the mantle, it is my opinion the knights removed it if given the opportunity: the mantle would only be bothersome to climb to saddle with and to fight with.

⁹³³ Though this episode does not explicitly describe cavalry, it is a different procedure from the usual raids and ambushes that is worth exploring. This is why I saved it for last, even though it brings again Heinrich von Plötzkau, deceased a few pages ago in the episode from 1320. Heinrich was Landmeister (1307), until the Great Master moved into Prussia – Heinrich then became Great Commander (1309) and died as Marshal (1320).

⁹³⁴ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5338-5406. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 14 – *CLP*:362.

attacked enemies on their journey home, when they were slowed down by plunder. Such is this case: the Lithuanians set camp for the night ‘at a wild and lonely area of Barthia’, on a plain with ‘a hill which was ringed by defences’, and when day broke the Teutonic forces arrived at their location and attacked them. “The use of offensive strategy presupposes great strength and overall superiority compared with the enemy. If there is no numerical advantage, it is absolutely necessary that the quality of the troops should be higher.”⁹³⁵, and while the chronicler does not provide numbers for the remaining of the Teutonic troops, it is likely that Heinrich decided to attack the Lithuanians in the open because of the quality of his troops. It seems the Lithuanians did not notice they had been followed, nor did they notice that the attackers were approaching.

Most likely, the Teutonic force travelled part of the night, took some rest, and then covered the remaining distance the moment there was enough light. The Teutonic force consisted of about 80 knights, ‘high and low’⁹³⁶, young and old’, plus ‘many skilled and tested bold warriors’, under the command of Heinrich von Plötzkau – here a ‘great commander’, but who has already appeared as Marshal and as Prussian Master. The issue of this episode is that the chronicler omits whether the Teutonic forces and the Lithuanians⁹³⁷ fight mounted, on foot, or mixed. Knights fought on foot when the terrain was bad and filled with obstacles⁹³⁸, and that Teutonic knights dismounted to fight on foot has been demonstrated. Yet, since there is a pursuit immediately after breaking the Lithuanian formation, it could be that the Teutonic troops were mounted. But while the Teutonic forces attacked in formation, they had to go uphill, against a fortified camp from where spears and other missiles were thrown at them. It is not wise to barrel through defences on horseback – though the *LRC* has described it, as well as the result – and exposing the horses to missile attacks would have certainly resulted in injury and death ⁹³⁹.

⁹³⁵ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:313.

⁹³⁶ High and low might separate knights and sergeants.

⁹³⁷ Cavalry was important for the Lithuanians for its swiftness and agility, with spears still predominant according to grave finds from the 14th-15th centuries (BIERMANN 2019:275).

⁹³⁸ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:106-107.

⁹³⁹ To attack horses, there were special crossbow bolts with wider sharp tips to cause massive bleeding – though there is a description of a warhorse that died after more than 40 crossbow shots (EKDAHL 1991:39). “Horses that could be used in battle were either the very stupid, so thick that they did not flinch at most batterings (this type has slow responses and would hardly have been ideal) or the courageous, a real partner to his rider. Close

Besides, it would have been harder to keep a tight formation and the horses collected⁹⁴⁰ while galloping uphill, since the knights would have to make small adjustments to aids and to their own position to keep themselves and their horses balanced in order to prevent injuries and falls – however, since both should already be used to riding across rough terrain, this would not have been too problematic. Perhaps this episode is good to recall the bigger size of the Order's horses, given that the larger and more powerful mass effect was most times decisive in fighting⁹⁴¹. In addition, considering that the knights chased after the Lithuanians, my supervisor suggested that it would not make much sense for the knights to be on foot and then waste time by getting to their horses and climb to the saddle. As for the Lithuanians, since they were defending themselves (apparently caught off guard as well) by throwing spears and one contingent of Russian archers is mentioned, plus the remark about how 'people began falling over themselves to run away' and about how the Christians 'captured 2,800 horses whose riders had been killed, over and above those who had died with the heathens in the lakes', it seems reasonable to assume the Lithuanians were on foot, behind their defences, and went for the horses in the moment of retreat.

In a small confrontation against infantry, cavalry forces, due to mobility, would be able to pick the location, take cover, and make the range of the charge as small as possible, which maximized surprise, minimized exposure to enemy fire, and could prevent the infantry from drawing into formation; since small cavalry forces were more manoeuvrable, it was easier to encircle the flanks of a reduced infantry force – it was also less limited by speed during the charge and the line was easier to hold⁹⁴². In this instance, however, it does not seem to have been a small confrontation, and the terrain was not picked by the Teutonic forces; since the hill was in a plain, it also seems unlikely that the Teutonic forces were able

order combat, in which the Templars excelled, was undertaken aboard stallions, whose natural aggression was an asset. This trait, coupled with noise, sudden movements, speed and the challenge of other stallions present in the heightened atmosphere of a rapidly moving maelstrom, would have worked to the horse's advantage by keeping its courage, i.e. aggression, flowing during combat. Non-crippling injuries would not have registered while the aggression manifested itself; yet at all times the mastery of the man, instilled through years of training and association, would have allowed this volatility to be channelled at the rider's command." (HYLAND 1996:163-164).

⁹⁴⁰ A stampeding herd will not notice obstacles such as ditches, caltrops or stakes until it is on them and thus without opportunity to react (GASSMANN 2018:77). Again, collected horses are easier and safer to manoeuvre.

⁹⁴¹ EKDAHL 1991:33.

⁹⁴² GASSMANN:166.

to keep in cover for long, and they also did not seem to reduce the range of the charge, leave alone minimize exposure to enemy fire. However the Teutonic attack was undertaken, formations were adopted and, while the vanguard tried to make way, the troops under ‘Brother Gunther von Arnstein made inroads on their flank, with one troop attacking the Rus’ian bowmen’ – Gunther seems to have been just a knight, and considering that the bulk of the Order’s knights should be at the vanguard, where, as has been stated, elite forces were placed, probably Gunther commanded a wing of native auxiliaries and vassals against the Lithuanian flank.

The Russians were overrun and retreated, with the Teutonic forces after them, and seemingly at same time the vanguard successfully wedged itself through the Lithuanian position, judging by how ‘the brothers’ banner reached the centre of the defensive fortifications. This caused the Lithuanians to flee, but they were immediately chased by the Christians, who ‘continued the slaughter and the pursuit all day and all night until they had put to death all the Lithuanians’. Whether this was an orderly chase undertaken by small groups in separate directions, or a chaotic chase with knights and horsemen becoming isolated from each other, it is not told. The statement about some of the Lithuanians drowning or hanging themselves might indicate that the Lithuanians were disbanded and in no condition to regroup, thus taking extreme measures upon feeling cornered; it also reinforces how warfare in the Baltic led to gruesome situations that must have taken a toll on the knights.

While Heinrich probably resorted to light cavalry, the men accompanying the brothers are not specified. Shooters and infantry are not mentioned among the Teutonic forces, either.

Assuming the knights were on horseback, given that they were following the Lithuanians and attacked seemingly by surprise, they must have travelled fast and with enough discretion, which suggests a reduced number of horses and leads me to believe the knights were riding their warhorses. In addition, successfully charging uphill while holding formation implies a familiarity between horse and rider that facilitates balancing and promotes the horse to step confidently – such familiarity would exist between a Teutonic knight and his warhorse, both used to navigate rough terrain together.

15 – A more unfortunate event for the Order’s knights can be found again in the *CLP*⁹⁴³. Firstly, there are two marshals mentioned. It does not seem likely that they are from different contingents from distinct fortresses, given that the action was attributed to the garrison at Kulm. Since offices had to be yielded past a certain time⁹⁴⁴, maybe Dietrich, the ‘old’ marshal, was the one who had held the office before the ‘new’ marshal, Berlwin – this would agree with how Dietrich proposed a safer approach (attack the rear) that was backed up by senior knights: these knights probably had more experience than Berlwin, though nothing is said about their careers. Despite the senior knights’ disagreement, Berlwin’s decision was obeyed⁹⁴⁵. Though a ‘Christian army’ is indicated, the mention of ‘the brothers and their men’ probably indicates Teutonic knights, sergeants, and maybe auxiliaries or vassals. Upon attack, the Prussians fled – since the Teutonic knights ‘rode to attack the front of the army’, it is likely that they attempted a charge, but the chronicler does not tell if these Prussians were on horseback or on foot. There was a disorganised chase through the pine forest (‘the Christian army was dispersed all around’), though the knights might have restrained themselves to staying on tracks. During the chase, the marshal and 24 unspecified Christians ran into a force of Prussians ‘preparing for battle’ – perhaps, survivors regrouping, or a separate force – that did not hesitate to attack the Order’s flag and the small force with it, killing all and then moving on to look for more Teutonic knights. ‘Fighting sporadically’ is likely to indicate that several different confrontations occurred through the forest, as Prussians and Teutonic knights ran into each other – this scenario is supported by how ten survivors managed to escape separately. As for the knights from Thorn, they were seemingly summoned by Berlwin to arrive at a given time and place, perhaps to assist after the initial

⁹⁴³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2255-2267. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 15 – *CLP*:363. The year of this episode is hard to ascertain, given that the surrounding episodes provide no dating; however, it is likely that, given the presence of Duke Swantopelk in prior events, the chronicler is telling events from the First Prussian Uprising (1242-1249).

⁹⁴⁴ Customs, paragraph 9, *How the commanders and the office holders shall give up their offices yearly in the general chapter*. (STERNS (trans.) 1969:290). Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Customs*, paragraph 9:354. However, some passages in the chronicles show that commanding offices were held for longer. Furthermore, it would not bring the troops stability if commanders were constantly switched.

⁹⁴⁵ The military orders, through the vow of obedience, privileged the collective instead of the individual, gaining advantage in discipline, internal cohesion and combat efficiency: the norm was to keep formation and renounce to individual opportunities (AFONSO 2018:350). Obedience did not serve the knights well in this instance.

frontal charge, and though they retreated, the Prussians still chased after them. It is worth noting that the Prussian camp was relatively close to the castle, and though it is not clear if the knights approached during the night and waited for daylight to fight, or if they fought in the dark, the situation would still require some stealth – once again, I am inclined to believe the knights went out already on their warhorses.

Manpower and casualties were provided, set at 400 men accompanying an unknown number of Teutonic knights from Kulm, plus more Teutonic knights from Thorn with 200 men – from these, all the brothers from Kulm were killed with 390 of their men, while the remaining Christian casualties went unnumbered; as for the Prussians, only the lonely force on the hill was recorded as 4000 men. The presence of light cavalry together with the Order's heavy cavalry is uncertain, as is the presence of bowmen or crossbowmen. Berwin's decision proved to be foolhardy and the way the Teutonic force split through the forest to chase the Prussians, thus being gradually decimated, shows indiscipline.

16 – In an episode from the *LRC*⁹⁴⁶, the Teutonic forces and the Lithuanians almost rode into each other, though it seems that, while the Kurs saw the Lithuanians, the Teutonic forces went unnoticed. The Order's forces comprised the knights, Kur auxiliaries, and Germans – either crusaders or vassals, it is unclear. No manpower is given, but the chronicler states that it was a 'small army' against a larger Lithuanian force. It is told that some of the Lithuanians were resting on a plain and that their horses were unsaddled, while 'their best men' were gathered in council on a field 'some distance away from the others', thus the Lithuanians were split. The Teutonic force attacked those who were gathered in council, and while some fled ('whoever managed to mount without a saddle was not ashamed to flee homewards')⁹⁴⁷, it seems others managed to form lines, given how 'the Brothers with the German detachment broke their lines with charges, and whatever pagans regrouped were struck down by the Kurs'. These charges were done on horseback, because after the confrontation, 'the brothers and their allies all dismounted on the grass'. Whether the Kurs were also mounted or not, it is not told. Since the Lithuanians were gathered in council, or

⁹⁴⁶ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:36-37. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 16 – *LRC*:364.

⁹⁴⁷ Even though these are Lithuanians, I believe this episode makes it perfectly clear why the military orders insisted that discipline be maintained and forbade unsaddling without permission whenever camp was pitched.

‘lying about’, and their horses were unsaddled, they must have fought on foot. The fight took place on the field where some of the Lithuanians were for the council, but it is unclear if it eventually moved onto the plain where the other Lithuanians were before retreating. No numbers are given to the Lithuanian losses; on the other hand, the Teutonic force had no casualties.

This episode features a charge breaking through the enemy lines, but since the chronicler says that ‘the Brothers with the German detachment broke their lines with charges’, it is tempting to assume the mounted troops regrouped to charge again, though the direction the new charge(s) took is unclear. As has been mentioned, the native auxiliaries sometimes fought as light cavalry, yet because it is not told if these Kur auxiliaries were mounted or on foot, I cannot discern whether the heavy cavalry⁹⁴⁸ was supported by light cavalry or by infantry to strike down ‘whatever pagans regrouped’. There was no mention to crossbowmen or bowmen. Since the Teutonic troops were not seen by the Lithuanians and that they took advantage of the situation by attacking those on the field (given that the chronicler says the field was ‘some distance away from the others’, it seems that the Teutonic forces had to move around the Lithuanians on the plain), it would require mobility and stealth. For this reason, I believe the knights were riding their warhorses and had no other animals with them.

17- Finally, a last example from the *LRC*⁹⁴⁹. Considering the Teutonic forces were chasing after fleeing Lithuanians, it seems likely that both parties were made up of mounted warriors. The Teutonic forces were assembled before Riga, and given the size of their force (‘the Brothers’ forces from Estonia and from the lands of the Letts had been assembled’), the Lithuanians opted for returning to their land. The Lithuanians were again commanded by Nameise, but while the Landmaster met the sentry, it was the Landmarshal who went ahead of the banners in pursuit of the Lithuanians that crossed over the Aa – the remark about the horses falling indicates an unbridled gallop (‘they all pursued with such abandon’), with the horses above the bit: this results in an unbalanced horse on the forehand, thus more prone to

⁹⁴⁸ As has been mentioned in Part II regarding ‘Rossdienst’ and ‘Platendienst’.

⁹⁴⁹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:113-114. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 17 – *LRC*:364.

stumble or slip and fall in difficult terrain⁹⁵⁰ – in this case, snow and ice. The pursuit took all morning, from daybreak to ‘sometime before midday’, until the marshal established visual contact with the Lithuanians and continued to pursue them.

Thirty Lithuanians had fallen through the ice, but managed to escape on foot to the shore and left their horses behind – this group was not pursued; on the other hand, the chase continued after the Lithuanians who were still mounted, but it seems that the Teutonic forces were scattered, given that the marshal’s group was separated from the banners. Some of the men among the Teutonic force abandoned the pursuit in order to remove the Lithuanian horses from the water and keep them to themselves⁹⁵¹, which seems to have particularly affected the marshal’s group.

However, the marshal did not notice his ranks were diminished (he must have been focused on not letting the Lithuanians out of his sight or losing their tracks) and consisted only of ‘five Brothers, three soldiers and one knight’. It is unclear who these soldiers were: they do not appear designated as any of the natives, neither as sergeants nor as Germans, thus making it difficult to understand if there were vassals of the Order, or mercenaries. The translators indicate that the knight, the ‘crusaders’ advocate’, had been elected to defend the Crusaders’ interests, but despite the praise given to him, he is unnamed. This knight had to stay behind because his horse was exhausted and could not accompany the marshal and his group⁹⁵². Isolated and, as such, an easy target, the knight was killed by Nameise (‘caught

⁹⁵⁰ A collected horse is balanced and has a shorter stride: balance, rhythm, and impulsion are essential to have a horse responsive and more easily (and safely) manoeuvrable. Controlled speed can still be achieved during collection.

⁹⁵¹ It is interesting to notice that, while the chronicler condemns them (‘Many of his men, however, stupidly abandoned the Brothers when they saw the horses in the flowing water. They meant to recover them for themselves.’), there is no religious rebuke to their actions, even though the consequences were dire. Peyper defends that the lack of biblical aspects in the *LRC* make this chronicle a contrast with other examples of ‘Deutschorderns-literatur’ and cites Fischer on how the *LRC* steers away from “(...) prescribing spiritual aspects of warfare towards describing technical military detail, with the popular appeal of the lay epic.” (PEYPER:22-23).

⁹⁵² This knight’s horse was either of poor quality, since it lacked endurance, or was not used to the terrain. This last option is unlikely: because the knight was elected to defend the Crusaders’ interests, it seems reasonable to assume he was experienced in Baltic affairs; as such, he should have a horse acquainted to the terrain (unless this was a new mount). Perhaps, he could not afford a horse that matched the Teutonic knights’ (although Henry of Livonia had already designated the German horses as ‘*equos meliores theutonicorum*’, is necessary to keep

sight of him and came rushing out onto the ice’) and the Lithuanians who had fled overland with him.

This happened out of visual and hearing range from the marshal’s group (or any other Teutonic group), because the Lithuanians continued their escape and appeared behind the marshal’s group. Since Nameise had the numerical superiority of 30 against eight, he attacked the marshal’s group from behind – the men seem to have been too focused on their chase, thus remaining unaware of how they were being followed until ‘Nameise slashed into them fiercely and did them great injury’, resulting in the death of three Teutonic knights and the capture of the remaining two, one of them the marshal. Though the captives were taken to Terweten, only the marshal – Gerhard – is said to have been sent to the Lithuanian king and have been forced to fight a duel, in which he died. What happened to the ‘three soldiers’ and to the other knight captured with Gerhard is not revealed. A second group with the banners, who seemed to have been pursuing the Lithuanians elsewhere, arrived to where some of the men had abandoned their ranks to recover the Lithuanian horses for themselves and were told that the marshal had gone ahead. This group found only bodies, and though they continued to follow the Lithuanians, they were unable to rescue the captured knights.

In this episode, even though ‘the army was quickly organized for the pursuit of the heathens’, the commanders appear to have been reckless and the Teutonic forces showed indiscipline, considering how the marshal went ahead of the banners and did not pay close attention to his surroundings, having been unaware that his force had diminished in size and that Nameise was riding after him; in addition, some of the men lagged behind to recover the Lithuanian horses. How the fight between Nameise and the marshal’s group went is unclear. Since the Teutonic force was after the Lithuanians, the knights must have been riding their warhorses (though they likely rode riding horses to the assembly point). The fact that the crusader’s horse was too exhausted to proceed with the Teutonic knights indicates it was a horse of lesser quality, which in turn reinforces the importance and the quality of the Teutonic

in mind that most crusaders would not have the means to have warhorses, and so relied on mounts of lesser quality (JENSEN 2016:257)). Either way, his horse cost him his life.

knights' warhorses in the Baltic: the Order's stock (or even lesser horses accompanying new recruits) must have had trained⁹⁵³ to withstand chases and raids across the forest.

18 – In an episode from the *CLP*⁹⁵⁴, the Teutonic forces opposed those of Duke Swantopelk⁹⁵⁵. In an earlier moment it is told that the Order and its allies were returning from a raid in Pomerelia that had lasted 'nine days and nights'. With the Order stood the duke of Austria's steward, Drusiger (who ran away when Swantopelk's forces attacked), other Austrian knights, Duke Casimir, and the crusader Heinrich von Lichtenstein – Duke Casimir's retinue is not specified by the chronicler, whereas 'pilgrims' refer to the crusaders under Heinrich von Lichtenstein's command. Swantopelk went after the Crusaders, using abandoned campsites to monitor the Crusaders' progress and manpower. The confrontation was triggered by an attack on the Crusaders' wagons. The native auxiliaries (Kujavians) had an assigned leader, Martin of Kruszwica, and fled before the battle. Whether there were more natives among the brothers' men, it is not said. Since the Teutonic knights did not retreat, Swantopelk had 'about 1,000' of his knights dismounting from their warhorses – specified as chargers – in order to oppose the enemy cavalry on foot: Swantopelk instructed them to 'shout and make a great noise' (probably to disturb both men and horses) and to 'thrust their spears at the Christians' horses', which, as has been referred, posed the biggest problem for cavalry facing infantry. Swantopelk's remark about the weight of the knights' weapons is odd, given that, as has been shown, Teutonic knights' weapons did not differ from those of Polish knights.

It is possible the comment also applied to the knights' armour, which resonates with Ekdahl's statement of how the knights' lives depended on their warhorses because without

⁹⁵³ This is achieved through conditioned training, such as riding up slopes, across water, and on snow, given that specific muscle chains are worked and the horse develops strength and stamina. Regular exercise would have also been needed, together with periods of rest and proper feeding. As has been mentioned before, archaeological data has revealed that horses associated to Teutonic contexts were fed differently from native horses. It must be kept in mind, however, that some horses are naturally more resistant than others.

⁹⁵⁴ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2473-2498. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 18 – *CLP*:365. A date for this episode is unclear given that the surrounding accounts provide no sure date.

⁹⁵⁵ Swantopelk's aggressions incited the Prussians to rebel against the Order: "Heavy-armed knights, big horses, and crossbows gave the Order an advantage on level dry ground within reach of a stockade. Elsewhere, the knight-brothers could be pinned down, cut off, and ambushed. But the Prussians could only attack forts by direct assault or by blockade, and crossbowmen and supply-boats frustrated these attacks." (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:133).

them, they could not move due to their armour⁹⁵⁶. Not only have experiments shown that armour was not impeditive, the Order's chronicles do describe knights fighting on foot, especially the *LRC*, that is contemporary to Swantopelk's aggressions. Perhaps, it should be considered that a fallen knight's real issue was being trampled by the remaining horses in the battlefield, and that maybe lying on the ground and wait for the horses to go past him would have seemed safer than trying to stand up and risk losing balance or be hit, only to fall again and risk being trampled down. As regarding Swantopelk's statement, maybe it indicates that, in comparison to his men's armours, the Crusaders' were heavier because they fought as heavy cavalry.

The disposition of the opposing forces is not specified, nor the terrain, but given that loot was being carried in wagons, it seems reasonable that it should no longer be a place of thick forest and marsh. Even though Swantopelk's men dismounted, Heinrich von Lichtenstein advised the Teutonic knights to charge ('Don't hesitate, that's my advice, because any delay will damage you.'). Forey comments that, in the Baltic, the Crusaders benefitted from the Order's local experience and knowledge, since the knights were able to give advice regarding the conditions of war and enemy tactics⁹⁵⁷— however, it is the Crusader Heinrich von Lichtenstein who tells the Teutonic knights to charge without delay, which I interpret as trying to prevent the horses from becoming nervous, since Swantopelk instructed his men to make noise: when a horse becomes aware of something disturbing, if the rider does not immediately incentive him to proceed and thus ignore the disturbing element or realise there is nothing to fear, the horse will either stop and refuse to go forwards, or will turn around and flee. While the outcome of the confrontation was favourable for the Teutonic knights and their allies (including capturing the enemy's warhorses and 'other horses'), ten horses were 'impaled by the enemy'.

⁹⁵⁶ EKDAHL 1991:30. Also "Anna Comnena states repeatedly that the Normans of Italy were invincible in a cavalry charge, and that her imperial father's tactic, at the end of the eleventh century, had been to make his men aim at their horses, since once on foot the Normans were very vulnerable, being hampered by the weight of their armour, while their huge shields and the spurs on their heels made them very clumsy." (DAVIES 1989:60). While tripping in one's spurs is a very real (albeit undignified) hazard, several experiments have shown that it was not too impractical to wear armour to fight on foot. Besides, it is reasonable that any piece of impractical equipment, such as a 'huge shield', would be discarded in the name of mobility.

⁹⁵⁷ FOREY 1992:88.

It is unlikely that the Order's heavy cavalry charge against a line of dismounted infantry is linked with the Order's relative inexperience in Prussia, especially because Swantopelk's men were Pomerelians and Prussians: probably, Swantopelk had his men dismounting because the natives traditionally fought on foot. Even though their horses are referred to as 'chargers', thus meaning warhorses, maybe Swantopelk feared they would still be unable to withstand the Crusaders' charge because they were not sufficiently armoured. It seems much faith was put in the effects of a charge, and also that, sometimes, knights seemingly had no way to know if the infantry would eventually break or hold until the last moment. The presence of light cavalry and shooters among the Teutonic forces is unclear, and the chronicler does not say what exactly followed the charge.

In this raid, wagons of plunder (earlier it is told that they 'covered two miles') were used, but given how quick raiding was, and the aforementioned problems pertaining dislocations in the Baltic, it is likely the wagons were stationed at a location where the raiders could leave the loot and move on – even because this confrontation happened when the Crusaders were returning from Pomerelia. Regarding horses, the chronicler specifies Swantopelk's 'chargers and other mounts': it is possible that, while some of Swantopelk's best men – the ones who dismounted⁹⁵⁸ – were riding warhorses, the remaining of his troops, natives, were riding Sweiks according to their custom. For swiftness, it does not seem plausible that there were other riding horses in Swantopelk's army, given that earlier it is stated that he was 'in a hurry to take revenge and win back what had been taken'. As for the Crusaders' horses, due to mobility, I believe they went already on their warhorses.

19 – The *LRC* reports a battle fought around 1244, according to the translators.⁹⁵⁹ It can be assumed, given a reference to 'grass', that this was not a winter campaign. The chronicler at least indicates the composition of the Teutonic forces: about five hundred

⁹⁵⁸ 1000 men dismounted, but 1600 warhorses were captured. I assume 600 of Swantopelk's men remained on horseback.

⁹⁵⁹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:35-36. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 19 – *LRC*:366. Dating events from the *LRC* is complicated, given that the narrative is organised by Landmeister and the events follow one after the other. Dates pertaining this chronicle are provided by the translators.

men⁹⁶⁰, comprising thirty brethren and native auxiliaries, the Kurs. It has already been mentioned that the Order's knights were few, and while Forey states the numbers provided by the chronicles "(...) indicate that the forces based locally, whether brethren or others, often needed assistance if considerable gains were to be made."⁹⁶¹, this episode is about breaking the Lithuanian siege at Amboten.

It is worth noting that the Lithuanians were seen by a watchman, yet it is not told if he was a Christian or a native, and also that the Kurs' 'oracles' are not condemned. Bernec of Haren took the banner (unlike in previous episodes from the *LRC*, where commanders were chosen), which makes it tempting to assume that Bernec might have been an 'official' commander already⁹⁶². His educational remark about 'staying with the flag' also points to an experienced leader. The Teutonic force then hid in a forest near Amboten, where it stayed hidden and watched the Lithuanians' movements and how they began to besiege the castle. The Lithuanians built siege engines, which is in accordance to previous statements of how the natives adopted the Crusader's technology; but it also interesting to notice that, during the attack to the castle, 'many a pagan fell from his horse onto the grass', and that when the Teutonic troops launched their attack, they spread in the terrain to 'better charge the enemy horse'. This indicates the presence of Lithuanian cavalry.

Cavalry could take castles, for lightening operations were well suited for small elite forces due to their mobility⁹⁶³, and the Teutonic forces waited in the woods for the

⁹⁶⁰ Bradbury points that numbers rarely made it to more than a few thousands and sometimes were only a few hundreds (BRADBURY 200:282), which in this case seems reasonable. The Lithuanian forces probably outnumbered the Order's, but the number provided is hard to believe.

⁹⁶¹ FOREY 1992:83.

⁹⁶² It is necessary to distinguish the commander of a tactical unit from the supreme commander: in occasion supreme commanders personally carried standards or banners at the head of their detachment, with the standard-bearers usually riding at the head of their units (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:105). There are no indications of supreme commanders, such as a Landmaster, which confirms with how Teutonic operations could be undertaken by more enterprising castle commanders, yet it is not said if Bernec was the commander of Goldingen.

⁹⁶³ GASSMANN:160. Mindaugas' cavalry copied Mongolian tactics, but used javelins and swords instead of bows, and wore mail (infantry used spears and axes, while Lett auxiliaries used crossbows) (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:167). Confrontation with the Order also led to significant changes in Lithuanian cavalry that showed more prominently in the 14th-15th centuries. Through the 14th century Lithuanian forces became more similar to those of Europe – with the exception that the expansion towards East led to strong eastern influences in cavalry weapons and armour: "Not only were elements of the weaponry of the equestrian nomads adapted, but some

Lithuanians to be focused solely in the siege, thus attacking them by surprise when leaving the woods – the knights rode out of the woods and ‘fanned out a little’ for a better charge, which indicates there was enough space to form tactical figures – though it is not clear what figure it was, by fanning out it seems the knights adopted an extended battle line: an open formation with an extensive rectangular front, difficult for an enemy to flank, yet this formation depended on good terrain, wide and plain, and also required sufficient manpower, given that opposing the enemy with few ranks and not enough depth was dangerous⁹⁶⁴. Importance is given to Bernec’s commands (‘stay by the flag’), and to how he imposes order by following fleeing Lithuanians with the banner and by forbidding a disorganised chase after the retreating enemy to prevent a counter-attack – which is in accordance to what has been discussed about the importance of banners on battlefields. Pursuing fleeing enemies was hard, given the small number of troops and the necessity to regroup, plus a reserve⁹⁶⁵ had to be maintained – if there was none, the pursuing victors chasing after scattered enemies could be hunted by a fresh enemy unit or be caught in an ambush⁹⁶⁶. The result of the battle was a Teutonic victory with a number of losses that the chronicler almost dismisses in the greater scheme and in comparison to the Lithuanian losses – though it has been stated that these numbers are probably unreliable, it still must have been a satisfying victory. Given that the Teutonic troops were waiting in a forest, I am inclined to believe that, given the confined space, they would have only warhorses with them; furthermore, keeping the element of surprise would have been harder with a larger number of horses.

The Order’s heavy cavalry seemingly attacked the mounted Lithuanians by the rear-guard, and since there is the indication of a large number of auxiliary natives, perhaps there

Lithuanian warriors apparently also dressed in an Eastern Slavic style. Others, however, were hardly distinguishable from their German or Western European opponents.” (BIERMANN 2019:274-275). This last instance was reflected in Tannenberg.

⁹⁶⁴ MONTEIRO 2009:5. Other figures were: wedge formation, triangle-shaped with a tip pointing to the weakest link in the enemy line and the other two tips forming the attacking base – it was widely used against numerous enemies and aimed at breaking through the lines and disorganise the enemy formation, especially in the weakest links; pincer formation, to counter-attack an enemy wedge, allowing it in and then trapping it, sometimes achievable in movement after the centre backed; circle or square formation, to protect a specific point, to protect baggage or, in case of a small force, to withstand a numerically superior foe until help was delivered (*idem, ibidem*:5-6).

⁹⁶⁵ There is no indication of reserve troops, unlike in the episode with Bertold and Volmar.

⁹⁶⁶ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:109.

was light cavalry mixed with the Order's heavy cavalry; however, bowmen or crossbowmen are not mentioned, neither is told if the besieged garrison joined the fray in the field.

20 – In a campaign into Lithuania, in the *CLP*⁹⁶⁷, the Landmaster commanded a force of Teutonic knights and another group made of either native auxiliaries, Withinge, or vassals. The expedition entered Lithuania by crossing over the frozen Memel and laid siege to a castle. The siege lasted the whole morning ('which he attacked ceaselessly from early morning until midday'), and the ferociousness attributed to the siege is perhaps linked to the necessity of making the best of the few hours of daylight available. The chronicler remarks that many of the Lithuanians 'had been shot and seriously wounded', which indicates the presence of – presumably – crossbows within the Teutonic force. As has been stated, the introduction of the crossbow in the Baltic by the Crusaders provided an initial advantage, and under the Order the crossbow was "(...) an 'everyday' weapon, not only of the brethren of the Order, but also of its servants, local burghers and simple men-at-arm.", as seen in the inventories of the armouries and in levy decrees⁹⁶⁸.

The crossbows were used on battlefields (heavy types for the infantry and lighter types for mounted troops), in hunts, in ambushes, and on fortifications⁹⁶⁹, in accordance to the Western High Medieval strategic heritage of the Order, whose main elements were armoured cavalry and crossbowmen⁹⁷⁰. Since there was no equivalent to the English longbows in the Baltic⁹⁷¹, the Order's crossbows remained the dominant long-range weapon during the Crusades and conflicts with Poland, either for sieges or campaigning⁹⁷². The

⁹⁶⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4384-4396. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 20 – *CLP*:367.

⁹⁶⁸ EKDAHL 1998. Artefacts found in Alt-Wartenburg from the Lithuanian raid of 1354, consisting of elements from bows, crossbows, and arbalests, demonstrate that the Lithuanians had armament similar to the Order's and other Central European nations (BERMANN 2919:274).

⁹⁶⁹ NOWAKOWSKI 1994:97. This contrasts with the defensive role Henry of Livonia attributed to the crossbowmen under the Crusaders in Livonia in the early 13th century (MÄESALU 2011:271-272).

⁹⁷⁰ NICOLLE 2007:45.

⁹⁷¹ EKDAHL 1998.

⁹⁷² Idem, *ibidem*. Seemingly, mounted crossbowmen appeared in the 13th century, and can be interpreted as a separate division added to a main force, or auxiliaries attached to the knights: "The second seems to me much more plausible. Keep in mind that a force of forty knights must be multiplied at least times three to accommodate squires and sundry personnel anyway." (GASSMAN:158) I second Gassmann's opinion, and in the context of the Baltic it would make sense crossbowmen were Teutonic sergeants. But the Rule does not specify who wielded the crossbows. The most common in Teuton ranks were the servants ('Diener'), that formed part of an armed garrison and were mainly crossbowmen operating as mounted infantry (NICOLLE 2007:13). These were

chronicler also notes many of the Christians were injured, though he does not specify if they were shot or if spears were used instead. Eventually, the Teutonic force overran the castle and destroyed it instead of seizing it, according to the regular way of conducting warfare in that region. Afterwards ‘the master sent a squad from the army to raid and harry the area all round it’, which proves a good example to what has been said about the suitability of cavalry forces for this kind of highly mobile operations. This smaller group then returned with its spoils to the main force, presumably still at the castle since no new location was given, and the entire force returned to Prussia. The length of the campaign is not told, but it seems that destroying the castle and raiding the area around it took an entire day. Though manpower is not provided, casualties were set at four knights and an unspecified ‘man’, who fell through the ice when riding in full armour and drowned. This aspect reinforces my beliefs that, in the Baltic, the knights moved about wearing armour. Nothing is said as to what happened to his horse.

At last, an episode where the knights resorted to shooters, probably crossbowmen. When attacking or defending a fortress, knights mostly did so on foot⁹⁷³, but the chronicler does not say if the knights dismounted or not. Infantry is not mentioned, neither is light cavalry, though it seems reasonable to assume the squadron sent to raid could have been light cavalry. As for the mobility the expedition required, with or without infantry, I believe that the knights were already riding their warhorses; furthermore, if the knights were riding fully armoured, it means they were expecting a fight, thus it would not make sense to ride a horse untrained for combat.

21 – In another instance from the *LRC*, in the late 1270s⁹⁷⁴, the episode features the Teutonic force under the command of the advocate at Goldingen, that comprised four knights from the garrison and Kur auxiliaries, mounted and on foot. Again, the commander and his troops conferred before action was taken. The Teutonic force advanced to Doblein ‘along difficult paths and through thick woods’, having also had to cross several rivers. In

assigned a crossbow and a specific number of bolts (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:101). “(...) iclicher dyner sal man usrichten ... eyn gut armbrost und ein schog pfile (...)” (idem, *ibidem*:101) (‘Every servant should arrange themselves... a good crossbow and 60 bolts’).

⁹⁷³ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:106. The Order’s chronicles contain examples of the knights storming a fortress on horseback or riding out, but there are also very vague descriptions.

⁹⁷⁴ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:109-111. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 21 – *LRC*:367.

accordance with what has been mentioned earlier about transporting provisions during raids, ‘each man carried his provisions on his back’. Besides having to navigate through natural obstacles, the Teutonic force also had to overcome a barricade to enter Sempallia. Once the barricade was overcome, Johann ordered the provisions to be left there, which might indicate Doblein was not far and that he had no intention of going further into Sempallia, otherwise he would not have ordered his men to leave ‘all their provisions behind’ – one should keep in mind the already mentioned episodes from the *CLP*, when all provisions were left in stashes and expeditions returned from raiding to find nothing.

The advocate’s objective was harassing Doblein, and to do so, he took with him fifty men (seemingly 49 Kurs and one Teutonic knight) and went ahead, while the remaining of his force followed. It is possible this group was mounted, at least the Teutonic knight. When the Teutonic force attacked the castle, the Sempallians came out on the field to fight them. Even though the advocate’s group was outnumbered, it still charged at the Sempallians and ‘forced them to retreat back through the sally-ports’. This is another example of how courageous warriors could get carried away, and indeed Johann’s courage ‘carried him too far, however, and as he pressed through the ports far ahead of the Kurish troops’ he was noticed by the Sempallians and was attacked. Given that Johann was ‘struck on the helm and he fell into the dust’, it is likely that the Sempallian that attacked him was at the same level as he was, so they were either both on horseback, or both were on foot. The knight that accompanied Johann – it is unclear if he had been caught in the momentum of Johann’s courage, or if he had just arrived faster than the Kurs because he was on horseback and they were on foot, or simply if he was just closer to the advocate – dismounted from his horse to help his commander⁹⁷⁵.

⁹⁷⁵ When discussing the Crusaders’ warhorses, Jensen presents the following from Henry of Livonia: “Rudolph of Jerichow fell to the ground, wounded by a lance, but Wigbold the Frisian lifted him to his horse. A Friesian himself, he trusted to the speed of his horse and, sometimes by fleeing, sometimes by returning to the enemy and by checking them in the narrow places, he freed many.” (JENSEN 2016:257). Perhaps, this is how that knight helped the advocate, by taking him onto his horse and leaving with him. If so, he either took the advocate’s horse as well, or the advocate was on foot. Given that he ‘dashed up’ to the gates of Doblein, he and those accompanying him were probably mounted; correspondingly, the Sempallian who attacked him would have been mounted as well.

It seems that, right after, the rest of the advocate's group and the remaining army arrived and they managed to hold the Sengallians while the advocate was evacuated, possibly by the knight. The action then moved to the main gate, 'where spears were thrown back and forth until midday' – whether that was when the fighting stopped, or if another approach was taken, it is unclear, though it seems reasonable to assume the Teutonic attack had started early in the morning. The advocate was no longer mentioned, so maybe he had been put out of combat. The chronicler then reports that 'some of the Christians were killed, but the advocate's army had the better of it. Some of the Kurs were wounded, but the Brothers who had come to Doblein with the advocate were unhurt.' The mention of unspecified Christians this late in the episode is odd: they are not Germans (Crusaders), nor vassals (Rigans or bishop's/king's men), nor sergeants, and not even squires. The natives are always mentioned by their tribal affiliations. Perhaps these were mercenaries, though these were referred to as 'guests' (at least in the Order's 15th century correspondence)⁹⁷⁶. Whoever these Christians were, they seem to have been the only casualties among the Teutonic forces.

Even though there was a combat, the Teutonic troops did not achieve much: the castle was left standing, the garrison was not killed, and no booty is reported. After the assault on the castle, the Teutonic force prepared to return: the wounded were put on horse-stretchers, but the advocate was sufficiently well to ride; the troops were organised 'in orderly fashion', most likely in the squadrons mentioned in the Customs, and a tactical unit, the rear-guard, was formed – as has been mentioned, the rear-guard was kept at a certain distance from the front and that was where elite forces and the commander stood. However, given that the advocate was the operational commander, and that he was warned about the Sengallian attack on the rear-guard, he was more likely to have been at the head of the troops.

This Sengallian attack was led by Nameise: since he was not mentioned in the attack to Doblein, it can be assumed he came from Terweten (another castle) to Doblein, when the Teutonic troops were already on their way back to Goldingen. Nameise stopped by Doblein to pick up more men, and then set off in pursuit of the Teutonic forces with mounted and

⁹⁷⁶ A letter to the Great Master from 11 July 1409 tells that "(...) Vytautas [the Lithuanian grand duke] knows very well that we have sent for the guests [that is, crusaders and mercenaries] and for Genoese crossbowmen [genueren scucczen]." (EKDAHL 1998).

infantry troops. It is unclear how coming upon the Teutonic rear-guard happened, but since there was time to warn the advocate and for the troops to dismount, to form, and to send away the horses⁹⁷⁷, I believe only visual contact was established. To further sustain this point, when the Semgallians ‘came charging through the forest’ and found the Teutonic force waiting (presumably still in a forested space), the mounted Semgallians had time to dismount and to continue to advance towards their opponents.

The battle is said to have occurred ‘amid fine fields and forests, near the wall of a castle named Baboten, which had been burned long before’. There is no description for the disposition of the Teutonic force, but since there were only four knights and the remaining forces were Kur auxiliaries, given that Johann ‘arranged his army in formation against the enemy’, and because commanders tried to protect their flanks by carefully selecting the terrain⁹⁷⁸, perhaps he tried to protect a flank with the castle wall. The advocate is reported to have rushed ahead of his troops, that then ‘charged as one man’, as in a tight formation. The Semgallians eventually fled, leaving behind fifty dead.

In this instance, the advocate recurred to infantry, but also had the mounted troops dismounting to fight on foot. There was no mention of shooters and cavalry action before the castle is uncertain. As for horses, the knights most likely rode their warhorses, while the mounted Kurs rode their all-purpose native horses. The difficult terrain would have required a reduced number of horses, to be more easily manageable. The remark about each man carrying his own provisions points at the absence of pack-animals in the expedition. As for the horse-stretchers, if the men carried their own provisions, then they could not have been overburdened with complex materials, so these stretchers must have been made with the wood provided by the forest plus rope, since rope can be easily carried on a saddle. There is no description as to what the stretchers looked like, but given the context, I suggest it was a travois: this would have allowed the horse to be ridden while dragging a wounded man, and while it would require more on the horse’s behalf, it has already been discussed that the Baltic

⁹⁷⁷ The chronicler states that ‘They took up their positions on foot, and, since they had no intention of fleeing, their horses were taken away to be guarded.’ The connection between flight and taking the horses away can also be found in the *CLP* (vide Addendum, Others, *CLP*4:387. Knights fought on foot to strengthen infantry lines and to provide encouragement: “The dismounted knights would not flee on horseback and would stay with the foot-soldiers till the bitter end or the victory.” (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:107).

⁹⁷⁸ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:104.

horses were sturdy and fit for riding, working, and warfare. Transporting the injured in such a fashion would have slowed down the Teutonic force some more, which again provides compelling evidence to the fact that the number of horses in this kind of expedition was limited to warhorses – the knights’, and the natives’ – to salvage mobility.

22 – And in a final example from the *LRC*⁹⁷⁹, this episode features Johann once again, acting as field commander while the commander of Goldingen, also present in the expedition, was the supreme commander. It is not said where the other advocates came from, nor the roles they played in the attack on Doblein. The Teutonic force comprised ‘Brothers and the large number of squires who had come with them’, plus Kur auxiliaries. Numbers are not given. The Teutonic knights gathered first in Goldingen, then met the Kurs in a pre-determined location. From there, they all went to Doblein, again travelling through difficult terrain (‘many bad roads, swamps and forests’). The chronicler does not say for how long the Teutonic forces were on the road, but it was ‘near daybreak when they came through the last forest’. Since an attack was immediately launched, it is possible the men travelled during part of the night⁹⁸⁰. Some warriors – Kurs and Teutonic knights – were chosen to go with Johann to Doblein. This group left their horses and crept on the outer works of Doblein, where they ‘awoke many a sleeping man, who would never again utter a sound’. The Sempallians who failed to reach the castle were either killed or captured. The outer works were then set on fire, and the commander, that had been waiting in the forest, approached with the remaining of the Teutonic forces – it is possible he had been waiting to see if deploying them would be necessary, and that joining the smaller group acted as a dissuasive tactic against a Sempallian counter-attack. Johann’s group was given back their horses, booty was split, and the Teutonic force returned to Goldingen with captives, horses, and cattle.

⁹⁷⁹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:111-112. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 22 – *LRC*:368.

⁹⁸⁰ An entire night of travelling followed by an immediate attack would have been very exhausting. Besides, the terrain was difficult. The safest way to travel through the woods was with an experienced guide (‘leitzlute’) (NICOLLE 2007:46), but the in the *CLP* abound examples of expeditions with guides getting lost. Another problem with travelling the whole night has to do with the lack of visibility. Using torches might have announced the Teutonic troops to hypothetical sentinels, and even though settlements would have torches of their own, the light would not always be visible through dense forest. Moonlight would have helped, but dense forest would have blocked most of the light. And while horses do see better at dawn and at dusk, they do not see better in the dark than what a person does. As such, it seems reasonable to suppose the Teutonic forces would have rested at the darkest hours and set out again the moment it was lighter.

Once again, this episode gave an example of knights fighting on foot. There were reserve troops, but these did not act. It is not told if there were footsoldiers or shooters among the Teutonic troops. Given that mobility was required to travel through the rough terrain and in the dark, plus the necessity to drive the captured horses and still maintain mobility to evade a possible chase, I sustain that the knights only had their warhorses with them.

