

CONCLUSION

“So is the cause of my order, to aspire to be the standard bearer of the glory of the Holy Cross to the land of Prussia, to drive out the pagans, as the vine being brought out of Egypt.” Conrad of Jungingen, Grand Master of the Teutonic Order.¹

WRITING TO THE Papal curia in 1395, Conrad of Jungingen sought to have the local anchorite, Dorothea of Montau (d. 1394), recognized as a saint. In one of seven letters concerning Dorothea’s canonization, the quotation reflects the continued significance of Prussia and the Baltic region as a new sacred landscape within the written communication of the Teutonic Order.² Recalling some of the earliest themes in the Teutonic Order’s historical writing (namely the imagery of the vine coming out of Egypt), we see the continuation of the Order’s mission with the sacralization of the landscape at the turn of the fifteenth century.

The quote here thus reflects the role of this imagery within the Teutonic Order’s collective memory. Although referring to Prussia and the Order’s territories there, similar examples survive from Livonia, particularly in the context of the Teutonic Order’s correspondence with Rome in 1392, and a letter written to Pope Urban VI in 1381 from the cathedral chapter of Ösel.³ By the end of the fourteenth century, then, the area had become engrained in the mentality of medieval Europe as a new sacred landscape tied to crusading, situated within an existing framework of historical and literary devices associated with missionary work. However, these frameworks were recast within the context of the crusading movement in this region and reflect its incorporation within the sacred geography of Christianity. Far from language alone, pilgrimage networks and the popularity of crusading in the Baltic by the end of the fourteenth century demonstrate the effect of this concept on transforming the region in the Middle Ages. Castles and churches of the Teutonic Order and the bishoprics of Riga, Ösel, and Warmia, reflected a common view among different groups involved in the creation of this new landscape. Moreover, the combination of the written and visual culture, alongside the employment of Geographical Information Systems (GIS), cements the distinct role played by conceptions of place and landscape in shaping how contemporaries perceived the Baltic region.

The thematic organization of this study traces concepts of place and landscape over five chapters, gradually moving from the written communication of the landscape to its geographical analysis and concluding with a consideration of the visual depictions of this message. Chapter 1 provided a broad survey of the main sources describing the crusades into Livonia and Prussia during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, noting some common themes used to describe the region of the Baltic. Chapter 2 discussed the paganism of the landscape expressed in those sources. Considering the earlier mis-

1 *CDP* 5: 78 (no. 64): “...hac de causa ordinem meum signiferum cuius est expertere gloriam Sancte crucis ad terram Prusie exteris nacionibus plenum quasi ad vineam de egipto translatum.”

2 *CDP* 5: 74–6 (no. 62), 76–8 (no. 63), 80 (no. 65), 81–2 (no. 66), 82–4 (no. 67), 84–6 (no. 88).

3 *LUB* 3: 375–77, here 377 (no. 1170); 644 (no. 1306).

sionary expeditions to Prussia, the crusade chronicles use distinct imagery with respect to landscape that both continued and changed an established tradition. The view of an enemy, pagan belief, served to legitimize the conversion of the landscape, since the Baltic campaigns themselves highlighted the need to convert the pagan peoples living in the region. Chroniclers in both Livonia and Prussia frequently commemorated events tied to the Holy Land crusades and applied them to the wars in the Baltic, placing them in a broader historical concept centred on the liberation of Jerusalem, which could be placed in the pagan landscapes of Livonia and Prussia. The placement of key events of crusading history, such as the loss of the Holy Land in Livonia and in Prussia reflects a historical consciousness, particularly expressed in the Teutonic Order's texts, centred on the sacred landscape in the Holy Land as vital to the verbal expression of crusading ideology in the Baltic. The themes and imagery present in the sources reinforce the concepts of group identity amongst crusaders and members of the Teutonic Order, and how they shaped a distinct concept of a new sacred geography. This revealed the establishment of a specific pattern with respect to describing the expansion of Christendom to the Baltic, laying the foundation for exploring this idea at a spatial level with qualitative GIS.⁴

Chapter 3 focused on martyrdom, hierophanic acts, and how these were used in transforming the landscapes in Livonia and Prussia. Employing the methodology from the concept of the "taskscape," and employing Geographical Information Systems to spatially consider the data, it traces the development of the sacred landscape in the region. The emotional accounts of martyrdom of brothers in the Teutonic Order in Prussia, or pilgrims in Livonia, demonstrates how those qualitative factors apply to landscape by representing them geographically. Letters addressed to potential crusaders, in addition to the commemorative practices surrounding martyrdom in both Livonia and Prussia, reflect this concept. The chapter provided a spatial representation of martyrdom in Livonia and Prussia, highlighting key differences surrounding the rise of "sacral cities" (e.g., the centrality of Riga in Livonia, versus the importance of Thorn, Kulm, Elbing, and Königsberg in Prussia) in both regions. In any case, specific events were pivotal in the communication of the crusades in the written material in each region, specifically with respect to martyrdom.

