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**Maccabees on the Baltic: The biblical apologia of the Teutonic  
Order**

Jencks, Alden, Ph.D.

University of Washington, 1989

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Maccabees on the Baltic:  
The Biblical Apologia of the  
Teutonic Order

by

Alden Jencks

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

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ALDEN JENCKS

1989

University of Washington

Abstract

MACCABEES ON THE BALTIC:  
THE BIBLICAL APOLOGIA OF THE  
TEUTONIC ORDER

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee:

Professor Carol G. Thomas  
Department of History

This study examines the religious and historical literature of the Teutonic Order, the brotherhood of warrior-monks whose northern crusade subdued and converted the eastern Baltic region during the late Middle Ages.

Chapter One presents the background against which the Teutonic Knights produced their Biblically-inspired works. It establishes that the early years of the 14th century were a time of crisis for the Order.

Chapter Two focuses on the Rule of the Teutonic Order and the Biblical foundation upon which its statutes rested. It was to this Rule that the Knights turned in their "generation of crisis," and it was from this Rule that their Order drew its stubborn will to survive. The Rule rekindled in the warrior-monks a sense of Biblical mission and it inspired them to defend themselves not only with the sword, but also with the written word.

Chapter Three provides an overview of the Order's crisis-born literature; Deutschordensliteratur is defined and circumscribed according to specific documents,

authors and themes. A work by work survey pays special attention to Biblical translations.

The Order's German rendering of I and II Maccabees is the subject of Chapter Four. The Makkabäerbuch receives thorough treatment as the work best typifying the literary efforts of the brothers. On the basis of this exemplary piece, the chapter's focus then broadens to accommodate general remarks about all Order writing.

Chapters Five and Six analyze the two major chronicles of the Order's Baltic crusade: Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae and Nicolaus von Jeroschin's Kronike von Pruzinlant. Selected passages demonstrate that both Peter and Nicolaus brought to bear Biblical imagery which earlier brothers had developed in their translations. Peter and Nicolaus thus transferred a mature sense of Scriptural legitimacy to their Order and to their Order's mission in Prussia.

A concluding Chapter Seven argues that the literature of the Teutonic Order fulfilled its function well. It both inspired and recorded the Order's successful emergence from its years of crisis. Furthermore, the vernacular translation begun by the Teutonic Order pointed the way to Martin Luther's German Bible two hundred years later.

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Date August 4, 1989

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To Professor Carol Thomas, my mentor and guide over the last several years, I express my profoundest gratitude. My study of the Teutonic Knights is largely a response to those qualities in her which bring out the best in any student: her love of learning, her exemplary industriousness, and her immediate response of praise and tangible help to the student whose own efforts call for guidance.

My debt is incalculable to Dr. Nancy Robinson of the University of Washington's Center for the Study of Capable Youth. Dr. Robinson generously allowed me to use a small office at the Center as well as her word processor. Within the Center's weather-beaten walls, I deepened my knowledge and love for the past and I renewed my faith in the future through daily contact with bright and bouncy teenagers. Dr. Robinson made this possible. My sincerest thanks go out also to colleagues and staff at the Center who were ever helpful and ever encouraging: Janie Amdal, Kay Solberg, Midge Grove and the rest.

Debra Greenwood provided solace and support during these dissertation years. Her insights and advice I will carry with me into the future.

Along with scores of doctoral aspirants before me, I add my voice in thanking Ruth Kirk and her assistant Anna Maclausand of the Interlibrary Borrowing Service, Suzzallo Library. The can-do attitudes of these two ladies have brought dozens of obscure books to my desk.

Finally, I offer a special thanks to my friends, Kristin Stout and Mark Stout, for reading my manuscript. The literary sources I drew upon were in German and in Latin, but my study is written in English. Kristin looking over my left shoulder and Mark over my right exhorted me to write an English that was clean, concise and correct.

My dissertation now stands completed and open to the critical judgment of readers. My hope is that it prove edifying. If lapses and errors still lurk in its pages, I alone bear the responsibility. But I also bear in my heart joyful gratitude to Dr. Carol Thomas, teacher par excellence, and to friends and colleagues who have helped cull out mistakes and who have contributed so much to the positive merit and substance of the finished product.



### Introduction: Problem Statement

The Teutonic Order <sup>1</sup> (Ger.: der Deutsche Orden, der Deutschritterorden, also "die Marienritter") came into being as the third and last of the great medieval crusading orders. <sup>2</sup> The Order began its existence as a temporary hospital for German-speaking crusaders during the siege of Acre in 1190. <sup>3</sup> The "pious burghers of

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1 The Latin title in the Order's Rule appears as: "Domus hospitalis Theutonicorum Sancte Marie in Ierusalem" (Prologue, Chapter 4). Papal letters generally address "Fratres domus hospitalis sancte Marie Theutonicorum Ierosolimitani."

2 The three major crusading orders were:

Knights of St. John or Hospitalers	1098
Knights of the Temple or Templars	1118
Teutonic Knights or Marianer	1195

The most important minor orders were:

Knights of Arviz	1145
Order of St. Jago	1175
Knights of Alcantara	1177
Order of Calatrava	1178
Order of Montjoio	1180

The foundation and growth of the Teutonic Knights constitutes an important transition between the earlier, large international organizations and the later, smaller "national," i.e. local organizations. See, however, note #4 below.

3 The famous and often repeated description of this beginning is to be found in:

"De Primordiis Ordinis Theutonicici Narratio," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Max Töppen (Leipzig, 1861 / reprinted Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965),

Bremen and Lübeck" who hurriedly set up this field lazaret accomplished much good and within one year these Germans received papal blessing and recognition within the Church. The Teutonic Order, like its sister orders the Templars and the Hospitalers, was a religiously committed, lay corporation within the Universal Church. Standing in the great monastic tradition of Western Christendom, the Order's members dedicated themselves to lives of good deeds and prayer. In return, the brothers enjoyed special papal privileges. Similar to other, latter-day descendents of St. Benedict, such as the Franciscans and the Dominicans, the Teutonic brothers performed their good works in the world and among men. Like them, these new monks specialized in particular types of Godly service. Early on, this service meant ministering to the needs of the sick and wounded. But more and more for the Ordensbrüder, good works came to mean defending by force of arms Christian pilgrims and missionaries against pagan harassment and attack. Order monks increasingly became

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Band 1, pp. 220-225.

Marien-Luise Favreau has written the latest and most definitive refutation of the die-hard theory that the German knights were somehow associated with an earlier German hospital actually located within the walls of Jerusalem. As part of her thorough treatment, she lists the scholars and arguments associated with the old theory.

Marie-Luise Favreau, Studien zur Frühgeschichte des Deutschen Ordens (Stuttgart: Klett Verlag, 1974).

warriors so that pilgrims might be protected and so that these same pilgrims might avoid needing the monks' services as surgeons. Other pressures, however, were also at work compelling the Germans to direct their attention toward more worldly concerns.

During the formative decades of their Order's existence, the monk-knights were closely linked to the imperial Hohenstaufen family. Duke Ferdinand of Saxony, brother of Emperor Henry IV, was their first patron. Later, under Grandmaster Hermann von Salza, close ties were forged with Emperor Friedrich II. It was during the period of association with Hohenstaufen power that this ecclesiastical order assumed its definitive Germanic character, thus, in part, justifying its popular name: the Teutonic Order (Der Deutsche Orden). <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> To understand the Teutonic Knights as "German" in the modern sense would be an anachronistic lapse of first magnitude. The Order was German to that extent that it had close associations with the imperial government and German provincial lands within the "Altreich." Furthermore, most of its members came from regions which spoke a Low, Middle or High German dialect. Nonetheless, the Order always numbered men of "non-German" origin among its members, and it is likely that Grandmaster Karl von Trier, for example, spoke French as his mother tongue (See Chapter 1 below).

For an excellent treatment of this topic see:

Erich Maschke, "Die inneren Wandlungen des Deutschen Ritterordens," Geschichte und Gegenwartsbewusstsein: Festschrift für Hans Rothfels (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), pp. 249-277.

The Teutonic Order concentrated its efforts in the Holy Land during the first several decades of its existence until it turned its attention to northeastern Europe.<sup>5</sup> In Prussia, the Teutonic Order succeeded in establishing a large and viable territorial state -- something which the Templars and Hospitalers had failed to do in their spheres of operations on the Mediterranean. The Teutonic Order, from its foothold on the shores of the Baltic, went on to exercise profound influence upon the political, cultural and ecclesiastical history of Central and Eastern Europe.

The principal events in Order history span three hundred and fifty years.<sup>6</sup> Though the Teutonic Order

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See also:

Erich Maschke, "Der Ordensstaat Preussen in seinen deutschen und europäischen Beziehungen," Ostdeutsche Wissenschaft 8 (1961), pp. 187-204.

<sup>5</sup> During the 1220's and 1230's, the Teutonic Order campaigned on the eastern frontiers of the Kingdom of Hungary against the pagan Cumans. King Andrew, who had first invited the Teutonic knights, ordered their departure when he saw their mounting strength. This negative experience was to color the Order's plans and commitments far into the future.

For the Hungarian sojourn and campaign, see:

Harald Zimmermann, "Der Deutsche Ritterorden in Siebenburgen," Die Geistlichen Ritterorden Europas, herausgegeben von Josef Fleckenstein und Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1980), pp. 267-298.

<sup>6</sup> See also for a concise outline treatment:

still exists today with its headquarters in Vienna, 1525 is the logical cut-off date for the following chronology, since this year marks the secularization of the Order's domain in Prussia.

- 1190-91 Founding of the Order at Acre under the Rules of the Knights of St. John.
- 1198 Transformation into a military order and recognized in its new form by Innocent III.
- 1210-39 Hermann von Salza grandmaster.
- 1216 German Master created to administer expanding possessions.
- 1211-24 Order invited by Andrew of Hungary to fight the Cumans in Transylvania.
- 1225 King Andrew orders the Knights to leave his realm.
- 1226 Golden Bull of Rimini - Friedrich II grants the Order special privileges within the Empire.
- 1229 Order accepts a call (since 1225) from Conrad, a Polish prince, to defend his lands against incursions of the pagan Pruteni.
- 1230 Kulmland is granted to the Order along with the promise of any lands it might conquer.
- 1230 Pruteni taken under the direct protection of the Pope.
- 1231 A Prussian Master is created to administer lands on the Baltic.
- 1234 The Knights transfer all their holdings to the Pope, receiving them back as a fief of the Church.
- 1236 Disastrous defeat of the Sword Brothers in the Battle of Saulen.
- 1237 Union of the Sword Brothers with the Teutonic Order; Landmaster in Livonia created.
- 1230's - 1260's Great era of town-founding - Thorn, Kulm, Marienwerder, Elbing, Memel, Königsberg.
- 1240's Mongol attack plunges deep into Eastern Europe.
- 1242 Battle on the ice of Lake Peipus: Alexander Nevski of Novgorod halts the advance into Russia of the Order's Livonian branch.
- 1242-49 General Pruteni uprising.

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Erich Dusterwald, Studien zur politischen Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens (Sankt Augustin: Verlag Hans Richard, 1973).

- 1243 Papal Legate William von Modena divides Prussia and Livonia into bishoprics.
- 1249 Treaty of Christburg - Pruteni receive generous terms.
- 1253 Feigned conversions of Prince Mindowe of Lithuania; skirmishes with the Pruteni.
- 1255 Riga becomes an archiepiscopal see over all of northeastern Europe.
- 1260 Battle of Durben - disastrous defeat of the Order by the Lithuanians.
- 1260-85 New Pruteni uprising, which is brutally put down with Polish help and with the aid of such renowned individuals as Otto III of Brandenburg, Ottokar II of Bohemia and Rudolph von Habsburg.
- 1291 Acre falls to the Moslems; Order Headquarters moved to Venice.
- 1300- Heightened conflict between the Order and the Archbishop of Riga.
- 1304-41 Archbishop Friedrich of Riga works actively against the Order at the papal court in Avignon.
- 1307-13 Persecution of the Templars.
- 1308-10 Order occupies Pomerelia and Danzig.
- 1308 Order Headquarters moved from Venice to the Marienburg in Prussia.
- 1317 Karl von Trier resigns as grandmaster.
- 1320's Poland presses several proceedings against the Order before the papal curia in Avignon.
- 1327-43 Intermittent war between Poland and the Order.
- 1330 Open conflict with Riga, Order occupies the town.
- 1343 Peace of Kalisch - Casimir the Great of Poland gives the Order de facto control over Danzig and Pomerelia.
- 1346 Estonia purchased from the Danes.
- 1351-82 Grandmaster Winrich von Kniprode - peace and prosperity for the Order; continued advances into Lithuania.
- 1385 Union of Poland and Lithuania; Prince Jagiello of Lithuania is baptized in order that he might marry Jadwiga, the heiress to the Polish throne. The two kingdoms are united, creating a mighty and hostile Christian nation to the south and east of the Order.
- 1398 The Order occupies Gotland.
- 1398 Treaty of Sallinwerder - Order purchases Schamaiten, which links Prussia to Livonia.
- 1402 Neumark purchased from Brandenburg.
- 1410 Battle of Tannenberg - disastrous defeat of the Order at the hands of the Poles.

- 1411 First Peace of Thorn - Order permanently weakened.
- 1414-18 Proceedings against the Order at the Council of Constance.
- 1453-66 Thirteen Year War between the Order and the Prussian Bund of German burghers; Poland aids the Order's enemies.
- 1457 The Marienburg is lost; Headquarters are moved to Königsberg.
- 1466 Second Peace of Thorn - large territorial loss; the grandmaster is forced to do homage to the Polish king.
- 1502 Master von Plettenberg saves Livonia for the Order at the Battle of Lake Smolina.
- 1519-21 Poles invade Prussia.
- 1525 Secularization of Prussia under Grandmaster, now Duke, Albrecht; the new duke does homage to the King of Poland.

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A vast literature exists on the Teutonic Order <sup>7</sup> and the Order's role in the conquest and settling of the Germanic East -- that movement which many German historians have considered the single most significant

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<sup>7</sup> The best reference handbook is by a former grandmaster of the Teutonic Order:

P. Marian Tumler, Der Deutsche Orden: Im Werden, Waschen und Wirken bis 1400 (Wien: Panorama, 1954).

The most thorough bibliography available is:

Karl Lampe, Bibliographie des Deutschen Ordens bis 1959 (Bad Godesberg: Verlag Wissenschaftliches Archiv, 1975).

This work should be supplemented by:

Karl Wermke, et al. Bibliographie von Ost- und Westpreussen (Marburg: Johann-Gottfried-Herder-Institut, et al. 1933 ff.).

occurrence in their medieval past.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, scholarly work on the Teutonic Order is so extensive that it has been characterized as being "fast unübersehbar" (Wermke). Exhaustive as this historiography on the Order may be, however, it is still wanting in several important respects.

In the first place, texts and secondary works are almost exclusively in the German language. Thus, when a recent English author characterizes his survey of the Baltic region during the Middle Ages as "mere scree on the mountainside of German Ostforschung,"<sup>9</sup> he fails to

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<sup>8</sup> Karl Lamprecht, for example, writes of the Ostbewegung as "die grösste Tat des deutschen Volkes im Mittelalter." Lamprecht's formulation bears the imprint of the fervent nationalism of his own age projected back into the medieval past (see my note #4 above). German historians today rightly condemn such excesses of fin de siècle patriotism, but fascination with the old topic continues. Every year new books and articles continue to appear.

Karl Lamprecht, Deutsche Geschichte (Berlin: Wiedmannsche Buchhandlung, 1913), Band 3, pp. 343 ff.

<sup>9</sup> Eric Christiansen, The Northern Crusade (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 4.

Christiansen casts his net widely, but as a general survey, this book is excellent.

Two other more circumscribed surveys are:

William Urban, The Prussian Crusade (New York: University Press of America, 1980).

William Urban, The Baltic Crusade (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1975).



appreciate the important fact that his scree is in English. The remoteness of geography and time as well as the demand for language skills (Middle High German, Latin, Modern German) make the study of the Teutonic Order in Prussia all but closed to even the most well-read English-speaking generalist. Thus, any survey or evocative monograph in English is important as an entree into a neglected realm of historical study.<sup>10</sup>

A second factor makes the vast German scholarship which we do possess nonetheless incomplete. The problem is the focus and emphasis of that scholarship. Nineteenth century German studies and critical editions of sources, which still constitute the beginning point of any serious study of the Teutonic Order, focus exclusively upon the

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<sup>10</sup> The history of the Teutonic Order and its activity in Prussia is not as arcane a topic as one might suppose. Though wielding great decision-making power as new borders were drawn in Eastern Europe after World War II, American leadership and public opinion moved in a fog of abysmal historical ignorance. Such ignorance continues today, as do the negative effects of this ignorance. The sadness of this state of affairs came home to me, as an American, when I heard the words of a Cracow professor to a group of German teachers with whom I was traveling.

"Wir, Pole und Deutsche," he said, "haben unsere Meinungsverschiedenheiten gehabt. Aber in einer Sache teilen wir immer derselben Meinung: wir stimmen ein, dass in der Lösung von Problemen die Geschichte etwas ausmacht." (We Poles and Germans have had our differences, but in one matter we always agree. We agree that, in the solving of problems, history makes a difference.)

Order as a political establishment in Prussia.<sup>11</sup> Works to the present have followed this well-trodden path. Furthermore, these and indeed all studies dealing with the Ostbewegung have been notoriously susceptible to the ideological predispositions of Wilhelmenian and interbellum writers. Through all of this, the cultural and devotional life within the Order, for example, has been all but forgotten.<sup>12</sup> Only slowly are scholars

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11 The tone was largely set by Johannes Voigt, Prussian archivist and father of Prussian provincial history. His monumental, nine volume work is still a touchstone for any study of Prussia and the activities of the Teutonic Order there.

Johannes Voigt, Geschichte Preussens von den ältesten Zeiten bis zum Untergange der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens, 9 Bände (Königsberg: Bornträger, 1827-1839).

12 Bruno Schumacher's essay "Die Idee der geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter" has established itself as a classic. This is largely because it has been, until quite recently, the only significant article to broach this problem. The exuberance of Schumacher's final sentence, however, demonstrates that even this work is a mixed boon to scholarship.

"Preisen wir das Walten der Vorsehung in der Geschichte, die immer wieder zeigt, dass es der Geist ist, der sich den Körper baut, dass Ideen Geschichte machen und Menschen, die sie verfechten und für sie sterben, nicht rohe Kraft und die Bedürfnisse des Lebens.

Let us praise the movement of destiny in history, which again and again demonstrates that it is "spirit" which shapes the body, that ideas make history as well as the men who fight for and die for these ideas. Raw power and necessity do not make history.

Bruno Schumacher, "Die Idee der geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter," Altpreussische Forschung 1

coming to appreciate what Luther understood centuries ago in his famous letter to Grandmaster Albrecht, shortly before the secularization of Prussia in 1525.

Euer Orden fürwahr ein seltsamer Orden ist, derhalben am meisten, dass er zu Streit führen wider die Ungläubigen gestiftet ist, darumb er muss das weltlich Schwerdt führen, und weltlich sein; und soll doch zugleich auch geistlich sein, Keuscheit, Armuth und Gehorsam geloben, und halten, wie ander Münch. Wie sich das zusammen reime, lehret täglich die Erfahrung und Vernunft allzuwohl.

13

Your Order is a strange one indeed, principally because it was founded for the purpose of combating the pagans. To this purpose, the Order must wield a worldly sword and be of the world. But the Order must, at the same time, be spiritual, swearing and holding to chastity, poverty and obedience like any other group of monks. How those two work out together, daily experience and reason teaches us all too well.

Luther's undertones are already those of a modern man, critical of an institution which he feels to be outdated and now unfit to exist. But what is worthy of

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(1924), pp. 5-24. Reprinted in Heidenmission und Kreuzzugsgedanke in der deutschen Ostpolitik des Mittelalters, herausgegeben von Helmut Beumann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), 1963, pp. 364-385.

An excellent recent book is:

Wolfgang Wippermann, Der Ordensstaat als Ideologie (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1979).

Unfortunately, Wippermann's book, which traces views of the Ordensstaat to the present day, devotes only one chapter to "Selbstverständnis und zeitgenössische Kritik." Wippermann's "Erstes Kapitel" is, however, excellent.

13 Martin Luther, "An die Herren Deutsches Ordens, dass sie falsche Keuscheit meiden und zur rechten ehelichen Keuscheit greifen, Ermahnung. Wittenberg, den 23. März, 1523," Dr. Martin Luthers sämtliche Werke, herausgegeben von Johann Konrad Irmischer (Erlangen: Verlag Carl Heyder, 1841), Band 29, pp. 17-33.

note in Luther's letter is the fact that he still stood sufficiently close to the Order in time and mentality to be cognizant of its spiritual-ecclesiastical function -- incompatible as this might have seemed with the Order's outward political and military existence. Modern historians have been wont to forget Luther's balanced, if antithetical view. It is within this spiritual, ideological realm of the Order's self-identity that the present study seeks to make its contribution.

The purpose of this study will be to examine one aspect of the Order's ongoing self-examination and recommitment during critical years of its activity in Prussia. Specifically, this study will explore the Order's use of the Bible and Biblical precedent as the anchor for its sense of mission. The armies of Joshua and Gideon, those of David and the Maccabees had fought to conquer and defend a Promised and Holy Land. As crusaders in the Levant, the knights of the Teutonic Order saw themselves as warriors standing in a line of famous Biblical predecessors. When the Order knights were driven from that most important of crusading battlefields -- Palestine -- Prussia became, in its turn, a new Palestine. If the Holy Land could not be rewon from the Moslems, at least a new land could be rendered holy, i.e. Christian, by these new Maccabees. The fight the Order waged against

the pagan Pruteni was for them but a continuation of their struggles around Acre. And the fighting around Acre had been a continuation of the struggle extending from the days of Joshua down to the age of Judas Maccabee. <sup>14</sup>

There exists a superb body of documentation to verify the contention that the Ordensritter did indeed view

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<sup>14</sup> "Historians I believe," writes Walter Ullmann, "pay insufficient attention to the overpowering and enduring influence the Latinized Bible had upon the shaping of public organization."

Walter Ullmann, The Relevance of Medieval Ecclesiastical History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 13.

"A large portion of the Geistesgeschichte of medieval nations is reflected in their understanding of Holy Scripture."

Robert McNalley, The Bible in the Middle Ages (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1959), p. 74.

"The Frisians, comparing themselves to the chosen people, invented the order of events in their history so as to get a closer correspondence with the Old Testament."

Beryl Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. xi.

Ullmann (cited above) expands upon his provocative passage with these words: "The kind of Christianity which the churchmen conveyed was, ideologically speaking, a combination of two vital elements: the Latin Bible in the shape of the Vulgate and the Latin governmental system, if system it can be called, of the late Roman Empire. Both these elements, either singly or, much more frequently, conflated and inextricably interwoven, exercised an influence upon the thought-patterns and ideology of subsequent ages which is far from being properly appreciated (p. 10).

themselves as new Maccabees fighting in a new promised land. This documentation is the Biblical, devotional literature the Teutonic Order produced. Written during the early years of the fourteenth century at a time of internal and external crisis, this literature proclaimed encouragement to the monk-knights as well as a defiant, Biblical self-justification to the Order's detractors.

Scholars have only recently taken up interest in this Order literature. And, where they have, it has not been from the historical and exegetical point of view which I plan to follow in this study. The reasons for this are readily explicable.

Order literature has been extremely slow to appear in accessible, printed form. Furthermore, only gradually has a critical consensus emerged as to the exact corpus of this Order literature.<sup>15</sup> Finally, the topical breakdown of the works involved has caused them to attract the attention more of literary scholars and philologists than of historians.

Helm and Ziesemer, in their standard survey, categorize Order literature under the subject headings: 1) Chronicles, 2) Biblical translations and paraphrases and

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<sup>15</sup> The whole theme of what constitutes Order literature will be taken up in detail in Chapter 3 below.

3) devotional works (largely saints' lives).<sup>16</sup> These works have been subjected to philological and literary scrutiny, representing as they do some of the earliest examples we possess of Eastern Middle High German -- that idiom which went on to become the basis for Luther's literary language. But historical investigations have been much more restricted. Biblical translations and the saints' lives have not been examined at all with a view to their historical significance. The chronicles, it is true, have not gone unstudied, but investigators have consistently sifted through them in order to unravel and explain Order institutions or to illuminate specific military and political events.<sup>17</sup> These historians have shown little or no interest in the chronicles as apologetic pieces produced by the Order for its own Biblical self-definition and self-justification. Furthermore, the close association between the Order's Biblical work and the narration of its own history has

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<sup>16</sup> Karl Helm und Walter Zieseemer, Die Literatur des Deutschen Ordens (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1951).

To these three groups, Gerhard Eis also adds the category of "artes-literature," i.e. practical handbooks. Eis is correct in his expansion upon Helm and Zieseemer. However, the artes-literature emerged in the final period of Order history and is, in any case, of little significance to the theme at hand.

<sup>17</sup> For example, Johannes Voigt and those standing in his tradition. See note #11 above.

been overlooked. When, for example, after the defeat of a Pruteni army, an Order chronicler writes "the Promised Land has been cleansed of the Moabites," his words tap deeply into a venerable tradition which this dissertation will attempt to lay bare.

This study, then, sets as its purpose to examine the self-understanding of the Teutonic Order in its own terms, i.e. the Biblical terms expressed in Order literature. Such a study will help balance the generally known facts of the Order's outward military successes with an appreciation for its inward, monastic commitment to Christian ideas. As Grandmaster Tumler reminds the readers of his shorter survey of Order history,



Doch dieser ungeheure äussere Aufschwung des Ordens, der ihn von einem kleinen Feldlazarett vor Akkon zu einem der reichsten Souveränen des mittelalterlichen Europa in seinem preussischen Staat geführt hatte, beruhte auf einer Kraft, die aus inneren Beweggründen kommen musste, die nicht nur physischer Natur sein konnte. Sie fand ihren Ursprung in der Doppelstellung des Ordens, dass der Ritterbruder nicht nur Kämpfer, sondern auch Mönch war, eine Besonderheit gerade jenes späten Mittelalters. Ohne den Versuch zu machen, diese uns heute nur schwer begreifliche Doppelfunktion des Ordens zu verstehen, entzieht sich uns die Beurteilung jener Entwicklung.

But this dramatic, external rise of the Order, which carried it from a small field lazaret before Acre to being one of the richest sovereigns in medieval Europe in its Prussian state, rested in a power which had to come from an inner drive. Such motivation could not have been of a physical nature alone. This drive found its source in the double-nature of the Order which made the knight-brother not only a warrior, but also a monk: a rare phenomenon of the late Middle Ages. We should have no pretense of judging the Order's remarkable development without making the effort to appreciate this double function of the Order, which for us today is so difficult to comprehend.

In addition to its primary purpose, my hope is that this study will also serve as a modest contribution to the general study of the Bible in the late Middle Ages. It will be, I hope, a partial response to McNalley's impassioned call for more studies dealing with any and all aspects of the Bible in the Middle Ages.

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18 Marian Tumler, Der Deutsche Orden, Von seinem Ursprung bis zur Gegenwart, unter Mitarbeit von Udo Arnold (Bonn-Godesberg: Verlag Wissenschaftliches Archiv, 1974), p. 23.

Father Tumler's words in this significant passage are uncharacteristically convoluted. Even the venerable Althochmeister, it seems, finds it difficult put into appropriate words the essential, spiritual calling of his beloved Order.

"Graduate faculties of medieval literature, philosophy, theology and even history are the centers in which these investigations can be best completed. Doctoral dissertations can make a substantial contribution, especially if they are written under competent direction and are published in series with other related studies. The study of the Bible in the Middle Ages is neither a peripheral problem nor a side issue nor an esoteric category of intellectual life. Precisely because the Bible is the book par excellence, because it dominated and formed the cultural and spiritual life of medieval civilization, its study pertains to all branches of medieval research, to literature, philosophy, history, philology and theology.

19

Work with the Teutonic Order seems particularly relevant since, as McNalley's colleague Beryl Smalley writes in her Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, our knowledge of Biblical exegesis during the 14th and 15th centuries is particularly hazy and confused. She also ventures to characterize this late period, with its onset of vernacular writings, as essentially one of decline.<sup>20</sup> The pious writers of the Teutonic Order, I intend to show, prove Miss Smalley wrong on this count. The literary works of the knightly brothers, like the entire Order itself, have a fascinating Janus-head quality. They are simultaneously staunchly conservative and yet surprisingly innovative. Biblical treatment at the hands of Order

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19 McNalley, The Bible in the Middle Ages, p. 77.

20 Smalley, The Study of the Bible, pp. xx and 356 ff.

brothers points both back to Jerome and Origin and forward to Luther and Erasmus.

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Before moving to a synopsis of ensuing chapters, two methodological considerations ought to be explicitly mentioned here.

The language used in Order literature was always some variant of the Order's own official Middle High German.<sup>21</sup> Dozens of internal references indicate clearly that the works were read aloud to the brothers and directly understood by them. The modern researcher has at his disposal, in other words, primary texts in the truest sense of the word. No interpretive model is needed, as, for example, is required when he attempts to analyze the effects of a Latin handbook upon preaching. In the case of the Latin Handbook, the historian must extrapolate and speculate as to what a congregation of the faithful might ultimately have heard when a preacher transformed Latin guidelines into a vernacular folk-sermon. The Middle High German pieces of the Teutonic Order, by contrast, tell us directly.

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<sup>21</sup> See the concluding chapter for a discussion of the possible role that Order literature played in the development of standard Early Modern German.

A second methodological consideration concerns the Vulgate text which stood as the basis for the Order's German translations. By the year 1300, one may assume that the mid-12th century "Paris Text" of the Vulgate (Exemplar Parisiense) had spread throughout all of Europe, even to its northeasternmost salient, which was Prussia. This collation of Latin Scripture by scholars associated with the University of Paris came down, virtually intact, to form the Tridentine Vulgate.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the historian today may safely consider the text of a modern Vulgate Bible to be, by and large, the text used by Order writers and translators. For translations occurring much before 1300, this assumption becomes increasingly precarious .

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This study of the Teutonic Order and its Biblical literature takes the following shape:

Chapter One presents the background against which the Order produced its literary works. This first section lays bare the fact that the early years of the 14th century (c. 1291-1330) were a period of internal as well

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<sup>22</sup> The definitive version emerged during the post-Tridentine pontificates of Sixtus V (1581-1590) and Clement VIII (1592-1605).

Friedrich Stummer, Einführung in die lateinische Bibel (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 1928), pp. 174 ff.

as external crisis for the brothers of the Teutonic Order.

Chapter Two has as its focus the Order's Rule and the Biblical foundations upon which these revered statutes rested. It was to this Rule that the Knights turned in their "generation of crisis," and it was from this Rule that the Teutonic Order drew its stubborn will to survive. The Rule rekindled in the warrior-monks their sense of Biblical mission and it inspired them to defend themselves not only with the sword, but also with the written word.

Chapter Three provides an overview of the Teutonic Order's crisis-born literature; Deutschordensliteratur is defined and circumscribed according to specific documents and themes. A work by work survey pays special attention to the central importance of Biblical translations.

The Order's German version of the Biblical books I and II Maccabees is the subject of Chapter Four. The Makkabäerbuch receives thorough treatment as the work best typifying the literary production of the Teutonic Order. On the basis of this exemplary work, the chapter's focus then broadens to accommodate general remarks concerning theological and historiographical innovations and conventions characteristic of Order writing.

Chapter Five and Chapter Six analyze the Order's two major chronicles: Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae and Nicolaus von Jeroschin's Kronike von

Pruzinlant. Selected key passages from these works demonstrate that both chroniclers brought to bear Biblical imagery which the Order had evolved in its earlier Biblical translations. Dusburg and Jeroschin thus transfer a mature sense of Scriptural legitimacy to their Order and to their Order's mission in Prussia.

A concluding Chapter Seven argues that the tendentious, Biblically-imbued literature of the Teutonic Order fulfilled its function well. In large measure through its inspiration, the Order survived years of crisis and entered into its Golden Age under Grandmaster Winrich von Kniprode (1351-1382). Furthermore, the Biblical work pioneered by the Order in many ways pointed to Martin Luther's German Bible two hundred years later.

## Chapter 1:

### The Teutonic Order: A Generation of Crisis

The year 1291 marks the beginning of a generation of crisis for the Teutonic Order. This year witnessed the loss of Acre -- the Order's headquarters and last stronghold in the Levant.<sup>1</sup> The fall of Acre, along with Tyre and Sidon soon thereafter, spelled the end of Christian military presence in the eastern Mediterranean.

The Templars and Hospitalers, who were also driven from these burning cities, accepted land-grants from the Christian King of Cyprus and attempted to retrench themselves upon that island. The Teutonic Knights, for their part, accepted an invitation from the Republic of Venice to transform the local convent there into a new headquarters for the Order.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The castle of Montfort (Starkenbourg) outside of Acre had been the previous headquarters until it fell in 1271. Though "Jerusalem" appears in the official Latin name of the Teutonic Order, the German knights were never in residence there. The Holy City fell into Moslem hands in 1140, fifty years before the Order's founding. See Introduction, note #3 above.

<sup>2</sup> The Order actively supported Venice in the ceaseless squabbling between it and Genoa, the other great Italian maritime power.

For excellent overviews of the Order's early quest for a secure headquarters, see:

Kurt Forstreuter, "Die Frage des Zentralortes - Von Jerusalem nach Marienburg," Der Deutsche Orden am

In the early years after 1291, the Order forged plan after plan of returning to the Holy Land via this great commercial city.<sup>3</sup> But by the end of the century, the apocryphal cry of Grandmaster Conrad von Feuchtwangen at the fall of Acre accurately outlined what the future would hold for the Order:

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Mittelmeer (Bonn: Verlag Wissenschaftlicher Archiv, 1967), pp. 188-200.

Kurt Forstreuter, "Das Hauptstadtproblem des Deutschen Ordens," Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Mittel- und Ostdeutschland 5 (1956), pp. 131-144.

<sup>3</sup> Christian unity and crusading had been major themes at the Council of Lyon in 1274. Gregory X (1271-76) worked hard to keep crusading zeal alive during his pontificate. The last of the general crusading armies dispersed in 1293 with the death of Pope Nicholas IV, another die-hard crusader.

Preussisches Urkundenbuch, herausgegeben von August Seraphim, et al. (Königsberg: Gräfe und Unzer / Marburg: Elwert, 1882-1958), Band I, 2 #622 (August 30, 1294).

Liv- Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch, herausgegeben von Friedrich Georg von Bunge, et al. (Reval und Riga: Kluge und Ströhm, 1852-1914), Band 3, Register #1,414 (Papst Coelestin V ermahnt den Deutschen Orden, obwohl er für die Ausbreitung des Glaubens in Livland und Preussen eifrig kämpfe, . . . zum Schutze des heiligen Landes, dass ihm besonders und dauernd am Herzen liege [specialiter et continue]).



"Ich kann es nimmer gestatten, dass ihr ohne Zweck und Ziel euer Leben dem Feinde preisgebt; es wäre ein Vergehen an unseres Ordens Regel, denn solange ein Ordensbruder mit Ehren leben kann, soll er leben. Aber ich gebe euch mein Ritterswort: ich will es einst mit euch an den Heiden in Preussen rächen, was euch der Sultan hier zu Akkon Leides angetan."

4

"I can in no wise permit that you offer up your lives to the enemy without goal and purpose. Such would be an affront to the Rule of our Order. For indeed: as long as a brother may live with honor, he ought to continue living. However, I give you all my knightly word of honor: with you I intend, one day, to visit vengeance upon the pagans in Prussia for the sorrow which the Sultan has inflicted upon you here in Acre."

During the years in Venice, a commitment of purpose slowly emerged from the reality of the situation: the destiny of the Teutonic Order lay in northeastern Europe. The years 1260-1290, which had built up to military disaster in the Holy Land, were the same years in which Order knights in Prussia successfully broke the last organized resistance of the indigenous Pruteni.<sup>5</sup> The Baltic region thus afforded the logical territorial base from which the Order might reorganize itself, confront its Christian detractors and reignite its crusading mission against the yet unconverted Lithuanians. In 1308 the Order took the logical step in the face of its crisis of

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4 Quoted in: Heinrich Bauer, Geburt des Ostens (Berlin: Frundsberg-Verlag, 1933), p. 114.

5 The great Pruteni insurrection spanned the years 1260-1272. The Order crushed the last desperate uprising of the Pruteni in 1296.

purpose and transferred its headquarters from Venice <sup>6</sup> to the Marienburg Castle on the lower reaches of the Vistula. <sup>7</sup>

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The first decade of the fourteenth century (culminating in the years 1307-1314) witnessed steadily increasing attacks upon the Templars and the Templars' ultimate liquidation at the hands of Philip IV of France and Pope Clement V (1305-1314). Military religious orders were everywhere under scrutiny, not just the Templars. <sup>8</sup> Lack of success had brought a waning of crusading zeal to western Christendom. And with this flagging interest, the raison d'être of the military orders seemed anachro-

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<sup>6</sup> Bauer (Geburt des Ostens p. 115) points out that Venice, the Order's erstwhile host, lay under papal interdict at the time that the Order vacated its headquarters there. This must have been still one more political dilemma for the embattled knights.

<sup>7</sup> The move was first proposed by Grandmaster Gottfried von Hohenlohe (1296-1303) at the general chapter which met in Memel in 1302. This meeting unleashed a constitutional crisis of which we shall hear later. Gottfried had previously been Provincial Master (Landesmeister) of both Prussia and Livonia.

<sup>8</sup> The Hospitalers (Knights of St. John) moved from Cyprus to Rhodes in 1310 as they, too, sought increased security from the Saracens and from their rapacious Christian brethren. At the time the heavy hand of the King of France fell upon the Templars, the grandmaster of the Hospitalers was fortunate enough to have been absent from France. Furthermore, by mere chance, this time proved to be a brief period of military success for the Hospitalers in their struggle against the Turks.

nistic.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the orders' tightly organized, international administration and financial power, protected as they were by the universal Church, were perceived to be a threat by emerging dynastic powers. King Philip descended mercilessly upon the Templars with

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9 Among the many canonists and scholastics who opposed the entire concept of crusade, the writings of Raymond Lull (1235-1316), Gilbert of Tournay (from 1240) and Roger Bacon (1214-1292) are of particular interest to us. These men all singled out the Teutonic Order as their prime example of a crusading order gone awry. Tournay's Collectio de Scandalis Ecclesiae condemns the Order's "greed and Teutonic darkness." Bacon's Opus Majus speaks of the Teutonic Order's having "deceived the Church with subtle arguments that it might reduce the Baltic peoples to slavery." Had it not been for the Order's unceasing wars of domination, Bacon maintains, peaceful preaching would have long since won the indigenous peoples to Christianity.

Roger Bacon, Opus Majus, edited by J. H. Bridges. (Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1964), Volume 3, Capitulum 13, pp. 120-122.

On the theme "Criticism of Crusade," the following survey works are particularly helpful

Palmer A. Throop, Criticism of the Crusade: A Study of Public Opinion and Crusade Propaganda (Amsterdam: N.V. Swets and Zeitlinger, 1940).

Elizabeth Siberry, Criticism of Crusading 1095-1274 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

Frederick H. Russell, The Just War in the Middle Ages (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

James A. Brundage, "Holy War and Medieval Lawyers," The Holy War, edited by Thomas P. Murphy (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 1976), pp. 99-140.

all the might of the emerging French giant. <sup>10</sup>

One can clearly see that Teutonic Order was in peril. The absurdity of the charges against the Templars and the speed and ease with which Church and State colluded to liquidate them did not bode well for the Teutonic Order. "If the Templars could be hunted down and burnt alive merely on suspicion of collaborating with the Moslems and disregarding their Rules, what would happen to an order with a dossier of accusations against it ranging from genocide to harassment of fellow Christians?" <sup>11</sup>

The first threatening moves against the Teutonic Order occurred in 1308. In a letter to the Archbishop of Riga, Pope Clement V announced the coming of the Council

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<sup>10</sup> This was not an easy time for other groups either. The Avignon papacy, bolstered as it was by partisan French power, lashed out with numerous and decisive condemnations. The Council of Vienne (1311-1312) condemned the Beguines and the Begards. A few years later, Pope John XXII (1316-1334) condemned the Spiritual Franciscans a few years later, along with other groups advocating apostolic poverty (Cum inter nonnullus, 1323). The followers of such theologians as Occam, Marsilius of Padua and Meister Eckhart were also anathematized.

Even the Cistercians felt pressure at this time -- among other reasons, because of their close association with the military-religious orders. We will explore this relationship in the next chapter.

See: Louis Julius Lekai, The Cistercians: Ideals and Reality (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1977), pp. 300-301 and 394 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Eric Christiansen, The Northern Crusades (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 144.

of Vienne two years hence, when the topics of deliberation would be 1) the condition of Christendom, 2) the protection of the Holy Land (hope had still not died out completely with Clement) and 3) the "problem" of the Templars.<sup>12</sup> The Pope wrote again in the following year. In this correspondence, Clement instructed his readers to support with money and good offices one Paul von Cavillac, whom he was sending to Prussia and Livonia in order to investigate Templar matters.<sup>13</sup> Then, in June of 1310, Clement singled out the Teutonic Order specifically in his Bull In Vineam Domini. In massive, accusatory statements which he clearly carried over from his Templar bulls, the Pope ordered the Archbishop of Bremen and other churchmen to investigate the Teutonic Knights.

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<sup>12</sup> Preussisches Urkundenbuch, Band I,2 #891 (Aug. 12, 1308).

<sup>13</sup> Preussisches Urkundenbuch, Band I,2 #907 (Sept. 1, 1309).

Proh dolor! nostri redemptoris  
iniuriam, fidelium cunctorum  
obprobrium et eiusdem fidei  
detrimentum, facti sunt hostes  
domestici, et familiares sunt  
redditi inimici, non insurgentes  
pro Christi nomine adversus  
hostes fidei, sed in eorumdem  
favorem, quod stupet auditus,  
variis calliditatum generibus  
dimicantes potius contra  
Christum.

14

"Alas, insulting our Redeemer,  
shaming all the faithful and  
damaging their faith, they (the  
Teutonic Knights) have become  
domestic enemies and familiars of  
the enemy, not fighting in the  
name of Christ against the  
enemies of the faith, but rather,  
astounding to hear, waging war on  
behalf of such people against  
Christ, with various cunning  
ruses.

The noose tightened even more around the Order when, in 1312, Clement announced that he was sending Francis of Moliano as an inquisitor to investigate "certain charges" raised against the Order by the Archbishop of Riga. Though Order lands had experienced a chain of nuncios throughout their history,<sup>15</sup> and though squabbles with the Archbishop of Riga had always been a part of life for the

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14 Liv- Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch, Band 2, #630 (Register #728) June 19, 1310.

15 The Teutonic Order was an ecclesiastical corporation which stood directly under the Pope. Through his cardinal-legates (legati a latere), who were literally "part of his body," the Pope could always bring his influence to bear in shaping the destiny of the Order and its lands.

The role played by these legates had generally been a positive one for the Order. William of Modena, for example, who held his commissions between 1225-1226, 1228-1230 and 1234-1242 was a great helper to the Order. As we shall later see (Chapter 2 below), the ecclesiastical boundaries he established in northeastern Europe were to have later, far-reaching implications for the Order.

See Christiansen, Northern Crusades, pp. 120-121.

Order, <sup>16</sup> this papal mission had a foreboding cast. The now timely accusation of heresy was included in the Archbishop's charges against the Order. And, bringing a threatening situation to its climax, Francis of Moliano was accompanied by two dark characters: these were the Frenchmen Galhard of Chartres and Peter Gervais, papal nuncios to Warsaw and veterans of the Templars' trials. These two Frenchmen would later preside over the proceedings against the Teutonic Order.

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Besides the possibility of being liquidated outright, a second, hardly more agreeable prospect confronted the Teutonic Order. This threat was the frequently-proposed solution that all the military-religious organizations be combined into one unified and tractable order. The concept was nearly as repugnant to the individual orders as the thought of liquidation.

As early as the Second Council of Lyon (1274), churchmen toyed with this proposal. Lyon II, in its effort to revive crusading élan in the East, had stressed Christian strength through unity. It was at this council, for example, that naïvely optimistic churchmen declared the East/West, Greek/Latin schism to be at an end. Here,

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<sup>16</sup> See below, later in this chapter.

too, the founding of new orders was forbidden so that existing orders might grow stronger, and existing orders were encouraged to consolidate.<sup>17</sup> The Council of Vienne (1311-1312) once again reassessed the role of the military religious orders and debated the possibility of their amalgamation.<sup>18</sup> Proposals by Philip IV of France, the nemesis of the Templars, that he head such a great and unified military order must have seemed particularly sinister to the embattled orders.

Making matters even more strained and confused was the fact that there was no love lost between the various orders.<sup>19</sup> The Teutonic Order in particular, as the

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<sup>17</sup> Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta, Chapter 23, edited by J. Alberigo, p. 302, quoted in R. W. Southern, Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 329.

<sup>18</sup> The several smaller crusading orders in Christian Spain were ultimately united under the kings of Castile and Aragon. In the 1490's, all the grandmasterships were made hereditary under the crown of a united Spain, and orders became merely honorary distinctions of nobility.

See F. C. Woodhouse, The Military Religious Orders (New York: Pott, Young and Co., 1879), part 4.

<sup>19</sup> In 1179, Pope Alexander III had to draw up a formal treaty of peace between the Templars and the Hospitalers. This did not stop the squabbling. The year 1242 witnessed Templars besieging the Hospitalers in their Acre convent and refusing to allow them to bury their dead. A few years later, once again near Acre, the Hospitalers had their revenge. In pitched battle, they killed a party of Templars nearly to the last man. Friedrich Heer, Kreuzzüge (Luzern und Frankfurt: C. J. Bucher Verlag, 1969), p. 98.



third, last and smallest of the international orders, had always felt itself particularly threatened and overshadowed. From the beginning, it had had to assert its right to exist alongside the Templars and the Hospitalers.

The Teutonic Order had lived first under the Rule of the Hospitalers before it was allowed to draw up rules of its own in the 1240's. And its own new Rule was largely based upon that of the Templars.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the Hospitalers continued their claim of sovereignty over the Teutonic Order until 1258, when they and the Templars finally recognized the Teutonic Order as being co-equal and independent.<sup>21</sup> During the 1240's and 1250's, the German knights were also engaged in a protracted conflict with the Templars concerning the Germans' right to wear as their order garb a white robe with a black Cross of Jerusalem. To the Templars, this seemed to be a

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<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 3 below.

For a translation and thorough discussion of the Rule of the Teutonic Order, see Indrikis Sterns, The Statutes of the Teutonic Knights (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1969).

<sup>21</sup> Papal recognition of the Teutonic Order, as we have seen (Introduction above), came quickly and decisively. Later, in 1221, Pope Honorius III affirmed the full equality of the Teutonic Order beside the other great orders:

Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici ex Tabularii Regii Berolinensis Codice Potissimum, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlike (Berlin: Weidmann, 1967), #309.

usurpation of their robe and a de facto recognition of Templar sovereignty.<sup>22</sup> The infamous Mantelstreit was fought out with a bitterness worthy of medieval man's deep devotion to his outward symbols -- a devotion difficult for the modern mind to comprehend.

Even in earlier, happier times in the Holy Land, rivalry between the military religious orders led to needless deaths on the battlefield. Knights of different orders would generally refuse to assist or rescue one another. Now returned to Europe, the orders were besieged in common once again -- and this time their very existence was at stake. Yet, once again, Hospitaler refused to stand by Teutonic brother, and both raised not a hand to aid the doomed Templars.

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<sup>22</sup> See: Tabulae Ordinis Theutonicici, #299, #300, #308, #368, #449, #471.

A thorough study of the "Mantelstreit" would be a welcomed contribution to Order history and to our understanding of medieval notions of clothing symbolism. As a beginning point, see the brief footnote in:

Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch, Max Töppen und Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, pp. 27-28.

Marie-Luise Favreau, Studien zur Frühgeschichte des Deutschen Ordens (Stuttgart: Klett Verlag, 1974), pp. 17, 67, 79, 150.

Besides attacks associated with the Templars and the collapsing status of military religious orders generally, the Teutonic Order found itself under attack on two further fronts. The instigators of these attacks were also successful in gaining papal attention. The first assailant was the Archbishop of Riga and the second was the king of the newly-united Polish state.

In the beginning years of the 1300's, in actions independent of and initiated before the full fury of the Templar persecutions, the Archbishop of Riga accused the Teutonic Order before the Pope of cruelty and injustice. By the time Rome responded to the archbishop's demand for action, curial investigators, as we have seen, <sup>23</sup> were already caught up in the anti-Templar, anti-orders fervor of the times. Meanwhile, Grandmaster Karl von Trier was summoned to Rome (later Avignon) by Pope Clement. The proceedings involving Karl flowed into and intensified the general investigations of the Teutonic Order surrounding the Templar case, as did the complaints coming from Riga. This reinforcement of charges served to bring the Order to the very brink of disaster. Karl arrived in Avignon with his Order and himself already under band. <sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See above in this chapter.

<sup>24</sup> Dusburg's Chronicon (I, 178) tells us that Karl "spoke French as if it were his own language and needed no

The Archbishop of Riga's grievances with the Teutonic Order were rooted in conflicting claims of religious and political jurisdiction. Such issues of institutional jurisdiction always figure large in a modern historian's efforts to understand the medieval past. But this case is of particular importance, for it lays bare the Order's agonizing struggle for self-definition and sense of purpose. Some background information is essential.

During his visit to the Baltic in 1243, papal legate William of Modena fixed the ecclesiastical boundaries in Prussia and Livonia. This came after several decades of conquest and consolidation in the area. Prussia was divided into four bishoprics: Kulm, Pomesania, Ermland and Samland. The new bishops each received one third of their diocesan lands as sovereign territory. And of these thirds, they were each obliged to pass on a third to their individual cathedral chapters. Because the Teutonic Order later incorporated into itself the Domkapitel of Kulm, Pomesania and Samland, the Order assured itself of control over the bishops' territories and indeed over the

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interpreter when he consulted with the Pope and his cardinals." He apparently used his eloquence and charm to good effect in defending himself and his order. It is even possible that his mother tongue might, in fact, have been French. His story serves as proof by example that the exclusive "German" nature of the Teutonic Order must not be exaggerated. As argued above (Introduction and its note #4), this was an international order whose character and membership, however, were largely Germanic.

elections of the bishops themselves.<sup>25</sup> The Prussian territories thus quickly developed into a unified Order state.

The situation in the Livonian sphere evolved quite differently. And this different development was to lead, ultimately, to the conflict between the Archbishop of Riga and the Livonian branch of the Order. William of Modena divided Livonia into the bishoprics of Kurland, Dorpat and Osel. Founded in 1201 as a suffragan of Lund in Sweden, Riga became an archepiscopal see in 1255. Riga oversaw both the Prussian and Livonian Church territories. The first bishop of Riga, Albert von Apeldern, had in many ways been the father of Christian Livonia. His successors continued to enjoy this prestige at the expense of the Teutonic Order.

From the beginning, the weaker and more diffuse Livonian branch of the Order struggled in vain to wrest ecclesiastical dominance unto itself. Founded in 1203 as the "Sword Brothers" (Fratres Militie Christi de Livonia), the original order proved so weak that in 1237 it was

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<sup>25</sup> The situation was more complicated in the Bishopric of Ermland. Here, the Order never succeeded in completely dominating the episcopal lands. As a result, Ermland's history was always somewhat apart. Ermland came to Poland in the Second Treaty of Thorn (1466) and remained Catholic in 1525 when Prussia was secularized and embraced Protestantism.

forced to join the Teutonic Order, which, by then, had ensconced itself in Prussia. The Archbishops of Riga, especially Friedrich (1304-1341), <sup>26</sup> assumed a hostile stance vis-à-vis the reinforced Livonian Order. The archbishops developed a policy of playing off and balancing the power of the Order against the emerging strength of the burghers in Riga. Indeed, the archbishop even went so far as to woo the pagan Lithuanians into frustrating the pretensions of the Order. <sup>27</sup> A cherished plan of the archbishop, frequently suggested to papal nuncios, was to have the knights packed off to the Balkans so that they might fight the Turks there, far from his domain.

With the onset of Templar-like investigations into the Teutonic Order, Archbishop Friedrich was able to raise the stakes considerably in his personal fight with the

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<sup>26</sup> Friedrich spent most of his years in office at the papal court in Avignon fermenting difficulties for the Order. He was influential in predisposing Francis of Moliano's mission against the Order (see above).

<sup>27</sup> The archbishop argued before the curia that his dealings with the Lithuanians had always been a part of delicate negotiations which would lead, he hoped, to a mass, national conversion. According to his argument, he had been frustrated in his efforts by the Order's attacking his representatives as well as peaceful Lithuanian envoys.

Liv- Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch, Band 2, #638 (Register #737) March 20, 1312.

Order. He could now call for their outright abolition. The passions of the times were heightened even more through a series of particularly nasty altercations between the Order on the one hand, and local churchmen and burghers on the other, in which no little amount of blood spilled. <sup>28</sup>

Of the flood of accusatory letters which Archbishop Friedrich sent off to Rome, <sup>29</sup> two serve as excellent examples. The first, written in 1305 to Pope Clement V, condemns the Order as an enemy of the Church and draws a scathing parallel between the Order's desertion of Acre and its present desertion of Riga.

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<sup>28</sup> One extended period of fighting came when the Order destroyed a bridge which the Rigans had built across the lower Dvina. Casualties and the capture of the archbishop focused and reinforced all of the economic jealousy which had built up between the two parties.

Liv- Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch, Band 1, Register #650 ff., Sept. 16, 1297.

See: William Urban, The Baltic Crusade (DeKalb: North Illinois Press, 1975), pp. 255-263.

<sup>29</sup> Liv- Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch, Band 1, #606 ff. (Register #693 ff.) 1302-, passim.

Item cum dicti fratres propter hoc locati sint in nostra provincia, ut sint defensores Rigensis ecclesiae, in arcum pravum totaliter sunt conversi, ecclesiam nostram Rigensem et totum clerum, in nostra constitutum provincia, hostiliter impugnando, nec sunt maiores inimicis. Romanae ecclesiae et nostrae provinciae, sicut ipsi, quia per eorum enormia facta in magna parte Christianitas in nostra provincia est deleta, et breviter concludendo, fides in substantia et mores in commansione pene deletae videntur, et nisi cito sedes apostolica, pia miseratione Christianis compatiens, remedium adhibeat, sicut apud Accon et Tripolim, Christianitas in Livoniae partibus penitus subvertetur.

The brothers were placed in our land in order to be defenders of the Rigan Church. But they have fought against our Rigan Church and all the clerics of the land. There are no greater enemies to the Holy Roman Church and to our land than they are. Through their monstrous deeds, Christianity in our land has been largely wiped out. Briefly stated: faith and morals have been so nearly destroyed that, unless the Holy See quickly provides Christians with tangible, pious help, Christianity will vanish completely in Livonia as it has already done in Acre and Tripoli.

The second document dates from the year 1312 and records testimony brought against the Teutonic Order in the presence of the papal investigator, Francis of Moliano.<sup>31</sup> This accusatory piece, on the basis of example after example of Order barbarities ranging back over the previous ten years, condemns the Order as brutal and self-serving. Testimonies bring out the consistent theme of the Order's reneging upon its responsibility to protect Christians. The Order, so the accusations went,

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30 Liv- Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch, Band 1, #616 (Register #710) Sept. 14, 1305 .

31 Liv- Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch, Band 1, #638 (Register #737) March 20, 1312.



had concerned itself only with its own material wealth and territorial expansion and had neglected, even suppressed, the Christians. The spread of Christianity had ceased and indeed receded due to the severity of the Order. Thus, in the eyes of the Church establishment in Riga, the Teutonic Order had forfeited its legitimacy and, indeed, its very right to exist.