Throughout these excerpts from the Order's chronicles, it has been noticeable that Teutonic cavalry in the Baltic was mostly confined in forested areas, moved about through ice or forests, and usually crawled out of the woods to wreak havoc and hurry back home. Infantry appeared a few times in the *LRC*, whereas in the *CLP* infantry is mentioned during amphibious operations, sometimes playing a passive role⁹⁸¹, or during sieges. Recurring to archers and crossbowmen is mentioned during sieges in both chronicles, which is very unsatisfying, considering the existence in the Order's inventories of crossbows meant to be used on horseback. The only mention in the *CLP* to mounted crossbowmen is about a contingent sent by the duke of Austria:

“At that time there was a brother at Rehden called Rabe who was known for his sound advice and valiant exploits. He gave the brothers this advice: that they should send Mestwin, Swantopelk's son, who had been given to them as a hostage and as security for the peace, without delay to the duke of Austria, and that they should act decisively in getting news of their situation to people in Germany, Bohemia and Poland and wherever else they might expect help, making known the difficulties facing Prussia along with the fact that the faith would be completely wiped out there if God did not prevent it soon, and that it was their duty to help. When this dreadful news was made widely known in these countries Master Poppo came at once with four brothers. In addition six strong brothers came quickly from Meissen and from the Marches and Thuringia. The duke of Austria also made his own virtuous contribution. He sent 30 mounted crossbowmen for use in battle at his own expense.”⁹⁸²

The deeds of those crossbowmen went unrecorded, as well as details as to how a crossbow would be operated on horseback, and the type of riding that entailed. The Order's

⁹⁸¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5427-5438. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 23 – *CLP* Amphibious Operation:369.

⁹⁸² FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2343-2354.

knights are reported to use them on foot, during sieges⁹⁸³, but nothing too detailed. Mounted crossbowmen provided cover for advancing troops; in case of contact with enemies carrying swords and lances, the crossbowman should be able to conjugate sword and crossbow⁹⁸⁴. This leaves a lot of questions regarding conduction of the horse: was the horse stationary?, were the reins loose?, were the reins in one arm, as is sometimes depicted in art?, how did the crossbowman span and reload? Remarkable balance and horsemanship must have been required to stay on the saddle, fight, and command a moving horse with the legs alone⁹⁸⁵.

With the battle of Tannenberg⁹⁸⁶ this analyses of Teutonic cavalry in the Baltic from the 13th to the 14th centuries comes to a conclusion. I was able to find a translated excerpt from Długosz' chronicle⁹⁸⁷ online, but given the size of the excerpt and the fact that there are studies on the battle, I opted for bringing only a few selected moments into the main text that I considered sufficient to illustrate the battle and had enough contrast to the previous operations undertaken by Teutonic cavalry.

⁹⁸³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3126-3137. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Chosen Episodes 24 – *CLP* Ullenus: 370.

⁹⁸⁴ GASSMANN:170.

⁹⁸⁵ 15th century 'Fechtbücher' instruct on how to operate a crossbow from horseback and depictions can be found in art (GASSMANN:159), such as Addendum, Figures, fig. 23:397 and fig.24:398. I did not have access to a 'Fechtbuch' and its instructions.

⁹⁸⁶ Given the subject of the current thesis and the limitations regarding dimension, I chose to address the battle of Tannenberg alone and leave out the political details of the Teutonic-Polish-Lithuanian Wars. My approach is limited, since the majority of scientific works pertaining the battle are in German, Polish, Lithuanian, and even Belarussian, and I do not have a sufficient language level to read scientific books in German. An overview of pertinent works about Tannenberg and the issues the several authors discuss can be found at https://www.academia.edu/28889757/New_Research_into_the_Battle_of_Grunwald_Tannenberg_%C5%BD_algiris_Attempt_at_an_Overview (2013) [6/5/21]. In addition, modern scholarship has yet to come to complete agreement as to what happened at Tannenberg: everyone agrees that the Great Master committed mistakes by bringing his army into the field; that both Ulrich von Jungingen and Vytautas were courageous warriors who risked their lives in combat; almost everyone agrees that, for whatever reason, Jogaila chose to stay in view by his tent on the hill and that the decisive moment of the battle occurred when the Teutonic attack on that position failed; and everyone except for the Lithuanians agree that a feigned retreat undertaken by an entire army was too difficult and risky to execute, though it was a common tactic for small units (URBAN 2003:216).

⁹⁸⁷ Ekdahl notes that Długosz's reliability cannot be taken for granted, for he had his own biased opinion regarding his country and its heroes; in addition, the same researcher argues that "(...) neither he nor his patron, Zbigniew Oleśnicki, were friends of the Lithuanians." and that when Długosz began to write his chronicle, in 1455, there was yet another war between Prussia and Poland, and that perhaps the refusal of the Lithuanians to side with Poland on that occasion led the chronicler to portray them as cowards at Tannenberg; consequently, "Due to the great authority the author enjoyed, the stigma he branded the Lithuanian army with was passed along from century to century without being seriously questioned. Inevitably, it has left deep marks not only upon history, but also upon politics, art, and literature in successive generations." (EKDAHL 2010).

To begin with, it should be noted that Vytautas was able to bring his forces to join Jogaila's because the trade routes had required the building of communication routes; notwithstanding, when entering Prussia, the Polish-Lithuanian army was faced with remnants of the Wilderness: while the Order had established settlements and had built roads, these were narrow and winding because the many hills and several swamps made it impossible for the roads to go straight, and it was easy to become lost in the woods⁹⁸⁸. There where supply columns and wagons in a scale bigger than both the Teutonic Great Master Ulrich von Jungingen and the Polish king – Jogaila – were used to⁹⁸⁹, and warfare in the Baltic in the 15th century still posed difficulties to the movement of large forces with a baggage train. Even so, according to Urban, both commanders were successful in bringing their armies together without serious trouble; both forces were well-supplied, battle-ready, and confident; officers knew their opponents and were familiar with the terrain and weather, as well as in possession of state-of-the art technology⁹⁹⁰.

The battle is known by different names, a consequence of the deployment of the contending forces. Turnbull states that Długosz placed the battle site on the fields of Grunwald and Tannenberg, and according to Turnbull the general position of the battle is "(...) easy to determine." given that "The modern memorial lies almost at the centre of the irregular triangle formed by the small villages of Lodwigowo (Ludwigsdorf), Stebark (Tannenberg) and Grunwald."⁹⁹¹; on the other hand, the continuator of Posilge's chronicle⁹⁹² mentioned Tannenberg because the deployment of the Teutonic forces went over Tannenberg and not Grunwald⁹⁹³. For Turnbull, the Order's and the Polish-Lithuanian army deployed

⁹⁸⁸ URBAN 2003:202/208.

⁹⁸⁹ Both Jogaila and Ulrich were careful in how their armies moved, since they both feared basic tactical mistakes such as being caught by nightfall at an unsuitable place for camping, or having to go through places where ambushes and blockades could be laid – not to mention they had to provide for horses and cattle: "Although each commander was experienced in directing men in war, these armies were larger than either had brought into battle previously, and the larger the forces, the more danger there was of error, of misunderstanding orders, and of panic." (idem, *ibidem*:205).

⁹⁹⁰ URBAN 2003:205.

⁹⁹¹ TURNBULL 2003:43-44.

⁹⁹² Posilge was a Prussian chronicler of the Order.

⁹⁹³ EKDAHL 2019:44. In addition, the same author explains that "When Heinrich von Plauen, successor of the fallen Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen, built a St Mary's Chapel within the triangle Tannenberg-Grünfelde-Ludwigsdorf in 1411, the name of Tannenberg was transferred to the battle and the area around the Chapel was

along a northeast-southwest axis: a depression in the terrain, probably the valley mentioned by Długosz, ran along the modern Tannenberg-Lodwigowo road – this road, which is almost visible from the memorial, is for Turnbull the mark of the battle’s frontline; Jogaila’s command post was on a small conical hill almost the same distance to the southeast of the modern road as the memorial is to the northwest; this position was occupied in the morning of the battle, with the Polish-Lithuanian army having come from its camp roughly a mile away near Ulnowo⁹⁹⁴. However, recent archaeological surveys with metal detectors have determined that most of the fighting occurred south and east of the Grünfelde (Polish Grunwald) village, thus proving wrong the previously undisputed thesis of the Prussian Johannes Voigt (1836) about how the main battlefield was located south and east of Tannenberg village (Polish Stębark) – both villages are about three kilometres apart⁹⁹⁵.

The battlefield was uneven and wooded, littered by small ponds and marshes; to the northwest, between Grunwald and Tannenberg, there was an area of boggy terrain – the area on the Polish side of the modern road is known as ‘valley of the great stream’, through where a brook ran north to the Marozka river⁹⁹⁶. In the excerpt I had access to, Długosz leaves mentions of forest and boggy terrain to a later moment in the narrative – the pursuit of the fleeing Teutonic troops – beginning instead by telling that the two forces met in a valley where six oak trees stood in the middle of the way; the Teutonic troops rode down from higher grounds and the two forces clashed around the oak trees⁹⁹⁷. Riding downhill would have made it harder for the knights to keep themselves and their horses balanced. Riding uphill in the last example from the *CLP* would have required small adjustments to the knights’ positions to keep them and their horses balanced; in the same way, riding downhill would have required the knights to lean backwards according to the steepness of the ground while accompanying the horse’s hindquarter movements with the seat: the aggravating factor of riding downhill would have been gravity causing higher changes for the horses to stumble and fall without a chance to regain footing. Again, both knights and their horses – at least the

called “Streitplatz” (Battlefield). It was a highly symbolic step because the tent with the Chapel of the Teutonic Knights had stood there during the actual battle.” (idem, *ibidem*:44).

⁹⁹⁴ TURNBULL 2003:44.

⁹⁹⁵ EKDAHL 2019:42.

⁹⁹⁶ TURBULL 2003:45.

⁹⁹⁷ MIKOS (trans.) 1999. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Tannenberg 1:370.

Order's – would have been used to the terrain and would probably know how to ride through it, yet the issue should still be considered.

There is no certainty regarding manpower: around mid-June Jogaila had an army of more than 30 000 cavalry and infantry (18 000 Polish knights and squires⁹⁹⁸, a few thousand infantry; some Bohemian and Moravian mercenaries; 11 000 Lithuanian/Russian/Tatar cavalry⁹⁹⁹; a Moldavian contingent; some Samogitians), while Ulrich had a force of perhaps 20 000: in Prussia, he raised only about 10 000 cavalry¹⁰⁰⁰, with the rest of the troops comprising Crusaders and mercenaries – for instance, Sigismund of Hungary sent two nobles with 200 knights, and Wenceslas of Bohemia allowed Ulrich to employ Bohemian mercenaries¹⁰⁰¹. The organisation of the troops was clearer. The Polish army was organised in 'banners', a unit subdivided into between 50 and 120 lances comprising two to five men each – given that the size of the lance varied according to the individual wealth of a knight, in order to even the power of different banners small units were merged or supplemented at the Polish king's expense¹⁰⁰².

The Polish-Lithuanian army was bigger three to two, whereas Ulrich had the advantage on equipment, organization, and in having fortresses nearby to resupply¹⁰⁰³. The Order's organisation was similar to the Polish, given that the knights were organised in banners¹⁰⁰⁴ consisting of lances (usually one knight and seven men-at-arms, normally the

⁹⁹⁸ Squires would have been directly involved in combat if the enemy tried to encircle the baggage, and probably played a role in foraging, in skirmishes and in pillaging (GASSMANN:157).

⁹⁹⁹ Długosz numbered the Tatars as 300 to brush off the fact that 'pagans' had been used against the Order's knights (EKDAHL 2019:47).

¹⁰⁰⁰ The Livonian branch did not take part in the battle. "Since Jungingen had allowed the Livonian master to conclude a truce with Vytautas (...) none of those excellent knights were able to join him; in any case, the northern knights were not enthusiastic about the war, and although the Livonian master sent word to Vytautas immediately that the truce would expire at the end of the grace period, he would not send troops to Prussia or attack Lithuania's vulnerable northern lands until that time had passed." (URBAN 2003:202). On the contrary, Turnbull claims that there were Livonians among the Prussian ranks (TURNBULL 2003:29). But Długosz mentions only Prussians, Germans, and Teutonic Knights, making no mention during the battle to the Livonians.

¹⁰⁰¹ URBAN 2003:202.

¹⁰⁰² TURNBULL 2003:25. The banners were identified by a system of heraldry similar to that of Western Europe, with the difference that, in Poland, various families that belonged to the same clan or ancestral group could bear the same coat of arms (idem, *ibidem*:25).

¹⁰⁰³ URBAN 2003:202.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Most of the crusaders at Tannenberg were from Westphalia, Frisia, Austria, Swabia and Bavaria, fighting under their own banners but also under that of St. George with the colours reversed; the Austrians fought under

majority of them crossbowmen); the main banners were fielded by the Order's 'Komturei' – the banner of a commandery was made up of the convent knights and knights from the commandery's administration area under the command of the 'Komtur'¹⁰⁰⁵. Many had experience in raids and sieges, but few had experience in pitched battles, though maybe some crusaders had experience from Nicopolis (1396); on the Lithuanian side, it is possible some had experience from Vytautas' unsuccessful campaign on the Vorskla (1399)¹⁰⁰⁶.

Jogaila (Wladislaw Jagiełło in Polish) was the supreme commander of the Polish-Lithuanian army: the elite of Polish cavalry fought under the Great Banner of Krakow, but there were other banners, such as that of the Czech mercenaries (Banner of St. George), the banner of Gniewosz of Dalewice, who had hired the Bohemian mercenaries (thus these fought under his banner), and the Banner Goncza, that was chosen to open the battle; each banner had its own trumpeters for signalling¹⁰⁰⁷. Jogaila drew more knights from the north than from the south, even though the southern knights had already served with him in

the banner of the Great Commander Konrad von Lichtenstein; there were also two Hungarian nobles fighting with the Order: Count Palatine Miklos Garai and Stibor, Voivode of Transylvania, with 200 mercenaries; moreover, given the Order's previous conquests, there knights of Polish descent in its ranks (TURNBULL 2003:29).

¹⁰⁰⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:28. Usually a castle provided twelve knights and up to 60 sergeants, though the numbers varied; the secular members of the Order served in their ranks as well, plus the 'Graumäntler' (idem, *ibidem*:28).

¹⁰⁰⁶ URBAN 2003:206. Thus, it is possible that Tannenberg was fought mostly by unsuspecting men – as has been stated, not even the commanders themselves were used to have such a large number of forces: "Only they [survivors from Nicopolis and Vorskla] knew first-hand that warfare on this scale was chaos beyond imagination, with commanders unable to contact more than a few units, with movement limited by the sheer numbers of men and animals on the field, with the senses overwhelmed by noise, smoke from fires and canon, and dust stirred up by the horses, the body's natural dehydration worsened by excitement-induced thirst, and exhaustion from stress and exertion. This led to an irrational eagerness for any escape from the tension – either flight or immersion in combat." (idem, *ibidem*:206).

¹⁰⁰⁷ TURNBULL 2003:26. The continuator of Posilge's chronicle, an anonymous Teutonic chronicler and contemporary to the events, wrote: "[King Jagiełło] gathered the Tatars, Russians, Lithuanians, and Samogitians against Christendom... So the king met with the non-Christians and with Vytautas, who came through Masovia to aid him, and with the duchess... [T]here was so large an army that it is impossible to describe, and it crossed from Plock toward the land of Prussia. At Thorn were the important counts of Gora and Stiborz, whom the king of Hungary had sent especially to Prussia to negotiate the issues and controversies between the order and Poland; but they could do nothing about the matter and finally departed from the king, who followed his evil and divisive will to injure Christendom. He was not satisfied with the evil men of the pagans and Poles, because he had hired many mercenaries from Bohemia, Moravia, and all kinds of knights and men-at-arms, who against all honour and goodness and honesty went into heathendom against the Christians to ravage the lands of Prussia." (URBAN 2003:203).

campaigns in Galicia and Sandomir – however, while Jogaila could have called more knights, he would not have been able to provide for them, nor have room for them¹⁰⁰⁸.

Even though Jogaila was the king and supreme commander, it was his cousin Vytautas who was more active in the battlefield. Vytautas divided the Lithuanians into banners, ordered each unit to guard its flag and obey the leader, and placed the less well armed/mounted men in the centre of each banner¹⁰⁰⁹. He led 40 banners that included Russians and Tatars, and though there was a separate contingent for the three banners of Smolensk and another contingent of Tatars from the Golden Horde, these were still under his overall command¹⁰¹⁰.

Some of Jogaila's and Vytautas' commanders had served together in earlier campaigns against Tatars or Crusaders, yet the Polish-Lithuanian army was so diverse that maintaining cohesion would be difficult; and while Ulrich had many secular knights and Crusaders who were prone to panic or to chase away in enthusiasm, he also had knights who were used to discipline and to fighting in units – in addition, he was on the defensive, could fall back into prepared positions, and had a better knowledge on the terrain¹⁰¹¹.

It is uncertain how the two forces deployed, but for Turnbull the Polish-Lithuanian troops were arranged in front of Jogaila's commanding post on the hill in three wedge formations of 20 or more men deep: the Poles were on the left and the Lithuanians on the right, with the Czech mercenaries between them; the formation reached from south of Ludwigsdorf to the modern road in the north¹⁰¹². "The battle of Tannenberg is still being refought by historians today. Although the outline of the combat is very clear, German, Polish, and Lithuanian historians are not in agreement about the various actions which occurred during the battle (...)", though there is agreement that the Crusaders were placed on the left, opposing the Lithuanians, perhaps because they would be more willing to fight Tatars, or, in Urban's words, "(...) just because that was the most convenient posting (...);

¹⁰⁰⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:207.

¹⁰⁰⁹ TURNBULL 2003:27.

¹⁰¹⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:27-28.

¹⁰¹¹ URBAN 2003:202-203.

¹⁰¹² TURNBULL 2003:44.

the Order's knights were in the centre and right, opposing the Poles and their mercenaries¹⁰¹³, though Turnbull remarks there were also Teutonic knights deployed against the Lithuanians¹⁰¹⁴. It is a reasonable point, given that the Teutonic knights were familiar with Lithuanians and their way of fighting, but it does not explain later developments. Turnbull also claims that the Order's troops were deployed on a southwest-northeast axis, probably with the left wing at the village of Tannenberg, and that the Great Master's command post was likely to have been on the spot taken by the memorial, with the rear-guard and the laager of wagons stationed around the village of Grunwald near the modern road¹⁰¹⁵.

Seemingly, the Polish-Lithuanian forces took no precautions against a surprise attack¹⁰¹⁶, but the Teutonic advantage of having crept unnoticed onto the Polish-Lithuanian army was wasted by having sleepless men (wet from early rain, hungry, and probably increasingly nervous) stand battle-ready for hours, without food or drink, until the enemy was ready; during that time, pits were dug to stop the Polish charge, but those too were wasted when the Order's forces withdrew¹⁰¹⁷ from that line, so that the Polish forces in the woods had space to form in two lines in the open field against the Order, consequently the pits became part of the Polish defence; on top of this, the Order's artillery was stationed where it was ineffective, the Order's infantry was placed where it was difficult to provide help to the knights, the day was abnormally hot and the men were not used to the heat: "Even considering that the grand master could hardly expect the Polish knights to charge unless they had room to line up their units, this was poor generalship.", yet even so, Urban considers that the Order could have prevailed if the enemy attacked first¹⁰¹⁸.

¹⁰¹³ URBAN 2003:214.

¹⁰¹⁴ TURNBULL 2003:45.

¹⁰¹⁵ TURNBULL 2003:44.

¹⁰¹⁶ TURNBULL 2003: 41. For Posilge's account on the beginning of the battle, vide Addendum, Pt. III – Tannenberg 2:371.

¹⁰¹⁷ This repositioning could have been to clear the way to the Order's artillery, that fired twice: "The elaborate gestures of the challenge with the swords and the unmasking of the guns were therefore ruses to persuade the dilatory Poles and Lithuanians into launching the requisite frontal assault on an army that had enjoyed the leisure to prepare its positions.", but the gunpowder was dampened by the wet weather, thus rendering the Teutonic artillery useless as the *Cronica Conflictus* says "Before the battle began a light and warm rain fell that washed the dust off the horses' hoofs. But just before the rain the enemy fired twice with cannon balls, not causing any damage despite having many of them." (TURNBULL 2003:45).

¹⁰¹⁸ URBAN 2003:213.

Across the field, the Polish forces were organised by Zyndram of Masckowice while Vytautas deployed the Lithuanian forces: only the Polish vanguard was ready for combat, with the other knights still in their tents and with some wagons and troops still on the road from Gilgenburg – an early attack from the Order would have spread chaos, yet the Order remained in position since, according to Turnbull, the Order seemingly suspected of a trap in the wooded and hilly Polish-Lithuanian position¹⁰¹⁹.

According to Długosz¹⁰²⁰, the Teutonic force sent two unsheathed swords to Jogaila, in order to initiate hostilities; while the emissaries were gathered with Jogaila, the Teutonic force rearranged itself on the field by withdrawing “(...) to a much vaster field to give proof by deed of the truthfulness of the secret orders given to the heralds.” In the meantime, Vytautas had been busying himself with preparing the Polish-Lithuanian forces to fight, until the battle began to the sound of reveilles and singing¹⁰²¹ – and though the chronicler attributes some readiness to the Poles, it was the Lithuanians under Vytautas who first went into combat.

The battle began at around nine in the morning, after the Teutonic troops had been in battle array for three hours, “(...) boiling in the sun (...)” in their armours, and it was the re-deployment of the Order’s first ranks that triggered the beginning of the battle (Vytautas, in the right wing, went for the Order’s left flank under a hail of arrows and bolts), which seems to have been the desired outcome¹⁰²²: “While the Poles advanced in reasonably disciplined order, singing their anthem, the Lithuanians charged wildly and scattered the lightly armed

¹⁰¹⁹ TURNBULL 2003:41. Urban takes notice on the contemporary values that affected the battle: Ulrich wasted the advantage of attacking the Polish-Lithuanian army by surprise to send a chivalric challenge for the battle; and Jogaila was stalling by hearing mass and ignoring requests for instructions – he could have been waiting for the Germans and their horses to wear themselves off because of the armour, he could have been waiting for reinforcements, he could have had no idea of what to do, he could have truly been pious (URBAN 2003:213).

¹⁰²⁰ MIKOS (trans.) 1999. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Tannenberg 3:371. The swords seem to have disappeared by grace of the tsarist police, as was told by my Polish friend, who also shared that the “two naked swords” became a Polish saying to mean an open declaration of war or an invitation to a friendly competition. The motion picture *Krzyżacy* features the delivery of the two unsheathed swords in an opening scene – vide Addendum, Figures, fig. 25:398.

¹⁰²¹ The Germans sang ‘Christ ist erstanden’ (Christ is Risen) and the Poles and Lithuanians sang ‘Bogu rodzica dzewica’ (Virgin Mother of God) (URBAN 2003:214).

¹⁰²² TURNBULL 2003:45.

units opposite them. Then the contending forces hammered away at one another for about an hour. Beyond this, there is little agreement in the various accounts.”¹⁰²³

In Długosz’s account¹⁰²⁴, no mention is made to crossbowmen, even though they are depicted¹⁰²⁵. Only the Teutonic artillery and its ineffectiveness are mentioned. The Lithuanians are told to have gone into battle first, but it is not indicated against whom – only a little further into the account is it indicated that ‘Meanwhile, the Teutonic army, which made chase after the fleeing Lithuanians and Ruthenians¹⁰²⁶, considering themselves victorious, was heading to the Prussian camp, leading a crowd of captives.’ The cavalry broke spears at the first clash, and while Nowakowski has mentioned that spears were used by the Order, he has also mentioned lances at Tannenberg, thus, perhaps a more accurate word here would be ‘lances’; in addition, ‘They changed places or advanced only when the victor took the place of the defeated by throwing down or killing the enemy.’, and as it has been stated previously, lances were used to unhorse opponents¹⁰²⁷.

After the lances broke and the knights massed together, fighting proceeded with swords and axes – again, Nowakowski has mentioned that the Order used axes, perhaps due to Prussian influence¹⁰²⁸. The chronicler repeatedly reinforces the image of the massed knights in a crowded battlefield, with no room to manoeuvre or fight freely (‘pushed by the horses and crowded, they fought only with swords and axes slightly, extended on their handles’), in what seems to be an engagement with one opponent at once¹⁰²⁹. After an

¹⁰²³ URBAN 2003:124. Given Długosz’s reputation, his version of the battle was consolidated in Polish and German historiography, but after the *Cronica conflictus* was discovered and published in the 19th century, it was questioned what chronicler was closest to the truth, which the Polish historian Stanisław Kujot (1910) answered favourably for the Lithuanians (“Obviously, their flight was something like Tartar cunning. The Light Lithuanian cavalry, which could not withstand the banners of the enemy, dispersed in small groups to avoid being defeated - a method often used by them – and to mislead their pursuers. There is no doubt that the groups soon began to gather again and returned to the battlefield shortly after the pretend victors, where they probably fought next to the banners of Smolensk. It was a Lithuanian method, which was well known by Witold.” (EKDAHL 2919:50).

¹⁰²⁴ MIKOS (trans.) 1999. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Tannenberg 4:372.

¹⁰²⁵ Vide Addendum. Pt. II – fig. 14 (blue marking):330.

¹⁰²⁶ Russians.

¹⁰²⁷ “Plate armour lessened the killing power of the lance.” (BRADBURY 2004:253).

¹⁰²⁸ Interestingly, the motion picture *Krzyżacy* shows the final duel between the Polish knight and the Teutonic knight being fought with axes instead of swords.

¹⁰²⁹ “If an advance on very close order is the ideal to be aimed at, and is indeed achieved as far as possible, then it follows that duels and individual combats are out of the question. They became, in fact, increasingly difficult

unspecified time of fighting, the Lithuanians are reported to have been forced to retreat from the battlefield. It rained, which, allied to the heat Urban mentioned, would have caused the air to dampen, making it harder to breathe and probably causing discomfort for those who had healed fractures. A moment of pause is not mentioned, but given that Długosz states that ‘a fierce battle broke out again between the Polish and Prussian armies in many areas’, I am inclined to believe there must have been a short break for both sides to catch their breath.

The Lithuanian withdrawal seems to have been the pivotal moment in the battle. Posilge’s continuator, that refers to the Lithuanians as heathens (‘dy heydinschaft’) states they were the first to go into battle only to be chased away by the grace of God, but that then the Poles came to their aid and a big battle ensued; another source, the chronicle of the monk of Saint Denis, refers a report by a courier of a friend of the Order, Sigismung of Luxemburg, to the King of France in the autumn of 1410 stating that the ‘saracens’ had been set to flee but then a battle had ensued; lastly, the Polish *Cronica conflictus* reports that after an hour of heavy fighting, the Lithuanians were forced to retreat and were then chased by men from the Teutonic troops, who thought they had won and so left their banners, but who were then pursued by the Lithuanians and were cut off by the laterally penetrating Polish forces when they tried to return to their banners, being either killed or taken prisoner, while all of those who were not separated from the banners clashed with the Polish forces and a brutal battle ensued¹⁰³⁰. In short, one chronicler accuses the Lithuanians of fleeing, but another – and

as the ranks were more tightly packed. These formations are a complete negation of the so-called duels, of which a battle between two knightly armies was supposed to have consisted.” (WILLARD (trans.) 1997:75). However, a sort of duel is described later by Długosz: “To put a stop to these disputes, Knight Dobieslaw of Olesnica, from the clan called Debno, with a cross in their coat of arms, set spurs to his horse and charged alone, with a raised spear, toward the enemy. A Teutonic knight, a commander of the regiment and units, ran out from the Prussian cavalry toward him and cutting off the attacking Dobieslaw, with skillful motions of his lance pushed Dobieslaw's outstretched spear over his head and in the first moment avoided his blow. And Dobieslaw, seeing clearly that his blow had missed, and recognizing that it was risky and unwise to fight against the whole unit, returned quickly to his people. The Teutonic knight, who began to chase him, setting his spurs to his horse and aiming threateningly at Dobieslaw with his spear, struck only Dobieslaw's horse across the covering called a caparison, and wounded its loins, but not mortally, and quickly returned to his ranks, to avoid being captured by Polish knights.” (MIKOS (trans.) 1999).

¹⁰³⁰ EKDAHL 2019:49-50. Ekdahl also states that the French chronicles of the Monk of Saint-Denis and of the nobleman Enguerran de Monstrelet mention the Lithuanian retreat as a decisive turning point that led to the Order’s defeat, and that both chronicles used early contemporary Teutonic accounts from the battle; the same author laments these sources have not been given attention due to blunders regarding the numbers of fighters and the length of the battle, still Ekdahl claims that if this fact is overlook, “It was the Teutonic Order itself that

seemingly the Order itself – does not. For Urban, German historiography agrees with Długosz perhaps due to the attributed partial victory against the pagans; Polish historiography emphasizes Jogaila's generalship and willingness to fight (“(...) according to Polish patriotic scholarship, Polish intelligence, courage, gallantry, and self-sacrifice had won the day.”); Lithuanian historiography disagrees with Długosz, insisting that the Lithuanians performed a tactical manoeuvre and credit Vytautas' activeness in the fight in contrast to Jogaila's uselessness during the combat¹⁰³¹.

Ekdahl, who defends that the Lithuanians, and among them Russians and Tatars, performed a feigned flight, thus luring the Order's knights into chasing after them and creating an opening through which the Polish troops penetrated and overwhelmed the Order's left wing, brings another chronicle to the table, the *Bychovca Chronicle* (early 16th century), that relied on information from the Lithuanians: “It states that Vytautas asked Jogaila to assist the Lithuanians with Polish troops in this crucial phase of the battle, thus indicating that a tactical agreement had been made between them.”¹⁰³².

With the Lithuanian withdrawal arises the problem of having the capability to perform it. The retreat seems to have been done by the entire Lithuanian army instead of just one unit; it was late in the afternoon when the counterattack happened due to the Lithuanian return, which is behind time for a quick response to a precipitated pursuit; instead of light cavalry

regarded precisely this phase of the battle as the true beginning of its decisive defeat.” (EKDAHL 2010). I did not have access to the *Cronica Conflictus*, that was written at the end of 1410 by Zbigniew Oleśnicki, the royal secretary, and describes that the Lithuanians “(...) after only one hour of fighting, had been forced to retreat, and were pursued by men of the Teutonic Order's army, who thought they had obtained victory and, therefore, left their banners. However, the pursuers themselves were then put to flight by those they had initially forced to retreat. When they tried to return to their banners, they were cut off by Polish forces and either killed or taken prisoner.” (EKDAHL 2010). The Lithuanians were driven off, but somehow managed to turn their situation around.

¹⁰³¹ URBAN 2003:216. “They regard the presence of Vytautas and the units from Smolensk fighting in the ranks of the victors during the decisive period of combat as proof that the main Lithuanian force did not run away, but only lured the Germans into disordering their forces so badly that the way was open for the Polish attack.” (idem, *ibidem*:216).

¹⁰³² EKDAHL 2010.

enveloping the Order's forces, the result was the fragmentation of the Polish-Lithuanian right wing and seemingly widespread panic¹⁰³³. It does not seem like a proper manoeuvre.

Regarding the combat expertise of the Order, although there were training grounds and small-scale warfare in Samogitia, a campaign in Gotland and the 1409 invasion of Poland, there had not been a pitched battle between the Order and Lithuania for forty years and between the Order and Poland for nearly eighty years; in contrast, the Lithuanians were more experienced in battle, but in the open warfare of the steppes and in the Russian forests – on small horses and wearing lighter Eastern armour, they were not equipped to fight against knights on heavier horses, whereas the Polish knights were better suited to fight with the Germans, but they did not have the confidence to fight against the Order's knights¹⁰³⁴. According to Turnbull, the Lithuanian army consisted of light cavalry¹⁰³⁵ and wore Eastern armour¹⁰³⁶. However, as has been mentioned earlier, Biermann defends that, due to contact with the Order, some elements of Lithuanian cavalry did not differ from that of Western countries¹⁰³⁷. Through the 14th century Lithuanian forces became more similar to those of

¹⁰³³ TURNBULL 2003:48-49. Turnbull states that after about an hour of fighting, the Lithuanians gave ground and retreated, which resulted in that “The Order's knights, including most of the visiting crusaders, pursued them for many miles elated at what they thought an early and easy victory.”; this Lithuanian flight caused the mercenary banners to panic and they too retreated until the Vice-Chancellor and Archbishop of Halicz, Mikolaj Traba, stopped them (idem, *ibidem*:48).

¹⁰³⁴ URBAN 2003:206-207. “Most Polish knights – 75% - sacrificed armour for speed and endurance, but they were not as ‘oriental’ as the Lithuanians. (...) they hardly differed from the majority of the order's forces, light cavalry suitable to local conditions. (...) many Polish knights wore plate armour and preferred the crossbow to the spear, just as did many of the Teutonic Knights' cavalry. The weakness lay in training and experience: many Polish knights were weekend warriors, landlords and young men; they were non-professionals who knew that they were up against the best trained and equipped troops in Christendom.” (idem, *ibidem*:207)

¹⁰³⁵ TURBBULL 2003:27.

¹⁰³⁶ “Here the influence was undoubtedly eastern and we see the predominance of mail and also of lamellar armour; the contrast even more marked by the lack of surcoats. Like the simpler German armours, the mail coats were reinforced with iron plates. The most noticeable feature was the distinctive helmet, which was rounded and conical in shape tapering to a point and with an aventail of mail. Mail was also used to protect the legs with leather boots also much in evidence. The Tartar contingents in Vytautas' army dressed very much in the traditional Mongol fashion, with heavy coats and boots.” (idem, *ibidem*:30).

¹⁰³⁷ To reinforce this statement, a raid undertaken by Lithuanians, much like those performed by the Order, should be considered. The Lithuanian raid on Alt-Wartenberg, from which the inhabitants did not escape, relied on cavalry, mounted crossbowmen, and infantry: “Herald Wigand von Marburg gives no details about the event in 1354. He only describes the conquest of Alt-Wartenburg by the ducal brothers, the nobles, and their retinues and the fact that none of the inhabitants escaped. What that meant is shown by the archaeological findings, which present a picture of devastation: completely destroyed houses with all their burned furniture preserved in a ‘Pompeii effect’, the bodies of the dead in the rubble of the burned cellars, the numerous bolt and

Europe – only, the eastwards expansion led to strong eastern influences in cavalry weapons and armour. Długosz does not describe the Lithuanian forces, namely how many western- and eastern-styled horsemen there were, so it should be equated that both were present amidst Vytautas' ranks. Regardless of the type of Lithuanian cavalry, while feigned flight was closely connected to regrouping and forming new units, it was also a real flight followed by a return into attack – which was possible to achieve, if scattered forces could be re-grouped; this manoeuvre was easily employed against infantry, that was not fast enough to chase after cavalry: “The simulated flight, in which retreating troops were helped by a reserve force, was possible because the knights (...) were especially vulnerable as soon as their close formation broke.”¹⁰³⁸ But the retreating Lithuanians were pursued by knights, who were later caught on their return. Plus, the panicked mercenaries were stopped. Thus, despite the problems of a feigned flight performed by an entire unit, it seems to have worked.

To support his view on the tactfulness of the Lithuanians, Ekdahl presented a letter he found in the Order's archives, that was probably requested to be written by an eyewitness from Tannenberg (the battle is referred to as the Great Battle in contemporary sources)¹⁰³⁹: Ekdahl states that the author of the letter was the commander at Schlochau, who told the scribe to write a letter for a foreign friend of the order – the letter was ultimately sent to the Grand Master as an attachment from another letter, maybe from the Order's commander¹⁰⁴⁰. The advice given is that “It might happen that your enemies intentionally let one or two banners withdraw or flee: this would be on purpose, for they hope they might break your battle formation that way, because the people usually like to take up pursuit, as seen in the Great Battle.”¹⁰⁴¹ Due to the Lithuanian withdrawal, the majority of the Order's

arrowheads witnessing to the wild free-for-all in the town's streets, and the silver coins hidden by panicked inhabitants behind cellar walls.” (BIERMANN 2019:275).

¹⁰³⁸ WILLARD (trans.) 1997:96-97.

¹⁰³⁹ EKDAHL 2010. For the MHG transcription and English translation, vide Addendum, Pt. III, Table II – Letter:377. Urban dates the letter from 1413 and says it was written by a well-informed mercenary captain or noble: “Its finger-wagging admonition to keep the ranks of the knights firmly in hand supports an alternate version of the combat given by less well-known chroniclers, that a small number of crusaders attached to the Teutonic Knights had fallen for a tactical ruse by the Lithuanians, a feigned retreat that led pursuers into a trap sprung by Polish knights waiting on the flank. The Lithuanians and Poles then drove into the disordered lines and rolled up the crusader formation” (URBAN 2003:214-125).

¹⁰⁴⁰ EKDAHL 2019:51.

¹⁰⁴¹ EKDAHL 2010.

Crusader allies dispersed after the Lithuanians to pursue or to loot the Polish-Lithuanian baggage train, having been captured or killed when, later, they tried to return to the Order's lines¹⁰⁴², even if in a first moment Długosz makes it look like the stray Crusaders returned undisturbed to the battle. But, since the Order was so knowledgeable of its' enemies' tactics, why did Ulrich or his commanders not inform the Crusaders in the left flank? Or did they, yet still the Crusaders got too carried away? Urban says it seems that the main units of the Poles were not deployed since the Germans remained defensive, waiting for an opportunity for a massive charge into the rear of a retreating formation or into a gap in the lines¹⁰⁴³ – could the Order have missed the opportunity to take serious advantage of the Lithuanian withdrawal for being engaged in the brutal fighting that ensued?

Długosz¹⁰⁴⁴ describes that the Order's and the Polish forces clashed after the Lithuanians removed themselves from the battlefield, and that while the Polish standard was momentarily down, the attackers were defeated and made to retreat. That seems to be the moment when those who had gone after the Lithuanians returned, realised there was still a battle going on, and joined the fray. Despite the hardship, the Teutonic forces held out. However, the Teutonic formation was breaking, given that Jogaila noticed them 'shattered and defeated in many places'. This is the moment sixteen reserve units were deployed and headed – seemingly – towards Jogaila's position. Stray men for other regiments rallied under these sixteen banners. Jogaila could not be backed up by his knights, given that everyone was either engaged in or about to enter combat, and so Jogaila's small standard was hidden. Nonetheless, a German knight from the new sixteen regiments, Dypold, spotted Jogaila and abandoned his ranks to attack Jogaila, but he did not succeed; much the contrary, he was knocked down and killed. Dypold's death seems to have triggered a repositioning of the troops to the right, commanded by a Teutonic knight using visual (gestures with his weapon) and sound ('Herum¹⁰⁴⁵') signals. A moment of confusion followed among the Polish troops, caused by the presence of the Lithuanian light spears (*sulice*) mentioned by Nowakowski in

¹⁰⁴² TURNBULL 2003:49.

¹⁰⁴³ URBAN 2003:124.

¹⁰⁴⁴ MIKOS (trans.) 1999. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Tannenberg 5:373.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Adverb for 'around', perhaps a command to turn around while the accompanying gesture pointed the way. First rank men would probably manage to hear and/or see it, spread the word, and the remaining ranks would follow.

the Order's ranks – the doubts were erased by an entrepreneur Polish knight who lured a Teutonic commander out of his formation. This was the final moment of the battle, when the Polish forces concentrated on the sixteen regiments – among which were Ulrich von Jungingen and the Order's high-ranking officers – and eventually defeated them.

Turnbull's and Urban's reading of the battle has some additional points. With seemingly all the Polish troops engaged in the centre, Ulrich took sixteen banners of knights into the battle – here, Turnbull states that one banner was composed by survivors of the Lithuanian counter-attack, and the other fifteen were fresh units: "This new attack was (...) launched by almost a third of the Order's original force, and thus posed a grave menace to the Polish king, whose forces were already committed."¹⁰⁴⁶

It goes against Długosz's claims that the sixteen banners were fresh, but considering the propaganda war that followed the battle and the chronicler's biased view on the Lithuanians, I acknowledge that making the Polish army defeat sixteen rested units would be more glorious than fifteen. Next, Turnbull says that, in spite of the Lithuanian flight from the right wing, the Smolensk banners continued to fight, and even though one was decimated, the other two managed to join the Polish ranks; in the meantime, the rest of the Polish army joined the fray, with Vytautas having never left the field, which gave him a good idea of what was happening and caused him to send urgent messages to Jogaila to tell him to show himself to the troops to boost their morale, at the same time that the Teutonic knights attacked the Polish lines¹⁰⁴⁷. While having the commander showing himself to the troops to boost their morale makes sense, it again goes against Długosz's depiction of concerned bodyguards hiding both the king and his standard¹⁰⁴⁸. In this regard, Urban comments that the Great

¹⁰⁴⁶ TURNBULL 2003:53.

¹⁰⁴⁷ TURNBULL 2003:49. The Grand Master's assault was not a frontal one: he went to the left, past Tannenberg, and then turned south to attack the Polish right flank – it was either to avoid the pits in front of the Teutonic lines, or maybe to collect survivors and strike where the Lithuanian retreat had weakened the Polish formation; the main target was Jogaila, "(...) because the Teutonic Knights came swooping down in to the melee that already raged in the depression just forward of Jagiello's command post."; it seems one Teutonic unit got too close for comfort, which led Jogaila to send for troops to help him, although the king's messenger was told by the commander Mikolaj Kielbasa that if his unit, fighting under the Nadworna (court) banner and heavily engaged, was re-deployed, then that would make the Germans follow them to the king (*idem, ibidem*:56).

¹⁰⁴⁸ Germans interpret Jogaila's behaviour in a negative way, whereas they acknowledge Vytautas as a brave commander in the battlefield (EKDAHL 2019:60).

Master, who should have probably given the order to retreat¹⁰⁴⁹, had his knights forming a wedge and charge at a small hill where he supposed Jogaila was, since the royal flag and heavily armoured knights were stationed there¹⁰⁵⁰. On the other hand, Turnbull defends that “The Teutonic Knights were clearly unsure of the king’s position. Jagiello’s bodyguard hurried to surround him and his lesser banner was furled to conceal his whereabouts.”; in addition, instead of approaching Jogaila’s position, the Teutonic knights wheeled towards the centre of the *mêlée*, and their appearance from the Polish rear led to the assumption that the Lithuanians had returned¹⁰⁵¹. This is the moment that was mentioned earlier, about the similarity of the Order’s weapons to that of its neighbours. However, the Lithuanians eventually made an appearance again. There was still much fighting in the centre when, according to Turnbull, Vytautas sent the light cavalry against the rear of the Order’s ranks¹⁰⁵², which Urban interprets as Vytautas taking men to Jogaila’s position¹⁰⁵³.

Ulrich’s charge did not make it past the royal bodyguards, which resulted in him being surrounded and killed with several of his best knights¹⁰⁵⁴; in turn, his fall had the rest of the cavalry retreating in disorder, which caused panic to spread to the German ranks – seemingly, the light cavalry from Kulm retreated first; after destroying the main force, the Polish knights pursued the disorganized flight – it was such that the last men could not pass through the crowd ahead of them, neither rally to fight, so they tried to surrender or died fighting uselessly; even the Crusaders who had pursued the Lithuanians returned to be captured and killed¹⁰⁵⁵. Those who managed, fled towards the Prussian camp near the village of Grunwald,

¹⁰⁴⁹ Urban suggests that the Great Master knew the horses were too exhausted to take the men out of the battlefield and so opted for putting everything into that charge: “Perhaps he hoped that his charge, coming at a somewhat unexpected angle, would find the Polish forces insufficiently disciplined to change their formation quickly enough to meet him. He was wrong.” (2003:125).

¹⁰⁵⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:125.

¹⁰⁵¹ TURNBULL 2003:56-61.

¹⁰⁵² Idem, *ibidem*:61.

¹⁰⁵³ URBAN 2003:125.

¹⁰⁵⁴ The Great Master tried to cut through the Lithuanians, but he was wounded in the face and chest and died to a lance-thrust through the neck – the *Cronica conflictus* attributes the deed to Dobieslaw of Olesnica, but while Długosz mentions him, he does not credit him (TURNBULL 2003:64).