However, words alone were not the only means with which contemporaries constructed a new sacred landscape in the Baltic region. Objects, rituals, and images were key in communicating this process. As a result, Chapter 4 focused on the objects and rituals that served to reinforce this process, specifically relics and processions. Through analyzing the history of relics in the region it provides a specific representation of pilgrimage routes that emerged by the end of the thirteenth century. This is particularly evident in the case of Prussia, where the cities founded by the Order were repeat locations of martyrdom and hierophanies and housed important relics such as those of St. Barbara at Althaus Kulm, or the relic of the True Cross in Elbing. A distinct relationship between these qualitative components to the texts and specific places in the landscapes of Livonia and Prussia emerges. Set against the backdrop of traditional approaches to the Baltic crusades, this chapter reflects the suitability of new methodological approaches

4 This is particularly noted in the work of Scandinavian historians. See Introduction.

to examining the spiritual dimensions of those expeditions and how contemporaries engaged with and commemorated them.

Chapter 5 demonstrated how the visual culture of the Teutonic Order's Prussian castles and churches reflects the final process of landscape sacralization defined in this book. Through considering the examples of the Order's visual program expressed in Marienburg, Königsberg, and Lochstedt, the themes concerning landscape and landscape ideology discussed in Chapter 1 were expressed visually. Given that some of these centres, particularly Marienburg and Königsberg, were used by pilgrims and knights in the Order, housed relics, and in some cases were connected to the early martyrdoms and miraculous events in the conquest of the region, the sacralization of landscape in the Baltic comes full circle. The consideration of these themes also demonstrates the new possibilities for scholarship on the visual culture of crusading in the Baltic region. There has been little attempt to analyze the role of landscape in the Order's visual culture, though the concept of landscape sacralization played a key role in the Teutonic Order's historical texts, in addition to the missionary texts produced outside the Order.

The end results and overall contributions of this study can be summarized as follows. The broadest contribution that it makes is to the role of place and landscape within the spirituality of the Teutonic Order and the self-image shared amongst crusaders and brothers in the Order.⁵ The propagation in the sources and visual evidence of a new sacral landscape in the Baltic region all can be connected to understandings of place and landscape in the Baltic zone in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The findings presented in this book thus have a broad-reaching spectrum of applications, particularly from a chronological perspective, in terms of how these ideas and concepts developed over the course of a century.⁶ In the context of recent academic research, this book demonstrates the growing need to re-assess previous summaries of the Baltic crusades as "religiously- glossed ethnic cleansing." It proposes that the religious imagery of the texts, the visual culture of the regions, and the spatial analysis of this material demonstrates quite the opposite.⁷ Often, the new sacral centres created in the Baltic were re-used or incorporated existing pagan settlements, and connected to pivotal events in the region's history, such as martyrdoms, miracles, or the presence of relics. They were not simply obliterated and abandoned, suggesting a more complex, multi-faceted view of the missions and how they shaped contemporary worldviews.⁸

Furthermore, in consulting Livonia and Prussia together, this book demonstrates the key differences in how power structures and land organization differed not only in the economic and political sense, but in how the Baltic lands of the Teutonic Order were perceived with respect to Christianization. Previous work tends to focus on one region or the other. Control of the land was different in Livonia than in Prussia due to the

⁵ See Introduction above.

⁶ Kahl, *Heidenfrage*, 409–30, here 410–4.

⁷ Tyerman, *Crusades*, 47: "The Baltic crusades acted as one more element in a cruel process of Christianization and Germanization, providing a religious gloss to ethnic cleansing and territorial aggrandizement."

⁸ Zielińska-Melkowska, "Pielgrzymkowe," 242–52.

pre-established division of power between the Order and the Bishops of Riga.⁹ Parallels between both regions with respect to the Teutonic Order as a spiritual institution and how it viewed itself as the creator of a sacral landscape still emerge in spite of differences in land administration, particularly with the adoption of the literary themes concerning the vineyard in both areas. While Livonia and Prussia differed in their divisions of power between the Order and church authorities, such as the archbishops of Riga and the bishops of Warmia, the focus on the role of landscape was a defining element of the crusades in both regions. Concepts like martyrdom and elements of pilgrimage, for example, played a similar function in shaping the perceptions of place and landscape in the thirteenth century. The case for further examining parallels in the crusade ideology for both regions can surely be made, particularly with respect to the fifteenth century, where a larger body of written material survives for both regions.