We may sum up the forgoing discussion of the Order vis-à-vis local episcopal authority with the curt observation: the local ecclesiastical establishment, which the Order so desperately needed to help it in its hour of peril, actively opposed the Order. The very institution which might have offered support in the wake of Templar-baiting, joined in with its own call for the Order's abolition.

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During this period of crisis and readjustment, even hard-won successes in the Order's desperate struggle to survive seemed to turn against it. This was certainly the case with the Order's occupation of Pomerelia in 1308, which brought with it the undying enmity of the Poles. This move, it can be argued, was probably necessary for the Order's survival as a territorial entity. But the moral and political price it exacted was a dear one indeed.

Pomerelia is a small land of 8,000 square kilometers located on the lower course of the Vistula.<sup>32</sup> Then, as today, Danzig (Gdansk) was the major city. At the turn of the 14th century, as is true in the 20th century, this territory was of critical geopolitical significance. Though loosely associated with Piasten Poland from earlier centuries, Pomerelia existed as an autonomous, Christian dukedom through most of the thirteenth century. In the tenth century Pomerelia, along with Pomerania to the west, fell within the sphere of interest of the newly founded Polish state. Early attempts by the kings of Poland to convert and integrate the two lands failed and both remained pagan and politically independent. Finally, however, under King Boleslaw III early in the twelfth century, the Poles prevailed and Christianization proceeded apace. Leslau became the episcopal see for the new bishopric of Pomerelia, which was, in turn, placed under the Polish Archbishopric of Gnesen. This ecclesiastical arrangement did not change through the

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<sup>32</sup> Pomerelia must not be confused with the larger territory of Pomerania, which lies farther to the west. To be sure, until its independence in 1227, Pomerelia had been a part of Pomerania and the designation Eastern Pomerania for Pomerelia is acceptable, though confusing. But by the time of the Order's activities in this area, it is essential to distinguish between the large western territory and the small, yet strategically important eastern one. Many English language surveys of Order history muddle this Baltic geography horribly.

course of the following tumultuous years of Polish history. Thus, established Church associations kept alive the memory of former political ties to Poland. This feeling held when Pomerelia was first semi-independent from politically-fragmented Poland, and then (from 1227) when Pomerelia stood completely independent under its own line of dukes, of whom Sventopelk was the most renowned.

It was Duke Sventopelk (1220-1266) of Pomerelia who allied himself with the Pruteni during their great uprisings against the Teutonic Order in Prussia. The pages of Dusburg's chronicle describe Sventopelk as the Order's most formidable military foe. He was also an ideological embarrassment, as he and his people were Christian. <sup>33</sup>

From the beginning, the Order looked upon Sventopelk's home territory as a prized bridge between their Prussian territories and the Altreich to the west. Similarly, the Polish princes, who consistently allied themselves with the Order in fighting Sventopelk and the Pruteni, looked to Danzig as a much desired outlet to the sea.

During the reign of Sventopelk, Pomerelia defended

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<sup>33</sup> Dusburg stops at nothing to portray Sventopelk as a demonic apostate Christian in order to re-affirm the Order's crusading purpose. See Chapter 5 below.

itself well and kept its powerful neighbors at bay. Any pretense by these neighbors at occupying Pomerelia was both untenable militarily and unacceptable ideologically, Pomerelia's inhabitants being Christians.

The situation changed dramatically upon Sventopelk's death and with the accession to the throne of his weak son Mestwin II. Out of fear of his rival brother and uncle, Mestwin immediately began negotiating defensive alliances with outsiders. As it became clear that he would remain childless, he held up vague promises of succession as a prize for favorable treatment during his lifetime.

In 1270 Mestwin became a vassal to the Margrave of Brandenburg in return for protection. But then, in 1282, he turned to his cousin Boleslav of Great Poland and promised Boleslav's nephew and successor, Przemyslaw II, the right of succession to Pomerelia. All the while, the conflicting liege relation to Brandenburg was not rescinded.

With Mestwin's death in 1294, Pomerelia became causus belli between Brandenburg and Przemyslaw II. But involvement did not stop here. The Teutonic Order soon entered the fray and went on to become the ultimate victor in this complicated struggle for the problem-laden prize of Pomerelia.

In Poland, as we have seen, dynastic struggles were

in progress which were destined to restore a unified Polish State. After Przemyslav, the original claimant of Pomerelia, was murdered, Wenzel II of Bohemia fell heir to Przemyslav's lands and land-claims, as well as Przemyslav's aspirations to a united Polish throne. As successor to Przemyslav, Wenzel occupied Pomerelia through a local palatine: Swenza. Wenzel's death in 1305 and the assassination of his son now brought the Polish throne to Ladislas, who, among other things, moved to take Pomerelia from the palatine. Swenza turned to the Margrave of Brandenburg for protection, calling upon the old liege relationship to the Mark. In 1308 the Margrave's troops occupied Danzig and encircled a group of Ladislas's men who had managed to occupy the citadel.

At this point the Order made its move.<sup>34</sup> Being on friendly terms with both Brandenburg and Bohemia, the Order until this point had limited itself to playing a mediating role between the belligerents. The Order entered

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<sup>34</sup> An excellent compilation of literary sources relating to the Order's acquisition of Pomerelia may be found in:

Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch, Max Töppen und Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band I, p. 709.

Many are in: Preussisches Urkundenbuch, herausgegeben von Max Hein und Erich Maschke, Band II,1, #1 ff. passim.

now only at Poland's pleading for help. Order knights quickly occupied Danzig and went on to drive the exhausted Brandenburger from the entire land. <sup>35</sup>

Now in possession of the area, the Order resisted Ladislas's efforts to re-occupy the land. The Order then turned to Brandenburg, which in its eyes had been the legitimate possessor, and negotiated the purchase of Brandenburger rights for the price of 10,000 marks of silver. <sup>36</sup> The Treaty of Soldin of 1309 received imperial confirmation from the Emperor and Pomerelia was incorporated into the Order State.

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<sup>35</sup> Concerning the massacre which the Order allegedly perpetrated upon the local population, see:

Preussisches Urkundenbuch, Band II,1 #13 (June 19, 1310).

Pommerellisches Urkundenbuch, herausgegeben von Max Perlbach (Danzig: 1882 / Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1969), #687 (June 19, 1310).

Kurt Luck, "Die Legende vom Danziger Massenmord (1308)," Der Deutsche Osten 1, 1938, pp. 19-24.

<sup>36</sup> Preussisches Urkundenbuch, Band I,2 #908 (Sept 13, 1309); also

Preussisches Urkundenbuch, Band II,1 #11, #29, #35 and #36, #38.

Pommerellisches Urkundenbuch, #676 (Sept. 13, 1309): Der Margraf Waldemar v. Brand. beurkundet, dass er dem Deutschen Orden in Preussen die Burgen Danzig, Dirschau und Schwertz mit ihrem Gebiet für 10,000 Mark Silber verkauft habe.

Pommerellisches Urkundenbuch, #685 (June 12, 1310).

Through its opportunistic, lightning move in occupying Pomerelia, the Teutonic Order had achieved a dramatic success. Pomerelia secured for the Order contact with the Altreich to the west and full possession of the lower Vistula. Controlling this territory, the Order was lord of the vast drainage basin of that strategic river and all of its ports on the Baltic, especially Danzig.

But the price for this territory was dear -- a price which the Order would continue to pay throughout the rest of its existence in northeastern Europe. Furthermore, the Order's understanding of itself and its mission could never again be quite the same. In the words of Father Tumler, himself a grandmaster of the Teutonic Order, writing in 1955:

"Das stille Zuwarten und blitzartige Zugreifen im Pommerellen waren politische Meisterstücke, freilich wenig passend für einen geistlichen Orden.

The quiet waiting, then lightning-quick movement into Pomerelia was a political masterpiece. But it was hardly an appropriate course of action for a spiritual order.

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The words of modern apologists ring hollow in light of the means employed, which were surely obvious to the Order membership at the time.

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37 P. Marian Tumler, Der Deutsche Orden, Im Werden, Waschen und Wirken (Wien: Panorama, 1954), p. 142.

So hatte der Orden durch geschickte und kühne Politik, aber schliesslich doch nicht durch einen Gewaltakt, sondern durch Vertrag und Kauf, Pommerellen erworben.

Die Erwerbung Pommerellens war für den Orden eine Lebensfrage und nicht eine beliebige Machterweiterung.

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Thus, through skill and clever political sense, the Order came into possession of Pomerelia: not through an act of violence, but rather through treaty and purchase.

For the Order, the taking of Pomerelia was a question of life and death, not an arbitrary act of power expansion.

The fact cannot be emphasized enough that the Order was here brutalizing and intimidating its Christian neighbors. If the possession of Pomerelia indeed did constitute a "Lebensfrage," the forcing of this issue in favor of the Order was done at the life-and-death expense of its Christian neighbors. This was a far cry from defending the faithful from pagan barbarities.

There were also practical political consequences of the Pomerelian coup. It is clear that this episode marked an irreversible turning point in the Order's relations to the now-united Polish State. Up until this time, the Order and the Polish princes had cooperated amicably within their own spheres of interest. They had worked together effectively in dealing with local uprisings and with incursions of the pagan Lithuanians. Now the Order had usurped lands which Poland had always viewed as being

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38 Fritz Gause, Deutsch-slawische Schicksals-gemeinschaft (Kitzingen/Main: Holzner Verlag, 1952), p. 52.



within her rightful sphere of interest and had blocked Poland's access to the Baltic. Forever after, the Teutonic Order had to function in all things under the assumption of Polish animosity. The erstwhile powerful friend now marshalled her strength against the Order, and thus the Order's archenemies were no longer the pagan Pruteni and Lithuanians, but rather the Christian Poles.

Over the next several years, Poland initiated repeated litigation against the Order at the papal curia. Major investigations were held soon after the occupation in 1310, then again in 1319 and in 1339.<sup>39</sup> The papacy ruled consistently in favor of the Kings of Poland, though no mechanism existed to enforce these rulings. Also, the Order was able to exploit procedural inconsistencies so as to neutralize many of the cases brought against it.

Throughout the trials, the payment of the traditional

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<sup>39</sup> Source material on these trials is to be found in:

Preussisches Urkundenbuch, Band II,1 #270 ff.

Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch, Max Töppen und Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, pp. 778 ff.

Lites ac Res gestae inter Polonos Ordineque Cruciferorum, Tomus I, edited by Z. Celichowski (Posnaniae: Sumptibus Bibliothecae Kornicensis, 1890).

See also bibliographical notes in Tumler, Der Deutsche Orden, p. 323, note #8.

Peter Penny tax to the papacy played a significant role. Pomerelia's ecclesiastical links to Poland obligated its possessor to pay a part of this special tax under which Poland stood. Obviously, the curia could, as it granted or withheld favors to the litigants, apply considerable leverage for the payment of this tax. As the Order stubbornly refused even to consider paying this tax, it raised further ire against itself and alienated the curia.

On the military front, initial skirmishes between Poland and the Order broadened into a major war fought between 1327-1343. The mutually destructive fighting continued, off and on, down to the secularization of the Order State in 1525.

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Other woes stemming from the Order's soured relations with Poland and the papacy deepened the permanent state of crisis in which the Order found itself. Now in possession of Danzig and the trade of this port city, the Order inherited strained, rival relations with the German Hansa.<sup>40</sup> And as news of the Pomerelian imbroglio found its way west to the Altreich, recruitment of new knights, half-brothers, peasants and burghers began to suffer.

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<sup>40</sup> Henryk Samsonowicz, "Der Deutsche Orden und die Hansa," Die Geistlichen Ritterorden Europas, herausgegeben von Josef Fleckenstein und Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1980), p. 319.

From about 1280, after the final defeat of the Pruteni, the Order had begun a systematic colonization of the country, encouraging in particular the immigration of German peasants. By 1330 this immigration was in sharp decline and the newly-conquered Pomerelian area suffered especially for want of new settlers.

During this same period of crisis and hostility with Poland, when the Order might have leaned upon its long-standing allies most heavily, many of these alliances melted away. Beyond general disenchantment with the Teutonic Knights, the usual reason for loss of support was the dying-out of ruling, dynastic families.

A major loss to the Order came during the mid-13th century with the extinction of the Hohenstaufen. As we have seen, <sup>41</sup> the Order was, from its beginning, closely tied to these imperial benefactors. <sup>42</sup> The renowned

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<sup>41</sup> See Chapter 1 above.

<sup>42</sup> The Narratio de primordiis ordinis Theutonici, the earlier document relating to the history of the Teutonic Order, stresses the links between the Order and the House of Hohenstaufen. After the fall of the imperial family, the Order distanced itself from this earlier alliance.

"De Primordiis Ordinis Theutonici Narratio," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Herausgegeben von Max Töppen (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, pp. 220-225.

See: Udo Arnold, "Entstehung und Frühzeit des Deutschen Ordens," Die Geistlichen Ritterorden Europas

grandmaster, Hermann von Salza (1210-1239), <sup>43</sup> had cemented this special relation between himself and Emperor Friedrich II, while at the same time preserving cordial relations with the papacy. The imperial throne, which had once been a touchstone of strength for the Order, became unpredictable and dangerous in later years, especially in times of double elections. And, as fate would have it, the years of particular instability associated with the rivalry between Louis of Bavaria and Friedrich of Habsburg -- 1314 until 1323 -- fell precisely at the time when the Order was in its deepest crisis.

The Askanier in Brandenburg died out in 1320. Though the Order had stared down the Marklanders during the siege of Danzig, the payment of the 10,000 silver marks and the Treaty of Soldin restored traditionally cordial relations between the two powers. The end of the Askanier line, however, robbed the Order of this strong ally. The Wittelsbachers, whom Louis of Bavaria sent as the

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Herausgegeben von Josef Fleckenstein und Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1980), pp. 81-107.

<sup>43</sup> On the life and works of this man, see especially:

Erich Caspar, Hermann von Salza und die Gründung des Deutschordenstaats (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1924).

Heinrich Bauer, "Hochmeister Hermann v. Salza," Geburt des Ostens, (Berlin: Frundsberg-Verlag, 1933).

replacement dynasty to Brandenburg, acted as a tractable extension of Bavarian dynastic policies. As such, they stood passively by while in neighboring Prussia the Teutonic Order struggled to survive.

A similar shock came in Bohemia. Here, the supportive Premyslids died out. Dating back to the days of Ottokar II (the king after whom Königsberg was named), the Bohemians had always played an active, positive role in Prussia, both in fighting expeditions and in settlement projects. Now the disinterested Luxemburg line was replacing the Premyslids. Furthermore, about this time, Charles Robert (an Angevin) arrived in Hungary. The Order and its problems were also clearly remote from his mind.

In this growing political isolation, the Order had to rely more and more upon its own resources within Prussia. This defensive attitude about itself and its possessions contributed to the Order's changed self-understanding. Increasingly, a spiritual, crusading order was becoming a jealous landlord .

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The Order's turning inward leads us to another aspect of our survey of the generation of crisis. This is what might be called the internal moral crisis of the Teutonic Order. The whole theme of Order self-understanding will be dealt with extensively in the next chapter as we

examine the Order's Rule. Nonetheless, a few examples are appropriate at this point to demonstrate that all was not well within the Order itself.

All during the period which we have been surveying, the Teutonic Order was experiencing considerable problems with its grandmasters. Those at the pinnacle of authority who might have contributed strength and stability to the membership were themselves often causes of internal dissension. Grandmaster Conrad von Feuchtwangen (1291-1296) and his successor Gottfried von Hohenlohe (1297-1303) were both roundly criticized by elements within the Order who resided in Prussia and Livonia. These grandmasters were charged with neglecting the Baltic crusade.<sup>44</sup> When Hohenlohe did go north in 1302, he was shocked by the looseness with which the Rule was being observed. Immediately, he pressed the brothers to be more strict in their observances. This turning of the tables so infuriated the local brothers that they were able to muster opposition to Hohenlohe and force him to resign.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Preussisches Urkundenbuch, Band I,2 #713 (June 26, 1298).

<sup>45</sup> Preussisches Urkundenbuch, Band I,2 #805 (Oct. 18, 1303).

A literary source originating outside the Order is particularly helpful in this matter. It provides some of the detached objectivity that one might wish concerning such a charged state of affairs. See:

Hard feelings and divided loyalties wracked the Order for eight long years until Hohenlohe died in 1310. <sup>46</sup>

Siegfried von Feuchtwangen, Hohenlohe's successor, experienced his problems even as he worked to transfer Order headquarters to the Baltic and thus accede to the demands of the Prussian brothers. Opponents of the move managed to amend the Rules to the effect that the grandmaster could not, on his own volition alone, transfer headquarters. When, nonetheless, the move from Venice to the Marienburg did take place, another hurtful rift rent the Order. <sup>47</sup>

Grandmaster Karl von Trier (1311-1324), who did such valiant and effective service defending his Order before the Pope in Avignon, provides another sad story of brothers battling it out with their grandmaster. <sup>48</sup>

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"De Prima Fundatione Monasterii Olivae," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch (Leipzig, 1861 reprinted Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, pp. 712 ff.

<sup>46</sup> Preussisches Urkundenbuch, herausgegeben von Philippi, et al. Band I,1 #820 (1305) [Hohenlohe affair: Grandmaster Siegfried von Feuchtwangen writes to the Landmeister in Prussia. He exhorts the master to combat Hohenlohe's machinations.]

<sup>47</sup> There were also tensions when the office of Landesmeister of Prussia was subsumed into the office of Grandmaster, now that the grandmaster resided in Prussia.

<sup>48</sup> "De Prima Fundatione Monasterii Olivae," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Band I, pp. 712 ff.

Elected in 1311, Karl was forced to resign almost immediately. Thereupon, Karl traveled to his natal city of Trier and from there renounced his resignation and proceeded to administer and defend the Order as best he could until his death in 1324. This geographical separation dramatically symbolizes the tortured splits and stresses within the Order at this time. An indication of the passions involved came a few years later when an irate brother stabbed and killed his grandmaster, Werner von Orseln (1324-1330). <sup>49</sup>

As a final example of internal dissension within the Order, one notes that three separate chroniclers and translators of the Order complained of threats and outright attacks they had endured. Heinrich Hesler in the introduction to his translation of the Apocalypse, complains of the opposition he had to face. <sup>50</sup> The anonymous author of the Passional guards his very

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<sup>49</sup> Nicolaus von Jeroschin, "Kronike von Pruzinlant," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgeben von Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), pp. 621-622.

For a full discussion of this event and Jeroschin's mournful dirge, see Chapter 6 below.

<sup>50</sup> Die Apokalypse Heinrichs von Hesler, herausgegeben von Karl Helm (Berlin: Weidemann. 1907 / Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters 8), p. 242, verse 16,459 ff.



anonymity out of fear that the circle of his jealous detractors might grow larger.<sup>51</sup> And, in clearly the most dramatic case of all, chronicler Nicolaus von Jeroschin laments that the first manuscript of his Kronike von Pruzinlant had been "torn up like Joseph's coat by a vicious animal" (i.e. an angry brother).<sup>52</sup> All three writers state, in their individual ways, that they were simply working at carrying out their officially-sanctioned commissions when divisive individuals within the brotherhood made life miserable and even dangerous for them.<sup>53</sup>

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In the course of our discussion of the generation of crisis surrounding the Teutonic Order, little mention has been made of the ongoing fight against the pagans. Indeed, as we have seen, the Knights' very successes at finally subduing the Pruteni brought them considerable

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<sup>51</sup> Das alte Passional, herausgegeben von K. A. Hahn (Frankfurt: Broenner, 1845), p. 333, Zeilen 61-89.

<sup>52</sup> Jeroschin, "Kronike von Pruzinlant," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, p. 305, verses 182-189.

See Chapter 6 below for a full treatment of this event and Jeroschin's use of the Biblical image of Joseph's coat.

<sup>53</sup> For a fuller discussion of the plight of these authors and the general problem of destructive factionalism within the Order, see Chapter 6 below.

trouble. In the eyes of its detractors, the Order had fought itself out of a job. But, though forced to live with adverse criticism directed at an army with no war to fight, the Order nonetheless had military problems on its hands.

The Pruteni, though subdued, had to be assimilated and integrated with the incoming German immigrants. Karl von Trier's slow, deliberate actions in this regard constituted one reason for his unpopularity as a grand-master. The far-from-ended struggle with the neighboring Lithuanians presented even more of a problem. Though the Order had successfully conquered and consolidated Prussia, the eastern borderlands were covered by a thickly-forested, swampy no man's land which shielded the highly mobile Lithuanians and provided them with an ideal base for incursions into Prussia.<sup>54</sup> During the crisis period of the early fourteenth century, Lithuanian strength had actually increased on the frontier while the power of the Order had weakened.<sup>55</sup>

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54 On this general topic, see:

William Urban, "The Organization of defence of the Livonian Frontier in the 13th Century," Speculum 48 (1973), pp. 525-532.

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"Auf allen Zügen während der dreizehnjährigen Regierung Karls von Trier konnte nur eine einzige

The Lithuanians were composed of large, well-organized tribes with surprisingly effective military coordination. They had learned much from the mistakes of their vanquished Pruteni cousins. Moreover, the Lithuanians resisted the Order and Christianity to no small degree because their own pagan way of life was highly successful in its own right. They were a large, prosperous gens who, like the Mongols, were able to govern diverse peoples (including Latins, Greeks, Jews and Tartars) even-handedly and fairly. Furthermore, the Lithuanians' very paganism made it possible for them to dangle a promise of conversion in order to win diplomatic favors. We have seen how Lithuanian leaders and the Archbishop of Riga wooed each others' support by playing this very game. Later, during the 1320's, the Lithuanian leader Gediminas, a brother to Grand Prince Vytenis, proved to be a master at repeatedly swearing, then reneging upon, vows to convert. Vytautas, a successor to Vytenis and Gediminas, had himself baptized five times, including both Latin and Russian confessions, only to slip

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Heidenburg selbst, anscheinend eine sehr unbedeutende, genommen und zerstört werden."

During all the campaigns of the thirteen-year administration of Karl von Trier, only one solitary pagan fort could be taken and destroyed and this fort was apparently very insignificant.

Karl Lohmeyer, Geschichte von Ost- und Westpreussen (Gotha: Perthes, 1908), Band I, p. 219.

back again into paganism. Wily Lithuanian leaders remained coy in this way, and only at the end of the century did Grand Prince Jagiello convert to Christianity. He did so at this time in order to attain the consummate prize of the throne of Poland through his Christian marriage to the Polish heiress Jadwiga.

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Contemporaneous with the Teutonic Order's generation of crisis were several natural disasters. Though these were in no wise related to the human political and ideological stresses the Order was experiencing, they added to the general instability of the times in Prussia and Livonia.

The greatest famine of the Middle Ages struck Europe in the second decade of the fourteenth century (1315-1317). Storms and torrential rains which ruined entire crops were especially severe in northeastern Europe. There, famine and disease gripped the land the longest.<sup>56</sup>

Compounding the loss of cereal foods was the loss of

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<sup>56</sup> One example will serve to demonstrate the cataclysmic effect of the violent weather. The storms and flooding of the years 1285, 1300 and then the next several successive years carved out the shoreline of the Zuider Zee. The shoreline from that time remained essentially stable until the twentieth century, when human engineering once again altered it.

See Henry Lucas, "The Great European Famine of 1315, 1316 and 1317," Speculum 5 (1930), pp. 343-377.

herring from the Baltic, beginning in the year 1313. These fish, which were a prime source of food and a lucrative export item, withdrew suddenly and mysteriously from the Prussian coast. The fish returned only very slowly, and then never in their previous numbers. Their behavior was probably set off by the unprecedented weather.

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From the last decade of the 13th century through the early decades of the 14th century, the Teutonic Order was beset from all sides by hostile forces and rent with internal strife. That the Order survived this "generation of crisis" is amazing indeed. And that the Order arose out of crisis to enter into its golden age of power and influence is astonishing. The source of this resilience and stubborn will to survive will be the theme of the following chapter.

## Chapter 2:

### Return to the Rule

The Teutonic Order in crisis was the theme of the preceding chapter. The Order's confronting of this crisis will be the focus of the present chapter. The thread of this discussion leads to the Order's Rule and beyond the Rule to the unique Biblical literature the Knights were to produce.

In the face of crisis, the Teutonic Order braced itself and did what many embattled monastic movements did throughout the Middle Ages: it returned to its Rule. In their Rule, the German knights were to find both reassurance and a strategy for survival. This process was what Southern has aptly called "the medieval instinct for corporate survival."<sup>1</sup> The legacy of this instinctive process was a rich one indeed -- the warrior-monks had venerable predecessors.

Benedict of Aniane's Benedictine reform (circa 820) sprang from a renewal of the Rule of St. Benedict. Two hundred years later, the Cluniac reform revitalized the Rule once more, giving it a strict application within a centralizing system. Still later the Cistercians

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<sup>1</sup> R. W. Southern, Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), p. 284.

professed returning to the Rule of St. Benedict and adhering to it with rigid exactness. "The Cistercian Rule, as everybody knows," writes a contemporary Cistercian historian paraphrasing the Carta Caritatis, "is the literal expression of the Rule of St. Benedict." <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> A Father of the Abbey of Gethsemani, Compendium of the History of the Cistercian Order (Gethsemani, Kentucky: Order of Cistercians of Strict Observance, 1944), p. 119.

The first chapter of Carta Caritatis states:

Regula servetur sine novo sensu. Nunc vero volumus, illisque praecipimus, ut Regulam beati Benedicti per omnia observent, sicuti in Novo Monasterio observatur. Non alium iuducant sensum in lectione sanctae Regulae, sed sicut antecessores nostri sancti Patres, monachi scilicet Novi Monasterii intellexerunt et tenuerunt, et nos hodie intelligimus, et tenemus: ita et isti intelligant et teneant.

The Rule is to be followed according to no new interpretation. We earnestly wish and command them that they ought observe the Rule of St. Benedict just as it is observed in the New Monastery. Let them not introduce another meaning into the text of the blessed Rule, but rather as our predecessors, the Holy Fathers, that is to say the monks of the New Monastery, understood and obeyed (it) and as we today understand and obey, so should they understand and obey.

"Carta Charitatis," Caput Primum I, Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1844-), Volume 166: 1,379.

Chapter XV of St. Stephen Harding's Exordium Cisterciense also contains another strong affirmation of the integrity of the Rule:

"Dehinc abbas ille et fratres ejus non immemores sponsionis suae, Regulam beati Benedicti in illo loco ordinare, et unanimiter statuerunt tenere; rejicientes a se quidquid Regulae refragabatur . . . Sicque recitundinem Regulae super cunctum vitae suae tenorem ducentes tam in Ecclesiasticis quam in caeteris observationibus, Regulae vestigiis sunt

The Rule of the Teutonic Order was essentially a modification of the Templar Rule, which in turn was based on the Cistercian Carta Caritatis; and the Cistercian reform was grounded in the Rule of St. Benedict. It was to this Rule -- a Rule which stood in a long and venerable tradition of reform and renewal -- that the Teutonic Order now returned in its time of need.

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An examination of the Rule of the Teutonic Order logically begins with those passages within the Rule which point to the revered status in which its writers meant the Rule to be held. The Rule says of itself that it is to be

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adaequati seu conformati."

Hence the abbot and his brothers, not (being) unmindful of their solemn promise, decreed to be ordained and observed in that place the Rule of the blessed Benedict, rejecting anything which opposed the Rule. And so, placing the rectitude of the Rule over the course of their entire lives, both in Church and in other matters, they were conformed and shaped to the guidelines of the Rule.

S. Stephanus Abbas Cisterc. III "Exordium Cisterciense," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 166: 1507.

The process of commitment and recommitment to the Rule was manifest from earliest times in the context of accepting and preparing aspirants who wished to become monks. A Benedictine novice had a probation period of instruction and testing (Benedictine Rule, Chapter 61). After two months, the Rule was read to him and it was read to him again after six months, in order that he might "know upon what he was entering" (Chapter 58). Final acceptance or rejection came four months later, after the brothers had read to him the Rule one final time.



carefully copied, preserved and frequently read. <sup>3</sup>

In iegelicheme huse sin sal die regele unde die gesetzedē geschriben han, darumme daz die brudere, die da sint, sie deste ofter, als hie nach geschriben ist, mugen gehoren unde gelernen.

In each house there shall be kept a copy of the Rule and of the Laws, so that the brethren may all the more often hear and study them, as is written hereafter.

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3 The Rule, narrowly defined, is made up of thirty-five brief paragraphs. The Laws are essentially a commentary on the preceding paragraphs of the Rule. These, together with the Customs, make up "the Rule" as it is broadly understood. This broader definition will be followed in this chapter.

4 Law 17, Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens, herausgegeben von Max Perlbach (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1890), p. 71.

The parallel English translation here and in ensuing citations is taken from Indrikis Sterns' translation of the Order Rule:

Indrikis Sterns, The Statutes of the Teutonic Knights: A Study of Religious Chivalry (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1969), p. 257.

The Benedictine Rule states:

Hanc autem regulam saepius volumus in congregatione legi, ne quis fratrum se de ignorantia excuset.

Rule #66:8

We wish this Rule to be read often in the community, so that none of the brothers may offer the excuse of ignorance.

The original Latin, as well as the English renderings are take from:

The Rule of St. Benedict/1980, edited by Timothy Fry (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1981), p. 288.

Wir setzen ouch, daz so kein bruder die regelen oder die gesetzede heizet schriben, daz er des sorcveldic si, daz man sie rehte schribe unde rihte. In allen huseren sal man die regelen unde die gesetzede in dem iare dristunt lesen in den octaven zu winachten unde zu osteren unde zu der schiffunge zu des heiligen cruces messe unde in den capitelen, unde darzu in allen sunnetagen, ob ez mit vugen mac sin, so sal man den bruderen ettelich teil der regelen unde der gesetzede lesen.

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We decree likewise that any brother told to copy the Rule or the Laws be careful that they are precisely written and properly corrected. In all houses the Rule and the Laws shall be read three times a year, in the octaves of Christmas and of Easter and at the feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, and in the chapter and furthermore, every Sunday, if it is convenient, some part of the Rule and the Law shall be read to the brothers.

On the election day of a new grandmaster, the Rule and the Laws were also to be read in toto, along with a celebration of the Mass and recitations of Pater Nosters. 6

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5 Law 27, Die Statuten, p. 74; Sterns, p. 260.

An early amendment to the Rule states:

Item omni die Dominico in capitulo unum capitulum de ordine et unum de consuetudinibus et unum de iudiciis ordinis coram fratribus recitetur.

Every Sunday in chapter will be read in the presence of the brothers one chapter of the Rule, one chapter of the Customs and one chapter from the Laws.

"Littera fratris Everhardi de Seyne" #14. Perlbach, Die Statuten, p. 161

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. . . unde so sie gesamnet sin, e dan man wele, so sal man die regelen lesen unde die gesetzede unde eine messe von deme heiligen geiste singen und iegelich bruder sal sprechen vunfzen pater noster .  
 . .

Having been written in a time of crisis 150 years earlier (1140's), the Rule affirms that it is to be a source of strength in all ages.

Swanne man die regelen unde die gesetzede liset, so sulen sie die brudere alle mit vlize horen unde merken unde sich vlizen daz zu lerne, daz sie hant gelobet zu tune, darumme daz in die lere rehtes lebenes unde der dinge, der sie schuldic sint, zu behaltene iht muge kumen zu bruche unde zu valle, unde daz erzenie solte sin, zu suche iht gerate.

Whenever the Rule and the Laws are read, the brethren shall all listen carefully and pay attention and be diligent to learn what they have vowed to do, so that by instruction in the good life and in the things they are obligated to do, nothing may lead to a breakdown and a fall, and so that good medicine, badly used, may not become an agent of plague.

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That this process could be painful, we have already seen.<sup>8</sup> When Grandmaster Gottfried von Hohenlohe traveled north to visit the embattled Knights in Prussia and Livonia, his principal message to them was that they ought keep the Rule more strictly. He met with such opposition at this time that he had to resign.<sup>9</sup>

Following Cistercian practice,<sup>10</sup> the Teutonic Order

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. . . but before the election, the Rule and the Laws shall be read, and a Mass of the Holy Ghost sung and every brother shall recite fifteen Pater Nosters . . .

Custom 4, Die Statuten, p. 92; Sterns, p. 285.

7 Law 28 , Die Statuten, p. 74; Sterns, p. 261.

8 See Chapter 1 above.

9 See Chapter 1 above and its note #45.

10 The attention to centralization, procedural correctness and uniformitas bespeak the Cistercian roots

held general chapter meetings each year, at which time new leaders were elected and, "with the good council of the membership," <sup>11</sup> changes were made in the Order's constituting Rule. <sup>12</sup> Thus, as one might expect, the Order's struggle to survive is chronicled by changes in, and enforcement of, the Rule. Many examples of new, reforming rules might be cited, each one aiming to reinforce the Order's organization and deepen its spirituality. Already in 1292, one year after the fall of Acre, Grandmaster Conrad von Feuchtwangen pushed to adopt "certain new rules." <sup>13</sup> Under Grandmaster Gottfried von Hohenlohe (1297), liturgical practices and disciplinary actions were examined, revised and put down in the Rule. <sup>14</sup> Sigfried von Feuchtwangen (1303-1309) faced a heated constitutional battle as he fought off efforts to keep him in Venice, once he had decided to move his

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of the Teutonic Order. Uniformitas was, as we shall see, an important guiding principle for the Teutonic Order as it struggled to save itself.

11 Custom 7, Die Statuten, p. 96.

12 Law IIb, Die Statuten, pp. 59-60.

Custom 7a, Die Statuten, p. 96-97.

Custom 18, Die Statuten, p. 102-103.

13 Die Statuten, pp. 140 ff.

14 Die Statuten, p. 144.

headquarters to Prussia. <sup>15</sup> New Statutes under Grandmaster Werner Orseln (1322-1330) have been termed "eine Art Restorationsprogramm." <sup>16</sup> Later, under Luder von Braunschweig, Rule revisions called for dramatic increases in liturgical devotions to Mary. And finally, the shock of the assassination of Grandmaster Werner von Orseln is recorded in the Rule in the form of a new culpa gravis covering the slaying of a master. <sup>17</sup>

In sum, then, we may say that the Order's re-examination and expansion of its cherished Rule provided both a vector for its reform aspirations and a chronicle of actual changes made. <sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Die Statuten, pp. 145-146.

<sup>16</sup> Helmut Bauer, "Peter von Dusburg und die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens im 14. Jahrhundert in Preussen," Historische Studien, Heft 272 (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Emil Ebering, 1935), p. 18.

Die Statuten, pp. 147-148.

<sup>17</sup> Perlbach, Introduction p. LIV and p. 149.

<sup>18</sup> In her fine study Mary-Verse of the Teutonic Order, Sister Mary Ellen Goenner writes of this period:

"The undue multiplication of ordinances and restrictions (often regarding points of rule) which characterizes the administration of the later grandmasters, presents clear and melancholy evidence of the gradual decay of monastic discipline."

This assessment is overstated and entirely too negative. Rule-changes actually bespoke a healthy, reforming spirit moving within the Order. As we noted in

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The Order, then, returned to its Rule -- but as it did so, it was burdened with a thorny problem. Simply stated, the problem was this: the Order's original Rule was an adaptation of the Rule of the Templars. The papacy, however, had investigated and finally condemned and liquidated the Templars as anathema to Christendom. Clearly, the Teutonic Order, in its self-defense, had to distance itself from any associations with the pernicious and heretical tendencies of the Templars. Yet, at the same time, the wellspring of the Germans' own self-identity and self-defense was a Rule which derived from those very Templars. The Order's return to its Rule, therefore, had to be prudent and selective. "Return" unavoidably came to mean reinterpretation and revision. Even as the Teutonic Knights affirmed a legacy of continuity within their Rule, they at the same time moved to neutralize all Templar associations embodied within it. In this ticklish process, the introduction of Biblical language and Biblical themes was to play a pivotal role.

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the preceding chapter, the Order was indeed suffering from a crisis in morale. But the amendments to the Rule chronicle the Order's decisive action to combat this ennui.

Sister Mary Ellen Goenner, Mary Verse of the Teutonic Order (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University Press, 1943 / The Catholic University of America Studies in German, 20), p. 19.

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At the time of its inception, the Teutonic Order was placed under the Rule of the Hospitalers. Then, with its transition to the status of a military order, the Knights came under the Rule of the Templars.<sup>19</sup> A new rule for

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<sup>19</sup> The historical prologue to the later Rule of the Teutonic Order speaks of an earlier granting of provisional rules: "to the sick, the Rule of the Hospital of St. John and to the Knights, the Order of the Templars."

Die Statuten, p. 23; Sterns, p. 202.

An even earlier document, De primordiis ordinis Theutonici narratio, probably served as the source of this:

. . omnes unanimi consilio constiterunt, ut domus sepe dicta ordinem hospitalis sancti Johannis Jerosolimitani in infirmis et pauperibus haberet, sicut antea habuerat, ordinem vero milicie templi in clericis, militibus et aliis fratribus de cetero haberet.

All agreed to establish that the oft-mentioned (German) House have the statutes of the Hospitalers in matters concerning the infirm and the poor, as they had before, but now in addition they would have the statutes of the Templars in matters of the clergy, the knight-monks and the other brothers.

Postquam autem firmatum erat consilium, et ordo milicie templi donatus, quendam fratrem Hermanum nomine, qui cognominabatur Wolpoto et frater erat ejusdem domus, in eodem loco magistrum fecerunt, cui magister templi dedit regulam ordinis milicie templi scriptam deinceps in eadem domo servandam.

After the completion of the gathering where the statutes of Templars were granted, they made a certain brother of the German House named Heirich Walpot their Master. To him the Master of the Temple gave a written copy of the Templar Rule which since has been preserved in the new master's house.

"De primordiis ordinis Theutonici narratio,"  
Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der

the German Knights was never a possibility, since the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) had forbidden the proliferation of any new monastic rules.<sup>20</sup> This canon made official the Church's stand against novelty of any kind within religious movements. It also expressed the confidence that as long as movements were forced to hearken back to St. Benedict, his time-honored directives would shield them from the dangers of heterodoxy.<sup>21</sup>

The policy of placing new Orders under older, established rules suited well the purposes of the papacy, but it caused the Teutonic Order no little discomfiture. Over the years, the legacy of the Order's early ties, first to the Hospitalers and later especially to the Templars, left the Order vulnerable and subject to attack. Early on, the Order brothers had to fight off the Templar's efforts to absorb them. The Germans were, after all, living under the Templar's Rule.<sup>22</sup> Later, when the

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Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Max Töppen (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, pp. 223 and 225 (also 221).

<sup>20</sup> In Livonia the Sword Brothers (Fratres Militie Christi de Livonia) and in Prussia the Dobriner Order (Fratres Militie Christi de Livonia contra Prutenos) also received the Templar Rule. We shall hear more about these smaller orders presently.

<sup>21</sup> In a few cases, religious orders hearkened back to the so-called Rule of St. Augustine. This rule was also venerable and safe.

<sup>22</sup> In the 1240's the grandmaster of the Teutonic



Templars themselves were crushed, the Order again had to fight for its life -- this time against guilt by association with those same Templars.

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During their generation of crisis, the Teutonic Knights based their constitutional case for differentness upon those modifications and adaptations they had been permitted to make, over time, to the Templar Rule.

In the early 1240's (two generations before the liquidation of the Templars), the Teutonic Order succeeded in garnering some papal sympathy for its embattled position vis-à-vis the Templars.<sup>23</sup> Though Rome brooked no compromise on the canon of the Lateran Council forbidding any new rules, it did allow for certain changes

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Order, Gerhard von Malberg, went over to the Templars. At the same time the Hospitalers were urging the Pope to assign the Teutonic Order to them as a dependent brotherhood.

See Eric Christiansen, The Northern Crusade (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 75.

<sup>23</sup> This period of the mid-thirteenth century was not an easy time for the Teutonic Knights generally. A revolt of the Pruteni (1242-1253) brought the Order to within a hairbreadth of losing Prussia completely. The new bishoprics which William of Modena was establishing in Prussia in the years 1245/46 (Chapter 1 above) turned out to be of great advantage to the Order. At the time, however, the threat seemed real that Rome's agent might act otherwise. Finally, this was the period of the greatest friction between the Templars and the Hospitalers. Bitterness from this struggle passed over to the Teutonic Order as well.

and adaptations in the Templar Rule to meet the specific needs of the Teutonic Knights. Papal approval was promulgated on Feb. 9, 1244 by Pope Innocent IV.<sup>24</sup> The result was a shorter, better organized and moderately altered version of the Templar Rule.

The Teutonic Order preserved the three major divisions of the Templar Rule: 1) the Rule proper (Regeln, 37 chapters), which laid down principles common to all monastic institutions; 2) the Laws (Gesetze, 45 Chapters), which constituted a commentary on the Rules; and 3) the Customs (Gewohnheiten, 65 Chapters), which made explicit executive functions and offices within the Order. To this revised Rule, the Order added through vote of amendment: 1) a Biblical-historical introduction of its own; 2) a special theological excursus of self-justification embedded in the text of the Rule; and 3) an increased number of Biblical quotations -- principally Old Testament citations -- which served to justify and

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24 Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici ex Tabularii Regii Berolinensis Codice Potissimum, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlke (Berlin: Weidmann, 1967), #470.

For the entire sequence of events, see:

Udo Arnold, "Entstehung und Frühzeit des Deutschen Ordens," Die Geistlichen Ritterorden Europas, herausgegeben von Joseph Fleckenstein und Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1980), pp. 98-99.

reinforce the minor alterations it had made.<sup>25</sup> These new elements, being as they were composed by the Order for itself, were later to weigh heavily in the Order's quest for vindication.

Appended to the end of the document were the so-called Vigils, Genuflections, Admission Ritual, Prayers and Supplementary Laws (the last being a series of directives for divine worship and decrees of various general councils). We have already noted examples of the Order's expanding upon that part of its Rule dealing with cult and ritual.<sup>26</sup> This section, independent as it was of the Templar prototype, was also to be a vector of study and expansion for the Knights.

It is worthy of note that the Teutonic Brothers originally took over from the Templars the Liturgy of the

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<sup>25</sup> Some of the changes seem strange indeed. Templars are not to cover lances and shields while exercising (Templar Rule #53). Teutonic Knights are specifically enjoined to do so (Rule #22). Other changes are of more significance. The German Knights, for example, allow themselves broader latitude in the weapons they might use (Rule #23) and they are more liberal in defining the animals they might hunt (Rule #23 vs. Templar Rules #55 and #56). This probably reflected their new sphere of activity on the Baltic.

The edition of the Templar Rule used throughout is:

La Règle du Temple, publiée par Henri de Curzon (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1886).

<sup>26</sup> See above in this chapter.

Holy Sepulcher as the basis of their devotional life.

This liturgy had originated in the Levant. As a part of their push toward constitutional independence in the 1240's, the Marianer replaced the inherited practices with the new Dominican liturgy.<sup>27</sup> In this, the Order was the first major congregation to adopt the liturgy which went

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<sup>27</sup> Tabulae Ordinis Theutonic (Strehlke), #357 and #471 (Innocent IV, Feb. 13, 1244) and also #378 and #536 (Alexander IV, Feb. 27, 1257).

"We grant you permission to celebrate in your houses everywhere the divine service according to the rite of the friar preachers" (quoted in King, p. 252).

"Ceterum, quia divinum officium secundum ordinem sancti Sepulchri pro eo quod a pluribus ex iisdem fratribus clericis ignoratur vix absque scandalo, sicut accepimus in vestro potest ordine observari, quod illud secundum ordinem fratrum praedicatorum admodo in vestris ubique domibus celebretur vobis concedimus facultatem.

Tabulae Ordinis Theutonic (Strehlke), #471

Archdale King quotes the above passage and provides helpful background information:

Archdale A. King, Liturgies of the Religious Orders (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1955), esp. p. 252.

Referring to the other document associated with Alexander IV (Strehlke, #536), King goes on to say (p. 342):

"Later Alexander IV permitted the use of the (Dominican) liturgy 'corrected' by Humbert de Romans, but the text of concession shows that the Knights had adapted the rite to their particular requirements."

on to prevail in Western Christianity. <sup>28</sup>

The revised Rule, with its additions, was composed in Middle High German. <sup>29</sup> This, in itself, was a statement of independence and change. The use of the German language was also a reaffirmation of one of the principal reasons why the Order came into being in the first place. The pious founders, after all, had seen as their special task that of ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of German-speakers who felt isolated and confused by the use of unintelligible French and Latin around them. <sup>30</sup> It has been suggested that papal legate William of Modena or

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<sup>28</sup> King, Liturgies, pp. 340 ff. and passim.

"Two notes have been said to characterize the Dominican rite: Brevity and simplicity" (King, p. 340).

King also points out that the Teutonic Order tried, unsuccessfully, to impose its Dominican liturgy upon the clergy of Riga (p. 344). This was surely one more of many sources of friction between the Order and the religious establishment of Riga.

<sup>29</sup> Sterns proves quite definitively that the original language of the Rule of the Teutonic Order was Middle High German. This is the major place where Sterns' work advances scholarship beyond the introduction and editorial material found in Perlbach's classic edition of the Rule. See Stern, p. 41 ff.

Between 1244 and 1249, the Templar Rule, which had before existed only in French and Latin, was revised and rendered into Middle High German by the Teutonic Order. Then, within a very few years, brothers translated the Middle High German text into Dutch, French and finally back into Latin.

<sup>30</sup> See Introduction above.

persons close to him either composed or stood as patron to the "new" Rule of the Teutonic Order.<sup>31</sup> If so, we have still another striking case of the fortuitous influence this dedicated Italian churchman had upon the history of the Teutonic Order and upon the history of the Baltic region generally.

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In their time of crisis in the early 14th century, the Teutonic Knights returned to their Rule with a view to those elements which were free and independent of the disgraced and condemned Templars. These elements had to be either 1) modifications the Order had made to the original Rule or 2) items of unquestioned orthodoxy with roots pre-dating the Templars. These latter elements were, of course, those portions of the Rule directly grounded in the Benedictine Rule and those places where the spirit of St. Bernard and the Cistercian shone through later Templar darkness.

We have already surveyed the alterations which the

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<sup>31</sup> William of Modena, as a papal legate to the Baltic region, had established the bishoprics in northeastern Europe. His arrangement proved to be quite advantageous to the Teutonic Order. (See Chapter 1 above) Modena in many ways played a role for the Teutonic Order similar to that which St. Bernard played for the Templars at the time of the Council of Troyes in 1128. Order chronicler Peter von Dusburg is of this opinion in the "Prologue" to his Chronicon Terrae Prussiae.

German knight-monks made to the basic Templar Rule. Before scrutinizing these passages, a few remarks are relevant concerning the background to the second, more subtle moment of defense latent within the Order's Rule, i.e. continuity of unquestioned orthodoxy reaching back to St. Bernard and his Cistercians.

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In Prussia and Livonia, the Teutonic Order enjoyed a long and special relationship with the Cistercians, free from any Templar competition or involvements. The legacy of this practical cooperation allowed the Germans to distance themselves from the Templars while, at the same time, affirming historical solidarity with Bernard and his Cistercians.

The roots of this fortuitous Cistercian connection extended back to early Cistercian activities in north-eastern Europe, long before German knights organized themselves into the Teutonic Order. Bernard himself, for example, had been a sponsor of the Wendic Crusade of 1147 <sup>32</sup> and had used his influence to have this European

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<sup>32</sup> Erich Caspar, Hermann von Salsa und die Gründung des Deutschordensstaat in Preussen (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1924), p. 47.

Edgar N. Johnson, "The German Crusade on the Baltic," A History of the Crusades: The 14th and 15th Centuries, Volume 3, edited Harry W. Hazard (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), p. 479.

crusade declared co-equal to service in the Holy Land. <sup>33</sup>  
 Bernard's characteristic blending of mission and crusade  
 are particularly striking in his sermons and letters  
 directed against the pagan Slavs and Balts. It was in  
 this context, for example, that one finds some of  
 Bernard's most ventured statements on the theme "compelle  
intrare" and some of his most liberal use of the verb  
"exterminare." <sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Pope Eugenius III's bull Divini dispensatione  
 (April 13, 1147) established the expedition against the  
 Wends as a crusade co-equal to the Palestinian one. It is  
 highly significant that this Pope was a Cistercian monk  
 and a pupil of St. Bernard. Bernard dedicated his De  
consideratione to Eugenius -- that work which one might  
 call the medieval "Mirror for 'Church Princes.'"

For the role of St. Bernard in the matter of the bull  
Divini dispensatione, see his:

"Epistola #457," Patrologiae latinae cursus  
completus, Volume 187: 651 and also,

"Ottonis Frisingensis Gesta Friderici Imperatoris,"  
Monumenta Germanicae Historica, Scriptores XXII, edidit  
 Georgius Henricus Pertz (Hannoverae: Impensis Bibliopolii  
 Aulici Hahniani, 1868), I, 40-42, pp. 373-374.

St. Bernard subscribed to what might be called a  
 "global strategy" in opposing the armies of pagan  
 darkness. He believed that the battle against Satan for  
 the souls of men had to be carried out with steady  
 pressure on all fronts of resistance. In terms of Carl  
 Erdmann's helpful construct, St. Bernard viewed crusading  
 much more in terms of a "Kampfziel" than of a  
 "Marschziel." See Chapter 6 below for more on Erdmann's  
 insights into the philosophy of crusading.

<sup>34</sup> See: Friedrich Lotter, Die Konzeption des  
Wendenkreuzzuges (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1977).



The Cistercians went on to become the most prominent monastic order in the eastern Baltic region. Prussia and Livonia, with their swamps, thick forests and inhospitable inhabitants, were a fitting sphere of activity for the order which prided itself in seeking out "desert places" on the frontiers of civilization.

The Cistercians rose to eminence in the midst of the most crudely expansive period in medieval history and were the most articulate prophets of this expansion. "The exposition of the whole Gospel in visible works" can never have been more deeply dyed in the spirit of the age. It was not an accident that the chief Crusading orders adopted the Cistercian rule, for there was a close affinity in their aims and methods. The Cistercians were essentially a frontier organization engaged in a work of colonization which was partly religious, partly military, and partly agrarian. No one -- least of all the Cistercians themselves -- knew where one type of colonization ended and the other began. They scarcely needed to know, for they all led to the growth of Christendom.

35

The Cistercians were already established and active in several important centers of Prussia, Pomerelia and Livonia at the time the Teutonic Order arrived there. The earliest Crusade activities in Livonia grew out of a mission that accompanied German merchants to the Dvina River valley in 1184. From the start, Theodoric, a

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E. Dalaruelle, "L'Idée de croisade chez Saint-Bernard," Mélanges Saint-Bernard (Dijon: Marlier, 1954), p. 54 ff.

Cistercian monk, was active in this mission. He helped found Riga in 1201 and was instrumental in the formation of the Order of the Sword Brothers (Fratres Militie Christi de Livonia) in 1202. Berthold, Abbot of the Cistercian Abbey of Loccum, served as the second missionary Bishop of Livonia and continued the tradition of Cistercian leadership which Theodoric had begun.

In the Prussian mission as well, Cistercians spread their influence from the very beginning of Christian activity there. The first (and only) missionary bishop to the Pruteni -- Christian -- was a Cistercian from the monastery of Lekno in Great Poland.<sup>36</sup> Christian founded the short-lived Knights of Dobrin (Fratres Militie Christi de Livonia contra Prutenos) on the Cistercian model.

At the time the Teutonic Order arrived in northern Europe, fortified Cistercian abbeys already dotted the countryside.<sup>37</sup> Cloister Oliva near Danzig -- certainly

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<sup>36</sup> It is true that Bishop Christian and the newly arrived Teutonic Order became uneasy partners and finally rivals in their missionary activities. Nonetheless, their common ideology and goals fostered cross-influence and, indeed, their very similarities probably gave rise to their competitiveness.

<sup>37</sup> Within the Polish dukedoms, there were twenty-five Cistercian abbeys by the time the Order arrived in Prussia. These abbeys played a significant, though largely unintentional, role in the Germanization of the Baltic region by bringing in large numbers of Germans from the west.

the most important of these -- was founded already in 1178. <sup>38</sup> The Order was later to blend the fortification techniques it had learned in the Holy Land with the

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"According to all indications, there was no nationalistic policy of German colonization behind such strange phenomena; the answer lies more likely in the structure of Polish society. The princes and bishops were just as generous toward Cistercians as the sponsors of the Order in the West, but in Eastern Europe the supply of vocations was problematic. According to Polish laws of inheritance all boys of a noble household had a share in the family estates; therefore younger sons had no particular incentive for joining monastic orders. The largest pool of Cistercian vocations in the West, the bourgeoisie and other professional classes, were largely absent from Slavic countries; for lay-brothers the Order in the West relied mostly on free tenant farmers, whereas peasants in Eastern Europe were unfree serfs bound to the soil, who could not normally become brothers."

Louis J. Lekai, The Cistercians: Ideals and Reality (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University, 1977), p. 43.

The early Cistercian missions into Prussia and Livonia, though setting out from "Polish" abbeys, had their cultural ties to the Germanic Empire in the West. Hedwig, the Patroness of Poland, entered the Cistercian convent of Trebnitz. This convent and her husband, Duke Henry of Poland, both imparted to this "Polish" saint strong Germanic ties.

<sup>38</sup> Oliva was founded by German speaking Monks from the West Pomeranian Cistercian Cloister of Kolbatz. Through rich landgrants, it became large and influential. The Old Chronicle and the Chronology of Olivia are extremely important sources to the early history of the Teutonic Order in Prussia.

"Die ältere Chronik und Die Schrifttafel von Oliva," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch, Band 1, pp. 669-731.

simple, functional brick style of these Cistercian abbeys.<sup>39</sup> Thus, the characteristic fortress architecture of the Teutonic Order stood as tangible witness to the solidarity of Cistercian and Marianer aspirations in northeastern Europe.

Under Cistercian leadership, as we have seen, military orders were established early on both in Livonia and Prussia before the arrival of the Teutonic Knights.<sup>40</sup> Theodoric founded the Sword Brothers in Livonia (1202-1237) and Christian the Dobruiner Order in Prussia (1228-

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<sup>39</sup> For a brief, yet illuminating discussion of Cistercian architecture in northeastern Europe, see:

Lekai, The Cistercians, p. 274 ff.

<sup>40</sup> A lesser known military order, that of the Brothers of St. Bernard, was also founded at Dünamünde in 1205. Little is known of this Order, but its name alone betrays its Cistercian links.

Passing mention in:

Edgar N. Johnson, "The German Crusade on the Baltic," A History of the Crusades: The 14th and 15th Centuries, Volume 3, edited Harry W. Hazard (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), p. 558.

See also: William Urban, The Baltic Crusade (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1975), p. 140.

Many of the Cistercian houses in the Baltic area kept copies of the Templar Rule in their libraries. This was in preparation for the eventuality that further ad hoc fighting orders might need to be created to defend vulnerable territory.

Friedrich Benninghoven, Der Orden der Schwertbrüder (Köln/Graz: Böhlau, 1965), p. 54.

1235). Both of these orders eventually merged with the Teutonic Order. Constitutionally, this was important in that these military-religious orders were direct extensions of Cistercian frontier work.<sup>41</sup> Thus, they brought with them to the larger Teutonic Order a fresh infusion of Cistercian élan, untainted by suspect Templar influences.

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Having surveyed the general influence of the Cistercians upon the Teutonic Order in northeastern Europe, we are now in a better position to focus upon the Order's Rule with a sharpened view to the Cistercian traits to be found there. The Knights were interested in those portions of their Rule which they had either 1) composed themselves or which -- new or old -- 2) breathed the spirit of unquestioned Cistercian orthodoxy. These portions of the Rule spoke directly to the Order in crisis and, as will be demonstrated, the language they spoke was that of the Old Testament. The Teutonic Order here tapped deeply into the tradition of Cistercian Biblicism which

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<sup>41</sup> In 1232, papal legate Baldwin of Alna reported to Gregory IX how the Sword Brothers he had seen in Livonia followed the Templar Rule, yet were not within the Templar organization. As such, they acted extremely independently and, in Baldwin's view, spurned papal authority.