¹⁰⁵⁵ URBAN 2003:215-216. The Great Master’s death was confirmed by a trophy brought to Jogaila, that of a reliquary the Great Master had worn around the neck; the bodies of the Great Master and other high ranks of the Order were sent to the Marienburg with safe conduct the day following the battle: Posilge recorded the Great Master’s burial in St. Anne’s chapel in the castle on July 19th, but the bodies of other fighters were buried in the battlefield; as for the prisoners, their names, origins, and status were recorded: “The knights were made to swear

yet upon reaching the wagons, the commoners turned against them and killed them¹⁰⁵⁶. The oldest casualty estimative set 8000 deaths for each side - that meant that half of the Order's fighters died, while thousands more were captured; yet from these, most of the Order's troops were killed with only secular knights and officers being held for ransom: "The dazed survivors gathered later, exhausted, wounded, and often without equipment, in the nearest cities and castles."¹⁰⁵⁷ About this, Turnbull says that almost half of the Order's troops were decimated and that 14 000 prisoners were taken; the *Soldbuch* indicates that only 1427 men (among them 77 archers) returned to the Marienburg for payment; aside from Werner von Tettingen, who escaped, all of the Order's high command perished during the battle or following it, for instance, by execution: "Markward von Salzbach, Commander of Brandenburg (Pokarmin), Heinrich Schaumburg the Voigt (bailiff) of Sambia and Jurge Marschalk the companion of the Grand Master were executed by order of Vytautas for their 'insulting behaviour after captivity'."¹⁰⁵⁸ The Order's losses were such that defences could not be manned, and survivors had taken refuge wherever they managed to, often far from their assigned locations: "The highest-ranking leaders had fallen almost to a man: the grand master, the marshal, the grand commander, the treasurer, and 200 knights."¹⁰⁵⁹

About the Order's defeat and losses, Długosz¹⁰⁶⁰ tells that, deprived of command, the Prussian army retreated towards the supply columns and the camp, but the Polish knights gave chase, resulting in the death or capture of many from the Prussian army. Though the Prussian camp was plundered, Jogaila ordered the wine caskets to be destroyed in order to keep his men sober and in conditions to fight, in case of a counterattack. The Prussian camp was located on a hill, not far from a small birch forest. The chronicler reports light reflecting on the fugitives' armour, 'which nearly all of them wore' – it is worth remembering Nowakowski's and Żabiński's remarks about plate armour elements in the Order's arsenals

to present themselves at Krakow on 11 November. The commoners swore that they would present themselves when summoned and thereafter nearly all the prisoners were set free. The exceptions were the two Pomeranian dukes (...) [that] remained in captivity for a year.", in addition to the few surviving Teutonic knights, lest they supplemented the Order's defences (TURNBULL 2003:68-71).

¹⁰⁵⁶ TURNBULL 2003:64-66.

¹⁰⁵⁷ URBAN 2003:218.

¹⁰⁵⁸ TURNBULL 2003:68.

¹⁰⁵⁹ URBAN 2003:218.

¹⁰⁶⁰ MIKOS (trans.) 1999. Vide Addendum, Pt. III – Tannenberg 6:375.

for the use of its troops. The pursuit for the fleeing troops went over boggy terrain, and stopped only by nightfall¹⁰⁶¹; since some groups tried to resist the Polish knights, many were killed in yet more fighting, or died by drowning, while others were simply captured. Długosz set the casualties for the Teutonic Order at 50 000, plus 40 000 prisoners; in addition, he mentions that 51 banners were captured, the ones displayed in the aforementioned *Banderia Prutenorum*. While chroniclers – as seen by previous reports from the Order’s own chronicles – tend to raise casualties and soak the battleground with blood, Długosz’s remarks about corpses on the road and about cries in the air seems a genuine description of the aftermath of a battle of unseen proportions.

Even though the Polish-Lithuanian army was the victor, Jogaila could not afford to rush into Prussia: the army had suffered heavy losses, men and animals were exhausted not only from the battle, but also from pursuing the Germans into swamps and forests, and from going to look for booty – Tatars and irregular troops spread around to wreak havoc and hinder the organisation of regional defences¹⁰⁶². Only after three days did Jogaila’s forces move north: he ignored the opportunity to take cities and castles that could be easily taken, instead heading straight to the Marienburg because, if he could take it, he would have a good position to spread into Prussia; many secular knights and burghers came to pledge to him, as well as the bishops of Ermland, Kulm, Pomesania, and Samland, declaring willingness to be Polish subjects if their rights and privileges were maintained; garrisons that had no orders or insufficient men surrendered to the Polish-Lithuanian army; the castellans of Osterode, Christburg, Elbing, Thorn and Kulm, that tried to organise the defences, were expelled so that the cities could be surrendered¹⁰⁶³. But after eight weeks, Jogaila lifted the siege to the Marienburg on 19th September, and while the army retreated to Poland, Heinrich von Plauen,

¹⁰⁶¹ The pursuit for retreating enemies ended about eight pm (TURNBULL 2003:68). A battle starting at nine am and stretching throughout the day (even if presumably interrupted by brief moments of pause), and then culminating in a retreat and chase punctuated by more fighting and that lasted until nightfall, is a very brutal thing that would have left men and horses completely drained.

¹⁰⁶² URBAN 2003:218.

¹⁰⁶³ URBAN 2003:221.

the new Great Master, ordered a pursuit of the Polish-Lithuanian army, which resulted in the recovery of Teutonic possessions captured by the Poles after Tannenberg¹⁰⁶⁴.

The battle of Tannenberg, though not entirely responsible for the later end of the Teutonic Order in the Baltic, had such a magnitude that a war of propaganda followed while Heinrich and Jogaila each tried to gain the sympathy of other European courts. Polish chroniclers make Jogaila a ‘*rex iustus*’, though good generalship is still attributed to him: “(...) the late attack of the Polish army was based on the clever tactics of its leadership, i.e. Jagiełło. He decided to wait until the sun was no longer an opponent of his own army, but dazzling and blinding the faces of the enemy, which was the case at noon.”; in addition, Jogaila was portrayed as a brave man, given that, according to Długosz, he had to be held back to be stopped from intervening personally in the fray¹⁰⁶⁵.

Changing societal norms acknowledged that the commander was preferable to stay alive and lead the army instead of engaging in combat for personal fame¹⁰⁶⁶, but even so the Order’s propaganda tried to portray Jogaila as a pious man useless for war¹⁰⁶⁷. Since Poland had to refrain from presenting Jogaila as a military leader because of his assigned position of ‘*rex iustus*’, the role was given (in Długosz’s chronicle) to Vytautas, Jogaila’s cousin, which greatly influenced historiography¹⁰⁶⁸.

The Order worked to convince contemporaries that crusades into Prussia were necessary then more than ever and that the defeat had been the work of the devil through pagans, schismatics and Saracens; and while the Polish tried to convince contemporaries of their own perspective, they lacked the Order’s connections and their praise of Jogaila tended to turn sympathies towards the Order: “After the first impact of the news was absorbed by

¹⁰⁶⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:226-227. “Plauen had saved his order in its most desperate moment. His courage and determination had sparked a similar commitment from others, and he had turned the broken survivors of a military disaster from beaten men into warriors. He did not believe that one battle would be decisive for the history of his organization, and he inspired many to share his vision of the ultimate victory.” (idem, *ibidem*:227).

¹⁰⁶⁵ EKDAHL 2019:55-56.

¹⁰⁶⁶ URBAN 2003:205.

¹⁰⁶⁷ EKDAHL 2019:56.

¹⁰⁶⁸ EKDAHL 2019:59.

the European courts, after the first months of difficulty had passed, interpretations favoured by the order tended to prevail.”¹⁰⁶⁹.

Still, the Order did not make it unscathed in the diplomatic realm. The Great Master was accused of not having attacked the Polish-Lithuanian army immediately by surprise and of having made tactical mistakes in deploying the units of the Order’s army, and of having taken several old Teutonic knights to the battlefield, who died in the battle and who would have been more useful defending the Order’s castles; in addition, the Poles argued that the battle had been divine punishment of the Order for its haughtiness: “It was an extremely effective propaganda that fitted well into the medieval thought pattern. In the catholic theology, superbia was one of the seven deadly sins and the swords handover had taken place.”¹⁰⁷⁰. Thus, the Order’s statement that it had been tradition and not arrogance was rejected (though Ulrich was exculpated of ‘superbia’, since it had been the Marshal sending the two swords).¹⁰⁷¹ Much less did the Teutonic Order leave the battlefield unscathed. Even though the Order’s possessions were eventually recovered in the trail of the retreating Polish-Lithuanian army, the losses in men, equipment, and warhorses were a severe (yet, as the Order stubbornly demonstrated, not crippling¹⁰⁷²) blow.

While Długosz’s account of the battle does not mention crossbowmen, he tells that, in the Prussian camp, the Polish knights “(...) found other wagons full of pine fire-brands

¹⁰⁶⁹ URBAN 2003:219. The Order’s propaganda after 1410 used the ‘pagan question’ to get support from Central and Western Europe: “Correspondence, chronicles, writings and Council records repeatedly point to the betrayal of Christianity by the use of non-Christian peoples in the armies of the Order’s opponents.”, which was dangerous for the Poles and led Bishop Wojciech Jastrzębiec of Poznań to instruct the Poles at the Papal Curia that while Jogaila had used Tatars and Russians – pagans and schismatics – to fight against Christians, those were Polish subjects and had been used to defend the kingdom; moreover, the Teutonic knights had had pagan help as well from native Prussians, “(...) from which barely a third had been baptized.” (EKDAHL 2019:48). However, even though the Order managed to survive Tannenberg, “Slowly the expeditions became more secular, more chivalric, until the crusade suffered the fate of idealistic knighthood everywhere and became an arthritic anachronism.” (URBAN 2003:174).

¹⁰⁷⁰ EKDAHL 2019:48.

¹⁰⁷¹ Idem, *ibidem*:48/53-54.

¹⁰⁷² After Tannenberg the Order and Poland became engaged not in raiding but in larger campaigns into enemy territory, with knights being replaced by mercenaries, firearms increasing in importance, and routinely lying sieges, though planning still revolved around the horses: the army should be self-supporting in enemy territory, thus sieges were laid only in the summer, when fodder was available in the fields, or in the autumn when stores could be plundered – “This was the case in 1409, 1410, 1414, 1422 and 1431 as well as during the Thirteen Years’ War of 1454-66.” (EKDAHL 1998).

soaked with tallow and tar, also arrows greased with tallow and tar, with which they were going to chase the defeated and escaping soldiers.”¹⁰⁷³ The depiction of the crossbowmen in the *Schilling's Chronicle* can, in my opinion, link these ‘arrows’ to crossbows, especially considering that incendiary bolts were used by the Order¹⁰⁷⁴. Moreover, the Order’s records show that the number of crossbows dropped in the arsenals after Tannenberg¹⁰⁷⁵, which points to lost equipment and indicates that the Order’s resources to make crossbows and bolts (or to import them) diminished. It has also been stated that the number of warhorses declined. Thus, so did the Order’s capacity to arm its’ troops and mercenaries, a blow to the Order’s economic and military power, because “(...) the battle was so costly to the order in men and material that subsequent grand masters were never again able to regain the power or prestige their predecessors had enjoyed.”¹⁰⁷⁶

But at the time of the battle, given the depiction of the mounted crossbowmen and the already mentioned archaeological findings, the Teutonic cavalry recurred to crossbowmen. Both armies were reported to employ mercenaries¹⁰⁷⁷, and the presence of infantry amidst the cavalry was commented on by Urban.

Contrary to what was described in most of the Order’s chronicles, the action of the cavalry is clearer. The battle began with a frontal charge between the heavy cavalry of the Order and the Polish knights; later, both cavalries attacked the enemy’s flank. It can be assumed that both armies recurred to light cavalry, considering that Prussian natives were among the Order’s ranks and that not all Lithuanians acted as heavy cavalry – besides, the Tatar troops present amidst the Lithuanian cavalry were traditionally light cavalry. Despite

¹⁰⁷³ MIKOS (trans.) 1999.

¹⁰⁷⁴ In the inventories of the Order appear the ‘fuerpfile’, incendiary bolts with barbed heads, with a skein of tarred oakum on the shaft that was ignited before the projectile was fired; other bolts had a container for powder (ignited before firing) below the head – these were more expensive and were used during sieges, as Długosz talks about the siege of Friedborg castle in 1307: “Erant inter Prussiae ... unus Crucifer ... qui igneis sagitis barbarous vexans.” (NOWAKOWSKI 1994:100).

¹⁰⁷⁵ EKDAHL 1998.

¹⁰⁷⁶ URBAN 2003:199.

¹⁰⁷⁷ The heavy losses on horses is one of the reasons why, after Tannenberg, the Order could no longer operate without the help of mercenaries – though it became an almost unbearable financial problem (EKDAHL 1991:37).

the problems pointed by Urban¹⁰⁷⁸ regarding the Lithuanian's 'simulated retreat', I consider the letter translated by Ekdahl and I am thus inclined to accept there was a simulated retreat of the Lithuanian cavalry¹⁰⁷⁹. At the beginning of the battle, the knights were most likely aligned in squadrons, though Ulrich's charge took the shape of a wedge. While it is unreported that knights fought on foot, Długosz does mention footsoldiers mingled in the cavalry fight when reporting Dypold's death. Reserve forces were used in Ulrich's charge and during the battle there seems to have been a series of independent fights. The fact that the Order's Crusader allies in the left wing abandoned ranks to chase the Lithuanians shows indiscipline¹⁰⁸⁰.

Interestingly, Długosz is silent about the horses that must have been captured and found in the Order's camp: I believe that, while monitoring the Polish-Lithuanian army's movements, the Teutonic knights rode riding horses, having gone on their warhorses to the battlefield – it must have been more practical, and they probably had not counted on having to wait stationary for three hours for the battle to begin.

Although not even a widely studied battle such as Tannenberg is fully understood, it still contrasts greatly with the cavalry actions that have been exemplified through the Order's chronicles – most obviously, the source used was not written by a Teutonic knight or a

¹⁰⁷⁸ "(...) if the retreat was a ruse, why was there no ambush of the pursuing forces? Or was there? More likely, the flight of the Lithuanian wing of the army was not planned. Jagiełło was (...) a cautious commander, and he would have understood that the retreat of an entire wing of his army would have been a disaster if the victorious crusaders had maintained discipline and charged with their full force into the gap left by the fleeing horsemen, then smashed into the flank of the royal forces." – in addition, Urban considers that the forest in the rear of the Polish line would have complicated a retreat, and that it perhaps shielded the central Polish formation from view or from a proper attack from the flank or rear (URBAN 2003:216-217).

¹⁰⁷⁹ I did not have access to all sources about the battle, and yet again, the letter discovered by Ekdahl cannot be ignored. But it should still be kept in mind that orderly discipline was important for a feigned retreat: "The challenge is for the cavalry to "flee" convincingly – i.e. fast and messily – enough to trick the defenders into abandoning their formation, and once that has happened, the cavalry need to be able to react promptly to their commandant's signal to stop, turn around, re-form, and attack." (GASSMANN 2018:77). As Urban has pointed, it is unclear if the Lithuanians who left the battlefield reassembled to attack again. Perhaps they were not able to in time, due to the forest behind the Polish lines.

¹⁰⁸⁰ The general agreement is that the Order's defeat was a consequence of the undisciplined chase after the Lithuanians, and that the disarray was exploited by the Polish and Lithuanian units under Vytautas' command; no contemporary sources provide numbers besides Długosz, and there is no agreement as to the composition of the Polish-Lithuanian army, but it is unimportant: "(...) the disruption of the German lines on the left wing led to a subsequent victory in the centre by the Polish forces. The Lithuanians had hitherto borne the brunt of the fighting, as the casualty figures substantiate, and they were still contributing significant pressure on the foe's disintegrating lines." (URBAN 2003:217).

Teutonic cleric, and that Tannenberg was a field battle. Nonetheless, observations can be made. The most striking difference is the sheer size of the armies and of the baggage trains following both of them (the Polish-Lithuanian's was still on the road). The communication routes were better. The knights did not fight in a forest, nor over the frozen Baltic Sea. It was not a raid into enemy territory to plunder and burn, nor an assault to a fortification, and the knights did not ride out to intercept an enemy raiding party laden with booty. Ulrich and Jogaila were monitoring each other, which allowed for the knights to ride riding horses to the battle site while their warhorses were led by hand. A great battle was fought in a field as open and as flat as possible. These, I believe, were the biggest changes seen by the Teutonic cavalry in the Baltic from the 13th to the 15th centuries. Yet, some elements remained: the small numbers of knight brothers and the Order's reliance on Crusaders; the remnants of the Wilderness in the landscape; scattered trees on a battlefield surrounded by forest and boggy terrain; the Order's officers dying in the fighting. And the knights astride their warhorses, waiting for the enemy to attack at any moment.

Now that the theatre of operations of the Order and the type of operations carried out by the Teutonic knights have been explored, I believe that, finally, an attempt can be made at assessing the knights' minds.

5. Trauma

Though the history of psychological trauma began in the 19th century with 'railway spine'¹⁰⁸¹, the usual conception that psychological trauma started with WWI implies that looking for signs of trauma before that conflict is pointless, given the differences between warfare and the lack of scientific insight into the human psyche, and proper concepts and diagnostics¹⁰⁸². Because trauma and traumatizing processes are consequences linked to certain realities, studying these in the past contests the utility that the modern concept of PTSD can have in understanding the past; furthermore, it can also question whether trauma and traumatic event are applicable to human experiences regardless of epoch or culture, since

¹⁰⁸¹ METZGER 2014:46.

¹⁰⁸² KERTH 2018:274.

it cannot be assumed that, in different times, people functioned the same as nowadays¹⁰⁸³. However, though terminology and understanding must certainly differ, I believe that – in the present context – medieval knights in a military order were exposed to conditions that could lead to psychological trauma:

“Several post-modern researchers in the field of psychiatry have written that ‘trauma’ as a diagnosis cannot be established in the past because the idea – that ‘a person exposed to violence may become traumatized and so be recognized as a victim – is in fact quite a recent idea.’ To their credit, Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman acknowledge that trauma may well have existed earlier, though not by that name – meaning not, in their words, as it is currently used in the field of mental health, as ‘the traces left in the psyche’ to be treated as a medical condition – rather, something ‘wrong’ with a person that was ‘suspicious’ in the modern world.”¹⁰⁸⁴.

It is a new and, I believe, needed approach. It not only brings humanity to people who are still considered ‘less’ humane than their 21st century counterparts, but also provides new perspectives to pose different questions, or even the same questions, under a new light:

“(…) although we may not possess material like medical files or video testimonies that record experiences of trauma, that does not mean that we cannot attempt to ask questions about experience, remembering, feeling and what those things meant to the people of the Middle Ages. In interrogating those issues, a past that sometimes seems so difficult and unfamiliar might be drawn just a little closer.”¹⁰⁸⁵.

Two researchers that have caught my attention are Heebøll-Hollm and Eickman, the first for applying the term PTSD to medieval knights who went on Crusade to the Holy Land and the latter for interpreting passages of the *CLP* as describing episodes of PTSD. Though I disagree with the usage of ‘PTSD’ and will thus use the broader term ‘trauma’ instead, I consider these researchers’ work pertinent.

Psychologists hypothesise that violence is either latent in the genes or something that is learned, and for Heebøll-Holm, the perception of violence in the Middle Ages lies between

¹⁰⁸³ METZGER 2014:44-45.

¹⁰⁸⁴ TURNER et LEE 2018:3. The *CLP* tells of two episodes of self-harm, and though these are presented as ‘pious’, one of the knights was called out on it, which could indicate his behaviour was perceived as something wrong going on with him. Both examples can be found further below.

¹⁰⁸⁵ CASSIDY-WELCH 2017:626.

the two: “From crime statistics and letters of pardon, historians can see that people in the Middle Ages were no more violent than we are today” (...) “But they had a different perception of the use of violence, including lethal violence.” “¹⁰⁸⁶ Considering the frequency of conflict during the Middle Ages, it could be assumed medieval minds were more resilient¹⁰⁸⁷.

Indeed, a Teutonic knight was a professional warrior, and in average he probably already had his fair share of experience in conflict at the time of his profession, given the great influx of *ministeriales* into the Order and the tricky stability in the Empire. But then this knight found himself in a military order, following a diet, plenty of rules as to how he should behave, in theory with no permitted amusements other than woodcarving and hearing readings at meals, sticking to a weird sleeping schedule that was imposed due to religious offices... and upon exchanging the Empire for the Baltic, he arrived to a warzone where manoeuvring was hindered by harsh weather, thick forests, swamps, and where conflict was constant (thus interfering with routine) and brutal – his actions, on one hand:

“Contrary to contemporary images of chivalric prowess, frontier warfare in the Baltic was indeed a dirty, brutal and cowardly form of violence that inflicted considerable hardship upon the rural population on both sides of the frontier.”¹⁰⁸⁸.

The brutality of the Baltic crusades served as a means to secure conversion, though the chronicles of Henry of Livonia and the *LRC* seem to report that destruction was the objective to be achieved if conversion was not, plus that killing and destruction were partially seen as a means to the end of accepting Christianity¹⁰⁸⁹:

“Explanations of the orders’ activities in the Baltic region must take into account the fact that pagans in that area were treated differently from Muslims in Mediterranean lands. (...) The explanation of the differing attitudes to pagans and Muslims seems to lie in the perceptions which Christians had of the enemy. Pagans in central and eastern Europe appear to have been seen as primitive and warlike peoples with only a rudimentary religion. The only possible

¹⁰⁸⁶ DE LAINE (trans.) 2011: <https://sciencenordic.com/anthropology-denmark-depression/violent-knights-feared-posttraumatic-stress/1398550> [10/8/20].

¹⁰⁸⁷ SAUNDERS et FERNYHOUGH 2016: <https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-29/november-2016/looking-back-medieval-mind> [10/8/20].

¹⁰⁸⁸ JASPERT 2017:9.

¹⁰⁸⁹ FOREY 1992:48.

approach was to convert them, which formed an important part of the civilising process, or to destroy them.”¹⁰⁹⁰.

Problem is, how many knights fought out of Christian duty¹⁰⁹¹, out of sheer pleasure, out of nothing else to do – and how many coped with killing. Furthermore, Bernard of Clairvaux distinguished secular knights (‘malitia’) and holy knights (‘militia’) through the moral quality of a knight’s mission and his ‘emotion of the heart’: “(...) the knights of Christ fight the battles of their Lord securely, by no means fearing either to sin from the slaughter of the enemy or the danger of their own death (...)”¹⁰⁹² – without this kind of mental shields (and perhaps even with these), serving in the Baltic likely took a toll on some knights.

On the other hand, the knight also had to deal with the actions perpetrated against himself. In general, crusaders were victims of obloquy because “The reason was that failure in God’s own war fought at his bidding could not possibly be attributed to him, but only, as it had been in the Old Testament, to the unworthiness of the instruments at his disposal, in this case the soldiers of Christ.”¹⁰⁹³. Making the crusaders guilty of failure, though

¹⁰⁹⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:48-49.

¹⁰⁹¹ A knight’s sense of Christian commitment (‘Ritterfrömmigkeit’) was mostly due to Christian values tangling in the heroic ethos than only religious matters: “(...) crusading offered a means through which the heroic ethic could be drawn into a Christian context.” (PEYPER:48) This can be observed in the *LRC* and thus raises the question of how many knights would have their consciousness clear once all the epicness of their deeds began to wear off and they were left with no superior cause to justify their actions. It is debatable that the Teutonic Order possessed a religious identity before 1291, when a form of ‘Frömmigkeitsbewegung’ (Pietism) appears within the Order around that time, noticeable in the additions to the Order’s Statutes throughout the rule of different Great Masters - these additions reveal disciplinary problems, such as holding private property, the knights having their own money to buy their horses and using ornate tacks and weaponry, and even how the knights enjoyed their free time (FISCHER 1984:16-17). For instance, the knights were accused of ‘*Vil spacîren unde ummerîten*’ (idem, *ibidem*:17), ‘viel spazieren und immer reiten’, that is, much sightseeing and always riding.

¹⁰⁹² SPENCER 2019:58.

¹⁰⁹³ RILEY-SMITH 1999:72. The first half of the 13th century saw a decrease in the interest in crusading in Western Europe (NICOLLE 1996:28), allied to a growing criticism against the military orders after the loss of the Holy Land – for instance, in 1268 Roger Bacon criticised the Order’s actions in Prussia: “The brethren of the German House ruin all hopes of converting them owing to the wars they are always stirring up, and because of their lust of domination. There is no doubt that all the heathen nations beyond Germany would long ago have been converted, but for the brutality of the brethren of the German House, because the pagan race has again and again been ready to receive the faith in peace through preaching. But they of the German House will not allow it because they want to subjugate them and reduce them to slavery and persuasions, they have for many years deceived the Roman church. This is notorious, otherwise I would not make the charge.” (FISCHER 1984:11-12) This critique to violence was due to a new perception of the human being, ironically developed through the Crusades to the Holy Land and the contact with ‘the other’, the Muslim (idem, *ibidem*:57).

ideologically necessary, made them targets for abuse¹⁰⁹⁴; but crusaders did not only suffer at the hands of their peers. In the Baltic, crusaders captured by Lithuanians could expect death by fire as a sacrifice to pagan gods; prisoners could also be sold, such as the case of Lithuanians selling Poles to Russians – if no ransom or exchange happened, the prisoners were enslaved.¹⁰⁹⁵ Captured Teutonic knights also experienced torture before death, as is described in the chronicles, and perhaps during captivity as well, at least when they were taken for slavery instead of ransoming¹⁰⁹⁶. Considering that between 10% and 90% of people who experience torture in modern times can develop PTSD later, and in view of the written evidence for torture during the crusades, “(...) we might expect a small but notable proportion of the population to have suffered with disfigurement, disability or posttraumatic stress disorder.”¹⁰⁹⁷.

But watching a comrade being tortured and be unable to do anything about it must have also taken a toll on a knight. The *LRC* describes how a knight was tortured before death, how another was burned alive and how the surviving captured knights were later ransomed. These knights were likely to have witnessed what happened to their deceased comrades, and though they were happy to be alive, they were certainly scarred for life:

“The loss of their leader was also a blow to the Semgallians. They vented their rage on the Brothers who had been captured in the battle. They immediately bound one to a horse and martyred him by beating him to death with clubs. As soon as he died, another lost his life when they set him upon a grate and burned him (...). The Semgallians were pleased at the outcome and gave thanks to their gods for their success in battle. They took weapons and horses worth many marks and returned home with their prisoners, whom they later ransomed. Those who had survived were thus able to return, rejoicing in their good fortune at being rescued from the heathens. There was great mourning in the land at the death of Master Willekin, and all those commanders and advocates who had been in his army. The total number of Brothers in the expedition was forty. Thirty-five died. Four lived, but were

¹⁰⁹⁴ RILEY-SMITH 1999:73.

¹⁰⁹⁵ EKDAHL 2016:268: “Polish chroniclers, as well as those of the Order, repeatedly tell us how the Lithuanians used their prisoners of war to settle their lands. According to a remark from the year 1420, it was considered a tradition that captives who had already been settled could no longer be made to return to their own lands.” (idem, *ibidem*:268).

¹⁰⁹⁶ Not many knights must have had Ludwig von Liebenzell’s luck. Ludwig seems to have been prone to getting captured and befriending his captors: for example, vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP*14 – Ludwig and Skumantas:336.

¹⁰⁹⁷ MITCHELL 2013:17.

captured in the battle. The fifth escaped by force of arms, as I mentioned above, and with God's help he avenged the injuries he had suffered. Later he repeatedly led armies against them and ravaged their lands, as you will later learn."¹⁰⁹⁸.

The perspective of capture and slavery must not have been a pleasant one. As for death and martyrdom, it again goes down at what was in a Teutonic knight's mind¹⁰⁹⁹. Regardless of my inability to reach it, a knight looking in the face of death and seeing it wearing the faces of his comrades (or even his own) must have been affected to some degree. Death in the Baltic could be gruesome. For instance, the *LRC* tells us of a sole surviving knight who was captured and had to carry around the severed head of his commander, after which he was executed – despite the outcome, the episode must have disturbed him during the time he was still alive, judging by how he was reported to lament that only he remained and had to carry the head:

“Whoever hopes to strike down his foe must not tarry. Force can break walls, and if one wishes to win a battle he must inflict losses on his enemy. That is what happened at Wenden. The Commander and his Brothers came out to fight at the wrong time. He charged a very powerful army with only five hundred men. To what avail was his courage? Most of the Brothers were killed. Only one of them escaped to bring home the dismaying news. Nine Brothers were killed in the battle and a tenth¹¹⁰⁰ had to carry the severed head of his

¹⁰⁹⁸ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:129.

¹⁰⁹⁹ “(...) Christianity also offered resources for accepting suffering, which could be understood as punishment for sin but could also be embraced as a means of refining the soul. It is possible too that the distinctly modern-looking understanding of the relations between cognition and emotion might have had a protective effect. The trauma of violence or death is of course a central aspect of extreme emotional experience, whether this is secular or spiritual: Christ's passion is affective precisely because of the extreme violence he suffers and the horror of this for the onlooker.” SAUNDERS et FERNYHOUGH (<https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-29/november-2016/looking-back-medieval-mind>) [10/8/20], 2016. Bernard of Clairvaux's solution to remove a knight's fear of death, martyrdom, and killing can be found in other theatres of operation, though adapted to the local circumstances: “(...) Henry of Livonia (...) utilized arguments of trust in God and remission of sin as antidotes to the fear of death, (...) The ideal of fearlessness still penetrated Henry of Livonia's chronicle, yet he did not dwell on the role of martyrdom in manifestation that emotional state and the specific context of the Baltic – recently branded *terra horrois*, the ‘land of horror’, by one historian – appears to have demanded a degree of fear acceptance.” (SPENCER 2019:62). The Order's chronicles lament death, but not always praise martyrdom.

¹¹⁰⁰ According to the translators, “This is one of the passages we must use to estimate the size of the crusader armies. Ten knights were stationed in that convent, which was a major castle. With the native *milita* they could

commander back to Lithuania. He lamented to God that the other Brothers had been slain while he remained alive and had to carry the head. This was forced upon him by Lengewin, who, after hurrying home, then killed him to avenge his own brother whom the Master had slain (...)”¹¹⁰¹.

The *LRC* also tells of another instance where knights were captured. One was executed and the other, that the chronicler indicates to be young, was eventually ransomed. This young knight probably witnessed what happened to his comrade, and it was most likely hard to forget:

“The commander himself set out with a fine force of brave sergeants and Brothers. They came charging up to the castle of Kreteinen, and those inside were angered that anyone dared ride so close. Immediately everyone, both foot-soldiers and riders, fiercely charged the Brothers. They fought back, but the heathen force was too strong for them. What more should I say? A brave and chivalrous hero named Veltemus was slain there, and two other Brothers lay dead at his side. The others were hard pressed, but God in heaven helped them escape back to Memel. They had also lost some of their good sergeants. May God save their souls. Two Brothers were captured and I will tell you what happened to them. One was the commander, and he did not survive their hatred. They roasted him on a grate. The other, a youth named Conrad Wirschinck, was later ransomed.”¹¹⁰².

In neither instance is martyrdom praised.

On the contrary, the *CLP* also tells of a knight, Gerhart, who was captured and sacrificed by fire. Though the event must have aimed at inspiring the knights to accept martyrdom¹¹⁰³ by referring to Gerhart as ‘God’s elect knight’, some knights must have found Gerhart’s end unsettling and probably hoped they would meet a different death:

“When the heathens had killed everyone there they captured Brother Gerhart von Rude, advocate of Sambia, put him in chains and cruelly put him to death in this way: they dressed him in the armour of three men and set him on a horse which was tied to four stakes, according to their custom, and then put so much wood around it that they could barely see

raise a force of five hundred men. Therefore, the ratio of knights to other cavalry must be high, perhaps ten or twenty to one, and higher if mounted infantry are counted.” (SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:43).

¹¹⁰¹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:43.

¹¹⁰² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:86.

¹¹⁰³ Again, it is necessary to keep in mind that the *LRC* was most likely written by a knight whereas the *CLP* was written and translated/expanded by priests of the Order.

horse or man, and then they set fire to the wood and burned God's elect knight to death in the resulting furnace. This was done as an offering to the heathen gods for their victory."¹¹⁰⁴.

Heebøll-Hollm's study on Thomas de Marle provides relevant material to extrapolate to the context of the Baltic Crusades. Presenting a list of combat-induced and warfare-related stressors, the author considered the following that resemble most conditions described in medieval sources: exposure to heat and cold (a continuous physical strain that wears down the warrior's resistance), exposure to dirt and mud (hostile conditions that obstruct the senses and cause confusion and constant irritation), sleep deprivation and fatigue, noise, smells and malnutrition, losses of friends (injury or death), feeling of fear¹¹⁰⁵, helplessness, shame and guilt, carnage and killing¹¹⁰⁶. While these are conditions knights were exposed to and did not always lead to trauma, the possibility of it occurring should not be discarded.

It should also be kept in mind for the current discussion that even for those who were not in the Baltic – for instance, knights who professed in the Empire before being sent to convents in Livonia or Prussia – it was a place that already held a reputation: “David Fraesdorff has shown that in the medieval imaginary, the North was a cold, dark and inhospitable place which contemporaries closely associated with fear and devilish manipulations.”¹¹⁰⁷.

5.1. Exposure to heat and cold

Extreme weather conditions, most specifically cold, are described in the Order's chronicles. Though most fighting took place in the winter, extreme cold proved deadly for

¹¹⁰⁴ FISCHER (trans.) 2010: 5647.

¹¹⁰⁵ Spencer defends a different approach to the emotions portrayed in Crusading texts: “Overall, the multiplicity of ways in which fear was conceived, represented, and deployed in crusade narratives suggests that attempting to excavate the actual feelings of protagonists from these texts is an oversimplification and methodologically flawed, not least because it ignored the myriad social, cultural, and literary influences which shaped medieval attitude towards, and representations of, fear.” (2019:117). I defend that a global approach should be taken, that of considering theological, philosophical and literary canons, and also keeping in mind that, as human beings, knights (and in some instances, those who wrote about them – I believe it is necessary to be careful with ecclesiastical writers) had feelings and expressed them.

¹¹⁰⁶ HEEBØLL-HOLLM 2014:242.

¹¹⁰⁷ JEZIERSKI 2017:112.

the men¹¹⁰⁸. The *CLP* tells of an aborted expedition, because the weather was too cold and the crusader army that joined the Teutonic knights was not prepared to withstand the cold:

“In the year of our Lord 1323 the lords of Zinnerberg and Egerberg and even more pilgrims from Bohemia and the Rhineland were in Prussia to fight there, and wanted to campaign with the brothers in Lithuania; but the winter was so severe that the army had to return: the brothers were afraid that the inadequately clothed army, which was unused to the frosts, would die of cold. That winter was so cold that the fruit trees did not survive the frosts. (...) In the same cold spell the ice on the salt sea was thicker than anyone could remember, so thick that you could ride in a straight line from Denmark to Lübeck, a distance of 15 miles across the sea.”¹¹⁰⁹.

The *LRC* seems to indicate that some men froze to death on a campaign to intercept Lithuanian raiders:

“Thus he rode along many paths until he came to Wiek, which lies on the sea. All those he had summoned joined him there. The king’s men came with many proud squadrons, and Bishop Frederick came from Dorpat with everyone he could bring. He had exerted himself in this and willingly contributed all his people to the force. And so the Master brought a huge army, including his own men, onto the wild sea. The winter was very cold, and that proved costly for many a mother’s son. The heathen army was returning from Ösel, after having looted and burned part of the land. The two armies approached each other on the sea until each side caught sight of the other. Both armies realized they would have to fight, and the Lithuanians drew their sleds up into a defensive position. The ice which covered the sea did not break under the great weight placed upon it by both armies. It was thick enough for all of them.”¹¹¹⁰.

In another instance, the *LRC* explicitly reports men freezing to death, both Crusaders and natives, which shows that not even the Baltic peoples could withstand the extreme cold: “The winter was so very cold that many men, both Christian and heathen, suffered greatly. Many undaunted warriors, daring and outstanding men on either side, froze to death.”¹¹¹¹.

¹¹⁰⁸ Extreme winters also caused major losses of horses (NICOLLE 2007:45).

¹¹⁰⁹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5753.

¹¹¹⁰ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:96.

¹¹¹¹ Idem, *ibidem*:104.

5.2. Exposure to dirt and mud

Though not explicitly referring to the knights crawling on dirt and mud, the chronicles do tell about the discomfort of travelling through the forest, and of how defeated knights had to escape through forests as well.

The *LRC* reports the knights having to escape through thick forest, which must have been an uncomfortable experience – especially after having to retreat:

“The battle ended when those Brothers, sergeants, Samites and crusaders who survived were unable to fight any longer. They all had to flee for their lives, however they could. Then the heathens took great booty unopposed. At this time there was heavy foliage in the forest, and the Christians had noted it well. Those who sought to save themselves from death fled into the forest and learned what it was to crawl away after a defeat. Thus was the army vanquished. I have read that Master Burckhardt had been Master in Livonia for four and one-half years and no more. He was greatly mourned, for he was a rare warrior. He had been born in Hornhausen.”¹¹¹².

The *LRC* also tells about the knights taking difficult paths to get to their targets, as well of how exhausting the journey was for men and horses; and though there is still no mention to mud, moving about in soaked clothes must have been uncomfortable:

“The defeat in the Stables in Riga still pained them, and when Master Willekin boldly said, “I will defeat the Sengallians, or we will all die,” the Brothers all approved. During their pursuit of the enemy, they encountered many difficult paths where neither bridge nor crossing had even been built, and they often became drenched in the streams. They travelled for three days and suffered great discomfort. On the evening of the third day the army decided to rest and made camp in a forest by a stream. The forest was so thick and dense that they had no need of hitching posts for their horses. They just let them stand in the woods. And so the army gathered, made camp, and built numerous fires. The forest echoed with the sound of wood-hewing. The people were tired, as were their horses, and everyone longed to rest.”¹¹¹³.

¹¹¹² *Idem, ibidem*:71-72.

¹¹¹³ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:126.

5.3. Sleep deprivation and fatigue

The military orders maintained monastic routine and six prayers throughout the day, while also training for combat and looking after equipment and horses¹¹¹⁴.

The Rule, paragraph 17, *How and where the brethren shall sleep*, indicates that “All the healthy brethren, if it can be easily arranged, shall sleep together in one room, unless the superior orders that some brethren, because of official duties or (...) other matter, sleep elsewhere (...)”, and also that they must keep clothes on and a light in the room¹¹¹⁵. Though it is not explicit if this applies to both knights and sergeants or if sergeants slept separately, it nonetheless indicates that a number of men slept together in the same space, which could have led to unfortunate circumstances: light sleepers might have struggled with their neighbours’ snoring and with the light in the room, thus reducing sleep quality. A more serious issue is presented in the Rule, paragraph 8. *How they shall come to and hear divine service*, that tells that “The brethren, priest and lay, shall jointly come day and night to divine service and to the hours (...)”¹¹¹⁶. Religious offices at night meant disrupted sleep: that is unpleasant by itself, and in the Baltic winter it probably became more. Between services the knights had tasks and had to tend to their horses and equipment, but there is little surviving information about the military training and exercises within an order during times of peace, as rules were meant to ensure that some activities characteristic of secular knighthood were not pursued¹¹¹⁷. Training must have occurred between offices. The Knights Templar followed a schedule¹¹¹⁸ that perhaps was not too different for the Teutonic knights.

¹¹¹⁴ BOAS 2016:555-556. The Teutonic Order must have followed a similar schedule to that of the Templars: vide Addendum, Pt. III, table III - Templar schedule:379.

¹¹¹⁵ STERNS (trans.) 1969:224-225. For the whole paragraph vide Addendum, Part III, *Rule*, paragraph 17. *How and where the brethren shall sleep*:380.

¹¹¹⁶ STERNS 1969:213. Lack of sleep seems to have been an issue, because in Laws III, paragraph 16. *That each brother keep his own particular place during divine service* tries to provide a solution for those who oversleep (be it from exhaustion or boredom): “Each brother shall keep his own place for chapel where he may hear divine service, and, if any brother by night or by day oversleeps divine service, the brother who has the place next to him shall wake him up. Likewise, those who are next them shall awaken those who sleep at divine service. This is also to be observed in the houses.” (idem, *ibidem*:256). Paragraph 54 of the Customs, *How the brethren shall take their places before the chapel* instructs that those who oversleep on campaign must be awoken as well (idem, *ibidem*:314) – vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Customs*, paragraph 54:380.

¹¹¹⁷ FOREY 1992:192.

¹¹¹⁸ CORRAL 2018:39. Alterations must have occurred in times of unrest.

As has been stated above, training could not differ so much from that of secular knights, and it was probably harsher, given that Teutonic knights had to be a cohesive unit: thus, a bad sleeping schedule allied to demanding exercise would have exhausted the knights. Not to mention that, in case of an attack on a castle, the garrison would have this routine disrupted, and the knights would hardly get any rest at all. The *CLP* tells of a restless night, but during a campaign:

“In the year of our Lord 1314 (...) the Marshal took warriors from the region of Natangia and Sambia, along with their brothers, and set off against Lithuania to the region of Medininkai. One night after he arrived some Lithuanians crept into the army, stabbed four Christians and stole two horses. The noise this caused meant that the army was disturbed all night, but they were not diverted from their purpose (...).”¹¹¹⁹.

Furthermore, the knights also travelled by night in difficult terrain, and sometimes had to fight at night as well – as such, being unable to rest properly. According to the *LRC*:

“Then the army left Riga and went to Dünamünde, where it made camp. This is the name of a cloister on the coast. Sometime before midnight, Traniate and his forces attacked the Brothers’ army. They sprang up and organized a defense, even though one could not really see well enough to fight. They had no choice but do battle by moonlight. Some of the heathens were killed but who could truly say whether friend had not slain friend. The battle took place at night. The battlefield was red with blood and nine Brothers and some of the burghers were slain.”¹¹²⁰.

5.4. Noise, smells, and malnutrition

Not much is said about the sound of battles, but it can be assumed to have been disorienting for men and animals. Battles are obviously noisy places and must have been filled by the clash of metal and the screams of men and horses. The chronicles commonly contain the words ‘hacking’, ‘slashing’, ‘stabbing’ – these are some words that evoke the sounds of fray, and since the chronicles were meant to be read aloud at meals, it is likely that

¹¹¹⁹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5481.

¹¹²⁰ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997: 85-86.

such words would resonate with the knights, especially if some were contemporary to the subject being read.¹¹²¹

Another type of sound that would have been distressing is that of storms. Men could become discouraged due to storms and bad weather on the eve of fighting – “Utterly demoralized by the physical suffering, wet clothes and the cold, perhaps also influenced by the fear of the unleashed powers of nature (...).”¹¹²² Such a situation can be found in the *CLP*:

“In the year of our Lord 1317 Brother Heinrich the marshal assembled a force of Natangians and Sambians and set off during winter to the province of Vaikiai. When he was so close to the area that he intended to attack that he planned to launch his assault the following morning, and just after they had gone to sleep that night, a terrible thundering noise was heard above them, as if all winds were clashing and thundering in a tremendous thunderstorm. Everyone was very unsettled by the constant noise and all the horses became so restless that they reared up, pulled free of their halters and ran off into the woods where they could only be caught again with very great difficulty. As a result of all these crises the army became so scared that the campaign was abandoned and they returned home. Afterwards it was discovered that the Lithuanians had also assembled a huge army which had been waiting for the brothers for three days in battle order at Vaikiai. If they had ridden into the province, they would all have died in this huge ambush. The earlier events prevented this from happening.”¹¹²³

Numbers are not given to the native auxiliaries, but since the Marshal was in command, it seems certain that there were at least two brethren with him, a knight and a sergeant¹¹²⁴, which, not counting with the knight’s own entourage, makes at least three professionals of war. Nevertheless, the brethren are not told to have been less affected by the storm just because they were professionals. This passage of the *CLP* is particularly interesting for mentioning how the horses were disturbed, having broken free and fled – and indeed (with varying degrees of sensitiveness) horses become altered on windy days and are particularly nervous during storms. It should be noted that, aside from the noise caused by

¹¹²¹ For example, the author of the *LRC* relied on oral and eyewitness accounts to relate earlier events, but was probably involved in the events closer to the completion of the chronicle (PEYPER:4)

¹¹²² WILLARD (trans.) 1997:46.

¹¹²³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5573-5583. It is interesting to notice that no miracle is attributed to the storm and consequent avoidance of the enemy forces.

¹¹²⁴ The Marshal’s office and his entourage are addressed in Part III.

the storm, there must have been a lot of neighing and restless pawing at the ground, which would have unsettled the men as well.

As for smells, even though there are no references in the chronicles, it can be assumed that the scents of a battlefield would encompass blood, guts, urine, and faeces. In addition, setting camp near a bog or burning down a village or a fortification during a raid would result in unpleasant scents in the air, like scorched flesh¹¹²⁵ – not to mention having to breathe inside metallic headgear. I would like to point out, too, that the Wilderness itself might have smelled of decay and that Teutonic knights could have been exposed not only to the scent of it, but also to the sight of hung corpses in varying states of decomposition and more or less gnawed by animals, which must have been disturbing. Already Henry of Livonia had portrayed the Wilderness as a deathly place – it was a place for the natives to ambush the Crusaders and a place for suicide: “Since it was now winter, the Lithuanians who escaped through the woods, because of the difficulty of crossing the Dvina, either drowned or hanged themselves in the woods (*in silvis suspenderunt*)”¹¹²⁶. The *CLP*, too, tells about Lithuanian troops hanging themselves in the woods:

“The Christians continued the slaughter and the pursuit all day and all night until they had put to death all the Lithuanians. Many of them died by drowning; some hanged themselves or died of despair”¹¹²⁷.