To be sure, the later period considered in this book is perhaps one of the most contradictory manifestations of how contemporary understandings of crusade linked religion and the sacralization of landscapes in the Middle Ages. These wars, the *Reisen*, project the complex and often contradictory nature of holy war at the end of the fourteenth century, and this tends to result in greater interest in their worldly, as opposed to religious, aspects.¹⁰ In analyzing the concept of landscape and taskscapes, fundamental to Chapters 2 and 3, this book proposes a new way of interpreting these expeditions by also linking them with the Order's visual expression of its ideology, which reached its peak at this time. The discussion of the themes and the analysis of the Order's visual culture in the fourteenth century is a topic receiving increased scholarly attention, though the smaller pilgrimage churches have only been addressed in a handful of publications in the last two decades.¹¹ The iconographical themes provide a continuity to the language analyzed in Chapter 1, which aids in re-assessing the spiritual nature of the later *Reisen* in Lithuania. This connection makes re-considering such evidence particularly useful, since it reflects the Order's ideological program outside of its castles, providing an opportunity to consider the views of pilgrims and crusaders who journeyed to the "Land of the Mother." If the Marian links with the area were an ideological trope, it was a highly effective one, embedded not just in the written ideology of the Order, but also used by crusaders to legitimize the spiritual component of their mission.

Pilgrimage and its nature as seen in the crusades in Livonia and Prussia highlights the implications of the above study. The language of pilgrimage and the use of terms such as *peregrini* are key aspects of crusade ideology, sometimes used to discredit the pilgrimage component of crusading in the Baltic (a land with no shrines sacred to Christianity).¹² Recent scholarship by Burnam Reynolds situates the concept of pilgrimage in the Baltic and its conversion-oriented nature.¹³ His work argues for the develop-

⁹ See Jähnig, *Verfassung*, 12–32; Murray, "Sword Brothers," 27–38.

¹⁰ Paravicini, PR 3: 525–42.

¹¹ Paravicini, PR 1: 305–9; Paravicini, "Denkmäler," 75–7; Pluskowski, *Archaeology*, 162–3, 275; Herrmann, *Architektur*; Herrmann, "Wehrhaftigkeit," 91–100.

¹² Urban, *Baltic Crusade*.

¹³ Reynolds, *Prehistory*, 154–5.

ment of pilgrimage shrines for future crusaders, and this book builds on this to consider its implications on a broader chronological and thematic scale. Qualitative GIS analysis visually displays the connection between events linked to pilgrimage practices, martyrdom, and miraculous vision, to demonstrate there is a more nuanced version of the pilgrimage landscape.¹⁴ These results lead to the consideration of how this approach to the sources contributes to the growing applications of digital and spatial analyses in the study of the Middle Ages. Keith Lilley has successfully demonstrated the application of these concepts to mental perceptions of city and landscape in medieval Europe. Cities and towns were reflective of medieval perceptions of faith, incorporating highly symbolic layouts and reflecting concepts of religious iconography, especially that of Jerusalem.¹⁵ Lilley's work likewise emphasizes that these concepts are applicable to the crusade movement in the Baltic, a diverse frontier region defined by its holy wars. Geographical Information Systems is valuable for its analysis of landscape and the ideology of the Teutonic Order, and how its visual culture portrays the ideology expressed in its texts concerning landscape. The present book provides not just an analysis of the literary and ideological elements expressed in the texts, but a spatial and geographical representation of them. This lends a new perspective to studies on historical landscapes that utilize qualitative GIS to better understand past societies' connections to landscape. The chroniclers for the Baltic crusades, in both Livonia and in Prussia, reflect a lasting connection to landscape in their placement of miraculous events (*hierophany*), the discovery of relics, and the martyrdom of crusaders.

To conclude, the role of a new sacral landscape in the Baltic played a key role in the ideology of the Teutonic Order not only in Prussia, but also in Livonia, ranging from ideological to spatial and to material expressions. It was through the lens of holy war that all three elements manifest themselves in the written and visual material of the region. Contemporaries viewed holy war as essential to their spiritual mission, in the form of armed pilgrimage and crusading, and created new sacred landscapes within which they could enact these two important components of medieval life. The Teutonic Order was a primary catalyst in this process, for it led the wars on both fronts and provided, ideologically, a connection to the Holy Land in Prussia and Livonia. Engaged in a war against enemies of the church, the Order used this imagery to its advantage in garnering support and maintaining its spiritual identity. Crusaders and participants in these wars likewise used it to shape their construct of "place" while on their seasonal campaigns. Landscape sacralization was a key factor in defining, propagating, and portraying the crusades in the Baltic region during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, reflected in the introductory quotation to this book: "Also pray for all of the land, which formerly lay in paganism, that God shall help it with his might and power."

14 See above, Chapter 3.

15 Lilley, *City and Cosmos*, 78–130; Lilley, "Cities of God?" 296–313, at 298–300 for "iconographical geographies."