See: Urban, The Baltic Crusade, p. 141.

extended back even before St. Bernard, its most famous exponent. A discussion of Cistercian Biblicism will complete this survey of the Teutonic Order's Cistercian roots. This Biblicism leads through and beyond the Teutonic Rule into the Biblical literature of the Order.

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The initial impulse which began the Cistercian tradition of Biblicism was probably its own return to the Rule of St. Benedict, accompanied by a zealous sense of uniformitas. The ideal of uniformitas caused the Cistercians early on to enforce upon themselves a standard Rule <sup>42</sup> and Liturgy. <sup>43</sup>

"It was part of the spirit of the Cistercian reform that utmost efforts should be made to restore and to perpetuate in their primitive purity, both the text of St. Benedict and all that appertained to the liturgy of the Church."

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<sup>42</sup> See quoted passages from Carta Caritatis and Exordium Cisterciense, note #2 above.

<sup>43</sup> For Cistercian work in establishing a critical edition of liturgical chants, see: A Father of the Abbey of Gethsemani, Compendium, p. 131.

<sup>44</sup> J. B. Dalgairns, Life of Stephen Harding, edited by John Henry Newman (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Bookshop, 1898), p. 151.

The Teutonic Order inherited this concern for uniformitas in its Rule.<sup>45</sup> In a like manner, the Order applied the same Cistercian principle to its treatment of Dominican liturgy. The original passage in the Carta Caritatis reads:

Hoc etiam volumus, ut mores et cantum et omnes libros ad horas diurnas et nocturnas, et ad missas necessarios, secundum formam morum et librorum Novi Monasterii possideant: quatenus in actibus nostris nulla sit discordia, sed una charitate, una regula, similibusque vivamus moribus.

46

We desire that they employ the practices and songs and all books necessary for the daily and nightly hours as well as for the mass which are in conformity with the practices and books of the New Monastery. This is to the end that no discord will exist in our acts, but rather that we may live according to one love, one rule and similar actions.

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<sup>45</sup> See the passages from the Order Rule dealing with uniformitas cited earlier in this chapter.

"Bei den verschiedensten Anlässen wird die uniformitas als ein anzustrebendes Ziel betont; das zieht sich wie ein roter Faden, als etwas den Deutschordensstatuten vor denen der älteren Ritterorden Eigentümliches, durch den ganzen Text."

Caspar, Hermann von Salza, p. 52.

Uniformity is stressed as a desired end in the most diverse contexts. This is a golden thread through the entire text of the Rule of the Teutonic Order and sets the Order's Rule apart from the rules of the older crusading orders.

In his note, Caspar cites the following examples. He quotes the Latin text of the Rule in the Perlbach edition.

Gesetze II f, p. 62: quia uniformitatem convenit servari, II g, p. 62: Uniformitatem intendentes augmentare, c. 23, p. 72: De uniformitate divini officii. In divino officio per totum ordinem uniformitas observetur etc. c. 45, p. 89: Volumus, ut uniformitas inter nos, in quantum fieri potuerit, observetur.

<sup>46</sup> "Carta Caritatis," Caput Primum, II, Patrologiae

This appears in the Rule of the Teutonic Order in the following form:

An dem Gotes dieneste sal man sich nach einer forme uber allen den orden halden, unde daz man daz desten baz muge getun, so wolle wir, daz man in eime iegelicheme huse habe die breviere nach dem ordene von dem ambehte, daz zu dem tage unde zu der naht gehoret, nach deme man sich vlize ze haldene unde nach ze volgene, als verre man mac, an dem Gotes dinsten unde vremede dinc, die zu unserem ordene niht gehorent, underwegen lazen.

47

There shall be one form of divine office followed throughout the whole Order, and the better to do this, we will that in each house be kept the breviary for the order of the office which is appropriate for the day and for the rite, which shall be carefully observed and followed, as far as possible at divine service, and strange observances which do not belong to our Order shall be kept out.

Beyond their Rule and their liturgy, the Cistercians addressed the issue of uniformitas in a third textual realm which they viewed as vital to their spiritual lives: a uniformitas of the Vulgate Bible. This interest pulled the Cistercians into an intense engagement with the Bible, both as a studied document and as the wellspring of their spirituality. 48

St. Stephen Harding (1109-1133), the second Abbot of Citeaux, went to great lengths to collate varied copies of the Vulgate in order to secure a uniform, reliable

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latinae cursus completus, Volume 166: 1,379.

47 Law #23, Statuten, p. 72; Stern p. 258.

48 See: Stummer, Einführung in die Lateinische Bibel, p. 146.



Correctorium text for his monks. <sup>49</sup> Even today, this first medieval attempt at a revised, collated Vulgate commands the respect of Biblical scholars. <sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> In a letter which has survived -- the so-called Monitum letter -- St. Stephen explains the purpose of his project and outlines his methodology.

"Censura de aliquot Locis Bibliorum," Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus, Volume 166: 1,373-1,376.

There are good indications that St. Stephen's Correctorium was successfully promulgated throughout the Cistercian abbeys and that the spirit of his work carried on. William of Hirschau and Nicolaus Manjacoria at Trois-Fontaines commissioned monks to continue Stephen's work of establishing and promulgating the corrected Biblical texts.

L'Abbe J. Paulin Martin, "Saint Etienne Harding et les premiers recenseurs de la Vulgate latine," Revue des Sciences ecclésiastiques, Aout, 1886.

Stummer, Einführung in die lateinische Bibel, pp. 147-148.

Raphael Loewe, "The Medieval History of the Latin Vulgate," The Cambridge History of the Bible (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1969), Volume 2, pp. 143-144.

A Father, Compendium, pp. 59-61.

J. B. Dalgairns, Life of Stephen Harding, pp. 136, 150-155.

50

Les maîtres de saint Bernard nous ont légué une oeuvre de critique biblique, supérieure à tout ce qu'ont produit en ce genre les autres monastères contemporains, sans excepter Cluny dont le culte pour les sciences et les arts est pourtant bien connu.

Bernard's (Cistercian) teachers left us a work of Biblical criticism superior to anything the other monasteries of that period produced, not excepting

Bernard, in the following generation, fell heir to this intense and exacting concern for the Biblical text. To the Cistercian Biblical tradition, Bernard added the stamp of his own mastery of Biblical style and the solemnity of Biblical imagery. Bernard's Biblicism is so well-known as to need no recounting here. It suffices to say that the Teutonic Knights felt themselves to be his heirs. Bernard's De Laude Novae Militiae, that most powerful of Bernard's Biblical calls to military action and sacrifice, had its honored place in all Order libraries.

In the years after Bernard's death, the Teutonic Knights took up the Cistercian Biblical tradition and

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Cluny, which had achieved great renown for learning and erudition.

Elphège Vacandard, Vie de St. Bernard (Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1910), Volume 1, pp. 55-56.

St. Stephen collated several codices, using the text with the most expansive passages as his basis. Suspicious of emendations, Stephen called in Jewish scholars with their Hebrew and Aramaic texts in order to make comparisons. Where, on the basis of other Latin and Hebrew texts, Stephen found a passage which was clearly a later addition, he had it erased from his long text. Where necessary, other words were corrected and inserted.

The four volumes composing St. Stephen Harding's Correctorium may be viewed today in the Municipal library of Dijon (Nr.9bis). The text still clearly shows the signs of erasing and inserting.

Stummer, Einführung in die Lateinische Bibel, p. 146.

Vacandard, Vie de St. Bernard, Volume 1, p. 56.

A Father, Compendium, pp. 59-60.

developed it in their Rule to a degree far beyond that to which the Templars had in theirs. The dozens of Biblical citations which the Germans added to the their Rule increased dramatically those few found in the original Templar Rule. Furthermore, in the same tradition of St. Stephen Harding, the Teutonic Knights were much more scrupulously accurate in their Biblical citations and Biblical argumentation than the Templars had cared to be.

The legacy of Cistercian Biblicism within the Rule of the Teutonic Order was absolutely central to the Order's prudent and selective "return" to its Rule and this same Biblicism went on to be a driving force in Order's general reform program. The remainder of this chapter will take up specific paragraphs from the Rule to demonstrate the power and depth of the Order's Biblical defense.

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The Biblical-historical "Prologue" of the Teutonic Rule immediately claims attention. There is nothing in the Templar Rule which corresponds to it.<sup>51</sup> On the other

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<sup>51</sup> There is a brief introduction to the Templar Rule, but it is an on-the-scene account of the administrative process by which the Templars gained recognition at the Council of Troyes in 1128. There is no discussion of the Order's earliest history, much less an attempt to place such an account in Biblical perspective.

See: La Règle du Temple, pp. 11-20.

hand, the Benedictine Rule <sup>52</sup> boasts such an introduction as does, in a more limited way, Carta Caritatis of the Cistercians. St Benedict clearly inspired this modification of the Templar Rule by the Marianer. Furthermore, moving on from St. Benedict's famous "Domino Christo vero regio militaturus," the Teutonic Order also likens its monks to an army of spiritual soldiers fighting under the standard of Jesus Christ, their king. The "Prologue" thus effects a transition into the full Biblical spirit of St. Bernard's De Laude.

The following extended quotation from the "Prologue" demonstrates that nearly all of the justifications present in De Laude are repeated here:

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52 "One may assume that at least the idea of introducing Biblical background into the "Prologue" (of the Teutonic Order's Rule) was borrowed from the Rule of St. Benedict by the Germans."

Sterns, The Statutes of the Teutonic Knights: A Study of Religious Chivalry, p. 120.

"The basic elements of the religious life are very clearly set forward in the fourth chapter of the Rule of St. Benedict, which contains 72 very short, slightly paraphrased quotations from the scripture, almost every one of which is reflected in the Statutes of the Teutonic Knights" (Sterns, p. 120).

Wanne wir lesen an den alden  
 buchen, daz her Abraham der groze  
 patriarche streit umbe sinen  
 bruder hern Loth, der gevangen  
 was, unde in mit strite wider  
 erlost von dem gevennisse. An  
 der widerverte begegente ime  
 Melchisedech mit sinem prisante  
 unde do offente der heilige  
 geist, daz der, der die hohesten  
 stat in der ecclesien hat, wie  
 lieb er sule haben rittere unde  
 wie er sie entphahen sule mit  
 deme segene in den schirm der  
 ecclesien mit sunderlichem  
 gunste unde ouch bestetigen mit  
 antlaze unde mit privilegien,  
 swaz in geistlicher gabe von  
 guten luten gegeben wirt. Do hub  
 sich ritterschaft von den  
 geloubegen wider die  
 ungeloubegen.

Dise ritterschaft ist ouch  
 bezeichnet bie der himelischen  
 unde irdischen ritterschaft unde  
 ist die vorderste, wande sie  
 gelobet hat, daz sie Gotes  
 versmenisse unde sines cruces  
 wollen rechen unde vehten umbe  
 daz heilige lant, daz der cristen  
 sin sal, daz die heidene under  
 sich hant betwungen.

We read in the Old Testament that  
 Lord Abraham, the great  
 patriarch, fought to free his  
 brother, Lord Lot, who had been  
 made prisoner, and by battle  
 delivered him from prison. On his  
 return Melchizedek, with gifts,  
 met him, and there the Holy Ghost  
 revealed how dearly he who had  
 the highest place in the Church  
 should regard the knights and how  
 he should receive them with  
 blessings into the protection of  
 the Church with particular favor,  
 and also furnish them with  
 indulgences and confirmations of  
 the religious endowments offered  
 them by righteous folk. Thus  
 arose the knightly order of the  
 faithful to fight the infidels.

This order, signifying both the  
 heavenly and the earthly  
 knighthood, is the foremost for  
 it has promised to avenge the  
 dishonoring of God and His Cross  
 and to fight so that the Holy  
 Land, which the infidels  
 subjected to their rule, shall  
 belong to the Christians.

Sente Johannes sach ouch, daz ein nuwe ritterschaft von dem himele herabe gienc. Die gesichte bezeichent uns, daz die ecclesie etteliche rittere nu sal haben, der begerunge sie der ecclesien viende mit craft ze vertribene. Zu disem gezucnisse gefuget 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 bosen unde die ungeloubigen lute, die daz heilige lant haten besezen, nach lewen siten bestunden unde vertiligeten si biz uf von grunde. Her David was ein kunic, den Got selbe zu dem riche hette erwelt, darzu ein groze prophete, der hete sumeliche lute under sime gesinde, der ambeht was, daz sie alleine sines houbetes hutten unde alle, die Davites houbtes laget, daz sie die verderbeten. Daz was ein vurzeichen, daz unser herre Got, der ein houbet ist der ecclesien, nu bi disen iugesten citen ouch hutere solde haben. Wir gedenken ouch des lobelichen strites, der wert vor Gote was, der rittere, die da heizent Machabei, wie stercliche die durch ir e unde umme den gelouben striten mit den heiden, die sie twingen wolden, daz sie Gotes verlougten, unde mit siner helpe sie so gar überwunden unde vertiligeten, daz sie die heiligen stete wider geirenegeten, die sie heten geunreint, unde den vride macheten wider in dem lande.

St. John also saw a new knighthood coming down out of heaven. This vision signifies to us that the Church now shall have knights sworn to drive out the enemies of the Church by force. In addition to this there is further testimony that in the time of Moses and Joshua, who were judges among the Jews, there were knights of God who fought the fights which were pleasing to God, and who, like lions, subdued the evil and heathen peoples, who had seized the Holy Land, and exterminated them to the last man. Lord David was a king whom God Himself chose for the kingdom, and also a great prophet, he had men amongst his household whose duty was that they alone should be his bodyguard and destroy all those who lay in wait for David. This was a sign that Our Lord God, who is Head of the Church, shall now in these latter days likewise have guards. We remember also the struggle, praiseworthy and pleasing to God, of the knights who were called the Maccabees; how stoutly, for their honor and their faith, they fought with the pagans who wished to force them to deny God, and, with His help, defeated and exterminated them so that they cleansed once again the Holy City which the pagans had defiled, and restored once again peace in the land.

Disen striten hat nachgevolget  
 hertecliche dirre heilige  
 ritterliche orden des spitales  
 sente Marien von dem Thuschen  
 huse unde hat erarnet, daz er ist  
 geziret mit manigeme ersamen  
 gelide, wanne si sint rittere  
 unde erwelte stritere, die durch  
 minne der e unde des vaterlandes  
 vertiligent die viende des  
 gelouben mit einer starken hant.  
 Sie sint ouch von ubervluziger  
 minne entphehere der geste unde  
 der pilgerine unde der armen  
 lute. Sie sint ouch, die von  
 miltekeite den siechen, die in  
 dem spitale ligent, dienen in  
 eime brinnendigem geiste. 53

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 they 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. They also from tender-  
 heartedness, serve with fervor  
 the sick who lie in the hospital.

The Order's self-justification is Biblical. Its  
 heroes and institutional models are from the Old Testament  
 and the Apocalypse: specifically Joshua, Melchizedek,  
 David and his Mighty Men, and the Maccabees. The  
 "Prologue" affirmed to the Knights that they stood as true  
 heirs to Bernard's Biblical crusaders, whereas the  
 Templars, in whose support Bernard had originally written  
De Laude, had failed him. 54

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53 "Prologue 2,3,4," Die Statuten, pp. 23-26;  
 Sterns, 202-204.

54 At the Council of Troyes (1128), each provincial  
 master of the Templars took an oath that he would "defend  
 all religious, but above all, Cistercian monks and their  
 abbots, as being their brethren and fellows."

"I swear that I will defend holy Church, etc. . .  
 Moreover I promise obedience to the Grand Master  
 of the order and submission, . . . according to  
 the statutes of our Blessed Father Bernard . . .

We see in this passage many of the Biblical elements which will later appear in the literature of the Teutonic Order. There are also many basic Cistercian themes which were to experience a renaissance at the hand of the Teutonic Order.

Here in the "Prologue" and throughout the Rule, there is the strong, Old Testament sense of God's lordship over human history. The Cistercians felt a continuity of this Biblical history reaching down into their own day. They thus became the great chroniclers of their age.

Cistercian Biblicism which fostered Otto von Freising's Chronicon and such Baltic Cistercian chronicles as that of the Abbey of Oliva and the Livland Reimkronik<sup>55</sup> is evident in the "Prologue." The section just preceding the quoted passage from the "Prologue," for example, narrates the founding of the Teutonic Order before the walls of Acre. The linking sentence, which bridges this narrative to the following account of the Order's Biblical

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I will assist by my words, my arms and my actions  
all Religious in general, and in particular the  
abbots and monks of the order of Citeaux, as  
being our brethren and our particular friends, to  
whom we are bound by special ties of fellowship  
.. . "

Quoted in: J. B. Dalgairns, Life of Stephen Harding,  
p. 188.

<sup>55</sup> See Chapter 5 below for a discussion of these two works.



ancestors, places everything sub specie aeternitatis.

"Diz selbe leben ist ouch nicht  
gestetiget alleine von den luten  
uf ertriche, sunder ez ist ouch  
gestetiget von Gote in himel-  
riche."

56

Yet this way of life itself  
[i.e., living within a military-  
religious order] is granted not  
just by men on earth, but it is  
likewise granted by God in  
heaven.

One also senses in the "Prologue" the typical Cistercian blend of task specialization and mystical devotion to God in the performing of that task. The "Prologue" is an excellent summation of Bernard's belief -- shaped by St. Paul, Revelation and especially the militant books of the Old Testament -- in spiritual as well as physical combat against the forces of evil. Indeed, here and elsewhere in the Rule of the Teutonic Order, much less is said about actual weaponry and battle formations than is said in the original Templar Rule.<sup>57</sup> The Teutonic Order, it would seem, chose to understand itself, at least ideally, as monks who were also knights rather than knights who were also monks. The mention of the Maccabees in the Rule foreshadows the Order's pious

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<sup>56</sup> "Prologue 1," Die Statuten, p. 23; Sterns, p. 202.

<sup>57</sup> Sterns (p. 179) contrasts briefly the Templars, who possessed detailed instructions for conduct in battle, and the Teutonic Knights who were left to do "what God dictates in their hearts." The main military matter, as such, treated by the Order's Rule regards cowardice in battle. There are several statements abhorring and condemning flight from the enemy.

translation of this work and the frequent repetition of what was certainly one of the Order's favorite Biblical passages:

Non in multitudine exercitus  
victoria belli, sed de caelo  
fortitudo est.

"For the success of war is not in  
the multitude of the army, but  
strength cometh from heaven."

I Macc. 3: 19

58

Cistercian Biblical spirituality within the Rule of the Teutonic Order receives further expression immediately after the "Prologue." Here, the three basic monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience are presented. The language is Biblical and in Bernardine terms. Poverty, chastity and obedience are affirmed in the context of the mystery of Christ's incarnation. The reader is called to devotion to Christ through His humanity, of which Christ's passion and death are the highest expression.

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58 Unless otherwise indicated, translations from the Latin Vulgate into English are taken from the old Douay-Rheims Bible. In those few cases where the exact meaning of the original Greek and Hebrew is of paramount importance, the Revised Standard Version (indicated as R.S.V.) will be employed.

Dru dinc sint, die gruntvestene sint eines iegelichen geistlichen lebenes, unde sint geboten in dirre regelen. Daz erste ist kuscheit eweliche, daz ander ist verzihung eines willen, daz ist gehorsam unz an den tot, daz dritte ist antheiz armutes, daz der ane eigenschaft lebe, swer entphet disen orden. Diese dru dinc bildent unde stellent den begeben menschen nach unserme herren Jhesu Christo, der da kusche was unde bleip an dem mute unde an dem libe, der daz groze armute an siner geburt anhub, da man in bewant mit cranken tuchelinen. Daz armute volgete im ouch sin leben mite, biz daz er ouch nacket gehinc durch uns an dem cruce. Er hat uns ouch bilde der gehorsam gegeben, wande er gehorsam was sime vater biz in den tot. Sus hat er die heiligen gehorsam in im selben geheiliget, unde er sprach: ich bin niht kumen minen willen ze tune, sunder mines vater wille, der mich hat gesant. Ouch schribet uns sente Lucas, daz Jhesus mit Marien unde Josebe varende von Jherusalem in undertenich was.

There are three things which are fundamental to every life in religion, and they are prescribed in this rule. 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, who was and remained chaste in soul and body, and who assumed great poverty at His birth, when they wrapped Him in ragged swaddling clothes. Poverty followed Him all His life until He hung naked for us on the cross. He has given us also the model of obedience, for He was obedient unto death to His Father. Thus He sanctified in Himself holy obedience when He said: "I am not come to do mine own will, but the will of My Father, Who sent me." Also, St. Luke writes that Jesus, when leaving Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph, was obedient to them."

Here again, the beginning point is the Rule of St. Benedict with a Cistercian development. There is no Templar parallel to the sublime, affective piety in this passage. The same could be said for the Knights' deep

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59 Rule #1, Die Statuten, p. 29; Sterns, pp. 206-207.

devotion to Mary, whose name they bore.<sup>60</sup> This high Mariology was the living tradition of Bernard and the Cistercians, and it permeated the Order's Rules and its later literature.<sup>61</sup>

Another example of Bernard-like, Biblical argumentation for which there is no Templar precedent is found in Custom #7, where the theme under discussion is how masters and commanders should follow good counsel. Proverbs is cited: "There is safety where there is much counsel" (Prov. 11:14). Then we are told:

Man liset ouch von Moysese, der  
da was von vollen der wisheite  
ein leitere gesetzet des volkes,  
daz der doch volgete Jetro rates,  
der im unglich was an wisheite.

One may read also of Moses, who,  
from fullness of wisdom, was made  
leader of the people, and yet  
followed the council of Jethro,  
who was inferior to him in  
wisdom.

Furthermore --

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<sup>60</sup> Fratres domus hospitalis Sanctae Mariae Theutonicorum in Ierusalem.

<sup>61</sup> On the veneration of Mary and on Mary in the name of the Order, see:

Maschke, Erich, "Der Ordensstaat Preussen in seinen deutschen und europäischen Beziehungen," Ostdeutsche Wissenschaft 8 (1961), pp. 187-204.

On Mary in Teutonic Order literature, see:

Sister Mary Ellen Goenner, Mary Verse of the Teutonic Order (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University Press, 1943 / The Catholic University of America Studies in German, 20), p. 19.

Uber daz liset man in dem ewangelio von unserem herren Jhesu Christo, der da was voll wisheite unde gnaden, daz er die lerere horte unde vragete unde sinen nachvolgeren damite lere unde bilde hat gegeben, daz si gerne gute lere horen unde rat suchen unde des volgen.

62

Our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was full of wisdom and grace, yet listened and questioned the teachers and thereby He gave a lesson and an example to his followers that they gladly listen to good teaching and seek counsel and follow it.

As a final example of Cistercian Biblicism to be found in the Rule of the Teutonic Order, we turn to the Laws, Chapter 33 -- the so-called "Theological Introduction" which the Teutonic Order added to its Rule. This chapter begins with the now familiar words: "We read in the Old Testament that . . . ." Biblical arguments are marshalled to drive home the point that :

Darzu sal sin alles geistlichen lebenes vliz, daz der orden beste unde daz man die sunde reche unde daz ein iegelicher leiste Gote sinen entheiz, den er mit eigener willekure hat entheizen.

63

The aim of all life in religion shall be that the Order endure and that sins be punished and that each one keep his vow to God which he has vowed of his own free will.

The Order is to be a "purgatory for them who sin." 64  
Judgments and guidelines handed down by the Order's  
periodic chapter meetings should assure the brothers:

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62 Custom #7, Die Statuten, p. 96; Sterns, p. 290.

63 Laws #33, Die Statuten, p. 77; Sterns, p. 265.

64 Laws #33, Die Statuten, p. 78; Sterns, p.266.

. . . daz sie daz hie  
abestrichen, daz an ir tote der  
tuvel niht muge an in vinden.

65

. . . that they purge themselves  
of those things which should burn  
in purgatorial fire, so that at  
their deaths, the devil may not  
find them.

We are dealing here with a central Cistercian theme: purgatory and prayers for the dead. <sup>66</sup> Largely through Cistercian pressure, the Fourth Lateran Council officially recognized the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead. The Teutonic Order, in its revision of the Templar Rule in the post-Lateran generation, inserted this passage as well as Rule #10, which outlines specific masses to be said for the dead. <sup>67</sup> This whole concern must surely have been a solace to the knight-monks as they daily risked their lives in battle.

The original Rule of the Templars predated this active concern with purgatory and prayers for the dead. Thus, such prayers are only briefly cited in the Rule of the Templars (Rules #62 and #63) and purgatory itself is not even mentioned. <sup>68</sup>

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65 Laws #33, Die Statuten, p. 78; Sterns, p.266.

66 "Pars Quarta" of Usus Antiquiores Ordinis Cisterciensis is devoted entirely to rites for the dead. Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 166: 1,465-1,484.

67 Rule #10, Die Statuten, pp. 36-38.

68 Règle du Temple, #62 and #63, pp. 62-64.

The objection might be raised at this point that, dear as the doctrine of purgatory was to the Cistercians, the concept has never been an essential Biblical one in the Roman Church. Rather, dogmas associated with purgatory are largely outgrowths of scholastic theology. Is it appropriate, then, to speak of interest in purgatory as part of the Cistercian "Biblical legacy" of the Teutonic Order? The answer is assuredly "yes." This judgment is valid, since the few fragments of Biblical evidence which do exist for purgatory and prayers for the dead came under careful Cistercian scrutiny and the Teutonic Order followed their mentors in this Biblical quest.

The Teutonic Order lovingly translated the Gospel of Nicodemus because it included Christ's harrowing of Hell. This was done in spite of the fact that Gospel of Nicodemus carried only the remotest claim to canonical status. Furthermore, the Teutonic Order's fascination with I and II Maccabees was in no small degree influenced by the prayers for the dead which these books contain. II Maccabees 12: 42-46 is the primary Scriptural

justification in support of living persons offering up prayers for the benefit of the dead. <sup>69</sup>

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The Rule of the Teutonic Order purveyed to the knight-monks the salubrious legacy of Cistercians Biblicism. The Rule also fostered the birth and growth of the Order's unique, Biblically-imbued literature.

A predisposition toward didactic literary expression is latent within the Order's Rule. The monk-knights were instructed by the Rule to "listen carefully and pay attention and be diligent to learn." <sup>70</sup> Such listening

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69

"And making a gathering, he (Judas Maccabee) sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection (For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead). And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."

II Maccabees 12: 43-46

This passage was probably the main reason why the Books of I and II Maccabees were retained within the canon of authorized Scriptures at the Council of Trent. The Cistercians and the Teutonic Order did much to keep the memory of these books alive during the late Middle Ages. See Chapter 4 below for a full discussion of this matter.

<sup>70</sup> Laws #28, Die Statuten, p. 74.



and learning involved more texts than simply the Rule itself.

Die brudere phaffen unde leigen  
sulen gemeinliche kumen tages  
unde nahtes zu Gotes dieneste  
unde zu ir geziten, die phaffen  
durch daz si singen unde lesen  
nach den brevieren unde buchen,  
die nach dem orden geschriben  
sint.

The brethren, priest and lay,  
shall jointly come day and night  
to divine service and to the  
hours, and priests shall sing and  
read the services according to  
the breviary and the books which  
are written for the Order.

71

The lectern which still stands in the refectory of the Marienburg reminds us of an even more important setting for the reading and hearing of "books which are written for the Order."

Daruber sal man daz behalten in  
allen huseren . . . daz man da  
pflegeliche di lectien zu tische  
habe, die alle, die da ezzen,  
mit swigene sulen horen, daz in  
alleine die gumen iht werden  
gespiset, sunder ouch ir oren  
hungere nach Gotes worte.

Furthermore, in all houses . . .  
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 for the word of God.

72

The Templar Rule has no corresponding passages to

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71 Rule #8, Die Statuten, p. 34; Sterns, p. 213.

72 Rule #13, Die Statuten, p. 41; Sterns, p. 221.

this, <sup>73</sup> whereas parallels to the orthodox and respected Augustinian Rule are striking.

Sedentes ad mensam taceant,  
audientes lectionem.

74

When seated at table, they are to  
be silent and listen to the  
reading.

Cum acceditis ad mensam, donec  
inde surgatis, quod vobis  
secundum consuetudinem legitur,  
sine tumultu et contentionibus  
audite; nec solae vobis fauces  
sumant cibum, sed et aures  
esuriant dei verbum.

75

Listen to the customary reading  
from the beginning to the end of  
the meal without commotion or  
arguments. Food is not for the  
mouth alone; your ears also  
should hunger for the Word of  
God.

Behind this all, the distant echo of St. Benedict is  
clear:

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73 The Templar Rule does refer to reading and even  
mealttime reading, but only passingly. Nowhere do the  
Templars show the impassioned concern which the Teutonic  
Knights show in this and other passages.

Règle du Temple, #24, also, #288 passim.

74 Ordo monasterii #7, Regula Sancti Augustini.

Both the Latin text and the English rendering are  
found in:

George Lawless, Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic  
Rule (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 77.

75 Praeceptum III, #2. Lawless, p. 85.

See also: Perlbach, "Einleitung," Die Statuten,  
p. xxxii and Sterns, p. 131.

Si tempus fuerit prandii, mox surrexerint a cena, sedeant omnes in unum et legat unus Collationes vel Vitas Patrum aut certe aliud quod aedificet audientes.

76

Immediately after rising from supper, someone should read from the Conferences or the Lives of the Fathers or at any rate something else that will benefit the hearers.

Records of official visitations to Order houses speak directly about the obligation of mealtime reading and whether the practice was upheld or not.<sup>77</sup> Such monitoring visitations are a clear indication of the stress which was placed on the custom of oral reading in the spiritual life of the Order. Furthermore, dating back to the Order's earliest medical work, the reading of pious books to the sick and injured was considered an important part of their care.

Man sal daz ouch ahten, daz ein priester unde ein schulere alle sunnetage sprechen daz ambeht von dem tage oder von unser vrowen, eine epistelen unde daz ewangelium, da ez mit fugen gesin mac, an der stat, da daz meiste teil der brudere liget.

78

Care shall be taken for a patient's soul as well as his body . . . On Sundays the Epistles and Gospel shall be read to them.

There is no equivalent to this passage in the Templar Rule. The Teutonic Order's Rule #6 states twice the need for "great care for the welfare of the [patient's] soul"

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<sup>76</sup> Rule #42:3, The Rule of St. Benedict/1980, pp. 242-243.

<sup>77</sup> See Chapter 1 above.

<sup>78</sup> Law #12, Die Statuten, p. 69; Sterns, pp. 254-255.

and the concern is repeated again in Law #12.<sup>79</sup> In the years following the Fourth Lateran Council, such concern for spiritual nurturing can only have increased. "In regard to the sick, the Fourth Lateran emphasized the spiritual care of the soul rather than the physical care of the body, declaring that it is easier to look after a sick body if the soul is comforted first."<sup>80</sup>

If the reading of edifying literature was important in the caring for the physically infirm, it was also important in nurturing and reforming those who were morally weak. Law #38 states, for example, that a brother doing penance for a misdeed might, as an exception, be present with the other brothers when the word of God was being read.<sup>81</sup> This served as a part of his regimen of restitution.

A group which was particularly in need of moral education and re-education was that of the Order's conversi or half-brothers. All the military orders took

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<sup>79</sup> Rule #6, Die Statuten, pp. 32-34; Law #12, Die Statuten, p. 69.

<sup>80</sup> Sterns, p. 103.

Sacrum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio, Edidit Joannes Dominicus Mansi. Paris/Leipzig: H. Welter [Reproduction], 1903, c. 22 i Decretals V, t. 38, c. 13 (as cited by Sterns, p. 103).

<sup>81</sup> Law #38/10, Die Statuten, p. 85.

over the Cistercian innovation of admitting so-called half-brothers into their orders. Among the Cistercians, these men were peasants and common laborers who performed menial tasks for which the regular brothers had no time. Within the military orders, the half-brothers were the support servants for the heavily armed knights. They also swelled the ranks of the armed host as light skirmishers.

The half-brothers as often as not had questionable pasts, yet their services were highly prized. Periodically, the popes extended special dispensations to seamy elements of society if the men involved would agree to join military orders as half-brothers and travel to the frontiers of Christendom to fight the pagans. <sup>82</sup> This, in

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<sup>82</sup> Strehlke's Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici includes several such papal dispensations. In each papal offer, there is the proviso that the offender put himself at the disposal of the Teutonic Order.

Strehlke, #326 -- crimes against clerics and members of other orders

Strehlke, #340 -- flight from other orders

Strehlke, #400 -- minor crimes

Strehlke, #579 and #580 -- arson and robbery

Sterns points out a particularly telling passage in document #579, which is a letter from Pope Alexander IV to the Order.

Ex parte vestra fuit propositum coram nobis, quod nonnulli ex fratribus ordinis vestri, dum adhuc manerent in seculo, multis modis, sed precipue per incendia, rapinas et usuras personis quam pluribus

one move, helped to free normal society of trouble-makers and to reinforce the crusading effort. But, to cite Sterns' somewhat overstated assessment, "the Teutonic Order, aided by papal privileges, turned into a quasi-sanctuary for sinners and malefactors." <sup>83</sup> The Order's harsh Rule served to hold these ruffians in check; and unrelenting pedagogical reading, Order officials hoped, would serve to awaken within these crude men a moral sense of Christian duty.

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Let us pull together the interpretive assertions made in the preceding paragraphs of this chapter.

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dampna gravia intulerunt; propter quod humiliter petivistis, ut super hoc providere salubriter curamemus. Nos itaque devocionis vestre precibus annuentes presencium vobis auctoritate concedimus, ut satisfaccionem pro huiusmode dampnis et usuris debitam illis dumtaxat personis, que omnino sciri et inveniri non possunt, in subsidium terre sancte ac eciam Lyvonice et Pruscie, ubi fidei negocium per vos ad dei gloriam magnanimiter et potenter agitur, prout milius expedire videritis, convertatis.

You have laid before us the fact that not a few of the brothers in your Order, during the time they were leading secular lives, committed many grievous crimes, principally arson, rape and usury. Because of this, you have humbly petitioned that we remedy the matter constructively. Acceding to your valued devotion, we therefore grant you the authority to exact satisfaction (i.e., compensation) for the debt of damages owed to all those whom the perpetrators cannot know or find, converting it into support for the Holy Land and also for Livonia and Prussia. In those places you (the Order) may, in a way you deem most fit, use it effectively to the glory of God.

83 Sterns, Statutes, p. 111.

In the face of its crisis, the Teutonic Order returned to its Rule. From those passages uniquely its own and from those emanating from the Cistercians (i.e., independent of Templar associations), the Order struggled to recover a sense of purpose. Key to this was an affective spirituality which focused upon charismatic heroes of the Old Testament. Moving along a devotional path prepared by the Cistercians, the knight-brothers elevated their sense of themselves and their sense of purpose by defining themselves as New Maccabees -- soldiers sanctified by God.

The Biblical literature which the Order was to produce over the next three decades became the purveyor of this heightened self-identification. Middle High German Biblical translations along with didactic vernacular chronicles of the Order's history identified the German knights with Biblical heroes of old. Regular reading of this material became nothing short of an indoctrination of the warrior-monks into an ideal.<sup>84</sup> The ideal itself and

"Erwägen wir, dass bei den gemeinsamen Mahlzeiten der Ordensbrüder neben biblischen Perikopen, Legenden und Abschnitten aus den Statuten auch solche aus den Ordenschroniken zur Verlesung kamen, so begreifen wir, wie die Idee des Ordens bei den Brüdern gewissermassen ex officio immer wieder wach gehalten wurde."

the method of its promulgation, leaders could confidently assert, sprang directly out of their Cistercian past. This was a legacy of scrupulously orthodox Biblicism, historical awareness, affective spirituality and specialized vocation.

The message the Teutonic Order preached to its own members it also carried to its critics beyond the borders of Prussia. To these foes, the Order held out its literature as a powerful apologia -- a geistige Abwehr articulated in terms of a tradition against which those enemies could hardly argue.

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When we consider that the Order brothers at their common meals heard read to them, along with Biblical perikopes, legends and paragraphs from the Rule, also similar material out of their Order chronicles, then we come to understand how the idea of the Order was, essentially ex officio, kept alive among the brothers.

Bruno Schumacher, "Die Idee der geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter," Heidenmission und Kreuz-zgedanken in der deutschen Ostpolitik des Mittelalters, herausgegeben von Helmut Beumann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963), p. 381.



Chapter 3:  
A Survey of the Literature of the  
Teutonic Order

During its crisis period, the Teutonic Order produced eleven translations of Scripture. The Biblical books thus treated were: Judith, Esther, Revelation, Gospel of Nicodemus (apocryphal), Maccabees (I and II), Daniel, Job, Ezra-Nehemiah, Acts, the Prophets (run together as a single work) and a brief overview translation of the entire Old Testament. <sup>1</sup> During this same period, the Order also produced two other genres which were closely related to its primary Biblical literature. These were 1) translations of exemplary saints' lives and 2) chronicles of the Order's own heroic exploits in Prussia. <sup>2</sup>

An obvious methodological concern immediately arises when such a list is cited -- the unavoidable question being: what defines Deutschordensliteratur? Or, stated another way: what characteristics of the listed works set

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<sup>1</sup> One might also include here a late translation (1350-1370, i.e. well beyond our period) of Thomas Aquinas' Catena aurea. This work, in which Thomas shows himself to be, above all, a great compiler, is a synthesis of commentaries relating to the four Gospels.

<sup>2</sup> Another minor category of literature is the so-called Artes Literature or Fachliteratur. These were handbooks involving practical tasks. See below.

them apart as belonging together and as belonging to the Teutonic Order?

Happily, this fundamental issue was largely resolved and put to rest by industrious German scholars early in this century.<sup>3</sup> Essentially, these literary historians examined individual works with careful attention to pragmatic indicators of Order associations. The clustering of a number of these "indicators" around a given work led to its acceptance as a piece of Ordensliteratur. No one of these pointers, in itself, confirmed the status of a document, but several together weighed heavily in the balance of circumstantial evidence. The most important considerations were:<sup>4</sup>

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3 Some of the more important of these scholars were:

Walter Ziesemer, Karl Helm, Gerhard Eis, Herbert Grundmann, Franz Pfeifer, Philipp Strauch, Gustav Ehrismann, Arthur Hübner, Philipp Funk, Theodor Karsten, Max Töppen, Ernst Strehlke and Theodor Hirsch.

These scholars and others also performed the invaluable service of publishing most of the Order's works in exemplary critical editions, appearing in such series as the Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins zu Stuttgart, Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters and Altdeutsche Textbibliothek.

4 Nowhere have I found these "indicators" so named or as systematically laid out as I have done here. Yet the basic presuppositions, even if largely unstated, seem to have been shared by researchers.

- 1) Stated authorship by a member of the Teutonic Order.
- 2) Dedication of a work to the Order or the Order's grandmaster.
- 3) Official declaration of the work's being commissioned or planned by the Order.
- 4) References to the fact that a work was to be read aloud and hints that the hearers would be Order brothers.
- 5) References to Prussia as the place of authorship.
- 6) Use of the German vernacular, particularly with identifiable dialectal coloring and vocabulary characteristic of the Order and/or Prussia.
- 7) Explicit cross-references between works.
- 8) Identifiable, but undocumented copying from one work to another.
- 9) Works catalogued as having been in several of the Order's libraries. <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> This piece of evidence creates a particular problem. Two works, Pfaffe Konrad's Rolandslied and Rudolf von Ems's Barlaam, were extremely popular in the German East, although it is clear that they were brought in from outside Prussia and outside the Order. Yet one can easily understand why the story of Roland and stories of the crusading battles of Charlemagne would have been popular among the knight-monks, leading to their virtual adoption by the Order. One verse in Rolandslied (v. 8,079) actually lists the pagan Pruteni as savage enemies of Christendom. In their search for self-justification, this passage did not escape the notice of the Knights.

For more information on the importance of Barlaam and

10) Works bound together with other works known to belong to the Order.

11) Unity of theme and subject matter; nature of the Biblical book selected; explicit rejection of currently popular courtly themes.

With some works, the evidence was undeniable for association with the Teutonic Order; with others, the issue was not so cut and dried. Nonetheless, a general consensus did emerge and the category "Deutschordensliteratur" is now generally accepted in standard histories of German literature. <sup>6</sup>

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Rolandslied for the Teutonic Order, see:

F. Mann, "Das Rolandslied in seiner Beziehung zur Ostmark," Ostland 10 (1929), pp. 37-38.

Bruno Schumacher, "Die Idee der geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter," Heidenmission und Kreuzzuggedanke, herausgegeben von Helmut Beumann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963), p. 374 and p. 381

Elisabeth Franzel, "Barlaam und Josaphat," Stoffe der Weltliteratur (Stuttgart: Kröner Verlag, 1976), pp. 71-74.

<sup>6</sup> The most important examples of standard histories of German literature which include a special chapter on Deutschordensliteratur are:

a) Helmut Deboor, Die Deutsche Literatur im späten Mittelalter: Zerfall und Neubeginn (München: C. H. Beck, 1962), pp. 204-210; 513-520; 537-540.

b) Gustav Ehrismann, Die Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters (München: Beck, 1922-1935), Band 2, pp. 669-676.

c) Reallexikon der Deutschen Literaturgeschichte,

Before moving on to an overview of the Order's individual Biblical translations, something ought be said about the "non-Biblical" literature produced by the Order. Following the neat, yet somewhat misleading categories of the histories of German literature, the Order produced both 1) "spiritual" and 2) "secular" writings. To the spiritual literature belonged a) the Biblical translations of which we have been speaking, as well as b) saints' lives. To the secular literature belonged the chronicles of the Order. <sup>7</sup>

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The following is the accepted canon of the saints' lives produced by the Teutonic Knights:

- 1) Brother Philipp's Marienleben (approx. 1300).  
A life of Mary dedicated to the Teutonic Order and written by a Carthusian brother. <sup>8</sup>

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begründet von Paul Merker und Wolfgang Stammeler,  
herausgegeben von Werner Kohlschmidt und Wolfgang Mohr  
(Berlin: Walter de Gruyter and Co, 1955), Band 2, pp. 244-251.

For further works providing an overview of Deutschordensliteratur, see bibliograpy.

7 I. Spiritual literature

A. Biblical Translations

B. Saints' Lives

II. Secular chronicles

- 8) Philipps des Carthäusers Marienleben,

2) Legende der Heiligen Martina (circa 1295). Hugo von Langenstein, an Order brother, composed this life of an exemplary female saint. The work is rich in pious observations, spiritual admonitions and moralizing allegories. The most striking example is a 7,000-line allegorical excursus upon Martina's clothing. <sup>9</sup>

3) Das Väterbuch (Legends of the Fathers, circa 1300). This work was basically a translation and conflation of Jacobus de Voragine's Legenda aurea and Vitae patrum. It deals with the lives of early Christian hermits. <sup>10</sup>

4) Das Passional (circa 1300). A history of Mary, Jesus, the apostles and 75 saints. Several saints' lives are of particular relevance to the Teutonic Order: for example, St. Elizabeth and St. Barbara. <sup>11</sup> The tales are

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herausgegeben von Heinrich Rückert (Quedlinburg und Leipzig: Basse, 1853 / Bibliothek der deutschen Nationalalliteratur, 34).

<sup>9</sup> Hugo von Langenstein, Martina, herausgegeben von Adelbert von Keller (Stuttgart: Literarischer Verein, 1856 / Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins zu Stuttgart, 38).

<sup>10</sup> Das Väterbuch, herausgegeben von Karl Reissenberger (Berlin: Weidmann, 1914 / Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters, 22).

<sup>11</sup> Passional, Das Alte, Buch 1 und 2, herausgegeben von K. A. Hahn (Frankfurt: Druck und Verlag von Heinrich Ludwig Broenner, 1845).

Das Passional, Buch 3, herausgegeben und mit einem Glossar versehen von Fr. Karl Köpke (Quedlinburg: Basse, 1852 / Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1966 / Bibliothek der deutschen

skillfully arranged to be read individually or as part of an ongoing celebration of the Church Year.

5) Der Sünden Widerstreit (Struggle against Sins, approx. 1300). This is an allegorical poem of heroic, knightly resistance to evil.<sup>12</sup> "He who loves God," the author writes, "must be a knight against sin" (v. 436 ff.). Anticipating later theme development within Order literature, the author speaks of a "nuwe" knighthood (v. 3,466) and a "gute" and "gotliche" knighthood (v. 2,516).

6) Gedicht von siben Ingesigeln (Poem of the Seven Seals, circa 1325). This work is largely a translation of the anonymous Libellus septem Sigillorum, which treats the seven stages of Christ's life. Old Testament prefiguring of Christ and complaints about clerical abuses characterize both the original Latin work and its German translation.<sup>13</sup>

Not surviving as autonomous works, but embedded in

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Nationalliteratur, 32).

See Chapter 6 below for a treatment of Sts. Elizabeth and Barbara and their significance to the Teutonic Order in Prussia.

<sup>12</sup> Der Sünden Widerstreit, herausgegeben von Victor Zeidler. (Graz: Styria, 1892.)

<sup>13</sup> Tilos von Kulm, Gedicht Von siben Ingesigeln, herausgegeben von Karl Kochendorffer. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1907 / Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters, 9).

Order's chronicles are the lives of St. Barbara, St. Adelbert, St. Elizabeth and "der Litauer" (the Lithuanian). All of these later saints' lives are important because of their specific associations with the Teutonic Order in Prussia. <sup>14</sup>

As is clear from the titles, a neat demarcation between strictly Biblical works and "non-Biblical" works of the Order is impossible. Indeed, only the allegory Der Sünden Widerstreit and later saints' lives move away from the strictly Biblical milieu of Christ's passion and the heroism of his early followers.

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<sup>14</sup> More will be said concerning St. Elizabeth, St. Barbara and St. Adelbert in Chapter 6.

Meister Johannes Marienwerder recorded the Life of Dorothea of Montau long after our period of interest (approx. 1400). Though the work does reflect pride in a local saint and was written in the vernacular, Dorothea's background was that of the German burghers who, during her lifetime, were in continual conflict with the Teutonic Order.

Johannes Marienwerder, Vita Dorotheae Montoviensis, herausgegeben von Hans Westpfal (Köln: Böhlau, 1964).

The Theologia Deutsch, so beloved of Martin Luther, was a product of the Teutonic Order. However, it was a late composition coming out of the Frankfurt/Main Order house. It stood under the strong influence of the Rhineland mystics and the via moderna. Thus, captivating as this work is, it is of limited relevance to this study.

"Der Franckforter," Theologia Deutsch, Kritische Texausgabe, herausgegeben von Wolfgang von Hinten (München: Artemis Verlag, 1982).



In light of its subject matter and its general chronology of composition, the sweep of Deutschordens-literatur shows a purposeful and directed development. Historical books of the Old Testament provide the foundation. Statements in the Order's Book of Maccabees indicate that there existed a formal plan to translate the entire Old Testament into Middle High German.<sup>15</sup> Of primary importance to the Order were those books dealing with the Jewish exile and the post-exilic struggle to re-establish the Temple Cult in Jerusalem. To the Order knights, this period of Biblical history paralleled in a striking way their own efforts to establish Christian domination over Prussia.

The New Testament books which attracted the Order's interest were those involving the ongoing struggle of good against evil, light against darkness. The Gospel of Nicodemus and the Apokalypse showed this on a cosmic, eschatological plane and the Book of Acts showed this on a more practical, human plane.

Building on Old Testament and selected New Testament foundations, the saints' lives and the allegory Der Sünder Widerstreit affirmed the continuity of this struggle down

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<sup>15</sup> Das Makkabäerbuch v. 14,231 ff.

For a full description of this plan, see Chapter 4 below which treats the Makkabäerbuch in detail.

to the Order's own day. As will be seen, Sts. Barbara, Adelbert and Elizabeth all had close ties to the Teutonic Order and to the German East.

Finally, the Order's Prussian chronicles focused attention upon the Order itself as standing in direct continuity with illustrious Biblical predecessors. Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon terrae Prussiae (Chronicle of Prussia) is the great early account of the Order's conquest of Prussia. It was written in Latin in 1324 during the height of the Order's generation of crisis. Almost immediately, this work was translated into Middle High German by Nicholas von Jeroschin as Di Kronike von Pruzinlant. These chronicles described the Order brothers as being like unto the Maccabees of old, the very pillars of the God's earthly temple, who carried on God's age-old struggle against the hosts of the Devil on earth.

Moving from an overview of the entire Deutschordens-literatur, it is now appropriate to focus upon the Order's strictly Biblical works. Detailed examination will, to be sure, serve to disrupt the all-too-tidy outline just completed. But, by the same token, careful study will demonstrate how each work, in its own way, purveyed the Biblical confidence and sense of purpose of the military-religious order which produced it.

Evangelium Nicodemi

Translations and running commentaries on the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus and the Book of Revelation were the earliest Biblical works of the Teutonic Order. Their author is known. He was Heinrich Hesler (Apok. v. 154), <sup>16</sup> a Thuringian, who apparently spent the latter part of his life in Prussia as a lay brother within Order circles ("uns laien," Apok. v. 6,629 ff.). From a strictly literary and philological point of view, Hesler's works are probably the most significant ones produced by the Order. From the political/historical perspective of this study, however, they are less important because of their early and transitional nature. The Gospel of Nicodemus has been dated at around 1292. The Apokalypse comes somewhat later. <sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Citations from the Apokalypse are taken from:

Die Apokalypse Heinrichs von Hesler, herausgegeben von Karl Helm. (Berlin: Weidemann, 1907 / Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters, 8).

<sup>17</sup> In his Apokalypse, Hesler refers to the three crusading Orders: the Templars, the Knights of St. John and the Teutonic Order (Apok. v. 5,393). Since nothing special is said about the Templars, the work must have preceded the cataclysmic fall of the Templars in 1312.

The apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus was extremely popular during the Middle Ages. The two well-known parts of the work are the so-called "Gesta Pilati" and, more important, "Descensus ad infernos." As Hesler and the Order focused upon Nicodemus, they carried on and reinforced pioneering Cistercian interest in it. Hesler's translation brings out a Cistercian affirmation of purgation and salvation in the face of struggle. Beyond this, Hesler also introduces cultural adaptations and themes which went on to characterize later Order translations.

The trial of Christ before Pilate, for example, clearly reflects an adaptation to German legal customs. Mention of Luke 22: 38 brings on an excursus (Nic. v. 533-556) <sup>18</sup> concerning the "two swords," where an equal balance between powers spiritual and temporal -- not a preponderance of the spiritual -- is seen as the ideal. Anti-Jewish and anti-heretical impulses and the theme compelle entrare emerge in several places. <sup>19</sup> Hesler

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<sup>18</sup> Citations from Nicodemus are taken from:

Heinrich Hesler, Das Evangelium Nicodemi, herausgegeben von Karl Helm (Tübingen: Literarischer Verlag, 1902 / Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins zu Stuttgart, 224).

<sup>19</sup> The phrase "Compelle entrare" -- force (them) to enter -- is drawn from Luke 14: 23. This is the parable of the master who instructed his servant to force guests

introduces a Busspredigt (exhortation to repentance) directed at the Jews (Nic. v. 3,724-3,777) and later exhorts Christians to deal sternly with Jews (Nic. v. 4,687 ff.). Still later (Nic. v. 5,134-5,144), he spells out specific measures.

Ja stet geschriben zware:  
 "Compelle intrare!"  
 "Trib daz sie dar in gen,  
 die dem gelouben wider steh!"  
 und warte, wes die schrift da ie:  
 "Schelt, bitte, drowe, vle,  
 wenz sie sich bekeren!"  
 Di pfaffen suln sie leren,  
 die leien suln sie triben,  
 daz sie stete dar an bliben.  
 Darumme segent man u die swert.

indeed, it is written: "Force them to enter!" "Drive them to go in, those who resist the Faith!" Attend to what Scripture commands: Scold, entreat, ask, plead to make them convert. The priests should teach them; laymen should pressure them that they knuckle down. To this end swords are blessed.

Nic. v. 5,134-5,143

The passage just cited has little or no basis in the Vulgate source, whereas the dramatic dispute between Pilate and the Jews in Chapter 12 of the Vulgate is not included in Hesler's translation. This debate portrays the Jews somewhat sympathetically, alluding to the long centuries that they had waited patiently for their Messiah. For this reason, apparently, Hesler chose to omit it.

Going beyond the Jews, Hesler's commentary mentions the legend of Gog and Magog (Nic. v. 4,725 ff.).<sup>20</sup> Here

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to attend his feast so that his house might be full. "Compelle entrare" has been used throughout Christian history as a Biblical justification of forced conversions.

<sup>20</sup> Vulgate, Revelation 20: 7. The first Biblical

and in later works, the Teutonic Order took up the medieval legend according to which Alexander the Great had walled up these wild peoples behind the Caspian Gates. Here the barbarous hordes await the end of time, when they will burst forth in a final cataclysm of death and destruction. Parallels are obvious between the tribes of Gog and Magog and the pagan clans of the Pruteni and the Lithuanians. There is also a deliberate juxtaposing of Alexander and his army with the grandmaster and the brother knights. <sup>21</sup>

At the conclusion of the Gospel of Nicodemus, Hesler mentions the miraculous legends of Veronica, Tiberius and Vespasian (Nic. v. 3,714). This continuation and extension of Biblical narrative down to the very threshold of its own age became characteristic of later Order literature.

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mention of "Gog of the Land of Magog" is in Ezekiel 38: 2 and 39: 1. See also Chapter 4 below.

<sup>21</sup> For further discussion concerning the medieval Alexander, see Chapter 4 below in the context of a treatment of Alexander in the Book of Maccabees.

### The Apokalypse

Hesler's Apokalypse comprises 23,000 verses of translation and running commentary.<sup>22</sup> To this difficult and visionary Biblical text, Hesler brought the same surprisingly sophisticated knowledge of popular theology which he had brought to the Gospel of Nicodemus. Cross references to Nicodemus are frequent.<sup>23</sup> Hesler's concern here with death and the end of time is raised to an even higher pitch than in Nicodemus. Indeed, Hesler's treatment of Revelation 12: 9 - 21: 27 is not a translation at all. Instead of translating and narrowly explicating these chapters, Hesler embarks rather upon a thorough treatment of the Anti-Christ and final judgment, which is based only loosely upon the actual Biblical wording (Apok. v. 17,751-20,472). Hesler's flights of speculation, based as they are on Revelation, that most dramatic of all Biblical books, are in fact so ventured that all Order writers after him had to show particular

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<sup>22</sup> This fills over three hundred double-columned pages in a modern edition. By comparison, Goethe's entire Faust is about two thirds this length.

<sup>23</sup> For example: In his Apokalypse (Apok. v. 2,114 ff.), Hesler associates the double edged sword which proceeds from God's mouth (Revelation 1: 16) with a spiritual sword. The wording is strikingly similar to that in the Gospel of Nicodemus (Nic. v. 546 ff.), where the theme under discussion (Luke 22: 38) is also a spiritual sword. See above.

caution in distancing themselves from many of his statements. Hesler's Trinity, for example, seems to stress diversity at the expense of triune unity, and one senses the influence of Joachim of Fiore in Hesler's delineation of human Heilsgeschichte. Among later writers, ponderous evocations of a scrupulously orthodox Trinity bespeak translators' looking back over their shoulders at Hesler's possible excesses.

As storm clouds gathered about the Order, its familiar pattern of conservatism and meticulous orthodoxy quickly became a hallmark. Even Hesler himself, in the latter parts of the Apokalypse, is already pulling back from earlier positions, especially those propounded in his more youthful Nicodemus. He stresses the Church's sacrament of penance as necessary to salvation (Apok. v. 20,651), stepping back from remarks in Nicodemus which implied that formal penance, under certain circumstances, might not be necessary (Nic. v. 1,872 ff.). In this, Hesler himself becomes an orthodox apologist defying the Joachimists.