As for malnutrition, there was a period of fasting and a diet¹¹²⁸ the knights had to stick to. However, considering the knights had to be in fighting shape, I share Forey’s opinion

¹¹²⁵ For example, according to the *LRC*: “After the wood in the moat was ignited, the fire spread to the castle with a great blaze. Even though everything around them was catching fire, the Lithuanians continued to fight the Brothers in the midst of the flames. (...) There was no escape, and they were slain amidst the flames. All the Kurs over eleven years of age were also killed and thrown into the fire. The army managed to carry much booty out of the fire and took captive the young Kurs who escaped the blaze. Those women who wished to survive the inferno had to stretch out their hands to the Brothers and plead for their lives. Many were granted their pleas.” (SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:74-75).

¹¹²⁶ NIELSEN 2011:165-166.

¹¹²⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5370-5406.

¹¹²⁸ According to the Rule, meat could be eaten three days a week; for the rest of the time, eggs or dairy products were the source of protein; Friday was a weekly fast day, though there were other 21 fast days and Lent, plus a meatless period during most of November and December; meals mainly consisted of eggs, milk, porridge and water; when not fasting, there were two meals a day consisting of two courses, whereas on fast days there was one meal of one course and mead, wine or beer replaced the evening meal (TURNBULL 2003:44-45). Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Rule*, paragraph 13. *How and what the brethren shall eat*:380. Some of the food consumed

on how fasting and diet were not as strict for the knights: “Though the compilers of the Templar rule regarded a superfluity of meat as a ‘burdensome corrupting of the body’, meat-eating was probably allowed in order to ensure that brethren were strong enough to fight.”¹¹²⁹ – the same must have applied for Teutonic knights; but whereas Templar fasting did not normally coincide with the campaigning season (the winter months), it did for the Teutonic Order¹¹³⁰; yet, since ‘other necessities’ are mentioned in the Rule, I believe fasting was not strictly followed by the knights. But there were other opportunities for a knight to be faced with malnutrition: the chronicles relate how besieged garrisons ran out of provisions and grew too weak to fight, how meals had to be interrupted to take up arms, and how expeditions either got lost in the woods and could not find their stashes of provisions, or found said stashes emptied by the enemy – thus the men were forced to eat roots and their horses to avoid starvation.

The *CLP* tells about interrupted meals, which not only must have been annoying and frustrating, but also left the knights hungry – which most likely brought about a series of

seems to have been turned into humorous content, maybe to make the knights feel better about it. The *CLP* tells of a Prussian elder who went to investigate the knights and reached an original conclusion: “This same Sambian had also seen the brothers eating cabbage, which was something the Prussians did not do at that time. For that reason, he thought it was grass. ‘I also saw them eating grass for nourishment, like horses,’ he said. ‘Who could stand up against men who can survive in the wilderness in this way and eat grass as food?’ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2758-2768. It might have made the knights feel better about the food, but might also have “(...) raised merry comments from the listeners about the quality of the diet they were consuming.” (https://department.monm.edu/history/urban/articles/humor_of_Teutonic_Knights.htm [27/11/20]).

¹¹²⁹ FOREY 1992:193-194.

¹¹³⁰ Paragraph 15. *Of fasting by the brethren*. From the Sunday prior to St. Martin’s Day [November 11th] until Christmas, and from the Sunday seven weeks before Easter until Easter Day, except Sundays, and furthermore on Twelfth Night, and the Eve of the Purification of Our Lady [February 1st], St. Matthias Eve [February 23rd], Fridays from All Saints Day [November 1st] till Easter, and St. Mark’s Day [April 25th], unless it falls on a Sunday, and on the three days when the Cross is carried [Adoration/Good Friday, Finding (May 3rd) and Elevation (September 14th) of the Cross], and on Whitsun Eve, and on the Vigil of St. Philip and St. James [April 30th], and on the Vigils of St. John the Baptist, and of St. Peter and St. Paul [June 23rd-28th], and of St. James [July 24th] and of St. Lawrence, and on the Vigil of our Lady in mid-August, on St. Bartholomew’s Day [August 9th, 14th, 23rd], and on the eve of Our Lady when she was born, and on St. Matthew’s [September 7th-20th], on St. Simon’s and St. Jude’s Day, on All Saint’s Eve [October 27th-31st], on St. Andrew’s [November 29th], on St. Thomas’s [December 20th], and on all four Ember days, the brethren shall fast on Lenten fare unless infirmity or other necessity demand otherwise; and if the vigils fall on a Sunday, then they shall fast on Saturday instead. On Fridays, from Easter until All Saint’s Day, the brethren may eat Lenten fare twice a day, unless, lest the laity be scandalized, the province commander with the better part of the chapter, counsels otherwise.” (STERNS (trans.) 1969: 222-224).

consequences that hindered their capacity to fight, ranging from a simple bad mood (not ideal to follow commands) to physical symptoms like sickness (not ideal to fight):

“(God alone knows what dangers, fears, anguish and hardship the Brothers and the Christians suffered in the towns and castles and elsewhere in the country during the 15 years of the Prussian revolt. No-one alive now knows the full extent of it. Because of the assaults of the enemy they seldom had the time or the peace to eat their meals without having to get up once or more to defend themselves or start fighting (...).”¹¹³¹.

Expeditions getting lost in the forest and misadventures with stashes are also accounted for in the *CLP*, as well as the consequences of going without proper nourishment for long periods of time:

“At the beginning of autumn that same year the marshal, Brother Heinrich, commanded all his people to follow him with enough supplies for four weeks and set off on a long, strenuous journey across swamps, marshland and rivers, mountains, valleys, sand and dense brush, in short, as hard a journey and as difficult a campaign as any army had ever set off on from Prussia in all the time the brothers had held that country. The campaign was aimed at the Krivich lands. Because of the distance they had to travel they hit on the excellent idea of leaving two loads of their supplies of food at particular spots, so that they would be able to find them again on their return. They left the final load along with the drivers of the wagons close to Gardinas, according to my information, and then turned towards the region of the Krivichi, who by then had had advance warning of their arrival. The inhabitants had taken refuge in fortresses and in the forests, so that they were unable to take advantage of their long journey by attacking the people. Instead they burned down the town of Novgorodok and all the surrounding area which belonged to it, and then spent the night resting in front of the castle at Krivich, attacking the enemy with missiles and causing many injuries on both sides. Diwan, a Pomesanian nobleman, was shot and died of his wounds during the campaign. Since the campaign had been unsuccessful the army turned homewards again, very disappointed that had not had better fortune. When they reached the spot where they had left the mule drivers with the supplies their hopes of relief were shattered, because David of Gardinas had killed 30 of them and taken away all the rations and equipment which had been left there. He had also seized around 500 horses and driven them off to Gardinas. There was a tremendous outpouring of misery because hardly anyone had any bread or anything else to eat. This completely broke the morale of the army. On the long journey home through the wilds some were forced by hunger to eat their horses. Many a bold hero had to grub for roots and eat

¹¹³¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010: 3797.

leaves to stave off the pangs of hunger. A fair number who were delicate by nature died because they could not digest the tough foodstuffs. Nonetheless they had great hopes for the second spot where they had left food. When they arrived they did not find anything there either, neither the people nor the food they were depending on. They had all gone home because the army's return had been delayed beyond the agreed date and they thought they had all been killed. What a terrible shock it was when they found nothing there, because all their hope of help was gone. They did not know what to do, but looked wretchedly at each other, each of them shocked at the sight of the other because their faces, which had been pink, plump and fresh, were now sunken and ashen as a result of starvation. But no-one could comfort the others in the plight they found themselves in because they were all equally unfortunate. The good marshal showed how sorry he was about the pitiful predicament of his people by weeping¹¹³² openly and giving the army leave to split up and go home by whichever route they chose to find food. They set off in great rush and many rode 20 miles in a day to hurry home. Many were so broken down that they barely managed to get home in six weeks from the day they set out. The effects of starvation made them look like dried-out sticks and they were barely recognizable, because many of these warriors travelled 100 miles from the Krivich lands without seeing or eating bread. Many died later as a result of being given something to eat."¹¹³³

Besides problems with stashes of food during expeditions, the *CLP* also portrays situations of starvation – and its effects in health - in siege contexts. For example:

“No-one can fully comprehend or imagine the attacks and the danger, the suffering and the serious hardship the brothers and the Christians who were besieged with them at this time had to suffer. Starvation brought them to the point that they ate the sheep, cows, pigs and all the horses they had in the fortresses; they even had to eat the animals' skins because they were so hungry. Many brothers and others lost all their teeth eating this tough, unaccustomed diet and chewing the skins.”¹¹³⁴

¹¹³² For ecclesiastical writers of the 12th and 13th centuries, weeping was a religious practice that crusaders were expected to perform: weeping could symbolize dedication to the cause, show awareness of personal sin, present as a gift to God or imitate Christ, while at the same weeping was also a visible manifestation of a crusader's humility, contrition, and as petitioning God: “Weeping interacted with the theme of Christian community in several further ways: participants were expected to shed tears of compassion over their deceased brethren and crying was also depicted as a gesture expressing the affection that apparently existed between co-religionists. Tears of love undoubtedly had spiritual value, and they thus epitomize the lack of distinction contemporary ecclesiastical writers made between ‘religious’ and ‘non-religious’ sobbing.” (SPENCER 2019:157/172). However, it should also not be discarded that Heinrich might have been truly desperate.

¹¹³³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5492-5525.

¹¹³⁴ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3028.

Disfigurement has already been mentioned. Considering one of the instances in the *CLP* where a knight has a tooth knocked out (“The knights were particularly sensitive about teeth¹¹³⁵.”, says Urban), it can be assumed that physical appearance was important for the knights¹¹³⁶, and thus less agreeable looks – such as lacking teeth – might have caused them discomfort (not to mention the impact it had on the consumption of food).

The effects starvation had in strength can also be found in the *CLP*, once again following a siege:

“The castle of Wiesenburg (...) was besieged by the Prussians for nearly three years during their revolt, according to what I have read. They set up three trebuchets in front of the castle, from which they subjected the brothers to frequent heavy bombardments and daily attacks. One day, when some of the besieging army had ridden off a way, it happened that the brothers were fortunate enough to capture one of the trebuchets and bring it into the castle with them. They used it to defend themselves, often inflicting serious damage on the enemy army and gaining respite for themselves. Some time after this the brothers and their garrison ran out of food so completely that they were no longer able to survive there so they had to secretly abandon the castle. They left it in 1263 and took the road to Masovia. When the Barthian leader, whom they called Diwan, heard that the brothers had run away with all their men, he set off in hot pursuit with a troop of armed men. When he had chased them for a good while, his men became discouraged because their horses were exhausted. Then he had the idea of selecting the 13 men with the best horses and followed the brothers’ tracks with them until he caught up with them: this was a measure of how angry he was with them. The brothers and their companions were so starving that they did not put up much of a defence: they were incapable of defending themselves or fighting from weakness and tiredness. He killed three of them in the first onslaught but then the others saw the danger they were in they began to defend themselves in spite of their weakened state. They did this so effectively that the Prussian leader was so seriously wounded that they were barely able to rescue him. The brothers set off immediately on their way again and escaped without further incident.”¹¹³⁷.

¹¹³⁵ https://department.monm.edu/history/urban/articles/humor_of_Teutonic_Knights.htm [20/11/20]. Perhaps to overcome discomfort, the knights tried to humour it. Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP* – Sailing:350.

¹¹³⁶ The fact can also be a critique, considering that holy knights were supposed to have left the vanities of the world (vide Addendum, Pt. III, *Rule*, paragraph 12. *Of the shaving of brother clerks and lay brothers*:382). But the complete baldness of a knight named Albrecht and the chronicler’s own remarks about the subject seem to point that physical appearance was still important: vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP5* - Albrecht:383.

¹¹³⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3226-3237.

5.5. Losses of friends (injury or death)¹¹³⁸, feeling of fear and helplessness

Casualties on both sides are reported in the Order's chronicles¹¹³⁹, and in a few instances the *CLP* describes how friends or siblings were parted by death. Mourning for the dead is often described in the chronicles, be them Teutonic knights or individuals who must have meant something for the Order and/or its knights. Sometimes, both chronicles also represent the knights expressing grief and despair – in one of the examples above, Heinrich, the commander, broke in front of the army by 'weeping openly and giving the army leave'. The loss of a favourite warhorse must have also taken a toll on a knight. Fear and helplessness, when attributed to the knights, are usually represented after a battle that went wrong for the Order, or after a particularly grim siege – even though fear was linked to cowardice, because fear led to shameful actions such as deserting and fleeing from battle, the external expression of fear was not shameful or cowardly in itself, given that an individual's external response to fear determined his honour (or lack thereof)¹¹⁴⁰. This episode from the

¹¹³⁸ "(...) it is well possible that medieval authors consciously used trauma narratives because it allowed a verbalization of emotions and a way of socializing the audience to the existence of trauma and the forms it can take. (...) My examples Orgeluse, Willehalm and Karl demonstrate first that medieval figures react mostly to the loss of beloved persons and less to life-threatening situations or acts of extreme violence that they experience or witness." (KERTH 2018:296). Though this excerpt applies to secular literature, I find it relevant in the context of the Order's literature: the chronicles were meant to educate the knights, and I believe this education comprised the Order's mission, the hard work of preceding knights, and helping the knights to process trauma. Perhaps, life would be easier for them if they heard that someone in the past had dealt with the same problem as them, and how the knights in the chronicles had dealt with it might have helped the audience of knights find their own way of expression.

¹¹³⁹ "Fourth comes a morbid fascination with death that was approached ironically. All the various ways of becoming a corpse are mentioned in the chronicles, and the demise of countless numbers of enemies is recorded joyfully, and, in a subtle way, almost humorously." (https://department.monm.edu/history/urban/articles/humor_of_Teutonic_Knights.htm) [25/10/20]. For instance, in the *CLP*: "It happened that during the battle Brother Gebhard, a Saxon by birth, chased after fleeing Prussians and in the pursuit he struck one of the Prussians such a blow that his head fell off. He left his head lying and ran after the others with just the stump of his neck. Finally he dropped dead of his injury. Each and every one of them thought that this terrible run was a great wonder, but it was a catastrophe for the runner and for the Prussians it was a great disgrace." (FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3126).

¹¹⁴⁰ SPENCER 2019:116. A cowardly response to fear could also result in humour – the *CLP* tells the amusing story of one of Swantopelk's men, who was terribly afraid of the Teutonic knights (vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP6* - Prank:383) and, as Urban points out in a passage of the *LRC*, not even priests were safe from mockery (https://department.monm.edu/history/urban/articles/humor_of_Teutonic_Knights.htm [27/11/20]): "The [Russian] army advanced on the castle, and the clerics feared death greatly. That had always been the way with them and still is today. They say one should defend himself bravely, but they seek safety in flight." (URBAN et SMITH (trans.) 1997:82. Though these examples from the Order's chronicles certainly praised the knights for fighting, the humorous tone probably helped the knights to cope with their daily life in the Baltic.

CLP describes that the Teutonic troops (seemingly the knights as well, since they were aware of their disadvantage) retreated from battle, an action attributed to fear:

“(…) they sent envoys to Master Meinhard, asking him to come to their assistance with his men, which that bold hero undertook to do without hesitation. When he arrived and attacked the army the two dukes immediately fled and the whole Polish contingent followed them. When the brothers saw this, they too were afraid because they could not fight off the large army on their own. So their troop also broke off from fighting the enemy, but not without incurring losses; many brothers and other people were injured.”¹¹⁴¹.

However, interpreting some passages as representing fear and helplessness can be subjective, and though I believe that portrayal of emotions should never be discarded, Spencer’s earlier remarks should also be kept in mind. Furthermore, these are Teutonic knights, and ideally, they should not feel fear. The ideal holy warrior relied on God, hence he did not fear death and from c. 1110 was willing to be a martyr – fear was not an appropriate emotional reaction at the perspective of eternal life, and this characterization of the ideal holy warrior is recurrent in connection to the Templars¹¹⁴² — it can be applied to the Teutonic Order as well, since both were military orders fighting for Christendom. Nevertheless, they were still men and men are fallible, and as has been stated above regarding Henry of Livonia, fear seems to have been accepted to some point in the Baltic.

The following example from the *CLP* is about two siblings, Philipp von Boland, office-holder, commander of the army and older brother of his unnamed sibling. According to the *CLP*, not only did Philipp watch his younger brother die, it also seems to be a direct consequence from his choices as commander – whether he felt responsible for it or not is unknown, but Philipp’s reaction is of grief and anger over his loss. In crusading texts regarding the Holy Land, anger was depicted usually in response to physical injuries (such

¹¹⁴¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4674.

¹¹⁴² SPENCER 2019:57. According to Bernard of Clairvaux’s *De laude novae militiae* (c.1129-36): “Certainly, the knight is fearless and free from all anxieties created when he has clothed the body with the breastplate of iron [and], in another way, the mind with the breastplate of faith. And without doubt fortified by both arms, he fears neither demon nor man. Nor indeed does he fear death, for he longs to die. For what he might fear, either living or dying, when *to live is Christ and to die is gain* (Philippians 1.21)? He stands firm confidently and willingly for Christ but to a greater extent he wishes *to die and to be with Christ* (Philippians 1.23), for this is better. Therefore, knights, proceed securely, and with an undaunted mind drive out the enemies of the cross of Christ …” (idem, *ibidem*:57).

as the slaughter of comrades), thus justifying acts of brutality; but narratives seem reluctant in justifying wrath with religion¹¹⁴³. I believe this can be applied to the Baltic as well, namely to the following example. As for grief, Philipp is not described as having cried, and as such can be assumed he expressed it with aggression.

“In the year of our Lord 1305 Brother Philipp von Boland, who according to what I have read was the advocate of the bishop of Sambia, set off into Lithuania along with nine brothers and 200 men and burned down three villages which belonged to the king, killing or dragging off with them everything they found there. During this time all the nobles in the country were with the king on important business and did not know what was happening. When the noise of the outcry reached the court and the king heard, he set off to track them down with 1,500 armed men. By this time the brothers were so far away that they thought they were out of danger and they had laid down their weapons and their armour. Two hundred horsemen had ridden on ahead in the company of one brother to take the plunder home. The other brothers were following at their ease with their men, some distance behind. The king’s army took them by surprise. They defended themselves but during the first attack the younger Boland was run through by a spear and killed. When the advocate saw his relative die he was so grief-stricken and furious that he put his shield on his back, took his sword in both hands and gave the murderer such a blow that his head came off. The brothers kept up their defence until four of them had been killed by the enemy: the two von Bolands, Brother Bernard von Honstein and John, a good brother, along with six of their men. Then the Christians who had gone on ahead came rushing back to the battlefield making a huge noise and the king got such a fright from their arrival and the sight of them that he and all his men simply threw down their weapons and fled. The brothers counterattacked, killing 17 of the great nobles of Lithuania; they also hacked to death many of the ordinary Lithuanians.”¹¹⁴⁴.

Regarding knights and their horses, though nothing is told about knights mourning the loss of esteemed warhorses, the *CLP* tells how Heinrich Zuckschwert reacted to having his horse injured during a fight – it could have been out of sheer affection towards the horse, or simply because the horse was useful and replacing it would be hard, or both:

“On the return home the Lithuanians followed him [Brother Meinhard] with a powerful army and began attacking the brothers. Among the robbers attacking them was Jesbuto, who had

¹¹⁴³ SPENCER 2019:222.

¹¹⁴⁴ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5219-5229. The chronicle also tells a story about two friends, Hermann and Friedrich, whose love for each other drove ‘God’s paternal hand of discipline’ to intervene, though they were still entitled a happy ending: vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP4* - Friends:382.

formerly been an ally of the brothers but had now turned against them. When he was in range he left the others and attacked Brother Heinrich Zuckschwert, wounding his horse. This distressed and angered the brother, who set off after him and attacked him, running him through with a spear. When Jesbuto realised he was mortally wounded he wanted revenge but he was too badly hurt to turn round. Nonetheless he lashed out wildly. One of the blows landed so as to hack off one of Zuckschwerts's fingers. That was how the battle between them ended."¹¹⁴⁵.

As for fear and helplessness, it seems to me that the following episode from the *LRC* can be used as an example. To begin with, the Teutonic banner went down, and that alone clearly was demoralising¹¹⁴⁶. Secondly, probably some of the knights fighting for survival were afraid of dying and felt impotent (yet again, these are only my suppositions: some might have welcomed martyrdom, others might have been content with a glorious death in battle). The battle was hard-fought and the native auxiliaries had deserted¹¹⁴⁷: though this is recurrent in the chronicles, I believe it is possible that some knights might have felt betrayed, and seeing the natives leave and be unable to stop them probably made them feel powerless (yet again, it all ultimately depended on a knight's faith). There were significant casualties in number and character, and at least some of those who managed to survive must have been disturbed by all that to some degree:

“The Brothers' army had fortified its camp, for it had learned beforehand that the heathens were hurrying after them. Many of the natives had left the Brothers' army and ridden home, and thus did not take part in the battle. The heathen army arrived in separate groups, as I have heard, and these should have been attacked, but they delayed too long. There was hesitation on both sides. When their main army arrived, the heathens felt the time right and launched an attack on the Brothers. Both sides began to fight. They hacked deep wounds, and blood flowed through the snow. Many dauntless warriors, daring and outstanding men from both

¹¹⁴⁵ FISCHER (trans.) 2010: 4614-4652.

¹¹⁴⁶ The subject of banners will be addressed in Part III.

¹¹⁴⁷ In crusading texts pretraining to the Holy Land, some writers avoid describing fear among Crusaders because that clashed with the perception of crusading as manly – but this same association of fear to a lack of virility could also be used to symbolize the weakness of certain people: “(...) in casting their principal protagonists as intrepid warriors who were capable of inspiring terror, several chroniclers conceptually linked emotions and powers; and the emphasis on the fearful reactions of Muslims protagonists effectively communicated the accomplishments and collective power of the crusaders.” (SPENCER 2019:116). Again, I believe it can be extrapolated to the Baltic. Fleeing auxiliaries are recurrent in the chronicles and many defeats are attributed to that, as such it must have been a real situation. However, it is also worth considering that the chroniclers aimed at manipulating their protagonists' courage besides reporting a battle.

sides, Christian and heathen, fell in grim death. The snow turned red from blood. The Brothers' army broke the heathens' formations, and Eilard, a good warrior hostile to all heathens, pursued them with his forces and struck many dead. The heathens were hard pressed. Now the Brothers had fought bravely in the battle, but they were outmatched. The huge heathen army rallied, and there ensued a melee of Christians and Lithuanians. There was hacking and stabbing and rivers of blood spurted through the steel rings of armour. The Brothers were defeated. The flag of Our Lady was cut down without mercy, and the knight who held it, whose name was Johann, was killed. God save him from all distress. He was a warrior from Thisenhausen, and may the angels in heaven comfort his soul, for he was full of virtue. Even after all these men had been slain, the Master and his Brothers remained undaunted. They suffered great and unbearable agony and fought a losing battle. The Semgallians fled and left not one of their men behind. This dismayed the Christian army, and when the heathens became aware of it, they advanced with their forces. The Brothers' flag was down, and that was a blow to the Christians. Master Ernest and seventy-one good Brothers died in the battle. They shed their blood for God. After Eilard had pursued and slain the heathens, as I mentioned earlier, he hurried back to the Brothers. When he approached the battlefield and heard the news that the battle was lost, he was pained and angered. He deeply mourned the Master's death. A large squadron of heathens held positions to either side of his escape route, and this was the hero's undoing. He spoke to his knights, "For my sake, stand by me, to live or die. I am completely exhausted." Some of the Brothers had dashed off with him earlier, and with these he now charged the heathen army. The heathens fought back. Lord Eilard's horse was shot from under him during the escape, and he was mortally wounded. The others barely managed to cut their way out through the heathens. Lord Eilard was slain, and well may we mourn it."¹¹⁴⁸

Another example for feeling fear and helplessness can be found in the *CLP*, and though it does not concern a knight – perhaps a sergeant – I opted for including it because it is clear this man's experience was frightful:

“On this campaign one of the brothers' men-at-arms returned miraculously from Lithuania in the following way: when Brother Albrecht was campaigning in the province this man was close behind him. During the chase the man fell so heavily to the ground from his horse that he was concussed and lay senseless for a few moments. When he recovered, he looked around and could see neither banners nor horses. This caused him great concern and distress and he called on God and the Virgin Mary to rescue him from the dangerous situation he found himself in. In return he would serve them even better than he had in the past. He passionately

¹¹⁴⁸ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:102-104.

commended himself to their protection, making the sign of the cross to ward off all harm and walked off towards Ragnit. He came across a village and asked the people the way to Ragnit., which they pointed out to him. When he had gone a short distance after leaving them they regretted having let him out of their hands because they realised that he was one of the brothers' men (because he was carrying weapons). They all began furiously to hunt him down with dogs. When he realised from the noise that they were following him he was very afraid and hid in some brush. They searched for him so close to his hiding place, often circling within three paces of him with the dogs, that they could have touched him, but God prevented them from seeing him and they did not find him. Finally they gave up and, abandoning the search, they went home. He then set off once more on his journey and quickly arrived safely at Ragnit, still carrying his weapons and giving thanks to God and His Mother for their help, because he had escaped from his enemies.¹¹⁴⁹

5.6. Shame and guilt

These are harder to identify in the chronicles, because holy warriors should not feel guilty or be ashamed to carry out their duties. The closest representations of these feelings can be found in the *CLP* and are propagandistic: the one regarding guilt (and shame, to a degree) is about an unnamed knight who decided he should join a more demanding order, only to have a dream that caused him to change his mind and withdraw his previous wish during the chapter meeting; another is about Albrecht von Meissen, whose extreme baldness brought him much shame (but he was miraculously healed)¹¹⁵⁰. Thus, I can only assume that perhaps some knights felt shame under specific circumstances¹¹⁵¹, like after defeats or forced retreats, since these situations would clash with their beliefs in faith and in their martial capacities, and maybe there were instances of survivor's guilt, especially in situations when, from a group of captured knights, some were killed and others were ransomed later. I believe that, unless explicitly written down, finding shame and guilt in the knights' actions can only be interpreted by individual researchers, thus making it too subjective.

¹¹⁴⁹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5592-5604. I opted to include this man here because his tale is too good, trauma-wise, to let pass: not only he suffered head trauma from falling off his horse, the fear he felt is described simply and in a human manner, with no 'heroic' contaminations. He did what anyone would do in an extreme situation: commend himself to a higher being and try to do something for himself.

¹¹⁵⁰ Vide Addendum, Pt. III, *CLP5* - Albrecht:383.

¹¹⁵¹ Disfigurement has already been hypothesized.

As an example, this part from the *LRC* allows the reader to wonder whether Master Anne felt guilty or ashamed (or both) of having failed to achieve victory, of having lost his knights – and of having left them unburied. One can only wonder:

“When the Master saw them, he did not hesitate, but charged through the Samites with the Brothers. Many hands were hacking, swords were clashing, and blood spurting through many good coats of armor. Blood flowed on both sides. Many Christians saved themselves by fighting their way through the barricade, but even so some of them were slain. The Master hacked through the pagan army and moved toward the sea, but he lost some of his Brothers in the battle. (...) The Master barely escaped through the barricade to the sea. His army had been decimated in the attack on Samland as you now know. The dead remained there, and Master Anne turned back with his men toward Kurland, traveling along the seashore.”¹¹⁵².

An episode from the *CLP* features a knight named Herman von Lichtenburg, who chastised himself by wearing armour against his skin, causing it injury, until he was healed by the Virgin¹¹⁵³. Eickman suggests this story shows coping mechanisms to deal with the guilt that a knight, in this case Herman, felt due to his actions:

“The wounds of his body surely match those in his mind, as he wore his armor as a constant “chastisement” for his perceived sins. It is not hard to imagine that these sins were bloody actions undertaken during the Baltic Crusade. These sins are then forgiven and his body healed by the direct intercession of the Virgin Mary. Passages such as this illustrate the importance of lived religious experiences for healing traumatic experiences, and even physical wounds.”¹¹⁵⁴.

Though an apparition is hard to believe, I am willing to accept some knights had rather poor coping mechanisms to deal with shame and guilt. Herman’s confessor is told to not have liked this situation, and to have tried to get Herman to remove the armour during times of peace – this shows that self-harm was an unwanted practice, since it compromised a knight’s performance. Perhaps, confessing their actions did not bring the knights relief, or perhaps confessing them aloud only made them feel worse, since fighting for the faith was their

¹¹⁵² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:54.

¹¹⁵³ Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP7* – Hermann von Lichtenburg:316.

¹¹⁵⁴ EICKMAN 2017:55.

mission. Thus, I second Eickman's opinion on how those physical wounds could match an injured psyche.

The *CLP* tells the story of another knight, named Engelkin, who seemingly had the habit of wearing a hauberk directly over his skin¹¹⁵⁵, and though interpreting these episodes as the knights being unable to cope with shame and guilt might be erroneous, for they clearly aim to demonstrate Herman's and Engelkin's piety, I believe these stories still portray knights bothered by something they could not deal with.

5.7. Carnage and killing

Death abounds in the chronicles, with varying degrees of gruesomeness, and it was routine for the knights. As has been stated, it is likely that most knights already had combat experience by the time of their profession, hence some probably had developed coping mechanisms to deal with death. Furthermore, the sense of fighting for a worthy cause probably helped them to cope – this, again, would vary according to the religiousness and motives of each individual knight. Thus, being affected by carnage and killing would probably differ from knight to knight. Even so, collective reactions to it are recorded in the chronicles, showing that, despite whatever mental shields the knights had, the destruction around them still affected them.

The *CLP* can be used as an example. Though the knights' reaction is exaggerated by religious motifs¹¹⁵⁶, I believe similar instances – of knights looking around and being affected by the suffering around them – must have happened:

¹¹⁵⁵ Vide Addendum, Pt. II, *CLP5* - Engelkin:316. I find Engelkin's story rather contaminated with religion, given that his name is composed by 'Engel' (angel) and his location is told to be Christburg (literally, Christ's castle). But even if Engelkin was fabricated, his story must have served a purpose and for that I included it here.

¹¹⁵⁶ The translator notes that the last line is a biblical reference to the Macabees. But self-violent displays of grief (tearing of hair, beards and clothes, fainting and the smashing of fists) were a familiar motif of vernacular literature, and representations of crusaders mourning and lamenting can be as brutal as those attributed to women – these inclusions in chronicles show influence of *chanson* culture (SPENCER 2019:182). According to Murray, the *LRC* is literarily and linguistically close to heroic epics like the *Nibelungenlied* – Murray suggests that the *LRC* was "(...) created with the intention of being attractive to a certain 'aggressive, warrior-mentality' demographic within the German knightly community in order to promote the crusade in Livonia. The prevalence of violent and exciting battles in the *Chronicle* suggests that as promotional piece *The Livonian*

“(When the army had left the country and the brothers saw the evil that had happened there and the great misery inflicted on the poor Christians, they said to each other in great distress: ‘Woe on us, why were we born, since our lives are so full of misery and we must look on as our people are hacked to pieces and wiped out or driven off? Woe to us Lord God, alas and alas. Are we now to see our land fall into the hands of the enemy? Alas for the wise old men who ruled this land and who now lie terribly murdered, and also the young bold heroes felled by the enemy’s sword. This is our lament to you, lord; maidens and children who had been free are now in eternal slavery and suffer piteously. This land, which was once full of people and wondrously fertile, now see how devastated it is! The churches have been burned down and their ornaments removed; all our beauty has been destroyed and we have been pitilessly attacked by the evil heathens; they rule over us in terror, they have power over us; alas, why should we go on living?’ Then the brothers tore their clothes and put on their mourning clothes.)”¹¹⁵⁷.

Other predisposing factors for trauma that Heebøll-Holm identified on Crusaders, such as continuous vigilance and a constant state of readiness¹¹⁵⁸ can be deduced from the context the Teutonic knights were inserted in, as has been demonstrated.

The knights were complex men, driven by various motives, meant for combat, and must have formed complex relationships among themselves and with their warhorses. The hardships they faced in the Baltic must have taken a toll on men and animals alike, and while through the Order’s sources I can only have a glimpse into the knights’ minds, “(...) it should be understood that good knights may have to undergo hard trials and adventures (...).”¹¹⁵⁹.

Rhymed Chronicle is designed to appeal to the more violent or adventure-seeking tendencies in knights rather than their Christian evangelical convictions.” (PEYPER:51).

¹¹⁵⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2267-2279.

¹¹⁵⁸ YOUNG 2011: <https://uniavisen.dk/en/medieval-combat-manual-shows-that-knights-had-stress-disorders/> [10/8/20].

¹¹⁵⁹ KENNEDY (trans.) 2005:95.

FINAL REMARKS

“Don’t adventures ever have an end? I suppose not. Someone else always has to carry on the story.” – Bilbo Baggins (J.R.R. Tolkien)

At the beginning of this thesis, first and foremost I sought to understand how Western European cavalry tactics performed by an elite force applied to the context of the Baltic, as well as what adaptations were made according to the environment surrounding the Teutonic Order in the Baltic; in addition to this, I also aimed at investigating the Teutonic warhorse and horse-keeping in the ‘Ordensstaat’.

I believe these topics were sufficiently covered throughout this thesis. Across episodes from the Order’s chronicles to the battle of Tannenberg, it was shown that the Teutonic Order relied on cavalry – heavy and light – and that the Order employed Western European cavalry tactics. Archaeology and the Order’s own records provided insightful information regarding warhorses and horse-keeping, confirming that the knights’ warhorses not only were bigger than the native horses, but were also fed differently and sustained particular injuries. However, the terrain did not always permit for a complete employment of Western European cavalry tactics: the dense forest and boggy terrain hindered movement, meaning the knights could not always charge at their enemies neither fight on horseback all the time; in addition, war was a business running all year round, with different types of campaigns according to season.

The restrictive weather and terrain led the Order to adapt its cavalry, keeping it highly mobile by discarding the usual Western European baggage trains that, nonetheless, did make a later entry in the Baltic, when communication routes improved, together with a large affluence of European knights wanting to have the Crusading experience. Knights rode out on their warhorses, in their armour, carrying whatever they might need, for not only the weather might catch up to them – Teutonic knights were as prone to being ambushed in the forest as being the ones to lay out ambushes, and while the knights maintained their Western European riding, they adapted to the terrain and to the foe, a trait that can be seen in how their equipment was permeable to Baltic influences and at how they grew accustomed to how Prussians and Lithuanians fought. However, though the Order’s cavalry was undoubtedly well-equipped and cunning, that did not always grant the knights victory, for the peoples they were up against had the advantage of number, familiarity with the terrain, and not too different equipment; most important, however, was that the Baltic peoples adapted to the Order’s knights and their technology.

This thesis also explored the knights' background before joining the Order, as well as their time of service, in an attempt at removing some of the anonymity shrouding them – to achieve this, social backgrounds, geographical origins, ages, behaviours, motivations, and the knights' techniques to cope with trauma were explored. In addition, I also tried to better understand the relationship between the knights and their warhorses on a professional and personal level, thus attempting to treat the warhorse as more than a tool for combat. Again, I believe these topics were adequately explored. It was established that the knights came from the Holy Roman Empire and even what regions were more represented in Livonia and Prussia, also the impact that had in the Order's internal dynamics. Most knights came from *ministerialis* backgrounds and, at the time of their profession, already had combat training. The Order's records and chronicles provided insight into some individuals' careers, and even allowed for some horses to be known, today, by name. While finer details regarding horsemanship could not be ascertained, it was still possible to conclude that the warhorses played a significant role in the Order's life, with many details regarding castle building and logistics revolving around the horse. The Order bred and, consequently, trained its own stock of warhorses, even though knights brought their own horses with them. The fact that many procedures from the *Book of the Order*, extrapolations from the Templar's Rule, and entries regarding registration and veterinary care for horses point towards the knights seeking to maintain their warhorses operational. But the type of riding required to perform efficient cavalry manoeuvres, the necessity to know the horse a knight was riding into a forest where he could be ambushed at any moment, the bond established from spending hours on the saddle, and records of named horses, suggest the knights esteemed their warhorses as comrades. Nevertheless, finer details regarding horsemanship, the knights' motivations to join the Order, their methods of coping with trauma, and how attached they were to their brethren and horses remain insufficiently explored.

Despite the conclusions achieved, there are aspects that remain poorly understood. Not to mention, some of the subjects sufficiently addressed in this thesis could be subject to further study. Furthermore, not only were found problems that influence the quality of research work about Teutonic cavalry in the Baltic (or medieval cavalry elsewhere), but some questions and ideas for future research also began to form.

To address problems first, one of the biggest handicaps for the subject of the Teutonic Order is that there are many original sources and works in German, Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, and even Latin and Russian, that immediately become the forbidden fruit to those who do not possess the necessary language skills, regardless of one's entrepreneur nature and collection of grammars and dictionaries. Many aspects regarding the Order's actions in the Baltic feel shallow (at least in English literature), for example, the evolution of the Order's logistics throughout the centuries and the deployment of mounted crossbowmen.

Another issue has to do with cavalry written from a desk instead of from a saddle. While procedures described in medieval sources may go unquestioned by researchers that do not deal with horses, the contrary applies to researchers who deal with horses on a regular basis.

Lastly, there is the overlooking of traumatic events in a medieval knight's life, especially those that might lead to psychological trauma. While it is dangerous territory given the subjectivity of interpretation and the inability to ask the knights their perspectives on the matter, it is also a line of investigation that should not be cut if the possibility to sustain one's conjectures with facts presents itself.

Regarding the questions related to the Order's cavalry that occurred to me along the way (and that I have not attempted to answer in the current work), some I consider pertinent. Where/how did men and horses train? What kind of horse and what type of riding did a mounted crossbowman need? What fate awaited traumatized knights and horses: rehabilitation or retirement? Did sergeants break their horses? Did knights ride on non-combat saddles when raiding, in order to be able to ride with a bent knee or jump obstacles if needed? I can only hope these can be of scientific value, and can be answered with more research – perhaps, by material I did not have access to for this thesis.

Besides seeking answers to the questions above, I also suggest new lines of investigation – preferably in English, for greater accessibility. A more thorough comparative study between cavalry action in Western Europe (including the kingdom of Portugal) and Teutonic cavalry in the Baltic could result in a better understanding of medieval combat riding, and even of the horses and knights themselves. More experimenting with medieval

tacks could reveal more about medieval horsemanship. A research comprising Teutonic cavalry in the Baltic, the Middle East, the Burzenland, and Spain could unravel similarities and show differences in the Order's cavalry action. Comparing traumatic events featured in the Order's chronicles with similar events described in other medieval chronicles could help understand the resilience and breaking point of a knight's mind. To achieve these, a multidisciplinary approach needs to be taken, for only that can shed new light on old topics and unearth new ones.

Thus, here is not the end of all things.

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ADDENDUM

Part I

- **CLPI** – Foundation of the Teutonic Order:

“Eleven hundred and ninety years after the pure Virgin gave birth to Christ, when the city of Acre was being besieged by the Christians and during the campaign when, with the help of God, after many fierce battles it was recaptured from the control of the heathens, there were a number of pious and devout merchants from the cities of Lübeck and Bremen among the Christian army which made the journey across the sea. Looking about them, they were distressed to witness the hardship and great discomfort endured by the poor sick people among the German contingent. They were merciful people so out of kindness they took action and founded a hospital on the battlefield among their tents. It was made from the sail of a cog, according to what I have read. (...) This is the reason the princes and lords were assembled there in the Christian army in the service and honour of God: the worthy Patriarch of Jerusalem and Archbishops of Tyre, Caesarea, and Nazareth, the bishops of Acre and Bethlehem, King Henry of Jerusalem and a large number of his men, the Master of the Hospital of the Order of St John and the Master of the Order of the Temple and many brothers from both orders. Also present were many barons from the Holy Land, Lord Ralph of Tiberias and his brother, Lord Hugh, Lord John of Ibelin, Lord Aymar of Caesarea, Lord Reynald of Sidon and many other honest lords from the kingdom of Jerusalem; there were also many great lords from Germany brought there by the will of God: an archbishop named Konrad who held the bishopric of Mainz, and Bishop Konrad of Würzburg, who was also Chancellor of the Roman Empire; Lord Volker, bishop of Passau, Bishop Gardolf of Halberstadt and the bishop of Zeitz, who had all come in the name of God. Many high-born princes had come to wage war on the heathens. Their names were as follows, according to what we have heard: the praiseworthy Duke Frederick of Swabia; an outstandingly noble and virtuous prince named Henry who was Count Palatine of the Rhineland and duke of Brunswick; also Duke Frederick, a great prince from Austria; Duke Henry of Brabant, the commander of the army; a prince called Hermann, count palatine of Saxony and even more practised in leadership since he was also landgrave of Thuringia, according to my reading; Albrecht, margrave of Brandenburg, a powerful and just prince; a bold lord called Heinrich von Kalden, Marshal of

the Empire; Konrad, margrave of Landsberg and Margrave Dietrich of Meissen, according to what I have heard. All these lords I have named and many other counts and lords and nobles whom I cannot mention by name, but were in this same army, all these looked kindly on the hospital (...) Therefore all the assembled lords agreed that Duke Frederick of Swabia should take charge of the matter and they nominated a delegation which he sent with all due circumstance to his majesty, his brother King Henry, then king of the Romans, and afterwards Emperor Henry VI, asking him to pursue the matter and make representations to the pope, requesting him to formally establish and endow the foundation of the new hospital.”¹¹⁶⁰

¹¹⁶⁰ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:674-709.

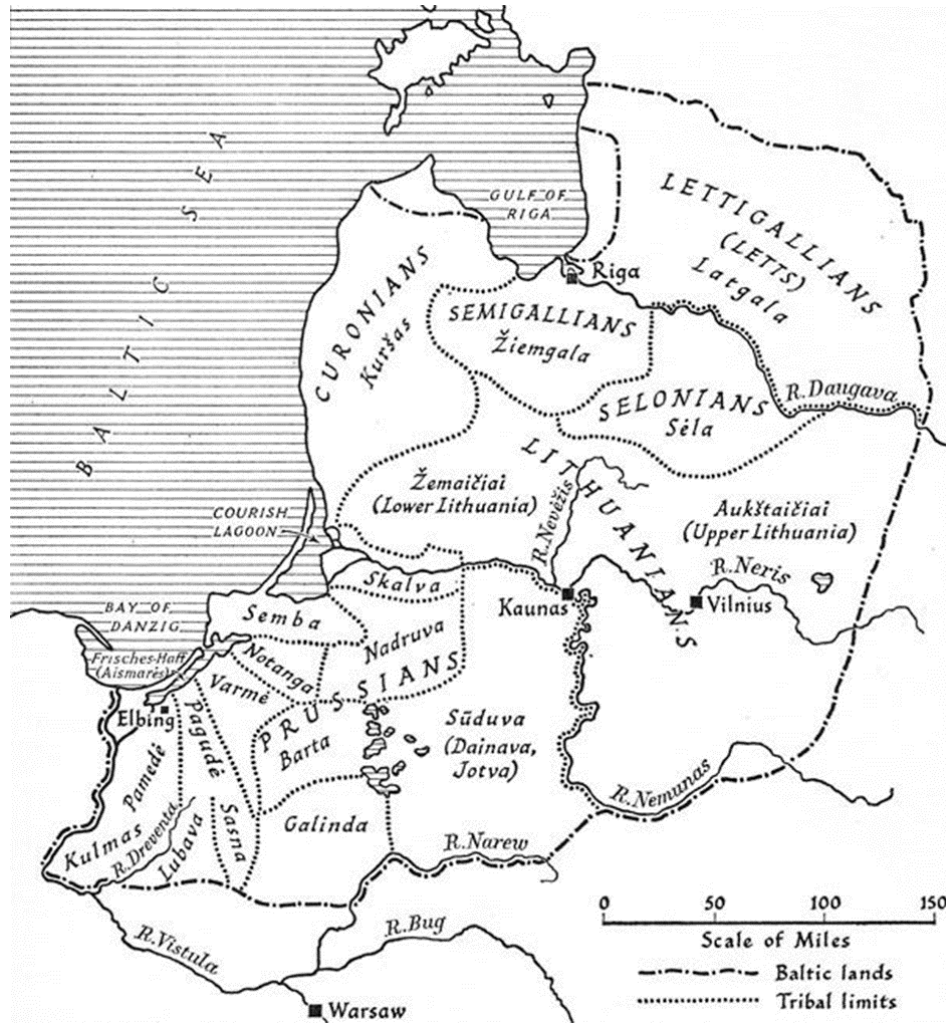


Figure 7: Baltic tribes (<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/81/59/59/8159593374cd68f5b535da22e589df75.jpg>) [8/8/20].

