

Gustavs Strenga / Cordelia Heß (Eds.)

ANTI-HEROES

Negations and Contradictions
of the Heroic in the Medieval
and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region



rombach
wissenschaft

studies of the
baltic sea region

Gustavs Strenga / Cordelia Heß (Eds.)

Anti-Heroes

Negations and Contradictions of the Heroic
in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region

**ROMBACH WISSENSCHAFT
STUDIES OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION**

Editors

Alexander Drost, Marie-Theres Federhofer
and Clemens Räthel

Volume 2

Gustavs Strenga / Cordelia Heß (Eds.)

Anti-Heroes

Negations and Contradictions of the Heroic
in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region

 **rombach**
wissenschaft

© Coverpicture: The brass plates attached to the sarcophagus of St Henry (made in Flanders in the late 1410s) in Nousiainen Church, depicting the killing of the bishop by Lalli. Photo by P. O. Welin, © The Finnish Heritage Agency.

The production of the book and its publication as open access have been generously funded by the German Research Foundation (project »Saints and Heroes from Christianization to Nationalism: Symbol, Image, Memory (Nord-West Russia, Baltic and Nordic countries)«, DFG project no. 445187042) and the Greifswald University Library.

The **Deutsche Nationalbibliothek** lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>

ISBN 978-3-98858-089-4 (Print)
978-3-98858-090-0 (ePDF)

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-3-98858-089-4 (Print)
978-3-98858-090-0 (ePDF)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Strenga, Gustavs / Heß, Cordelia

Anti-Heroes

Negations and Contradictions of the Heroic
in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region
Strenga, Gustavs / Heß, Cordelia (Eds.)

213 pp.

Includes bibliographic references and index.

ISBN 978-3-98858-089-4 (Print)
978-3-98858-090-0 (ePDF)

1st Edition 2025

© Published by Rombach Wissenschaft Verlag within
Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG
Waldseestraße 3 – 5 | 76530 Baden-Baden
www.nomos.de

Production of the printed version:
Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG
Waldseestraße 3 – 5 | 76530 Baden-Baden

ISBN 978-3-98858-089-4 (Print)
978-3-98858-090-0 (ePDF)

DOI <https://doi.org/10.5771/9783988580900>



Onlineversion
Nomos eLibrary



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution
4.0 International License.

Acknowledgements

This book is an outcome of the project »Saints and Heroes from Christianization to Nationalism: Symbol, Image, Memory (Nord-West Russia, Baltic and Nordic countries)«, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (2021-2024). It began as a research project between the University of Greifswald and Saint Petersburg State University.

We were almost halfway through our project when the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine happened. This dramatic event led to the suspension of our cooperation, and it prompted us to look at the dark side of the heroic. The main ideas and topics of this book were developed during the workshop »The Role of the Anti-Heroes and Evil in the Construction of the Late Medieval Northern European Heroes« (Hamburg, 14-15 September 2023). This volume has been a collaborative enterprise, and we are truly thankful to the authors for joining this book project.

The editors of the series »Studies of the Baltic Sea Region« Clemens Räthel and Alexander Drost from the University of Greifswald and Marion Müller from Rombach Wissenschaftsverlag have been highly supportive of this project. Likewise, we are grateful to Juliane Künzel and Louise Curtis for their work on the manuscript. Doreen Wollbrecht has been fundamental in organising the financial aspects of this book, which has been funded by DFG and Greifswald University Library.

Aarhus and Riga, January 2025

Table of Contents

CORDELIA HESS AND GUSTAVS STRENGA	
Heroic Contradictions: An Introduction	9
CORDELIA HESS	
Chapter 1 Indigenous counter-heroes and the »discovery« of Vínland	27
TUOMAS HEIKKILÄ	
Chapter 2 The National Murderer and the Shifting Sands of Finnish Historical Identity	57
PHILIPP HÖHN AND GEORG JOSTKLEIGREWE	
Chapter 3 Segmented memory. The (Anti-)Heroizations of Grand Master Heinrich von Plauen (1410–1413) from the 15 th to the 21 st Centuries	89
CHRISTINE EKHOLST	
Chapter 4 The King as Anti-Hero: Executing Enemies and Revising History in Fifteenth-Century Sweden	117
GREGORY LEIGHTON	
Chapter 5 The Depictions of Vytautas the Great as Hero, Counterhero, and Antihero in the Correspondence of the Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order from the 14 th to the 15 th Centuries	145
GUSTAVS STRENGA	
Chapter 6 A Long Relationship Between a Hero and His Enemies: Master Wolter von Plettenberg and the Russians (c. 1500– c. 1700)	173
List of Illustrations	207
Contributors	209
Index	211