The Apokalypse again raises the issue of "convert or destroy" (compelle entrare) in relation to the Jews and the pagans (Apok. v. 4,714 ff.; v. 5,652-5,680). Hesler remains prophetic in his exhortations to the Order to crush the foes of Christianity, but he speaks in a more



conciliatory way concerning faltering Christian brothers. New in the Apokalypse is Hesler's expressed concern for a high standard of morality within his Order. While praising the clergy and the institution of monasticism, Hesler warns monks against having a too exalted view of themselves and their positions (Apok. v. 6,532 ff.). All Christians, in his view, stand as equals before God. He then goes on to defend the dignity and worth of secular men and the God-ordained institution of marriage (Apok. v. 6,532 ff.). Hesler is certainly speaking here to the tensions then existing within the Order between the full and the half-brothers.

As he had done in Nicodemus, Hesler speaks in the Apokalypse of such moral issues as free will, predestination and why God might allow evil in the world. Expanding upon his remarks in Nicodemus concerning Christ's words, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Nic. v.1,930-2,165), Hesler's tone is now more subdued. He allows sources of unquestioned orthodoxy to speak through him: Glossa Ordinaria, Beda Venerabilis, Haimo von Halberstadt, Gregory, Ambrose, Honorius of Autun and particularly Peter Comestor.

For sheer literary talent and independence of expression, Heinrich Hesler was never equaled by the Order writers who followed him. All of the major themes which

Order literature went on to develop are already present in the Gospel of Nicodemus and the Apokalypse. But succeeding writers were also under growing pressures which Hesler had not known. In the face of mounting crisis, Order writers increasingly subordinated their own personalities and creativity to the needs of their embattled Order.

Judith

Chronologically, the Book of Judith is the next Biblical translation to merit our attention. The Order's Judith states as a part of its conclusion (Jud. v. 2,764), that it was composed in the year 1304.<sup>24</sup> This places it after the Gospel of Nicodemus and perhaps slightly before the Apokalypse. Characteristic vocabulary and the transmission of the sole surviving manuscript argue for its being a work of the Teutonic Order. Furthermore, it shows strong influence from the Passional and Väterbuch and is itself alluded to three times in Jeroschin's Kronike von Pruzinlant. The unnamed author states that he is translating Judith because of the wish of "ey bruder min und vrunt in Gote" (Jud. v. 2,293-2,294, also Jud. v. 73) to have a work from Holy Scripture.

Judith is, in many ways, a prototypical work of the Teutonic Order. Though the story and character of Judith

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24 Citations are quoted from:

Judith, herausgegeben von Rudolf Palgen (Halle: Niemeyer, 1924 / Altdutsche Textbibliothek, 18).

The earliest extant manuscript reads 1254 as the author's stated date of composition (Jud. v. 2,767). Helm has convincingly demonstrated from internal evidence, however, that a scribal error changed the actual year 1304 to the incorrect and indeed impossible year 1254.

Karl Helm und Walter Ziesemer, Die Literatur des Deutschen Ordens (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz, 1951), p. 72.

had long been popular throughout Europe, <sup>25</sup> and though earlier Middle High German translations already existed, <sup>26</sup> the Knights took up Judith and made her truly their own. <sup>27</sup> The Book of Judith went far in the direction of satisfying knightly tastes for heroism and adventure, while at the same time inculcating appropriate moral lessons. <sup>28</sup> The German author, for example, uses

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<sup>25</sup> An excellent general book on Judith and her significance during the Middle Ages is:

Edna Purdie, Judith in German and English Literature (Paris: H. Champion, 1927).

<sup>26</sup> These were the so-called Older Judith and Younger Judith, both of which were composed in the Rhineland.

See: W. Schroder, "Die ältere Judith" and "Die jüngere Judith," Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon, gegründet von Wolfgang Stammer, zweite Ausgabe herausgegeben von Kurt Ruh (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1978-), Band 1, pp. 289-294 and Band 4, pp. 923-926.

Hans Steinger, "Judith," Die Deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon, gegründet von Wolfgang Stammer und fortgeführt von Karl Langosch (Berlin und Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1933-1955), Band 2, pp. 717-721.

<sup>27</sup> Deboor argues that the theme and even the Order's Judith itself were introduced from the outside.

Helmut Deboor, Deutsche Literatur, pp. 489-490.

Steinger speculates that traveling poets introduced Judith into Prussia.

Steinger, "Judith," Verfasserlexikon (1933), Band 2, p. 719.

<sup>28</sup> The warrior-monks of the Teutonic Order were not

fulsome German to translate the Vulgate's description of Judith and her people's reveling in booty and spoils (Judith 15: 11-12 / Jud. v. 2,219-2,238). But this frenzied celebration is embedded in the framing context of disciplined and pious submission to God's will.

The Order's translation of Judith is generally conservative and accurate, allowing the power of the story to carry itself. Where the Younger Judith skips a prayer (Vulgate, Judith 9: 2-19) and a song of praise (Vulgate, Judith 16: 1-21), the Order's Judith scrupulously includes them. The Word of God had to be translated correctly. And, in its German form as well as in its Latin original, Order scribes stood under obligation to copy Judith correctly.

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the first to discover Judith as the embodiment of militant zeal for the Faith. In his Speculum Ecclesiae, Honorius of Autum (Augustodunensis) wrote of Judith "Omnium ore usque hodie laude digna triumphat" / She triumphs, worthy of everyone's praise down to the present day.

Patrologiae latinae cursus completus (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1844-), Volume 172: 896.

Ich bit ouch vlizeclich hie na:  
 Wer diz buch im schriben la,  
 Daz er vlizic blibe  
 Daz man ez rechte schribe.  
 Man mac verkeren in kurtze zit  
 Da manic sin dar nider lit.  
 Da von so bit ich sere  
 daz man ez icht verkere!  
 Wer des mit vlize neme war,  
 Dem tilie Got sine sunde gar  
 Und vure von im den ewigen vluch  
 Und schribe en in der lebenden  
 buch!

I implore earnestly: may he who  
 copies this book be diligent that  
 he write correctly. One can  
 quickly and easily make mistakes.  
 Therefore, I earnestly entreat  
 that one work in this way. He who  
 so industriously labors, may God  
 erase his sins and keep him from  
 eternal damnation and enter him  
 in the Book of Life.

Jud. v. 2,753-2,7764

These admonishing verses bring immediately to mind similar passages in the Order's Rule <sup>29</sup> as well as the Order's general legacy of Cistercian uniformitas. <sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, the translator could not resist making some adjustments to the text. He abbreviates sharply, for example, the original's lengthy descriptions of the heroine's pulchritudinous beauty (Vulgate, Judith 10: 1-4 and much of Chapter 16). He apparently felt that dwelling on this topic would be a dangerous tease to the men.

Jerome's "Introduction" to Judith stands at the beginning of the Order's translation, apparently as an assumed part of the canonical text. Jerome's influence is further felt in those few insertions of running commentary which Judith does have. These are etymologies taken from

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29 Law 27. See Chapter 2 above.

30 See Chapter 2 passim.

Jerome's De nominibus hebraicus and De situ et nominibus locorum hebraicorum.<sup>31</sup> Following Jerome, for example, Egypt is construed to mean "darkness" (Jud. v. 2,405-2,410 and 2,485) and Israel means "God sees our thoughts" (Jud. v. 2,711-2,712). But the German author's own translations of Latin titles often introduce a more subtle and effective tendentiousness. He renders these terms into German in such a way as to bring them into a world more comprehensible to his warrior-monks. Holophernes is a "hauptmann" (Jud. v. 2,565), Achior is a "herzoge" (Jud. v. 607), and a priest is a "pfaffe" (Jud. v. 499, 539) and a "himmel vurst" (Jud. v. 2,491).<sup>32</sup>

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Beyond his hortative prologue (Jud. v. 101-126) and conclusion (Jud. v. 2,535-2,814), the translator breaks his German version in only two places. The first (Jud. v. 621-679) is a paragraph of direct and personal encouragement to his "brother knight." The second (Jud. v. 2,293-2,534) is a mystical-allegorical excursus on the distinction between earthly and divine wisdom. In this

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<sup>31</sup> In Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 23: 815-975.

<sup>32</sup> As another example of cultural accommodation, Purdie points out that "the lists of weapons and musical instruments are thoroughly nationalized."

Purdie, Judith, p. 37.

context, the brother knight is exhorted to guard his honor and the "honor of God" (Jud. v. 2,505-2,506).<sup>33</sup> This conflating of theological and chivalric language went on to become a hallmark of Deutschordensliteratur. The allegorical excursus also contains several combative images which appear again in later exegetical commentaries of the Teutonic Order. They include:

1) A wild bear (the Devil) who must be confronted and fought as he seeks to ravage God's vineyard (Jud. v. 640 ff.)

2) The threat of a lion; the need of a Samson to fight it (Jud. v. 651 ff.).

3) Exhortations to be "Gotes degen" (Jud. v. 2,461 -- God's servant; but also God's dagger).

4) Nebuchadnezzar, i.e. the Devil leading his army, i.e. a host of demons (Jud. v. 2,550 ff. -- In Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon, this typological equation will be Sventopelk of Pomerelia = the Devil; Sventopelk also

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33

Daz du der eren nicht ergebess  
Und ot nach Gotes eren strebes.

Jud. v. 2,505-2,506

May you not give up your honor and may you strive toward God's honor.



appears as a lion [#2 above]). <sup>34</sup>

5) God as the hunter who is in pursuit of souls (Jud. v. 2,515).

The most telling typological equation of all, however, is the implicit interpretation of Judith as a prefiguration of Mary, the gentle, yet mighty Protectress of the Order. <sup>35</sup> In the Teutonic Order's treatment of

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<sup>34</sup> See Chapters 5 and Chapter 6 below.

<sup>35</sup>

Gedenke doch wie deme her  
Niemant widerstunt mit wer  
Untz daz ez begonde nahen da  
Deme lande Judea.  
Da sazen die Israhelen:  
Daz sint getruwe selen  
Die me clagen Gotes e  
Zu storen dan ir selbes we.  
Da wart al daz her geschant  
Durch Judith des wibes hant.  
Die sluc nider sunder wan  
Holofernem den houbtman.

Jud. v. 2,697-2,706

Just think how no one could stand up to that army with weapons until it began to approach the Land of Judea. There sat the Israelites. Those were true souls who were more concerned about God's honor (law) than their own lives. The (attacking) army was humiliated at Judith's hand. She cut down their leader, Holofernes.

"Dominus autem omnipotens nocuit eum, et tradidit eum in manus feminae, et confodit eum."

Judith 16: 7

But the almighty Lord hath struck him, and hath delivered him into the hands of a woman, and hath slain him.

Esther, this equating of an Old Testament heroine with the Order's Protectress becomes absolutely explicit.

HESTER

The Order's translation of the Book of Esther was completed by an unknown Order cleric during the first decade of the 14th century.<sup>36</sup> Theme, vocabulary, tradition of textual transmission and clear influences from the Passional and Väterbuch establish Hester as a work of the Teutonic Order.<sup>37</sup> The translator holds closely to the Vulgate text, showing editorial whim in only a few places. He does, however, drop some verses when they are repetitive or lack dramatic import. As examples of omissions may be mentioned: the names of Haman's nine sons (Vulgate, Esther 9: 7) and the description of the origins of the Jewish festival of Purim (Esther 9: 16 ff.). Furthermore, in one place where the Vulgate praises Esther's pulchritudinous beauty, the German author writes:

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<sup>36</sup> Caliebe, editor of the latest edition of Hester, argues for an earlier date, but he is not convincing.

Caliebe, p. 312 ff. See bibliographic reference, note #38 below.

<sup>37</sup> See Helm und Zieseimer, Die Literatur des Deutschen Ritterordens, p. 74 ff. and Caliebe, p. 312 ff. for further evidence.

Wir lazen hie der rede ein teil,  
Wand sie werden vil zu geil.

We shall drop part of the speech  
here because it becomes too  
lascivious.

(Hs. v. 387-388) 38

The Knights, in other words, ought not be titillated by  
such a passage. 39

As significant as the deletions are the additions to  
the Biblical text. In a few places, for example, the  
author-translator draws upon Peter Comestor's Historia  
Scholastica and Josephus' Antiquities to fill out his  
story. Typical here is an inserted, non-Biblical  
explanation of why Haman hated the Jews (Hs. v. 542-557),  
which serves to explain Haman's demand before the Persian  
king that the Jews be slaughtered (Hs. 565-588).

Deletions and additions, however, serve more than  
simply to organize and smooth out a Hebrew story to German  
tastes. First through Josephus and then on his own, the  
Hester translator subtly changes matters in order to bring  
a secular, patriotic story of the ancient Jews sub specie  
aeternitatis. A good example of this is an added remark

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38 Citations from Hester are taken from:

Hester. Eine poetische Paraphrase des Buches Esther  
aus dem Ordensland Preussen, herausgegeben von Manfred  
Caliebe (Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1985 / Quellen und  
Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, 21).

39 This same squeamishness has been noted above in  
the Judith translation.

(Hs. v. 1,628-1,635) to the effect that, because of the wondrous workings of God, an attack upon the Jews by their enemy turns against this very enemy himself:

Sus karte gotes rat her um  
des viendes rat den er treip,  
wand er gar underwegen bliep.  
die not die er den juden bot  
erwarb im selben sulchen tot.

God's design so turns about the  
schemes of the enemy that the  
enemy stops in his tracks, and  
the suffering he sought to visit  
upon the Jews he himself inherits  
in death.

(Hs. v. 1,628-1,632)

Only in his prologue (Hs. v. 1-58) and epilogue (Hs. 1,945-2,015) does the German author speak for himself. And even here, his remarks are within the strict conventions of the devotional writing of his day. Nonetheless, the author offers telling hints concerning his knightly-monkish world and the crisis with which his Order was struggling. Christ's name is invoked to guide the writer's literary efforts, but the title of his Lord is that of a military leader in an ethos of knightly Treu:

ihesu getruwer leitesman,  
swer dich zu geleite hat  
stete an aller siner tat,  
dem wirt ein gut ende.

Jesus, devoted liege, he who  
holds You steadfastly as a  
companion in all his deeds, to  
him will come a happy end.

(Hs. v. 8-11)

Justifying himself for translating the Bible into German, the Order poet mentions sympathetically the "tummen man" (ignorant man, Hs. v. 42) who cannot understand the Latin Bible, i.e. the unlettered man of his Order. The author's purpose is to teach, not to show off

his theological knowledge. Biblical Good News, in his view, ought not remain hidden.

den guten sal man schriben  
in allen zungen die schrift.

One ought write the good of the  
Scriptures in all languages.

Hs. v. 54-55

The epilogue to Hester (Hs. v. 1,945-2,016) is a prayer directed to Mary, the Protectress of the Order. Typological parallels serve to transform further a conventional prayer into a passage transparent to the Order in crisis. In an absolutely unambiguous way, Esther is equated to Mary and Ahasuerus to Christ :

daz wir . . .  
unsr hester anschrien,  
ich meine die lieben marien,  
daz sie den kunic assuerum,  
den edelen iesum christum,  
vor uns getruwelichen bite  
daz uns sine helfe wone mite

We cry to Esther, that is, sweet  
Mary, in order that She might  
plead before King Ahasuerus (i.e.  
the noble Jesus Christ) that His  
help might abide with us.

Hs. v. 1,948-1,956

Mary, "our Esther" of the Order knights, was always the divine personage invoked by late medieval man when his cause seemed hopeless.<sup>40</sup> At the time the nameless cleric translated Hester, the Teutonic Order saw itself on trial as a misunderstood and persecuted group, similar to the Children of Israel exiled in Babylon. Fair and gracious Queen Esther was the perfect prototype of the Knights'

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<sup>40</sup> For a splendid example of this from the tradition of the Teutonic Order, see Conclusion below.

heavenly Queen, who pleaded the case of Her chosen clients. Mary pleaded before Her Son and before her Son's vicar on earth, the Roman pontiff, to whom enemies had brought baleful misrepresentations and accusations.

Wand unser argen viende craft  
die wollen uns berouben  
der minne und des gelouben  
und an der sele tot irslan  
ob in die state wirt verlan.

Because the power of our vicious  
enemy seeks to deprive us of love  
and faith and strike death to the  
soul if we are left alone.

Hs. v. 1,960

Esther's joyous success prefigured the divinely ordained success which awaited the Teutonic Order under Mary's -- "our Esther's" (unsre Hester) -- protection.

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The Book of Esther was not a well-known or influential Scripture during the European Middle Ages. Its general popularity came only centuries later in the Baroque art of the Counter Reformation. Yet, because of the striking parallels to its own plight, the Teutonic Order discovered and cherished this dramatic story of the Jewish heroine. That the Book of Esther did not fade in the consciousness of Western Christendom and that it finally won full canonical recognition at the Council of Trent is attributable in no small part to the Biblical legacy of the Teutonic Order.

Hiob

The Book of Job was translated in the year 1338 by an Order brother in Prussia and explicitly dedicated to Grandmaster Dietrich von Altenburg (1,335-1,341; Hiob v. 15,526).<sup>41</sup> The author nowhere identifies himself, but the dedication, the document tradition, theme, meter and style of the work all point to the Teutonic Order, as does a specific reference to it in Jeroschin's Kronike von Pruzinlant.<sup>42</sup> What is more, an epilogue to the work (to be examined presently -- Hiob v. 15,525 ff.) praises the Teutonic Order by name.

The Book of Job stands as an undeniable example of Deutschordensliteratur, yet a puzzling question arises: why would the knights have selected Job? Does Job in any way tie in with the political and social concerns of Order literature? Careful examination, as it turns out, uncovers solid reasons why the story of Job's suffering was relevant to the knights and why it merited their choice for translation and commentary.

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41 Die mitteldeutsche poetische Paraphrase des Buches Hiob, herausgegeben von Theodor E. Karsten (Berlin: Weidmann, 1910 / Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters, 21).

42 Nicolaus von Jeroschin, "Kronike von Pruzinlant," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, p. 518.



To begin with, the Book of Job was immensely popular during the Middle Ages and, indeed, its popularity extended back into canonical Scripture. Job is cited in the Books of Ezekiel, Tobit <sup>43</sup> and the Epistle of James. <sup>44</sup> All three of these citing Scriptures allude to

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43 Liber Tobiae, in the Vulgate, narrates the story of Tobias the Elder and Tobias the Younger. The Douay-Rheims English version calls this the Book of Tobias. Protestants, treating this as an apocryphal book, have traditionally translated the title as the Book of Tobit, which recounts the lives of Tobit (the father) and Tobias (the son).

44 Ezekiel (Ez.14: 12-14 and 19-20) lists Noah, Daniel and Job as three great exemplars of righteousness.

"Now this trial the Lord therefore permitted to happen to him (Tobit), that an example might be given to posterity of his patience, as also of holy Job . . . For as the kings insulted over holy Job, so his [Tobit's] relations and kinsmen mocked at his life.

Tobit 2: 12 and 15.

Burying the dead, respectful treatment of those departed and promises of life after death are all stressed in Tobit. This accounts for the immense popularity of Tobit among the Teutonic Knights.

"Take, my brethren, for an example of suffering evil, of labour and patience, the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we account them blessed who have endured. You have heard of the patience of Job, and you have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is merciful and compassionate."

James 5: 10-11

There was also an important apocryphal scripture during the Middle Ages entitled The Testing of Job. It was extremely popular.

Interest in Job increased as the crusaders (among

Job in the context of their praise of good works and perseverance. Already in James, the roots of Job's medieval reputation are clear -- a reputation cemented permanently by Gregory the Great's immensely popular Moralia on the Book of Job .

Job was the patient protagonist in the face of adversity. He was the warrior, scarred yet victorious, who vanquished evil and vice.<sup>45</sup> Job was also the physician who boldly confronted physical infirmity -- he was Christ's predecessor in the Savior's role as Christus Medicus. Job was revered as a man of healthy and authentic emotions. In our modern parlance, Job was a vitally alive man who was "in touch with his inner feelings."<sup>46</sup>

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them the Order knights) brought back from the East another strand of Job's legacy. This was Job's association with Levantine asceticism.

For discussions of this and related topics, see:

Lawrence L. Bessermann, The Legend of Job in the Middle Ages (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 34, 57, 75 and 111.

<sup>45</sup> In Prudentius' Psychomadia, Job is the silent and battered warrior. Pointed out by Besserman, Legend of Job, p. 69 ff.

<sup>46</sup> Clearly, medieval man did not assess his life in popularized, clinical terms as we are wont to do in the late twentieth century. Nevertheless, medieval man did betray hints of his emotional being as he mused upon Job's fate.

For some brief reflections upon this topic, see Helm

As an outgrowth of all this, and of great significance to medieval man, Job became the prophet par excellence of the afterlife. Taking its cue from Gregory's Moralia, the Office for the Dead cites Job 19: 25-27 and Job 14: 10-15.<sup>47</sup> Moderns perpetuate this tradition of linking Job to the promise of eternal life not only in the Office for the Dead, but also in our yearly hearing of Job's words in Handel's Messiah.<sup>48</sup> Though contemporary exegetes deny that these passages originally referred to a life after death, the Order brothers, along with others of their period, were

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und Ziesemer, Literatur, p.113.

A good, emotionally-charged passage in the Order's translation may be found in Hiob v. 5,037-5,044.

<sup>47</sup> According to modern exegesis, Job as cited and interpreted in the liturgy, is mistranslated and misinterpreted. (Also: based upon Job 34: 15, "Remember man that thou art dust.")

Modern and earlier translations are conveniently cited and analyzed by Besserman, Legend of Job, p. 27 ff.

All of the passages under discussion clearly show that Jerome either misunderstood the Hebrew or willfully read Christian presuppositions about eternal life into the text. But Christians were quick to embrace the story of Job in the tendentious form in which St. Jerome gave it to them.

<sup>48</sup> For a treatment of these particular passages, see:

J. Prado, "La Perspectiva Escatológica en Job 19: 25-27" Estudios Bíblicos 25 (1966), pp. 5-39.

convinced that they did. <sup>49</sup>

The Ordensritter, whose lives were daily at risk, thirsted for affirmations and promises of hope in this life and the next. Job, as the steadfast combatant for the good, as physician to the sick and injured, and as guarantor of life after death, captivated the imaginations of the knight-monks.

The author of Hiob provides extensive commentary passages along with his translation of Scripture. The commentary begins with the author's introduction (Hiob v. 269-450) and it continues intermittently down through the rest of the text. The author takes a great deal of material directly from Gregory's Moralia, especially in Chapter 1 (Hiob v. 489 ff.). He also, probably through secondary sources, draws upon Ambrose and Augustine. Intermixing translation and lively commentary, the author makes a non-epic work more engaging to his hearers. God, he is sure, speaks through Holy Scripture (Hiob v. 209 ff.), and allows Scripture to be elucidated through glossing and explicating by pious and learned men. Since normal glosses are often too elaborate and extensive for

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<sup>49</sup> On the popular level, the common folk went so far as to invoke Job in charms against worms. See Besterman, Legend of Job, p. 65 quoting:

Lucille Pinto, "The Worm Charm in the Middle Ages," University of Chicago Dissertation, 1969.

his hearers -- "der glosen, want ir ist zu vil" (Hiob v. 494) -- the translator choses to keep his comments brief and to the point: "Ich will lichtlich und slecht den text, mag ich, uz legen" (Hiob v. 495-496). His general sense of self-confidence and authority in these remarks seems to indicate that the writer was an Order priest. Hiob, throughout, adheres closely to the Vulgate text and its translator conscientiously tries to return to the Vulgate after each "lichtlich und schlecht" excursus. Of the entire Biblical Book of Job, only part of Chapter 27 is omitted.

The author's initial, orderly interpretation of Job and his trials follows Gregory the Great's four senses of the Holy Word -- historico, allegorico, morali, spirituali sensu. But this theological rigor quickly vanishes after Chapter One. Abandoning all proclaimed intentions, the translator-exegete slides into subjective moralizing. Text and commentary often find themselves inextricably intertwined. Since Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica does not deal with Job, some have claimed to see the mark of Nicholas of Lyra in the glosses of Hiob. This, however, is highly improbable for chronological reasons, since Lyra's Postilla was edited and published only after

the death of Nicholas in 1340. 50

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The final verses of the Order's Book of Job (Hiob v. 15,511-15,565) are a prayer of thanksgiving to Mary as protectress of the Order and a panegyric of praise for Grandmaster Dietrich von Alterburg. Here, more than anywhere else in the book, the author's knightly spirit shines forth. The grandmaster is praised more for his fighting prowess than for any gentle, Christian virtues.

Er was manheit und wisheit vol  
Und verstund den Orden wol. . .  
Er hatte eynes lewen mut.

He was full of virility and  
wisdom and he understood the  
Order well. . . He was a  
lionheart.

Hiob v. 15,533-11,136

Not content with these general words of praise, the Order priest goes on to narrate the specific military accomplishments of this great leader. In his first year

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50 F. Vernet, "Lyra, Nicolas de," Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, sous la direction de A. Vacant et E. Mangenot (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ane, 1926-27), Volume 9, pp. 1,410 ff.

Wilhelm Gerhard, the editor to the Order's late work Historien der Alden E (circa 1350), argues convincingly against any significant influence of Nicolas of Lyra upon the Biblical works of the Teutonic Order. "Einleitung," pp. lii-liiii. See note #90 below for a full bibliographic citation.

T. E. Karsten, the editor of Hiob, is convinced that Lyra did indeed influence the author of Hiob. Karsten's "Einleitung" p. xliii and footnotes are laced with alleged cross-references to Lyra's Postilla. This enthusiasm for Nicolaus of Lyra is to be rejected.

as grandmaster, Dietrich led a victorious campaign against the Lithuanians, during which he captured Pilen (Hiob v. 15,538-15,543) and established a fort on the Memel (Hiob v. 15,544-15,549). These actions successfully blocked further incursions by the Lithuanians into Order territory.

Der selbe meister mit witzzen  
den Littown menlichen hat  
Ab gezogen das virde rat,  
Daz sy nicht mugen reysen me  
Als sy dicke phlogen e;

With cunning that same master  
boldly drove out the Lithuanians  
so that they might no more raid  
as they had freely done before.

(Hiob. v. 15,550-15,555)

Moving from praise of the indomitable leader, the poem next focuses upon the soldiery who made Dietrich's triumphs possible: the rank and file of the Teutonic Order.

Man suchet vorest und schust  
Mit heldes hant, mit mannes  
craft,  
Man stritet und hat riterschaft,  
Daz man ircryge vride,  
Als di weysen sain geschide,  
zu vuze und zu pherden.

They struggle so hard with heroic  
hand and manly power. They fight  
and play the warrior in order to  
win peace. For this reason, they  
work to become adept on foot and  
on horseback.

Hiob v. 2,362-2,367

If the Order's selection of the Book of Job for special attention seems, at first blush, strange to the modern reader, the concluding section of Hiob serves to underscore the anomaly. Nevertheless, the Biblical literature of the Teutonic Order had a logic of its own. According to it Job, the valiant and persevering fighter,

physician and prophet of the afterlife, stood appropriately shoulder-to-shoulder with the grandmaster of the Teutonic Order at the head of a warlike band of knight-monks.



Daniel

The translation of the Book of Daniel <sup>51</sup> is a work of central significance in the corpus of Deutschordens-literatur. Only the Order's Maccabee translation, to which Daniel is closely related, looms larger as a work of self-defense and self-justification. <sup>52</sup> Repeated direct

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51 Included as a part of the Order's Daniel translation are:

a) The Prayer of Azariah: Dan. v. 7,165- 8,295 Vulgate, Chapter 3 between verses 3: 23 and 3: 24 in a modern Protestant Bible.

b) Susanna: Dan. v. 7,865-8,292 Vulgate, Chapter 13; not in a modern Protestant Bible. The Order translator provides no commentary upon the Susanna story, perhaps because of the Order's general prudery concerning descriptions of beautiful women (See the discussion of the Order's Judith above).

c) Bel and the Dragon: Dan. v. 7,865-8,292 Vulgate, Chapter 14; not in the modern Protestant Bible.

52 Grandmaster Luder von Braunschweig himself translated the Order's Makkabäerbuch. Luder von Braunschweig then commissioned the translation of Daniel. This project, when completed, was dedicated to the grandmaster. Daniel shows the influence of the Makkabäerbuch at every turn.

For specifics of the influences of the Makkabäerbuch upon Daniel, see:

Helm und Ziesemer, Literatur, pp. 104-105 and especially,

Arthur Hübner, "Daniel, eine Deutschordensdichtung," Palaestra, Band 101 (Berlin: Meyer und Müller, 1911), pp. 134-143. This monograph, by the editor of the modern, critical edition of Daniel (see note #56 below), is the single best secondary work available on Daniel.

references to Grandmaster Luder von Braunschweig, to St. Elizabeth and to the Order in general, as well as citations to and from other Order works,<sup>53</sup> place Daniel at the very center of Order life. In the epilogue to Daniel, the translator specifically dedicates his work to Luder von Braunschweig, grandmaster of the Teutonic Order:

Ein vurstē is dirre man,  
Geboren von des adils zwic,  
Gekreirt der von Braunswic,  
Bruder Luder, dem orden  
Ho meister hie geworden  
Genant der dutschen heren.

This man is a prince, born of a  
noble line. He comes from  
Braunschweig. Brother Luder, he  
is grandmaster to the Order of  
German knights.

Dan. v. 8,318-8,323

Luder (and through him, his Order) are related to the imperial line ("keiserlicher bluete," Dan. v. 8,307) as well as to St. Elizabeth of Hungary (Dan. v. 8,304 ff.; also Dan. v. 2,167 ff.). She, as a departed saint, continues to watch over her own, even as she did in life.<sup>54</sup>

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Chapter 4 below will deal exclusively with the Book of Maccabees.

<sup>53</sup> Specifically named and cited are, for example, Maccabees (Dan. v. 6,288), the Apokalypse (Dan. v. 7,263 ff.; v. 2,146 ff.). There are also verses taken directly from Martina (eg. Dan. v. 1,305-1,308 / Martina 70,7).

<sup>54</sup> For further information about St. Elizabeth and her association with the Teutonic Order, see Helm und Ziesemer, p. 106 and Boockmann, p. 46 ff. St. Elizabeth's life is narrated at length in the Passional (Saint #73).

Hartmut Boockmann, Der Deutsche Orden: Zwölf Kapitel

Sie sal den viant stillen,  
Ob er en noch vichtet an.

She will quiet the enemy,  
whenever he attacks.

Dan. v. 8,316-8,317

Mary, too, as the Order's official protectress,  
guards Her Order and blesses the translation of the Book  
of Daniel (Dan. v. 85 ff.). <sup>55</sup>

\*

The unknown author of Daniel states in his  
introduction that he is translating Daniel into German in  
order to praise God and teach the world -- "der werlde wol  
zu lere" (Dan. v. 29). <sup>56</sup> To be taught and honored are

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aus seiner Geschichte (München: C. H. Beck, 1981).

<sup>55</sup> Exemplary passages affirming Mary's care and  
protection of Her Order:

Daniel v. 64-72 and v. 86-104 (The translator  
entreats Mary to guide him in translating and glossing  
Daniel); v. 1,029 ff. (Mary as the allegorical mountain  
in Daniel, Chapter 2), v. 2,960 ff., v. 4,484-4,489; v.  
5,042-5,045; v. 6,546-6,553; v. 7,390-7,393; v. 2,294-  
2,2301; v. 4,408-4,411; v. 4,419-4,426; v. 8,295-8,299  
(concluding thanks and praise to Mary).

Sister Mary Goenner calls the Order's Daniel "a  
Marian allegory."

Sister Mary Ellen Goenner, Mary-Verse of the Teutonic  
Knights (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University Press,  
1943 / Catholic University of America Studies in German,  
19), pp. 181-185 and 220.

Hübner, "Daniel," Palaestra 101, p. 116 ff. is also  
excellent on this topic.

<sup>56</sup> Citations from Daniel are taken from:

Die poetische Bearbeitung des Buches Daniel, heraus-

members of the Teutonic Order who "with battle strife have driven from Prussia all sorts of idols with knightly sword" (Dan. v. 33-37). <sup>57</sup> These knights of "dem deutschen huse" fight "that faith may blossom along with divine charity where before nothing had been heard of the divine Lord" (Dan. v. 39-43). <sup>58</sup>

There can be no doubt that, in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Rule, <sup>59</sup> the knight-monks did hear Daniel read to them during mealtime, for the author addresses the lectors directly:

"Heb an, leser, und sprich!"

Begin, reader, and speak!

Dan. v. 3,388

Daniel was clearly intended to provide a word-true translation of the Vulgate for the Order brothers.

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gegeben von Arthur Hübner (Berlin: Weidemann, 1911 / Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters, 3).

57

Zu eren den beschriben  
Die da mit strit vertriben  
Haben uz Pruzen lande  
Abgote mancherhande  
Mit ritterlichem swerte.

58

Daz der geloube bluet  
In deme lande gluert  
Ouch gotliche caritas,  
Die bevor e nicht enwas  
Von den gotlichen heren.

<sup>59</sup> See Chapter 2, passim.

Especially early on in the translation, tortured German formulations and double translations <sup>60</sup> make it obvious that the translator wants his hearers to grasp the meaning of the Vulgate text. He is conscious of his weak Latin as well as his weak German (Dan. v. 60 ff.), <sup>61</sup> but he appeals to Mary for help (Dan. v. 90 ff.). The German writer airs here the same kinds of concerns which St. Jerome had expressed before him in his own preface (also translated into German as a part of Daniel). Jerome makes no effort to conceal his frustration at the often obscure, apocalyptic language in Daniel, <sup>62</sup> and the saint also

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<sup>60</sup> Hübner points out several places where the author translates a phrase, and then translates it again a second time in order to assure that his readers grasp the meaning of the Vulgate text.

Hübner, "Daniel," Palaestra 101, p. 96 ff. and 105 ff.

<sup>61</sup>

Wand ich bi minen jaren  
Nie dutsche buch gemachet  
Habe, . . .

Dan. v. 60-62.

Even at my age, I have never written a German book.

Nicolaus von Jeroschin, the Order's great chronicler, confesses similar inexperience and lack of confidence in his German abilities. See Chapter 6 below.

<sup>62</sup> Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 28: 1,358.

complains of language problems he himself has had. <sup>63</sup>

In his effort to remain true to his Vulgate source, the author of the German Daniel keeps the Biblical text unbroken and intact within individual chapters. The only place where he disrupts the flow of the Vulgate is in Chapter 6 (Dan. v. 5,123-5,310). <sup>64</sup> This is the place where Daniel, in defiance of the king's decree, retreats to his chamber in order to pray three times a day to the God of his fathers. This reference to the three standard prayers among the Jews incites the translator to expound extensively upon the history and allegorical significance of the Christian horae canonicae (Dan. v. 1,119-1,164). The factual basis for this excursus is Comestor's Historia Scholastica. <sup>65</sup>

This interrupting excursus, unique as it is in the Daniel translation, places in clear relief the pious, monastic ideals of the Teutonic Order. Other such moralizing commentaries abound in Daniel, but they are always arranged after the completion of individual Biblical chapters, not, as here, by themselves in a

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<sup>63</sup> The original Daniel was written partially in Aramaic, a language which Jerome understood even less perfectly than Hebrew.

<sup>64</sup> Hübner, "Daniel," Palaestra 101, p. 127.

<sup>65</sup> "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,458; also 1,449.

privileged position within the Scriptural text itself.

From his focus upon the teaching of moral rectitude through example, the Daniel author shows himself to be a priest. He is interested in guiding other Order priests and lay brothers to moral strength so that they might effectively conquer and evangelize. The author does not -- and this is quite significant -- allow himself to be pulled into sweeping historical models and eschatological schemes based upon Daniel. In this he differs from nearly all other contemporary commentators. There is not a hint of Joachim of Fiore or Otto of Freising. Rather, the Order priest uses Daniel strictly as a source of stories of exemplary moral lives, individual heroism and martyrdom. The gloss of Daniel, Chapter 7, for example, is quite brief (Dan. v. 5, 959-5, 969). Rather than entering into a commentary upon this highly apocalyptic passage, the author simply follows Comestor in identifying the famous small horn (Daniel 7: 8) with the Anti-Christ.<sup>66</sup> He then refers his readers to a primary Scriptural source where similar themes are treated:

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66 "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,454.

"Et ecce cornu aliud parum ortum est de medio eorum. Hic est Antichristus de tribu Dan ignobilis."

See Hübner, "Daniel," Palaestra 101, p. 129.

Revelations Chapter 13.<sup>67</sup> More than this our author cannot or will not say and he drops the topic.

At the end of Daniel, Chapter 11 (Dan. v. 7,263 ff.) and Chapter 12 (Dan. v. 7,385 ff.) there is similar cautious discretion. Once again, the writer avoids potentially controversial apocalyptic subject matter by referring his reader to Revelation, Chapter 13 and Chapter 20 respectively. Daniel, Chapter 3 (Dan. v. 2,146 ff.) and Chapter 9 (Dan. v. 6,538 ff.) also have generalized referrals to Revelation rather than exegetical commentaries.

There is, indeed, only one place where the author ventures any apocalyptic speculation based upon Daniel -- but this bit of commentary is highly significant. The main gloss for Chapter Two (where Nebuchadnezzar's great statue is equated with the four world empires) is a straight translation of Comestor's safe and orthodox handbook, Historia Scholastica.<sup>68</sup> But going beyond Peter Comestor, the Daniel translator says on his own account that imperial power and responsibility have now passed from the Romans on to a fifth group -- the Germans:

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<sup>67</sup> Specifically here, Daniel 7: 19-25 = Revelations 13: 1-8.

<sup>68</sup> "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,449.



Dar nach sal ez kumen vort  
 Dem himelischen Gote,  
 Wand ez in des gebote  
 Ist, unde sal drinne gen  
 In der Dutschen hant besten.  
 Wie lange, des vind ich nicht  
 Scholastica die begicht.  
 Ich hoffe, ez nicht wiche.  
 Got gebe uns sin riche!

Thereafter [after Rome] it will  
 come to pass, because it is  
 pleasing to the divine Godhead,  
 sovereign power will pass into  
 German hands. How long? That I  
 don't find in Scholastica. I hope  
 it will never pass away. God  
 grant us his kingdom.

Dan. 1,156-1,164

This concept of "Germans' burden," as will be shown  
 in the next chapter, probably originated at the hand of  
 Luder von Braunschweig, grandmaster and author of the  
 Order's Maccabees translation. In Maccabees, Luder  
 writes:

Do bleib die uberste herschaft  
 daz ist der monarchien kraft  
 bi den Criechen vil manchen  
 tac,  
 unz daz sie ouch nam uberslac,  
 daz sie quam an die Romere.  
 Manche zit bleib sie da here,  
 biz daz sie vurvaz wart gewant  
 unde hin quam in deutsche lant,  
 da sal sie ouch zu rehte sin.  
 Nu ist an got die bete min:  
 swer nutzest sie der cristen-  
 heit,  
 des name mache got hie breit.

The highest authority, that is  
 the power of the monarchy, rested  
 with the Greeks many a day. Then  
 authority moved on to the Romans.  
 For a long while it rested there,  
 until it indeed was changed and  
 came into German lands, and there  
 this power ought reside. Now my  
 prayer to God: He who uses it  
 [this power] for the sake of  
 Christendom, may God spread his  
 name far and wide.

Makk. v. 777-788 69

Cautious as he is, the Daniel translator allows  
 himself, in this case, to follow the lead of the revered

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69 Das Buch der Maccabäer, herausgegeben von Karl  
 Helm (Stuttgart: Literarischer Verein, 1904 / Bibliothek  
 des literarischen Vereins zu Stuttgart, 233).

grandmaster. As Luder had done before him in Das Makkabäerbuch,<sup>70</sup> the Daniel translator and exegete places the mission of the Teutonic Order in unbroken continuity with the Biblical calling of the Maccabees. It is also highly significant that his citations from the Book of Revelation are taken from the Order's own German translation of that book. This becomes clear when he writes as a part of one of his references to Revelation:

Swer disse glosse welle han,  
Der suche sie ane wan  
Von des Endecristes tat.  
Apocalipsis sich hat  
Bewerrit mit dirre schrift  
In eines capitils trift,  
Daz drizende ist ez zwar;  
Dutschen stetis offenbar  
zu rime wol gemachet.

He who wants to have this gloss,  
let him search, without  
hesitation concerning the deeds  
of the Antichrist. The Apokalypse  
has dealt with this passage in a  
chapter, the thirteenth it is. It  
stands revealed in German in  
well-formed rhyme.

Dan. v. 7,263-7,271

Our author's central moral concerns, along with his general eschewing of ventured, apocalyptic commentary may be seen in his remarks on Nebuchadnezzar's first dream (Daniel, Chapter 2 ). Here, full emphasis is placed upon the typological moral significance of the vision, which the German calls a "geistige auslegungh" (Dan. v. 925 -- a spiritual explication). His exegesis is conservative and follows earlier established patterns. Comestor, once again, lays the groundwork:

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<sup>70</sup> See Chapter 4 below.

Nu sult ir horchen lise  
Waz uch die glose wise!

Now you should hear read to you  
what the gloss indicates.

Dan. v. 911-912

Comestor states that Nebuchadnezzar is the Devil, his statue paganism and the statue-destroying stone is Christ. This Christ-stone is "uncut by human hand," i.e. divinely conceived (Dan. v. 1,029 ff.) and it comes from a mountain, i.e. Mary. The stone, in its turn, goes on to become a mighty mountain. (Dan. v. 1,060-1,067). <sup>71</sup> Rather than using this passage as a basis for describing the world's apocalyptic end, <sup>72</sup> the author focuses upon immediate moral issues and the great Christian mission to convert pagans, i.e. to destroy the idolatry symbolized by the statue. Eternal life is promised to the valiant fighters in this cause.

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<sup>71</sup> This allegorical interpretation had a long and venerable history:

See: Goenner, Mary-Verse, pp. 60-65 and Hübner, "Daniel," Palaestra 101, p. 116 ff. for discussions of its source and lineage.

<sup>72</sup> This theme is dispensed with through a quick reference to St. Paul:

Paulus sprichet in daz wort:  
"Wir sint, an die kumen ist  
Ende der werlde genist."

Dan. 1,043-1,044 (based on Rom. 13: 11)

Paul speaks the word to him: "We are those who look to the end of time and the coming of salvation."

In other passages, too, the Book of Daniel acts as a treasure-trove of exemplary lives and deeds for the warrior-monks of the Teutonic Order. The heroes it applauds are primarily fighters against false religion, paganism and idolatry. One has but to think of the heroic defiance of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; Daniel's rebuffing the King's idolatrous demands; Daniel's enduring of two trials in the den of lions; Daniel's combat with the dragon and his foiling the pagan priests in the pericope Bel and the Dragon.

These stories of heroism thrill the Order priest and his exegetical efforts heighten a sense of contemporary mission to combat paganism. In the Book of Daniel, Habakkuk flies to Daniel in order to provide him with sustenance in the den of lions (Dan. v. 8,093 ff.; Vulgate Daniel 14: 33-39). Typologically explained, Habakkuk is a priest bringing the viaticum to a soldier of faith who is locked in combat with the forces of evil and paganism.

In the same way, but perhaps on a more subtle level, hearers would have responded to the gloss of Chapter 4. This chapter narrates Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great tree, followed by Daniel's exposition of that dream. The gloss to this chapter includes a lengthy, 700-line retelling of the Legend of the True Cross (Dan. v. 3,919-4,012). The source seems to have been Jacobus de

Voragine's Legenda Aurea. This legend was extremely popular among knights of the Order because of its immediacy and relevance to them as Germanic warriors. Many of the knights had their roots in the Rhineland. The True Cross, since its alleged translation to Cologne in the eighth century, had been much venerated among the Rhineland population. The True Cross was for Teutonic warriors a symbolic link between the Holy Land and their own northern European field of crusading activity.

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The only genuinely original gloss to be found in the Order's Daniel translation deserves special attention as the final portion of this discussion of the work. This gloss explicates the Vulgate's Daniel, Chapter 3 -- the story of King Nebuchadnezzar's column. This is the so-called "Pflanzenallegorie" or plant allegory (Dan. v. 1,645-3,306).<sup>73</sup> This allegorical gloss shows the Order translator at his characteristic best. His interest focuses upon specific moral virtues which he believes the crusading knight would do well to emulate.

The commentator sets the stage by the familiar equating of King Nebuchadnezzar with the Devil (Dan. v. 1,165). The field of Duham is the world (Dan. v. 1,677)

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<sup>73</sup> So labeled in Hübner's edition of Daniel.

and the pagan column, the worship of which the Nebuchadnezzar demands, symbolizes human desires (Wohllust; Dan. v. 1,676).

Thus far, the author follows a familiar path. His originality comes into play when he inserts a description of the delicate plants and flowers growing upon the field of Duham -- the heart of the Pflanzenallegorie. Each of the fifteen plants and flowers he describes represents, allegorically, a Christian virtue. The plants and their characteristic virtues are arranged according to class-appropriate behavior of the various social groups in a properly ordered human society. Each class -- priests, monks, knights, farmers, etc. -- has its own paragon virtue, appropriate to its station.<sup>74</sup> The Order knights are called to defend this beautiful garden from the Devil, for the delicate flowers wilt and die if the Prince of Evil is allowed to set up his column (Dan. v. 2,556).

Of the several plant exempla which might be selected, the following were of particular relevance to the brothers

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<sup>74</sup> Das Schachbuch (the Chess Book) was translated within Order circles from a Latin original during this approximate period. This book was nominally a piece of Fachliteratur which discussed the game of chess and the power and function of the various chess pieces. Beyond its immediate purpose, however, this work carried a heavy allegorical message concerning the appropriate, hierarchical ordering of properly disciplined human society.

of the Teutonic Order:

Violets: the chaste (Dan. v. 2,605 ff.)

Thorns: martyrs (Dan. v. 2,195 ff. and v. 3,011 ff.)

Wheat: faultless priests (Dan. v. 3,061 ff.)

Olive trees: compassionate servants (Dan. v. 2,965 ff. and v. 2,091 ff.)

Specially mentioned as a compassionate servant in the last case was St. Elizabeth (Dan. v. 2,167 ff.) who was highly venerated in the Order. Her compassion is mentioned once again at the conclusion of the translation (Dan. v. 8,307 ff.). The description of such a saint through flower and plant allegories is a far cry from the "zeichenhaften" descriptions of Mother Nature in the worldly Minnesang of the period and, of course, it served a completely different purpose.

The Pflanzenallegorie is a moral critique of the author's contemporary world, and he focuses particular attention upon those areas of moral decline which, in his view, were harming his Order. He addresses the issue of commitment and purity of Order priests (Dan. v. 2,240 and 3,066) <sup>75</sup> and he pleads that compassion be shown toward the laboring half-brothers (Dan. v. 1,818 ff.; also v. 2,968 ff.). In all things, this Order priest praises

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<sup>75</sup> See Hübner, "Daniel," Palaestra 101, pp. 168-169 and p. 163.

respect for strict social hierarchy and appropriate Christian virtues within each social class. Each group has its proper tasks and responsibilities. Taking their important place in this ordered and disciplined hierarchy were the warrior-monks, whose function it was to defend and spread the Faith. And within the Order itself, there was to be the same hierarchy of responsibility reflecting in microcosm what the whole of Nature showed forth in macrocosm.



Esdras und Neemyas

Between the years 1331-1340, an unknown translator rendered I, II, III Esdras <sup>76</sup> into Middle High German under the title Esdras und Neemyas.

Vocabulary, cross-references to and from other Order works, and manuscript descent within Order libraries provide assurance that this work belongs to the literature of the Teutonic Order. As a translation, Esdras und Neemyas holds closely, verse for verse, to the Latin original. It shows none of the editorial additions which are so common in other Order pieces. Nevertheless, some

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<sup>76</sup> The author translates Ezra and Nehemiah and I Esdras, which he calls "das andre Esdras" (beginning at E.-N. v. 2,366). II Esdras is dropped.

In the modern, officially sanctioned version of the Vulgate, First and Second Esdras appear in the Old Testament, whereas Third and Fourth Esdras, when they appear, come only at the very end of the bound volume after the New Testament. These latter two books carry the title Libri apocryphi.

In the Luther Bible, Liber Primus Esdras and Liber Secundus appear as the books of Esra and Nehemia. Liber Esdrae Tertius and Quartus are dropped. In the English Bible, First and Second Books of Esdras appear as Ezra and Nehemiah and Third and Fourth Esdras come as the first two books of the Apocrypha under the names First and Second Esdras.

This is certainly confusion of the first order. Most laymen and many scholars never quite manage to sort things out. Whence came this imbroglio? All started rather benignly, it seems. The Greek Septuagint speaks of Ezra and Nehemiah and of Esdras I and II. Jerome's Vulgate called these books Esdras I, II, III, IV.

individualization does occur. Jerome's introduction receives careful and emphatic attention, especially Jerome's anticipatory self-defense against his critics. Just as Jerome was sensitive about his imperfect knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic, <sup>77</sup> so also was the German author about his knowledge of his source language: the Latin of the Vulgate. (E.-N. v. 24 ff., v. 43 ff., v. 89 ff.). <sup>78</sup> Verses 24-28 of the introduction are of particular interest, since they have no direct correspondence in the Jerome text:

Noch han ich mich nicht ergeben  
 Daz ich uwers gebotes schin  
 Ihtes welle gebunden sein.  
 Deweder tun oder lazen  
 Daz wil ich noch selber mazen.

I have not given in to meeting  
 your open demands in any way.  
 Either to do or not to do, that I  
 myself will decide.

(E.-N. v. 24-28)

The translator, in other words, is aware of his limitations, but he will brook no destructive criticism and imposed opinions from hostile voices around him. He will be the final judge of the correctness of his word choices. Such hints as this indicate that the Teutonic Order was experiencing considerable internal stress and also that there were those within the Order who were less

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<sup>77</sup> See above in this chapter.

<sup>78</sup> Citations from Esdras und Neemyas are taken from:

Esdras und Neemyas, herausgegeben von S. M. Stirk.  
 (Breslau: Priebatsch, 1938).

than comfortable with Scripture being rendered into German -- perhaps out of fear of heresy.<sup>79</sup>

Characteristic textual insertions of a moralizing nature, so common in Order literature, are absent in Esdras und Neemyas, but tendentiousness is not altogether missing. Ezra's harsh prayer concerning mixed marriages, for example (E.-N. v. 1,170-1,204; Vulgate Esdras 9: 6-15), is translated and generalized. The strictures against marrying foreign women are largely subsumed into the more general issue of subduing the land (Palestine/ Prussia), wherein God's "honor" (easily understood by the knight-monks) is at stake.

Was sprech wir darzu, herre got?  
Wir han verlazen din gebot,  
Din e wir nicht gehalden haben.

What shall we say, Lord God? We  
have forsaken your commandment.  
We have not upheld your honor.

E.-N. 1,170-1,173

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The specific moral issue of overcoming the temptation of women, always a concern of the brothers, receives its due attention in a dramatic context: the debate among Cyrus' three pages as to which thing was strongest:

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<sup>79</sup> See the case of Heinrich Hesler and also that of the Passional author alluded to in Chapter 1. Chapter 6, with its note #57, will cite further examples of opposition within the Order to its writers and translators.

<sup>80</sup> The two Old High German words "ê" (law) and "êre" (honor) had, by the late Middle High German period, become confused and interchanged. Order writers exploited this fact extensively. For a more detailed discussion of this purposeful use of word ambiguity, see Chapter 4 below.

1) wine, 2) the king or 3) women (E.-N. v. 2,580-2,833; Vulgate, III Esdras, Chapters 3 and 4.

Anachronistic insertions of New Testament and liturgical material -- characteristic of Order Bible translations elsewhere -- do not fail entirely in Esdras und Neemyas. Esdras, for example, exhorts the people to confess before God (E.-N. v. 1,260) and Cyrus responds to the workings of the Holy Spirit by sending the Jews back to Jerusalem with the order to rebuild their Temple (E.-N. v. 2,517). Those Jews who contributed gifts for services in the Temple receive salvation (seelenheil, E.-N. v. 2,099). As a final example, there are the words of the third servant-boy from the debate pericope cited above. After his discourse on the power of women, the page moves on to a general praise of wisdom. In this, his words remain true to the Vulgate. But he concludes with a non-Biblical hymn of devotion to Christ (E.-N. v. 2,748).

The relevance of Esdras und Neemyas for the Teutonic Order in Prussia may be summed up by the passage from Esdras und Neemyas which describes the wall construction in Jerusalem. The Teutonic Knights in Prussia, like the returned Jews in Jerusalem, saw themselves as being, simultaneously, both God's chosen fighters and his appointed purveyors of culture and the True Faith in a hostile land.

Wir kerten alle wider hin  
 Ieclicher zu dem werke sin,  
 Ein teil der iungen zu arbeit,  
 Die andren waren zu strite  
     bereit . . .  
 Die eine hant treib uf daz werc,  
 Die andre steteclich daz swert  
 Zu strite hielt gar unervert.

We all return, each one to his  
 own labor. One part of the men to  
 work, the other stands ready for  
 battle. One hand is laid to the  
 task, the other holds the sword,  
 steady and prepared to fight.

E.-N. v. 1,622-1,629)

This passage is later echoed in Jeroschin's Kronike  
von Pruzinlant.

Eine hant des werkis wilt  
 un daz swert di andre hilt.

One hand is busy with the work,  
 the other holds the sword.

Jer. 15,269-15,270 81

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81 "Kronike von Pruzinlant," Scriptores Rerum  
Prussicarum, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlke, Band 1, p.  
 479.

Di Propheten

The Order's piece entitled Di Propheten (all the Old Testament prophets, major and minor) was translated by one Claus Cranc during the tenure of Order Marshal Siegfried von Dahefeld (1347-1359). Like the Apostele Tat (see below), this work appeared at the end of the Teutonic Order's period of literary activity and its form and content reflect a final stage of development. This translation is a rendering of the Vulgate's Latin into late Middle High German prose. With only two notable exceptions, the author contents himself with a straightforward translation of the Vulgate text, including Jerome's introduction.

A 180-word, verse introduction is the first of the two places where the translator presumes to speak for himself and his rhyme provides a kind of bridge back to the Order's earlier Biblical translations. In this introduction, the author characteristically appeals to Christ and Mary for guidance and then he prays:

Reiche, vater, dine hant,  
Son, nu kum in unse lant.

Father, reach out thy hand. Son,  
come into our land.

Proph. "Vorrede" v. 61-62 <sup>82</sup>

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82 Citations from Di Propheten are taken from:

Die Prophetenübersetzung des Claus Cranc,  
herausgegeben von Walter Ziesemer (Halle/Saale: Niemeyer,

The "unse lant" of which he speaks is Prussia and the "ritterschat," for whose blessing he later appeals (Proph. "Vorrede" v. 131-132), is the Teutonic Order. Further examination of this introduction reveals that the first letters of each verse form an acrostic. The carefully constructed acrostic phrase proclaims the author's name, the name of his patron and the name of the honored "ritterschat," the Teutonic Order:

Gote czw lobe diner geer ritter  
 gut  
 bruder Siwrid won Taenvelt  
 hoyste  
 marscalc des dwtschen ordens ich  
 minner bruder Claws Cranc  
 Custos zw Prussen habe di  
 grossin  
 und minnern propheten mit Marien  
 hulfe hy zu  
 dwzche bracht."

In order to praise God and for the noble knight, Brother Siwrid of Taenvelt highest Marshal of the Teutonic Order I, the Franciscan Claus Crancs, Prussian custos, have here, with Mary's help, rendered the major and minor prophets into German.

Proph. "Vorrede" v. 1-180

Claus Cranc was a Franciscan custos residing in Prussia. He apparently dedicated this work as an exhortation to and an apologia for the Teutonic Order. <sup>83</sup>

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1930).

<sup>83</sup> For more information on the identity of Claus Cranc, see:

Helm und Zieseemer, Literatur, pp. 123-124.

Goenner, Mary-Verse, p. 201.

Walter Zieseemer, "Cranc, Claus," Die Deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon (1933), Band 2, pp. 937-938.