Part II

- *Rule, paragraph 29. Of the probation of those who wish to enter this Order.*

“He who wishes to be received into this honorable brotherhood shall be given a suitable period of probation, so that he may learn the hardships to be undergone in this Order, and the brethren may find out his character, unless he wishes to be excused the period of probation, and his sponsor agrees, in which case he may then make profession of complete obedience. Then the superior, if he is present, or a priest, shall give him the mantle with the Cross, which is blessed with the usual blessing and asperged with holy water, for he received the habit of this order with the Cross, and otherwise no other garment distinguishes the novice from the professed.”¹¹⁶¹

- **German language:**

There are three important aspects to consider about the Holy Roman Empire in the Middle Ages that left historical and linguistic marks: the dimensions of the Empire, internal obstacles such as the great forests separating Saxony and Thuringia from Franconia (which led the four Germanic tribes of Swabians, Bavarians, Saxons, and Franconians to develop their own dialects, laws, and customs), and the fact that the Empire was never prone to feudalism (because the various lords inherited tribal spaces that had been familial independent territories from king or emperor, plus the Western concept of chivalry was not instituted in the Empire before the 12th century)¹¹⁶². The issue of feudalism meant that, when

¹¹⁶¹ STERNS (trans.) 1969:233-234.

¹¹⁶² GRAVETT 1997:3/9. It is suggested that breeding stock for horses derived from captured Hungarian horses, that were probably related to the Tarpan – which is a small horse: “It seems very possible that the Saxons and subsequent emperors used only small horses and light cavalry for longer than the Franks, and if this was in fact the case it may help to explain why the institution of knighthood developed in Germany only in the twelfth century, about a century later than in France, and why William of Apulia claimed that in the 1050s the Germans still preferred to fight on foot.” (DAVIES 1989:54). However, the western and central regions of Franconia, Lorraine, Burgundy and Bavaria knew a certain degree of feudalism, though the most feudalized region was the Rhineland (GRAVETT 1997:3/9). It is also necessary to consider the process of castle-building and enfeoffment of the later 11th to 12th centuries (ARNOLD 1985:45).

the concept of chivalry was brought in and successfully applied around 1180 by Frederick I (though it began to decline after Frederick II), French troubadour lyrics and chivalric romance came as a bonus, lending new lexicon and themes to the language¹¹⁶³. This language, MHG, is a term applied to the spoken and written German language, with all its dialects and regional variations, between 1050 and 1500¹¹⁶⁴. It transitioned from OHG ('Althochdeutsch') because of changes in vocals, but also due to the influence of certain dialects¹¹⁶⁵ spoken by certain social groups that became prominent in this period¹¹⁶⁶. I believe it can be associated with the *ministeriales*, given that their origins are linked "(...) in chronology and function to the rise of territorial lordship and the achievements of economic expansion."¹¹⁶⁷ – plus, the aforementioned feudalism in the south of the Empire.

Since feudalism and chivalric culture were more palpable in the western and southern areas of the Empire, it meant the new lexicons and themes did not spread evenly through the Empire. In effect, "(...) we cannot properly label MHG a coherent, holistic supra-regional language (...)"¹¹⁶⁸. Thus, MHD is a linguistic period subject to regional and social change and is harder to locate and date with the same precision allowed by a conventional archaeological artefact. It is possible to ascertain, however, the geographical variations in language:

- division between High German and Low German, and their internal variations: the geographical frontier between High German ('Hochdeutsch') and Low German ('Niederdeutsch') can be made through a line (Benrather Linie) going from Benrath (Düsseldorf) and Aachen until near Frankfurt an der Oder; north is the Saxon dialect ('Sächsich'), that evolved to Old Low German (Altniederdeutsch); in the south are a series of dialects like Frankish ('Fränkisch'), Alemannic ('Alemannisch'), Bavarian ('Bairisch') and Lombardian ('Langobardisch') that evolved to OHG

¹¹⁶³ WILINKSON 1998 (<https://users.monash.edu.au/~ewilkins/textbook/CHAP20.PDF>) [4/10/20].

¹¹⁶⁴ MARSHALL 2016:1.

¹¹⁶⁵ The linguistic changes (Bavarian diphthongs) began in the south and spread northwards, though Oberdeutsch dialects were not affected (idem, *ibidem*:4).

¹¹⁶⁶ DINH 2016:17.

¹¹⁶⁷ ARNOLD 1985:29.

¹¹⁶⁸ MARSHALL 2016:3.

(‘Althochdeutsch’), that, in turn, transitioned to MHG (‘Mittelhochdeutsch’), from which modern High German (‘Neuhochdeutsch’) is based¹¹⁶⁹;

- subdivisions within High German: in a narrow speaking area (‘Sprachraum’) below the Benrather Line, there are Central Western and Eastern German dialects, separated by the Speyer Line from Upper German¹¹⁷⁰ (Oberdeutsch), that consists of Alemannic and Bavarian¹¹⁷¹.

Furthermore, the majority of sources for MHG consist of courtly literature from 1170-1230 (‘höfische Dichtersprache’), because a great part of it was produced by knights, and thus the themes are related to court affairs and chivalric ideals; as such, the language does not reflect the several dialects of the general population (‘Volksmundarten’)¹¹⁷². Given that the main texts in MHG (such as *Parzival*, *Das Nibelungenlied*, *Iwein*, and songs from Heinrich von Morungen and Walther von der Vogelweide) are predominant south of the Benrather Line, they exclude the written German from the north and new forms resulting from the eastwards expansion between the 12th and second half of the 14th centuries¹¹⁷³ during the Baltic Crusades. In addition, the influence of French and literary traditions in MHG made it a dialect used in a specific context, which meant it was likely that written and spoken MHG were relatively uniform, more so than other dialects¹¹⁷⁴.

¹¹⁶⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:2.

¹¹⁷⁰ Upper German is from the family of High German.

¹¹⁷¹ MARSHAL 2016:2.

¹¹⁷² DINH 2016:18/MARSHAL 2016:3-4.

¹¹⁷³ MARSHALL 2016:2-3.

¹¹⁷⁴ DINH 2016:18.

3. Dese ridderscap is oec die vorste, want
zi gheloeft hebben, dat si Goeds versmanisse
end zijns cruceu wreken wilt end vechten om
dat heijlighe lant, dat der kersten wesen soude,
dat die heijden onder hem hebben bedvonghen. 5
Sente Jan sach oec, dat een niwe ridderscap
van den hemel hier ave quam; dat zien bete-
kent ons, dat die ecclesie sulke riddere sal nu
hebben, di in der begeringhen zijn der ecclesien
viande mit crachte te verdrivene. Te dessen 10
getuuchnesse vugt sich wale, dat bi Moyses
end bi Josues tiden riddere waren onder di
Joden, die Goeds riddere waren, die streden
stride, die Gode wel bevellen, ende die bese
end die onghelovighe lude, die dat heijlighe 15
lant hadden beseten, na eens lewen zede be-
stonden ende verdelichden zi al op van grunde.
Her David was een coninc, den God selve ten
rike hadde vercoren ende daer toe een groet
prophete. Hi hadde sulke lude onder sine ghe- 20
sinne, derre ambocht was, dat zi allene zijn
hoeft hoeden ende alle, die Davids hoefdes

3. Dise ritterschaft ist ouch bezeichent bie
der himelischen unde irdischen ritterschaft unde
ist die vorderste, wande sie gelobet hat, daz
sie Gotes versmēnisse unde sines crūces wollen
rechen unde vehten umbe daz heilige lant, daz
der cristen sīn sal, daz die heidene under sich
hānt betwungen. Sente Johannes sach ouch,
daz ein nūwe ritterschaft von dem himele herabe
gienc. Die gesihte bezeichent uns, daz die
ecclesie etteliche rittere nū sal haben, der be-
gerunge sie der ecclesien viende mit craft ze
vertribene. Zu disem gezūcnisse gefūget sich
ouch wole, daz bi Moyses unde Josues ziten,
di rihtere waren under den Juden, die Gotes
rittere waren, die striten strite, die Gote wole
gevielen, unde die bōsen unde die ungeloubigen
lūte, die daz heilige lant hāten besezen, nāch
lewen siten bestunden unde vertiligeten sī biz
ūf von grunde. Hēr David was ein kunic, den
Got selbe zu dem rīche hette erwelt, darzu ein
grōze prophēte, der hēte sumeliche lūte under
sīme gesinde, der ambeht was, daz sie alleine
sines houbetes hūten unde alle, die Davites

Tho dūseme ghetūchnisse vōghet sich wol, dat by Moyses unde Josues thiden de riddere waren
under den Jōden, de Godes riddere waren, dhe streden stride, de Gode wol bevellen, dhe bōsen
unde de ūngheloveghe lūde, de dat heylighe lant hadden bezath, na lewen seden hadden bestreden
unde vōrdelghenden zhe ūph van grunde. Her David was eyn konig, den Got zelven hadde tho
deme ryke erwelt, unde dar tho eyn grot prophete was, dhe hadde zomelyke lūde under zynen ghe-
synne, de ammeth [f. 14^r] was, dat zhe allene sins hōvedes hūdden unde alle, de Davites hōvede

Figure 8: Prologue in Holländisch (Dutch – left), Mitteldeutsch (German – right), and Niederdeutsch (Low German – bottom) (PERLBACH 1890:24).

- Rule, paragraph 26. *How the brethren shall live in friendship and brotherhood.*

“All brethren shall behave to each other so that friendly concord in the name of brotherhood does not turn into hardness of heart, but they shall take pains to live with each other in brotherly love, harmoniously and amicably in the spirit of gentleness, so that one may justly say of them: how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, that is harmoniously. Let each, as well as he can, bear one another’s burdens, and in accord with the Apostle’s advice be diligent in honouring one another. No evil speech – whispering,

backbiting, boasting of deeds of old, lying, cursing or reviling, quarrelling, or idle words shall issue from a brother's mouth. But, if any of the brethren at times mistreat each other by word or deed, let them not delay to seek reconciliation and not be slow, each one to heal with instant words the wounds in the other's heart, where he has been injured by word or deed; as likewise the Apostle bids us that the sun not go down on our wrath, that is, that it not last overnight, as especially our Lord Jesus Christ bids us in the Gospel, where he says: "If thou bring thine offering before the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go first to reconcile thyself with thy brother and then come and offer thy gift."¹¹⁷⁵

- **CLP1 – Stange siblings:**

"The brother known as Heinrich Stange, the commander of Christburg and a magnificent hero in battle, assembled a large troop of brothers and armed men on the orders of the master, marched out in battle against the Sambians in the name of the Lord and entered their territory across the sea at the point where there is now a castle called Lochstädt (this was during the winter) and devastated the land far and wide, robbing, burning and killing with great ferocity as far as the village of Germau. The Sambians mounted their defence there and pressed them so hard that the brothers and their army turned and fled. When the commander saw this he set off against the enemy with the intention of holding them off for long enough that his men could escape unharmed. He fought like a lion, showing no fear and wounded many of them. Finally, however, the heathens surrounded him and beat him ferociously, keeping it up until they had knocked him from his horse. When his brother, Brother Hermann, saw this it caused him great distress to see his own flesh and blood being slaughtered in this way. He was seized by a great anger and he ran up and hit out at them valiantly, stabbing and slashing until many of the heathens lay at his feet, some dead, others wounded. In this way he protected his brother and they both inflicted great distress on many a Sambian. Finally they lay dead

¹¹⁷⁵ STERNS (trans.) 1969: 220-231.

together on the battlefield. In the meantime the other men retreated without any difficulty and reached home safely.”¹¹⁷⁶

- **CLP2 – Nourishment of the soul:**

“In the year of our Lord 1234, when the Prussians had been driven out of the Kulmerland brother Hermann, the master, sent all the men he had to build a strong, secure fortress called Rehden at the edge of the wilderness between Pomesania and the Kulmerland at a site on the routes the Prussians used to launch both open and covert attacks on the region. I have read that a brother in this fortress was wrongly convinced by the devil’s trickery that the Order of the Teutonic House, of which he was a member, could not nourish his soul. This persuaded him that he must join another stricter, more demanding order immediately. After he had made his decision he went to sleep and dreamed that he saw St Bernard, St Dominic, St Francis and St Augustine, each with the members of their orders, processing with hosts of angels, and he begged and fervently pleaded with them to be allowed to join their brotherhood. Each of them refused him. When he was standing there downcast he saw the pure Virgin, Mary the mother of God, coming towards him with a wonderful array of the brothers of the German House. He fell weeping at the Virgin’s feet, humbly begging her to have pity on him and allow him to stay with his brothers. She replied: ‘No, it is not right for you, because you, you stupid ape, think our order is lax, and carries no burden, and that as a member it is not possible to suffer as you would wish.’ With that she brought forward the brothers standing around her, pulled aside their cloaks to show him the many wounds and blows from which they had died in the defence of the faith against the attacks of the heathens and said: ‘Look! Now can you say that your brothers have not suffered in the name of the sweet lord Jesus Christ?’ After these words the visions vanished and the brother woke up and set off without delay to the chapter house where the brothers were assembled, knelt down in front of them all, humbly retracted his earlier, wicked, misguided accusations against them and related them the vision

¹¹⁷⁶ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2734-2744.

as he had seen it. From this time on this brother fervently redoubled his devotion to the service of God and a few days later was killed by the heathens.”¹¹⁷⁷

- **CLP3 – Johannes von Ilberstedt:**

“During the course of the same year [1324] the Saxon Brother Johannes von Ilberstedt was buried at the house at Königsberg. While he had still been in thrall to the world he lived a disgraceful, sinful life, so to discipline him God inflicted such a severe fever on him that he finally made confession and was given the sacraments and the last rites. While he was sick his habitual wickedness drove him to rape a servant girl who was looking after him. Immediately afterwards God caused the devil to lift him and his bed up high and say to him: ‘You wretch, how dare you commit so heinous a crime against your creator after receiving the holy sacraments?’ The sinner became very afraid and began to call on Mary for help, swearing that if she helped him out of this danger he would join the Teutonic Order. When he mentioned the order the devil dropped him unharmed in a bog, because Mary had protected him. The bog the devil took him to was about half a mile away. After this he went straight to Halle and told everyone the story, citing as proof the fact that all his bedding had been found in the bog.”¹¹⁷⁸

- **CLP4 – Elder knight:**

“The Prussians arrogantly rebuilt the siege towers again in the fourth year of the siege of Bartenstein; this was in the year of our Lord 1263, and they manned and equipped them with more men and arms than before to attack the castle. This caused the brothers concern because

¹¹⁷⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:1819-1829. Shortly before Dusburg began his writing, in 1312, the Knights Templars had been disbanded by Clement V; thus, the translator notes that the insertion of this episode and others similar might reflect the will of the Order’s leadership to emphasise the Order’s legitimacy and to maintain the knights’ morale (idem, *ibidem*:6174).

¹¹⁷⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5795-5804.

their supplies were running low and they and their people were suffering from such great shortages and were so hungry that they were forced to eat the skins of horses and cattle. I imagine that even children's food would have tasted good to them then. When the brothers and their companions could no longer withstand these privations they began to think about how they could escape. But before they began to make good their escape they tricked the Prussians three times like this: they took up their positions quietly and secretly and stayed quiet and hidden from morning until the middle of the day, with no-one moving, as planned. This total silence deluded the Prussians into thinking that they had all deserted the castle. As a result they all rushed at once because they were all keen to get inside. When those inside calculated that they were close enough, everyone on the battlements broke their silence; they shot, hurled, stabbed and killed many of them. Many who were mortally wounded had to be carried away. They played this trick three times, without actually leaving the castle. I read that there was a pious brother in the fortress who from the outset prayed devoutly to God to reveal to him what the best course of action would be in this time of suffering. And behold, a voice from heaven was heard saying the following words in Latin: 'Judea and Jerusalem, do not be afraid and leave this place tomorrow. (...) The day after they had heard the voice they divided themselves and their followers into two sections, taking the holy relics with them. One section quickly reached Königsberg in safety, while the other arrived safe and sound at Elbing. When they went they had left one brother behind at Bartenstein who was not capable of leaving with them because he was old, sick and blind. This poor, good brother survived several days. He rang the bell for worship at the usual times and in this way was able to deceive the enemy. When this had gone on for a while and they had not seen anyone in the castle they began to approach it. Since there was no resistance from the garrison they came right into the castle and killed this good brother, spilling the blood of this old man and taking control of the castle, which they often used afterwards as a base for attacks on the brothers.'¹¹⁷⁹

¹¹⁷⁹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3281-3292.

- **CLP5 - Engelkin:**

“According to what I have read there was a brother called Engelkin at Christburg at this time, a native of Westphalia. He was a devout man, pure in body and mind and dedicated to God. Among the many other virtues he possessed in abundance and practised, he used in particular to wear an iron hauberk next to his skin instead of a shirt. With this torment he disciplined his flesh and remained virtuous. Up to the time of his death he used up four of these hauberks, all of them old, rusted and battered.”¹¹⁸⁰

- **CLP6 – Brother Thamno:**

“In the year of our lord 1321 Brother Thamno, who was born in Meissen, died, in the way of all flesh. He had been a brother for 56 years, all of which he had spent at Balga. He spent the 30 years before his death within the convent, never travelling anywhere beyond what is permitted to the brothers there. He prayed often and devotedly to God; he avoided wine and mead and all intoxicating liquor; it was his habit to wear a hair shirt next to his skin; he fasted on the days preceding saints’ days, eating only bread and water and always disciplined his flesh with abstinence and strict chastisement. When he finally took ill and was approaching death he received the sacrament with great fervour. Afterwards he lived on for 39 days without eating anything before he died on St Simenon’s Day.”¹¹⁸¹

- **CLP7 – Hermann von Lichtenburg:**

“According to what I have read a brother called Hermann von Lichtenburg later lived in this castle [Brandenburg]. He was noble by birth and even nobler in his heart. This pure, virtuous man disciplined his body day and night with many chastisements. To this end this lover of

¹¹⁸⁰ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3570.

¹¹⁸¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5720-5731.

God constantly wore armour instead of a shirt against his skin. It seemed right to him that when he was on campaign and fighting he should put on his other weapons over this armour, so that he could only move with difficulty. Moving in this way caused him such pain that his whole body was covered in sores as if he had been torn by thorns. Brother Peter, his confessor, criticized the bold, true hero and warned him he should take off his armour while he was working, and especially fighting, because his weapons were so heavy. ‘No, not at all,’ the worthy man replied. ‘Nothing will induce me to take it off until I die. This is my firm resolve.’ Now a wonderful miracle happened. That same night the Virgin Mary appeared to him and gently touched the noble warrior with her soft hands. The touch took away all his pain and when brother Peter saw him again the following morning he found that all the wounds on his body were completely healed. His skin was clear, pure and glowing; may the bride of God be praised!”¹¹⁸²

- *Laws II, paragraph h) How and when the brethren shall receive their discipline.*

“In all houses of this Order, every Friday all brethren shall receive their discipline, except on feast days; and during the fasts before Christmas and before Easter the brethren shall receive discipline three days a week, that is on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and no brother shall be exempted without permission, and thereafter all the year on Fridays, when they are kneeling. Exempted are the brethren who are on a journey and the brethren in the infirmary. The others who attend divine service shall not be exempted without permission from their superior.”¹¹⁸³

¹¹⁸² FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3402-3412.

¹¹⁸³ STERNS (trans.) 1969:247.

- **CLP** – Polish donations:

“Wratislaw gave up the temptations of the world and became a brother in the Order of the German House in order to gain salvation for his soul. He freely gave his share of the inheritance from his father’s dukedom to the order as a fitting gift to the eternal glory of God. Afterwards, when Sambor realised that his share was not enough for him to be able to live in the lordly manner due to one of his status, he went to the brothers in Prussia and gave them his share of the inheritance in return for appropriate support for him and his household in any dispute; the fourth brother did the same thing and in order to secure these three gifts in perpetuity, each of them separately offered his share to the master with the proof of their inheritance, giving it to the order and completely relinquishing any legal rights to it which they or their successors might lay claim to in the future. They had documents drawn up itemising this agreement which they sealed with their three seals and gave to the brothers.”¹¹⁸⁴

- **LRC1** – God’s share:

“Maseke, their king, abandoned the booty and left helmets, shields, swords and over two hundred and fifty horses. (...) Some were fortunate enough to reach their horses and they dashed toward home. The Christians chased the heathens back and forth across the field, slaying whomever they encountered. Their king escaped, but he forfeited his son and left him lying dead on the battlefield. He fled grief-stricken back to his own land. Thus the heathens were vanquished. The Christians were all happy with the outcome. Those whom the Lithuanians had captured were released and joyfully set free. Then they took the heathens’ horses, helmets, shields and swords and divided them all equally. God in heaven was given His share, for He had given them victory.”¹¹⁸⁵.

¹¹⁸⁴ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4253-4264.

¹¹⁸⁵ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:143.

- **LRC2 - Divination:**

“They took from the cloister whatever Brothers, sergeants and Kurs they needed. The latter knew the lay of the land and the roads toward Gresen. They set out on the journey in high spirits, because they expected to succeed. Their oracle sticks fell propitiously, and their birds sang favourably, and from all this they concluded that everything would go well for them.”¹¹⁸⁶

- *Laws III*, paragraph 20. “In each house there shall be a white cloth with a black cross for the burial of our brethren, who expire there.”¹¹⁸⁷

- **CLP9 - Hartmann:**

“The fifth master of Prussia was Brother Hartmann von Grünbach, who held office for five years. His deeds matched his name, because he was a very hard man. He also had a nickname: he was called ‘Watmal’ everywhere after a coarse piece of clothing he ordered the brothers to wear. He also had two of his brothers publicly burned to death at Elbing in front of the common people. They had succumbed to the treachery of the devil and had gone over to the Prussians when they had been rebelling after the war in Curonia, which will be described later. When the pope heard this he was so angry that he ordered Hartmann to demit office and imposed a year’s severe penance on him, along with everyone who had advised him in this unwise affair.”¹¹⁸⁸

¹¹⁸⁶ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:89.

¹¹⁸⁷ STERNS. (trans.) 1969:257.

¹¹⁸⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2880-2888.

- **CLP10 – Divination II:**

“(…) Brother Heinrich, the commander of Tapiau, assembled a force of eight brothers and 300 men and set off for Semigallia to see if he could find any harvesters and reward them with death. The plain of the Memel river on this side is near the castle of Pastovia. It was rainy and wet when they arrived, so they did not find the harvesters, who had gone back home across the Memel. Nonetheless before they turned back they were able to capture 34 of the heathens’ horses which were grazing there. But the heathens saw them and gave chase. When Brother Heinrich realised this he set up a hide-out at the side of the track and sent some of his men to continue on down the road. When the heathens were nearly at the hide-out one of them blocked the way. He rolled the dice, according to heathen superstition, and shouted loudly: ‘Do not pursue them any further. Turn back because the Germans are lying in wait nearby.’ The Lithuanian troops made to turn back but the brothers waiting in the ambush realised they were fleeing and charged out of their hide-out, riding down and killing 12 of them.”¹¹⁸⁹

- *Rule, paragraph 11. How and with what the brethren may clothe themselves, and what they may have for bedding.*

“The brethren of this order are allowed to wear and use linen for undershirts, for drawers and hose, for sheets and for bed covers, and for other things, when suitable. Outer garments shall be of sober hue. The brothers knights shall wear white mantles as a sign of knighthood, but their other garments shall not differ from those of the other brethren. We decree that each brother wear a black cross on mantle, cappen and armor surcoats to show outwardly that he is a special member of this Order. Furs, pelisses, and coverlets shall be of no material other than sheep or goat skins, yet goat shall be given to no one, unless he asks for it. The brethren shall have shoes without laces, or buckles, or rings. Likewise, those in charge of clothing or footwear shall take pains to supply the brethren in so religious and seemly a fashion that each

¹¹⁸⁹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5785.

one has the right size, not too long, nor too short, nor too tight, nor too wide, and that each one may without any help put on and off his clothes and shoes. As for bedding, let each brother be content with a sleeping bag, a rug, a sheet, a coverlet of linen or buckram and a pillow, unless the one in charge of such articles wishes to give more or less. It is fitting that upon receipt of new things, the old are returned, so that the one to whom the clothes are handed over may distribute them to the servants and to the poor. But should it happen, which God forbid, that a brother outrageously insists on arms or clothing or such things finer or better than those given to him, then he deserves to be given worse. For this proves how much he is lacking in the clothing of the heart and in inner virtue, who bothers so much about the outer needs of the body. Since clerics living in the world should show their religion by their clothing, so it is all the more seemly that those in the Order use special clothing.”¹¹⁹⁰

- *Rule, paragraph 22. Of the things which pertain to the knights.*

“Since this order is specially founded for knights fighting the enemies of the Cross and of the faith, and since the customs of the enemy in fighting and in other matters differ in different lands, and therefore it is necessary likewise to oppose the enemy with different weapons in different ways, so we leave to the decision of the superior among the brethren the things which pertain to knights, horses, arms, attendants and other things proper and permitted to the brethren for battle, that he order and decide all the aforesaid things with the counsel of the wisest brethren or the province in which the war is fought, or with those who are present, if he cannot delay without harming the other brethren. However, the rule shall be carefully observed that saddles and bridles and shields be not painted needlessly with gold or silver, or other wordly colours. Spears, shields, and saddles shall not have covers, but polished lances may be covered with a sheat so that they be kept sharp for wounding the enemy. Likewise if the master or the brethren, who are empowered by the master, give or lend to other men beasts and arms or other things which were granted to the brethren temporarily for their use only, then the brethren to whom the things were granted, shall in no way object, so

¹¹⁹⁰ STERNS (trans.) 1969:218-219.

that there be no thought that they wish to keep as their own things which were granted only temporarily. Further we decree that no brother seek to have a weapon or animal as peculiarly his own. Should it happen that a brother was or is granted anything which is not fit for use, he shall humbly and decently inform the official who is in charge of that office about the deficiency and shall submit to his discretion to act and order the matter as he wills.”¹¹⁹¹

¹¹⁹¹ STERNS (trans.) 1969:226-228.

● Table I - Injuries:

	Age	Injury
1st individual (L.203s)	30-40	“(…) arrowhead embedded within the anterior aspect of the left iliac bone.”
2nd individual (L.212)	20-30	“(…) similar arrowhead intimately associated with the outer aspect of the left humerus, but not buried within the bone.”
3rd individual (L.929)	30-40	“(…) three arrowheads intimately associated with the cervical vertebrae.” Injuries compatible with a sword with no evidence of periosteal reaction or bone remodelling: “One wound was present on the left distal humerus at the level of the elbow joint. “ (amputation); “Another wound was present in the left side of the mandible, which divided it in two. (...) nearby wound was noted on the adjacent maxilla. The prominence of the maxilla was missing (...) suggesting a glancing blow to the cheek. A further wound was located in the frontal and parietal bones at the front of the skull (...) divided the surviving cranium into two.”
4th individual (L.203n)	25-30	“(…) just one wound, in the humerus of the left shoulder. (...) deep, straight, longitudinal lesion in the head and proximal shaft of the bone, lying in the sagittal plane. It extended into the shoulder joint but did not transect the bone (...)”
5th individual (L.930)	25-30	Since no wounds were found in the remains, it is likely he died from soft tissue injuries.

MITCHELL 2006:147/148/149.

● Swords in the ‘Ordensstaat’:

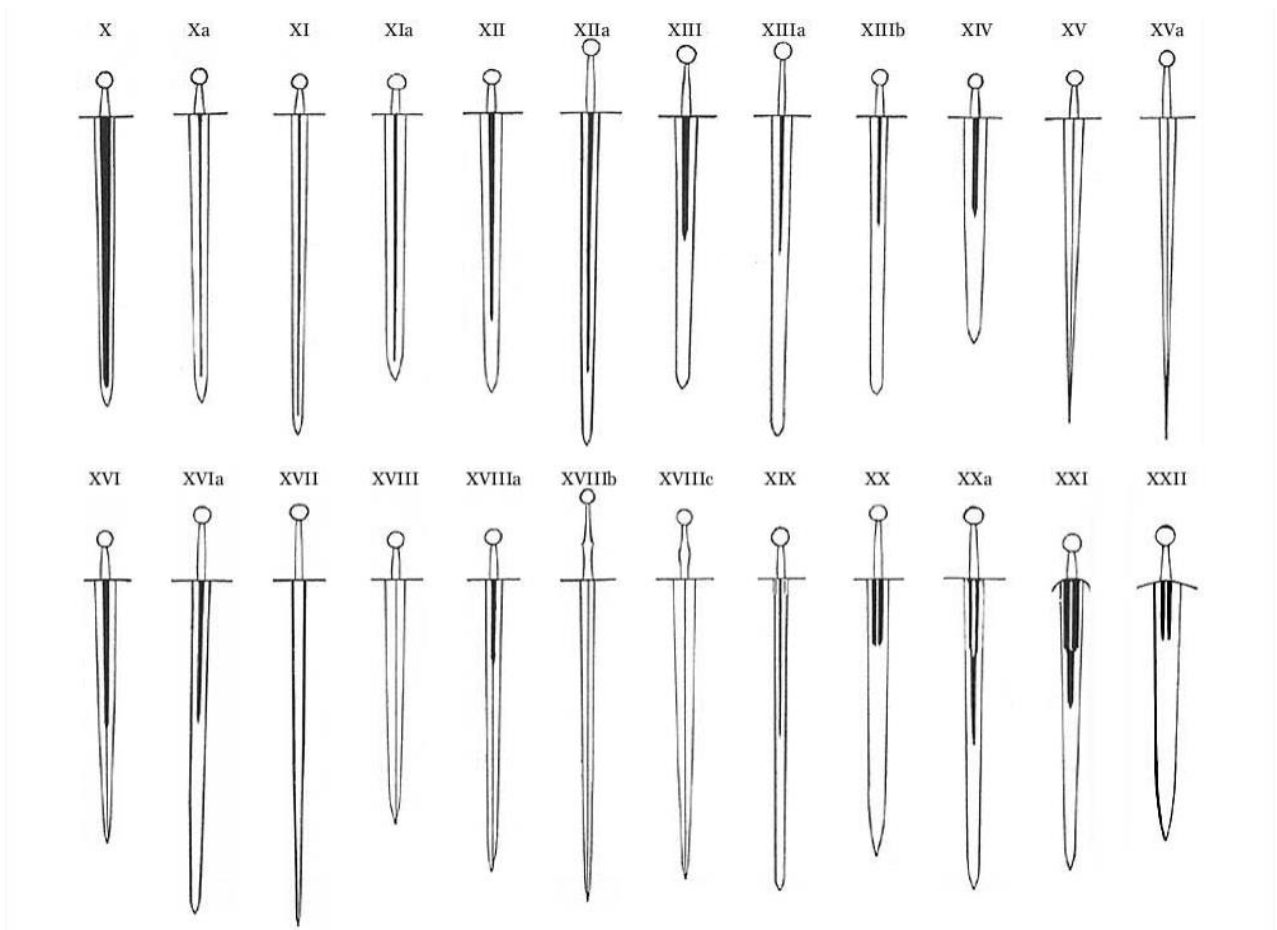


Figure 9: Oakeshott typology (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e4/Oakeshott_types.png) [10/6/21].

Period	Type (following Oakeshott)
Turn from the 13 th to the 14 th century	XIII
	XIIIa
	XVIa
	XVII
	XII

14 th century	XVIa XVII XX (a sword found at the Marienburg: flat and wide blade with fuller, two- handed grip, long and narrow handguard that curves downwards)
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NOWAKOWSKI 1994:86. I chose not to include where the swords were found because it is unclear these swords belonged to Teutonic knights or not – only the Marienburg has been mentioned because chances are higher that this sword belonged to a Teutonic knight.

As for depictions of swords in iconography, Nowakowski has sorted the following types:

“In the scene from the *Apocalypse* the Teutonic Knights are shown fighting with swords assignable to type XIII. The sword held by the Teutonic Knight on the capital of the Marienburg column can be classified as type XVI, G, 2, and that carried by Kunon von Liebenstein should be assigned to type XVII, T, 6. The specimens depicted on the frescoes at Juditten are similar to the types XVII, F and XVII, H. The latest specimens classified as type XVII are depicted in the scene of the battle of Grunwald in the Schilling’s Chronicle, and the sword held by Friedrich of Saxony belongs to type XX.”¹¹⁹²

While I could not find all the sources listed by Nowakowski, I was able to find:



- the miniature from the *Apocalypse* (manuscript UMK Rps 44 III *Apocalypse*, 1334-1336, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Toruniu): while the Teutonic Knight’s sword is hidden (probably it is his sword that is raised next to the main figure’s, given that it seems that the sword striking horizontally belongs to the crowned figure), all the swords appear to belong to the same type; in addition, the form of attack and the way the swords are held are the same for both sides. Attention should also be given to the figures felled with lateral blows to the head, some with rounded skull caps (West) and others with

¹¹⁹² NOWAKOWSKI 1994:87.

conical helmets (Baltic/Eastern). The Great Helm surmounted with the Order's cross is also depicted.



Figure 10: Apocalypse miniature. Markings done by me. (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/5819/22581>) [15/7/21].

Type attributed by Nowakowski	Source
XIII 	

- frescoes at Juditten church (modern Kaliningrad oblast): only one of the knights is depicted with a visible sword. Regardless of the accompanying heraldry, both are holding the Order's standards and are wearing plate armour.

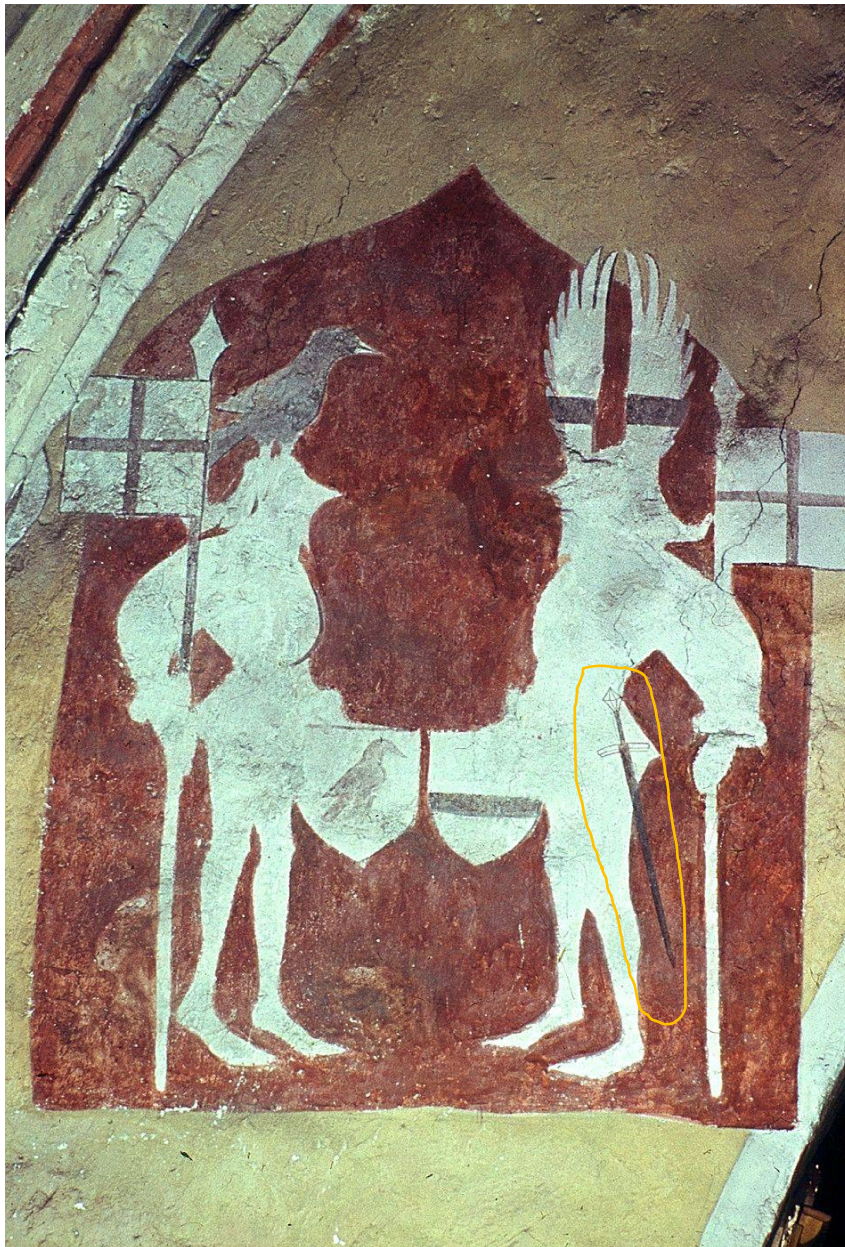


Figure 11: Fresco at Juditten church, mod. Kaliningrad. Markings done by me.
(<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/2d/8a/9e/2d8a9ecfc8b296cdfceb391067b185cc.jpg>) [19/7/21].

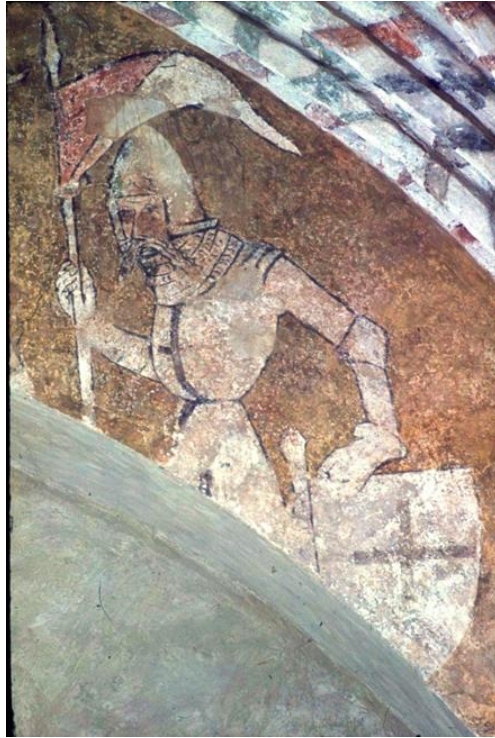




Figure 12: Fresco at Juditten church depicting a Teutonic knight wearing plate armour
(<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/dc/19/c2/dc19c29673b40eac448af6587478fa58.jpg>) [19/7/21].



Figure 13: Fresco at Juditten church depicting Teutonic knights
(<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/e2/6c/38/e26c38e69076215e6a426c2eff1eafd8.jpg>) [19/7/21].

Type attributed by Nowakowski	Source
<p>XVII</p> 	

- the battle of Tannenberg as depicted in Schilling's Chronicle (*Berner Chronik des Diebold Schilling d. Ä.*, late 15th century): the Polish-Lithuanian forces are on the left and the Order's on the right. There is a general use of plate armour, swords (red), lances, and crossbows (blue), with no apparent significant differences between both sides, though there are more kettle hats on the Teutonic side.

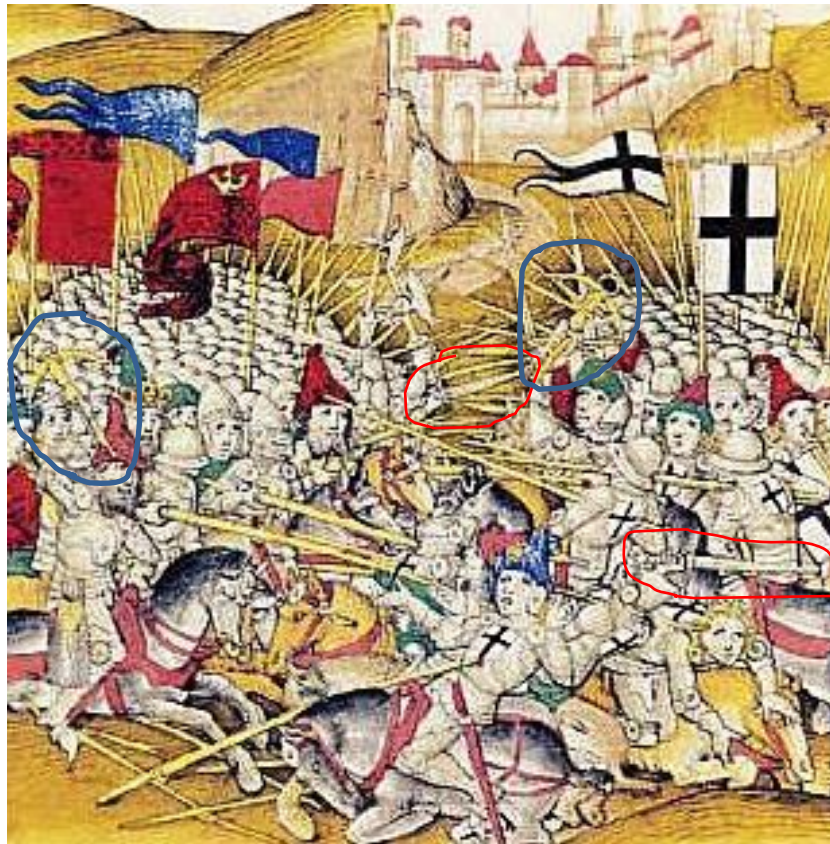




Figure 14: Battle of Tannenberg. Markings done by me.
(<https://i.pinimg.com/564x/3f/e8/ed/3fe8edb7fa1ec98b134ca8d834654b6c.jpg>) [20/7/21].

Type attributed by Nowakowski	Source
<p>XVII</p> 	

- **CLP11 – Knight shot:**

“In the year of our Lord 1306 the Master, Brother Konrad Sack, was reliably informed that a large army from the region of Gardinas had left Lithuania to attack Poland. According to what I have heard he sent out Brother Albrecht von Hagen with more brothers and 400 Natangians under his control, ordering them to wait near the castle at Gardinas to see if they could do anything while its keepers were away. (...) When the army arrived home and Brother Eberhard, the commander of Königsberg, had heard of their exploits at the castle, he assembled a force of 100 brothers and 6,000 horsemen and he too set off against Gardinas, in the hope that he might more easily be able to capture the fortress itself, but it was not to

be. As soon as the king had heard about the fires he had sent a large number of men. The commander found the fortress well defended by bold, stalwart heroes; when the Christians began to storm it the garrison fearlessly threw open the castle gates and began a battle which went on for a long time. Finally the brothers forced them back and they retreated into the fortress. (...) in the melée many of the heathens were killed and many seriously wounded. Brother Hartmann von Elsterberg was shot through the throat and died later.”¹¹⁹³

- *Customs, paragraph 47. How many animals the commander and the marshal and the other office holders shall have.*

“The grand commander and the marshal and the other office holders shall not have more than four animals, but the commander, the marshal and the Turcopoler may have a turkoman [type of warhorse] instead of a mule.”¹¹⁹⁴

- **Hungarian skeletons:**

“The skeletons in question are particularly robust, with well-marked muscular insertions but without any sign of generalized hyperostotic conditions (...). In comparison with the other male skeletons of the cemetery, the fractures, sprains, spondylolysis, mechanical enthesopathies, spinal or extraspinal degenerative joint diseases are two or three times more frequent in this group. The phenomenon does not present a closed age relation: we observed the lesions in question on 9 “middle adult” (40-60 years) and 5 “old adult” (60+ years) skeletons. The common skeletal changes of these skeletons were found on the hips and femurs. On the proximal femur, the hypertrophic character of the insertions of the muscles gluteus medius and maximus; adductor magnus and brevis; quadriceps femoris and pectineus were frequently seen. The femoral head was often extended onto the neck (in several cases,

¹¹⁹³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5229-525.

¹¹⁹⁴ STERNS (trans.) 1969:311.

well marked iliac impressions could be observed on the femoral neck). On the distal femur, the insertions of the lateral and medial heads of the gastrocnemius muscle and the adductor magnus insertion were well marked. On the hips, beside the frequent superior extension of the acetabulum, several muscular insertions present a hypertrophic character, such as the insertions of gluteus medius and maximus, adductor magnus, biceps femoris, semimembranosus and semitendinosus muscles.”¹¹⁹⁵

- **CLP12 – Horse theft:**

“The heathens won and the brothers lost because the might of their army had been diminished by the desertion of the rank and file. Among those who were killed on the battle on St. Margaret’s Day were Brother Burchard of Hornhausen, who was master of Livonia, and Brother Heinrich Botel, marshal of Prussia, along with 150 brothers and so many other Christians that I do not know the number. (...) Woe, see how the enemy was strengthened by so much plunder, weapons, and the horses which they took from God’s heroes, so many thousands of whom lay slaughtered on the battlefield.”¹¹⁹⁶

“In the year of our Lord 1260 the Warmians, Natangians and Barthians turned away from the faith and Christianity and rebelled for the second time. They went on armed raids across their whole territories and killed whatever Christians they found there; the women and children were taken prisoner. Afterwards they raided Balga and stole the brothers’ horses and cattle. This was not an isolated occurrence; they inflicted such losses on many occasions.”¹¹⁹⁷

¹¹⁹⁵ PÁLFI et DUTOUR 1996:45-46.

¹¹⁹⁶ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2920.

¹¹⁹⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3460-3470.

- **CLP13 – Siege I:**

“Not long afterwards the Prussians, goaded on by the devil’s resentment, assembled in three armies and armed themselves with three trebuchets. They marched on the castle at Heilsberg, assembled the engines and arrogantly attacked and besieged the castle until the Christians who formed the garrison were forced by the pangs of hunger to eat 250 horses. Finally, to survive, these same people were forced to eat the horses’ skins. In the end, when their food supplies finally ran out, they abandoned the castle and left in secret for the town of Elbing. They had taken with them twelve Prussians who had been sent to them as hostages; they blinded them and sent them back to their friends.”¹¹⁹⁸

- **Castle list:**

“Schlochow

Item der hawßkompthur 3 pferde und 2 manne hernesch. (...) Item Heppenberg 3 pferde 1 manne harnesch. Item Dynyes Tzarte 2 pferde 1 manne harnesch. Item Techwitz 3 pferde 1 manne harnesch. Item pferdemarschalk 3 pferde und zcu einem manne harnesch. Item 3 pferde nicht harnesch. Item der kellermeister 2 pferde. Item der thormeyster 1 pferd. Item der pfleger von der Baldeburg hoth 3 pferde und 1 manne harnesch. Item Hose 3 pferde. Item der kuchmeister zcu 1 manne harnesch. Item Johan Rost nicht pferde nicht harnesch.¹¹⁹⁹ (Auch der Hauskomtur 3 Pferde und 2 menschlicher Harnisch. (...) Auch Heppenberg 3 Pferde 1 menschlicher Harnisch. Auch Dynyes Tzarte 2 Pferde 1 menschlicher Harnisch. Auch Techwitz 3 Pferde 1 menschlicher Harnisch. Auch Pferdmarshall 3 Pferde zusammen mit einem menschlichen Harnisch. Auch 3 Pferde kein Harnisch. Auch der Kellermeister 2 Pferde. Auch der Tormeister 1 Pferd. Auch der Pfleger von der Baldeburg hat 3 Pferde

¹¹⁹⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3020-3030.

¹¹⁹⁹ KUBICKI 2017:112. The same also remarked the following: Heppenberg might be the same Conrad Heppenberg from the convent in Brandenburg, mentioned in 1451; Tzarte maybe is the Antonius Czart mentioned in the convent in 1454; Heynrich Techwitz was mentioned in 1413 in the convent of Człuchów as a Teutonic Knight from Meissen; the Pfleger was prosecutor in Biały Bór; no information regarding Hose; Johann Rost was mentioned in the composition of the convent of 1437 and 1443 (idem, *ibidem*:112).

und 1 menschlicher Harnisch. Auch Hose 3 Pferde. Auch der Kuchmeister mit 1 menschlichen Harnisch. Auch Johan Rost keine Pferde und kein Harnisch.)¹²⁰⁰



Figure 15: Illustration from the *Codex Balduini Trevirensis*, 1341. The lone Teutonic knight's warhorse is wearing a snaffle bit. Marking done by me (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4543/8565>) [20/7/21].

¹²⁰⁰ Translation: Also the House Commander, three horses and two full armours. (...) Also Heppenberg, three horses and one full armour. Also Dynyes Tzarte, two horses and one full armour. Also Techwitz, three horses and one full armour. Also the 'Horse marshal', three horses together with one full armour. Also three horses, no full armour. Also the Cellar Master, two horses. Also the Gate Master, one horse. Also the procurator from Baldeburg has three horses and one full armour. Also Hose, three horses. Also the Kitchen Master with one full armour. Also Johan Rost, no horse and no full armour.

- **CLP14 – Ludwig and Skumantas:**

“Brother Ludwig [von Liebenzell] was from a branch of a noble family, had learned the arts of war from an early age and performed many miraculous, valiant deeds in battle, which this book will describe later. When the enemy captured him he was entrusted to Skumantas. He saw in him an exceptional warrior and brave man like himself and for this reason he looked after him himself and enjoyed his company. After this it happened that Skumantas was to travel alone to a drinking session where all the noblest Sudovians had gathered, and he took him with him as a friend, even though he was a prisoner. During the drinking session an argument arose and a powerful but ignorant Sudovian nobleman taunted Ludwig, disparaging him and threatening him. He said to Skumantas: ‘Did you bring me here with you so that this man can shout at me, mock me and threaten me?’ Skumantas replied, ‘You can be sure that I am sorry that he is annoying you; if you are brave enough to pay him back for what you have had to put up with I will certainly stand by you and help you.’ On hearing this he angrily drew a sword and fearlessly hit out at the Sudovian and killed him in front of them all. After this one of Skumantas' servants freed him from the bonds which kept him captive, took him away and brought him back to the brothers.”¹²⁰¹

¹²⁰¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4221.

Part III

- *Customs, paragraph 21. Of the marshal's office, and how he shall be attended.*

“All the brethren who are given arms are subject to the marshal and shall be obedient to him after the master, and he shall give them everything which pertains to arms: horses and mules, arms and blankets, tents which are called gribellure, leather hose and maple platters. Under him, likewise, shall be the saddlery and the small forge, so that he may the better supply the brethren; he shall have two brothers in attendance, one brother knight and one other brother, in addition to the vice-marshal. He shall have also one Turcopole to carry the standard, and, in time of war, two. Further, he shall order each brother who is under him carefully to look after the train of horses and mules, and their harness.”¹²⁰²

- *Customs, paragraph 30. What pertains to the office of the grand commander.*

“To the office of the grand commander pertain the treasury and the grain supply, and the ships, and all the brother clerks and lay brothers and their domestics, who live in the house, and the camels, pack-animals, wagons, slaves, and craftsmen, and the armory and all the workshops, save those which are under the marshal, and he shall provide these, as well as all the others, in case of necessity, with what each requires, and should he neglect this, the master shall call him to account.”¹²⁰³

¹²⁰² STERNS (trans.) 1969:298-299.

¹²⁰³ Idem, *ibidem*:302.

- *Customs, paragraph 42. Of the office of the brother in charge of the saddlery.*

“The brother in charge of the saddlery shall give to the brethren straps for stirrups, reins, halters, girths, straps for weapons and spur straps, and shall have repaired whatever items are broken.”¹²⁰⁴

- *Customs, paragraph 43. Of the office of the brother in charge of the small forge.*

“The brother in charge of the small forge shall repair the brethren’s bits or stirrups or spurs and refurbish them. He shall also give out the rings for hose and for belly-bands, and surcingles, and packstraps, and he shall account for these to the brother in charge of the saddlery.”¹²⁰⁵

- *Customs, paragraph 41. Of the office of the master of the esquires, what he may do.*

“The master of the esquires may give to a brother from the troop a saddle or a panel [saddle-cushion], or a bridle, which are old and worn out. He shall also receive esquires and allocate them to the brethren, and shall determine the recompense for those who serve for pay or charity. Besides that, he shall give curry combs, reins, and brushes to the brethren, and fodder to the animals according to custom with heaped up measure not pressed down, and he shall not increase the fodder for anyone without the superior’s permission. Every Friday he shall hold a chapter with the esquires, but he may put it off to another day, if his activities interfere.”¹²⁰⁶

¹²⁰⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:309.

¹²⁰⁵ STERNS (trans.) 1969:309.

¹²⁰⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:308-309.

- **CLP1– Brühaven:**

“When the god-fearing Brother Bertold Brühaven had been in charge of the fortress at Ragnit for some time, the master ordered him to take charge of the castle at Königsberg, which he did very conscientiously. Many wonderful stories are told of this man’s life and his virtues, but in particular about his chastity.”¹²⁰⁷

“Afterwards, at Easter of the same year [1291] the Lithuanians built a fortress in the aforementioned area of Junigeda, which they also named Junigeda after the district in which it stood. When Brühaven became aware of this he put together an army of 1,000 men with which he intended to disrupt the building work, but he met with too much opposition on account of the large number of defenders and he was not able to realise his goal. So that the campaign was not entirely fruitless, he left there and went to the castle at Medraba, which had earlier inflicted great damage on the Christians, and stormed it relentlessly until he captured it from the control of the enemy, killing or taking prisoner everyone he found there. Having achieved this he burned down the castle and returned home.”¹²⁰⁸

“While this was happening the order’s champion, Grand Master Gottfried von Hohenlohe, was in Prussia when he heard what difficulties the arrogant Rigans were inflicting on the brothers, he sent Brühaven with a big force of brothers and armed men to Livonia to help and protect the brothers there against the monstrous townspeople. When Brühaven had arrived from Prussia with his army he joined all the Livonians with their arms and together they turned against the people, besieging Neuermühlen on the feast day of the Apostles St Peter and St Paul and beginning a ferocious battle which saved Neuermühlen from further harm and created many widows in the town of Riga. Many Lithuanians lost their companions there because the brothers hacked at and killed the rich city oxen and the Lithuanian imbeciles in the sand, killing more than 4,000 besides those who barely escaped with serious wounds.”¹²⁰⁹

¹²⁰⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4536.

¹²⁰⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4632.

¹²⁰⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:4898.

- **LRC1 - Lasen:**

“When these men from Goldingen arrived they were taken along with the rest of the army to Lasen. That was the name of a castle in Kurland at that time [1263]. The Brothers’ army approached it, and the Kurs took up arms, but to no avail. When all the army had arrived, there began a strong assault, and fire was placed in the ditches. The Brothers’ men rejoiced when they saw the Kurs’ castle burn as if it were straw. They captured the castle at Lasen, and not a single Kur escaped. Many were struck dead, and the rest surrendered. The army then filled its hands with booty and herded away the women and children. Nothing remained in the castle, and it was burnt to the ground.”¹²¹⁰

- **CLP2 – Ludwig von Liebenzell:**

“Master Mangold vigorously and skilfully pursued the wars against the Sudovians which had been initiated by his predecessors. He gathered all the armed forces he could assemble together in an army and marched into Sudovia (...) When his army was about to leave Crasima and enter the neighbouring region, God ordained that it lost its way and became split up into separate groups. These groups ranged here and there and in this way the army so completely covered the area that there was not a single place which was not devastated; in this campaign that excellent warrior, the commander of Tapiau, Brother Ulrich the Bavarian was killed, and because he had always aspired to be wounded in the way that Christ was, that is what happened to him; the Sudovians wounded him four times in his feet and hands and killed him with a fifth wound to his heart. Four other men who were fighting alongside him were also killed. Brother Ludwig von Liebenzell was taken prisoner during this campaign. Brother Ludwig was from a branch of a noble family, had learned the arts of war from an early age and performed many miraculous, valiant deeds in battle, which this book will describe later. When the enemy captured him he was entrusted to Skumantas. He saw in him an exceptional warrior and brave man like himself and for this reason he looked after him

¹²¹⁰ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:84.

himself and enjoyed his company. After this it happened that Skumantas was to travel alone to a drinking session where all the noblest Sudovians had gathered, and he took him with him as a friend, even though he was a prisoner. During the drinking session an argument arose and a powerful but ignorant Sudovian nobleman taunted Ludwig, disparaging him and threatening him. He said to Skumantas: ‘Did you bring me here with you so that this man can shout at me, mock me and threaten me?’ Skumantas replied, ‘You can be sure that I am sorry that he is annoying you; if you are brave enough to pay him back for what you have had to put up with I will certainly stand by you and help you.’ On hearing this he angrily drew a sword and fearlessly hit out at the Sudovian and killed him in front of them all. After this one of Skumantas' servants freed him from the bonds which kept him captive, took him away and brought him back to the brothers.”¹²¹¹

“On this same campaign against the Sudovians [Ludwig] von Liebenzell was so seriously wounded in the fierce fighting that he was left for dead in the snow. However, he was found by some Sudovians who took him, sick as he was, and loaded him sideways across a horse like a sack and took him away at a fast trot. The shaking and swinging stimulated his blood flow again and flushed it out of his wounds, and in this way Brother Ludwig recovered from his injuries; otherwise he would certainly have died, as he himself said afterwards. Since he was now their captive, as you have heard, they gave him to Cantegerda, the most noble of them all, to guard.”¹²¹²

“Master Konrad (...) gathered brothers and many people and launched a campaign into Sudovia. On his journey he met Brother Ludwig von Liebenzell coming towards him from Sudovia, surrounded by a crowd of men and women. Among them was Cantegerda, who had housed him there and kept him prisoner, and about 1,600 heathens, all of whom he had converted from their error and brought to the path of the true faith by teaching them while he was a prisoner. When the master saw him and the crowd of people, he was extremely happy at what had happened: that he was seeing his brother again and that God had brought about this change in the people, and he courteously invited them to travel into Sambia, where Brother Ludwig was to look after them until he returned. The master continued on his way,

¹²¹¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4221.

¹²¹² Idem, *ibidem*:4241.

launching an attack the following morning into the area of Kymenovia, where he rode up to a castle of the same name and launched such a brutal, violent assault on it that the garrison had no choice but to give it up, on condition that their lives and belongings would be spared and swearing that they would unreservedly accept baptism and give up all the teachings of paganism. Each of them swore this with the most solemn oaths, whereupon the master appointed a guide who was to take them back to Sambia and he himself continued campaigning in the neighbourhood, setting it ablaze. (...) On the way back he was told that the castle garrison had killed their guide and gone off towards Lithuania. But Brother Ludwig arrived safely back in Sambia without incident with his people and they afterwards all received baptism in the name of our Lord.”¹²¹³

“(...) 36 men set off from the castle at Aukaimis and went off fearlessly to Ragnit to attack and plunder it. But as they approached it they became very afraid; being nervous they cast lots, as is their habit, to find out how the attack would prosper. The dice fell badly for them, so they hurriedly retreated. In the meantime, however, the brothers at Ragnit had positioned look-outs at intervals along the tracks leading to the enemy, and when one of them got wind of this raid he told the news to the brothers at the castle, who were still toiling under great difficulty and mourning the death of their commander and the others who had been killed earlier, as you have heard. All this grief made them so angry that if at all possible they wanted revenge on their enemies. The brother known as Ludwig von Liebenzell leapt to his feet and set off after them along the path they had taken, along with Brother Marquard von Röblingen. They also took with them two courageous brothers and 26 armed men, with whom they pursued them through scrub and forest until they finally caught up with them in an open field. There they hacked down 25 of the troop of Lithuanians; the others made good their escape.”¹²¹⁴

“During the same year Brother Ludwig von Liebenzell became commander at Ragnit. He was a bold, brave warrior in spirit and in deed whenever he took part in an attack on the enemy. With his brothers at Ragnit he now threw himself fearlessly and with great cleverness and boldness into an unrelenting war against the heathens and took part in many laudable

¹²¹³ Idem, *ibidem*:4287-4298.

¹²¹⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:4589.

battles in many campaigns at sea and on land. On one occasion he sailed with his men to Aukštaitija, which is subject to the king of Lithuania. There was a large village called Romene. In their simplicity the inhabitants of Aukštaitija considered the village to be sacred. The commander silently put the village in order, wreaking great destruction there, consecrating the natives under the banners of his own chaplains. This ritual of the laying on of hands was sharp against their necks and whoever encountered it was killed, regardless of how sacred they were. But enough of this mockery: He killed or captured everyone there and then returned home. He lost one brother on this campaign, Brother Konrad von Tuschevelt, killed at the hands of the enemy. He conducted many campaigns, harrying Aukštaitija and plaguing them with violence and destruction. However, their neighbours, the people of Samogitia, did not lament their suffering, because the suffering he inflicted on them themselves on his raids was quite enough, and they did not know where to turn to escape from danger. There was one area known as Pograuden which he and his men secretly moved against, hiding the bulk of the army in an ambush and sending out a small troop to rampage across the region, killing and destroying and then moving on. This made the people very angry and they set off in hot pursuit with all of their horsemen chasing the raiders and not noticing the ambush until they were right upon it. Then there was a great clash; some ran away, the others set about them and killed all of the Lithuanian army so that only six horsemen escaped, according to reports, while all the others died. This event so weakened the mounted forces of the region of Pograuden that their numbers did not recover for a very long time. He did the same at Vaikiai. He set an ambush and sent out a raiding party into the region to lure the people down according to the plan. Then the commander burst out of his hiding place and killed many of the greatest men in that area. With strategies like this he tricked the Lithuanians so often that I cannot describe it all. He persecuted them so much with his strength and cunning during the six years that he was in command of Ragnit that he forced all the Lithuanians who lived along the Memel from the River Neris to the province of Lamotina to maintain peace with the Christians and to give the brothers at Ragnit an agreed yearly tribute. Note these wonders and note that however much suffering this Ludwig caused them during his wars, they still liked him, so that even the nobles in the province of Samogitia incited the common people to rebel against the king. They often fought against him so that on occasion 100 or 200 men were killed on each side. He was also able to use amazing

cunning to foment trouble among the provinces, to the point that in his day the king of Lithuania could not persuade the people of Samogitia by threats or pleas to fight on his side against the brothers.”¹²¹⁵

“In the course of the same year [1295], shortly after the rebellion took place, Brother Ludwig von Liebenzell took a few brothers and 200 men to storm a castle in Lithuania. On the journey the scout got lost and they missed the castle. When they turned back and found it they only found an empty building. The garrison had found out they were on their way and had fled into the forest because they did not believe they could fight off the threat to the castle. The brothers were very annoyed that their campaign had been wasted. Nonetheless they burned down the castle and, disappointed, they left the area. But the good Lord did not want their work to go entirely to waste, but wanted to fulfil their wishes in a way that satisfied them, so He ordained that they came across a nearby castle on the Memel, called Kymel. It was strong and well garrisoned and the brothers’ forces had attacked it repeatedly in the past at great cost and to little effect. They fearlessly ran at the castle gates before the heathens in the castle knew they were coming. The unwanted guests ferociously attacked the host and his household and murdered all of them. Then they set the castle on fire and razed it to the ground.”¹²¹⁶

¹²¹⁵ *Idem, ibidem:4771-4791.*

¹²¹⁶ *Idem, ibidem:4855.*

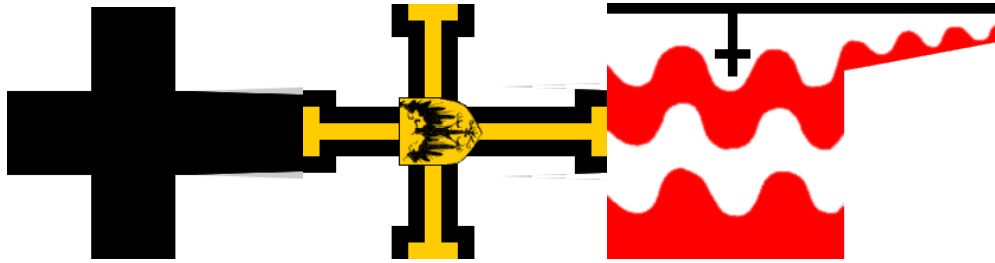


Figure 16: Some of the Teutonic standards captured at Tannenberg: the Order's banner (right), the Great Master's banner (centre), and the banner of the town of Kulm (from the *Banderia Prutenorum*, available at https://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/de_to_bp.html#ban) [4/8/21].

- **LRC2 – Organisation:**

“When they crossed the Dvina, each flag-bearer orderly assembled his unit and constantly kept it together through the swamps and many terrible woods. Such is the composition of the land and there are also many bad streams.”¹²¹⁷

“The army was organized for battle with the heathen. The man assigned to scout ahead picked out his best men and those who knew the roads. They rode through many treacherous ravines and suffered much, and the army moved along behind them. Finally they found a very beautiful field and there, alongside a splendid brook, the army pitched its tents and spent the night. Early the next morning some of their scouts came in bringing news that a mighty force was storming back and forth across the countryside. (...) When the Master heard it he conferred with the Brothers and then went to a castle named Warrach. His army had a vanguard and a rearguard and on both flanks elements were carefully grouped for defense. It marched in perfect order. (...) The Christians pitched their tents on a splendid field of grass near the castle. Part of the garrison there came out with their forces. The Master decided, for good or ill, to delay no longer, but to seek battle with the heathens the next day, whenever

¹²¹⁷ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:41.

they might be found. After this decision was made, some of the brave men were selected and formed into two groups. One of these would guard the army until the next day. (...) The other group was sent out to see what the heathens were doing. Late in the evening it rode out.”¹²¹⁸

“A small band of Brothers came from Leal, and a few came from Weissenstein. If you wish to know the actual numbers, there were thirty-four Brothers in all, but they had plenty of natives, who were all very willing to fight against the Russians. When the natives arrived, who were to help the Brothers, they were grouped in the left flank. This was where they were to fight. The larger group of the royal vassals of German birth moved up and held the right flank. The Brothers and their men made a glorious charge, in which Bishop Alexander was killed. Two formations of Russians advanced upon them, but they were attacked and driven to flight. They retreated across the field, and although they often turned around and fought back, it was to no avail. They left many men there. The brothers honorably avenged the injuries they had suffered so long from the Russians. The field was broad and wide, and the Russian defeat was severe. They were dismayed at the outcome of the battle. God’s help was surely present there, for each German had to fight sixty Russians. The hero Prince Dimitri then organized a defense with five thousand chosen Russians. His other army had fled. Now hear what happened. The brothers’ flagbearer led the attack against Dimitri, pressing hard toward a deep river, and it was here that he caught sight of the Brothers’ army. The Brothers had one hundred and sixty men and that had to suffice. There were also about eighty foot soldiers, and they heroically advanced upon a bridge. Then they banded together with the Brothers and hacked their way through the Russians, to their great dismay. Thus the Brothers returned to their lands with great honor”.¹²¹⁹

“With the consent of the Brothers he sent swift messengers throughout the land to proclaim a day when all were to assemble in Riga. As soon as they heard this, each advocate came willingly with all his forces. The bishop Frederick, a man whose virtue was constant, came personally with his group of knights. He was born in Haseldorf and was installed in the diocese of the well-known city of Dorpat. The headmen sent a splendid force of the king’s men. When they came to Riga on the appointed day [winter, 1280/81], they were welcomed

¹²¹⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:64-65.

¹²¹⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:93-94.

as dear guests and shown every courtesy. Afterwards the army was grouped under the various banners for the expedition and then advanced into Semgallia. (...) Then news came that an army was coming from Lithuania. When they heard this report, they abandoned the assault on the castle and left Doblein standing. They cut down the catapult and aligned the army into ranks against the Lithuanians. The heathen army meanwhile came storming toward a place named Slackenkappen. The Brothers' army grouped itself and set out toward them. When they approached so near that they could see one another, the heathens realized that the Christian force was large and powerful, and they began to flee toward home. The Marshal charged in pursuit, but his army came to a deep ravine, where the swamp was still unfrozen. The army was sad and angry that the enemy had escaped them. (...) The Master and the bishop went to the Brothers' monastery, and there they warmly received the crusaders and the king's men. Then the Master and Bishop Frederik parted lovingly, and everyone else who had come there returned home. This took place in the winter.”¹²²⁰

- **LRC3 – Bertold and Volmar:**

“When that army [that went in retaliation for the attack on the Stables] decided to rest and made camp, it laid all cares aside. Unknown to them, however, the Semgallians were nearby at that very moment. The latter ordered some daring warriors to spy on the Brothers' army and observe the campsite. They hurried to do that. They caught sight of the campfires and approached near enough to see the army itself (...) At daybreak the Master told a messenger to summon the Brothers. They came and joined him in council. The Master ordered one brother to have the watchmen look and see if anyone could find strange tracks. The watchmen were sent out, and they came back immediately, saying, “The enemy is coming. We have seen them nearby in well-ordered ranks. They are very near our army.” Since the Master was sitting in council, all the Brothers heard what the sentry reported. As soon as he finished they rushed to take up arms. Brother Bertold was the warrior chosen as banneret, and he took the flag in his hand and went onto a field. Without any urging the Brothers, townspeople and

¹²²⁰ Idem, *ibidem*:115.

crusaders quickly gathered around the flag. The natives, however, were not ready, for they had camped off in the woods. Some of them even saw the enemy, but fled away toward home, leaving their horses in the forest. But many a chivalrous squire displayed proper courage and stood by his lord. Then the splendid force moved through the forest with their shields. The daring hero Brother Volmar von Bernhausen was compelled by his courage to boldly charge the enemy as soon as he saw them. He rushed toward them, and the banner followed after him. He alone was mounted. All the others fought on foot. There was slashing and stabbing, and the heathens retreated. More than twenty of them were killed, and the rest fled from the fight. Some of the soldiers were also killed. Brother Volmar returned like a hero to his banner, once again spurred his horse, and charged the enemy. This time the hero was slain. He died a brave man, and I wish his soul well. The Master shouted to the Brothers to move out onto the field, but it was too narrow for them and because of the crowding on the battlefield, they were unable to group themselves properly. A great band of men was seen approaching, and they had no choice but to fight. The Brothers needed no admonishment to fight by their banners, and the soldiers were also ready and willing. Now another group which was after booty came between the Brothers and their horses. The Brothers saw that, and they moved in that direction with their banner, but they were unable to save the horses from the Sengallians, whose strength was too great. This dismayed the natives, and many of them fled. The brothers remained in the battle, however, forty of them and fifty Germans. They were completely surrounded by the Sengallian forces. Some of the others in the Christian army fled away, ignoring bridges and crossings, but many of them were later captured and killed. Many times the charging forces crashed together where the Master was fighting. The Brothers were fighting on foot as were all the Sengallians. Men on both sides became overheated, and red sweat spurted through the chain armor. Swords clanged, helmets split, and men on both sides fell dead upon the field. Many sank to the ground, knocked unconscious by the blows and stabbings. The brothers often forced the heathens back into the forest, but both sides lost many daring warriors in the heat of battle. Thirty-three Brothers were killed here, and the rest were overwhelmed in the fighting. Six who had been wounded were captured. One Brother hacked his way through the enemy, as many Sengallians witnessed with their own eyes. He struck down one man and rode toward home. He was

wounded by missiles, but recovered from his injuries. Master Willekin, who had governed five years and five months, was slain.”¹²²¹

- **LRC4 – War-horn:**

“The army spent the night under the protection of Our Lord and when the morning light appeared, the Master ordered the war-horn blown as a signal. The noise was grand and mighty, and the army quickly gathered itself together and made ready. Once again the war-horn sounded clearly, and then the army broke camp. When the third blast was blown, good Master Andreas of Livonia, like a bold hero, began the march with his entire army. (...) The Christian army ravaged the area and was often attacked, but it repaid this fully. All exerted themselves in devastating the land. Even those who should have defended their camps against them had fled. They had been checkmated. The Christians rejoiced and thanked God in heaven and His loving mother, for the help of both of them was evident there. They also took an innumerable amount of booty in the land of Lithuania and then destroyed by the torch everything around them. They could take their pick of all the roads and the Brothers were seen in places no Christian had ever been before. The Master with his Brothers and crusaders formed up their army carefully. They wanted to advance without resistance upon the Samogithians and cause them great harm. The war-horn sounded three times and the army made ready. Then they rode toward Samogithia (...) The Christians filled their hands with booty, and then devastated the land with fire and returned home. (...) Following the advice of his Brothers, the Master gave a part of the booty to our Lord, because He had given them a safe journey. He had earned His share, and they gave him weapons and horses.”¹²²²

¹²²¹ Idem, *ibidem*:127-128.

¹²²² Idem, *ibidem*:45-46.



Figure 17: The mural at Bunge church

(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/ff/Gotland_Bunge_kyrka_Wandmalerei_17.jpg) [8/8/21].

- **CLP3 – Sailing:**

“(…) [the master] sent a large, well-equipped army by ship to avenge their suffering and the crimes perpetrated against the murdered Christians. They disembarked when they arrived at the beach at Balga and went to the castle, where they set up all their bowmen in good positions in front of the castle. They began the assault boldly by setting up ladders against the battlements. In the meantime the leader of the besieged garrison, called Codrunus, had secretly gone over to the Brothers. With his help they quickly took the castle by force. What slaughter followed this.”¹²²³

¹²²³ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:1889-1901.

“The duke’s captain attacked Brother Friedrich von Weida, who was in charge of the sailors. He set about him ferociously and kept on attacking until he had pierced his cheek with a spear. However, brother Friedrich repaid him for this by killing him on the spot. At the same time the brothers hurriedly rowed their ships up to harry the enemy until the water became so shallow that one of the boats grounded on the sand and could not move backwards or forwards. The enemy attacked it, inflamed with their hatred, and had killed two brothers before Brother Friedrich arrived; he rescued his companions and took them on board his ship. Two brothers and three of their retainers were killed. Twenty of the enemy died; the others all escaped”¹²²⁴.

“(…) [Swantopelk] began to build another castle on the banks of the Vistula half a mile from where the city of Kulm now stands on the opposite bank. He called the castle Schwetz. The godless man intended to prevent the brothers from sailing up or down the river. When the master realised he had started building, he ordered the brothers at Kulm to sail downriver with their men while he himself planned to take to horse with the brothers at Thorn and Duke Casimir and come to their assistance at Schwetz. The master wanted to prevent the construction of the castle if at all possible. When Swantopelk saw the brothers in the ships landing to launch their attack he struck camp, destroyed the bridge which gave access to the castle and fled. But when he saw that the army on horseback had realised that they could not join the men in the ships from Kulm because the water between them was too deep, his courage returned and he headed back to the castle with his troops. When he grasped that the master was planning to storm the new castle he rapidly rebuilt the bridge he had destroyed and took his army across it. He left 300 men whose task was to defend the castle against the brothers. At this point the brothers’ army and Duke Casimir approached and began a bold and sustained attack against the castle, which was defended by its garrison. They were deadly enemies. The battle was so violent that many on both sides were seriously wounded. But because the castle was so secure it was not easily captured, so the brothers could not make any headway and Swantopelk quickly returned with his men and made the fortifications even stronger.”¹²²⁵

¹²²⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:2422-2433.

¹²²⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:2366-2377.

“Brother Dietrich (...) the advocate of Sambia, took a troop of brothers and 1,000 bold armed men who were particularly experienced in storming castles and travelled by ship with them to Scalovia, which is situated on both sides of the Memel, and without warning marched up to a castle which was located where Ragnit now is and began to storm it. When the Scalovians in the castle sat him setting up ladders against the battlements they would have very much liked to defend themselves but they were hit so often by the many sharp arrows which flew at them so continuously that all their defences were useless. This became apparent when not one of them dared show himself above the parapet. So the Christians climbed up to the men above them; some also broke in below through the castle gate and they hacked, hit and stabbed until no man there was left alive, although there were more of them than the whole of the Cristian army; they took the women and children prisoner and took away rich plunder in the form of goods. They reduced the castle and its defences to dust and burned all the villages in the vicinity where the people lived.”¹²²⁶

“Immediately after these events, on the orders of the master, Brother Erneko, the commander of Ragnit, set out on a campaign to Lithuania, taking with him a troop of 25 armed men and a brother called Johannes von Wien. They travelled up the Memel river by ship with the intention of capturing a Lithuanian who could give him more information on the lie of the land. When they were sailing past Kolainiai the garrison commander, Surminas, called together his men and together they considered many ways of tricking the brothers into coming onto land where they could kill them. After they had debated various ploys they finally decided that they would dress a man who could speak Polish in a woman’s clothes and make him look as if he were a Christian woman who had been taken prisoner, and that he would go to the riverbank and beg the brothers in God’s name, that if they came back, they would take him and free him from Lithuanian captivity. One of the Lithuanians, known as Nodam, who according to what I have read afterwards became a Christian and ended his days in the faith, took charge of this matter, selecting 60 men, taking them to a secret hiding place which suited his purposes, and setting up the false woman on the shore. Shortly afterwards, when the commander had completed his business and they were returning, the conspirator called out to them, wailing pitifully and tearfully (...). When brother Erneko

¹²²⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:3965.

heard this lament, his heart went out to her in mercy and he brought the ship in close, intending to pick her up; this decision cost him dear. When they reached the bank and threw out a rope the traitor grabbed hold of it and held on to it firmly. Then all the men who had been hiding rushed up to the trap and killed all the Christians.”¹²²⁷

“Not long after this Brother Volz, the commander at Ragnit, assembled the people he commanded and sailed with them up the River Jūra, from where they went secretly to Pūtvė. They arrived there at dawn while the whole garrison were still asleep, entered the castle and killed anyone who dared resist them. (...) At the end of August in this same year, after they had rebuilt the outer bailey so that it was even stronger than before and the people had brought the corn they had grown into the same defences, the commander came once more with his men, sailing up to the castle at Pūtvė, capturing the outer bailey and burning everything inside: both buildings and corn were consumed by the fire and whatever Lithuanians he found he hacked to death.”¹²²⁸

“This same brother Poppo, the grand master, was constantly striving to increase the safety of the Christians, to the honour of God, so he sent Brother Konrad, known as Bremer, and some armed men, to travel to Elbing with three ships laden with supplies of food, to the great delight of the Christians there. When they approached the fortress at Zantir they saw that Swantopelk was there with his men, waiting for them in 20 ships. When Brother Konrad saw that he was up against he was not afraid. His heart trusted on God and he commanded his men to row powerfully towards the enemy; which they did: they rowed with all their strength straight downstream towards the Pomerelian ships and they hit them so hard that many flipped over, keel up, deck side down in the water. The others all broke up. Many Poles could be seen thrashing in the water and their stomachs became fish traps. When the enemy saw the brothers’ ships approaching the riverbank they ran up with stones and threw them at the crew, to the great distress of brother Konrad, one of whose teeth was knocked out. Many of the others were also injured in the attack. This notwithstanding, they and their cargo all arrived safely in Elbing, where they recovered from their injuries.”¹²²⁹

¹²²⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:4568-4578.

¹²²⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:5270.

¹²²⁹ Idem, *ibidem*: 2412-2422.

- *Customs, paragraph 9. How the commanders and the office holders shall give up their offices yearly in the general chapter.*

“We also decree that all the office holders who are appointed by the general chapter give up their office yearly in the chapter. The holders of minor officers shall likewise give up their office, after the chapter, to the master or to the brethren whom he wishes to name for this, or to their respective superiors. Likewise the provincial commanders shall hold yearly a general chapter once a year and relieve their subordinates of their offices in the same chapter while each official also shall account in writing how he received the house and how he leaves it, as to funds and debts.”¹²³⁰

- **Chosen Episodes:**

Raids/Expeditions

1 – CLP: “When the building work was finished, winter was setting in, and the ice was frozen hard the Master, Brother Hermann, assembled his brothers and the aforementioned pilgrims, all of whom were passionate in their desire to dampen the Prussian’s audacity, and they set off on a successful campaign with them to the region of Reisen. They killed or captured many of the heathens and stormed through the area as far as the River Sorge, where luck was on their side and they enjoyed the battle they had been hoping for. They found assembled there a large, well-armed, powerful Prussian army which was riding to attack the Christians. When the Prussians saw the Christians approaching so valiantly their vanguard found themselves bringing up the rear as they fled like cowards. (...) Lord Swantopelk and his brother Sambor and their men, who were more experienced in dealing with the Prussians’ tactics than the others, arranged to set up road-blocks on the paths through the undergrowth so that none of them could escape. They stabbed and slashed in their terrible anger; the knightly sword of Christianity greedily devoured the sinners’ flesh, their spears were red, because the Prussians had no way to escape; they fell like the cowards they were. The Christians carried on the battle until more than 5,000 Prussians lay dead in the snow.”¹²³¹

¹²³⁰ STERNS (trans.) 1969: 290-291.

¹²³¹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:1796-1807. Bradbury points to the unreliability of numbers given by chroniclers (BRADBURY 2004:281), though it is worth recalling Pluskowski’s remark on how chronicles tell that the Prussians could gather large numbers of cavalry. Not to dismiss Bradbury, for the chronicler may have painted a more glorious picture, yet it is necessary to understand that Teutonic knights were few, and they were not in a friendly environment. As Christiansen puts it, “Their enemies could outnumber and outfight them; therefore,

2 – CLP: “(...) Brother Heinrich Zuckschwert, who was then commander at Balga, according to what I have read, took 1,500 horsemen and 20 brothers and covertly entered Lithuania, where he set an ambush at the castle of Junigeda, hiding himself and all of his men and only allowing the banner of Ragnit to ride up to the castle, which was manned by Lithuanians from other parts of the country. They were angry that these men dared come so close and ran after them to attack them. The Brothers would have killed many of the Lithuanians if the others, who were hidden, had not come out of their hiding place too soon. The Lithuanians hurried away, and as the raid had not turned out as they had hoped, the brothers withdrew to a place where they could set up camp and consulted among themselves about what to do. They finally agreed that they did not want to return empty handed so they launched another attack against the area around the fortress at Aukaimis, where they killed or captured many of the unbelievers and accumulated a great quantity of plunder before leaving. Because all the horsemen there had rushed off to Junigeda the day before in response to the uproar there about the attack, the only Lithuanians who followed the Christians were on foot. They planned to block the tracks through the forests, but the brothers were so courageous that they broke through the barricades and eventually encountered the enemy on an open area of heath, where they killed 12 of them and left them there. The others thought better of pursuing the army any further and returned home.”¹²³²

3 – LRC: “[The Christians] burned their villages and all their crops, and this enraged the Semgallians. Then Master Conrad happily turned back toward Livonia with his fine army. He decided to ride ahead of the army and improve the road at the bridges and crossings. He spoke to a Brother, “With your permission, I will take such men as I need and ride ahead to rebuild the bridges which have been destroyed. If the Semgallian army attacks you, set up a defense and blow my horn. That shall be the signal for me to come with my group. You will need no other means of communication than this. Ride slowly. Do not rush.” The Master left and rode away across a wide meadow. He was in a hurry to get the work done, for the army was following closely behind him. After he had left his men, he heard the Semgallians coming angrily through the forest. They positioned many warriors between the Master and his army. The Brothers took up arms, but the Master could not come to their aid, because the way was barred. That grieved him greatly. He conferred with his squadron, and those who were with him advised him to ride safely back to Mitau and to remain there and wait for his army. He followed their advice, but he later regretted it. And so, in anguish and sorrow, he rode to Mitau. Now I will tell you how it went for the Brothers who remained in the forest. I am unable to fully describe their distress. Many of their horses were slain, and so they dismounted and fought against their attackers on foot. The strength of the heathens was too great for them, and their native troops lost heart and fled through the woods. The chivalrous

they had to impose permanent military garrisons on conquered territory, and protect them with a wide band of scorched earth.” (CHRISTIANSEN 1997:131).

¹²³² FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4652-4662.

Brothers, however, were determined to help the Germans escape, three of whom had already been killed. The brothers held fast and fought bravely against the heathen army. What more should I say? Ten brothers and many other daring warriors were slain, and the rest had to retreat into the forest. The dead lay where they had fallen, and the others returned to Mitau.”¹²³³

4 – CLP: “There was one area known as Pograuden which [Brother Ludwig von Liebenzell] and his men secretly moved against, hiding the bulk of the army in an ambush and sending out a small troop to rampage across the region, killing and destroying and then moving on. This made the people very angry and they set off in hot pursuit with all of their horsemen chasing the raiders and not noticing the ambush until they were right upon it. Then there was a great clash; some ran away, the others set about them and killed all of the Lithuanian army so that only six horsemen escaped, according to reports, while all the others died. This even so weakened the mounted forces of the region of Pograuden that their numbers did not recover for a very long time. He did the same at Vaikiai. He set an ambush and sent out a riding party into the region to lure the people down according to the plan. Then the commander burst out of his hiding place and killed many of the greatest men in that area. With strategies like this he tricked the Lithuanians so often that I cannot describe it all. He persecuted them so much with his strength and cunning during the six years that he was in command of Ragnit that he forced all the Lithuanians who lived along the Memel from the River Neris to the province of Lamotina to maintain peace with the Christians and to give the brothers at Ragnit an agreed yearly tribute. Note these wonders and note that however much suffering this Ludwig caused them during his wars, they still liked him, so that even the nobles in the province of Samogitia incited the common people to rebel against the king. (...) He was also able to use amazing cunning to foment trouble among the provinces, to the point that in his day the king of Lithuania could not persuade the people of Samogitia by threats or pleas to fight on his side against the brothers.”¹²³⁴

5 – CLP: “Whenever he could, Master Konrad persecuted and destroyed the accursed heathens with all his might; now he assembled a powerful army of foot soldiers and horsemen to attack the Sudovians. When he reached that region, he took the mounted troops and, leaving the others behind, he advanced into another area in Sudovia, known as Meruniska, where he killed 18 of the highest ranking lords, and in addition killed and captured 600 people and moved about the area at will, devastating it and killing, raising fires and plundering.”¹²³⁵

¹²³³ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:91-92.

¹²³⁴ FISCHER (trans) 2010:4782-4794.

¹²³⁵ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4126.

6 – LRC: “(...) a fine hero and warrior [Helmicus] was chosen in Goldingen to lead the Brothers. He and the Brothers decided to lead an expedition against Lithuania. The plan was kept secret. After the decision had been made, he summoned the Kurs without delay, and they came willingly to Goldingen as requested. They were not threatened with punishment if they did not come. Three hundred and fifty of them joined the expedition. Twelve Brothers and some brave squires also went. The army set out to try its fortune wherever the brothers led it. All had their minds set on Lithuania. The army was arranged beneath the banners in an orderly fashion. They sent scouts ahead and followed their trail through swamps and dense forests. The land was such that they encountered many bad paths where neither bridge nor crossing had ever been made, but they were happy on their journey. When they reached the borders of Lithuania, they made camp. Let me tell you what happened then. The commander had sent some daring sergeants into the land to scout the roads and spy out on the region the Brothers planned to attack, and to see if anyone were defending it. Now the Lithuanians had assembled to defend their land, for news had reached them that the Brothers were coming there to do them injury. They did not tarry. Those who had the very best mounts were assembled into a large band. They grimly set out in pursuit and soon came upon the trail left earlier by the Brother’s army. Their hearts rejoiced, and they hurried on even faster until they came to where they could see the army. The Lithuanians who were riding dismounted from their horses, as was their custom. They rushed at the Brothers’ army, which they found coming boldly toward them. The Brothers and sergeants most experienced in swordplay charged on foot. They bravely rushed into the forest toward the heathens with their banner. Daring warriors, Christian and heathen, threw spears back and forth. No one needed to urge his fellow on. The Kurs stood by the banner like brave warriors. The Brothers advanced upon the heathens with their troops, and God helped them with his grace. Many heroes from both sides died in the slashing and stabbing of battle, but the Lithuanians were forced to fall back, retreating in disgrace. Many deemed themselves lucky if they managed to get away from there on foot. It was night and the forest was dark and deep, and thus many of the enemy escaped the Brothers. They abandoned the pursuit and found shields, clothing, and swords lying in the forest. They also captured one hundred and sixty horses. They praised God and rejoiced that such glory had been rendered unto Him. Then they proudly turned homeward with their army, taking little rest until they arrived at a castle named Amboten. It also lies in Kurland. The brothers brought their booty there and divided it equally. God in heaven, who had given them victory, was given His share. After the division of the spoils they set out without delay and proudly rode home to Kurland.”¹²³⁶

7 – CLP: “In the year of our Lord 1261 news of these inhuman crimes was heard in Germany and the Christians, including princes, counts and many lords, felt very bitter towards the Prussians. (...) One virtuous man was called von Reider. He came to the assistance of Prussia with many noble warriors from all over Germany. With them, the Brothers marched into Natangia, plundering and burning, killing and taking prisoners.

¹²³⁶ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:139-140.