Though not written by an Order member, the Propheten was dedicated to a marshal of the Teutonic Order and was a book clearly intended for the express use of the knight-monks. Its sole surviving manuscript is bound between a copy of the Order's translation of Job and the Apostele Tat.

Besides his introductory poem, the only other place where our author pulls away from his Vulgate source to speak for himself is an extended commentary on Ezekiel, Chapters 40-41. <sup>84</sup>

Hi ist Ezechiel uz. Was hinach  
volgit daz sal man ouch schribin  
biz zu ende uz mit underscheide,  
das is in den text nicht gehore.

Here the Book of Ezekiel stops.  
What now follows, that, too, one  
should copy to its end. The only  
difference is that this part does  
not belong to the primary text.

Proph. p. 252: 37-40 <sup>85</sup>

These chapters express a vision of the new, rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem. Claus Cranc takes the description and measurements of the Temple and gives them allegorical interpretations. Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica is

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<sup>84</sup> Die Prophetenübersetzung, pp. 252-270.

<sup>85</sup> This is one of the several passages in Order literature admonishing anyone copying the text to do so conscientiously and correctly. This concern was already expressed in the Order's Rule (Rule 27, Chapter 2 above). Care heightened even more in connection with the translating activities of the brothers (See discussion of Judith above). There was concern to preserve the inspired Latin meaning, but there is also, in this case, the hint of an author's pride in his words. There will be more on this topic in the next chapter.



his direct model in this. Christ and his Church are the Temple, which suffers destruction, yet is restored. The City of Jerusalem surrounding the Temple is equated to worldly principalities. This land is to be divided equitably among the Christian princes and rendered faithful by them. The author cites by name such time-honored authorities as Richard of St. Victor, St. Gregory the Great, Hugo "der cardinal", i.e. Hugo of St. Caro and Josephus. Following this list of weighty authorities, listeners are warned against false glosses, "manche valsce glose" (Proph. p. 256: 25), as well as purely Jewish exegetical schemes. Claus Cranc mentions Nicholas of Lyra by name, the first Prussian commentator to do so (Proph. p. 268: 5 ff.), but he does not commit himself in the direction of Lyra's more literal, historical exegesis. It is as if he is reluctant to be in any way controversial -- Lyra was just becoming known by the middle of the fourteenth century. <sup>86</sup>

Though Claus Cranc ventures no commentary, there is much in the prophetic books of the Old Testament which the knights of the Teutonic Order, in their endangered predicament, would have found relevant. The theme of the entire Book of Haggai is the restoration of the Temple.

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86 See note #50 above.

The Books of Obadiah, Malachi and Joel present the picture of a struggling Jewish community, threatened by neighboring peoples and weakened from within by poverty, discontent and religious apathy. Nahum also shows the heightened, indeed vindictive feelings of a small Jewish community, squeezed into a narrow area and surrounded by peoples who resented its presence.

Encouraging apocalyptic messages also appear in the prophetic books of the Old Testament: in Deutero-Isaiah (Isaiah, Chapters 24-27, the so-called "Little Apocalypse"), in Deutero-Zechariah (Zechariah, Chapters 12-14), in Joel 3: 9-21 and, of course, in Daniel, which is translated here for a second time. Finally, the earliest references to individual salvation and the resurrection of the dead to be found in the Old Testament (at least in the view of the medieval exegete) are declarations uttered by the prophets: Isaiah 26: 19 and Ezekiel, Chapter 37.

Der Apostele Tat

Der Apostele Tat (Acts of the Apostles) was translated quite late: during the 1350's, the same decade as the Propheten. Its sole surviving copy was preserved in the Order Library at Königsberg, bound into a volume along with Hiob and the Propheten.<sup>87</sup> This fact, as well as its vocabulary, mark it clearly as having eastern German provenance.<sup>88</sup> Early efforts to credit Claus Cranc, author of the Propheten, with this work have now been rejected, though German formulations and phraseology in the two works are strikingly similar. Rather than a common authorship, one finds evidence here of an amazingly homogeneous Early Modern German developing in the German East.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ziesemer, "Cranc, Claus," Verfasserlexikon (1933), Band 2, p. 937.

<sup>88</sup> Citations from Der Apostele Tat are taken from:

Eine ostdeutsche Apostelgeschichte des 14. Jahrhunderts, herausgegeben von Walter Ziesemer (Haale/Saale: Niemeyer, 1927 / Altdeutsche Textbibliothek, 24).

<sup>89</sup> See Conclusion below for a brief discussion of "Luther Deutsch." The Early Modern German which Luther molded was based upon the Eastern Middle German of the colonial lands. The Apostele Tat is an outstanding philological document which points the way to Luther. Ziesemer's excellent introduction to the Apostele Tat demonstrates striking parallels between the formulations of Martin Luther and those of Claus Cranc.

Other than the Apokalypse and the Gospel of Nicodemus, Acts was the only New Testament work to draw the attention of the Teutonic Order for translation. The Order favored tales of derring-do from the Old Testament, but the Apokalypse and the Gospel of Nicodemus tied neatly into the Old Testament predilection, since they are works in which time is suspended and in which the forces of Good and Evil clash on a cosmic plane. Acts, too, though definitely anchored in later history, had much to offer along these same lines. There are selfless, heroic deeds to be emulated and there is the constant affirmation of God's guiding his own through adversity of opposition and misunderstanding. One hears exciting tales of miracles, visions, liberations from prison and shipwrecks, along with the rousing sermons of St. Paul. This was all exciting and edifying reading material for the knights.

Another interesting and relevant aspect of Luke's work is its decidedly pro-Roman point of view. Luke consistently relieves the Roman political establishment of responsibilities for Christ's death and for ensuing Christian persecutions, placing guilt squarely at the feet of the Jews. The Roman authorities are always well-intentioned, but they never quite understand the youthful Christian movement and its plight in the face of vicious Jewish opposition. The parallel to the Order's situation

is striking: Roman ecclesiastical authority corresponds to old Roman imperial authority, and the pagan Pruteni are likened to the Jews. The convention of treating in the same breath both pagan and Jew, as we have seen, had its origins with Heinrich Hesler.

Der Apostele Tat is translated entirely into Middle High German prose. It sheds all pretense of verse and contains neither introduction nor explanatory remarks. It is a straight translation of the Vulgate text, including Jerome's first introduction. As is characteristic of all Order translations, there are frequent double translations of key words in order to assure fidelity to the sacred source. The translator is probably a clergyman because of his familiarity with ecclesiastical words and practices. Furthermore, his particular skill with German nautical terms in Acts, Chapter 27 (St. Paul's sea voyage to Rome) provides evidence that he lived directly on the Baltic.

### Historien des Alden E

Historien des Alden E, which was composed circa 1350, is not a German rendering of a single Biblical book. Rather, it is an overview of the external events narrated in all the historical and prophetic books of the Old Testament. "The Old Testament," says the translator, "is very difficult and too long" (gar swer und alzu lang, Hist. v. 40).<sup>90</sup> Historien des Alden E is intended to provide a convenient abridgment. In a scant 6,000 verses are covered the entire Old Testament plus fragmentary inter-testamental and New Testament allusions. Unlike earlier Order works which often expanded translations into effusive commentaries and devotional pieces, this work radically abbreviates and omits.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, one feels throughout that this final Biblical work is little more than an attempt to round out, hurriedly and often carelessly, the Order's goal of translating the entire Old Testament. Like earlier translations of the Order, Historien des Alden E is in verse, but the verse is

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<sup>90</sup> Citations from Historien des Alden E are taken from:

Historien der Alden E, herausgegeben von Wilhelm Gerhard. (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1927 / Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, 271).

<sup>91</sup> ". . . in einer erbärmlichen Kürze und Dürre abgehandelt." Deboor, Deutsche Literatur, p. 496.

contrived and forced. Furthermore, the author's selection of Biblical material seems arbitrary, to say the least. So important a matter as the granting of the Ten Commandments on Sinai (Hist. v. 1,313) is hardly mentioned and the crossing of the Red Sea is forgotten altogether. On the other hand, non-essential stories, such as the banishment of Hagar (Hist. v. 601 ff.), receive dozens of lines. In several places, non-Biblical stories, for example that of Alexander the Great (Hist. v. 4,833-5,060, Hist. v. 4,996 ff., Hist. v. 2,412-2,426), receive extensive treatment. Even Julius Caesar makes an appearance (Hist. v. 5,621-5,638).

It is obvious that the author draws heavily upon Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica. Sometimes Historia Scholastica is credited by references to either "die glos" or "der lere," but generally no reference is made.<sup>92</sup> Citations from Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine are most likely gleaned second hand from Comestor (Hist. v. 2,655-2,662, also v. 6,010). Altered sequencing of Biblical stories and careless translations hint that the Order's translator might even have sometimes used Comestor's retelling of Biblical stories rather than the Bible itself.

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<sup>92</sup> For example, Hist. v. 140, v. 1,861, v. 3,619, v. 3,753; v. 1,050, v. 1,895, v. 3,851, v. 4,615.

Historien des Alden E has been called "the end of an epoch, the last pitiful departing note of a literary movement."<sup>93</sup> This it undoubtedly is; yet flashes of the old inspiration are not altogether lacking. The author's introductory statement (Hist. v. 1 ff.) and his fervent concluding prayer to Mary (Hist. 6,145-6,165) express, one last time, the Order's sense of mission as well as its commitment to translate all of Holy Scripture into German. Furthermore, there is still some of the old excitement and inspiration-through-example when Josias marches against Necho and manfully confronts him (Hist. v. 3,772 ff.).

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93 "Dieses Gedicht bedeutet tatsächlich das Ende einer Epoche, den letzten trüben Ausklang einer literarischen Bewegung."

Deboor, Deutsche Literatur, p. 496.

The words of Helm und Zieseemer, Literatur, p. 118 and 120, are even harsher in their judgment:

Ein schlechtes und unerfreuliches Werk steht am Ende der Bibeldichtung des Deutschen Ordens. . . Hier schreibt ein Mann . . . ohne genügende Lateinkenntnis, ohne viel Bildung, ohne Geschmach, nachlässig, oberflächlich, unkünstlerisch verworen.

A poor and unsatisfying work stands at the close of the Biblical poetry of the Teutonic Order. A man is writing here who possesses inadequate knowledge of Latin, little education, and no taste. He is careless, superficial and artlessly confused.



The shallowness of Historien des Alden E, the last of the Order's Biblical works, must neither be generalized into a negative final assessment of Deutschordensliteratur, nor be viewed as an indication of the well-being of the Teutonic Order in the mid-fourteenth century. Quite to the contrary -- one weak document serves better to emphasize the general high standard of the Order's Biblical works and also the fact that, by mid-century, the Teutonic Order had recovered from crisis and was moving into a brighter future. Indeed, the revitalized Order stood at the very threshold of its Golden Age under Grandmaster Winrich von Kniprode (1352-1382). The Order's Biblical literature had served its function well in the Order's painful and protracted recovery process.<sup>94</sup> Each evening at mealtime during all those difficult years, the warrior-monks received inspiration from their own German translations of Old Testament. When Nicolaus von Jeroschin, in his Kronike von Pruzinlant, sought a precedent for the spiritual as well as physical war the Teutonic Order waged in Prussia (Jer. v. 2,304 ff.), he found it in the Old Testament through the Order's own

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<sup>94</sup> See the concluding chapter below for more evaluation of the role played by Deutschordensliteratur in the recovery of the Teutonic Order from its generation of crisis.

German translation of Judith. 95

Order lectors and chroniclers drew heavily upon all the Biblical translations. But the most characteristic and influential of them all was Das Makkabäerbuch, the Order's official translation of the books of I and II Maccabees. The Makkabäerbuch has been omitted in this survey chapter; it will be the subject of a thorough examination in the chapter which follows.

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Abir want di schrift bewist,  
daz vrowe Judit ist geprist  
nicht von der wapene achte,  
sundir von tuginde machte,  
damit si Holofernem sluc:

. . . . .  
Nu sol uch werdin hi geseit  
von der wapin undirscheit,  
beide der vleischlichin  
und ouch geistlichin,  
der di heilige schrift gewigit,  
damit man in dem strite pfligit  
kempfin, den da nuw irkorn  
got hat, als ich sprach davorn.

Jer. v. 2,304 ff.

Scripture demonstrates that Frau Judith merits praise, not because of arms, but rather because of her power of virtue with which she struck down Holofernes. . . . So should it be here concerning the difference in weapons. Holy Scripture blesses physical and spiritual [weapons] in order that we might wage the fight which God has lately ordained.

## Chapter 4:

### Das Makkabäerbuch

The Teutonic Order's verse translation of the two books of Maccabees took shape during the second or third decades of the 14th century. By this time, the knight-monks already identified strongly with the Maccabees of old, that venerable band of Biblical warriors. The translation simply cemented a long-standing and mature tradition.

From the point of view of Western Christendom as a whole, this fostering of a Maccabean tradition was highly unusual. Indeed, outside of the crusading orders, the books of I and II Maccabees had fallen into near oblivion within the Roman Church. The fact that the Council of Trent in 1546 ultimately recognized I and II Maccabees as canonical is attributable in no small part to the fact that the Cistercians, and in their turn, the Teutonic Knights, had kept alive a conscious tradition of the Maccabees.<sup>1</sup>

The status of I and II Maccabees within Jewish religious literature was originally, and still is today,

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<sup>1</sup> Theological issues, such as Purgatory and prayers for the dead, as they are described in I and II Maccabees, also played a role. See Chapter 2 above for the interest of the Cistercian and Teutonic Order in these matters.

extremely marginal. The works were written late in the second century B.C. Their purpose was to narrate contemporary events of Seleucid Greek oppression and successful Jewish resistance to that pressure, leading finally to the restoration of the Temple cult in Jerusalem. The books of Maccabees are thus sequels to the books of Kings <sup>2</sup> and Chronicles, and of Ezra and Nehemiah. Kings treated God's mighty acts and the struggle of the Children of Israel against such foes as the Philistines in the early days of the Kingdom of Israel. Chronicles continued the story into the days of the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions. Ezra and Nehemiah, in their turn, carried the story to the time of the Persian conquest and the return of the Jews to Palestine. At this point, Maccabees purports to extend the narrative into the later period of Greek encroachment and pressure. Judas Maccabeus shows qualities similar to Moses, Solomon and Jeremiah. Called "Savior of Israel" (I Macc. 9: 21), he appears as practically co-equal to the ancient Judges (Judges 9: 21) and Kings (II Kings 13:5). Judas' brother Jonathan as well, as he judges the people at Michmash (I Macc. 9: 73), appears remarkably similar to the good

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2 Vulgate: I Kings, II Kings, III Kings, IV Kings

Protestant Bible: I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings.

judge described in I Samuel 14.<sup>3</sup> Striking, too, is the way the authors of the Maccabees, in their quest for legitimacy and a sense of antiquity, laced their narrative with clearly anachronistic geographical and ethnic terminology: e.g. the Philistines, Ammon, Moab, Caleb.

The authors of Maccabees made a concerted effort to compose their works in such a way as to win for them an honored place among Jewish historical scripture. Nonetheless, because of obvious unacceptability on several counts, the books of I and II Maccabees never attained full recognition within the Palestinian canon of Jewish writings. The languages of composition, for example, were Greek and Aramaic and not the sacred language of Hebrew. Furthermore, though historical events stood in continuity with earlier events of Jewish history, the period described came after the closing of the prophetic age. That this age had indeed closed was universally recognized and this fact is even alluded to within the Maccabean

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<sup>3</sup> More passages which show deliberate paralleling of earlier Biblical descriptions:

I Macc. 2: 26 sees in Mattathias' newly-sparked revolt against the Greeks a contemporary parallel to the heroism of Phinehas (Numbers 25: 7-15).

Mattathias' final testament (I Macc. 2: 65-68) seems to map out the course of future Jewish history in the same way that Jacob's testament had earlier done (Genesis, Chapter 48-49).

books themselves.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the books of Maccabees, particularly the more interpretive II Maccabees, are largely secular works with a glaring political tendentiousness. The Maccabees were the ancestors of the Hasmonaean line of Herod the Great. Books which praised the Maccabees and fostered their memory were useful as a political apologia for the later, generally unpopular political establishment which extended down to the time of Herod the Great and beyond.

For all these reasons, the two Books of Maccabees were preserved and read in later centuries only as a part of the longer, so-called Alexandrian canon of the Jews living in that metropolis. I and II Maccabees were dropped from the shorter, Palestinian canon as established

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4

"Thus there was great distress in Israel, such as had not been since the time that prophets ceased to appear among them."

I Macc. 9: 27 (R.S.V.)

". . . So they tore down the altar, and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until there should come a prophet to tell what to do with them."

I Macc. 4: 45-46 (R.S.V.)

"And the Jews and their priests decided that Simon should be their leader and high priest for ever, until a trustworthy prophet should arise, and that he should be governor over them."

I Macc. 14: 41-42 (R.S.V.)

by the Council of Jewish elders held at Jamnia in 70 A.D. On the basis of the Alexandrian canon alone, I and II Maccabees found their place in the Greek Septuagint Bible. And when St. Jerome later labored to carry out Pope Damasus' (366-384) commission to revise and complete the Latin translations of Old Testament Scriptures, the problem confronted him as to what he ought do with these extra, originally Greek works of the longer Alexandrian canon. Jerome finally translated the entire Alexandrian canon, but expressed repeated cautions and provisos concerning the extra books. His introduction to "The Solomon Books" is perhaps his clearest statement of the matter:

Sicut ergo Judith et Tobiae et Machabaeorum libros legit quidem ecclesia, sed eas inter canonicas scripturas non recipit, sic et haec duo volumina legat ad aedificationem plebis, non ad auctoritatem ecclesiasticorum dogmatum comprobendam.

5

As with Judith, so also the Church reads Tobit and the Books of Maccabees. But the Church does not receive them among canonical Scriptures. Accordingly, these two works may be read for the edification of the people, but not for validating the authoritative dogma of the Church.

Down to the Council of Trent, other Church fathers and scholastics expressed similar uneasiness or outright rejection. Gregory, in his Moralia, excuses himself when he draws evidence from Maccabees.

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5 "Praefatio in libros Salomonis," Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1844-), Volume 28: 1,305-1,308.

De qua re non inordinate agimus,  
si ex libris, licet non  
canonicis, sed tamen ad aedi-  
ficationem Ecclesiae editis,  
testimonium proferamus.

6

Concerning this matter, we are  
not acting inappropriately if we  
bring forth testimony from books  
which, though they might not be  
canonical, yet nonetheless were  
produced for the edification of  
the Church.

Isidore of Seville, in the seventh century, seems  
grudgingly to accord canonicity to I and II Maccabees, but  
then immediately circumscribes their significance.

Machabaeorum libri, licet non  
habeantur in canone Hebraeorum,  
tamen ab Ecclesia inter divinorum  
voluminum annumerantur historias.  
Praenotant autem praelia inter  
Hebraeorum duces gentesque  
Persarum, pugnam quoque  
Sabbatorum, et nobiles Machabaei  
triumphos, foedus quoque  
amicitiarum cum Romanorum  
ducibus, actaque legationum.

7

The Books of Maccabees, though  
not included in the canon of the  
Jews, nevertheless are numbered  
by the Church among the  
historical books of divine  
Scripture. They tell primarily of  
battles between leaders of the  
Hebrews and the Persians,  
fighting on the Sabbath, worthy  
triumphs of the Maccabees, an  
alliance of friendship with the  
Romans and the acts of  
ambassadors.

A final striking example of the marginal status of  
the Books of Maccabees is demonstrated by the fact that  
Hugo of St. Victor (1096-1141), a powerful representative  
of the Biblical ferment around Paris in the mid-twelfth  
century, omits I and II Maccabees from his list of

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6 Sancti Gregorii Magni, "Moralium libri sive  
Expositio in Librum B. Job," Patrologiae Latinae cursus  
completus, Volume 76: 119.

7 Isidorus, "In Libros Veteris ac Novi Testamenti  
Prooemia," Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus, Volume  
83: 174-175.



canonical Biblical books. <sup>8</sup>

If Maccabees remained on the periphery of interest among exegetes and theologians, local clergymen and their lay congregations also had little acquaintance with the Maccabees. How foreign the Maccabees were to the European Middle Ages generally is shown by the fact that, among all the collected medieval sermons which Schönbach has published, the Maccabees receive not a single citation or mention. <sup>9</sup> Stegmüller's Repertorium does not even list

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8

Sunt praeterea alii quidam libri, ut Sapientia Salomonis, liber Jesu filii Sirach, et liber Judith, et Tobias, et libri Machabaeorum, qui leguntur quidem, sed non scribuntur in canone.

There are other books, those being The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobit, and the Books of Maccabees, which are indeed read but are not written in the canon.

Hugonis de S. Victore, "De Scripturis et Scriptoribus sacris praenotatiunculae," Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus, Volume 175: 15.

<sup>9</sup> Anton Emanuel Schönbach, Altdeutsche Predigten (Detmold: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964).

Pointed out by Helm and Zieseimer in:

Karl Helm und Walter Zieseimer, Die Literatur des Deutschen Ritterordens (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1951), p. 96 and note #264.

Hans Rost, Die Bibel im Mittelalter: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Bibliographie der Bibel (Augsburg: Kommissions-Verlag M. Steitz, 1939), p. 133.

"Maccabees" in its index.<sup>10</sup> Denzinger's Enchiridion Symbolorum has no entry for Maccabees.<sup>11</sup> In the entire Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, that great compendium of pre-1215 medieval documents, "Maccabees" is represented by less than two dozen brief sermons, poems and letters. And of these few documents, over half deal with the same pericope: II Maccabee, Chapter 7 -- the martyrdom of the "Seven Holy Maccabees."<sup>12</sup>

The widely used Glossa Ordinaria often, but certainly not always, included an explication of I and II Maccabees. This treatment, however, did not originate with Anselm of Laon and his collaborators, the Glossa's presumed 12th authors.<sup>13</sup> Rather, Anselm's group or later copyists,

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<sup>10</sup> Friedrich Stegmüller, Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto Francisco Suarez, 1950-1977).

Rost, Die Bibel, p. 133

<sup>11</sup> Heinrich Denzinger, Enchiridion Symbolorum (Frankfurt: Herder, 1963).

Rost, Bibel, pp. 133-134

<sup>12</sup> "Index operum Alphabeticus," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Index Volume 218: 739.

See Chapter 5 below for more on the story of the Seven Holy Maccabees.

<sup>13</sup> The author of Glossa Ordinaria was certainly not Walafrid Strabo (+849), as is still stated in most Church histories and histories of literature. This error continues to cause endless confusion. See:

apparently out of a sense of obligation for completeness, inserted Rabanus Maurus' ninth century commentary, verbatim, into the text. Indeed, many copies of Glossa Ordinaria contain only a referral to Rabanus' work, which was presumably to be sought elsewhere. <sup>14</sup>

When one turns to the popular genre of historical Bibles (Historienbibeln), the absence of I and II Maccabees from these supposedly "complete" works is just as striking. Aurora, the Latin hexameter rendition of the entire Bible, omits I and II Maccabees. <sup>15</sup> Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica, significantly, does include the books of Maccabees and other apocryphal works which Jerome had translated, but Comestor's treatment is curt and lacks the extensive glossing which he was wont to include with other books.

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Beryl Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952), pp. 56-66.

<sup>14</sup> This is the case with the modern, printed edition of Patrologiae latinae cursus completus. Rabanus Maurus' Maccabees commentary appears in P.L. Volume 109. Glossa Ordinaria appears as Volumes 113 and 114 of P.L. Under the heading "Libros Machabei" within Glossa Ordinaria (P.L. 114: 63), one finds simply a cross-reference to Volume 109 and Rabanus' commentary.

Beati Rabani Mauri, "Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 109: 1,125-1,256.

<sup>15</sup> Petri Rigae, Aurora: Biblia Versificata, edited by Paul E. Beichner (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965).

Considering the precarious position of Maccabees within the Jewish canon and later within the medieval Christian canon, it is easy to see why first the Waldensian, then Wycliff, Hus and finally Martin Luther, rejected these books. <sup>16</sup>

In spite of all the evidence attesting to their marginal status, the Catholic Church nonetheless emerged from the Middle Ages declaring I and II Maccabees to be canonical scripture. Polarized as matters might have been during the Counter Reformation period, it is simplistic to assert that this Catholic judgment was handed down simply as a rejection of the shorter Biblical canon embraced by the Protestants. Sketchy and hard to trace as it might be, there did remain a living Maccabean tradition throughout the Middle Ages which eventually flowed into the Council of Trent. The most important purveyors of

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<sup>16</sup> According to the Tischreden, Martin Luther, always argumentative and provocative, had this to say about the Maccabees (and Judith):

Ich bin dem Buch (II Maccabees) und Esther so feind, dass ich wollte, sie wären gar nicht vorhanden; denn sie judenzen zu sehr, und haben viel heidnische Unart.

I am so averse to the Book of II Maccabees and to Esther that I wish they were not even present. They flaunt too much Jewishness and have too much pagan depravity.

Martin Luther, Tischreden (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1912), Band 1, p. 208, Nr. 475.

this tradition during the high and late Middle Ages were, as will be presently demonstrated, the military-religious Orders, and specifically the Teutonic Knights.

The purpose of the following section will be to search out and trace the faint, yet enduring legacy of the Maccabean tradition through the first Christian millennium until the time when it was taken up and revived by the military-religious orders in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

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The extra books of the longer, Alexandrian canon never experienced the questioning or neglect in the Christian Greek East that they did in the Latin West. The Greek Septuagint (LXX), compiled as it had been in Alexandria, contained the longer Old Testament canon with no qualifications as to the relative merits of the individual books. And LXX has always been the Old Testament foundation for the Greek Bible of the Eastern Church.

The historical experience of the Eastern Church also served to keep Maccabees alive among its faithful. Eastern Christianity had had to struggle, practically from the beginning, first against Persian military might, then successively against Arab and Turkish power. There was, in other words, a continual war for survival against

powerful external threats. Furthermore, Eastern Christians also struggled with the ever present, pernicious cancer of heretical movements within the Church. In the face of such threats, Greek Orthodoxy never ceased looking to I and II Maccabees for inspiration, even as it looked to other books of more apocalyptic struggle, such as Daniel and Revelation.

The first major stream of the Maccabean tradition, therefore, which flowed into the Teutonic Order came from the East.<sup>17</sup> Having been founded in the Levant and having carried out their earliest activities in the East, the Teutonic Knights here discovered and embraced a living Maccabean tradition. The warrior-monks gloried in the fact that they fought the Saracen in some of the very places where the Maccabees of old had once faced the Seleucids.

The Eastern Orthodox influence upon the Order continued, even after the Order's expulsion from the Holy Land. From its earliest years, the Teutonic Order established and maintained strong and influential

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<sup>17</sup> The Cistercians, and with them the military-religious orders, also learned from the Greek East that kind of fervent devotion to the Virgin Mary which was to characterize them in later centuries. The Teutonic Knights thus adopted both their Protectress (Mary) and their most powerful image of themselves (New Maccabees) during their brief, formative period in the Holy Land.

possessions in Armenia, <sup>18</sup> Romania, <sup>19</sup> Sicily and Apulia. These remained open channels of theological as well as administrative renewal for the Teutonic Order down through its history.

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A second source of the Maccabean tradition is to be found in the West. Within certain circles, the Maccabean tradition remained alive in Europe during the time of the barbarian invasions and into the Carolingian period. As Charlemagne engaged in his wearying and unceasing border wars against the pagan Saxons, Norsemen, Hungarians and Arabs, the Emperor's favorite image of himself was that of a new David, surrounded by his "mighty men" (I Chronicles 11: 11 ff.). <sup>20</sup> But the Emperor also gloried in the image of Judas Maccabee. Rabanus Maurus' great, imperially commissioned commentary on I and II Maccabees stems from this period. <sup>21</sup> It was a time in which the Christian

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<sup>18</sup> Lesser Armenia, i.e. Cilicia.

<sup>19</sup> Latin controlled areas in the old Greek homeland.

<sup>20</sup> For Charlemagne as David with his mighty men, see:

Notker the Stammerer, Life of Charlemagne in Two Lives of Charlemagne (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 142, 153, 160, 168.

<sup>21</sup> Beati Rabani Mauri, "Commentaria in Libros Machabaeorum," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 109: 1,125-1,156.

Franks saw themselves as fighting off pagan-barbarian incursions, even as the Maccabees of old had struggled to defend Jerusalem and the Temple Cult of Yahweh. <sup>22</sup>

With the passing of the Carolingian period into that of the Ottonians, the vision of a Maccabean fight grew dimmer, but did not vanish entirely. The first notable account of the northeastern expansion of Germanic Christian civilization in the post-Carolingian period was Adam of Bremen's Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum. This work was composed during the Salian Period (1024-1125), but deals with warfare extending far back into Ottonian times. The subject matter is appropriate for Maccabean allusions, and Adam of Bremen does not disappoint his readers. The Christian prince Gotescalcus, because of a particularly heroic engagement against the Slavs, earns the name "Our Maccabee."

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<sup>22</sup> It is not without significance that Rabanus Maurus was Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey at Fulda. During this period, Fulda was essentially a frontier settlement, situated as it was quite close to the Germanic/Slavic, Christian/pagan boundary.



Princeps Gotescalcus eo tempore interfectus est a paganis, quos ad christianitatem nitebatur ipse convertere. Et quidem vir omni aevo memorabilis magnam partem Sclavaniae conversam habuit ad divinam religionem. Sed quia nondum "impletae sunt iniquitates Amorreorum" neque adhuc venit tempus miserendi eorum, necesse erat, ut venirent scandala, ut probati fierent manifesti. Passus est autem noster Machabeus in civitate Leontia VII. idus Iunii cum presbytero Yppone, qui super altare immolatus est, et aliis multis tam laicis quam clericis, qui diversa ubique pro Christo pertulerunt supplicia.

23

Prince Gottschalk was at this time slain by the pagans whom he was trying to convert to Christianity. And indeed, the forever memorable man had turned a great part of Slavia to the divine religion. But because as yet "the iniquities of the Amorrhites are not at the full" nor "time to have mercy on them yet come," it "must needs be that scandals come," that they "also, who are approved may be made manifest." Our Maccabee suffered on the seventh day before the Ides of June in the city of Lenzen with the priest Yppo, who was immolated at the altar, and many others, both lay and cleric, everywhere underwent diverse tortures for the sake of Christ.

Helmold of Bosau's Cronica Slavorum was the other early account of Germanic expansion to the East. As Adam had done before him, Helmold draws heavily upon Maccabean symbolism. Helmold adapts the Maccabean model to the

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23 Magistri Adam Bremensis, Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum (Hannover und Leipzig: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1917 / Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in Usum Scholarum), Lib. III, Cap. L, p. 193.

The English translation is taken from:

Adam of Bremen, History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen, translated by Francis J. Tschan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), pp. 156-157.

Tschan identifies the imbedded scriptural passages as being: Genesis 15: 16, Psalms 101: 14 and Matt. 18: 7. The allusion to Judas Maccabee is generalized, but it recalls I Maccabees, Chapter 4 in which Judas is busy within the temple building, purifying it and rededicating a new altar.

bloody encounter between the (now) Christian Saxons and the pagan Slavs along the Elbe frontier.<sup>24</sup> As Helmut describes the war of Christian pitted against pagan, his style is heavily influenced by the Vulgate. Like the Teutonic Order's Peter von Dusburg a century-and-a-half later,<sup>25</sup> Helmold was removed in both time and place from direct experience with most of the events about which he wrote.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, Biblical battle-narratives provided him with the necessary details. And, according to the editor of the standard Helmold translation,<sup>27</sup> the list of Biblical books Helmold cites or copies most frequently is dramatically headed by I Maccabees. Of hardly less significance is the fact that II Maccabees ranks as Helmold's eighth most frequently cited Biblical book.

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24 Helmsoldi, "Chronica Slavorum," Monumenta Germanicae Historica, Scriptores XXI, edidit Georgius Heinricus Pertz (Hannoverae: Impensis Bibliopolii Aulici Hahniani, 1868), pp. 11-99.

Helmold, Priest of Bosau, The Chronicle of the Slavs, translated and introduced by Francis Joseph Tschan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935).

25 See Chapter 5 below.

26 Helmold lived at the time of Friedrich Barbarossa, but wrote of a much earlier period.

27 Francis J. Tschan, "Introduction" to Helmold, Chronicle of the Slavs, p. 34.

I Maccabee

Psalms

Genesis

I and II Kings

Isaiah

Deuteronomy

II Chronicles

II Maccabees

Helmold calls the Saxon hero Gottschalk, for example, a "Second Maccabee" <sup>28</sup> and in another place says:

Nichil itaque melius a notissimis  
illis filiis Sarvie <sup>29</sup> vel a  
Machabeis quondam pugnatum est,  
quam a sacerdote Gerlavo virisque  
perpaucis in castro Susle.

Those most noted sons of Sarvia  
or the Maccabees did not fight  
more valiantly of old than did  
the priest Gerlav and the handful  
of men at Sussel.

30

Beyond naming the Maccabees as exemplary predecessors, Helmold also imitates the Latin style he finds in I and II Maccabees. Upon the death of Alexander the

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28 Helmold, Chronicle of the Slavs, p. 97.

29 II Samuel 2: 18 and I Chronicles 2: 16 -- also written Zeruah. She was David's sister and her sons were Joab, Abishai and Asahel. See also II Samuel 14: 1 and 16: 9.

30 Helmoldi, "Chronica Slavorum," Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Scriptores XXI, p. 60.

English translation of Helmold are taken from: Helmold, Chronicle of the Slavs, translated by Francis J. Tschan, p. 179.

Great, for example, the Vulgate says concerning the emergence of the Diadochi, "Et multiplicata sunt mala in terra" (I Maccabee 1: 9). Helmold writes concerning the death of Emperor Henry III and the immediate struggle between his heirs:

Et surrexit unusquisque adversus  
proximum suum, et multiplicata  
sunt mala multa in terra,  
depredationes, incendia et mortes  
hominum.

Each one rose against his  
neighbor and many "evils were  
multiplied in the earth,"  
robberies, fires, and murders.

31

The final important channel of Maccabean awareness is to be found among the Cistercians and especially with St. Bernard. The Cistercians, as has been demonstrated, actively engaged in practical Biblical studies.<sup>32</sup> With their sense for completeness and uniformitas, Cistercians never allowed I and II Maccabees to be entirely neglected. Furthermore, from the time of their beginnings, the Cistercians supported crusading efforts and St. Bernard, in his De Laude, used Maccabean symbolism based upon broad Cistercian Biblicism.

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31 Helmoldi, "Chronica Slavorum," Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Scriptores XXI, p. 28.

According to Tschan, the translator and editor of the English translation of Helmut ("Introduction," pp. 35-36), the narrative from which this citation is taken shows Helmold at his most powerful best. This is precisely the place where he leans most heavily upon his Maccabee source.

32 See Chapter 2 above.

The Cistercians were active for centuries in the inhospitable and disputed borderlands of Eastern Europe.<sup>33</sup> On the Slavic frontier, as has been noted, the chronicles of Adam of Bremen and Helmold of Bosau perpetuated the perceived parallel between the Maccabees and contemporary Christian soldiery locked in struggle with the pagan Slavs. When St. Bernard journeyed to the northeast in order to preach crusade against the Wends (1147), his sermons re-enforced this strand of Maccabean polemic.<sup>34</sup>

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The Biblical books of I and II Maccabees were not widely known and used during the Middle Ages, but they were not entirely forgotten. The tradition of the fighting Maccabees stayed alive in those regions where the Church militant was actively engaged in struggle with pagans and heretics: in the Greek East, during Western crusades in the Levant, and in the pagan-threatened borderlands of northeastern Europe. As military religious

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<sup>33</sup> See Chapter 2 above.

<sup>34</sup> Manfred Unger, "Bernhard von Clairvaux und der Slawenkreuzzug 1147," Zeitschrift für Geschichte 7 (1959), pp. 80-90.

W. Schlesinger, "Die geschichtliche Stellung der mittelalterlichen deutschen Ostbewegung," Historische Zeitschrift 183 (1957), p. 517 ff.

orders developed, these orders were identified increasingly with the Maccabees until, because of the lack of general interest in the Maccabees, the tradition became practically their own. The Templars, to whom Bernard's De Laude was dedicated, were the most prominent "New Maccabees" until their cataclysmic fall. Then, by default, the Teutonic Order claimed this singular distinction. As they entered their generation of crisis, the Ordensritter realized that, as they spread awareness and appreciation for the Maccabees, they spread sympathy and support for themselves.

There is no better way to trace this later development of the Maccabean tradition than through an examination of papal letters of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

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Very soon after the appearance of Bernard's De Laude, the English Pope Adrian IV (1154-1159) saw fit to continue Bernard's fortuitous imagery of the New Maccabees in his letters.<sup>35</sup> At this early date, Adrian wrote with only the Templars in mind. But the milites christiani to whom

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<sup>35</sup> Desmond Sewart, The Monks of War: the Military Religious Orders (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1972), pp. 41 and 45.

the popes later referred steadily broadened.<sup>36</sup> During the Fourth Lateran Council, Innocent III's opening sermon refers to the crusading priests as being similar to the "Maccabees who once delivered Jerusalem." Innocent here includes members of all crusading orders, not just the Templars. The Teutonic Order had been founded two decades earlier and was at this time completing its transformation into a full-fledged military order.

. . . Nam et olim in simili casu  
per sacerdotes fecit Deus salutem  
in Israel, quando per  
Macchabaeos, utique sacerdotes,  
filios Mathathiae, liberavit  
Jerusalem et templum de manibus  
impiorum.

For in former times in a similar  
situation God, through his  
priests, brought well-being to  
Israel when He, by means of the  
Maccabees, sons of Mathathias and  
certainly priests, liberated  
Jerusalem and the Temple from the  
hands of the impious.

Mansi 22/970 37

This sermon is typical of Innocent's scripture-laced rhetoric, where he provides an optimistic assessment of problems through his Biblical eloquence. The Teutonic Order was later to imitate Innocent in both content and form in its own Scriptural self-defense.

During the course of the thirteenth century, the

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36 For cited examples of early Maccabean allusions used in relation to the Templars and Hospitalers, see:

Marie-Luise Favreau, Studien zur Frühgeschichte des Deutschen Ordens (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1974), p. 83 note #129.

37 Sacrum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio, edidit Joannes Dominicus Mansi (Paris/Leipzig: H. Welter [Reproduction], 1903), Tomus 22, p. 970.

Teutonic Order so identified with the Maccabee image that stirring Maccabean allusions were introduced into the revised Order Rule of 1244. Significantly, there was no precedent for these Maccabean insertions in the original Templar Rule.<sup>38</sup> In this same spirit, papal letters directed to the Teutonic Order increased in their number of allusions to the Maccabees.

A first example of a Maccabean reference directed exclusively at the Teutonic Order comes in a Bull issued by Pope Honorius III (16 January, 1221). The title novi Machabei appears here within the context of a papal description of the Order's raison d'être.

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38 "Prologue" #3 and #4, Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens, herausgegeben von Max Perlbach (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1890), p. 25.

"Prologue" #3 and portions of "Prologue" #4 are quoted in Chapter 2 above.



Milites hospitalis sancte Marie  
Theutonicorum Ierosolimitani novi  
sub tempore gratie Machabei,  
abnegantes secularia desideria et  
propria relinquentes, tollentes  
crucem suam, dominum sunt secuti;  
ipsi sunt, per quos deus orien-  
talem ecclesiam a paganorum  
spurcitiis liberat, et christiani  
nominis inimicos expungnat; ipsi  
pro fratribus animas ponere non  
formidant et peregrinos ad sancta  
loca proficiscentes tam in eundo  
quam redeundo defensant ab  
incursibus paganorum.

39

The Knights of the Hospital of  
St. Mary of the Germans of  
Jerusalem, who are in this time  
of grace New Maccabees, denying  
secular wishes and leaving their  
possessions, have followed their  
Lord by taking up their cross.  
These are the ones through whom  
God liberates the Eastern Church  
from the filth of paganism and  
wipes out the enemies of the  
Christian name. These [knights]  
do not fear extending their  
courage for their brothers. They  
defend pilgrims bound for holy  
places from harassment by the  
infidel, both when the pilgrims  
are going and when they are  
returning.

Somewhat later, the same Pope Honorius III, in  
another letter in defense of the Order, says of them:

(Cum ) fratres domus hospitalis  
sancte Marie Theutonicorum  
Ierosolimitani tamquam veri  
Machabei crucem dominicam in  
proprio corpore baiulantes sese  
pro defensione christianitatis  
extremis exponant periculis et  
carnalia desideria negligentes  
discipulos sese constituerint  
Ihesu Christi . . .

40

The brothers of the House of the  
Hospital of St. Mary of the  
Germans of Jerusalem, just like  
true Maccabees, carrying the  
cross of the Lord upon their own  
bodies, expose themselves to  
extreme danger for the defense of  
Christianity and, denying  
physical needs, present  
themselves as disciples of Jesus  
Christ.

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39 Tabulae Ordinis Theutonicici ex Tabularii Regii  
Berolinensis Codice Potissimum, herausgegeben von Ernst  
Strehlke (Berlin: Weidmann, 1866 / Jerusalem: H. E. Meyer,  
1975), #321, pp. 290-291.

August Potthast, Regesta pontificum Romanorum, 1198-  
1304, 2 Bände (Berlin: W. Rudolf de Decker, 1874-1875 /  
Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1957),  
#6,496.

40 Tabulae Ordinis Theutonicici (Strehlke), #403,  
p. 333.

Honorius' successor, Pope Gregory IX, continued the Maccabean imagery in a letter addressed to the Order in the year 1230. Calling for support of the Order in its construction of the Castle Monfort near Acre, Gregory writes:

Dilecti filii fratres hospitalis sancte Marie Theutonicorum in Ierusalem, novi sub tempore gracie Machabei, abnegantes secularia desideria et propria relinquentes, tollentes crucem suam dominum sunt secuti. Ipsi sunt, qui orientalem ecclesiam a paganorum spurcitia liberare et christiani nominis inomikos expugnare nituntur; ipsi pro fratribus animos ponere non formidant et peregrinos ad sancta loca proficiscentes tam eundo quam redeundo ab incursibus paganorum defensare conantur.

41

(My) revered sons, brothers of the Hospital of St. Mary of the Germans in Jerusalem, who are in this time of grace New Maccabees, denying secular wishes and leaving their possessions, they have followed their Lord (by) taking up their cross. These are the ones who struggle to liberate the Eastern Church from the filth of paganism and work to wipe out the enemies of the Christian name. These (knights) do not fear extending their courage for their brothers. They endeavor to defend pilgrims to holy places from harassment by the infidel, both when the pilgrims are going and when they are returning.

It is obvious that the popes had fallen into the comfortable pattern of referring to the Teutonic Order as "New Maccabees." Telling also are the examples in which local bishops and political leaders employ the same Biblical symbolism. These more localized examples are

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41 Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici (Strehlke), #72 (July 10, 1330), p. 56.

Potthast, Regesta pontificum, #8,587.

A comparison reveals that this letter is almost a verbatim repetition and reaffirmation of Honorius III's bull of 1221. Honorius' bull is quoted above.

significant for two reasons: 1) The Maccabee image was filtering down and spreading out in the lower levels of the Church and the political establishment, and 2) the Maccabee parallel was now being applied in areas far distant from the Holy Land where it had been originally used.

The first example involves a land grant bestowed upon the Teutonic Order by the King of Armenia. King Leo transferred lands:

. . .venerabilibus et religiosis  
fratribus sancte domus hospitalis  
Teutonicorum vicem Machabeorum  
pro defensione domus Israel  
gerentibus . . .

42

. . . to the venerable and pious  
brothers of the House of the  
Hospital of the Germans, that is,  
of the Maccabees, who provide  
defense for the House of Israel .  
. .

A second example, fittingly, comes from Elbing in Prussia. It is dated April 27, 1251 and was written by a Brother Anselmus, Bishop of Ermland. In order to support the Teutonic Order, Anselm guarantees:

. . . veri, ut sepe probatum est,  
Machabei pro amplianda fide  
catholica quamplurima passi sunt  
detrimenta et cottidie paciantur,  
. . . .

43

Truly, as has been often shown,  
these Maccabees have endured so  
many injuries for the spreading  
of the Catholic Faith and they  
continue to suffer daily.

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42 Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici (Strehlke), #46 (April 1212), p. 37.

43 Preussisches Urkundenbuch, herausgegeben von Philippi, et al. Königsberg: Gräfe und Unzer / Marburg: Elwert, 1882-1958, Band I, 1 #248.

The Rule of the Teutonic Order was revised into its definitive form during the mid-thirteenth century, precisely that period of the cited papal documents -- the time when curial usage was essentially establishing the appellation novi Machabae as the Teutonic Order's own possession.<sup>44</sup> The "Prologue" to the Rule, for understandable reasons, repeatedly stresses the Maccabee precedent.

Wir gedenken ouch des lobelichen  
strites, der wert vor Gote was,  
der rittere, die da heizent  
Machabei, wie stercliche die  
durch ir e unde umme den gelouben  
striten mit den heiden, die sie  
twingen wolden, daz sie Gotes  
verlougenten, unde mit siner  
helfe sie so gar überwunden unde  
vertiligreten, daz sie die  
heiligen stete wider  
gereinegeten, die sie heten  
geunreint, unde den vride  
macheten wider in dem lande.

We remember also the struggle,  
praiseworthy and pleasing to God,  
of the knights who were called  
Maccabees; how stoutly, for their  
honor and their faith, they  
fought with the pagans who wished  
to force them to deny God, and  
His help, defeated and exter-  
minated them so that they  
cleansed once again the Holy City  
which the pagans had defiled, and  
restored once again peace in the  
land.

## 45

In the Rule, allusions to St. John's New Knighthood coming down from heaven (Rev. 3: 12 and 19: 14) also awaken a vision of the New Maccabees, as do the mounted angelic warriors descending from the sky (II Macc. 3: 25

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44 An important consideration for this period, too, is the fact that Pope Eugenius III (1145-1153) was a Cistercian.

45 "Prologue" #3, Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens, p. 25; Stern, p. 204.

and 34, II Macc. 5: 2, II Macc. 10: 29). None of this Biblical, and specifically Maccabean material, was in the original Rule of the Templars upon which the Rule of the Teutonic Order was based.

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This background survey of the Teutonic Order and the Order's relation to the Maccabee tradition demonstrates that a translation of I and II Maccabees within the bosom of the Order was inevitable. The Order's roots in the East, its Cistercian affiliations, its activities on the eastern European frontier, its interest in post-exilic Jewish history -- all of these things encouraged, indeed compelled the Teutonic Order to render I and II Maccabees into German and accord to it a privileged status.

In the early decades of the fourteenth century there appeared in the German East a verse translation of I and II Maccabees. This work was the product of the Teutonic Order. The evidence to this fact is indisputable. The surviving copy of Das Makkabäerbuch was preserved in the Order library at Bad Mergenheim, bound together with the Order's translations of Daniel, Esdras und Neemya, Judith, Hester and the Apocalypse.<sup>46</sup> The vocabulary is

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<sup>46</sup> For a careful description of this manuscript, see:

Karl Helm, "Einleitung," Das Buch der Maccabäer,

characteristic of the Order. <sup>47</sup> The author of the Makkabäerbuch knows and imitates the Passional, which he cites twice by name (Makk. v. 14,144 and v. 14,201). <sup>48</sup> The Makkabäerbuch, in its turn, strongly influenced the later translation of Daniel, which specifically cites the Makkabäerbuch in one place (Dan. 6,216-6,219). <sup>49</sup>

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herausgegeben von Karl Helm (Tübingen: Literarischer Verein in Stuttgart, 1904), p. vii.

<sup>47</sup> Helm, "Einleitung," Buch der Maccabäer, p. lxxxii; See also: Helm und Zieseimer, Literatur, p. 261.

<sup>48</sup> The translator of Maccabees imitates his predecessor doggedly, but falls short of his gifted mentor in matters of style. Even the most sympathetic modern reader must admit that the Makkabäerbuch, important as it is historically, is not great poetry. It is written in a wooden German style, tedious in its diction and mediocre in its execution of Hesler's 8-syllable rhymed lines.

As an example of poetic tediousness: verses 329 to 354, i.e. 25 verses, all rhyme in -anc! (danc, cranc, ranc, schanc, lanc, etc.)

See Conclusion for a general discussion of Order's use of poetic verse.

49

Swér nu disser rede gert  
Vurbaz, der such sie dort  
Machabeorum dutscher Wort  
Gemachet zum ersten an.

Dan. v. 6,216-6,219

He who indeed delights in this story, let him first of all seek it out where  
Maccabees is rendered into German.

Arthur Hübner, in his thorough study devoted to the Order's translation of Daniel, says of Daniel's dependency upon the Makkabäerbuch:

Finally, Historien der Alden E, which appeared considerably later, carried on the Order's Maccabean literary tradition. In a work of 6,165 verses which purports to summarize the entire Old Testament, over one thousand verses (Hist. v. 4,807-5,855), or approximately one sixth of the total length, is taken up treating the Maccabean period.

The Makkabäerbuch can be dated fairly accurately to the late 1320's or early 1330's. It is cited in the Order's Daniel translation. Defining terminus a quo is a complaint in the Makkabäerbuch v. 777-788 (i.e. early in the poem and thus presumably early during the work's composition) about the absence of a recognized Emperor. This defines the period between 1313 (the death of Henry VII) until 1322 (the victory of Louis the Bavarian over

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"Aber die Abhängigkeit des Daniels geht weit über eine solche gelegentliche Benutzung hinaus. Vielmehr sind die Makk. in mancher Fragen der äusseren Form geradezu das Muster für den Daniel gewesen."

But this dependence of Daniel goes far beyond an occasional using. More than this, the Makkabäerbuch is in many questions of outward form nothing less than the prototype for Daniel.

Hübner's next ten pages, with all the examples and analytical Gründlichkeit of a Wilhelminian scholar, go on to prove this assertion.

Arthur Hübner, "Daniel, eine Deutschordensdichtung," Palaestra, Band 101 (Berlin: Meyer und Müller, 1911), p. 134 ff.

Friedrich der Schöne at Mühldorf). Our author also helps in establishing a time-frame by complaining (Makk. v. 305 ff.) that he has labored for a considerable number of years on his work.

Based on all of the marshalled evidence, it appears that the Makkabäerbuch was composed during the 1320's and was completed at the end of that decade or at the beginning of the next.

Regarding authorship, Karl Helm's thesis has found general acceptance.<sup>50</sup> Karl Helm, noted authority on the literature of the Teutonic Order, concludes on the basis of time of composition, theme and internal evidence, that the author-translator was none other than Grandmaster Luder von Braunschweig. An overview of Helm's argued case is important here -- for as we are able to assure ourselves that Luder von Braunschweig indeed was the author of the Makkabäerbuch, we bring together the Order's most powerful and resourceful leader during the period of crisis and the Order's most significant work of Biblical defense.

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<sup>50</sup> Only Gerhard Eis seems reluctant to follow Helm in this matter.

Gerhard Eis, "Review of Helm und Zieseimer's Literatur des Deutschen Ordens," Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie, 73 (1954), p. 122.



Looking to the text of the Makkabäerbuch itself, it is immediately apparent that the author makes a point of hiding his identity.

Wil ieman wizzen wer er si,  
der dise rede nu tut hie,  
sines namen man niht endarf,  
wand er ist der sinne unscharf,  
des mac er haben keinen danc,  
er ist leider vor got cranc,  
iedoch sin herze stete ranc,  
daz im wurde der gnaden schanc

. . .

Makk. v. 325-336 51

If someone wants to know who it is who is writing this piece, he may not learn the name, for the author is not bright and the work deserves no praise. He is ill in the eyes of God, but his heart is moved that he has been granted grace.

In modesty appropriate to the period and to the nature of the work, the author contents himself with such titles as "ein arme knabe" (Makk. v. 275), "ich armer genant" (Makk. v. 934) and "von gote genant der arme" (Makk. v. 11,264). In further humility, he pronounces himself to be a layman and not a priest.

Ieclicher sal sich entladen  
daz er iht gewinne schaden;  
en betriegen der schrifte wort,  
ob er niht vraget vurbaz vort  
wie er die dinc sal vernemen,  
daz sie dem gelouben zemen.  
Die werde pfafheit allez gar  
uns daz entrihten wol vurwar.

Each one should hold back, lest he pick up something injurious. Lest the written word lead him astray, ought he not ask how things should be taken so as to be in accordance with the Faith. The worthy priest will indeed inform us in all such matters.

Makk. v. 14,375-14,382

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51 Citations from Das Makkabäerbuch are taken from:

Das Buch der Maccabäer, herausgegeben von Karl Helm (Tübingen: Literarischer Verlag, 1904 / Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins zu Stuttgart, 233).

There is, however, one not-so-subtle indication as to the author's identity. On page 52 of the manuscript, the letter N which begins verse 267 ("Nun hat ir wol vornomen") contains the Braunschweig coat-of-arms. The coat-of-arms is not where one might expect it: either at the start of the poem or at the very beginning of the entire Prachthandschrift in which the Makkabäerbuch is bound. Rather, the coat-of-arms comes precisely at the beginning of the personal preface by the Maccabee translator. It might be possible, Helm recognizes, that the coat-of-arms could stand for a commissioning patron. But in other Order works which are dedicated to Luder (e.g. Daniel and Des Sünder Widerstreit), he is named explicitly as such. Furthermore, if the author had wanted to allude to his patron with the patron's coat-of-arms, a spot around verse #299 would have been more appropriate, because here the author speaks freely of the purpose of his work. The most logical place of all for the coat-of-arms of a patron, of course, would have been at the beginning of the work. Helm accordingly surmises:

Ein solches diskretes Verfahren wie die Stellung des Wappens passt dagegen gut gleichsam als Eigentumsmarke vor der persönlichen Vorrede des Verfassers, der im übrigen in aller Bescheidenheit verschmäh't, seinen Namen zu nennen.

Such a discreet action as the placing of his coat-of-arms in front of his personal prologue fits appropriately as the mark of possession of the author who in all modesty refuses otherwise to give his name.

52

Helm concludes his argument, which as he admits is "auch nicht zwingend, so doch sehr wahrscheinlich" <sup>53</sup> by pointing to the close association between the Makkabäerbuch and Grandmaster Luder as he is directly mentioned in the pages of the later Daniel translation. Daniel is explicitly dedicated to Luder von Braunschweig, and Daniel shows striking influences from the Makkabäerbuch. The Daniel translator is very likely flattering his patron by imitating the patron's work. <sup>54</sup>

Following Helm, we may thus conclude that Luder von Braunschweig was the author of the Teutonic Order's Maccabee translation. And even if he was not, his name must, at the very least, be associated with the Maccabees in the closest possible way. This fact is highly significant since Luder stood as the Order's most powerful

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52 Helm und Ziesemer, Literatur, p. 99.

53 Helm und Ziesemer, Literatur, p. 99.

54 See the discussion of the Order's Daniel in Chapter 3 above, where the influence of Das Makkabäerbuch upon Daniel are stressed.

and influential leader since the days of Hermann von Salza, its great formative leader. Luder personified the Order's rebirth from crisis. Under him the most pernicious military and diplomatic battles threatening the Order approached their conclusion and the most destructive internal stresses were put to rest.

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Luder von Braunschweig entered the Teutonic Order around the turn of the 14th century as a young nobleman of the Thuringian line.<sup>55</sup> Luder's family was politically active and influential beyond the boundaries of its own principality and the family was widely noted for its love of the arts. Ties to the Teutonic Order and the colonial East had always been firm, long before the dramatic step of a younger son's taking Order vows. Luder was a distant

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<sup>55</sup> Helpful biographical information on Luder von Braunschweig may be found in:

Johannes Voigt, Geschichte Preussens von den ältesten Zeiten bis zum Untergange der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens (Königsberg: Bornträger, 1827-39), Band 4, pp. 478-519.

Erich Maschke, Der deutsche Orden in Gestalten seiner grossen Meister (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1936).