When they had done enough they returned to the place where Brandenburg now stands and pitched camp on a plain. Both groups, brothers and pilgrims, thought it would be worthwhile for part of the army to return to Natangia and other places and campaign there, devastating, destroying and burning whatever remained unharmed while the rest of the army waited for their return. While they were engaged in this the Natangians had assembled a mighty force and had come to Pokarwen, where one part of the Christian army was, and attacked ferociously. The brothers and the Christians fought back valiantly, particularly one, a good pure knight called Lord Schenckel of Bentheim who came from Westphalia. He had heard a bishop there preaching to the people that all of the Christian souls who were killed by the heathens in Prussia entered heaven directly without going through purgatory. This reward was precious above all others to this knight. He spurred on his horse and charged, carrying his spear as knights do, and charged through the enemy front line and into the main army. His charge inflicted serious injury on many Prussians; his sharp-edged salute killed many on both sides. When he had charged through them, and he was turning back and had reached the middle of the army, this laudable warrior of God was knocked down. Then the Barthians on both sides attacked ferociously and many were seriously wounded or killed outright. The fighting went on until at last, unfortunately, Lord Reider himself was killed, and with him a large part of the army and all the brothers who were with him. Some Christians were taken prisoner, the rest fled. At this point the troops which had been sent to Natangia returned. When they approached the battlefield and saw that the Christian army had conceded defeat and that there was nothing they could do to help because the enemy outnumbered them, they were forced to leave by secret tracks, bitterly distressed.”¹²³⁷

8 – CLP: “During the same winter [1304] the master conceived the plan of sending out two armies, one under the command of Brother Konrad von Lichtenhain, who was the commander at Brandenburg, and the other under the command of that great hero Brother Eberhard von Virneburg, commander of Königsberg. They were to attack the Lithuanians. The two campaigns were so arranged that Lichtenhain first attacked the area of Gardinas, where he and his men set the country ablaze, so that the fires could be seen from a great distance. He did not achieve much, other than setting up a hue and cry among the mounted Lithuanian men, who came out in hot pursuit of him. On the third day after this, as had been planned, Virneburg came riding up at great speed with 2,000 men and launched a surprise attack in Pograuden, rampaging though it taking prisoners, pillaging, killing, burning and laying waste the greater part of the country. During all the fighting the banner of the brothers’ army was left unassailed on a hill opposite Gedimin-Burg from morning until midday. Count Werner, whom I mentioned earlier, was knighted there and he himself then knighted many noble young men. When they were ready the brothers left, tricking the Lithuanians who came after them and killing 20 of them, quite apart from all the pillaging and burning they had carried out.”¹²³⁸

¹²³⁷ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2984-3001.

¹²³⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5202-5210.

9 – LRC: “The expedition assembled in Riga and it was very large. Master Anne summoned all the noble crusaders from Riga to him and said, “Now show that you have taken the cross for the sake of Christianity, and be of good cheer.” No one had to invite the Estonians, Livs and Letts, for they were all eager to join the expedition. Then the well—ordered army moved off toward Sengallia and when they came to that land, the Master ordered all the natives there to join them, saying he would exempt no one, and they had to obey him whether they liked it or not. The Kurs proved their trustworthiness and boldly joined the expedition. Thus the army went toward Samogithia in high spirits, hoping for booty. Now after the native peoples of both regions [Kurland and Sengallia] had joined them, the Master and his advocates and the crusaders deemed it time to group the people under various banners, as is the custom in war. When they arrived at the borders of that land [Samogithia], the advocates regrouped their forces and drew them up for combat. The banners were entrusted to those who were eager for battle and who knew how to conduct themselves in such matters. There were many peoples there in formations which no foe could ever break. Although there were many banners, the natives were so well trained that they would not stray from their own. Their leaders also kept them under their constant care. The army arrayed itself in many proud formations, as should be done in battle. Guides were assigned to the leaders, and that benefitted the entire expedition. These were native Lithuanians, fine heroes, and the army was well-protected. One of them was named Tusche, who was skilful at spying. Another was Milgerin, who was as daring as a boar. The third was Gingeike, who boldly sought out all the paths. His enemies fled before him in time of storm and battle. The army exploded into Samogithia and did tremendous damage. This time the Samogithians were outmatched, and the Kurs did not mind that at all. There were monks and friars in the army and the first fires were set by the latter, the next by the former. I have heard that everyone who had come on this expedition was eager to burn. While the main army remained well-protected and well-ordered at all points, ready for battle smaller groups rode here and there plundering and the devastation grew even greater. When evening came, the great army of the Christians made camp. During the night, some heroes continued the attacks and brought in much booty: men, women, and children and all manner of cattle. Whatever was not driven or carried away was slain. The army’s watchposts were strong and well-manned, but even so the sentries there were strongly attacked by the heathen. They bravely defended themselves, however, and did not rest until they had given all the heathens blue heads. In the morning, at daybreak, the sentries came in and the army moved on to plunder some more. They swept through the land robbing and burning for nine days. They devastated everything and met with no resistance. They took much booty and totally despoiled the land. Then Master Anne spoke, “Everyone heed me. When the war-horn is blown, we will all take our leave and ride for home. The spoils we have taken here are worth a great deal.” The horn was blown and the army set out on the journey.”¹²³⁹

¹²³⁹ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:55-56.

10 – CLP: “In the year of our Lord 1320 Brother Heinrich Plötzkau, always keen to confront the accursed heathens in battle, took 40 brothers and all the horsemen in Sambia, went up the Memel and launched a campaign into the province of Medininkai, intending to mount another devastating attack there. While they were campaigning across the province the heathen army had assembled in force. They did not intend to confront them in the province itself but instead focused on the roads the brothers had used to enter the country, which they blocked with trees and transformed into a thick forest to confuse the Christians as they returned. When the campaign was over and they set off again a few of them drove the plunder in front of them. The majority stayed with the banners which followed the plunder. The heathens were not in a hurry to fight for the plunder; instead they waited until the vanguard with the banners came to a narrow point in a wood. In this cramped space the heathens attacked the brothers from all sides to terrible effect and the savage onslaught, in a place where they were unable to defend themselves, continued for so long until they were so exhausted from trying to defend themselves and from the weight of their weapons that they were incapable of moving from the spot or defending themselves any more. Then the rested troops fell on them, shedding the Christian blood of 29 brothers and many other Christians. That bold lion Plötzkau, who never hid from the enemy, was also killed by the heathens.”¹²⁴⁰

Intercept Raids

11 – LRC: “The brothers and all the Germans and the numerous Kurs armed themselves for battle as custom dictated. When they were ready, Brother Bernhart von Haren took up the banner, and the Christians immediately charged the heathen army, which quickly took up arms to defend itself. Both sides fought viciously. One by one the Kurs withdrew from the battle and fled, and the Brothers found themselves left in a precarious position. But the Germans resolutely stood by the Brothers even unto death, and those Kurs who remained loyal stood firm and shared the danger. Spears flew and Brother Brenhart and his Brothers, the Kurs and the crusaders, hacked and hewed, killing and wounding a great number of the heathen. And blood spurted through breast-plates down onto the sand. But thirty-three Brothers and some of the Germans died fighting on the battlefield. The Christians were defeated. The Samogithians divided their horses and happily gave thanks to their gods that the battle was theirs.”¹²⁴¹

12 – LRC: “Thus he rode along many paths until he came to Wiek, which lies on the sea. All those he had summoned joined him there. The king’s men came with many proud squadrons, and Bishop Frederick came from Dorpat with everyone he could bring. He had exerted himself in this and willingly contributed all his people to the force. And so the Master brought a huge army, including his own men, onto the wild sea. The winter was very cold, and that proved costly for many a mother’s son. The heathen army was returning from Ösel, after having looted and burned part of the land. The two armies approached each other on the sea until

¹²⁴⁰FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5636.

¹²⁴¹SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:62.

each side caught sight of the other. Both armies realized they would have to fight, and the Lithuanians drew their sleds up into a defensive position. The ice which covered the sea did not break under the great weight placed upon it by both armies. It was thick enough for all of them. The men from Dorpat, and Leal, Master Otto, and the king's men assembled. (I cannot name all of the latter, even though I hold them all in great regard, but I would mention one fine knight. He had the courage of a lion and was named Seivereith, headman over the king's land of Reval.) These men quickly conferred, and then ordered all their people to move to attack immediately. The entire army pressed forward. The bishops were to defend the left flank, and they were given plenty of bold Brothers for the battle. Seivereith of Reval and his men were to fight on the right flank. Orders were given for a general attack, but the Brothers charged upon the heathens too soon. When they came dashing towards them, the heathen went behind the defensive line of their sleds, and the foremost Brothers, the flag-bearers, smashed into it. The heathens rejoiced and stabbed their horses to death. Some of the Brothers were slain, but the others put up a good fight. Meanwhile the main body of the Christian army charged without delay. There was a wild hacking and hewing on both sides, Christian and heathen, and the blood of men from both armies spilled onto the ice. It was a fierce battle in which many noble men were struck down. Good Master Otto and fifty-two Brothers were slain, spilling their blood for God, and some of the native allies were killed, may God save their souls. The surviving Brothers were hard pressed, for most of their horses had been killed, and they had to fight on foot. This encouraged the heathens, but those Brothers who were still mounted performed heroic deeds here and there on the ice, slashing through many a band of heathens. The bishops of Dorpat and Leal and the knights of Reval came to the Brothers with all their men. Thus the Brothers' army recovered and continued the attack. The Brothers fought as one man and inflicted much damage back and forth across the ice in many a bold band, and many of the heathens were slain. Sixteen hundred of those who had hoped to win glory lay dead, and the battlefield was red with blood. The bishop of Leal was wounded, and six hundred Christians were slain there upon the sea. The brother's army rode away, and the heathens rejoiced, for they had held the ice and thus won victory. (...) Master Otto had governed well and wisely for three years and six months in Livonia."¹²⁴²

13 – LRC: “When the Lithuanians learned that [the brothers] were coming to defend the land, they hurried homeward, fearing a defeat. They took their booty and happily crossed over the Dvina, hoping to return home. Meanwhile the commander at Ascheraden (...) had sent messengers throughout the land. Soon all those who heard the news eagerly came to Ascheraden. His heart rejoiced, and without delay he ordered the Brothers to take up arms, which they gladly did. When his army was ready, the commander was notified that the heathens had gotten away, and he was enraged at the enemy when he heard this. The Dvina was frozen solid, and so he took his army out onto it. The Brother from Kokenhusen¹²⁴³ whom I mentioned before also came. All the bold men set out in pursuit of the heathens, hurrying along their trail. The scouts out ahead came upon the heathen

¹²⁴² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:96-97.

¹²⁴³ The castle belonged to the bishop, but a Teutonic knight was in charge.

tracks. The Lithuanians also knew that the Brothers' forces were coming after them, but they were bold and arrogant. They made camp in a forest, saying, "The brothers are coming. We did not take anything from them, and so they are bringing their possessions to us. Let us be of good cheer." According to the book they cut down trees and erected a barricade around themselves and their horses. The brothers arrived with their forces, and when the heathens saw them, their hearts rejoiced. They charged the Brothers as they dismounted from their horses, and swords inflicted many losses on both sides. The battlefield was red with blood. The brothers, however, pressed through the barricade and killed six of the heathens. One of their leaders was slain, and the rest withdrew from the battle. They left many shields, spears, swords and horses, but for those who escaped it seemed gain enough to be able to flee toward Lithuania on foot. They forfeited Schoriat, who was slain on the battlefield. Let his friends mourn him. Two brothers were killed, but there is no need to mourn them."¹²⁴⁴

14 – CLP: "Good fortune breeds arrogance; arrogance is evil since it resists authority and destroys everything. Men who are raised high by arrogance are also brought low by it. This is clearly illustrated in the case of King Vytenis, the proud heathen, as I shall tell you now. He had always had good fortune (...) That made him so proud that he thought he could threaten any kingdom he pleased, as could be seen from the stupid things he said. (...) After he had campaigned in Prussia, as I described earlier, causing great damage and distress and bringing grief to many hearts, finding no-one offered any resistance he planned to attack the land once more. He took 4,000 proven heroes, chosen for their courage, skilled and strong in battle, and set off for Prussia, launching a savage attack on the bishopric of Warmia early on the day before Palm Sunday, rampaging through it with his men, attacking and killing and destroying the whole country as far as Braunsberg (...) During this campaign the dogs insulted the honour of God and His servants; they frenziedly burned all the churches they came across. (...) After they had tormented the country in this way for three days the king left to return home with immeasurable pride, taking with him such a quantity of goods that no one could make an inventory of them, and over and above this, aside from the men he had murdered across the country in his ferocious onslaught, he had taken around 1,300 girls, women and children prisoner and driven them off with him in chains. (...) The Lithuanians withdrew until they arrived at a wild and lonely area of Barthia, where they settled down to rest on a plain which in Prussian is known as Woplauken. (...) As the night came to an end and morning broke, Brother Heinrich von Plötzkau, the great commander, and many other valiant heroes arrived. Who else could it be? It was the honourable community of the brothers; high and low, young and old, numbering around 80, and with them many skilled and tested bold warriors. (...) When they drew near they found the heathens camped on a hill which was ringed by defences. They did not hesitate; the Christians got into formations and attacked the enemy. In the first assault the Christians lost 40 men, killed by the king, but nothing daunted they pressed on like lions; the largest part of the army pushed on towards the top of the hill with their banners, pressing forward against the heathens, who defended themselves fiercely, throwing down spears and missiles

¹²⁴⁴ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:119-120.

at the Christians so that it looked as it were snowing. Brother Gunther von Arnstein made inroads on their flank, with one troop attacking the Rus'ian bowmen, who even at that period were using their bows and sharp arrows against them. However, after a short time Brother Gunther overran their position and they retreated with Brother Gunther in hot pursuit. In the midst of all this in the name of God the brothers' banner reached the centre of the defensive fortifications. That gave the heathens such a shock that immediately there was a great noise and people began falling over themselves to run away (...) The brothers rushed headlong after the enemy and hacked, slashed and stabbed so relentlessly until many of the heathens lay dead before them, run through or heads broken by the brothers' swords, and many terrible torrents of red heathen blood, spilled by the brothers' vanguard, were visible against the green of the battlefield. (...) The Christians continued the slaughter and the pursuit all day and all night until they had put to death all the Lithuanians. Many of them died by drowning; some hanged themselves or died of despair. Nonetheless the king escaped with three men. (...) After this they captured 2,800 horses whose riders had been killed, over and above those who had died with the heathens in the lakes, and they took quantities of plunder I cannot begin to describe. This laudable battle took place on 6 April. It was the Wednesday of Holy Week in the year of our Lord 1311."¹²⁴⁵

Confronting or chasing after enemies

15 – CLP: “The brothers in the castle at Kulm (...) when they saw that the heathens had pitched camp near the marsh they went out after them at night with 400 men. When the heathens were half way across the swamp Brother Dietrich, the old marshal, wanted to attack the men at the rear. He said: ‘Let us fight here because before those on the side can come back these will be dead.’ The senior brothers among them agreed with this, but Brother Berlwin, the new marshal, disagreed. ‘No’, he said, ‘I think it would be much better to attack those at the front.’ Again the senior brothers argued against this, because they thought that if they attacked the enemy at the front they would be forced to defend themselves and would not be able to escape. But although the most senior of them thought it was a mistake, they followed him quickly and rode to attack the front of the army, which immediately took flight. The Christian army set off in pursuit on the tracks of the enemy for some distance through the pine forest. Many of the heathens were left for dead on the heath. While the Christian army was dispersed all around, the marshal and 24 Christians came to a hill. There he found 4,000 Prussians preparing for battle, and when they saw the brothers' flag appearing in front of them so ill-defended and with such a small number of Christians all their cowardice disappeared; they rose up together in battle against him and killed the marshal and his companions. Afterwards they began to reconnoitre, looking for the brothers and their men and fighting sporadically until they had killed all the brothers and 400 of their men in total, all bar ten, who fled the scene separately and thus saved their lives. The brothers of Thorn came rushing up with 200 men just after this happened, at the time and to the place the marshal had told them; when they saw the carnage and suffering and

¹²⁴⁵ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:5338-5406.

the brothers and their men slaughtered they lost no time in fleeing from that place. The Prussians chased after them. During the flight many Christians were killed by the Prussians.”¹²⁴⁶

16 – LRC: “One time it happened that [the brothers] unknowingly rode into terrible danger. Their enemies, the Lithuanians, came strongly against them, bringing many warriors into Kurland, where foe would find foe slaughtered on the plain. The two armies approached each other haphazardly, but the Kurs were apprehensive since they had already caught sight of the enemy. The Brothers’ forces approached quite near to the Lithuanians but no warning was given, for they had all taken off the saddles, and five thousand of them were lying about on the plain. Their best men had gone to a tribal council on the field some distance away from the others. The Brothers rejoiced at this, and their small army, both noble and commoner, was ready to fight. They took this as a sign that they would live through the battle. The Germans all cried out to God in heaven and the Kurs, as was their custom, joined in with their battle cry. Then they attacked the tribal council and with their blows caused many a youth to forget the decrees he had heard there. Whoever managed to mount without a saddle was not ashamed to flee homewards. The Brothers with the German detachment broke their lines with charges, and whatever pagans regrouped were struck down by the Kurs. They had to fall back under the pressure, for half their army lay dead. The heathens gave up defending themselves, and throughout their army the cry arose, “The might of the Germans is upon us!” Many a pagan neck was severed, and many fell to earth, never to wage war again. Thus God gave help to His friends, while the devil gave the heathens pain and suffering. Woe to him, who allies himself with Satan. When the battle was over, the brothers and their allies all dismounted on the grass and their hearts were happy. Their rage rightly disappeared when they found they had lost no one (...) They divided the weapons and horses equally, and a share was set aside for God in heaven.”¹²⁴⁷

17 – LRC: “Now they had hurried toward Riga sometime after daybreak, and when Nameise and his troops saw the banners and shields of the Brothers spread across the field, they turned homeward. They were in such a hurry to flee that none of them remembered to kill the sentry. They fled in two groups, and many threw down their shields in their haste. Nameise fled overland, but the other group went down onto the frozen river Aa. The sentry could see the Brother’s banners, and he hurried toward his lords, shouting and waving his hands. The Master came running to him and asked him what had happened and if he had seen the enemy. “I certainly have seen them,” he replied, /I barely escaped from them. (...) [Nameise] asked me for information about the size of the army, and I said the Brothers’ forces from Estonia and from the lands of the Letts had been assembled here. (...) They were in such a hurry to flee that they let me go./ “Let us delay no longer,” said the entire army. “This good news pleases us.” The army was quickly organized for the pursuit of the heathens. The Marshal galloped ahead and came upon the trail of those who had ridden out onto the Aa. The banners followed him, and they all

¹²⁴⁶FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2255-2267.

¹²⁴⁷SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:36-37.

pursued with such abandon that many of their horses fell. Sometime before midday, the Marshal had come near enough to the enemy to see them, and he and his troops dashed after them. The heathens then had a stroke of luck: Thirty of them had fallen through the ice and had wisely left their horses there and fled toward the shore. No one followed their trail. Now I will tell you the consequences of this. Those heathens who had not fallen through the ice hurried toward home, with the Master in pursuit. He did not turn aside for booty. Many of his men, however, stupidly abandoned the Brothers when they saw the horses in the flowing water. They meant to recover them for themselves. The Marshal did not realize that his force was now so small. There were only nine of them: five Brothers, three soldiers and one knight. The latter was a fine man (...) He was called the crusaders' advocate and was from Westphalia. He had to separate from the Brothers when his horse stopped from exhaustion. Nameise and his forces, who had been fleeing overland, caught sight of him and came rushing out onto the ice. He killed the knight, and that hero was later greatly mourned. Nameise continued to flee, and when he saw the eight men ahead and recognized Brothers among them, he set out after them. He had a good thirty men with him, and so he boldly pursued the eight. The Brothers did not realize that the enemy force was coming up from behind. Nameise slashed into them fiercely and did them great injury. Three Brothers were slain and the other two were taken along toward Terwerten. The Landmarshal was one of those. Now those with the banner were also pursuing the enemy and when they came to the place where their horses had been taken from the ice, they asked, "Where has the Marshal gone?" The people said, "He continued the chase. You warriors should make haste, for he rode on with a small force." They gave their horses the spur and tarried no longer. They soon came to the place where the knight lay slain, and that enraged them. They continued the pursuit, and then saw the other dead men and realized that the marshal was lost. That caused them sorrow and anger, and they would have fought eagerly, if only the heathens had waited for them. They followed on a while longer, and then they returned to Riga. The Landmarshal was later sent to the land of King Thoreiden, the lord of Lithuania. He was forced to fight a duel, and both combatants were killed. Thus Brother Gerhard died, may God make his soul happy in heaven."¹²⁴⁸

Order attacked after raid

18 – CLP: "(...) Swantopelk gathered together a huge army, made up of his Pomerelians and some of those Prussians he was always inciting to leave the brothers and reject the baptism (...) He followed them swiftly, always camping at night at the spot which the brothers had left with their army that morning on their way home. He had his chargers and other mounts stabled in the same places the brothers had kept their horses. The tents were counted, as were the tracks on the ground. In this way the evil Swantopelk was able to establish that his army was twice as big as the brothers' (...) In the morning, when the brothers' army was leaving its lodgings, several men from Swantopelk's army ran to the wagons of plunder (...) Lord Heinrich von Liechtenstein noticed

¹²⁴⁸ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:113-114.

this so he at once rushed among the enemy and they disappeared before him like dust. (...) When Swantopelk heard this he arrived quickly to help with three troops of men. When the Kujavians saw so many of the enemy approaching them they forgot all discipline and took flight, all except one knight, called Martin of Kruszewica who was entrusted with carrying their banner, and Duke Casimir. The duke advised them to send quickly for Lord Heinrich von Liechtenstein. In the meantime the brothers and all their men joined the battle. When Swantopelk saw that the brothers did not intend to retreat before him he selected about 1,000 of his best men and instructed them to get down of their chargers to face the battle and that they should shout and make a great noise and attack the brothers, holding their shields in front of them, and thrust their spears at the Christians' horses. 'I will easily win', he said, 'if they attack, because their weapons are so heavy that they cannot turn in either direction and cannot fight.' After the armies on both sides had taken up position for the battle, Lord Heinrich von Liechtenstein rejoined the group. When he looked at the enemy he immediately said to the brothers, 'Don't hesitate, that's my advice, because any delay will damage you.' So they set off bravely against the enemy and closed with them in the name of God. A very fierce battle then ensued, which nonetheless had a very happy ending for the Christian heroes, because that day they killed 1,500 of the enemy on the battlefield, while none of the Christians died. However, ten of their horses were killed, impaled by the enemy as Swantopelk had instructed. When the strife of battle had ended in their favour (which can only have been the work of God), the brothers and the pilgrims set off homewards again, taking with them 1,600 war horses, others horses, and weapons and goods they had won from the enemy for which I have no figures, and the glory of victory, which had been given them as a sign by the hand of God. Praise be to the name of Jesus Christ for ever more, amen!"¹²⁴⁹

Attacking castles/relieving sieges:

19 – LRC: "A watchman saw the army and with a punishing gallop hurried to Goldingen. He took the Brothers aside and told them the news, yet they feared neither death nor any danger. They sent messengers to summon the men they needed. The Kurs resolved to defend their women and children, themselves and their lords, their castles and land, and so they came to the Brothers with a determined force. Since their oracles had been propitious, they were full of fight and anxious for battle. The Brothers were also of good cheer, and about thirty of them made ready for battle. Bernec of Haren took the banner in his hand and said, "Brothers, remember what our Order stands for! Stay with the flag!" They hurried into a forest near Amboten with about five hundred men. The Lithuanians came on proudly and in great force. As the bold pagans advanced, shouts rang out from their army. The Brothers stayed in the woods and carefully observed their march. Mindaugas had ordered his men to build siege machines, with which to intimidate those who were in the castle, but they too knew how to deport themselves in war and offered a stubborn defense against the army. Mindaugas ordered the attack, and many a pagan fell from his horse onto the grass. The Brothers were happy, since, for the first time, they had a true estimate of their strength. It was a huge band of pagans, some thirty thousand men. Mindaugas continued

¹²⁴⁹ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:2473-2498.

the assault with a frenzied attack. Meanwhile the Brothers conferred, “Let us not rush out from our hiding place in the woods too soon. It is to our advantage to let them come so near to the castle that they will take notice of nothing else. Great glory shall be rendered unto God here before this very castle.” Then they rode out of the woods and fanned out a little so that they could better charge the enemy horse. “Now, you heroes, fight!” cried Brother Bernec, “Whether things go for good or ill, stay by the flag! Have the courage of lions! I have nothing more to say.” (...) They struck freely at the enemy, and many widows in Lithuania were to mourn because their husbands had departed this life so early. The Kurs defended their land well with heroes’ hands and helped attack Mindaugas. There was much hard fighting, and the Lithuanians were dismayed and would have gladly been anywhere else but there. Many took to flight, but Brother Bernac pursued them relentlessly with the banner. Quiet properly, however, he ordered his men not to pursue them too far, saying, “If he should look back and see how few of us there are it would mean our death. So let us ride cautiously and look after our men.” Everyone accepted this advice. (...) In all only four Brothers were killed, and that was a slight loss considered the battle. Many of the Lithuanians lay slain there, more than fifteen hundred, and their friends mourned in sorrow.”¹²⁵⁰

20 – CLP: “The Master, Brother Konrad von Tierberg, whom you have often heard me mention before, assembled many brothers and a huge army, with whom he embarked in a campaign during the winter [1283] crossing the frozen Memel and quietly entering Lithuania and laying siege to a castle called Bisenè, which he attacked ceaselessly from early morning until midday. He attacked it so ferociously that the Lithuanians became very weary because many of their number had been shot and seriously wounded, although they injured many of the Christians too. The battle ebbed and flowed until at last the brothers’ strength told and they were victorious, capturing the castle and burning it to ashes. (...) When the castle was overrun the master sent a squad from the army to raid and harry the area all round it. They wreaked destruction everywhere, burning and taking away a great deal of plunder They brought the booty back to the main army and they set off for home. During this campaign the master lost four brothers and a man: while they were riding in full armour they fell through the ice and were drowned in the waters of the Memel.”¹²⁵¹

21 – LRC: “One time he [Brother John von Ochtenhausen, the advocate at Goldingen] planned an attack and after conferring with the Brothers, sent for Kurs. They came hurrying to him as soon as they received word. He took a small number of Brothers, four in all, and set out on the journey to Doblein. With many daring warriors, both mounted and on foot, he travelled along difficult paths and through thick woods. They also had to labor at crossing many rivers. Each man carried his provisions on his back. Their advocate was very wise and when they had passed through the barricades which were erected on the border of that land, he ordered them to leave

¹²⁵⁰SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:35-36.

¹²⁵¹FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4384-4396.

all their provisions behind. He took a small band of men and one Brother and hurried toward Doblein, his army following after. He came dashing up to their gate and found many bold heroes before it, who came out onto the field and attacked. He boldly made them pay for this, but they would not give ground and their numbers were too large for him. This greatly annoyed the advocate. Although he had only fifty men with him, he charged them bravely and forced them to retreat back through the sally-ports. His courage carried him too far, however, and as he pressed through the ports far ahead of the Kurish troops, the Sempallians caught sight of him deep within their doors. A warrior came forward and struck the advocate on the helm, and he fell into the dust. There was still one Brother with him, and he dismounted from his horse onto the grass and helped the advocate. Meanwhile the army came forward and saved their advocate by fighting. Then they advanced on the main gate, where spears were thrown back and forth until midday. There was hard fighting on both sides and some of the Christians were killed, but the advocate's army had the better of it. Some of the Kurs were wounded, but the Brothers who had come to Doblein with the advocate were unhurt. The Brothers and their troops advanced across a splendid field right up to the castle, but they left it standing. They made horse-stretchers for the wounded, but the advocate, whose condition was little improved, sat astride his mount. His army was drawn up in orderly fashion and well protected by a rear guard. Then they turned homeward. Nameise, chief of Terweten, came dashing after them with many daring men. I cannot estimate their numbers. He had decided to pursue the Brothers and had chosen the best men in Doblein to accompany him. Mounted and on foot, they hurried rapidly along the Brothers' path, resting very little. They came upon the rear guard, and this was reported to the advocate. He was still very weak and much downcast because of it. But God comforted him, and he was relieved of his infirmity. When he realized his strength and returned, his heart rejoiced, and he arranged his army in formation against the enemy. They took up their positions on foot, and, since they had no intention of fleeing, their horses were taken away to be guarded. Nameise and his men came charging through the forest, grim and determined. When they saw that the advocate and his army were offering battle, those men who were riding now dismounted onto the grass. His army was coming up quickly, hurrying toward the Brothers. The advocate was in front of his army, and when he saw the enemy, he rushed out at one of them and stabbed him. With that his army charged as one man. What more should I say? The Sempallian army was cut to pieces and left fifty dead lying on the battlefield. The rest had enough of the fight and fled homeward like wild men. They left over two hundred shields behind as payment, and the Brothers shared the booty with their Kurish troops. The battle took place amid fine fields and forests, near the wall of a castle named Baboten, which had been burned long before."¹²⁵²

22 – LRC: “Not long afterward, the commander and the advocate [the already mentioned John von Ochtenhausen] planned another expedition and summoned the Brothers without delay. They all came riding, eager to go to Doblein and attack the Sempallians. The council met in Goldingen, a castle in Kurland, and sent

¹²⁵² SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:109-111.

messengers to the Kurs, informing them of the expedition. They brought many brave men to a pre-determined assembly point, a meadow in front of a forest. The commander and the advocates joined them there with their Brothers and the large number of squires who had come with them. When the army had all assembled, scouts were chosen. Then they set out for Doblein and encountered many bad roads, swamps and forests. It was near daybreak when they came through the last forest. Some daring warriors and Brothers were chosen from the army and ordered to go with the advocate. They left their horses standing there and hurried toward Doblein. (the horses were later returned to them.) The advocate took his men and advanced unobserved on the fortress. They slipped into the outerworks and awoke many a sleeping man, who would never again utter a sound. They captured and killed a good three hundred men and women in the attack. Everyone who did not escape to the castle fell into the hands of the Christians. The outerworks were burned and much booty taken. Then the commander arrived at Doblein with his forces, and the horses were brought to those who had come ahead on foot, as you have heard. When each man had taken his horse and gathered up his booty, the army was formed up in an orderly fashion. The Brothers turned toward Goldingen with their army and rejoiced, herding women, children, horses and cattle from Doblein to Kurland. They had filled their hands with booty taken in the outerworks, and when they returned home, they divided it equally among all their troops, both rich and poor. They also gave part to God and praised him for their victory. After they returned from Doblein the natives went home, and the Brothers rode on to Goldingen with their forces.”¹²⁵³

Amphibious operation:

23 – CLP: “Immediately after returning home Brother Heinrich put together an extremely powerful force: it comprised 150 brothers, so many horsemen I cannot tell you the exact number and 2,000 foot soldiers. With this army he set off to a region where the brothers had never been before known as Salsenicka. When the army was approaching Gardinas they came across four guards. They killed three of them and decided to spare the fourth if he told them what was happening in Lithuania. In response he told them: ‘No-one knows you are here. Indeed, by way of proof I can tell you that 50 of the king’s men are coming today to enclose an area for the king to go hunting.’ They came as he had predicted, and afterwards, when they had killed them, the army took to ships and sailed across the Memel to the Lithuanian side, where they left 12 brothers and the 2,000 foot soldiers to guard the ships. The others set off against the region we have mentioned and arrived in Salsenicka unnoticed and without any mishap on St Processus’s Day. They launched a ferocious surprise attack, destroying and burning everything, they found there. They also burned down the fortresses and killed everyone they came across: old and young, male and female. They slaughtered so much livestock that the

¹²⁵³ SMITH et URBAN (trans.) 1997:111-112.

carcasses were scattered right across the field. They stayed there overnight and on the next day they drove great quantities of goods away with them and around 700 people over and above those they had killed.”¹²⁵⁴

Ullenbusch:

24 – CLP: “(...) Henry Monte, the chief of the Natangians, gathered together a strong and mighty army with the evil intention of storming and capturing the castle at Königsberg. When he rode up to the plain in front of Königsberg the brothers began to counter his attack. They advanced towards him on the plain with their army. Henry Monte looked across and quickly realised that one brother, called Heinrich Ullenbusch¹²⁵⁵, according to what I have read, who was carrying a crossbow, was just about to draw back the bolt. He hurried up to the brother, and when he was close to him he said mockingly to him: ‘Today I will send you to heaven.’ With these words he speared him with his lance and seriously injured him. Ullenbusch afterwards recovered from this life-threatening wound. The servant who was standing beside him at this time saw all this and took revenge for his lord. He carried a very short sharp javelin which he threw at Henry Monte. Monte was very seriously wounded and left quickly along with all his men to go back to his lands.”¹²⁵⁶

- **Tannenberg:**

1: “And it was just at that moment that the two units clashed in the middle of the valley that separated the armies, and both sides raised a cry, as soldiers usually do before a battle. The Teutonic Knights tried in vain to hit and confuse the Polish units with a double shot from the cannons, even though the Prussian army ran to battle with a louder cry, greater speed and from a higher elevation. In the place where the encounter occurred, there were six high oak trees on whose trunks and branches many people climbed and sat - it was not dear if they were from the royal or Teutonic army - to watch from above the first encounter of the units and the fate of both armies. Because during the attack of the armies, breaking spears and armor hitting against each other produced such a great clatter and bang,

¹²⁵⁴ Idem, *ibidem*:5427-5438.

¹²⁵⁵ Like Ludwig, Heinrich features more than once in the *CLP*; unfortunately, his career cannot be followed as Ludwig’s, and because of that – and the dimension of the current thesis – I opted to leave out the total of Heinrich’s accounts.

¹²⁵⁶ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:3126-3137.

and the clang of swords resounded so loudly, as if some huge rock had collapsed, that even those who were several miles away could hear it.”¹²⁵⁷

2: “The grand master with his forces and the guests and mercenaries rode against the king to the border near Drewenz, near Kauernik and the two armies camped opposite one another. Because the king of Poland did not dare cross the Drewenz, he went toward Gilgenberg and took that city and burned it, and they struck dead young and old and with the heathens committed so many murders as was unholy, dishonouring maidens, women, and churches, cutting off their breasts and torturing them, and driving them off to serfdom. Also the heathens committed great blasphemies on the sacraments; whenever they came into the churches they ground the host in their hands and threw it under their feet, and in that way committed their insults. Their great blasphemies and insults went to the hearts of the grand master, the whole order, and to all the knights and men-at-arms among the guests; and they rode with righteous indignation against the king from Lubov to Tannenberg, to the village in the district of Osterode, and came upon the king without warning, having come in great haste fifteen miles by daybreak on the 15th of July. And when they could see the enemy, they formed their ranks and held the enemy in sight for more than three hours. The king meanwhile sent the heathens out to skirmish, but the Poles were altogether unready. If they had attacked the king immediately they would have won honour and booty, but that, unfortunately, did not happen; they wanted to call him out to fight chivalrously with them. The marshal sent the king two unsheathed swords with the heralds.”¹²⁵⁸

3: “Mikolaj, the deputy chancellor of the Polish Kingdom, having received the royal order, went to the supply columns, and the king intended to put on his helmet and march off to battle. Suddenly, two heralds were announced, led under the protection of Polish knights in order to avoid an act of aggression. One of them, from the Roman king, had a black eagle on a gold field in his coat of arms, and the other, from the Szczecin duke, had a red griffin on a white field. They came out of the enemy's army carrying unsheathed swords in their hands, demanding to be brought into the king's presence.

¹²⁵⁷ MIKOS (trans.) 1999.

¹²⁵⁸ (URBAN 2003:212). The heathens were the Lithuanians and Tatars.

The Prussian Master Ulryk sent them to King Wladyslaw, adding also an arrogant order to rouse the king to commence the battle without delay and to stand in ranks to fight. (...) Aleksander, the grand duke of Lithuania, could not be called on account of the hasty preparations for battle and the difficult duty of drawing up his ranks. (...) And it was noticed that during the deputies' speech the Teutonic army, confirming the statement conveyed by the heralds, withdrew to a much vaster field to give proof by deed of the truthfulness of the secret orders given to the heralds. (...) When the reveilles began to sound, the whole Polish army sang¹²⁵⁹ with loud voices the native song 'Mother of God' and then, lifting spears, they threw themselves into battle. The first, however, who went to battle were the Lithuanian army, commanded by Duke Aleksander, who did not tolerate any delay."¹²⁶⁰

4: "The first encounter

When the reveilles began to sound, the whole Polish army sang with loud voices the native song 'Mother of God' and then, lifting spears, they threw themselves into battle. The first, however, who went to battle were the Lithuanian army, commanded by Duke Aleksander, who did not tolerate any delay. (...) In the place where the encounter occurred, there were six high oak trees on whose trunks and branches many people climbed and sat - it was not clear if they were from the royal or Teutonic army - to watch from above the first encounter of the units and the fate of both armies. Because during the attack of the armies, breaking spears and armor hitting against each other produced such a great clatter and bang, and the clang of swords resounded so loudly, as if some huge rock had collapsed, that even those who were several miles away could hear it. Then knight attacked knight, armor crushed under the pressure of armor, and swords hit faces. And when the ranks dosed, it was impossible to tell the coward from the brave, the bold from the slow, because all of them were pressed together, as if in some tangle. They changed places or advanced only when the victor took the place of the defeated by throwing down or killing the enemy. When at last they broke the spears, all the units and armor clung together so tightly that, pushed by the horses and crowded, they fought only with swords and axes slightly, extended on their handles, and they made a noise in that fighting that only the blows of hammers can raise in a forge. And among the knights fighting hand to hand only with swords, one could observe examples of great courage.

Wladyslaw Jagiello in danger

¹²⁵⁹ The Germans sang 'Christ ist erstanden' (Christ is Risen) and the Poles and Lithuanians sang 'Bogu rodzica dzewica' (Virgin Mother of God) (URBAN 2003:214).

¹²⁶⁰MIKOS (trans.) 1999.

After the Lithuanian army was driven away, a light, mild rain sent up a powerful swirl of dust that covered the battlefield and fighters, and a fierce battle broke out again between the Polish and Prussian armies in many areas.”¹²⁶¹

5: “Wladyslaw Jagiello in danger

After the Lithuanian army was driven away (...) a fierce battle broke out again between the Polish and Prussian armies in many areas. As the Teutonic Knights were striving hard for victory, the big standard of the Polish King (...) fell to the ground under the enemy's pressure. But the knights fighting under it, the most battle-seasoned knights and veterans, raised it immediately and put it in its place, not allowing its destruction. (...) And the Polish knights, trying to erase the infamous insult, attacked the enemy in the most furious way, and routed them completely, cutting down all these forces that dashed with them.

Meanwhile, the Teutonic army, which made chase after the fleeing Lithuanians and Ruthenians, considering themselves victorious, was heading to the Prussian camp, leading a crowd of captives. Seeing, however, that a very fierce and bloody battle was taking place, they abandoned the captives and spoils, and threw themselves into the vortex of the battle to help their own, who at that moment were fighting with less intensity. Thanks to the help of the new fighting men, the battle between the two armies grew more fierce. And when on both sides a lot of men fell down and the Teutonic army suffered heavy losses, when confusion began in its units, when its leaders perished, it was expected that the Teutonic army would be inclined to run away. But thanks to the persistence of the Teutonic Knights and the Order as well of the Czech and German knights, the battle which was weakening in many places was renewed.

During the fierce battle between the two armies, the Polish King (...) confidently expected the retreat and final rout of the enemies, whom he saw shattered and defeated in many places. Meanwhile, sixteen new, untouched, not yet battle-scarred regiments of the enemy entered into battle under their standards. When their ranks turned toward the Polish king, standing only with his bodyguard, it seemed that they aimed at him with their outstretched spears. And the king, convinced that the enemy's army threatened his life, especially because of a small number of knights surrounding him, and fearing mortal danger, sent his secretary, Zbigniew of Olesnica, to the regiment of his courtiers fighting nearby, with the order to come quickly to his rescue, to protect their king from the mortal

¹²⁶¹ MIKOS (trans.) 1999.

danger he would face if help did not come at once. This regiment was dense enough to engage the hostile forces. But a king's knight, Mikolaj Kielbasa of the Nalecz clan, one of those fighting in the first rank, aimed his sword at secretary Zbigniew, the king's messenger, scolding him loudly and ordering him to leave: "Poor wretch", he said, "don't you see that the enemies are attacking us? And you compel us to abandon the battle, just about to begin, and go to defend the king? Wouldn't it be like escaping from the ranks, turning tail to the enemy, and endangering both ourselves and the king if our forces broke down?" (...) After returning to the king, Zbigniew of Olesnica reported (...) to the king that he could not convince any units involved in the battle, since they would not listen to arguments or orders on account of the noise and confusion.

A small royal standard carried behind the king, with the white eagle on the red field as the coat of arms, was farsightedly removed so as not to betray that the king was there. (...)

Meanwhile, a knight of German origin, Dypold Kokeritz of Ecber in Lusatia, ran (...) from the ranks of a bigger Prussian regiment, one among the sixteen regiments, to the place where the king stood, and waving his spear in full view of the Prussian army standing under sixteen standards, he intended, it seemed, to attack the king. When the Polish King Wladyslaw attempted to fight with him, waving his own spear, Zbigniew of Olesnica, the king's secretary, clashed with him, shielding the king from the blow, with a spear broken in half. He struck the German on the side and knocked him from his horse to the ground. With his spear, King Wladyslaw struck the knight, who lay on his back on the ground in convulsions, hitting him in the forehead, which was bare as his visor had opened, but left him intact. But the knights keeping guard over the king killed him immediately, and the foot soldiers pulled off his armor and clothes.

(...)

The Teutonic army suffers defeat

(...) Seeing that the aforementioned knight Kokeritz was slain, the army began to withdraw at once, having been given a signal by a Teutonic Knight, a regiment commander, who was sitting on a white horse, giving to the knights in the first rank a signal to retreat with his spear and shouting in German: 'Herum, herum'. After turning back, the army moved towards the right side, where the bigger royal regiment was standing, which returned with some other royal regiments after finishing the slaughter of the enemy. The majority of the king's knights, having noticed the army positioned under sixteen standards, took them for the enemy's army, as was the case. The rest, succumbing to human weakness, prone to expect something better, maintained that it was the Lithuanian army because of the big

number of light spears, called sulice; and did not attack them immediately, held back by uncertainty and disputes that arose among them. (...)

And the Polish units, abandoning a hesitation which delayed them, threw themselves with many regiments at the enemy, who were positioned in sixteen regiments, in which found refuge also those who had suffered defeat under other banners, and the Poles waged a mortal battle against them. And although the enemies put up a resistance for some time, ultimately, surrounded by great numbers of the king's army, they were put to the sword and virtually all units fighting in the sixteen regiments either perished or were taken prisoner. After defeating and crushing the enemy's army, during which - as it is known - Grand Master Ulryk, marshals, commanders and all the more prominent knights and lords of the Prussian army perished, the remaining crowd of enemies beat a retreat and once they turned tail they began to run away with determination.”¹²⁶²

6: “After defeating and crushing the enemy's army, during which - as it is known - Grand Master Ulryk, marshalls, commanders and all the more prominent knights and lords of the Prussian army perished, the remaining crowd of enemies beat a retreat and once they turned tail they began to run away with determination.

And the Polish king won a delayed and difficult victory, but one that was nonetheless full and decisive over the Grand Master and the Teutonic Order. (...) A considerable number of knights who escaped from the Prussian units found refuge behind the Prussian supply columns and in the camp. Attacked fiercely by the king's army as it fought its way into the supply columns and to the camp, they perished or were taken prisoner. Also the enemy's camp, filled with all kinds of riches and wagons, as well as all the possessions of the Prussian master and of his army, were plundered by the Polish knights. (...)

In addition, there were many barrels of wine in the camp and on the Prussian wagons, which the king's army, exhausted by toils of battle and summer heat, descended upon after defeating the enemy, in order to quench their thirst. (...) And the Polish King Wladyslaw ordered the wine barrels destroyed and smashed, fearing that his army, if they got drunk with wine, could become inefficient and be easily defeated by a cowardly enemy, if somebody had enough courage to begin a battle, and also that the army could become prone to sickness and weakness. (...)

¹²⁶² MIKOS (trans.) 1999.

Later they found not far from the enemy's camp in a little forest covered with trees that we call birches, seven Teutonic banners left by the fleeing army, carefully stuck in the ground, which were immediately carried to the king. (...)

Pursuit of the fleeing Teutonic Knights

After smashing the enemy's supply column, the king's army came to a hill, on which stood the enemy's permanent camp, and they saw many enemy units and detachments scattering in escape, and the light reflecting off their armor, which nearly all of them wore. The Polish army continued chasing them, entered wet meadows, threw themselves at the enemies and defeated the handful that had dared to offer resistance. Following the king's order to the knights to end the slaughter, they chased the remaining unit, not allowing any bloody outrages. It was then that the Polish king gave a sign to order the knights to chase the fleeing enemies, having admonished them to refrain absolutely from slaughter. The pursuit stretched for many miles. The handful that had taken flight earlier escaped. Many knights were captured and brought to the camp and the victors treated them with leniency. The next day they were handed over to the king. Because of the crowding and pushing, many drowned in a pond, two miles from the battle scene. The approaching night interrupted the pursuit. Fifty thousand enemies perished in that battle, and forty thousand were taken prisoner. It was reported that 51 banners were taken. The victors became rich with the enemy's booty. Although I am convinced that it is a difficult thing to count exactly how many of the enemies perished, however the road was covered with corpses for many miles, the soil was soaked with the blood of the dead, and the air was filled with the cries of the dying and of the moaning.”¹²⁶³

¹²⁶³ MIKOS (trans.) 1999.

● **Table II - Letter**¹²⁶⁴:

<p>„Liber her meister, ab is got ffugete, das ir mit euwirn vinden tzu hoffe qwemet, unde ir sult euwir ding bestellen unde schigken ken euwirn vinden, so were unsir ratd, das ir die geste, die ir bey euch hat, die ir dirkennet dortzu tochtig seyn, das ir die dotzu nemet, unde bestellet mit euwirn gebitigern, das die gehorsam seyn wie sie geschigk werden, das sie do bleyben in der schigkunge. Is muchte geschen, das euwir vinde den uffsatz vorsich nehmen, unde lissen eyne banirh addir tzuwey weychin addir fluchtig werden: das were eyn uffsatz do mete sie meynten euwir schigkunge tzubrechen, noch deme als die luthen phlegen gerne noch tzu yagen, als ouch geschach in dem grossen streythe. Das bestellet, ab das also tzu gyng, so ir aller hertiste kunnet, das yo die euwirn in erer schigkunge bliben: wann wenne eyn huffe addir eyne schigkunge tzutrauth wirt, so sintd die luthen nicht so rischlichen weddir umbe tzubringen, wann denne eyn ydirman will yagen, unde waenth, das spil sey gewonnen unde wissen nicht, das is halp mag seyn verloren. Unde dorumb so rothe wir euch, so wir getrwlichste kunnen, das ir die euwirn, so ir hogeste kunnet, mit eren</p>	<p>“Dear Master, if divine Providence should arrange that you come together with your enemies to fight, and you line up and arrange your forces against your enemies, our advice would be that you take the war guests and mercenaries, which you have with you, that you take those of them, which you regard as able, and settle with your commanders that they be obedient when they are lined up for fighting, so that they stay in formation. It might happen that your enemies intentionally let one or two banners withdraw or flee: this would be on purpose, for they hope they might break your battle formation that way, because the people usually like to take up pursuit, as seen in the Great Battle. Thus make sure, if this should happen, as strictly as you can, and insist, that your men stay in their arrays: because when a group of soldiers or an array becomes too sure of victory, it is not so easy to bring the people back, because everybody wants to take up pursuit, and thinks that the victory has been won, and they do not know that it may be half lost. And for this reason we advise you in the most forcible manner, that you hold your men together in their battle</p>
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¹²⁶⁴ EKDAHL 2010 (http://www.lituanus.org/2010/10_2_06%20Ekdahl.html) [12/5/21].

schigkungen tzu haeffe haldet unde mit
nicht von enandir losset, so lange bys das
ir seet, wie sich euwir vinde huffe hindir
dem fluchtigen an lesset. Unde dorumbe so
bestellet das fleisseclichen mit euwirn
gebitigern, das is veste gehalden werde,
wann is kumpth wol das tzu angesichte in
sotanem gescheffte, do XX addir dreysig
yagen, das die machin, das undirwilen vil
schigkunge gebrochin werden, do man
wenth undirwilen ffromen tzu schaffen
unde kumpth tzu grossem schaden.“

formations as severely as you can, and
never let them leave the others, until you
have seen how the enemy formations
behave behind those who flee. And thus
arrange this carefully with your
commanders, so that it will be firmly kept,
because it can be seen in such an
undertaking, when 20 or 30 soldiers take
up pursuit, that they sometimes cause
many battle formations to be broken, for
they sometimes hope to get profit, but
instead suffer great harm.”

● **Table III – Templar schedule:**

10pm-2am	sleep
2am (Matins were performed at 4am in the winter)	Matins, followed by an inspection to horses and equipment
3am-7am	sleep
7am	Prime, followed by an inspection to horses and equipment
8am	free time
9am	Terce
10am-12am	free time
12am	Sext
1pm	lunch
2pm	Graces
3pm-5pm	free time
5pm	Nones
6pm-7pm	free time
8pm	dinner
9pm	Compline, followed by an inspection to horses and equipment

CORRAL 2018:39. Alterations must have occurred in times of unrest.

- *Rule, paragraph 17. How and where the brethren shall sleep.*

“All the healthy brethren, if it can be easily arranged, shall sleep together in one room, unless the superior orders that some brethren, because of official duties or because of some other matter, sleep elsewhere; and when they sleep, they shall sleep girt in their shirt, with drawers and hose on, as is proper for religious. They shall sleep apart only if it is absolutely necessary. In the places where the brethren usually sleep, the light shall be left on during the night.”¹²⁶⁵

- *Customs, paragraph 54. How the brethren shall take their places before the chapel.*

“Every brother shall take his place before the chapel where he may hear divine service, and if any brother by night or day oversleeps divine service, the one who is placed next to him shall awaken him. Those who are next them shall wake up the ones who fall asleep during divine service. The same rule shall also be observed in the houses. After they are in quarters, the brethren shall not without permission send their animals either for wood or for grass or for other things, but, if they have permission, then the saddles shall be covered, so that they may not be damaged by what is brought in. And if the brother has two attendants, let him send out one, while the other he shall keep at hand for various tasks and whatever may arise.”¹²⁶⁶

- *Rule, paragraph 13. How and what the brethren shall eat.*

“When the brethren assemble for meals, the clerics shall recite the customary grace, and the lay brothers a Pater Noster and an Ave Maria, and all shall take the victuals given by the grace of God and by the house. On three days, Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, the brethren

¹²⁶⁵ STERNS (trans.) 1969:224-225.

¹²⁶⁶ STERNS (trans.) 1969:314-315.

of this Order are allowed to eat meat; the other three days they may eat cheese and eggs, and on Friday they eat fish; however, they may eat meat every day on which Christmas Day falls, even if it falls on a Friday, because of the joy of the holy season. To all brethren common victuals should be given and distributed equally according to the status, place and need of the brother, yet among the brethren more attention shall be paid to each one's need than to his eminence. For the need of one nothing shall be taken from another, but each shall have a share according to his need. They shall likewise not desire for themselves all they see given in charity to others in need. Let him whose need is smaller thank God; let him whose need is greater, because of weakness, humble himself, and, when he receives more because of weakness, let him not pride himself on being treated with charity; thus may all members live in peace. We warn that special abstinence, which markedly differs from the general, be avoided. In their houses the brethren eat two and two together, except for vegetable dishes, and drink separately. Furthermore, in all houses where there is a convent of brethren, that is, a commander and twelve brethren, to the number of the disciples of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the custom of reading at table shall be observed, and all who are eating shall listen in silence, so that not only the mouth is fed, but also the ears which hunger after the word of God. However, those at table, in case of need, may talk quietly and in few words with those who are serving, or with other people with whom they have to settle some small matter. The servers and those eating at the second table after the convent and the brethren in the small houses where there is no reading shall endeavor to keep silent as far as the business of the house allows, unless the superior, because of visitors, gives permission to speak. The brethren shall not rise from table before they have finished their meal, except when absolutely necessary, after which they may return and finish their meal. When the meal is over, the clerks shall recite the customary prayer and the lay brothers two Pater Nosters and two Ave Marias, and in every house they shall go in an orderly fashion to the church or elsewhere as assigned by the superior. Whole loaves of bread shall be kept, but the rest given in alms."¹²⁶⁷

¹²⁶⁷ STERNS (trans.) 1969:219-221.

- **CLP4 - Friends:**

“This same year [1300] saw the death of two brothers at Marienburg; they were Brother Hermann and Brother Friedrich. These two were so devoted to each other that neither of them wanted to live or die without the other. Their love remained constant for a long time. Finally God’s paternal hand of discipline struck down Brother Hermann with leprosy. He bore this blow patiently as a sinner; shortly after this Brother Friedrich fell so heavily from his horse that he was killed. When Brother Hermann was told this the following day he said, ‘My dear friend, why have you left me in this way? What happened to the loyalty between us? We had sworn to each other that we would both go to eternal rest together; why have you forgotten your sacred oath of loyalty to me now? My life must end like yours and I cannot remain here any longer.’ And in spite of the fact that he was not ill other than his leprosy, he called for a priest and received the last rites. As soon as he had received them he gave up the ghost that very day, entering the realm of joy where all sorrow is comforted and all suffering disappears. There he found his friend, who will never be taken from him again.”¹²⁶⁸

- *Rule, paragraph 12. Of the shaving of brother clerks and lay brothers.*

“All the brethren shall have their hair shaved in a regular and clerical manner, so that they can be recognized from the front as well from the back as religious. As for beard and moustache, likewise care shall be taken that they be neither too short nor too full. The brother clerks shall have a tonsure of not too small size, as is seemly for men in orders, and likewise because they officiate at the Mass they shall shave the beard.”¹²⁶⁹

¹²⁶⁸ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4955.

¹²⁶⁹ STERNS (trans.) 1969:219.

- **CLP5 - Albrecht:**

“This Brother Albrecht, the elect servant of God, was struck down by an illness so severe that it destroyed all the hair on his head as well as his brows and his beard. It made him look so deformed and terrible that no-one wanted to join him at meals or be with him on any of the other usual occasions. This made the virtuous man very sad and, in the goodness of his heart, he tearfully begged God either to remove this source of shame or to remove him from his life on earth. See how God cared for this deserving man. That same night when he had gone to bed after saying his prayers he woke up again, and to his great amazement felt his hair, which had been taken away from him, had returned so completely to his head, his brows and his beard that no-one could find any remaining bald spot anywhere on his body. I wish that this miracle would also happen to poor me. I would stroke my curls and mock the other bald men when, as often happens, the wind blows their hats off in front of the ladies. My, I would be haughty, seeing their bald brows while my own hair was luxuriant and curly! That is enough of this digression.”¹²⁷⁰

- **CLP6 - Prank:**

“Among the vicious Swantopelk’s men was a retainer, a knight, who was so afraid of the brothers that whenever he heard the name of the Teutonic Order he was so frightened that his whole body shook. One day Lord Swantopelk happened to visit one of his villages to pass the time and gathered a few of his knights for some fun. For their amusement he intended to play a trick to make them all laugh. So he quietly said to some of them: ‘Don’t tell anyone what we’re about to do. We will send a page out into the countryside, and once we have had something to eat he is to come rushing back saying that the brothers’ army is coming to attack us, and then we can laugh at what that cowardly knight does.’ The lords complied, laughing among themselves, saying it would be very amusing. They sent off the messenger. Now as luck would have it, the brothers had found out about the trick they were playing and were approaching that same village. The man realised this and took fright. He rushed back to the

¹²⁷⁰ FISCHER (trans.) 2010:(4491-7195).

village, unsheathing his sword and waving it about. Pale and shouting he rushed straight back to where his lord Swantopelk was. ‘Getup,’ he said, ‘flee, for God’s sake. I am not joking when I tell you that the brothers are heading this way to attack us.’ When the men who had arranged the joke heard this they laughed heartily. But that knight took the news very seriously. When the brothers were mentioned the colour left his cheeks, he leapt over the table and ran away as fast as he could, causing great mirth.”¹²⁷¹

¹²⁷¹ Idem, *ibidem*:2400-2407.

Others

CLP1: “In the year of our Lord 1295 on the last Friday before Whit Sunday four brothers assembled a force of 150 men from Natangia and Sambia and rode into Gardinas. When they were nearly there they took the decision to send the horses back home and continue their journey down the Memel by ship. (...) When the heathens saw this they immediately assembled and ran with their weapons to their own ships and attacked the Christians. During the battle two bold brothers were killed, Dietrich von Esbeck and the one called von Veringen; the Lithuanians, however, lost 70 seasoned, armed fighting men, some of whom were shot and some of whom drowned in the river. After these events the Christians took away the bodies of the two dead brothers but when they arrived near Junigeda the waters of the Memel were so low and the flow so feeble that the ships ran aground. The heathens came running up and attacked them ferociously, killing two more brothers, called Henemann Kint and List. Twenty-five men were killed along with them and the others escaped to safety. Before the battle was over, many of the heathens had been wounded. Before these events Brother Dietrich von Esbeck had foretold his death to Brother Konrad Rot; when the latter had offered him his horse for the campaign Esbeck had turned him down, telling him to keep his horse: ‘My horse is enough for me, and the blessing of God on high be on us both, because I am going away and you will not see me alive again, whatever the outcome of the campaign.’ “¹²⁷²

CLP2: “When the master, Brother Helmerich, became aware of these lamentable events he immediately assembled all the forces at his disposal and sent off without delay in pursuit of the enemy. He followed them and caught up with them at Löbau. He did not hesitate; the master cleverly sent his advance guard into battle, exhorting and encouraging them to fight valiantly for the heavenly reward we know that God gives to his soldiers. The warriors of our Lady attacked the enemy. The Prussians had entrenched themselves behind a defensive palisade and put up a stiff defence against the Christians. However, they finally retreated from their defences and took flight. The brothers’ troops followed them, killing many of them. In the headlong pursuit the Christian army was dispersed across the battlefield, chasing the enemy, and their banner was left poorly defended. When the Prussians

¹²⁷² FISCHER (trans.) 2010:4794-4805.

saw this they began to gather again in their defensive position and battle raged on again for a long time. Finally God, whose judgement is incomprehensible, decreed that His men should lose and that Master Helmerich and Brother Dietrich the marshal should die. I read that 40 brothers and the whole army died with them. On this terrible day the poor Christian people in Prussia experienced terrible grief (...) because all the wise men in Prussia, the elder statesmen and brave men who had sustained and protected Prussia with good advice and brave exploits all died on that day.”¹²⁷³

CLP3: ”Christ saw to it that 1254 years after He lived in human form, King Ottokar of Bohemia marched into Prussia. He was skilled in warfare and laudably pious. Margrave Otto of Brandenburg came with him as his marshal on this campaign, a man of great courage, and also that bold, daring man, the prince of Austria and margrave of Moravia. These princes had many fighting men in their retinues. Bishops also arrived (...) Many bold warriors, counts, knights and their warriors arrived from the Rhineland, Saxony, Thuringia, Meissen and from many different lands. They all wanted to fight the heathens in God’s name and avenge the suffering of our Lord who was crucified for us. (...) Finally the army arrived at its goal at Elbing, at the time when winter usually sets in (...) The king we mentioned before launched a surprise attack into Sambia, in the region of Medenau and killed many of the people there. He also took some prisoners and burned everything that flames could consume. He campaigned at full strength for the whole day and then spent the night there. On the following day he departed for the region of Rudau, captured a castle there from the Sambians and persecuted and killed so many of the Sambian people that they offered hostages and begged the king graciously to accept them and not to wipe out their entire people in this terrible way.. Afterwards he also marched through the regions of Quednau, Waldau, Kaimen and Tapiau. (...) After this the king handed the hostages over to the brothers and marched on to the hill where Königsberg now stands and advised the brothers to build a castle there (...) He also made a contribution to the building costs and gave them generous donations, as befitted his royal status. With this he came to the end of the duties of his pilgrimage and the noble, merciful king marched joyfully back to his kingdom.”¹²⁷⁴

¹²⁷³ *Idem, ibidem:3315-3325.*

¹²⁷⁴ *Idem, ibidem:2771-2803.*

CLP4: “In the year of our Lord 1260 the brothers from Livonia and Prussia came together in two mighty armies with the aim of bringing provisions to the brothers on St George’s Mount. When they were approaching the castle a messenger came, bringing bad news. He said 4,000 Lithuanians had just ferociously devastated a part of Curonia, burning and looting. (...) When the brothers heard this news both armies rapidly began to prepare themselves to take revenge for the attack and release the poor Christians who were being driven off as captives. When they had begun, Brother Heinrich, the marshal, asked a man called Matto, who I had heard was a Pomesanian and Pippin’s son, how they should go about attacking the heathen’s army. The man replied with this advice: ‘I suggest that we dismount and send the horses so far away from us that no-one will have the chance to flee back to them, and that we should fight on foot. Since the men do not have horses they will be forced to defend themselves and to stay in the battle; otherwise they would undoubtedly flee.’ The knights of Reval, who were in the service of the king of Denmark at this time, disagreed with this advice, along with many others. They were of the opinion that it was not possible to fight without horses because of the weight of the armour. Then the men of Curonia, who were also involved in the fight, stepped up and humbly and fervently pleaded that if it came about that God gave the Christian army the victory, their wives and children would be released. The brothers would gladly have granted this request but the common people from both countries disagreed and said that they should maintain their established rights in this matter, as they had in many previous battles. At this, the men from Curonia became so angry with the Christians that when the brothers’ army began fighting the Lithuanians they treacherously attacked the brothers from the rear, like an apostate people. So when the Lithuanians were fighting the Christians at the front, and they were attacking them in the rear so ferociously, the ordinary men gave up the defence and they all abandoned the brothers and fled. However, a few of the Prussian nobles showed their loyalty to the brothers by standing by them. One of these, I have heard, was a Sambian from Quednau called Sclodo (...) The heathens won and the brothers lost because the might of their army had been diminished by the desertion of the rank and file.”¹²⁷⁵

CLP5: “(...) Brother Albrecht von Meissen, the commander of the castle and a great but modest warrior for God. He led an angelic life on earth, perfect in every virtue. In his youth the devil had used his tricks to arouse in him the desires of the flesh, which consumed him and caused him great distress, but God’s pure warrior resisted with all his might, reining in his desires by starving himself

¹²⁷⁵ Idem, *ibidem*:2896-2911.

and by other means both day and night. At the same time he often used to call on God in prayer to free him and relieve the distress the devil's wickedness inflicted on him with such terrible torture. (...) This Brother Albrecht, the elect servant of God, was struck down by an illness so severe that it destroyed all the hair on his head as well as his brows and his beard. It made him look so deformed and terrible that no-one wanted to join him at meals or be with him on any of the other usual occasions. This made the virtuous man very sad and, in the goodness of his heart, he tearfully begged God either to remove this source of shame or to remove him from this life on earth. (...) That same night then he had gone to bed after saying his prayers he woke up again, and to his great amazement felt his hair (...) Some time afterwards Brother Albrecht had to leave with other brothers on a campaign against the heathen armies. This was at the time when the brothers usually received the mass in the name of Jesus Christ, so they were unable to do this. This caused his pure heart much grief and in his pain he left the others so that he could not be disturbed and gave vent to his distress, lamenting tearfully that he needed this consolation. (...) As soon as he had spoken these words he saw a communion wafer hovering in the air in front of his mouth, just like the sacramental bread which the priest takes in the name of God and transforms into the body of Christ. This sight both terrified and overjoyed the brother (...) Then he opened his mouth and the wafer immediately entered. He received it with great joy, praising his gracious God whose loving command had sent him the true heavenly nourishment in this way.”¹²⁷⁶

- **Ambushes:**

CLP: “Gracious God persuaded two praiseworthy counts, of the Mark and of Jülich to come to Prussia with a great army of their fighting men. These guests arrived at Königsberg in the year of our Lord 1262 around the time of vespers on the eve of St. Vincent's Day and would have attacked the siege towers with which the fortress was besieged by the heathens that very day. However, the brothers advised against it, because there was too little daylight left for such a hard battle. The next day, at dawn, when the Christian army arrived intending to attack the siege towers all the Sambians had gone and they did not find a single man there. Instead they had set ambushes on the roads for the pilgrims. The count of Jülich was angered by the fact that the Sambians had escaped him. He did not know about the ambushes. He took all the men who had come with him and withdrew angrily,

¹²⁷⁶ Idem, *ibidem*:4479-4513.

unaware of the danger from the hidden traps. However, the brothers loyally advised him to be careful and sent out scouts to look for tracks and find out whether there was any risk of danger on the road. One of these scouts, as I have read, was called Stanteko. He came across the Sambian look-outs, who attacked him and severely injured him. However his horse rescued him by carrying him quickly away, so that the heathens could not kill him. He rode up with a bloody sword and told them what the situation was. The guests were not slow in organizing themselves for a battle. The count of the Mark and his men fought those who arrived on horseback while the others attacked the foot soldiers (...) With valiant courage they fought until God in his grace gave them a laudable victory without any loss to themselves. Many of the enemy were dead; some escaped by fleeing but were wounded. Many of them retreated to a village nearby which was known as Calgen and is now called Sclunie. There were many hard-fought encounters before they were cleared out of there. They defended themselves vigorously against the pilgrims and gave them so much trouble that the brothers from Königsberg and their troops had to join in. They pitched cunning against cunning in their valiant fight against the enemy. The fighting lasted so long and was so hard that there were many dead and wounded on both sides; however, God entered on the side of his own pure pilgrims with the result that they killed all the Sambians, who were estimated to number well over 3,000. I have also read that many other Prussians lay dead on the same battlefield.”¹²⁷⁷

“When [the Prussians] were nearly there [town of Marienwerder] they chose a suitable place where they set up an ambush with good soldiers and then moved on to the town with just a few men. Since their army seemed so weak, as was their intention, the brothers and their armed men, along with the townspeople, set out to launch a fierce attack on the enemy on the field between the mill and the town; many Prussians were killed or wounded in the battle. When the Christians had completely overwhelmed them the troops who had been waiting in the ambush attacked. There were so many of them that they quickly killed nearly all of the brothers and Christians; hardly any of them escaped. They fled into the town, pursued furiously by the Prussians, who then also captured the town and took prisoner or killed everyone who was there at that time. Some managed to escape the disaster by fleeing to the castle. Then the army completely burned down the town and marched off with huge amounts of plunder.”¹²⁷⁸

“Although this Jesbuto lived with the heathens and was officially one of their number, in secret he was at this time an ally of the brothers and had given them advance notice of the raid and where he would take his army. The master heard of this and sent Brother Heinrich Zuckschwert with 29

¹²⁷⁷ Idem, *ibidem*:3049-3072.

¹²⁷⁸ Idem, *ibidem*:3581.

brothers and 1,200 men to block the enemy's way at a pre-arranged spot in the wilderness; they duly went there and set up camp with the aim of trapping the enemy between the waters of the Lyck and Narew river. They thought the enemy would arrive quite soon but it turned out otherwise; they had to wait in their ambush for eight days, suffering greatly from impatience and a lack of food, since they had used up all their supplies. At last Jesbuto arrived with his army, on the look-out for danger. When they were close to the spot where the ambush had been set, I do not know if a bird flew towards them or if the devil caught the leading Lithuanian's attention, but he wanted to see how the dice would fall, and they fell so badly for him that he immediately shouted to the people around him, 'Woe to us all, we are all going to die.' This made his captain angry and he told him to be quiet; he refused and kept on shouting the same words again and again until suddenly the brothers launched their attack from their position in the ambush and killed 350 of them on the spot; the others barely managed to escape and few of those reached home: many of them suffered such great deprivations in the wilderness that they hanged themselves; others became lost in the desolate country and died of hunger on the long road, so that nearly all of them perished. Master Meinhard was seriously concerned about the brothers and their army because they had not returned by the day he had arranged and he had no word of them (...). While he was meeting his advisors (...) a messenger came in. He began to describe how the brothers at Ragnit had killed 24 enemy raiders. While he was still finishing his account another rushed in announcing the arrival of the brothers and a victory they had won over their enemy, many of whom they had killed in the battle (...)."¹²⁷⁹

¹²⁷⁹ Idem, *ibidem*:4599-4610.

Figures

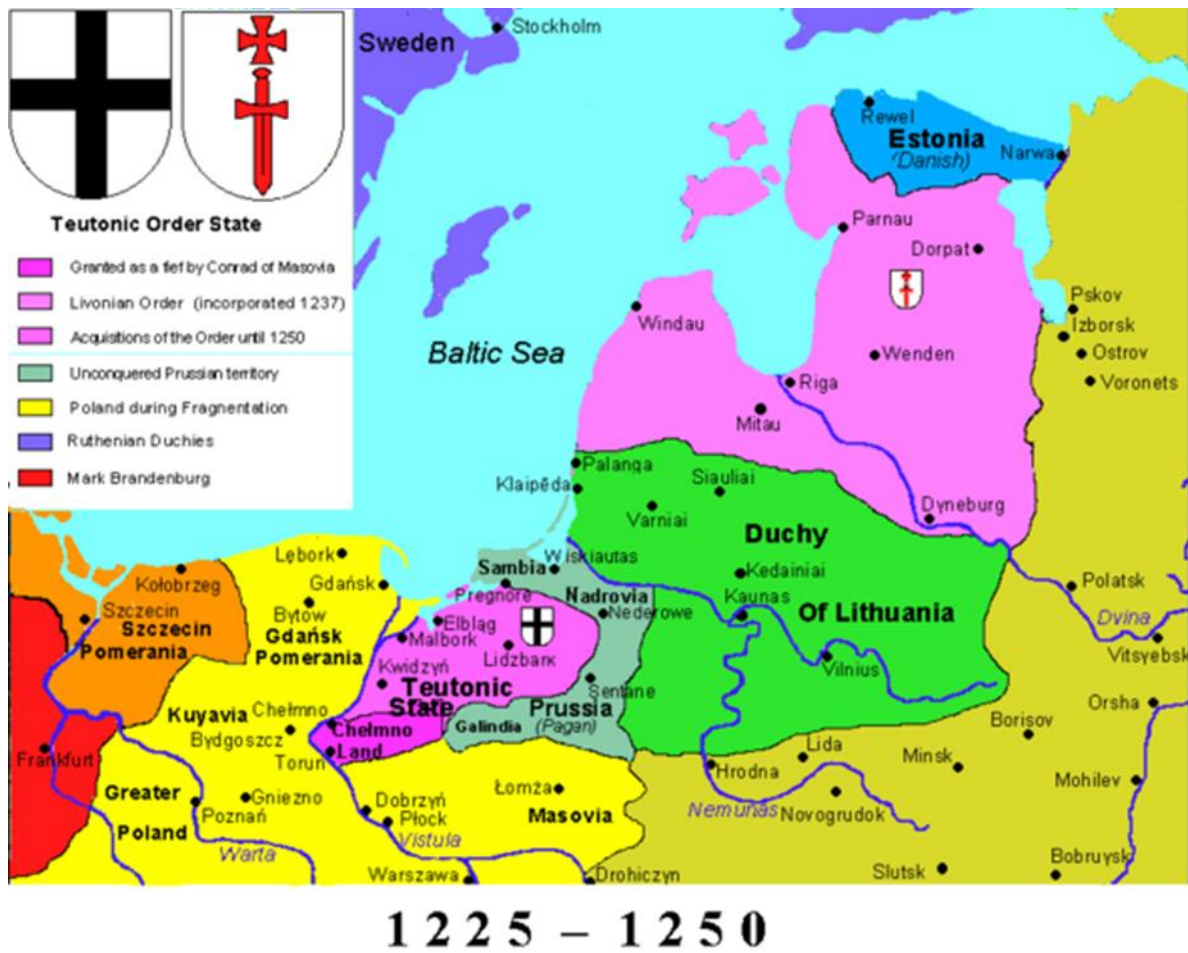


Figure 18: The 'Ordensstaat' in the 13th century

(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/2a/Teutonic_state_1250.png/590px-Teutonic_state_1250.png

) [8/8/20].



Figure 19: Rettet den Osten (save the East) poster, 1930ies (<https://propadv.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/1920-Rettet-den-Osten.-W%C3%A4hlt.-Liste-5-Deutschnational.jpg>) [3/7/21].



Figure 20: Depiction of Teutonic crests. Top left: depiction of Tannhäuser in the *Codex Manesse*, wearing a Teutonic mantle (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/aa/Codex_Manesse_Tannh%C3%A4user.jpg/800px-Codex_Manesse_Tannh%C3%A4user.jpg) [30/8/21]; top right: Teutonic crests in Eisenstein's *Alexandr Nevskii* (http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3126/2805643480_4e65013396_o.jpg) [7/7/21]; bottom: Teutonic knights wearing peacock feathers in the motion picture *Krzyżacy* (https://teologiapolityczna.pl/assets/cms/MainImages/2016/_resampled/ScaleWidthWyI4MDAiXQ/a7f1c2904b090963ad02a6cb691a7e67.jpg) [18/5/21].

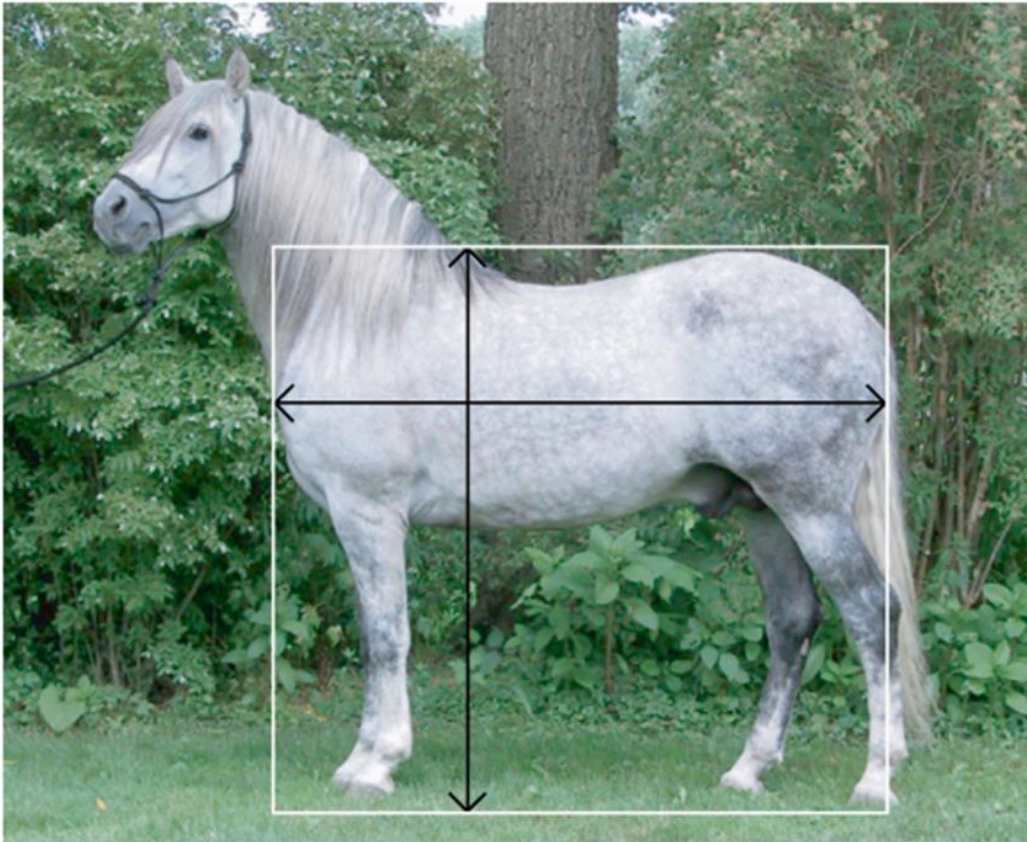


Figure 21: Horse with square conformation. This conformation can be found in baroque horses, such as the Andaluzian in the picture, but also in Lusitanos , the Lippizaner, or the Murgese, for example (<https://www.oldstonehousefarm.com/PDFs/DressageandIberians.pdf>) [26/3/19].

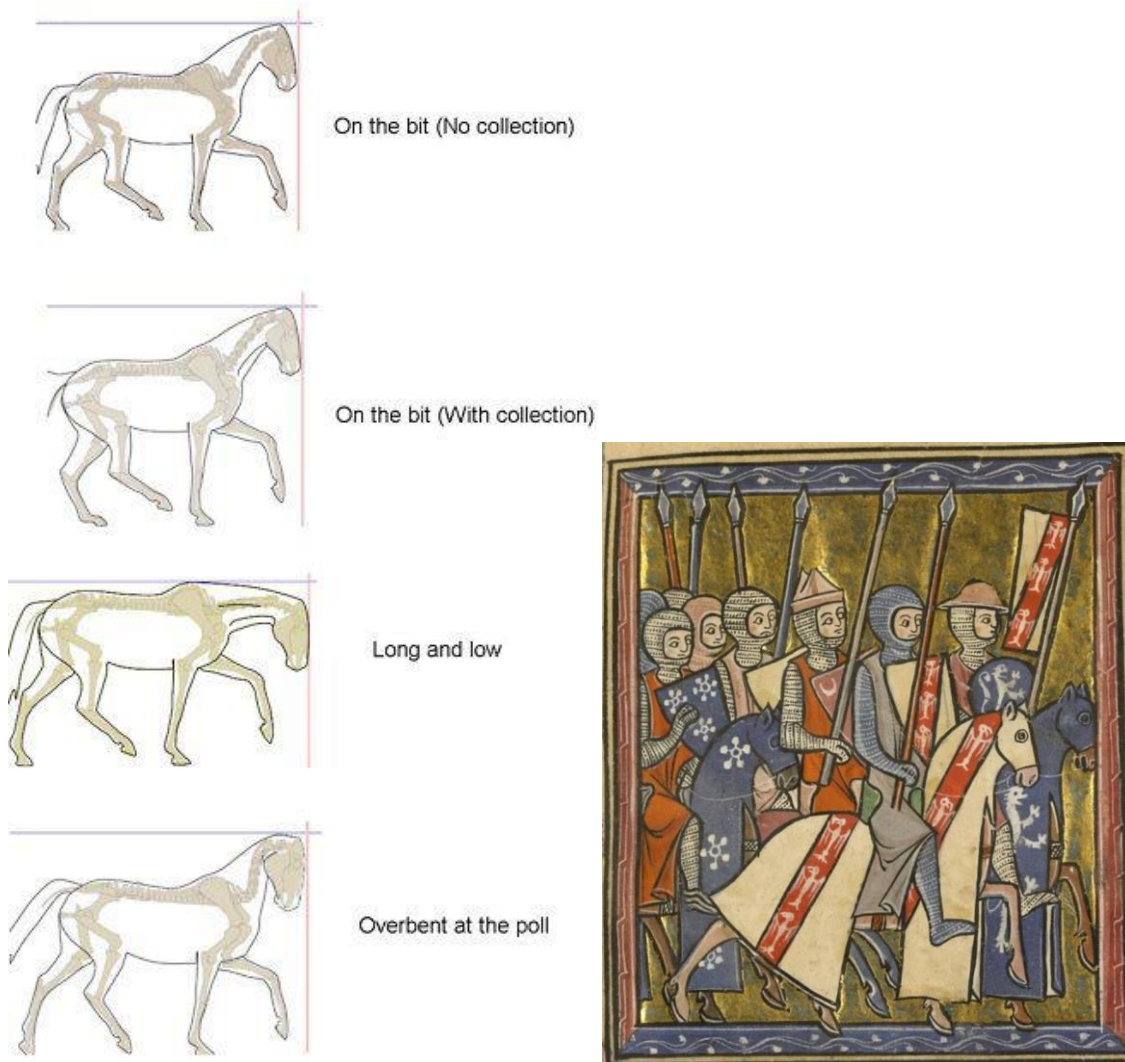


Figure 22: Comparison between bit action and a medieval depiction of knights on horseback. The arched neck and the position of the head indicate controlled horses and probably tries to convey collection

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/d0/66/ce/d066ce699d6e188c493db6366e751bd7.jpg> [12/8/21] and

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/3b/b6/04/3bb6043f373917a353cea1e76d69ec54.jpg> [12/8/21].



Figure 23: Depiction of a mounted crossbowman using a crossbow with stirrup. The reins are seemingly loose and the horse appears to be stationary, though the raised hand could correspond to one of the phases of the canter/gallop (<https://qph.fs.quoracdn.net/main-qimg-6e04570554d825239e1b12ff79f22793>) [12/8/21].



Figure 24: Depiction of a mounted crossbowman against a lancer. The lancer is using double reins and seemingly so is the crossbowman, though his reins are secured in his arm. Again, the horse appears stationary, yet it could be a phase of the canter/gallop (<https://qph.fs.quoracdn.net/main-qimg-c0733ec08bf47f20d635a0f413b6a74b>) [12/8/21].



Figure 25: The delivery of the two naked swords before the battle of Tannenberg, from the motion picture *Krzyżacy* (<https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRvDww5BP9SHWzPWlou03n-xbIONhQVIbLwSw&usqp=CAU>) [10/5/21].

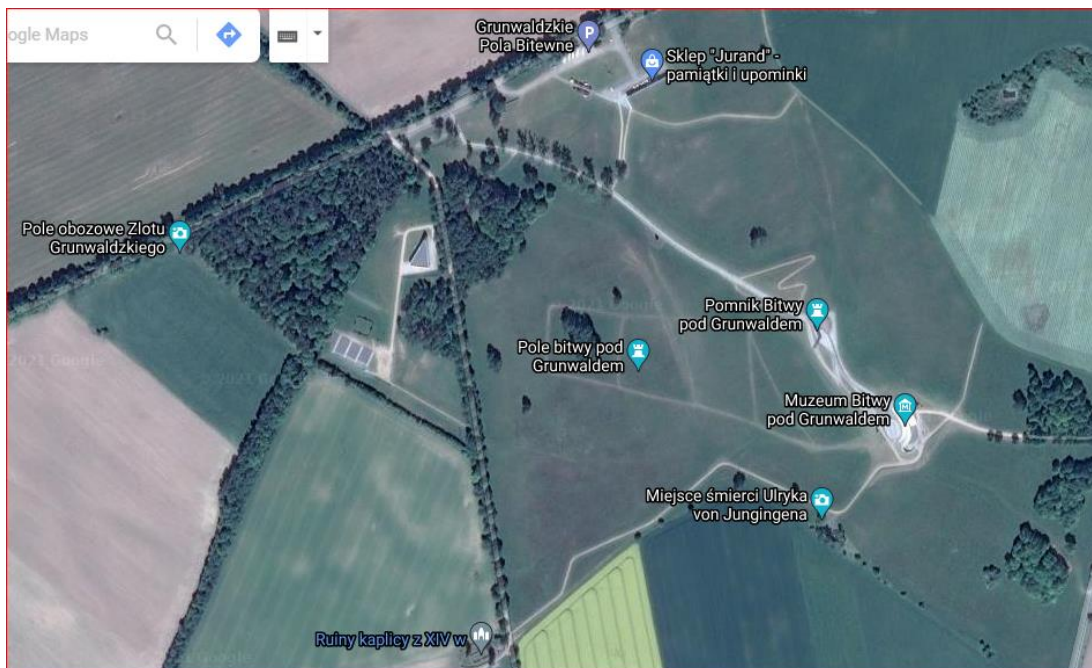
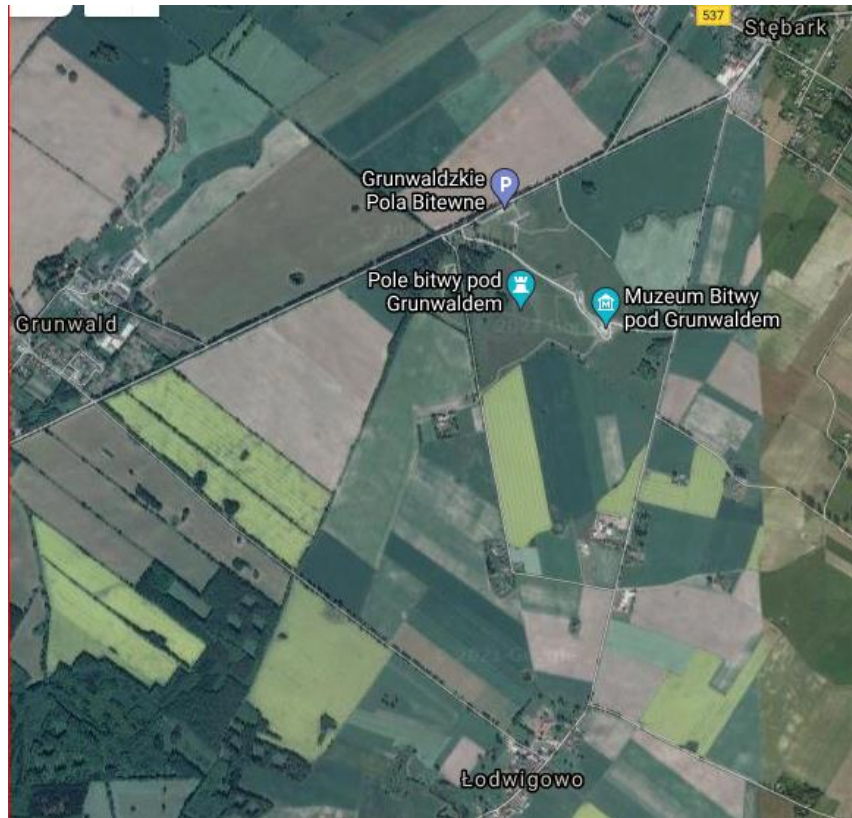


Figure 26: Battlefield of Tannenberg/Grunwald, Poland

(<https://www.google.pt/maps/@53.4829212,20.1145672,3731m/data=!3m1!1e> [27/8/21] and

<https://www.google.pt/maps/@53.4865346,20.118333,933m/data=!3m1!1e3> [27/8/21]).

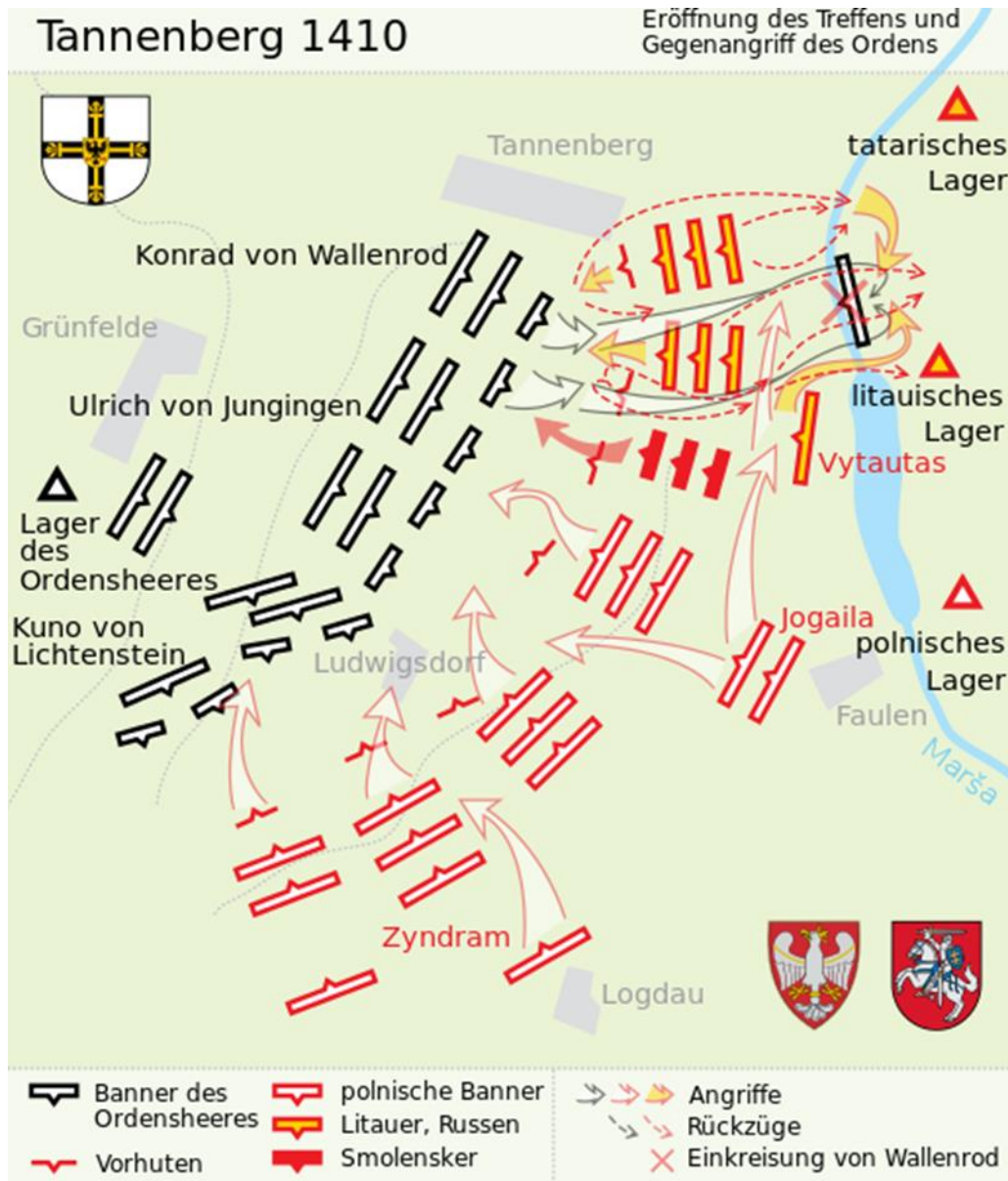


Figure 27: Tannenberg: opening of the combat and the Order's counter-attack
(<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/4b/f4/44/4bf444e50ad9673dafd77bca16e2d51a.png>) [17/6/21].



Figure 28: Tannenberg: the Great Master's counter-attack and final stage of the battle

(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/72/Grunwald_%28end%29_German.svg/411px-Grunwald_%28end%29_German.svg.png) [17/6/21].