Heinrich Bauer, Geburt des Ostens (Berlin: Frundsberg Verlag, 1933), pp. 73-151.

Band III, 1 and 2 of Das Preussische Urkundenbuch contain primary documents relating to Luder von Braunschweig and his tenure as grandmaster.

descendant of Henry the Lion, whose early exploits on the Slavic frontier had become legendary. His name (variously recorded as Luder, Luther and Lothar) honored another distant relative famous in the Germanic East, Lothar von Supplinburg. Luder's grandfather, Otto von Braunschweig, had fought side by side with Order knights during the 1240's in some of the earliest campaigns against the Pruteni.<sup>56</sup> Luder's father, Albrecht the Great, had campaigned in the East, helping the Order crush the great Pruteni uprising of 1260-1274. But probably Luder's greatest asset to the Teutonic Order was the fact that, as a member of the princely Thuringian house, he was distantly related to St. Elizabeth of Thuringia.<sup>57</sup> Elizabeth was by now revered among the Knights as a protectress second only to Mary.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> In Nicolaus von Jeroschin's Kronike von Pruzinlant, a chronicle which Luder commissioned during his grandmastership (see Chapter 6 below), Otto's exploits are described with particular warmth and enthusiasm (Kron. v. 142 ff., 1,456 ff., 5,509 ff., etc.).

<sup>57</sup> Luder's paternal aunt, Helene, was wife to Hermann of Thuringia, the son of St. Elizabeth.

<sup>58</sup> Elizabeth, daughter of King Andrew of Hungary, was sent to marry Ludwig IV, Landgrave of Thuringia, while still a young girl in the year 1221. The match was a political one. Upon the Landgrave's sudden death, Elizabeth, rather than returning to Hungary, stayed in her adopted land and took the veil. For the remainder of her short life, she ministered to the needs of the sick and infirm in Marburg under the stern direction of the Dominican Conrad of Marburg. Elizabeth's ties to the

In later years, the translator of Daniel included in his work a lengthy panegyric to his patron, Luder von Braunschweig. The translator praises Luder's circumspect wisdom and makes a specific point of Luder's blood ties to the imperial family, to the Thuringian house and to St. Elizabeth.

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Teutonic Order were numerous:

a) The Order's first European crusade was in Hungary at the invitation of Elizabeth's father, King Andrew.

b) Landgrave Ludwig's younger brother, Elizabeth's brother-in-law, was Grandmaster Konrad von Thüringen (1239-1240). Ludwig traveled to Rome and worked diligently for Elizabeth's sanctification.

c) During the early years before the full onset of the Prussian campaign, Thuringia was the center of Order activities in German-speaking Europe. It was also the most important recruiting territory for Order novices.

d) Elizabeth's medical work was revered by the knight-monks. Much of Elizabeth's work was continued by the Teutonic Order after her death. As a result of the negotiations in Rome concerning her sanctification, the Teutonic Order was given the responsibility for her Marburg hospital.

e) Elizabeth was laid to rest in the Teutonic Order's Elisabethenkirche in Marburg.

For an excellent discussion of St. Elizabeth of Hungary/Thuringia and her relation to the Teutonic Order, see:

Hartmut Boockmann, Der Deutsche Orden, Zwölf Kapitel aus seiner Geschichte (München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1981), pp. 46 ff.

Sulcher uzlegunge bat  
 Der reine und der wise,  
 Des urhab ich wol prise  
 In keiserlicher bluete.  
 Von sines stammis guete  
 Entspröz der tugende vas  
 Elyzabet, die hie was  
 Zu Ungern des kunges kint;  
 Heilic ist sie worden sint  
 Bi Gote in ewikeit.  
 Disse vreude si bereit  
 Im ouch durch iren willen.  
 Sie sal den viant stillen,  
 Ob er en noch vichtet an.  
 Ein vurst ist dirre man,  
 Geborn von des adils zwic,  
 Gekreirt der von Brunswic,  
 Bruder Luder, dem orden  
 Ho meister hie geworden  
 Genant der dutschen heren.

The pure and wise one whose nobility in imperial blood I praise (i.e. Luder) commissioned this translation. From the goodness of his clan sprang that vessel of virtue, Elizabeth, who originally was from Hungary, the child of a king. She became a saint with God in eternity. This joy she also prepared for him through her will: she will silence the enemy, if he attacks. This man is a prince, born of noble stock, from Braunschweig, Brother Luder, who became grandmaster of the order which is called the German Knights.

Daniel v. 8,304-8,323

Before Luder's tenure as grandmaster (1331-1335), he occupied the important office of Komtur of Christburg (1314-1330). Already in his lesser post, Luder carried out many of the reforming programs which were to characterize his eventual leadership as grandmaster.<sup>59</sup> Luder fostered colonization from the Altreich. He established an effective school system and took measures to curtail the use of the Prussian language among the indigenous population. An energetic builder, Luder saw to the construction of numerous frontier fortifications and

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<sup>59</sup> For a listing of some of the more important of Luder's reforming decrees, see:

Heinrich Bauer, Geburt des Ostens, pp. 141-144.

the dedication of dozens of new churches. All of these initiatives fostered a thorough Germanization of the land. This concern with Germanization later figures large in the gloss of Luder's Makkabäerbuch (Makk. v. 782 ff.), which evokes the spirit of a kind of "Germans' burden" for the spreading of culture and Christianity in the East. <sup>60</sup>

Particularly after he assumed the mantle of grandmaster, Luder moved decisively to complete the evangelization of Prussia and to strengthen spirituality within the Order. He promulgated anti-heretic and anti-Jewish laws and gave close attention to Church polity. Luder expanded and unified the Order's liturgy, showing particular devotion to the Order's protectress Mary and to its second protectress (and his ancestor), St. Elizabeth. He decreed, for example, that in all Order convents an early mass be held honoring, on alternate mornings, the Holy Virgin and the souls of the departed. <sup>61</sup> He also

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<sup>60</sup> Makk. v. 777-788. See below for a full quotation of this passage.

<sup>61</sup> The corresponding passage in Jeroschin's Kronike von Pruzinlant reads:

Ouch satzte er vil seleclich,  
daz man solde tegelich  
gote zu lobis renten  
in des ordins conventen  
eine vrumesse halden i  
unda ouch ordenliche di  
singen mit den noten  
einen tac vor di toten,



encouraged special devotion to St. Barbara. <sup>62</sup> A later chronicler of the Teutonic Order wrote of Luder:

Frater Lutherus de Brunswig  
magister devotus in oracionibus  
et virtuosus multa memorie digna  
statuit et in bonis operibus  
finem clausit in choro  
canonicorum in Königsberg . . .  
(Luder) sepius in choro cantat,  
quum notas novit dulciter modu-  
lare et signanter sanctissimam  
Elizabeth tamquam sibi specialem  
matronam devotissimis obsequiis  
et laudibus venerabatur. <sup>63</sup>

Luder von Braunschweig, devout  
and virtuous in prayer, stands  
worthy of memory. In testimony to  
his good works, he lies buried in  
the choir of canons in  
Königsberg. . . Luder often sang  
in choir, where he knew how to  
intone notes sweetly, and  
specifically (he sang) to St.  
Elizabeth as if he venerated his  
special mother with most devoted  
observances and praise.

The Kürze Reimchronik von Preussen has similar glowing words describing Luder's ecclesiastical reforms:

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den andern von Marien  
der edeln wandils vrien.

Jeroschin: Kronike  
v. 27,673-27,682

He also piously established that one should daily in the convents celebrate forever to God's praise an early mass. Masses were to be properly sung with notes, alternating one day in honor of the dead, the other day in honor of Mary.

<sup>62</sup> "Gesetze Luthers von Braunschweig" in Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens, p. 148.

Helm und Ziesemer, Literatur, pp. 92-93

<sup>63</sup> Wigand von Marburg, "Cronica Nova Prutenica," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 2, p. 487.

Do wart zu homeister gekorn  
 ein edel herre wol geborn,  
 bruder Luder von Brunswic;  
 der vant zu himele den rechten  
 stic;

. . .  
 zu Merginburg und anderswa,  
 zu Golube, Kirsburg, hi und da,  
 und in ander maniger stat  
 er gotis dienst gemeret hat  
 mit mancher lobelichen tat,  
 der in got genizen lat.

A grandmaster was chosen, a  
 noble, well-born lord, Brother  
 Luder von Braunschweig, who found  
 the right path to heaven, . . . At  
 the Marienburg, at Golube and  
 Christburg as well as in other  
 places, Luder increased Church  
 services with many laudable  
 deeds, in which God allowed him  
 to take pleasure.

K.R. v. 132 ff. 64

It is within the context of Luder's reforms,  
 particularly his liturgical reforms, that Luder as author  
 and patron of literature is rightly understood. Luder  
 wrote and translated pieces himself, he had three works  
 dedicated to him (Daniel, Der Sünden Widerstreit, Von  
siben Ingesigelen) and he encouraged still further

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64 "Die Kürze Reimchronik von Preussen," Scriptores  
Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen  
Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1861 /  
 Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 2, p. 5.

As was always the case in the history of the Teutonic  
 Order, direct ties and influences from the Cistercian  
 Order figured significantly in Luder's reform efforts.  
 Luder did not carry out his reforms in isolation.  
 Benedict XII (1334-1342), Luder's exact contemporary in  
 his tenure as pope, was a Cistercian monk. In 1335  
 Benedict XII promulgated a series of regulations to  
 restore the primitive spirit of his own Cistercian Order.  
 Benedict's reform of the liturgy bears striking  
 resemblance to Luder's efforts.

For early Cistercian influences upon the life of  
 Luder von Braunschweig, see:

Erich Maschke, Der deutsche Orden in Gestalten seiner  
grossen Meister, pp. 62-63.

compositions. But Luder was not, in the strict sense of the word, a belletrist. He fostered a Biblical Zweckliteratur which had little or nothing to do with the courtly literature so prized by Luder's Thuringian kinsmen in the Altreich. <sup>65</sup> Luder's literature was a literature of spiritual edification and self-defense. <sup>66</sup> Beyond the

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<sup>65</sup> Unfortunately, many historians of German literature have wrongly praised Luder as a belletrist, a devotee of l'art pour l'art. Pruntz, for example, in his inaugural oration Der Anteil der geistlichen Ritterorden an dem geistigen Leben ihrer Zeit states that Luder labored to establish a "seat of the Muses" (Musensitz) at the Marienburg. In this, Luder supposedly followed the lead of his kinsman, Heinrich Landgraf von Thüringen, master of the cultivated court of the Wartburg castle. Other scholars have unfortunately perpetuated this exaggerated Schwermerie.

Luder does deserve our admiration, but appropriately only as a dedicated leader of his Order and as the promoter of an effective Zweckliteratur.

Hans Prutz, Der Anteil der geistlichen Ritterorden an dem geistigen Leben ihrer Zeit: Festrede (München: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1903), p. 11.

Walter Zieseimer, "Geistiges Leben im Deutschen Orden," Jahrbuch des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung 37 (1911), pp. 129-139.

<sup>66</sup> Beginning at the time of Luder's grandmastership and continuing on after him, the Teutonic Order produced a number of handbooks on practical topics. The Order's Fachliteratur reflected those technical realms in which the Order excelled: medical and veterinary science, military and naval science, architecture, surveying, smithing and weapon making, bookkeeping, etc. Here, as with the Order's Biblical and historical literature, Cistercian influences are undeniable.

The works of Gerhard Eis are an excellent beginning point for further study of this branch of Deutschordensliteratur:

Maccabee translation, the sources state that Luder composed other practical books. Wigand von Marburg, a later chronicler of the Teutonic Order, tells us that Luder von Braunschweig, as a part of his general piety, *ecclesias frequentabat, vulgares libros composuerat.* 67 . . frequented Churches and composed books in the vernacular.

Jeroschin's Kronike von Pruzinlant corroborates this description when he writes (Kron. v. 6,422 ff.) that Luder composed, in German, a life of the martyred Egyptian Saint Barbara:

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Gerhard Eis, "Die Literatur im Deutschen Ritterorden und in seinen Einflussgebieten," Ostdeutsche Wissenschaft, Jahrbuch des Ostdeutschen Kulturrates 9 (München, 1962), pp. 56-101.

Gerhard Eis, Mittelalterliche Fachliteratur (Stuttgart: Sammlung Metzler, 1962).

Gerhard Eis, "Mittelalterliche Fachprosa der Artes," Deutsche Philologie im Aufriss, herausgegeben von Wolfgang Stammer (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1962), Band 2: 1,103-1,216.

P. Assion, Altdeutsche Fachliteratur (Berlin: Schmidt, 1973).

67 Wigand von Marburg, "Cronica Nova Prutenica," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Band 2, p. 487.

Swer daz nu wil irjagin  
unde ouch wizzin ebin  
di martir und daz lebin  
Barbarin der herin,  
den wil ich wege lerin.  
Er suche an dem buche,  
daz mit grozin ruche  
von der selbin magit zart  
der herzoge lichter art  
brudir Ludir, von Brunswic  
des stammis ein vurstlicher zwic  
und homeistir ouch irkorn  
dem dutschin ordene bevorn  
hat gebracht zu dutsche ganz  
mit getichte ane schranz.

He who wants to pursue and know  
the martyrdom and the life of  
Barbara the lady, I shall teach  
him the way. He should look in  
the book about the tender maid  
which, with great feeling, the  
duke, Brother Luder von Braun-  
schweig, scion of a princely stem  
and chosen grandmaster of the  
German Order, has rendered into  
German with skill and without a  
flaw.

Kron. v. 6,426-6,440

In another place as well, Jeroschin alludes to  
Luder's literary production:

Dirre homeistir Luder  
alle sines vlizes ger  
zu gotis dinste kerte  
und daz sere merte,  
horte unde zirte  
und mit zirheit wirte  
an allirhande vlate  
mit buchen und ornate  
und wes sa was behuf  
zu gotis lobe er daz schuf.

This Grandmaster Luder turned all  
his energies to divine services,  
which he increased and enriched.  
Treasures showed beauty  
everywhere: books and decorations  
and anything else contributing to  
the praise of God, that he  
created.

Kron. 27,660-27,669

So involved was Luder von Braunschweig in his  
function as patron and author of Biblical works and  
saints' lives that some scholars, following Helm, have  
seen in him the driving force behind a grand plan to  
translate the entire Old Testament into German verse. <sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Karl Heim, "Einleitung," Das Buch der Maccabäer,  
p. lxvii.

Karl Helm cites as his principal evidence a telling passage from Luder's epilogue to the Makkabäerbuch (Makk. v. 14,233-14,245).<sup>69</sup> In this passage, Luder says that his Makkabäerbuch marks the appropriate end to Die Alden E (Old Testament). He then expresses the hope that the other books of the Old Testament still being worked on might be completed and placed appropriately in front of the Makkabäerbuch. Helm, having made his case for Luder and a projected German Old Testament, also sees in further verses in the Makkabäerbuch possible indications that Luder was considering a complete translation of Die Nuwen

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69

Hie wirt dise rede volant,  
 daz die alde e ist irkant;  
 . . .  
 Want swes die alden e irmant,  
 daz sal man vorn an allentsamt  
 ioch verre dort zu spingen  
 vor Machabeorum genant.  
 Die sullen sin die letzten bant  
 nach allen buchen swingen

Makk. v. 14,231-14,445

This speech is here ended, which is known as the Old Testament . . . As matters call for the Old Testament, that one finds all together and further forward; indeed one has to hasten far in front of said Maccabees. Maccabees should be the last book, hanging after all the others.

Note that the Old Testament is "dise rede," (this speech). This is still another indication that Deutschordensliteratur was intended to be read aloud.

E (the New Testament) as well (Makk. v. 14,249 ff). <sup>70</sup>

Having discussed in some detail the author of Das Makkabäerbuch and his pivotal significance to the political and literary history of the Teutonic Order, we now direct our attention to the contents of the actual work itself.

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Luder's Makkabäerbuch is 14,410 verses in length. In its modern, published edition by the Stuttgarter Literarischer Verein, this runs to 405 pages. The work may be broken down into the following parts:

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70

Die sullen sin die letzten bant  
nach allen buchen swingen,  
unz daz uns da her wart gesant  
Crist unser here der heilant --  
daz sal darnach entspringen.  
So kumt die nuwe e gerant,  
die sal man nemen vor die hant  
swen da mit lustet ringen;  
· · ·  
wol let sie uns gelingen

Makk. v. 14,244-14,254

It [Maccabees] was to be the last book, hanging after all the other books, until thereafter was sent Christ, our Lord and Savior. That (story) ought appear afterwards. So the New Testament comes in its turn. One should take it in hand, he who is equal to the struggle. . . May we have success.

See Helm und Ziesemer, Literatur, p. 72

I. Introduction v. 1-385.

A. Luder von Braunschweig pays respect to Jerome who translated the original works out of Aramaic (judisch) and Greek v. 1-44.

B. Luder remembers Rabanus Maurus, who explicated I and II Maccabees and wrote two introductory epistles.

1 Rabanus' letter to Emperor Louis the Pious v. 45-155.

2 Rabanus' letter to Archdeacon Gerold v. 157-264.

C. Orienting remarks by Luder von Braunschweig v. 265-355.

D. St. Jerome's Introduction to I and II Maccabees v. 357-386.

II. Luder's translation of I Maccabees v. 387-7,012.

Imbedded in Chapter 1 is an extensive narrative of the life and conquests of Alexander the Great:

v. 451-1,330 and v. 1,379-1,458.

These passages go far beyond the nine sentences devoted to Alexander in the original Vulgate text.

III. Transitional remarks between I and II Maccabees v. 7,013-7,078.

- basically a content outline and characterization of II Maccabees.

71

IV. Luder's translation of II Maccabees v. 7,079-11,256.

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71 This section is essentially a translation from Comestor's "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,521.



- V. Historical narrative bridging the Maccabean period down to the time of Herod the Great v. 11,262-14,230).
  - A. Luder's outline of the contents and the sources of what is to follow v. 11,262-11,300.
  - B. Historical narrative which is based almost entirely upon Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica v. 11,301-14,230.
- VI. Luder's concluding remarks v. 14,231-14,410.
  - A. Plan to translate the entire Bible.
  - B. Disappointment with the Jews for refusing to accept the Gospel.
  - C. Advice to use reputable glosses.
  - D. Concluding exhortations.

\*

In this voluminous work, Luder addresses his listeners only sparingly. Indeed, he truly speaks for himself in a scant three hundred verses clustered at the beginning and ending of the piece.

. . . ich arme knabe  
da zwischen noch willen habe,  
ein teil zu reden demutlich  
uch nigende, want daz bin ich.

I, poor servant, have desire to  
humbly speak a bit in between,  
indicating when I do that it is  
I.

Makk. v. 275-278

Luder's introduction states that his single purpose is to translate the Biblical text into straightforward, useful German to be heard by the warrior-monks.

der mit cranker sinne schine  
 hat gebraht uz dem latine  
 die beide buch in dutsche wort,  
 also noch her nach hie wird  
     gehört,  
 der tut hie dise rede nu,  
 da horet vlizeclicher zu.

He with poor, sick spirit has  
 brought the two books out of  
 Latin into German words, which  
 will be heard hereafter. He is  
 delivering this speech now.  
 Listen attentively.

Makk. v. 279-284. 72

Luder disdains identifying himself in what is  
 undoubtedly authentic modesty clothed in conventional  
 phrasing of self-abnegation:

Wil ieman wizzen wer er si,  
 der dise rede nu tut hie,  
 sines namen man niht endarf,  
 wand er ist der sinne unscharf.

If someone wants to know who it  
 is who is delivering this speech  
 here, his name one may not know,  
 for he is not very clever.

Makk. v. 325-328.

Nonetheless, the author asks God's help in his  
 translating, even as God had earlier helped Jerome in  
 translating I and II Maccabees out of "judisch" and  
 "criechisch" (Makk. v. 9-10).

In what is likely a play on his own name -- Luder --

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72 In this passage, Luder speaks of his translation  
 being heard. Earlier on, in reference to Rabanus Maurus'  
 letters, Luder makes a similar remark:

da von sten zwo epistlen hie,  
 gar lustic sint zu horen die.

Makk. v. 35-36

Of them stand two epistles here. They are very good to hear.

All Order literature testifies to the fact that it is  
 to be heard -- presumably by the assembled monks -- and  
 not passively read.

the grandmaster affirms that even though his efforts alone would be "luterlich" (i.e. disgusting, Makk. v. 300), <sup>73</sup> God's hand will guide him. In all modesty, Luder promises that beyond simple, straightforward translating he will not go:

aber ich mac volbrengen niht  
von mir selben dise geschicht.

But I want to add nothing from  
myself to this story.

Makk. v. 77 -78

A bit later in his introduction, Luder is even more explicit in his statement of intent:

Nu sult ir wizzen, daz ich man  
von dirre beider buch angan  
biz uz der capitel ende  
keine rede darin wende;  
ez ist gar der historien sin,  
mine rede kumt niht darin

Now you should know that I  
intend, from the beginnings of  
these two books until the final  
chapter, to insert no speech. It  
is entirely the sense of the  
story - my speech does not enter  
in.

Makk. v. 311-315 <sup>74</sup>

Scripture, Luder obviously believes, speaks for itself.

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<sup>73</sup> In the vicious tract literature of the 16th century, Martin Luther's enemies used this same play on words against him with great effectiveness. Opponents would address their attacks against "Herr Dr. Luder" -- Dr. Scoundrel or Dr. Disgusting.

<sup>74</sup> Makk. v. 7,457 ff. also expresses a promise to be true to the Biblical text and to introduce no distortions.

Eime ieglichen vuget wol  
 irkennen swaz er halden sol,  
 uf daz en got niht enschulde  
 entvirre von siner hulde;  
 darumme ein ieglicher man,  
 der ein Cristener wil bestan,  
 ist pflihtic daz er irkenne  
 wie unde wa unde wenne  
 daz er gut oder arc getu;  
 ez hort eime ieclichen zu.  
 Darumme sullen wir suchen  
 in den vorgehenden buchen  
 und darinne gerne lesen  
 wie unser leben sal wesen,  
 so vinden wir gar die vernunft  
 des ewigen lebens zukumft.

Anyone should be able to  
 recognize what he should remember  
 in order that he not offend God  
 and remove himself from His  
 goodness. Therefore, every man  
 who wants to remain as a  
 Christian has the duty to  
 recognize how and where and when  
 that he has done well or ill.  
 That is fitting for everyone.  
 Thus we should search in old  
 books and read eagerly therein  
 how our lives should be. In this  
 manner we find reason of future  
 eternal life.

Makk. v. 14,329-14,344

It is in this context (Makk. v. 14,230 ff. -- these are in the final pages of the work) that Luder hints at a grand plan to translate the whole of the Old Testament and perhaps even the New Testament into German.<sup>75</sup> Luder then moves to express his amazement -- typical of Order writers -- that the Jews have refused to follow the Old Testament's message into its fulfillment in the New Testament (Makk. v. 14,280 ff).<sup>76</sup>

But if the Jews refuse to see Biblical truths for what they are, to Christians these truths appear obvious.

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<sup>75</sup> See above and note #69 for a discussion of Helm's theory on this matter and for text quotations of supporting evidence.

<sup>76</sup> All medieval thinkers were bewildered and angered by the Jews on this count. But Order writers must have felt this particularly keenly because of their enthusiasm and respect for Jewish heroes of the late Old Testament period.

Nevertheless, even the believer needs assistance from time to time. In such cases, Luder points beyond himself, giving the advice that one ought refer to standard glosses:

Wer dise schrift wil irkunden,  
der sal niht zu allen stunden  
gevolgen deme texte na;  
man sal sich vurhten hie und da,  
wie man ez rehte verneme,  
einen rat so geb ich deme:  
er sal sehen an die glose  
waz sie von der sache kose  
(wand daz ist die rehte warheit  
von den heiligen uz geleit),  
so mac er geloubic besten.

He who wants to comprehend this Scripture, he should not every hour pursue just the text. One now and then should be concerned as to how to take something. I give a piece of advice to this person. He should have a look at the glosses (for that is proper wisdom, derived from the saints). So he will remain true to the Faith.

Makk. v. 14,345-14,355

Furthermore, in matters of interpretation, the laity (of whom Luder was himself a part <sup>77</sup>) ought properly defer to the clergy who possess the appropriate authority and education.

Die werde pfafheit allez gar  
uns daz entrihten wol vurwar;  
swie sie predgen unde leren,  
also sal man die schrift keren,  
want wir werden bewart daran  
daz wir von gote lon entfan;

The worthy clergy will discharge this for us. As they preach and teach, thusly ought we to use Scripture, in order that we be spared from estranging ourselves from God.

Makk. v. 14,381-14,386 <sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Makk. v. 14,380-14,382, cited above.

<sup>78</sup> These verses are taken from a long passage -- Makk. v. 14,355-14,390 -- which will be taken up in detail in the Conclusion. Arguing from this passage, two fundamental points will be made: 1) The medieval Church did not oppose vernacular translation of Scripture per se but 2) the medieval Church did oppose any and all heterodox interpretations of those Scriptures. Heresy was

This is, once again, the recurring theme in Order literature of a properly regulated social and religious hierarchy and strict orthodoxy. <sup>79</sup>

At the very beginning of his work, Luder includes two hortative letters by Rabanus Maurus in addition to St. Jerome's introduction.

ein meister der hiez Rabanus,  
der legte uz die buch beide  
mit merclicher underscheide,  
wie man die buch vernemen sol  
daz sie vorstentlich werden wol.

A teacher who is named Rabanus,  
he explicated the two books with  
remarkable discrimination - how  
one should interpret the books in  
order that they be understood.

Makk. v. 14-18

These letters are significant on several counts. First of all, Luder takes over much of their contents for himself: they color what he has to say, later in his translation, when he does venture first person remarks. Rabanus' declarations of modesty (Makk. v. 52 ff. and v. 76 ff.) and his assurances that he will add nothing in his commentary beyond what the Fathers have said (Makk. v. 85 ff.) -- these sentiments appear later in the text in a slightly modified form as Luder's own thoughts. Rabanus also stresses, as Luder does later, that I and II Maccabees are to be read (aloud) in the churches (Makk. v. 39 ff.) and that they are of unquestioned canonicity. Rabanus also admonishes the individual Christian that the

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the point of concern, not vernacular translations.

<sup>79</sup> See discussion of Daniel, Chapter 3 above.

future life ought always be on his mind (Makk. v. 137).

A second important significance to Luder's quoting of Rabanus' two letters in full is the implied hearkening back to the Carolingian period. This was a time when the Franks, similar to the Teutonic Order five hundred years later, fought unrelentingly to secure their borders against the incursions of hostile pagans. For the Franks, in their day, it had been the pagan Saxons, Avars, Vikings, Arabs and Hungarians. For the Teutonic Order in Luder's day it was the pagan Pruteni and Lithuanians. As Rabanus Maurus' commentary on I and II Maccabees had called up Maccabean memories in Charlemagne's time, so now Luder worked to carry on Maccabean zeal in his day. <sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Rabanus Maurus' influence upon German-speaking Europe down through the ages has earned him the well-deserved cognomen Primus Praeceptor Germaniae. Rabanus paid careful attention to the disruptiveness and divisiveness of heretics, schismatics and Jews. Spicq writes of him:

[Chez Raban] le norme suprême de l'interprétation, c'est l'orthodoxie, la conformité de l'exégèse avec la foi et la tradition chrétienne.

The ultimate guideline of interpretation is, for Rabanus, orthodoxy - the conformity of exegesis with faith and the Christian tradition.

P.C. Spicq, Equisse d'une Histoire de L'Exégèse Latine au Moyen Age (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1944), p. 40.

All of these concerns and emphases on the part of Rabanus Maurus passed on to the Teutonic Order through the translating efforts of the great grandmaster, Luder von Braunschweig.

St. Jerome's introduction to Maccabees appears, in direct translation, at the end of Luder's pre-Biblical section (Makk. v. 357-386 -- see the outline of the entire Makkabäerbuch above). Right down to the Council of Trent, Jerome's introductions were considered practically a part of canonical Scripture. Luder von Braunschweig treats the introduction in just this spirit.

Jerome's introduction is of particular importance for the rest of Luder's translation because it established priorities to which Luder generally adhered. Jerome stresses in his introduction and Luder later follows him in emphasizing:

- 1) Charismatic leadership of the Maccabee brothers.
- 2) Praise of martyrdom, with a special reference to the mother who cheered her seven sons on to heroic death (The "Seven Holy Maccabees").
- 3) Anachronistic references to the Persians, rather than the Seleucid Greeks, as being the Jews' enemies.
- 4) Practical matters of survival: the precedent-breaking battle on the Sabbath, as recounted in I Maccabee, is mentioned here.

Beyond Rabanus Maurus and Jerome, other authorities that Luder mentions are Glossa Ordinaria (e.g. Makk. v. 1,382), <sup>81</sup> and St. Augustine (Makk. v. 7,347). <sup>82</sup> But by

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<sup>81</sup> Here and in at least a dozen other places, Luder cites Glossa Ordinaria directly, calling it simply "die glose."

Die glossa war mithin neben der historia scholastica



far the most important source for Luder -- the one he repeatedly cites by name or simply calls "die glos" -- is Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica.<sup>83</sup> This, of course, is that work so beloved and so consistently used by the Teutonic Order down through the years of its literary production. The most dramatic proof of the importance of the Historia Scholastica to Luder's Makkabäerbuch is the fact that the entire non-Biblical narrative which bridges the Maccabean period down to the

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die wichtigste Quelle des Dichters.

Next to the Historia Scholastica, the Glossa Ordinaria was the most important source of the poet.

Helm, "Einleitung," Das Buch der Maccabäer, p. liv.

The editor of the Makkabäerbuch, Karl Helm (p. LV) claims to see Nicholas of Lyra behind some of Luder's references to "die glosen," e.g. Makk. v. 7,142. The presumption is doubtful and, even if true, Lyra's influence here would not be significant.

See Chapter 3, note #49 for further remarks on Nicolaus of Lyra and the Biblical literature of the Teutonic Order.

82 Augustine probably came to Luder through secondary glosses.

Luder clearly draws on some type of gloss in the other passages where his editor, Karl Helm, has been unable to pinpoint the source, e.g. Makk. v. 809, 7,347, 7,414.

83 Places where Luder refers to Peter Comestor or Historia Scholastica by name:

Makk. v. 457; 1,382; 2,236; 2,583; 2,589; 2,615; 3,478; 3,737; 4,135; 4,981; 6,170; 11,269; 11,282; 11,298; 11,301.

time of Herod the Great and the eve of Christ's birth (Makk. v. 11,261-14,230) is nothing more than Luder's literal translation of the relevant pages of Comestor's Historia Scholastica. Luder, with an explicitness of source documentation unusual for his age, cites Peter Comestor by name four times in rapid succession at the beginning of this section (Makk. v. 11,269; 11,282; 11,298; 11,301).

Luder's translation makes only one substantive insertion of more than a few verses into the actual Biblical text itself. This is a description of the exploits of Alexander the Great.<sup>84</sup> Luder interrupts his

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<sup>84</sup> There are two other insertions which number more than a few lines, but they are of little substantive import:

a) Makk. v. 1,379-1,459:

Citing directly Peter Comestor as his source, Luder expands beyond the Bible to narrate Antiochus' campaign into Egypt. The only thing of special note here is that the normally dry and factual Luder inserts a flash of humor which is all his own. When the Romans draw their famous circle around the ambitious king:

"Antiochus betrubet was  
von sachen die man im vorlas;  
er sprunge uf oder nider,  
antworten muste er sider,  
daz er gerne wold entwichen  
heimwart von den landen  
strichen."

Makk. v. 1,447-1,452

Antiochus was vexed by what he heard read. He jumped up and down but still,

translation at I Maccabee 1: 10 to insert the outside material at Makk. v. 451-1,330. He then momentarily returns to his translation of the Vulgate, only to interrupt it once again for a brief extension of the extra-Biblical material (Makk. v. 1,379-1,458). As might be expected, the Alexander story is essentially a copy of Peter Comestor's treatment of the same material.<sup>85</sup>

Luder seems quite enthusiastic about breaking away from his declared task of Bible translating in order to focus upon Alexander:

Die Biblen lan wir nu ligen  
etsliche wile verzigen,  
ein teil muzen wir ummegan  
unz wir komen her wider an.  
Seht dise ummerede nu,  
die wir ouch brengen da herzu.

We'll now let the Bible lie for a  
while. We have a piece to work  
through before we return here  
again. Look now to this digres-  
sion which we break in here.

Makk. v. 451-455

Clearly, Alexander captured Luder's imagination, even as the great Macedonian captured the imagination of all

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in the end, had to answer in a way that he wished he could have slipped away  
homeward from that land.

b) Makk. v. 4,351-4,394:

Desirous of explaining the concept "prophetenwerc" (exploits of the prophets), Luder lists off the key individuals involved in the post-exilic restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem.

<sup>85</sup> The Alexander story is expansive in Comestor's "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,496-1,498.

medieval men.<sup>86</sup> But Luder and his Ordensritter had even more reason than most for a feeling of affinity. Their Rule expressly forbade them from cultivating courtly affectation (Hofartigkeit) and the worldliness of Minne literature. With the story of Alexander, the warrior-monks could be true to their religious principles, identify with acts of heroic self-sacrifice and learn tactics, while at the same time hear a marvelously entertaining story.

Luder's Alexander excursus surveys the consolidation of Greece under Philip, Philip's assassination, Alexander's conquests, the division of his Empire and the descent of Seleucid kingship down to the time of Antiochus Epiphany, "the evil and sinful root" (Makk. v. 439-440). Luder here allows himself considerable freedom with the

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86 Pfaffen Lamprecht's Alexanderlied was the most influential piece of Alexander literature in German-speaking lands during the Middle Ages.

Pfaffen Lamprecht, Alexander, Gedicht des zwölften Jahrhunderts, Urtext, Übersetzung, und Erläuterungen von Heinrich Weismann (Frankfurt: Literarische Anstalt, 1850 / Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1971), 2 Bände.

On the subject of Alexander the Great in the Middle Ages, see:

Herwig Buntz, Die deutsche Alexanderdichtung des Mittelalters (Stuttgart: Sammlung Metzler, Band 123, 1973).

George Cary, The Medieval Alexander, edited by D. J. A. Ross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956).

Comestor text in contrast to his strict, literal translation of the Vulgate. An innocent, yet charming example of his accommodation to his German audience is a passage where, in order to describe the deadly power struggle among the Diadochi, he quotes a German proverb rather than following Comestor's flat narrative.

Ez gienc nach eime sprichworte,  
daz ich von vil luten horte:  
"Swer den andren hie ubermac,  
der schubet en in einen sac."  
Also geschach den kungen ouch:  
der meiste den minsten hin zouch  
wand die vier kunge vor benant  
besazen alle dirre lant.

Matters went according to a proverb which I have heard from many a person: "He who overpowers others shoves them into one sack." And this is exactly what happened to the kings. The stronger pulled in the weaker until the four previously mentioned kings possessed all this land.

Makk. v. 1,087-1,094

Luder shows keen interest in Alexander as a man of historical destiny. He includes, for example, predictions by two sacred trees (the tree of the sun and the tree of the moon) of Alexander's conquests and subsequent death. (Makk. v. 529 ff.).<sup>87</sup> This same theme of Alexander as a man of destiny within God's sovereign plan appears in Luder's description of Alexander's apocryphal visit to Jerusalem (Makk. v. 641 ff).<sup>88</sup> Here, after initial threats from Alexander and defiance by the Jews, the chief

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<sup>87</sup> The immediate source is Comestor's "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1496.

<sup>88</sup> Principal source here is Comestor's "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,522 and perhaps Josephus.

priest of Jerusalem, "der oberster bischof" (Makk. v. 628), following the guidance of a heaven-sent dream, succeeds in mediating peace. The "oberster bischof" then orchestrates Alexander's triumphal entry into the city (Makk. v. 711). Alexander and the Temple authorities in Jerusalem are mutually impressed and respectful. The priest reads the prophecies of Daniel to Alexander and, as a result of negotiations, the Jews win from Alexander:

- 1) the right to continue living according to their Law and
- 2) the right to observe the Sabbath.

This pericope serves to associate Alexander with those privileges for which the Maccabees later fought. Alexander is necessarily distanced from his Seleucid successors, who were to become the oppressors of God's Chosen. There is, of course, not even a hint of all this in the six short verses of the Vulgate which describe Alexander.

It is in the context of the story of Alexander in Jerusalem and the reading of the Prophet Daniel that Luder von Braunschweig inserts his powerful and influential remarks concerning Germanic Christians ("dutsche" Makk. v. 784) as being successors to Empire. As such, the "Germans" of Luder's day bore the heavy burden of responsibility for the spreading of religion and civilization:

Do bleib die uberste herschaft  
 daz ist der monarchien kraft  
 bi den Crieche vil manchen tac,  
 unz daz sie ouch nam uberslac,  
 daz sie quam an die Romere.  
 Manche zit bleib sie da here,  
 biz daz sie vurbaz wart gewant  
 unde hin quam in dutsche lant,  
 da sal sie ouch zu rehte sin.  
 Nu ist an got die bete min:  
 swer nutzest si der cristenheit,  
 des name mache got hie breit.

Supreme lordship, that is the  
 power of monarchy, remained with  
 the Greeks many a day, until it  
 shifted and came to the Romans.  
 Quite a time it remained there  
 until, in truth, it changed and  
 came thither into German lands  
 and fittingly so. Now my prayer  
 is directed to God: he who uses  
 it (the power) for the benefit of  
 Christendom, may God spread his  
 fame.

Makk. v. 777-788 89

In the ensuing descriptions of battles, Alexander appears as an exemplary hero, in every way meriting emulation. Alexander even fights to subdue "die heiden" (the heathens). <sup>90</sup> In this, Luder exploits Alexander's status as one of the so-called "worthies of antiquity," --

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89 The translator of the Order's Daniel follows his patron in announcing this historic mission of "die Dutschen." See Dan. v. 1,156-1,164.

It is critically important here and elsewhere that the Middle High German word "dutsche" (deutsch; German) be understood in the sense in which the Teutonic Knights understood it. It carried with it none of the connotations associated with Bismarck's Reich or, in fact, any nation state. Rather, "dutsch" had strictly linguistic, cultural and religious significance. The knight-monks were "dutsch" in that they spoke various, mutually comprehensible Germanic dialects, they were non-Romanic central Europeans and they were Christian.

See also Introduction, note #4.

90 Luder repeatedly casts Alexander as fighting with "the heathens":

Makk. v. 2,135; v. 2,140; v. 2,308; v. 2,330; v. 2,371; v. 2,403; v. 2,409; v. 2,435; v. 2,556; v. 2,658.

men of the past whom medieval writers particularly revered. The worthies were: Hector, Alexander, Caesar, Joshua, David, Judas Maccabee, Charlemagne, King Arthur of Britain and, added later, the crusader Gottfried of Bouillon.<sup>91</sup> Collectively, the Nine Worthies comprise three groups made up of three pagans, three Jews and three Christians. In this company, Alexander is seen not as an opponent of the later Maccabees, but rather as a kindred spirit, standing shoulder to shoulder with Judas Maccabee. Alexander, Judas Maccabee and, in fact, all the worthies were charismatic leaders of committed fighting men. The lesson by example could hardly have failed to impress the Knights to whom Luder directed his narrative.

Finally, Alexander plays his important role in an interesting and unusual version of the ever-popular story of the containment of Gog and Magog.<sup>92</sup> According to this retelling, which Luder bases only loosely upon Comestor's

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<sup>91</sup> For more information on the worthies of antiquity, see:

C. S. Lewis, The Discarded Image (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 181.

<sup>92</sup> See Chapter 3 above and the discussion of Hesler's Apokalypse for more on the Order's treatment of Gog and Magog.

The Biblical wellspring of Gog and Magog stories is to be found in:

Ezekiel 38: 2; Ezekiel 39: 6; Revelation 20: 8.



Historia Scholastica,<sup>93</sup> Alexander and his army seal these barbarian hordes behind the Caucasus. There they will remain, in check, until the end of time, when they will at last burst forth in the final cataclysm ushering in the Day of Judgment. What is unique to this version is that the hosts of Gog and Magog are equated with the "Red Jews" (die roten Juden, Makk. v. 800 ), who are the ten lost tribes of Israel.

There are two clear message in this, Luder's retelling of the Gog and Magog story. First, Luder stresses the pernicious nature of apostasy. Second, Luder stresses in his story the commission of civilized men to keep at bay the ever-threatening forces of barbarism and darkness.

Du got, der uber al bist ho,  
wand din wille diz selbe ist,  
daz man verveste hie mit list  
diz volc in disen gebergen  
durch ir ubeltat mit ergen,  
unde wand wir mit menschenkraft  
ez niht mugen machen slozhaft,  
so lege dine gewalt zu  
besluz mit dem gebirge nu  
diz volc, so daz ez nimmer me  
heruz kume, daz ist min vle.

You, God, who are over all on  
high: if it is your will that we  
wall in forever in the mountains  
this people for their evilness,  
and because we, with human  
strength, are not able to make it  
secure, lay Your power to the  
task. Close up this people with  
the mountains so that they never  
come out again; that is my  
request.

Makk. v. 904-914

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<sup>93</sup> Peter Comestor, "Historia Scholastica,"  
Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,498.

The actual contents of the translated I and II Maccabees, independent of any additions or commentary, purveyed to the Teutonic Knights theological concepts important to them in their struggle. Above all else the Books of Maccabees, in Luder's unadorned German verse, provided the Ordensritter with a model of clear conflict between good and evil, truth and falsehood; between the bright light of authentic religion and the utter darkness of paganism. Warfare on the human level has its parallel on the supramundane, cosmic plane.<sup>94</sup> I and II Maccabees, as post-exilic works, are imbued with the concept of the universal and absolute sovereignty of God,<sup>95</sup> to whom ultimate victory is assured. God's Chosen People are invincible with Him on their side (II Macc. 11: 8 and 13). II Macc. 15: 15 pictures, in a most concrete way, Jeremiah handing Judas Maccabee a golden sword with the words, "Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with which you will strike down your adversaries." During battles, panoplies of angels, mounted for war, ride down from

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94 For typical examples of where conflict is described as the forces of "light" pitted against "darkness," see:

II Macc. 8: 23 ff., II Macc. 12: 11 ff., II Macc. 13: 13 ff., II Macc. 15:7 ff., II Macc. 15: 17 ff.

95 References to the Deity in II Maccabees contain the first unambiguous allusions to God's creation of all things ex nihilo. II Macc. 7: 28.

heaven to turn the tide of battle in favor of the Maccabee-led hosts of Israel (II Macc. 3: 25, 5: 2; 10: 29-31; 11: 6-15). As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, Order chronicler Peter von Dusburg invokes an encore performance of these same mounted angels in the skies over Prussia.

Consistent with earlier Old Testament theology, Maccabean victories depend upon unswerving loyalty to God. Judas, on several striking occasions, recites a formal prayer and affirms his and his men's obedience to Divine Will (eg. II Macc. 8: 1-5 and 27). For, as men fastidiously observe the Law, victory is their assurance -- but there is harsh retribution for apostasy.<sup>96</sup> As for the oppressing gentiles: their annihilation is sure. God will slaughter them as he once did the Assyrian hosts (I Macc. 7: 41, II Macc. 8: 19 ff.). In his translation, Luder is so taken with the bloody precedent of divinely ordained annihilation of the Assyrian foe that he alludes to it in places where the Vulgate original does not (e.g. Makk. v.

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<sup>96</sup> II Macc. 4: 16-17; II Macc. 4: 38; II Macc. 5: 9-10; II Macc. 7: 17; II Macc. 8: 33; II Macc. 9: 5-6; II Macc. 13: 8.

Apostasy among God's chosen is in many ways worse than the most demented scheming of the gentiles.

I Macc. 3: 10; I Macc. 5: 1; I Macc. 7: 23; I Macc. 13: 17

11,128 [as Jeremiah presents the golden sword], v. 3,720, v. 9,286, v. 9,895). II Maccabees, Chapter 9 provides the consummate example of divine retribution: the demise of Antiochus. When Order chronicler Peter von Dusburg later describes the final moments of the Pomerelian prince Sventopelk (Chron. III, 128), he essentially conflates the demise of Antiochus and the demise of Nicanor from the pages of I and II Maccabees.<sup>97</sup>

I and II Maccabees provide dozens of examples of individual and collective acts of heroism worthy of imitation by the knight-monks of the Teutonic Order. The classic example is the heroic death of Eleazar Maccabee (I Macc., Chapter 6). But post-exilic theology breathes into these exemplary deeds the added dimension of martyrdom. The ethos of martyrdom was later to be of particular interest to the chroniclers of the Teutonic Knights.

Luder's translation of II Maccabees, Chapter 6 narrated to the knights how Eleazar the scribe<sup>98</sup> spurned the opportunity of having his life spared. Rather, he courts death joyously,

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<sup>97</sup> I Macc. 6: 10-13 and II Macc. 9: 5-29; II Macc. 8: 34 ff.

<sup>98</sup> Not to be confused with Eleazar Maccabee.

. . . ut multi adulescentium,  
arbitrantes Eleazarum nonaginta  
annorum transisse ad vitam  
alienigenarum, et ipsi, propter  
meam simulationem, et propter  
modicum corruptibilis vitae  
tempus, decipiantur, et per hoc  
maculam, atque execrationem meae  
senectui conquiram.

. . . Quamobrem fortiter vita  
excedendo, senectute quidem  
dignus apparebo; adulescentibus  
autem exemplum forte relinquam,  
si prompto animo, ac fortiter pro  
gravissimis ac sanctissimis  
legibus honesta morte perfungar.

II Macc. 6: 24-28

In a similar manner Razis, an elder of Jerusalem,  
falls upon his sword, hurls himself from a high wall and  
still has the strength to throw his own entrails at the  
crowd:

. . . eligens nobiliter mori  
potius quam subditus fieri  
peccatoribus, et contra natales  
suos indignis injuriis agi.

II Macc. 14: 42

Peter von Dusburg, in a Prussian context and with an  
Order knight as his macabre protagonist, retells this  
story of self-disemboweling martyrdom (Chron. III, 66).

The most famous and influential pericope of heroism  
and martyrdom, however, is the story of the so-called  
"Seven Holy Maccabees" as related in II Maccabees, Chapter  
7. In this consummate tale of sacrifice, a zealous mother

. . . lest many young persons might  
think that Eleazar, at the age of  
fourscore and ten years, was gone  
over to the life of the heathens:  
And so they, through my  
dissimulation, and for a little  
time of a corruptible life,  
should be deceived, and hereby I  
should bring a stain and a curse  
upon my old age. . .

Wherefore by departing manfully  
out of this life, I shall shew  
myself worthy of my old age: And  
I shall leave an example of  
fortitude to young men, if with a  
ready mind and constancy I suffer  
an honourable death, for the most  
venerable and most holy laws.

. . . choosing to die nobly  
rather than to fall into the  
hands of the wicked, and to  
suffer abuses unbecoming his  
noble birth.

admonishes her seven sons, one after another, to defy Seleucid authorities and thus, before her eyes and those of the dwindling number of brothers, incur excruciating death. This was the only Maccabean pericope widely known outside limited circles during the high and late Middle Ages. Indeed, the Holy Maccabees <sup>99</sup> were the only Old Testament saints included in the standard liturgical year. In the handbooks of the period, one finds laid out the reasons for this seemingly anomalous inclusion of Jewish worthies. Jacobus de Voragine, for example, writes in his popular Legenda Aurea:

The Machabees were seven brothers who, with their venerable mother and the priest Eleazar, refused to eat the flesh of swine, in order to observe the Law, and were therefore subjected to unheard-of torments, as is related fully in the second book of the Machabees. The Western Church does not celebrate the feasts of the saints of the Old Testament, because they descended into Hell. Exception is made only for the Holy Innocents, in each of whom Christ Himself was slain, and for the Machabees.

There are four reasons for the celebration of the feast of the Machabees, in despite of the fact that they too descended to Hell. 1) The first reason is the preeminence of their martyrdom, since they suffered more dreadful tortures than any other saint of the Old Testament. 2) The second is their mystical significance. For the number seven is the number

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<sup>99</sup> There is no evidence in the Biblical text that the heroic mother and her sons were of the zealous Maccabean clan. Nevertheless, hagiographic tradition and Jerome's authority in his introduction (see above) solidified the belief that they indeed were.

of universality and therefore the Machabees signify all the fathers of the Old Testament who are deserving of special honour. 3) The third is the example of patience and constancy given by the Machabees, that by their example the faithful may be heartened to suffer for the Law of the Gospel, as they girded themselves strongly for the Law of Moses. 4) The fourth is the cause of their suffering, for they suffered in defense of the Law of Moses, as Christians suffer in defense of the Law of the Gospel.

100

With even more theological acumen, Peter Comestor addresses this same issue of the status of the Holy Maccabees.

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100 Jacobus de Voragine, The Golden Legend, translated by Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger. (London: Longmans, 1941).

It is interesting to note that the New Testament itself alludes to this story once: Hebrews 11: 35. Medieval writers neglected two other passages from II Maccabees to which the New Testament also alludes: Hebrews 11: 38 (II Maccabee 5: 27; 6: 11; 10: 6) and Rev. 21: 8 (II Macc. 8: 13).

Nomen martyris ad quatuor extenditur. 1) Dicitur martyr, qui pro conservatione legis Dei moritur, ut Machabaei. 2) Dicitur etiam martyr, qui pro veritate praedicationis moritur, ut Jeremias, et alii prophetae. 3) Dicitur idem martyr, qui loco ipsius Christi moritur, ut infantes. 4) Dicitur et martyr, qui pro confessione fidei, et passionis Christi moritur, ut Petrus et Paulus. Et isti proprie dicuntur martyres, id est testes passionis Christi. Quorum festum facit Ecclesia, cum nullius Veteris Testamenti martyris festum agat, nisi septem Machabaeorum.

101

The name martyr is accorded to four types. 1) He is called a martyr who dies for the preservation of the Law of God, as the Maccabees. 2) He also is called a martyr who dies for truth of proclamation, as Jeremiah and the other prophets. 3) He is called a martyr who dies in place of Christ, as the Holy infants. 4) And he is called a martyr who dies for the confession of the Faith and of the passion of Christ, as Peter and Paul. These are properly called martyrs: that is, witnesses of the passion of Christ. The Church celebrates a feast for those, but for none out of the Old Testament, except for the Seven Maccabees.

St. Bernard also concurred with the Church's unique recognition of these Old Testament heroes. <sup>102</sup> He, with the others, focused upon the singularly exemplary nature of the martyrdom suffered by the Seven Holy Maccabees. Bernard, the Cistercian, was profoundly moved and so, in his wake, were the brothers of the Teutonic Order. Martyrdom to the Order, as to the Maccabees of old, was seen as playing its decisive role in the cleansing and refining of their community and their land. The warrior-monks fought to cleanse a pagan land and, in their

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<sup>101</sup> Peter Comestor, "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,524.

<sup>102</sup> S. Bernardus, "Epistola de Machabaeorum festo," Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus, Volume 182: 230.



suffering and death, they set an example for others. 103

The inverse of martyrdom -- compelle entrare -- is also comprehensible in this context. Soil irrigated by the blood of martyrs was marked out for repossession, and the blood itself cried out for vengeance. 104 Later conquests and forced conversions effected by the Teutonic Order had their precedent in the Maccabees' systematic destruction of pagan altars and forced circumcisions (I Macc. 2: 44-48).

Martyrdom also went hand in hand with the concepts of eternal reward and prayers offered for the benefit of the dead. The mother of the Seven Holy Maccabees affirmed in her resolution and pain:

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103 This late Old Testament view of martyrdom experienced a dramatic rebirth in nineteenth and twentieth century Zionism. Some ultra-orthodox Jews have gone so far as to argue that genocidal martyrdom at the hands of the Nazis might well have been the sacrificial price required of God's Chosen People for the resurrection of the State of Israel.

104 This sentence sums up an excellent discussion of this topic to be found in:

Eric Christiansen, The Northern Crusade (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 56.

Nescio qualiter in utero meo  
 apparuistis; neque enim ego  
 spiritum et animam donavi vobis  
 et vitam, et singulorum membra  
 non ego ipsa compegi; sed enim  
 mundi Creator, qui formavit  
 hominis nativitatem, quique  
 omnium invenit originem, et  
 spiritum vobis iterum cum  
 misericordia reddet et vitam,  
 sicut nunc vosmetipsos despicitis  
 propter leges ejus.

I know not how you were formed in  
 my womb: for I neither gave you  
 breath, nor soul, nor life,  
 neither did I frame the limbs of  
 every one of you. But the Creator  
 of the world, that formed the  
 nativity of man, and that found  
 out the origin of all, he will  
 restore to you again in his  
 mercy, both breath and life, as  
 now you despise yourselves for the  
 sake of his laws.

II Makk. 7: 22-23 105

And Razis, in his theatrical death, is mindful that  
 eternal life is his due reward:

Et cum adhuc spiraret, accensus  
 animo, surrexit; et cum sanguis  
 ejus magno fluxu deflueret, et  
 gravissimis vulneribus esset  
 saucius, cursu turbam  
 pertransiit; et stans supra  
 quamdam petram praeruptam, et jam  
 exsanguis effectus, complexus  
 intestina sua, utrisque manibus  
 projecit super turbas, invocans  
 dominatorem vitae ac spiritus, ut  
 haec illi iterum redderet; atque  
 ita vita defunctus est.

And as he had yet breath in him,  
 being inflamed in mind he arose:  
 and while his blood ran down with  
 a great stream, and he was  
 grievously wounded, he ran  
 through the crowd. And standing  
 upon a steep rock, when he was  
 now almost without blood,  
 grasping his bowels with both  
 hands, he cast them upon the  
 throng, calling upon the Lord of  
 life and spirit, to restore these  
 to him again: and so he departed  
 this life.

II Macc. 14: 45-46

Luder von Braunschweig inserts an extension,  
 unfounded in the Vulgate Maccabee text, to the effect that  
 Jeremiah will be present at the last Judgment (Makk. v.  
 7,430). In doing so, Luder ties the promise of eternal

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105 Other references to physical resurrection from  
 the dead:

II Macc. 7: 9 and 11.

life together with Jeremiah, the agent of the Schwertleite (Makk. v. 7,430; v. 11,128 -- II Macc. 15: 15). <sup>106</sup>

Finally, in the general context of martyrdom and the life hereafter, the book of II Maccabees expresses for the first time and only time in the Bible, the concept of the efficaciousness of prayers for the dead and of intercession of the saints (II Macc. 12: 42-46). <sup>107</sup> This

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<sup>106</sup> Peter Comestor, too, singles out Jeremiah not only as the bold preacher, but also as the prophet of martyrdom.

Dicitur etiam martyr, qui pro veritate praedicationis moritur, ut Jeremias.

He is called a martyr, who dies for the truth of preaching, as Jeremiah.

"Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1,524

See above in this chapter.

<sup>107</sup>

"And making a gathering, he (Judas Maccabee) sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection, (For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."

II Maccabees 12: 43-46.

See Makk. v. 10,500 ff. for Luder's careful translation out of the Latin.

passage later became central at the Council of Trent, but already much earlier, in Cistercian circles <sup>108</sup> and among the Teutonic knights, these verses were beloved and revered. They, along with Maccabean verses promising eternal reward for martyrdom, spelled out a consistent theology of hope for the monk-soldiers who confronted death with each dawning day.

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The theological message and the examples of derring-do in I and II Maccabees were so clear, self-explanatory and relevant to the Order knights that Luder von Braunschweig, in his translation, allowed the Biblical chapters to speak for themselves. Concerning the body text itself, Luder remained amazingly true to his sworn intent: "mine rede kumt niht darin" <sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, in several important cases, Luder's translating technique let

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<sup>108</sup> Comestor makes explicit his belief that this passage in II Maccabees justifies Christian prayers for the dead when he writes:

Hinc habes auctoritatem, quod animas sanctorum  
efflagitare debemus, quod pro nobis orent et  
intercedant. . .

From this you have the substantiation that we may entreat the souls of the  
saints that they pray for us and intercede for us. . .

Peter Comestor, "Historia Scholastica," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, Volume 198: 1525.

<sup>109</sup> "My remarks will not enter in" (Makk. v. 316).

the text speak for itself, but through his own tendentious selection of German words. A few examples will demonstrate this and, beyond the case at hand, will serve to characterize the translating technique of Order writers generally.

ê (êre) - law / honor

Like all other Order translators, Luder repeatedly calls upon the Middle High German word ê (êre).<sup>110</sup> This word may be translated as "divinely ordained law or propriety." Under this meaning, it is a logical choice for das alde ê and das nuwe ê -- the Old and New Testaments. But the word also carries the additional meaning of "action in accordance with divinely ordained law," which brings it very close to a chivalric sense of "honor." This word thus had the very kind of ambiguity in meaning which well suited the dual status of a monk-knight of the Teutonic Order. Luder von Braunschweig exploited this fact to the fullest. With the aid of the useful word ê, Luder often stretches an original Latin sense in order

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<sup>110</sup> During the Old High German period, the words "ê" (law) and "êre" (honor) existed as discrete words. By the late Middle High German period, however, and particularly in the writings of the colonial East, the two words had largely flowed together. The author-translators of the Teutonic Order exploited extensively the resulting double meaning of the fused word "ê."

to articulate matters in terms of knightly honor. As has been shown, this process was already afoot in the Order Rule -- particularly in "Prologue" 3. 111

As an example from Das Makkabäerbuch, the translation of I Maccabees, Chapter 1 presents itself. In this chapter, Antiochus pressures the Jews to offer unclean sacrifices, to profane the Sabbath and to leave their children uncircumcised. The populace is under constraint to,

versmahen ir e also

"despise their divine Law" or  
"despise their honor"

Makk. v. 1,617

Jerome's Latin is flat in this passage, but its meaning is straightforward and unambiguous:

ita, ut obliviscerentur legem.

that they should forget the law.

I Macc. 1: 51

At Luder's hand, even God may be construed as having "honor." Jerome's introduction to Maccabees speaks, in Luder's German translation, of those who have suffered for God's Law (or God's honor Makk. v. 379). And Nicanor comes to ill for battling God's Chosen and not respecting His Law (or honor Makk. v.9,422).

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111 Quoted in its entirety, Chapter 2 above. See also the discussion of Judith and Esdra und Neemyas in Chapter 3.

heide - heathen, pagan

As the discussion of the Alexander excursus in the Makkabäerbuch has demonstrated (see above), Luder makes generous use of the word heide where it is clearly anachronistic.<sup>112</sup> By applying this tendentious, Christian word in dozens of places where it is unfounded in the Vulgate original, Luder willfully heightens and polarizes the intensity of conflict between the forces of Yahweh and those of the Evil One, and he subtly implies a parallel to the fighting in Prussia.

vurst, herzog, houbitman  
- social and military titles -

Luder uses, as did other Order writers, contemporary military and political titles to translate Jewish and Hellenistic ones. These medieval, Germanic titles brought with them all the feudal presuppositions of the world in which the knight-monks lived, fought and died.

herzog: Makk. v.1,957; 5,561; 6,015; 2,724;  
3,423; 3,490; 3,505; 7,624

houbitman: Makk. v. 5,850; 9,806

vurst: Makk. v. 9,775; 4,219; 1,997; 10,675

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<sup>112</sup> See note #90 above for the verses where Luder inserts the word "heide" as a part of the Alexander story. There are, of course, dozens of further examples in other contexts.

bishop

In the course of the Alexander excursus, Luder translates High Priest of the Temple as "oberst bishof" (Makk. v. 628). In other passages as well, Hebrew Temple officials become "bishops:"

Makk. v. 2,593; 7,616; 7,639; 7,665; 7,669;  
7,678

Luder engaged in these rather ventured translations in his efforts to make the Vulgate text comprehensible and relevant to his listeners. To further facilitate understanding, Luder also inserted, from time to time, short definitions and explanations of strange or unclear foreign words. He gleaned this supplementary information from standard Biblical chronicles and commentaries. In this he followed his own advice (Makk. v. 14,345 ff.)<sup>113</sup> that readers ought refer to standard glosses. As might be expected, Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica is his principal source. Luder himself says in his introduction:

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<sup>113</sup> See above in this chapter.



. . . ein weninic ist namen,  
 die unvernemelich quamen  
 und uz alden cronken here  
 der Juden Criecken Romere,  
 als sie die Scholastica treit  
 so vil ist darzu uzgeleit  
 ouch ein teil geb ich under-  
     scheit  
 waz dirre und der hat geseit.

Makk. v. 317-324    114

. . . a few names, which appear  
 incomprehensible and come from  
 noble old chronicles of the Jews,  
 Greeks and Romans, are explained  
 - as many as Historia Scholastica  
 takes up. I also tell what this  
 or that other source has said.

\*

For Luder von Braunschweig, and indeed for all the  
 Order translators, the massive effort of translating,  
 interpreting and applying Scripture had as its purpose to  
 teach and to motivate the milites christiani of the  
 Teutonic Order. From Luder's earnest and determined  
 description of the heroism of Judas Maccabeus, the step

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114    Overviewing Luder's additions based on  
 Comestor's explanations, one can, with only a handful of  
 exceptions, classify all into a few general categories:

a) Questions of chronology and dating, e.g. Adar =  
 marz, the month of March.

b) Names of exotic things, e.g. a Pyramid.

c) Locations of geographical places, e.g. Emmaus  
 pinpointed.

d) Jewish customs, e.g. several yearly festivals  
 explained.

e) Greek customs, e.g. Herculean games explained.

f) Contemporaneous events cited, e.g. background to  
 Antiochus' time as a hostage in Rome.

was not great to Peter von Dusburg's narration of Hermann Balk's first campaign against the Pruteni at the head of a pioneering band of Order knights. The Biblical model flowed into an idealized narrative of the legendary early days of the Teutonic Order. Grandmaster Luder von Braunschweig's Makkabäerbuch proclaimed to the Ordensritter that "it is not on the size of the army that victory in battle depends, but rather upon the strength that comes from Heaven" (I Macc. 3: 18). Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae and Nicolaus von Jeroschin's Kronike von Pruzinlant emboldened the Teutonic Knights with the message that the same God who once looked down upon Israel and the Maccabees now looked down upon them in the swamps and forests of Prussia.

## Chapter: 5

### Peter von Dusburg's

### Chronicon Terrae Prussiae

The great chronicle of the conquest and subjugation of Prussia by the Teutonic Order, Chronicon Terrae Prussiae,<sup>1</sup> was a product of the Order's generation of crisis. Like the Order's Biblical translations -- and indeed in close association with these translations -- Chronicon Terrae Prussiae defends the Order against external criticism and exhorts its members to regeneration from within. The Order's chronicle is, in a very real sense, the mirror image of its Biblical translations. Daniel and Das Makkabäerbuch retell Biblical history, accompanying this history with commentary pointing forward to the Order's crusade in Prussia. The Order's chronicle reverses this process. Chronicon Terrae Prussiae narrates the Order's activities in Prussia, accompanying this history with commentary pointing back to parallels in the Bible. Tersely stated: the Biblical commentaries see

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<sup>1</sup> Cited throughout has been Max Töppen's exemplary edition of Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae:

Peter von Dusburg, "Chronicon Terrae Prussiae," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Max Töppen (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, pp. 21-269.

Prussia in Palestine; the chronicle sees Palestine in Prussia.

To medieval historians and literary historians alike, the simple existence of a chronicle of the Teutonic Order is unique. Helmut Deboor's standard history of medieval German literature places this fact in clear perspective:

Die Leistung des Deutschen Ordens in der Geschichtsschreibung wird in ihrem Wert erst deutlich, wenn wir daneben den anderen Ritterorden in Betracht ziehen, der auf deutschem Boden Fuss gefasst hat, den Johanniterorden. Nur ein einziges kleines und dürftiges Werk befasst sich mit seiner Geschichte, das Gedicht von dem Spitale von Jerusalem. . Kaum 250 Zeilen gelten den Orden selber.

The accomplishment of the Teutonic Order in its history writing becomes only then clear, when we look to the Hospitalers, the other military-religious order which put down roots in German soil. Only a small and pitiful work deals with its own history: the Poem of the Hospital of Jerusalem . . . it boasts hardly 250 lines dealing with the Hospitaler Order itself.

2

The roots of this "Geschichtsbewusstsein" which Deboor so extols are to be found in the Order's Biblical consciousness. The Order turned to historical writing as a natural outgrowth of its purposeful translating and glossing of the Vulgate. <sup>3</sup>

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2 Helmut Deboor, Die Deutsche Literatur im späten Mittelalter: Zerfall und Neubeginn (München: C. H. Beck, 1962), pp. 209-210.

3 It is highly significant that the Cistercian movement, which had so influenced the Order's interest in the Bible in earlier decades, also went through a similar evolution. Cistercian monks throughout Christendom produced extensive chronicles of their individual abbeys. The important Abbey of Oliva in Pomerelia was no exception. This abbey produced De Prima Fundatione

The introductory "Epistola" of Chronicon Terrae Prussiae leaves no doubt as to the work's author, its Biblical inspiration and its association with the Teutonic Order. The author identifies himself as one Peter von Dusburg, an Order priest.<sup>4</sup> Dusburg composed the chronicle while residing in Königsberg and carrying out his sacerdotal responsibilities there.<sup>5</sup> The "Epistola" makes clear that Grandmaster Werner von Orseln (1324-1330) commissioned the work and that it was completed in 1326.<sup>6</sup> A later addition to the chronicle carries it down to the year 1330 and the beginning of the historic grandmaster-

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Monasterii Olivae at approximately the same time that Dusburg was writing his Chronicon. There is some overlapping of material between the two works, making comparisons helpful from time to time.

"De Prima Fundatione Monasterii Olivae," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch, Band 1, pp. 669-805.

<sup>4</sup> ". . . frater Petrus de Dusburgk eiusdem (of the Teutonic Order) sacre professionis sacerdos . . ."

Chronicon, "Epistola," p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Willy Krogmann, "Peter von Dusburg," Die Deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon, gegründet von Wolfgang Stammler und fortgeführt von Karl Langosch (Berlin und Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1933-1955), Band 5, p. 880.

Karl Helm und Walter Zieseemer, Die Literatur des Deutschen Ritterordens (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1951), p. 149.

<sup>6</sup> Chronicon, "Epistola," p. 21.

ship of Luder von Braunschweig. <sup>7</sup>

Dusburg's Chronicon is anything but an objective account of the foundation of Prussian history. Local crusading campaigns and Old Testament motifs intermingle freely as Dusburg describes and defends his Order with an unabashed theological and political bias. <sup>8</sup> The historian's normal task in confronting such a document as this is to look behind and through the ideological tendentiousness for such factual information as may be found. <sup>9</sup> The purpose of the present chapter, however,

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<sup>7</sup> For the evidence proving that Dusburg indeed wrote the supplementary Pars V of the Chronicon, see: Voigt, Band III, pp. 625-626 (full bibliographic citation in note #9, which follows).

<sup>8</sup> August Kotzebue (1761-1819), the inveterate critic of Romanticism and the Romantics' rediscovery of the Middle Ages, is indignant with Dusburg's subjectivity and tendentiousness. Along with other unflattering names, Kotzebue calls Dusburg "eine Ordenskreatur," and "ein Ordensschmeichler."

August Kotzebue, Preussens ältere Geschichte, Band 1, pp. 280 and 335 as cited by Voigt, III, pp. 603-604.

<sup>9</sup> Over the years, German historians have done considerable sifting through the pages of Dusburg's Chronicon in quest of historical "truth" in Ranke's sense of "was eigentlich gewesen ist" -- what really happened. Their efforts have been rewarded with impressive stores of information about individuals and historical events. The great Königsberg archivist Johannes Voigt was the first modern historian to approach the pages of Dusburg's Chronicon critically and systematically. For sheer wealth of culled facts and information, Voigt's nine volume work has never been surpassed.

Johannes Voigt, Geschichte Preussens von den ältesten

will be quite different. The focus here will be upon that very tendentiousness which historians normally labor to dispel. The locus of interest will be those portions of the Chronicon where Dusburg extols the Teutonic Order and where he justifies and rationalizes its existence and its activities. In this, the chapter will lay bare how the Order's Biblical self-definition carried over from its translations and commentaries into its own chronicled history. <sup>10</sup>

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Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae begins with a dedicatory "Epistola" followed by a "Prologus." The "Prologus" concludes with the author's tidy outline of the contents of his work.

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Zeiten bis zum Untergange der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens (Königsberg: Bornträger, 1827-39), 9 Bände.

See especially Voigt's Band 3, pp. 603-626 for his assessment of Peter von Dusburg as an historical source.

<sup>10</sup> Good overview introductions to Peter von Dusburg and his Chronicon Terrae Prussiae are:

Helmut Bauer, "Peter von Dusburg und die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens im 14. Jahrhundert in Preussen," Historische Studien, Heft 272 (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Emil Ebering, 1935).

Max Töppen's "Einleitung," to Peter von Dusburg's "Chronicon Terrae Prussiae," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Band 1, pp. 3-20.

Voigt, Geschichte Preussens, Band 3, pp. 603-626 (Old but still rich in information not easily found elsewhere).

Modus agendi in hoc libro erit iste.

The approach to be taken in this book will be:

Primo describam, quo tempore et a quibus et quomodo incepit ordo domus Theutonice,

First I shall describe at what time and by whom and with what means the Teutonic Order began,

secundo quando et quomodo fratres predicti intraverunt in terram Prussie,

next when and how said brothers entered into the Land of Prussia,

tercio de bellis et aliis, que gesta sunt in dicta terra, quorum pauca, que vidi, alia que audivi ab his, qui viderunt et interfuerunt, cetera, que relatione veridica intellexi.

thirdly [I shall describe] wars and other things which have occurred in said land. Of these I have seen a few, others I have heard about from those who saw them and participated, and still others I know on good report.

Quarto ponam in margine pontifices summos et imperatores, qui a tempore institutionis hujus ordinis regnaverunt, et notabilia quedam facta, que ipsorum temporibus acciderunt.

Fourthly I shall mention in addition popes and emperors who reigned at the time of the institution of this order and certain notable things which took place during their tenures.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 23-24

To his four stated parts, as noted previously, Dusburg later appended a final section covering the years 1326-1330.

This chapter's discussion of Dusburg's Chronicon will focus considerable attention upon the "Epistola" and "Prologus." Brief though these sections are, they are rich in material relevant to our topic. Pars I and Pars II are important for two principal reasons. First, there



is the significant fact that Dusburg's narration of the Order's early years in Pars I is based almost exclusively upon the historical section of the Order's Rule. He returns to the Rule not only for inspiration (as the Biblical translators had done), but also for names, dates and events.<sup>11</sup> Secondly, Dusburg's Pars II contains an extensive allegorical treatment of the weapon of war used by the warrior-monks. This theological excursus is based broadly upon Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 6:

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11 To be sure, there are also other minor sources. They are early, fragmentary documents concerning the Order's earliest days:

- a) De Primordiis Ordinis Theutonici Narratio.
- b) Hermann von Salzas Bericht über die Eroberung Preussens.
- c) Hartmanns von Helderungen Bericht über die Vereinigung des Schwertbrüderordens mit dem Deutschen Orden und über die Erwerbung Livlands durch den letztern.

These sources may be found in Volumes 1 and 5 of Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit.

The dating, authenticity and actual influence of these early sources has been the subject of much heated debate. This whole problem-complex is, however, of limited significance to us here. If Dusburg did draw upon these sources, he pressed the information they provided into his own Biblical mold.

An excellent overview of the whole issue of Dusburg's sources, along with well-argued proposals for solutions is:

Marzena Pollakówna "La Chronique de Pierre de Dusburg," Acta Poloniae Historica 19 (1968), pp. 69-88.

11-17, but Dusburg expands it beyond this to embrace extensive Old Testament symbolism.

Pars III, along with its supplement, Pars V, constitutes the bulk of Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae. These sections recount a bewildering array of battles waged by the Order against its enemies. Here, warfare rages between the powers of light and darkness; between the forces of good and evil; it is a near Manichaeian struggle, pitting God's army against the hosts of the Devil. Imbedded in the rapidly shifting landscape of military action are ethical exhortations and exempla which are of great interest and relevance.

Pars IV is an overview of world events which were contemporaneous with the Order's activities in Prussia.<sup>12</sup> Events in the Holy Land receive special attention as Dusburg counterpoises the crusade in Mary's Land with the crusade in Christ's own land.

With this survey in mind, let us now return to examine, in detail, the important, self-justifying

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<sup>12</sup> The two principle sources for this rather dry and uninteresting cataloguing of dates are the writings of the two Dominicans, Ptolemaeus von Lucca and Martin von Troppau. For bibliographic information on Lucca and Troppau see:

August Potthast, Wegweiser durch die Geschichtswerke des europäischen Mittelalters bis 1500 (Berlin: W. Weber, 1896), Band 1, pp. 771-772 and Band 2, p. 945.

portions of the "Epistola," of the "Prologus" and of Pars I. We shall then focus upon the weapon allegories found in Pars II.<sup>13</sup> Finally, the remaining sections of the chronicle will provide selected, exemplary stories which will be analyzed in our attempt to understand the Biblically-based, apologetic character of this medieval chronicle.

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Peter von Dusburg's "Epistola" dedicates the Chronicon Terrae Prussiae to Grandmaster Werner von Orseln. Following his dedicatory remarks, Peter immediately calls up two Biblical allusions: first, the "proclamation verse" from the Book of Tobit.<sup>14</sup> Referring to the founding heroes of the Teutonic Order, whom Dusburg sees as standing in a direct line of descent from ancient "advocates of Christ" (suos ministros), Dusburg writes:

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<sup>13</sup> After discussion of the Waffenallegorien, there will be a brief excursus touching upon the Chronicle of Livonia and the Livländische Reimchronik as sources to Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae.

<sup>14</sup>

"Opera autem Dei revelare et confiteri honorificum est."

based on Tobit 12: 7

It is altogether proper to proclaim and profess the works of God.

Attendebant enim ad illud Tobie  
verbum, quod opera domini  
revelare honorificum est.

They gave heed to the word of  
Tobit that it is most fitting to  
proclaim the works of God.

Chron. "Epistola" p. 21

Dusburg promises, in his own day, to herald boldly  
the mighty deeds of his Order. He will not hide that  
which Christ has given him to proclaim (Luke 19: 20). <sup>15</sup>

Bella, que per nos et  
antecessores nostros ordinis  
nostri fratres victoriose gesta  
sunt, conscripsi et in hunc  
librum redegei.

The wars which we and the  
predecessor brothers of our Order  
have waged victoriously I have  
written down and I make public in  
this book.

Chron. "Epistola" p. 21

Dusburg begins his "Prologue" by paraphrasing another  
favorite Biblical passage bequeathed to him through the  
Order's Rule and the Order's Biblical translations:

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<sup>15</sup> Matt. 25: 14 ff. and Luke 19: 11 ff.: "Parable  
of the Talents."

The intensity of Peter's feeling here is so high  
that he breaks into the first person.

Quorum imitatus sum vestigia, ne cum servo nequam et  
inutili, qui talentum sibi a domino traditum  
abscondit, proiciat in tenebras exteriores.

Chron. "Epistola" p. 21

I have followed the steps of those [ministers of Christ] so that I not be,  
with the worthless servant who hid his talent, thrown into outer darkness.

Signa et mirabilia fecit apud me  
Deus excelsus. Placuit ergo mihi  
predicare signa ejus, quia magna  
sunt; et mirabilia ejus, qui  
forcia.

The most high God hath wrought  
signs and wonders toward me. It  
hath seemed good to me therefore  
to publish His signs, because  
they are great: and his wonders,  
because they are mighty.

Daniel 3: 99-100 16

As had been the case in earlier Biblical commentaries  
by the Order, Daniel does not draw Dusburg into  
speculation concerning coming epochs of history. Rather,  
Dusburg sees in Daniel and in Shadrach, Meshach and  
Abednego the precursors and inspirers of saintly heroism  
in his own day.

Competunt tamen hec verba auctori  
hujus libri, qui in persona sacre  
congregacionis fratrum hospitalis  
sancte Marie domus Theutonicorum  
Jerosolimitani, postquam vidit et  
audivit tot magna signa et tam  
mirabilia facta insolita et a  
seculo inaudita, que per dictos  
fratres in terra Prussie deus  
excelsus misericorditer operari  
dignatus est, qui pro defensione  
fidei corpora sua tradere in  
mortem non formidant, potuit  
dicere: signa et mirabilia fecit  
apud me deus excelsus etc.

These words [of Daniel] agree  
with the author of this book who,  
as a member of the Teutonic  
knights, has seen and heard great  
signs and many miracles which are  
unmatched and unequaled through  
time. Exalted and merciful God  
wrought these things in the land  
of Prussia through said brothers  
who, for the defense of the  
Faith, did not fear to offer  
their bodies unto death. The  
author may accordingly say: The  
Lord Almighty has shown signs and  
wonders in my presence, etc.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 21

Dusburg also sees precursors to the Teutonic Order in  
Stephen the Martyr and the other Apostles as they are  
described in the Book of Acts. In the spirit of the  
Order's own Apostele Tat, Dusburg writes:

Signa magna: dictum est in actibus apostolorum, quod Stephanus plenus gracia et fortitudine faciebat signa magna. Nec dubitandum est, quin fratres domus Theutonice pleni fuerint gracia et fortitudine, cum ipsi pauci numero tam potentem et ferocem et innumerabilem Pruthenorum gentem sibi subdiderunt, quam eciam multi principes, licet sepius attemptarent, non poterant sibi aliquid subjugare. Nec pretereundum est hoc eciam magnum signum, quod bellum prosperatum est in manu fratrum predictorum.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 22 17

Great signs: it is said in Acts that Stephan, who was full of grace and strength, performed great signs. Neither is it to be doubted but that the brothers of the German House were full of grace and strength. Though their number was small, they [nonetheless] subdued the Pruteni, such a powerful and ferocious and numerous people that many princes have repeatedly tried, but have not been able, in a like manner, to subdue them. Such a great sign as this ought not pass by unnoticed: at the hand of these brothers, this war was successfully waged.

Returning to prefiguring from the Old Testament,

Dusburg writes:

Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum misericors et miserator dominus per dictos fratres, ut vere possit dici de ipsis, quod scriptum est de populo Israelitico post exitum de Egipto.

The merciful and compassionate Lord made known his wondrous acts through said brothers, so that truly it may be said of them that which has been written concerning the Israelites after their exodus from Egypt.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 22

As he goes on to describe the hardships which the knights endured in the early days in "taking up their cross to follow and serve Christ," Dusburg echoes St. Bernard's description of knights attired in simple, rough garments appropriate for battle. Citing the prophet Isaiah and seeing in the Order a fulfillment of

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17 The cited passage goes on to list all of the conquests completed by the Order in a brief span of years.

prophecy, <sup>18</sup> Dusburg extols the Order's austere food restrictions and the general severity of its earlier days. The Order, in Dusburg's view, had produced examples of Christian martyrdom worthy of St. Paul's description in Hebrews. <sup>19</sup> Dusburg recounts the heavy odds against which the Order had always struggled and, as his "Prologue" nears its completion, his mind turns to the Maccabees.

Ecce mirabilia forcia, quomodo  
per fratres predictos omnes  
gentes, que inhabitabant terram  
Prussie exterminate sunt . . .  
Attende, qualiter fratres ut  
Judas Machabeus loca sancta terre  
Prussie, que gentes prius per  
ydolatriam polluerunt,  
mundaverunt . . .

Behold the great miracles,  
whereby through the said  
brothers, all the peoples who  
inhabited the Land of Prussia,  
were killed (driven out) . . .  
Mark well how the brothers in  
Prussia, just as Judas Maccabeus  
in the Holy Land, cleansed where  
the people had previously  
polluted with their idolatry.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 23

The Biblical reign of King David provides Dusburg with his model for the peace and order which the Teutonic knights, with God's help, have succeeded in establishing in Prussia:

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18

Completum fuit in eis, quod dominus per Ysayam  
dicit: dabit tibi dominus panum artum et aquam  
brevem.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 23, after Isaiah 30: 20

It came to pass among them what the Lord said through Isaiah: "The Lord gives  
you meager bread and scarce water."

19 Hebrews 11: 35.

Et ut David eciam instituunt sacerdotes, et augent quotidie cultum dei. Sic patet quam magna signa et forcia mirabilia fecit deus excelsus per dictos fratres in terra Prussie: quomodo et predicabuntur, inferius apparebit.

As David established priests and daily added to the services of God - so God Almighty makes plain the greatest possible signs and miracles through said brothers in Prussia: as it was foretold, so it in later times will appear.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 23

God, through his Teutonic Order, has accomplished great things. "Aperi oculus tuos et vide; omnia ad oculum tibi patet," Dusburg exhorts his listeners. <sup>20</sup> But his final words are those of prophetic warning. Accomplishments of the past must not be lost in the present day through prideful arrogance and self-satisfaction. The Order is at risk.

Sed quia in novissimis diebus instabunt tempora periculosa, et erunt homines se ipsos amantes, querentes, que sua sunt, non que Jesu Cristi, habundabit iniquitas et multorum caritas refrigescet.

Because in the latter days dangerous times will be at hand, and (because) there will be men who, loving themselves and that which is theirs and not that which is of Jesus Christ, iniquity will abound and the love in many will begin to flag.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 23

Dusburg concludes with a prayer of supplication that Christ rejuvenate the Order and that He work actively through it:

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<sup>20</sup> "Open your eyes and see; all these things lie open to your sight." Chron. "Prologus," p. 23.



Idcirco, benignissime Jesu, da  
eis spiritum consilii sanioris,  
ut non contristent spiritum, in  
quo signati sunt; innova signa  
et immuta mirabilia et erue ipsos  
in mirabilibus tuis . . .

Therefore, gracious Jesus, give  
them the spirit of healthier  
counsel, so that they not sorrow  
the Spirit in whose sign they  
are. Renew Your signs and  
miracles; make them plain in Your  
wondrous works.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 23

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Pars I of Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon describes the origins of the Teutonic Order. The tone and contents of Dusburg's narrative come directly from the historical introduction to the Order's Rule. Dusburg's description is lengthier than the relatively compact source, but his additions are generally expansions upon themes or recombining of elements drawn from divers parts of the Rule. As the original authors of the Rule had done before him, Dusburg devotes at least as much time to Biblical prefigurings as he does to chronicling of founding events.

Dusburg begins Pars I by describing the make-up of the Teutonic Order as he knew it in his day: first in terms of its ideals, and then according to its actual administrative structure. In doing this, Dusburg draws upon the familiar image of Solomon's Temple, which was already a fully developed trope inherited from the Rule

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21 After Ephesians 4: 30.

and passed down through Biblical works. <sup>22</sup> Dusburg blends the image of the Temple of Wisdom as described in Proverbs, Chapter 9 <sup>23</sup> with elements of Ezekiel's visionary temple (Ezekiel, Chapters 40-47). <sup>24</sup> Ezekiel's Temple, one recalls, was the topic which the Order's Prophetenbuch had so exhaustively glossed. <sup>25</sup>

The seven columns of the Dusburg's allegorical Temple are seen as prefiguring the seven sacraments of the Church, which the Order defends. <sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the

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<sup>22</sup> See Chapter 2 above.

<sup>23</sup>

"Wisdom hath built herself a house, she hath hewn her out seven pillars."

Prov. 9: 1

<sup>24</sup> Other relevant Biblical passages which undoubtedly influenced Dusburg's Biblical trope are:

"For he that hath his dwelling in the heavens, is the visitor, and protector of that place, and he striketh and destroyeth them that come to do evil to it."

II Macc. 3: 39

"He that shall overcome, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God."

Revelations 3: 12

Also noteworthy are: Isaiah 6; I Esdras 6; Song of Songs 3: 10; III Kings (I Kings) 10: 18; John 10: 22.

<sup>25</sup> See Chapter 3 above.

<sup>26</sup> Chron. I, p. 24.

Mary, the Mother of God, who defended the Order, was also associated with the seven-pillared Temple.

seven columns symbolize the three monastic vows of the Knights, combined with the four stages of purposeful and disciplined penance through which all Christians must move:

. . . sunt septem columpne alie spirituales in hac domo, quarum tres scilicet obediencia, paupertas, castitas disciplinam ordinent regularem, et quatuor alie videlicet contritio, confessio, satisfactio et caritas, que operit multitudinem peccatorum.

. . . there are seven spiritual columns in this house. Of them, three are obedience, poverty and chastity as established by the discipline of the Rule. Four (others) are contrition, confession, satisfaction and charity, which expiate a multitude of sins.

27

Chron. I, p 25.

Prefiguring the Teutonic Order itself, the seven "carefully-worked pillars" represent the Order's seven provinces, which are administered under their seven commanders:

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See: Tilo von Kulm, Von Siben Ingesigeln, v. 1,421-1,438.

27 Based on I Peter 4: 8.

Hic dominus papa Celestinus III edificavit i.e. instituit et confirmavit sibi et sancte ecclesie ad utilitatem domum, videlicet sacre religionis hospitalis sancte Marie Theutonicorum Jerosolimitani et excidit columpnas septem i.e. septem fratres commendatores seu preceptores provinciales scilicet Lyvonie, Prussie, Theutonie, Austrie, Apulie, Romanie et Armenie . . . magister generalis et capitulum sint fundamentum hujus domus, provinciales commendatores seu preceptores columpne, alii fratres superedificati. Et sic dominus papa assimilatur viro sapienti, qui edificavit domum suam supra petram.

This Lord Pope Celestin III (1198) built, i.e. instituted and confirmed for his and for the Holy Church's use the house, viz. the House of St. Mary of the Germans of Jerusalem and cut seven columns, i.e. seven brother commanders or provincial preceptors for Livonia, Prussia, Germany, Austria, Apulia, Romania (Greece) and Armenia (Minor) . . the grandmaster and the chapter are the foundation of this house, the provincial commanders or preceptors are the columns and the remaining brothers are the superstructure. Thus the Lord Pope resembled the man of wisdom who built his house upon a rock.

Chron. I, pp. 24-25.

The Temple, i.e. the Teutonic Order, is founded upon the rock which is Jesus Christ and God watches over the entire structure. Finally, it is not without significance that Dusburg breaks down the Order's Prussian possessions into seven parts to once again portray the seven pillars of wisdom and Solomon's seven-pillared temple. 28

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28 Chron. III 3, pp. 51-52.

Hermann Balk led the first Order expedition of conquest into Prussia at the head of seven brother knights and their support troops. ("He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the Temple of my God." Revelations 3: 12). From this humble beginning, Dusburg writes, all of Prussia was eventually subdued and converted (Chron. III 3, p. 52).

See below for more on Balk's pioneering expedition.

Dusburg's use of the Temple provides an excellent example of the lineage of an allegorical trope within Order literature. It originally found its way into the Order Rule through the influence of St. Bernard and Cistercian Biblical piety. From the Rule, Biblical translators and commentators reworked and refined the trope until, especially after the suspension of the Knights Templar, it became synonymous with the Teutonic Order. <sup>29</sup>

After repeating the history of the Order's first field lazaret before the walls of Acre, <sup>30</sup> Dusburg returns to his Biblical justification based upon expanded passages from the Rule. And here, in a significant and original transitional passage, there is a striking case of the Order's activities in Prussia seen as having been prefigured in Palestine:

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There were seven Maccabean funeral pyramids set up at Modein in honor of those who had saved and cleansed Zion and the Temple -- I Macc. 13: 25-30.

See Chapter 4 above for the "Seven Holy Maccabees."

<sup>29</sup> For a discussion of the Teutonic Order as the legitimate heir to the disgraced and condemned Templars, see Chapter Two above.

<sup>30</sup> Chron. I 1, p. 25 ff. based on "Prologus 1" of the Rule. This section exists only as a part of the original German version of the Rule. Dusburg was here compelled to translate from German into Latin. In other places, he simply turned to the Latin text of the Rule.

Plantasti radices ejus et  
implevit terram, transtulisti eam  
postea et ejecisti gentes de  
terra Prussie et Lyvonie et  
plantasti eam ibi, et sic  
extendit palmites suos usque ad  
mare et usque ad flumen  
propagines ejus. Hec reverenda  
milicia non solum in terra est ab  
hominibus confirmata, verum eciam  
typo celi et terre multipharie  
prefigurata.

You planted its roots and it  
filled the earth. After this you  
transported it and cleared out  
the peoples from the Lands of  
Prussia and Livonia and planted  
it there. And so it extended its  
young roots to the ocean and its  
shoots to the river. This revered  
army is not only confirmed on  
earth by men, but truly also it  
is variously prefigured by  
heavenly and earthly signs.

Chron. I 1, p.28 31

Dusburg reiterates from the Rule, in expanded form, the story of Abraham's campaign to free his brother and his brother's household from captivity. For his deed, Abraham is rewarded at the hand of Melchizedek, the priest-king.<sup>32</sup> Abraham, the returning warrior, is portrayed as a precursor of the Order knight who fights to redeem his innocent and helpless brother Christians from pagan captivity and abuse.<sup>33</sup> Melchizedek, who blesses and rewards Abraham, embodies the dual role of priest and king. In this combined role, he speaks to the warrior-monk's dual role of other-worldly saint and worldly

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31 See Psalms 79 (Vulgate).

32 Dusburg's account is based upon (indeed often copied verbatim from) the Latin version of the Rule. The Latin translation already had expanded somewhat upon the German original. The parallel columns in Perlbach's polyglot edition of the Rule are extremely helpful in comparing and evaluating texts.

33 Genesis 14: 13-20.

soldier.<sup>34</sup> Melchizedek's offering to Abraham confirms the necessary and privileged status of the knight-monks and their Order.

Ex quo tempore tyrocinia fidelium  
contra nacionum turbas ceperunt  
exerceri, revelante extunc  
spiritu sancto, quanto favore  
iis, qui summum in ecclesia  
obtinere locum, tales amplecti  
debeat tyrones, ad protectionis  
ecclesiastice benedictionem eosdem  
speciali benevolencia suscipiens  
et suis indulgenciis et  
privilegiis encenia patrimoniorum  
crucifixi militibus illis oblata  
confirmans.

From the time warriors of the  
faithful undertook to fight  
against the raging of the  
nations, the Holy Spirit made  
plain with what favor he who is  
in the highest position in the  
Church ought to esteem such  
fighters. He (the Pope, like  
Melchizedek) accords them the  
blessing and protection of the  
Church and confirms endowments  
offered to them.

Chron. I 1, p. 28

Taking his lead from the Rule, Dusburg repeats the prefiguring seen in St. John's vision of the New Jerusalem, using the expanded Latin version of the Rule as his basis:

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34 Melchizedek also figures prominently in medieval literature as embodying the harmonious cooperation of Church and State -- the powers spiritual and temporal. Much more work needs to be done on this important Biblical figure and his function during the Middle Ages.

This entire section is taken, essentially verbatim, from the Latin version of the Order's Rule, "Prologus" 2.

Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens, herausgegeben von Max Perlbach (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1890), p. 23 [Sterns, pp. 202-203]. The Latin translation of the Rule differs in some matters of detail from the Middle High German original version.

Vidit namque Joannes ecclesiam militantem sub typo nove Jerusalem de celis a triumphante descendere, in qua cum ceteris celestium virtutum agminibus potestates deo militant, quamlibet potestatem contrariam debellando. Que profecto visio nos ammonet, quosdam in ecclesia militante debere contineri milites, quorum votum sit, inimicam ecclesie tyrannidem infidelium propulsare, statuente in omnibus altissimo terminos fidelium populorum juxta numerum et officium angelorum dei.

John saw the Church militant in the form of a New Jerusalem descending in triumph from heaven. In it, along with other reinforcements of celestial power, fighting forces waged war for God, combating whatever power which offered resistance. Such a vision admonishes us that in the Church militant there ought also be warriors whose vow it is to defend the Church from the hostile tyranny of the infidels. At the frontiers of the people of faith, God has established our number and responsibility along with the angels.

Chron. I 1, p. 28

Moses and Joshua, Gideon and David, along with their respective armies, provide further, prophetic models which Dusburg sees as presaging his own day and his beloved Order.<sup>35</sup> The final prefiguration, as one might expect, is that of the Maccabees. And here, with jarring explicitness, Dusburg hammers home the equation: **MACCABEES = TEUTONIC KNIGHTS.**

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<sup>35</sup> Chron. I 1, p. 29.



Subit eciam animum illud  
 laudabile et deo dignum bellum  
 Machabeorum, qui . . . zelo legis  
 et fidei repleti, Antiochum  
 Epiphanem et radicem iniquitatis  
 . . . dei suffulti iuvamine  
 contriverunt, ut sancta iterato  
 mundarent, arcem Sion reciperent,  
 et redderent pacem terre. Quorum  
 bella sacer hic ordo milicie  
 videlicet domus hospitalis sancte  
 Marie Theutonicorum in Jerusalem  
 strenue imitans. . . Sunt namque  
 milites et bellatores electi zelo  
 legis patrie manu valida hostes  
 conterentes. . . Hunc ergo  
 spiritualem ordinem ad utilitatem  
 sancte ecclesie se generalius  
 diffundentem congratulacionis  
 oculo diversi summi pontifices  
 intuentes, confirmatum plurimis  
 privilegiis et immunitatibus et  
 libertatibus illustrarunt.

I am reminded of the war of the  
 Maccabees, which was laudable and  
 worthy of God. The Maccabees were  
 filled with zeal for the Law and  
 the Faith and with the support of  
 God, they wiped out Antiochus  
 Epiphany, that root of iniquity.  
 They cleansed holy places, took  
 Zion and returned peace to the  
 land. This Order, viz. the  
 Teutonic Order, closely imitates  
 the Maccabees in these holy wars.  
 They are warriors and fighters,  
 selected apart by their zeal for  
 the law of the homeland and their  
 strength at arms in smashing the  
 enemy. . . This spiritual order  
 has expanded in its service to  
 the Church. Several popes have  
 looked favorably upon it,  
 confirming many privileges and  
 immunities and liberties.

Chron. I 1, p. 29

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Pars II of Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae begins the narrative of Baltic history proper. Dusburg starts with a description of the devastation which Christian settlements had experienced at the hands of the pagan Pruteni. Conrad of Masovia's call for help is recounted only summarily. Dusburg avoids details of the Bull of Rimini and the Treaty of Kruschwitz, the conflicting interpretations of which, three generations later, brought the Order and Poland into war. Rather, Dusburg focuses on Pruteni atrocities in order that he might build up to a direct citing of what is to him the

obvious and appropriate Biblical precedent for the Order's activities in Prussia:

. . . Conradus predictus misit nuncios ad reverendum virum et religiosum fratrem Hermannum de Salcza magistrum generalem domus Theutonice, nuncios ei omnia, que gesta fuerunt circa negocium sibi commissum, petens humiliter et supplicans, ut plures fratres et armigeros mitteret ei. Qui acquiescens precibus ipsius misit ei fratrem Hermannum dictum Balke in magistrum, dicens ad eum, sicut dominus ad Josue: confortare et esto robustus, tu enim introduces filios Israel i.e. fratres tuos in terram, quam pollicitus est eis dominus, et deus erit tecum.

Conrad sent emissaries to the pious and religious man, Hermann von Salza, Grandmaster of the German House, announcing to him everything which had transpired relative to this matter. They humbly implored that several brothers and armed men be sent to Conrad. Acceding to these entreaties, Hermann sent Brother Hermann Balk as commander, telling Balk what the Lord said to Joshua: "Be comforted and strong, you will lead the children of Israel, i.e. your brothers, into the land which the Lord has promised them, and God will be with you."

Chron. II 11, p. 47 36

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36 This passage, as rendered into Middle High German by Nicolaus von Jeroschin in Kronike von Pruzinlant, provides an excellent opportunity to contrast his art with that of Peter von Dusburg. In anticipation of the next chapter, it is included here.

Er sante im zu meistre san  
einen brudir, der Herman  
Balke was geheizin do,  
und sprach zu deme so,  
alse got gesprochin ē  
hatte ouch zu Josue:  
"Starcmutic und creftic bis,  
want du leit in solt gewis  
der israhelschin sune schar,  
daz sint dine brudere gar  
und brengin in daz lant,  
daz in von gote ist benant  
und got sal mit dir sin  
in allin den arbeit in din."

Kronike v. 3,529-3,543

Dusburg records Conrad's call as having been seconded and reinforced by letters from Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241). <sup>37</sup> The Pope's words, according to Dusburg's account, concluded with a paraphrase of I Maccabee 3: 58 ff.

Gregorius IX papa . . . injungens dictis fratribus, ut vindicarent injuriam crucifixi domini et terram Cristianis debitam recuperarent, ab infidelibus occupatam. Et exhortans eos ad bellum, ait: accingimini et estote filii potentes, estote parati, ut pugnetis adversus naciones, que conveniunt disperdere nos et sancta nostra, quoniam melius est nobis mori in bello, quam videre mata gentis nostre et sanctorum.

Pope Gregory IX . . . ordered the brothers to redeem the injury of the crucified Lord and to regain for the Christians their rightful land from infidel occupation. Exhorting them to war, he said: "Arm yourselves, sons, and be strong, be prepared to fight against the nations which conspire to destroy us and our holy possessions, because it is for us better to die in war than to see the misfortunes of our people and our sanctuary.

Chron. II 6, p. 38 38

He (von Salza) immediately sent there a brother named Hermann Balk as commander and spoke to him as God had spoken earlier to Joshua: "Be of good courage and strong, because you are about to lead the host of the sons of Israel, that is to say your brothers, and bring them into the land that is named by God for them. In all your adventure God will be with you."

Nicolaus von Jeroschin, "Kronike von Pruzinlant," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlke, Band 1, p. 343.

<sup>37</sup> January 17, 1230. Further quoted and discussed in Töppen, p. 38, notes #1 and #2 of his edition of Dusburg's "Chronicon," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum.

38

"Et ait Iudas: 'Accingimini, et estote filii potentes; et estote parati in mane, ut pugnetis adversus naciones has quae convenerunt adversus nos, disperdere nos et sancta nostra; quoniam melius est

Dusburg cites Old Testament promises by God that He will be with and fight for His people.<sup>39</sup> Then Dusburg looks to the Maccabees.

Non enim pugna vestra est, sed dei. Hec magnanimitas maxime fuit in Juda Machabeo, qui quando cum paucis stabat contra maximam multitudinem gentium confortando suos ait: Ne timueritis multitudinem eorum et impetum eorum ne formidetis.

It is not your fight; it is God's. This consummate greatness of soul was in Judas Maccabee who, when he stood with only a few against a great multitude, comforted his men and said, "Do not fear their numbers and do not dread their attack."

Chron. II 6, p. 38<sup>40</sup>

Once in Prussia, Dusburg affirms, the Teutonic Order succeeded in subduing the savage Pruteni where others had failed: Julius Caesar, the Gepids, Hugh of Potyre and, more recently, Bishop Christian and his Dobriner Order.<sup>41</sup>

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nos mori in bello, quam videre mala gentis nostrae et sanctorum. Sicut autem fuerit voluntas in caelo, sic fiat!"

I Macc. 3: 58-60

"And Judas said: 'Gird yourselves, and be valiant men, and be ready against the morning, that you may fight with these nations that are assembled against us to destroy us and our sanctuary. For it is better for us to die in battle, than to see the evils of our nation, and of the holies. Nevertheless as it shall be the will of God in heaven so be it done.'"

<sup>39</sup> Deut. 20: 1 and Deut. 20: 3. Chron. II 6, p. 38.

<sup>40</sup> Dusburg rounds out his treatment of the call to Prussia by paraphrasing other passages from Maccabees. The paraphrase, based upon I Macc. 2: 62 ff., I Macc. 2: 50 ff. and I Macc. 2: 64 ff., stresses fidelity to the Law of God and solidarity with the glorious forefathers who, in their day, also fought to uphold God's plan.

<sup>41</sup> Chron. II 7, p. 39.

In a footnote, editor Max Töppen offers some

In Dusburg's mind, the explanation for this success was simple: the Teutonic Order, as a pious order of monk-knights, arrived and began to wage a new kind of war. This bellum novum involved God's special participation; the likes of it had not been seen since the days of the Maccabees.

Modo per fratres hospitalis  
sancte Marie domus Theutonicorum  
Jerosolimitani incipiunt nova  
bella contra ipos. . . Nec tantum  
est novitas in bello, sed eciam  
in novo genere bellandi, quia non  
solum materialibus, sed armis  
spiritualibus vincitur hostis. .  
. Sic habemus novum bellum et  
novum genus bellandi, quo armis  
spiritualibus hostes fidei et  
ecclesie superamus.

Only with the brothers of the  
Teutonic Order do new wars begin  
against them. . . . It is not  
novelty in war, but rather in the  
new way of waging war; for now  
the enemy is vanquished not only  
with material means, but also  
with weapons of the spirit. . .  
Accordingly we have a new war and  
a new way of waging war. It is by  
means of spiritual arms that we  
overcome the enemies of the Faith  
and of the Church.

Chron. II 7, p. 39 42

God's new war was a war of crusading Faith. And this war of the spirit was fought with spiritual weapons. With

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tentative suggestions as to possible sources for Dusburg's fanciful statements, especially as they relate to Caesar. Obviously, Dusburg's alluding to the alleged failures of earlier generals and armies is intended to make the success of the Teutonic Order appear all the more stunning by contrast.

42 Dusburg's further discussion goes on to single out oracion (prayer) as one of the characteristic signs of the "new war." He cites five examples where actual battlefield prayer or the cessation thereof decided a battle, one way or the other, for the Israelites.

Two of the five examples, predictably, are lifted from the pages of I Maccabees.

this introduction, Peter von Dusburg begins his expansive "Waffenallegorie." 43

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The Order knights, according to Dusburg's allegorical description, carry the shield of faith as they go forth to battle.

Magne fidei verbum fuit, cum  
David pugnaturus contra Golyam,  
diceret: tu venis ad me in gladio  
et hasta et clipeo, ego venio ad  
te in nomine domini, et tradidit  
eum dominus in manus suas. O  
quanta fides fuit in Jonatha et  
Juda Machabeo, cum dicerent: non  
est difficile domino, salvare in  
multitudine vel in paucis.

Chron. II 8, p. 40

It was a great word of faith when  
David, about to fight Goliath,  
said: "You come against me with  
sword and spear and buckler, but  
I come against you in the name of  
the Lord." And the Lord delivered  
him into David's hands. Oh, how  
much faith was in Jonathan and  
Judas Maccabee when they said:  
"It is not difficult for the Lord  
to help against great numbers or  
small."

But faith, without works, is useless. A knight must hold  
the shield of faith in one hand and the sword of good  
works in the other.

De gladio dicitur Jeremias ex-  
tendisse dexteram et dedisse Jude  
gladium dicens: accipe gladium  
sanctum munus a deo, quo deicies  
adversarios populi mei Israel.  
Iste est gladius, quo Judas  
(Machabeus) castra filiorum  
Israel protegebat.

Chron. II 8, p. 40 44

Of the sword it is said:  
Jeremiah, having extended his  
right hand and having given Judas  
Maccabee the sword, declared:  
"Accept the sword of holy office  
from God, by which you will  
disperse the foes of my people,  
Israel." This is the sword with  
which Judas Maccabee protected  
the camp of the sons of Israel."

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43 The "Waffenallegorie" constitutes Pars II 8, pp. 40-44 of Dusburg's Chronicon.

"Whereupon Jeremias stretched forth his right

The knight's buckler is the word of God. It protects the Christian warrior and guides his "lance of good intentions." 45

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hand, and gave to Judas a sword of gold, saying: take this holy sword a gift from God, wherewith thou shalt overthrow the adversaries of my people Israel."

II Macc. 15: 14-16.

Luder von Braunschweig's Makkabäerbuch makes much out of Jeremiah's Schwertleite: II Maccabees 15: 15. See Chapter 4 above.

The Order Rule speaks of "Benedicchio ensis ad faciendum militum" as a part of its initiation ritual.

Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens, p. 129.

45

Pro lancea, que recta est, accipe rectam intencionem, et secundum doctrinam apostoli: quodcunque facitis in verbo et opere, in nomine domini facite, et sive manducatis, sive bibitis, sive quid aliud factis, omnia in gloriam dei facite.

Chron. II 8, p. 41

As a straight spear, receive good intention and, according to the teaching of the Apostle (Col. 3: 17; I Cor. 10: 31), whatever you do in word and deed, do it in the name of the Lord, and what you eat and what you drink and whatever else you do, do all to the glory of God.

Pro clipeo accipe sermonem domini  
 . . . de quo dicitur: sermo  
 domini clipeus ignitus est  
 omnibus sperantibus in se. . .  
 Qui ideo ignitus dicitur, quia ab  
 omnibus telis igneis dyaboli  
 defendit. De hoc Judas Machabeus  
 dicitur singulos suorum armasse,  
 non clipei nec haste munitione,  
 sed sermonibus optimis.

A buckler means the Word of the Lord, of which is said: "The Word of God is a buckler of fire to all who have faith in it." It is called fiery because it defends against all spears of the Devil's fire. Concerning this Judas Maccabee is said to have armed each of his men, not with buckler and spear, but rather with the divine Words."

Chron. II 8, p. 41 46

The new Maccabees, as the Maccabees of old, must wear the armor of justice.

De lorica dicitur, quod Judas Machabeus induit se lorica tanquam gigas et protegebat castra sua. Pro lorica accipe justiciam, de qua apostolus dicit: induite lorica[m] justicie.

Concerning armor it is said that Judas Maccabee put on his armor as a hero and protected his camp. Armor you should understand as justice, of which the Apostle says: "put on the armor of justice."

Chron. II 8, p. 41-42

Peter von Dusburg next calls up the image of an arrow (sagitta) as representing obedience. The arrow allegory includes chastity, that sternest of all forms of obedience.<sup>47</sup> Judith, so beloved of the Order, is Dusburg's primary Old Testament exemplar.<sup>48</sup> Among Dusburg's armory of spiritual weapons, the sling (funda) symbolizes poverty. As one would expect, David, the

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46 See II Macc. 15: 11.

47 On this theme, see the (to modern readers) amusing exemplum of Brother Bertold's remarkable test of his chastity. It appears later in this chapter.

48 See Chapter 3 above.



shepherd boy, stands forth as an embodiment of this virtue. Dusburg's images of sling and arrow are largely original with him as the vigorous, well-intentioned clumsiness of their formulation seems to show. To Peter von Dusburg, the sling and arrow were particularly important as spiritual weapons, for they place in clear relief the three monastic vows which set the knight-monks of the Teutonic Order apart from and above other warriors.

Finally, the knight's helmet is his salvation -- salvation which is the hope of all Christians, but especially of the warrior-monk, whose earthly life is precarious indeed.

Per galeam significatur salus.

The helmet symbolizes salvation.

Chron. II 8, p. 44

Chronicon Terrae Prussiae ends its allegory on weapons with some final, ringing words to the Christian knight concerning his spiritual armament and his commission to use them.

Hec sunt arma, quibus . . . David  
hostes regni sui devicit, et  
Machabei civitatem sanctam  
Jerusalem destructam  
reparaverunt, et templum domini  
sordibus gentium pollutum in-  
terfectis hostibus mundaverunt.

These are the weapons with which  
David conquered the enemies of  
his kingdom, and the Maccabees  
restored the holy city of  
Jerusalem from destruction and  
cleansed the polluted Temple of  
the Lord from the filth of the  
gentiles after slaying the foe.

O quam securus stabis in bello,  
 si hiis armis fueris  
 circumcintus. . . O fortissimi  
 milites et bellatores incliti,  
 induite hec arma et vindicate  
 injuriam crucifixi domini et  
 terram sanctam Cristianis debitam  
 recuperate, ab infidelibus occu-  
 patam.

Oh how secure you will be in war,  
 if you gird yourself with these  
 weapons . . . Oh most mighty  
 soldiers and chosen fighters, put  
 on these arms and avenge the  
 injury of the crucified Lord.  
 Reconquer from occupation by the  
 infidels the lost Holy Land of  
 the Christian.

Chron. II 2, p. 44

Dusburg's "land sacred to Christians" is Prussia.

The New Maccabees, armed with spiritual weapons, are called to fight in a new Holy Land on the shores of the Baltic -- Prussia has become a New Palestine.

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If Peter von Dusburg had left his Waffenallegorie at this point, it would have stood as a remarkable piece of inspirational writing.<sup>49</sup> Herein are certainly expressed

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<sup>49</sup> Helmut Bauer seems chary of granting Dusburg the credit for originality which I feel he deserves -- especially in light of Dusburg's further theme development in the Chronicon (see my ensuing discussion). Nevertheless, Bauer's tentative Quellenhinweisungen provide a starting point for further study.

"Die Herkunft der Waffenallegorien ist ungewiss. Perlbach kann auch nur auf Ephes. VI: 14 ff. verweisen (Preuss.-poln. Stud. II, S. 113; vgl. Hrab. Maurus, Migne CIX, 149A; Alanus de Insulis, c. 40, ed. Migne CCX, 187 A. -- Sicher ist nur die Verbreitung der Allegorie im 14. Jhdt. überhaupt. vgl. Brinkmann, a.a.O. S. 88."

The origin of the "weapon allegories" is uncertain. Perlbach can only point to Ephesians 6: 14 ff. . . Certain is only the diffusion of the allegory in the 14th century.

Helmut Bauer, "Peter von Dusburg und die Geschichts-

the Order's deepest spiritual longings, articulated in strictly Biblical terms. But Dusburg moves beyond his metaphorical apologia to a listing of specific circumstances where the Order might, with God's blessing, attack its enemies. In these instances, Dusburg writes, the Order is empowered to bring to bear not only weapons of the spirit, but also those of iron. Dusburg entitles this pivotal section of his Chronicle: "De usu armorum carnalium et spiritualium."

Peter states six reasons or situations where physical as well as spiritual weapons may be used. (Sex sunt cause, propter quas utimur armis carnalibus et spiritualibus.)

First, the Order needs to fight regularly in order to remain in battle readiness.

Prima est propter exercitium, ut exercitemur in bellis secundum voluntatem dei.

The first is on account of preparedness - that we may practice in war according to the will of God.

Chron. II 9, p. 44

After conquest of the Canaanites, Dusburg writes, there

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schreibung des Deutschen Ordens," p. 37.

Bauer fails to mention Isidore's "Etymologies," Chapter 18. Even a cursory glance at the format and headings of Isidore's chapter reveals at least some of the influence it must have had upon Dusburg's Waffenallegorie.

Isidorus, "Etymologies," Patrologiae latinae cursus completus, edited by J. P. Migne (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1844-), Volume 182: 639-662

followed generations of Israelites for whom memories of the heroic war of conquest grew dim. Against these descendants, therefore, God sent attackers to keep His people in fighting trim. In a like manner, God daily tests the fighting mettle of His warrior-monks in Prussia. He moves the pagans to vent their rage by attacking the brothers, thus forcing the Christian warriors to remain ever prepared and vigilant.

Dusburg's second and third reasons for using physical weapons expand upon reason number one and, by the same token, they seem to flow into each other.<sup>50</sup> The Order must -- to continue Dusburg's line of argument -- use the worldly sword against hostile plots (*propter hostium insidias*) and against open attack (*propter hostium apertam impugnationem*). The Maccabees give Dusburg his model for armed vigilance and even preëemptory strikes against insidious plotters:

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<sup>50</sup> Dusburg is anything but a tightly-arguing, scholastic thinker. But his six reasons possess in raw energy what they lack in logical compactness.

Unde filii Israel timentes  
insidias hostium, assumentes arma  
bellica sederunt per loca augusta  
itineris et custodiebant tota die  
et nocte. Legitur et de Juda  
Machabeo, quod percepit filiis  
Israel, armatos esse in locis  
oportunis, ne forte ab hostibus  
repente mali aliquid oriretur.

The sons of Israel, fearing  
attacks by the enemy, put on the  
arms of war and took up stations  
at strategic spots on the road  
and guarded them day and night.  
It is said of Judas Maccabee that  
he ordered the sons of Israel to  
be armed and in position, lest  
some evil suddenly arise from the  
enemy.

Chron. II 9, p. 44.

Similarly, the Maccabees showed how force alone  
blunts naked aggression.

Unde dicitur in libro  
Machabeorum, quod cum Lysias  
confidens in multitudine  
bellatorum, nunquam recogitans  
potestatem dei, sed mente  
effrenatus, vellet civitatem  
sanctam Jerusalem et templum dei  
destruere, et jam presidium  
expugnasset, Machabeus sumptis  
armis, et qui cum eo erant, hoc  
cognito, cum fletu et lacrimis  
rogabant dominum, ut eis bonum  
angelum mitteret ad salutem.  
Convaluerunt animo et viribus, et  
irruentes impetu in eos  
prostraverunt XI milia peditum ex  
eis et . . .

The Book of Maccabees states that  
Lysias, relying upon the number  
of his warriors and never  
recognizing the power of God,  
sought, with an effrontery of  
spirit, to destroy the holy city  
of Jerusalem and the Temple of  
God. Realizing that the outposts  
had already been taken, the Judas  
Maccabee took up arms. He and  
those who were with him begged  
God with lamentations and tears  
that He send them a good angel to  
aid them. They regained their  
spirits and courage and broke  
forth in attack and killed eleven  
thousand of the enemy's foot  
soldiers. . .

Chron. II 9, p. 45 51

God and His angels inflame human courage and  
strength, but it is the physical swords of the Maccabees  
which actually cut down the enemy. Dusburg cites the

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51 II Maccabees, Chapter 11; also I Maccabees,  
Chapter 4

Makkabäerbuch v. 9,891 ff. and v. 2,495 ff.

numbers involved in the slaughter, <sup>52</sup> and then he focuses upon Prussia by pointing out the parallels he is confident he sees:

Hec est causa, propter quam fratres domus Theutonice ab introitu terre Prussie usque ad presentem diem utuntur gladiis continue, ut in promptu habeant, quo se defendant, si contra eos ab hostibus insurgeret aperta impugnatio vel occulta.

Chron. II 9, p. 45

This is the reason why the brothers of the German House, from their entrance into the land of Prussia down to the present day, use their swords continually. It is so that they might have them in readiness in order to defend themselves if enemies, openly or clandestinely, rise up against them.

Dusburg's fourth and fifth justifiable reasons for making a spiritual fight a physical, earthly one are "to keep the peace so that we might keep our possessions in peace" and "to recover our lost possessions." The Latin wording is important here, including, as it does, Dusburg's sudden shift to the first person plural -- we of the Teutonic Order.

Quarta causa, propter quam utimur armis carnalibus, est propter pacem, ut possimus bona nostra in pace possidere.

The fourth reason why we use physical arms is on account of peace - so that we might hold our possessions in peace.

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<sup>52</sup> Dusburg's love of numbers, especially large numbers (troops, casualties, horses, etc.) bespeaks a subtle influence of the Biblical Books of Maccabees. The Hellenistic period has been characterized as an age of grand scale and Zahlenqier (love for large numbers). In this respect, I and II Maccabees certainly qualify as Hellenistic documents, even as they denounce Hellenism. Maccabean Zahlenqier passes on to Dusburg. Like his predecessors, Dusburg is fond of proving how mighty God's works are by quoting large numbers of battle slain and masses of booty taken.

Quinta causa est, ut bona perdita  
recuperemus.

The fifth reason is so that we  
might recoup lost possessions.

Chron. II 9, p. 45.

There is no doubt here that Dusburg is speaking of the Order's conquered lands and those lands which it aspired to conquer. Furthermore, his ensuing Biblical-legalistic argumentation appears as relevant against Christian Poland as it does against the pagan Pruteni and Lithuanians. Alluding to Christ's forceful reoccupying of His Father's Temple, <sup>53</sup> Dusburg sees a prefiguring of this act in Judas Maccabee's earlier cleansing of the Temple. <sup>54</sup> By extension, the further implication is that the Order's warfare on the Baltic was a latter-day cleansing process, whereby even Christian Poles had to be

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<sup>53</sup> Matt. 21: 12, Mark 11: 15-17; Luke 19: 45-46; John 2: 13-17.

<sup>54</sup> Biblia Pauparum, the late medieval picture book Bible, juxtaposes Judas Maccabeus at work on the left side of the page and Christ with his scourges on the right.

Gerhard Schmidt, Die Armenbibeln des XIV. Jahrhunderts (Graz-Köln: Böhlau, 1959).

R. L. P. Milburn, "The People's Bible: Artists and Commentators," The Cambridge History of the Bible, edited by G. W. H. Lampe (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1969), Volume 2, Chapter 7, p. 293.

Hans Rost, Die Bibel im Mittelalter: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Bibliographie der Bibel (Augsburg: Kommissions-Verlag M. Steitz, 1939), Chapter 21 "Die Biblia pauperum," pp. 214-231 passim.

dislodged and thrown out when they disgraced and dishonored their professed Christianity. Had not the Temple money-changers, in a similar way, assumed the guise of religious men as a ruse to occupy and selfishly exploit a holy place?

Moving on to selected passages from Luke, Ecclesiastes, Baruch, and Proverbs,<sup>55</sup> Dusburg argues for peace with justice. But said justice is for Dusburg the fulfillment of the Order's "just" demands. Fighting "so that we may recuperate our lost possessions" (cause #5) actually means "conquering such Prussian and Lithuanian (and Polish?) territories as we have set our sights upon" -- i.e. "land which God has promised us." Dusburg's

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55

Unde dicit dominus: cum fortis armatus custodit atrium suum, in pace sunt omnia, que possidet. Sic solum cum utimur armis virtutum, pacem habemus, quia non est pax impiis.

Luke 11:21

As the Lord says, "When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things are in peace which he possesseth." Only when we use the arms of virtue do we have peace, for there is no peace for the impious (See also Isaiah 48: 22 and 57: 21).

Quare quoque dicit Salomon: cum placuerit domino via hominis, inimicos ejus convertet ad pacem.

Prov. 16: 7 / Chron. II p. 45.

This is why Solomon also says: "When the ways of man shall please the Lord, he will convert even his enemies to peace."



scriptural support makes this perfectly clear.

Sic filii Israel armis armati in  
terram promissionis ascenderunt,  
quam deus dederat patribus eorum,  
et occupatam de manibus hostium  
recuperaverunt.

Thus the Children of Israel,  
armed with weapons, entered the  
land of promise which God had  
given to their fathers, and they  
rewon occupation from the hands  
of the enemy.

Chron. II 9, p. 45

Dusburg's sixth and final cause for having physical  
arms and using them on a regular basis involves  
intimidating a potential enemy.

Sexta causa est propter ostenta-  
cionem, ut hostes visis armis  
terreantur.

The sixth reason is for the sake  
of show, so that the enemy,  
having seen the arms, will be  
terrified.

Chron. II 9, p. 44

Dusburg gives as an example the way in which Judith  
(Jud. 14: 1-19) staged a mock attack so as to send  
Holofernes' guards off in search of him, only to find him  
slain and lying in his own gore. This ruse so frightened  
the Assyrians that they fled. Dusburg argues that similar  
saber-rattling will put into their proper places any and  
all foes of the Order.

Dusburg ends his section De usu armorum carnalium et  
spiritualium by recapitulating his praise for spiritual  
weapons and extolling such Christian virtues as humility,  
poverty and austerity. But the stern message of the  
preceding pages has been all too clear, and this message  
certainly must have remained paramount in minds of  
Dusburg's listeners. Spiritual weapons notwithstanding,

the Teutonic Order stood ready to fight dirty, bloody, earthly battles against any and all who opposed what it saw as its divine commission.

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In the introductory sections to the Chronicon which have just been surveyed (Prologus, Pars I and Pars II), Dusburg speaks primarily as a theologian and exegete. Pars III and its supplement Pars V are, by contrast, a collection of battle narratives. In these stories of valor and heroism, Peter von Dusburg restages Old Testament battles in the dark swamps and pine forests of Prussia. In this recreating process, the influence of a final source not mentioned heretofore is particularly noticeable and thus merits our close examination. This source is the collective influence of earlier frontier chronicles standing in the tradition of Helmold's Cronica Slavorum and Adam of Bremen's Gesta Hammaburgensis.<sup>56</sup> Though no earlier chronicle narrated the history of Prussia before Dusburg, two antecedents of the Chronicon had, in the preceding century, dealt with the struggle of Christians to subdue neighboring Livonia. These two works were Henry of Livonia's Chronicon Livoniae, a Latin work

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<sup>56</sup> See Chapter 4 above.

dating from the early 1200's (1225-29) <sup>57</sup> and the anonymous Livländische Reimchronik (1291-98), <sup>58</sup> dating from the final decade of the same century. These chronicles purveyed to Dusburg certain centuries-old conventions in historical writing as practiced in Eastern Europe.

On the eastern salients of Latin Christendom, crusading fervor had not been, as it had been in the West, a short-lived passion which arose in the eleventh century only to fade in the thirteenth. The Livonian writers, and Peter von Dusburg after them, clung to their crusading fervor, even though the crusader's "deus lo volt" was by now largely passé and even anachronistic in the Altreich. <sup>59</sup> Standing in the tradition of Adam of Bremen

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57 "Heinrici Chronicon Lyvoniae" Monumenta Germanicae Historica, Scriptores XXIII, edidit Georgius Heinrichus Pertz (Hannoverae: Impensis Bibliopolii Aulici Hahniani, 1874), pp. 231-332.

The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, translated and introduced by James A. Brundage (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961).

58 Livländische Reimchronik, herausgegeben von Leo Meyer (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1876).

The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle, translated and edited by Jerry C. Smith and William Urban (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977).

59 Henry's Chronicon describes the Christian forces of the Bishops of Riga pitted against vastly superior numbers of pagans. There is a black and white sense of crusade and struggle. Any method to control the

and Helmold of Bosau who lived and moved in perpetual crusade, Dusburg's Livonian predecessors passed on, undiminished, their admiration for David and his Mighty men and their veneration of the warlike Maccabees. Old Testament heroes were their ever-present inspirations. James A. Brundage, in the introduction to his fine English translation of Henry of Livonia's Livonian Chronicle, writes of Henry and his work:

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barbarians is just because, before conversion and baptism, the heathens are capable only of stealing, murder, polygamy, incest and broken oaths. Military domination is the only way to prove the truth of Christianity to the Livonians and their allies. Repeatedly, the Christian knights learn to their woe, that they must:

Unde nos confestim proiecto sacrosancto crismate,  
ceterisque sacramentis, ad clypeorum gladiatorumque  
ministeria cucurrimus . . .

" . . . immediately put down the holy chrism and other holy articles and hurry to the ministry of sword and shield."

"Heinrici Chronicon Lyvoniae," Monumenta Germanicae Historica, Scriptores XXIII, xxiii, 7, p. 305.

The translation of Henry of Livonia, here and elsewhere, is from Brundage's English edition.

After a Christian victory, the defeated pagans (in this case Estonians) say of the deus teutonicus:

"Cognoscimus Deum vestrum maiorem diis nostris, qui nos superando animum nostrum ad ipsius culturam inclinavit.

Chron. Lyv. xv 1, p. 274

"We acknowledge your God to be greater than our gods. By overcoming us, he has inclined our hearts to worship him."

"The style of his chronicle shows that Henry was completely at home in the Latin language and that he was steeped in the language of the Vulgate Bible and of liturgical literature. Although Henry does occasionally quote from, or allude to, classical Latin authors, he refers to biblical and liturgical sources far more often. Henry's language is studded with references to the Vulgate and some whole passages in his chronicle are veritable mosaics, pieced together with phrases and figures taken from the Vulgate and from the various liturgical books, especially the Breviary.

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Leonid Arbusow's careful study "Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs 'Chronicon Livoniae'" gives statistical verification to Brundage's assertion.<sup>61</sup> Arbusow's painstaking work reveals 775 borrowings in phraseology, of which the vast majority are from the Old Testament. And of the Old Testament sources, I Maccabee dramatically stands at the top of his tallied list.<sup>62</sup>

Henry speaks repeatedly of "Mary's Land" and the divine commission to redeem it from "northern Saracens." Here, Henry goes beyond simply perpetuating an earlier convention among eastern chroniclers -- he builds upon

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60 Chronicle of Henry of Livonia (Brundage), p. 12.

61 Leonid Arbusow, "Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs 'Chronicon Livoniae'," Deutsche Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters 8 (1950), pp. 99-153, especially pp. 99-131.

62 Arbusow, "Das entlehnte Sprachgut," p. 109.

it.<sup>63</sup> Henry wrote in the decades following the IV Lateran Council (1215), during which time even the popes acceded to the frontier fighters and their practice of calling the Baltic territories "Mary's Land." The popes also declared in increasingly unambiguous terms that the liberators of this land would be co-equal to those

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63

Sic, sic maris stella suam semper custodit Lyvoniam,  
sic, sic mundi domina terrarumque omnium imperatrix  
specialem suam terram semper defendit.

Thus, even thus, the Star of the Sea always guards Livonia. Thus, even thus, the Lady of the world and the Empress of all lands always protects Her special land.

Ecce Dei mater quam mitis circa suos, qui fideliter  
ei deserviunt in Lyvoniam, qualiter ipsa semper  
defendit eos a cunctis inimicis suis, quamque  
crudelis circa illos qui terram ipsius invadere,  
sive qui fidem et honorem filii sui in terra ipsa  
conantur impedire!

Behold how the Mother of God, so gentle to Her people who serve Her faithfully in Livonia, how She always defended them from all their enemies and how harsh She is with those who invade Her land or who try to hinder the Faith and honor of Her Son in that land!

Semper enim hactenus vexillum suum in Lyvoniam et  
preeundo et subsequendo defendit ac de inimicis  
triumphare fecit.

She has always defended Her banner in Livonia, both preceding it and following it, and She has made it triumph over the enemy.

"Heinrici Chronicon Lyvoniam," Monumenta Germanicae Historica, Scriptores XXIII, xxv, 2, p. 313; Brundage, pp. 198-199.

redeeming Christ's land in the Levant. <sup>64</sup> For the crusaders, at least, two "Holy Lands" now existed. The stage was set for Dusburg to transform Prussia into the New Holy Land for his New Maccabees. <sup>65</sup>

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64 For a brief but excellent overview of papal bulls relating to the Baltic crusade and the status of this crusade in the eyes of the Universal Church, see Töppen's note to his edition of Dusburg's Chronicon.

Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Band 1, p. 49, note #1.

Significant among his remarks is the following:

Laut den früheren Bullen wurden die kirchlichen Gnadengaben den nach Livland und Preussen pilgernden nur in sofern zugesichert, als sie nach Palästina zu ziehen unvermögend wären, erst in den Bullen Gregors IX. und Innocenz IV. fällt diese Clausel fort.

According to the earliest bulls, the granting of Church indulgence was guaranteed to Livonian and Prussian crusaders only to the degree to which they were unable to journey to Palestine. Only in the bulls of Gregory IX (1227-1241) and Innocent IV (1243-1254) is this clause dropped.

See also Chapter 2, note #33 above.

65 Henry's anticipation of Dusburg goes beyond even this. Dusburg wrote his Chronicon in order to defend and admonish his Order in a time of crisis. Similarly, at the time Henry of Livonia wrote his defense of crusade in Livonia, he was serving as interpreter to William von Modena during that legate's investigatory visit to the Baltic. (1225-1227). Henry mentions William specifically (*venerabilem Mutinensem episcopum*) in his Chronicon Lyvoniae.

"Heinrici Chronicon Lyvoniae," Monumenta Germanicae Historica, Scriptores XXIII, xxix, 2, p. 326; Brundage, p. 229.

See Chapter 1 above for William's visit.

James A. Brundage, "Introduction," The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, translated and introduced by James A.

The Livländische Reimchronik, the second Livonian predecessor to Dusburg's Chronicon, appeared during the last decade of the 13th century (1291-1298).<sup>66</sup> This work surveys, in Middle High German verse, the subjugation of the Kurs and Semgallians during the century extending from 1180 until 1290. The chronicle is anonymous, but in many ways it stands in much closer relation to the Teutonic Order in Prussia than does Henry's Chronicon Livoniae. The Reimchronik narrates, for example, the founding of the Swordbrothers in 1203 and the subsequent uniting of the Swordbrothers with the Teutonic Knights in 1237.<sup>67</sup> Though direct influence upon Dusburg once again is minimal, the author does show some of the hallmarks of later historiography in Prussia.

The early verses of the Reimchronik set the stage

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Brundage (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), p. 13.

<sup>66</sup> Livländische Reimchronik, herausgegeben von Franz Pfeiffer (Stuttgart: Literarischer Verein, 1844 / Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins zu Stuttgart, 7).

The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle, translated and edited by Jerry C. Smith and William Urban (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977).

Helm und Zieseimer, Literatur des Deutschen Ritterorden (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, p. 149).

<sup>67</sup> "Hartmanns von Heldrungen Bericht über die Vereinigung des Schwertbrüderordens mit dem Deutschen Orden," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch, Band 5, pp. 168-172.



theologically by citing numerous Biblical precedents. The Virgin receives Her wonted deference and praise. Christianity's arrival in Livonia is viewed in the perspective of Christian evangelism stretching back to the Book of Acts and the Apostles themselves. The author, indeed, addresses his readers in terms not unlike those used by St. Luke in addressing Theophilus. Moving on to actual events in Livonia, the Reimchronicler, anticipating Dusburg a generation later, seems obsessed with the miracles wrought by God in support of His people and their fight against the indigenous pagans.

waz wonders da zuo Niflant  
geschehen ist, solt ich ez  
sagen,  
ein wagen muest daz bermit  
tragen,  
solt man iz allez schriben an,  
was got wonders hât getan  
in Niflant an der kristenheit.

If I, for my part, were to  
recount all the wonders which  
occurred in Livonia, a wagon  
would be needed to haul the  
parchment on which to record the  
miracles done by God for the  
Christians in that land.

Reimchronik v. 2,708-2,713 <sup>68</sup>

As Dusburg was later to do in narrating Prussian history, the Livonian poet focuses upon dramatic, military successes. He often forgets the Christians' long-range goal of converting, as he delights in describing brutal slaughter and subjugation. He pays only incidental attention to such matters as the peaceful influx of settlers and the founding of towns. But through the

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68 Reimchronik, p. 74; Smith and Urban, p. 38.

chronicle's bewildering and disorganized descriptions of sieges and battles, a pattern does emerge. In the words of Smith and Urban, editors of the English edition, "the chronicle has a religious function as well as being entertaining." <sup>69</sup> God wins battles for His people when they earnestly call upon him -- even when they are hopelessly outnumbered. Furthermore, in clear association with the I and II Maccabees, fighters are repeatedly described as praying for the souls of their comrades. Those who are slain in God's service and for whom their comrades pray, are assured an eternal reward. <sup>70</sup> Such assurances will appear again as a part of the moralizing stories Dusburg tells in his Chronicon Terrae Prussiae.

This survey of Dusburg's sources now complete, we return to the pages of his Prussian Chronicle itself. Pars III witnesses the arrival of the Teutonic Knights on the Baltic and with this, actual Prussian history begins

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The sentiment expressed in this passage is repeated frequently in the pages of Dusburg's Chronicon and Jeroschin's Kronike. See below, especially note #120.

<sup>69</sup> Jerry Smith and William Urban "Introduction," The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle, translated and edited by Jerry C. Smith and William Urban (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 17.

<sup>70</sup> II Macc. 12: 43 ff. and II Macc. 15: 11 ff.

See Chapter 4 above for a discussion of the Order's concern with martyrdom, death, Purgatory and eternal life.

-- it begins for Dusburg and, in a wider sense, it begins for European historiography generally. <sup>71</sup>

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Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae, Pars III and V, covers the one hundred years stretching from approximately 1230-1330. The campaigns he describes are successively the subjugation of the Pruteni (c. 1230-1248), the great Pruteni insurrection (1260-1274, including battles waged against Sventopelk, Duke of Pomerelia), later minor Pruteni uprisings and, finally, wars waged against the Lithuanians. What was in actuality a century of bewilderingly disjointed battles of attrition, Dusburg sorts into a neatly ordered succession of conflicts. The Order meets and subdues one foe before the next adversary appears. Furthermore, embarrassing conflicts and unflattering internal stresses receive little or no mention. <sup>72</sup> We hear nothing, for example, about the

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"Die preussische Geschichtschreibung begann erst im zweiten Viertel des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts mit Dusburg."

Prussian historical writing began only in the first quarter of the fourteenth century with Dusburg.

Max Töppen, Geschichte der preussischen Historiographie (Berlin: W. Hertz, 1853), p. 1.

<sup>72</sup> For example, Dusburg passes quickly over the story of Christian, the early Cistercian "Bishop of the

conquest of Pomerelia at the expense of other Christian princes. Battles against the rapidly uniting Christian Kingdom of Poland receive only tangential mention <sup>73</sup> and the same applies for squabbling with the Archbishop of Riga. Dusburg gives virtually no information on early German colonization and public administration.

Having thus carefully selected and adapted his themes, his protagonists and his chronology, Dusburg goes on to describe a near Manichaean warfare between the forces of Good and Evil -- between the Children of Light and the Children of Darkness. For Peter von Dusburg, the Pruteni and related Baltic tribes are the very embodiment of evil. The Pruteni are in his view infidels, <sup>74</sup> northern Saracens <sup>75</sup> and Turks. <sup>76</sup> They are sons of

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Pruteni," whom the Order had harshly pushed aside and then ignored, as it was establishing itself in Prussia.

Chron. II 1, p. 33.

<sup>73</sup> Dusburg broaches the topic of war with Poland only after he has developed theological justification for this conflict -- Chron. V. 12, p. 216. In his Biblical argumentation, he calls upon the Book of Maccabees three times. Dusburg's case is basically a reworking of his earlier arguments, especially #4 (see above), justifying those situations where the Order might appropriately use worldly arms as well as spiritual arms. Christians though the Poles might have claimed to be, they were nonetheless sinners who openly showed their malicia. Accordingly, they deserved armed punishment.

<sup>74</sup> Chron. III 334, p. 184.

<sup>75</sup> "Prutenos et alios Sarracenos": Preussisches Urkundenbuch, herausgegeben von Philippi, et al.

Balial <sup>77</sup> who speak impieties and do unending mischief. <sup>78</sup>  
 The Lithuanians are also sinners <sup>79</sup> and thus they are  
 damned. <sup>80</sup> The Devil -- that venomous dragon, that enemy  
 of mankind -- fights for these barbarians against the  
 Teutonic Order. Satan works in pagan hearts causing them  
 to resist conversion <sup>81</sup> and to fall immediately into  
 apostasy, once they have been converted. <sup>82</sup> Those whom  
 the Order fights are devils, plain and simple. <sup>83</sup>

Dusburg's harshest judgment falls upon apostates:  
 those who have seen the truth of Christianity and  
 willfully reject it. It is from this perspective that  
 Dusburg so soundly condemns Sventopelk, the Christian

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(Königsberg: Gräfe und Unzer / Marburg: Elwert, 1882-1958), I, 1 #78 (June, 1230), p. 60.

<sup>76</sup> Cited by Joshua Prawer, "Military Orders and Crusader Politics," Die Geistlichen Ritterorden Europas, herausgegeben von Josef Fleckenstein und Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1980), p. 229.

<sup>77</sup> Chron. III 95, p. 102.

<sup>78</sup> Chron. III 205, p. 141 -- the Sudowita in this case.

<sup>79</sup> Chron. III 91, p. 172.

<sup>80</sup> Chron. III 243, p. 154.

<sup>81</sup> Chron. III 626, p. 160.

<sup>82</sup> Chron. III 31, pp. 66-67. See also: Chron. III 110, p. 108; Chron. II 1, p. 33.

<sup>83</sup> Chron. II 1, p. 33 and Chron. III 31, pp. 66-67.

prince of Pomerelia <sup>84</sup> who had allied himself with the pagans against the Teutonic Order. Sventopelk is a son of iniquity, a son of perdition, <sup>85</sup> and a son of the Devil. <sup>86</sup> Sventopelk denounces the Church. <sup>87</sup> His qualities are the antithesis of normal virtues -- they are

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<sup>84</sup> This conflict with Pomerelia and its prince is not the one which resulted in the Order's annexing of Pomerelia. Dusburg does not so much as mention this later war. Rather, the fighting against Sventopelk takes place two generations earlier. But even at this earlier date, the issue of conflict against fellow Christians has already emerged.

<sup>85</sup> Chron. III 32, p. 67.

<sup>86</sup> Chron. III 35, p. 69.

Fuit in terram Pomeranie dux quidam nomine Swantepolcus, filius iniquitatis et filius perdicionis, ut scriptura impleatur, habens cor plenum omni dolo et fallacia, qui cepit cum Pruthenorum gente jam noviter conversa ad fidem Cristi habere verba pacifica in dolo, confederans se cum ipsis sub hoc pacto, quod ipsi fratres domus Theutonice et alios cristifideles a terminis Prussie eicerent violenter, bonusque visus est sermo in oculis eorum, et abierunt multi et quasi omnes consenserunt ei.

Chron. III 32, p. 67

There was in the Land of Pomerelia a certain duke named Sventapelk, the son of iniquity and the son of perdition. Fulfilling Scripture, he had a heart full of all deception and falsehood. He began having quiet, deceitful words with the Pruteni, a people who at that time were newly converted to the Faith of Christ. He established an agreement with them under the terms of which they would violently drive out the brothers of the Teutonic Order and other crusaders beyond the borders of Prussia. His talk appeared good in their eyes. Many fell away [from the Faith] and nearly all consented to [follow] him.

<sup>87</sup> Chron. III 34, p. 69.

trickery, cleverness, falsehood and deception.<sup>88</sup> He is the raging lion, as described in the Psalms and in the Liturgy, seeking whom he may devour.<sup>89</sup>

Dusburg gives himself over completely to such images of utter wickedness and depravity as he describes those who oppose the Order. The Teutonic Order, for its part, is the purveyor of Christian holiness and goodness. Angels fight alongside the Order. They engage evil spirits as the knights engage evil men. The players and the settings which Dusburg describes recreate late Old Testament scenes where natural and supernatural forces clash upon a cosmic stage.<sup>90</sup> Like the Seleucid Greeks of old, not only do the Order's enemies not know the one true

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<sup>88</sup> Chron. III 32, 37, 40, 55, pp. 67, 71, 73-74, 81-82

See: Johannes Voigt, Geschichte Preussens, Band 5, p. 616.

<sup>89</sup> In one incident Sventopelk is put to flight by the knights of the Order (Chron. III 44, p. 76; see also editor's footnote on the same page). Dusburg likens Sventopelk's retreat to that of the Saracens before Charlemagne. This is of particular interest for two reasons: 1) the Order viewed its crusade in Prussia as being on equal footing with crusades against the Moslems and 2) the Order felt the same disdain toward their apostate Christian foe as they felt toward the Moors.

<sup>90</sup> Dusburg, like other Order writers and translators, also calls upon earlier Old Testament heroes and villains: David and Gideon; the Canaanites and the Philistines. But the Biblical milieu he and the Order translators recreate is always that of post-exilic, late Old Testament times.

God -- much worse, they make incursions into the land of His people expressly for the purpose of slaughtering them and committing acts of deliberate sacrilege and desecration. In a typical such case, Dusburg tells us:

Hii capitanei et duces exercituum statuerunt diem certum ad hoc, ut omnes convenientes in armis, quoscunque fidei Cristiane professores occiderent et usque ad internecionem delerent. . . ecclesias, capellas et oratoria dei comburentes, sacramenta ecclesie irreverenter tractantes, vestes sacras et vasa ad illicitos usus pertrahentes, sacerdotes et ministros alios ecclesie miserabiliter trucidabant.

The leaders of the armies established a specific date for all to come together in arms so that they might, to the point of mass extermination, kill whomever they should meet who professed the Christian Faith. They burned churches, chapels and oratories of God, irreverently dragged down Church sacraments, subjected holy vestments and vessels to desecration and cruelly butchered priests and ministers of churches.

Chron. III 90, p. 99-100

Particularly stressing the willful desecrations by the Pruteni, another passage reads:



Sacerdotes et alios clericos tam religiosos quam seculares . . . plures in altari, dum sacrosancta corporis et sanguinis domini nostri Jesu Christi tractarent ministeria, trucidantes, ipsa sacramenta in contemptum dei irreverenter in terram proicientes, pedibus conculcabant. Calices, ampulas et alia vasa ecclesie corporalia vestesque sacras ad divinum cultum dedicata deferentes ad illicitos usus pertrahebant, cum virginibus deo dicatis de claustris suis violenter extractis impudice sua ludibria exercentes. Et ut breviter concludam, nullus sufficeret ad plenum scribere, quanta mala et facta detestabilia fidei et fidelibus irrogarunt.

Chron. II 2, p. 34

Cutting down priests and other clergy, religious and also secular . . . many of them (standing) at the altar while administering the sacrosanct elements of the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Pruteni irreverently and in contempt of God trampled upon those sacred things. Chalices, vials and other ecclesiastical vessels, as well as divers holy vestments dedicated to the divine cult they subjected to illicit use. They violently tore from their cloisters holy virgins dedicated to God and disgracefully carried out their sport. Briefly said: nothing would suffice to write fully how much evil and how many detestable things they inflicted upon the Faith and the faithful.

When, in later generations, Lithuanian incursions became the problem, Dusburg describes the Lithuanians as being just as blasphemous and cruel.

Eodem tempore David castellanus de Gartha cum exercitu Lethowinorum intravit Revaliam terram, et preter alia infinita damna, quibus oppressit dictam terram incendio et rapina . . . Sacerdotes eciam plures seculares, et religiosos occidit. Sacramenta, ecclesias, vestes sacras et vasa altaris, et quicquid ad divinum cultum spectabat, inhumaniter polluit et contrectavit.

Chron. III 343, p. 187 91

At that time David, castellan of Gartha, with an army of Lithuanians, entered the territory of Rival. Besides other boundless damage from plundering and fire with which he oppressed said land . . . he killed many priests, both secular and religious. Holy objects, churches, holy vestments and furnishings of the altar and whatever else pertains to divine liturgy, he savagely polluted and dishonored.

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91 See also Chron. III 310, p. 176.

If there is any doubt as to whether Dusburg is thinking of parallels to the desecrations of Antiochus Epiphany in the days of Judas Maccabeus, these doubts are put to rest when Dusburg states explicitly:

Isti Diwano blasphemio accidit  
sicut Heliodoro, qui cum vellet  
in templo domini erarium  
depredari, occisus a deo concidit  
in terram.

This Diwani (a Balt leader) died  
for his blasphemy, just as  
Heliodorus (II Macc. Chap. 3)  
who, when he tried to plunder the  
treasury of the Temple of God,  
was struck dead by God and thrown  
to the earth.

Chron. III 165, p. 128.

Surveying the scene after a devastating pagan raid, Dusburg sums up his views on barbarian destruction and desecration:

Quanta mala et quam magnam  
stragem in populo dei, et quantam  
verecundiam fecerit iste  
exercitus sacramentis ecclesie et  
ministris, nullus sane mentis  
posset sine lacrimis cogitare.

How much evil and how great the  
carnage among the people of God  
and how much irreverence this  
army committed against the Church  
and against its ministers, no one  
of healthy mind can imagine  
without tears welling up.

Chron. III 192, p. 137

Of crucial significance in the context of his descriptions of such oppression are Dusburg's repeated references to "the People of God." Christians in Prussia are God's Chosen People; they are a New Israel. <sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> The following are further examples of Dusburg's references to the "people of God":

Unde Sudowite sepius intraverunt terram Colmensem,  
et facta magna strage in populo dei.

Chron. III 192, p. 137

The Sudauer often entered the land of Kulm and caused great carnage among the

Echoing Maccabees, Dusburg argues that the slaying of God's People looms large among the many pagan offenses against God and God's honor.

Iniquitatem in excelso locuti  
sunt super populum tuum, domine;  
cogitaverunt consilium adversus  
sanctos tuos, dixerunt: venite,  
disperdamus eos gente, et non  
memoretur Israel ultra. Ut ergo  
populum dominis . .

They spoke vain iniquity about  
Your people, Lord; the oppressors  
plotted in council against Your  
saints, saying: "Come, let us  
destroy this people so that  
Israel will not be remembered.  
So that the people of God . . ."

Chron. III 95, p. 102

Because of their repeated offenses against God and His people, the Pruteni, Lithuanians, et al. call vengeance down upon themselves and forfeit to the Teutonic Order any right of dominion they might have over the land.<sup>93</sup> Dusburg's paragraphs are laced with expressions

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people of God.

Also: Chron. III 195, p. 138:

God chastises, but does not forsake "His people" -- cited at the end of this chapter.

Chron. III 123, p. 113;

Chron. III 172 p. 130;

<sup>93</sup> See Chapter 4 above for a discussion of the Christians claim to lands which had been "irrigated with the blood of martyrs."

Crusading meant invoking a harsh lex talionis. Because pagans had destroyed scattered Christian shrines, the crusaders reacted quickly to expunge the religion of the Pruteni.

Eodem tempore frater Lodewicus de Libencele fuit  
commendator de Raganita, qui cum suis fratribus et  
armigeris multa bella gloriose gessit contra

of vengeance invoked against the heathens in order to satisfy the lèse-majesté of God.

. . . quorum animus accensus fuit  
ad vindicandam injurium domini  
crucifixi.

. . . [the Knights] whose spirits  
had been kindled to avenge the  
injury of the crucified Christ.

Chron. III 70, p. 91

. . . venerunt ad vindicandam  
injuriā crucifixi contra gentem  
Lethowinorum.

. . . they came to wreak revenge  
upon the Lithuanian people for  
their injury of the crucified  
Christ.

Chron. III 196, p. 173

. . . preparant se ad arma, ut  
vindictent injuriā domini  
crucifixi.

. . . They armed themselves to  
avenge the injury of the  
crucified Christ.

Chron. III 8, p. 56

Using Carl Erdmann's helpful categories,<sup>94</sup> we may understand Dusburg as delineating for the Baltic crusade a clear, Biblically-founded Kampfziel and an equally precise Marschziel. The Order's Kampfziel (goal or purpose in

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Lethowinos. Navale bellum multiplex habuit, unum  
versus Austechiam terram regis Lethowie, in qua  
villam dictam Romene, que secundum ritus eorum sacra  
fuit, combussit, captis omnibus et occisis.

Chron. III 259, p. 159

During this time Brother Ludwig von Libencele was commander at Raganita. He, with his brothers and support troops, waged many glorious campaigns against the Lithuanians. He executed several naval raids, one against the Duke of Lithuania's land of Austechiam in which the village called Romene is located. According to pagan beliefs, this village is sacred. Ludwig burned the town after capturing and killing all the people.

<sup>94</sup> Carl Erdmann, Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugs-gedankens (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935).

fighting) was to protect Christians and mete out God's vengeance against His enemies. The Order's Marschziel (goal or purpose of its pilgrimage) was to occupy and hold yet unredeemed land -- variously called Mary's Land and Christ's New Land -- which pagans had forfeited to Christendom. Dusburg paraphrases two time-honored passages from Order Biblical literature as he places Kampfziel and Marschziel in clear relief. His commitment and sense of urgency are strong -- he addresses his listeners in the first person.

Et ut verum fatear, in eis fuit impletum, quod de Judeis, volentibus civitatem sanctam Jerusalem reedificare, gentibus ex adverso renitentibus, dictur, quod media pars eorum faciebat opus, et altera tenebat lanceas ab ascensu aurore, donec egrederentur astra; una manu faciebant opus, et allera tenebant gladium.

Chron. III 172, p. 130 95

If I may profess freely, in this was fulfilled what is said of the Jews who desired to rebuild the holy city of Jerusalem in the face of resistance by surrounding peoples. Half of them did the work, and the other half held lances from the breaking of dawn until the rising of the stars; with one hand they did the work, and with the other they held the sword.

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95 This direct and explicit reference to Nehemiah 4: 16 ff. is framed by lines which are powerful in their own right.

Quot incommoda, quot pericula, quotque angustias fratres et alii cristifideles in hac persecucione, que ultra xv annos duravit, ab hostibus in singulis civitatibus, castris et aliis locis perpassi sunt, in sola dei cognicione ita subsistunt, quod nullus hominum nunc vivencium posset ea plenius explicare.

. . .

No man now living could fully describe, only God knows, how much difficulty, peril and danger the Brothers and the other crusaders endured during their campaign which lasted more than fifteen years. They were continually hard

Speaking of the yet-to-be-redeemed Baltic lands, Dusburg reminds his listeners of the Holy Land and the Temple, both of which were cleansed by the Maccabees and both of which, to Dusburg's mind, prefigure Prussia.

Attende, qualiter fratres ut  
Judas Machabaeus loca sancta  
terre Prussie, que gentes prius  
per ydolatriam polluerunt,  
mundaverunt.

Just see how the brothers, like  
Judas Maccabee, cleansed the holy  
places of Prussia which before  
the heathens had polluted with  
their idolatry.

Chron. "Prologus" p. 23 96

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Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae is a treasure-trove of stories of military heroism and divine intervention. With each vignette, Dusburg seeks to give concrete evidence in support of his theme of the worthiness of the Order and its divine commission in Prussia. The Old Testament God of War continues to

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pressed by the enemy in their cities, camps and other places.

Sed hii dei ministri, ut docet apostolus, in hiis omnibus tribulacionibus, necessitatibus, angustiis, plagis, carceribus, sedicionibus, laboribus, vigiliis et jejuniis, in multa paciencia quasi morientes vixerunt; quasi tristes, semper autem gaudentes fuerunt.

But these ministers of God, as the Apostle teaches, though nearly dying, lived with great patience through all the tribulations, difficulties, concerns, imprisonments, insurrections, labors, and hunger. Nearly dying, yet they lived. They had reason to despair, but they always rejoiced.

Chron. III 172, p. 130

96 On the topic of this prefiguring, see earlier in this chapter as well as note #50.

support His chosen fighters in a new Promised Land. God, for example, strikes Samgallian troops blind.<sup>97</sup> God warns Order knights as they are about to fall into a trap.<sup>98</sup> Propitious winds sent from on high help the Order in destroying a bridge.<sup>99</sup> Divine intervention allows Order troops to cross the thin ice of a river during a dangerous winter campaign.

Quis hec facere poterat, nisi  
ille solus, qui imperavit mari,  
ut tanquam murus staret a dextris  
et a sinistris, et sicco pede  
Israeliticus populus  
pertransiret?

Who could have done this save Him  
alone who commanded the sea to  
stand like a wall to the right  
and the left, allowing the  
Israelite people to cross through  
with dry feet.

Chron. III 256, p. 158, 100

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97 Chron. III 105, p. 107.

See also Chron. III 326, p. 182.

98 Chron. III 312, p. 177.

99 Chron. III 103, p. 106).

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And Judas said to the men that were with him:  
fear ye not their multitude, neither be ye afraid  
of their assault. Remember in what manner our  
fathers were saved in the Red Sea, when Pharaoh  
pursued them with a great army.

I Maccabees 4: 8-9.

See: Chron. III 285, p. 169 for another miraculous  
case where Dusburg has God commanding Prussian ice to obey  
in the same way that He had once commanded Egyptian  
waters.

Most striking, however, are Order triumphs in the face of overwhelming numerical odds.

Et ait Iudas: Facile est concludi multos in manibus paucorum; et non est differentia in conspectu Dei caeli liberare in multis aut in paucis, quoniam non in multitudine exercitus victoria belli, sed de caelo foritudo est.

I Macc. 3: 18-19

And Judas said: It is an easy matter for many to be shut up in the hands of a few: and there is no difference in the sight of the God of heaven to deliver with a great multitude, or with a small company. For the success of war is not in the multitude of the army, but strength cometh from heaven."

Sometimes God imparts superhuman strength to the embattled few.

Ortumque fuit inter ipsos tam durum bellum, quale unquam visum fuit in hoc seculo inter paucos bellatores. Tandem misit eis deus opem et auxilium de celis, ut indubitanter creditur, quia humane virtuti quasi impossibile fuit eis (tante multitudini) resistere . . .

Chron. III 103, p. 106 101

There arose among them such a battle as has been seen in the world only by a small number of warriors. Finally, it may be doubtlessly believed that God sent them intervention and help from heaven because, by human strength alone, resisting such a multitude would have been impossible.

Sometimes God imbues His faithful few with the ability to endure unimagined hardships.

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101 See also Chron. III 183, pp. 133 and 134.



Ecce mira dei et exuberans  
 gracia, que fratres istos et  
 alios cristifideles non solum in  
 isto castro, verum eciam in tota  
 terra Prussie misericorditer  
 adimplevit, ut tales defectus  
 quasi intolerabiles et humane  
 vite necessitati omnino  
 contrarios in tanta paciencia et  
 mansuetudine tolerarent, quod non  
 sicut tristes, sed quasi semper  
 gaudentes credebant se paradisi  
 deliciis interesse.

Behold the wonder of God and the  
 overflowing of His grace which  
 mercifully filled those brothers  
 and other crusaders, not only in  
 that fort but in the whole of the  
 land of Prussia. Thus they  
 endured not sadly, but rejoicing  
 as if in heavenly bliss, such  
 intolerable deprivations as are  
 altogether contrary to the  
 necessities of human life.

Chron. III 145. p. 122

At other times, the strength comes in the form of God's  
 mighty acts in nature which serve to protect vulnerable  
 knights. 102

But most impressive of all Dusburg's stories,  
 however, are those cases where the "strength which comes  
 from heaven" appears in the form of actual heavenly  
warriors who join the fray alongside the warrior-monks.  
 On one occasion, St. Barbara appears and guides Order  
 troops into battle. 103

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102 Chron. III 193, p. 138.

See also the wind and ice examples cited above.

103 Chron. III 36, pp. 69-70.

St. Barbara will be treated more thoroughly in the  
 next chapter, which deals with Nicolaus von Jeroschin's  
Kronike von Pruzinlant.

Mary, Mother of God and Protectress of the Order,  
supports Her children and leads them to victory in another  
battle.

Frater Theodoricus dictus Rode,  
commendator de Cristburgk infra  
secundam apostasiam exiit cum  
fratribus et peregrinis numero  
centum, et post depredacionem  
terre Pogesanie, secuta fuit eos  
innumera multitudo Pruthenorum,  
quos dum sine conflictu evadere  
non posset, confisus de miseri-  
cordia dei vertit faciem suam ad  
eos, et dum viriliter aggredere-  
tur in bello, conversi sunt in  
fugam, et fratres et peregrini  
sequentes ipsos tot occiderunt,  
quod nunquam a paucis hominibus  
uno die tot fuerunt homines in-  
terfecti. Captivi autem, qui  
ligati ducebantur a fratribus,  
dixerunt, quod vidissent in actu  
bellandi unam pulcherrimam vir-  
ginem vexillum fratrum in aëre  
ducentem, de qua visione tam  
meticulosi facti fuerunt, et  
emarcuit cor eorum, quod nullus  
ad defensionem ponere se audebat.

Chron. III 141, pp. 119-120 104

During the second uprising,  
Brother Theodor Rode, commander  
of Christburg, went out with one  
hundred brothers and crusaders.  
After laying waste to the land of  
Pogesania, a large multitude of  
Pruteni began following them  
which he (Theodor) could not  
evade without a fight. Confiding  
in the mercy of God, he turned  
his face toward the Pruteni and  
attacked. They were put to  
flight and, pursuing them, the  
brothers and crusaders killed as  
many of them as have never before  
been killed in a single day by so  
few. Captives, however, who were  
led away bound by the brothers,  
said that they had seen during  
the course of the fighting a  
beautiful virgin carrying the  
banner of the brothers in the  
air. The sight had made them so  
fearful and had so withered their  
hearts that no one had dared  
defend himself.

A battle near Elbing serves as an example where  
strength comes to the Order in the form of a full company  
of supporting knights which Pogesianian warriors imagine

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104 Mary appears on the battlefield on at least two  
other occasions. She incenses those heroic knights who  
lie slain on the battlefield (Chron. III 141, p. 74). She  
also carries fallen warriors to heaven (Chron. III 86,  
p. 98).

they see arrayed against them. <sup>105</sup> God deludes the Pogesanians and thus assures His knights of victory.

During the course of the Lithuanian wars, the signs and angels which once supported the Maccabee fighters (II Macc. 5: 29-31 and II Macc. 5: 1-4) <sup>106</sup> reappear to provide the Teutonic Order with "strength from above."

Anno domini MCCCXXIX ultima die mensis Januarii in ipsa nocte, que precessit vigiliam purificationis beate Marie, quidam Pruthenus vigil in castro Girdavie vigilans, audivit tonitrua et coruscaciones, et posthec vidit in aëre innumeros viros enses evaginos vibrare; deinde vidit lucem maximam in quatuor plagis terre, et in medio lucis crucem fulgidam, cujus summum brachium quod se extendit ad orientem, primum cepit oriri, deinde paulatim proximum brachium ad occidentem, post hoc brachium dextrum ad meridiem; et sinistrum brachium ad aquilonem. Tandem venit turbo magnus, qui involvens hec omnia secum duxit versus orientem in Lethoviam.

In the year 1329 in the night of the last day of January which precedes the feast of the purification of the Virgin, a certain Prutenus standing watch in the fort of Girdavia heard thunder and shaking and after that he saw in the air innumerable men brandishing their drawn daggers. Then he saw great light in all four directions and in the middle of the light a glowing cross. Its vertical arm, which extended toward the east, first began to rise, then gradually the next arm toward the west, after this the right arm toward the south and the left one toward the north. Then came a great disturbance, which, enveloping all of this, led off toward Lithuania.

Chron. V 11, p. 216

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<sup>105</sup> Chron. III 17, p. 61.

This story is also told in "De Prima Fundatione Monasterii Olivae," but in a more matter-of-fact way.

"De Prima Fundatione Monasterii Olivae," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, herausgegeben von Theodor Hirsch, Band 1, pp. 679.

<sup>106</sup> See Chapter 4 above.

Strength from heaven thus comes to the Order in diverse and mysterious ways but, according to Dusburg, the precedent of Judas Maccabeus is always applicable.

Hoc audito, fratres et alii consternati mente dixerunt: ergo evadere ipsos non possumus; quid ergo faciemus? Respondit commendator, confortans eos verbis Jude Machabei. Dixit: facile est concludere multos in manu paucorum, et non est differentia in conspectu dei celi liberare in multis aut in paucis, quia non in multitudine exercitus victoria, sed de celo fortitudo est; pertranseamus ergo eos viriliter et dominus liberabit nos. Quod consilium placuit omnibus. Unde signantes se signo sancte crucis, transeuntes dictum exercitum Lethowinorum, plures interfecerunt, aliquos letaliter vulneraverunt. Ceteris in fugam conversis, fratres cum suis sani et incolumes redierunt. Ecce quomodo unus persequabatur mille et duo fugabant decem milia.

Chron. III 251, p. 157

As narrated by Dusburg, the pagans themselves realize that fighting against the Order, and thus its God, is futile.

. . . videntes, quod dominus pugnaret pro fratribus, et non possent eis amplius in bello resistere, dederunt obsides et colla sua fidei Cristiane et fratribus humiliter subjecerunt.

Chron. III 75, p. 93

Having heard this, the knight-brothers and others were disturbed in spirit and said: "Thus we are not able to escape them; what shall we do?" The commander responded, comforting them with the words of Judas Maccabee. He said, "It is easy to hem in many by the force of a few. There is no difference in the view of the God of heaven to liberate with many or with few, for it is not in the multitude of the army that victory lies, but in the strength from heaven' (I Macc. 3: 18-19). Let us therefore valiantly persevere and God will deliver us." This counsel pleased all. Thus signing themselves with the holy cross, they went forth against the army of the Lithuanian, killing many and mortally wounding others. Putting the rest to flight, the brothers and their support troops returned healthy and untouched. Behold how one thousand drove off twice ten thousand.

. . . seeing that God fought for the brothers and that they could not effectively resist, they gave hostages and humbly subjected themselves to the Christian Faith and the brothers.

The most telling case of a foe's realizing that resistance is futile comes with the dying words of Sventopelk, the Order's archenemy. His final pronouncement is a conflation and summation of the words of the dying Antiochus IV (I Macc. 6: 10-13 and II Macc 9: 5-29) and the words of Antiochus' defeated general, Nicanor (II Macc. 8: 34 ff.).

Hoc anno Swantepolcus dux Pomeranie decidit in lectum, et ut cognovit, quod moreretur, vocavit ad se filios suos, et pro testamento ultimo, quod morte confirmavit, dedit eis hanc doctrinam, dicens: postquam inter me ex una parte et fratres domus Theutonice ex altera bellum crevit, ego semper decrevi; per fas et per nefas et modis variis impugnavi eos, et non profeci, quia deus cum eis est et pugnat pro eis. Unde consulo, quod nunquam vos eis opponatis, sed cum omni reverencia honorate.

In that year Sventopelk, Duke of Pomerelia, fell ill and knowing that he was dying, he called his sons to him. As a last testament which his death sealed, he gave them this instruction: "When war arose between me and the Teutonic Order, I always declined in power. By fair means and foul and with diverse strategies, I have fought them, but I have not prospered, for God is with them and fights for them. Accordingly I counsel that you never oppose them, but rather honor them with all reverence.

Chron. III 128, p. 114-115

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Holding up exemplary models for the members of his Order to follow, Dusburg filled his Chronicon with tales of individual and collective heroism. In score upon score of cases, these tales of derring-do are transparent to the Biblical stories which stand behind them. In words, for example, which echo those of the mother of the Seven Holy

Maccabees (II Macc. Chapter 7), a woman exhorts her sons to stand firm against invading oppressors.

. . . ait ad filios suos: doleo, quod vos unquam genui, ex quo non vultis vitam et gentem vestram ab hostibus defendere. De quibus verbis filii ejus et alii castrenses provocati, exierunt ad bellum, et de exercitu infidelium ultra duo milia occiderunt.

Chron. III 174, p. 131

. . . she said to her sons: "I grieve that I ever gave you birth because you do not yearn to defend your lives and your people from the enemy. With these words her sons and others in the fort were provoked. They went out to fight and killed more than two thousand of the army of the infidels.

Like the defiant old man Razi in II Maccabees, <sup>107</sup> an Order knight defies God's enemies, even as they rip out his intestines. <sup>108</sup>

Pruteni ligaverunt eum vivum per manus ad arborem, et excisum umbilicum ventris sui, cui adherebat viscus, affixerunt arbori, quo facto plagis multis compulerunt eum ut circuiret arborem quousque omnia viscera ipsius arbori adhererunt, et sic in confessione vere fidei reddens deo spiritum expiravit. Volve et revolve omnia scripta martirologii, non occurret tibi tale genus martirii.

Chron. III 66, p. 88

The Pruteni tied him by his hands live to a tree and cut out from his stomach his navel to which his intestines were attached. They affixed the intestines to the tree. Then, with many blows, they forced him to run around the tree until all his entrails clung to the tree. Confessing the true Faith and rendering his spirit to God, the man died. Search and search again in the books of the martyrs -- you will not find the equal of this martyrdom.

In the Biblical account, Razi defies his enemies in his confidence that God will grant him eternal reward. In this same spirit, Dusburg affirms again and again that slain Order knights will surely receive their eternal

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<sup>107</sup> II Macc. 14: 46; see also II Macc. 6: 18 ff.

<sup>108</sup> See Chapter 4 above.

reward. On two separate occasions, <sup>109</sup> observers see doves flying heavenward from the bodies of expired knights. <sup>110</sup> Mary appears over a field of slain crusaders, incensing them and preparing them for their heavenly journey.

Quedam mulier dum post conflictum cum aliis civibus de Colmine iret ad locum certaminis ad sepeliendum corpora interfectorum, et maritum suum semivivum vellet ad civitatem ducere, ille restitit, et dum quereretur, quare ibi lubencius moreretur, respondit, quod beata virgo Maria eodem die cum turibulo, precedentibus duabus virginibus cum candelis ardentibus, omnes occisos turificasset, et dum viniret ad eum, et sensisset eum adhuc vivum, ait: tertia die morieris, et gaude, quia anima tua, sicut cetera anime occisorum, ad eterna gaudia evolabit, ductusque sic cum aliis in civitatem Colmensem, tertia die mortuus est, ut predixit, et credidit omnis populus verbis ejus.

Chron. III 41, p. 74

After the fight, a certain woman went to the battlefield with other Kulm townspeople to bury the bodies of the slain. Her half-dead husband she wanted to bring back to the town, but he resisted. She asked why he would rather die there and he replied that on that same day, in a whirlwind, the Blessed Virgin Mary, preceded by two other virgins with lighted candles, had incensed (turified) all the dead. She had then come to him and, sensing that he was alive, said: "In three days you will die. But rejoice, because your soul, just like the other souls of the dead, will fly up into eternal joy." The man was taken with the others to Kulm where he died on the third day, as had been predicted and all of the populace believed his words.

On frequent occasions, after the bloody carnage of battle, angels are seen descending to earth in order to carry away the souls of fallen heroes.

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<sup>109</sup> Chron. III 91, p. 101; Chron. III 181, p. 167.

<sup>110</sup> Chron. III 91, p. 101;

Chron. III 281, p. 167;

Chron. III 360, p. 193.

Tantus ibi sanguis Cristianorum  
fusus fuit, quod fluuius vicinus  
amisso colore naturali sanguineus  
apparebat. Refertur a pluribus  
fide dignis, et indubitanter  
debet credi, quod dum hec  
agerentur, quidam in meniis  
civitatis Elbingensis stantes ad  
spectaculum viderunt celum aper-  
tum et ab angelis introduci  
animas occisorum.

Chron. III 170, p. 130

So much blood of the Christians  
flowed that the neighboring river  
lost its natural color and  
appeared red. It is reported by  
many men worthy of trust and it  
may thus be unquestioningly  
believed that, while these things  
were happening, certain persons  
standing on the walls of Elbing  
saw the heavens open and the  
souls of the dead being taken up  
by angels.

Deo devota mulier . . . cui  
dominus apparens, ostendit ei  
hanc stragem in quadam visione.  
Vidit enim fratres et eorum  
armigeros cum infidelibus bellare  
et occidi, et eorum animas in  
celum ab angelis deportari.

Chron. III 86 p. 98

Appearing to a devout woman, the  
Lord showed her this battle in a  
vision. She saw the brothers and  
their retinue fighting with the  
infidels and being killed and  
their souls being carried into  
heaven by angels.

The devout lady in this story is actually the sister  
of Konrad von Feuchtwangen, a future grandmaster of the  
Teutonic Order (1291-1296). She has her vision far away  
"in partibus Alemanie," as does the pious landsman in  
another recounting of this vision. This devout peasant  
actually sees fighting in the air between Order knights  
and the Lithuanians and says to his companions:

nonne videtis, quomodo domini  
nostri fratres pugnant cum  
infidelibus?

Do you not see how our lords, the  
Brothers, fight with the  
infidels?

In addition, he sees Mary descending to claim the  
souls of her beloved knights.



modo fugiunt tam Pruteni quam  
Lyvonienses; modo fratres et  
pauci cum eis, stant in bello se  
viriliter defendentes, undique  
vallati hostibus; heu modo  
occiduntur, nunc video beatam  
virginem Mariam et sanctas  
virgines et angelos dei cum  
animabus ipsorum ascendere in  
celum.

Now fly both the Pruteni and the  
Lithuanians; now the brothers and  
the few with them stand in battle  
and valiantly defend themselves  
on all sides against the enemy.  
Alas, now they are slain and I  
see the Blessed Virgin Mary and  
holy virgins and angels of God  
ascending into heaven with their  
souls.

Chron. III 87, p. 98

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Dusburg wrote during the period leading up to and including the liturgical reforms of Luder von Braunschweig. As his Waffenallegorie demonstrates, Dusburg was deeply concerned with the spiritual health of the knight-monks. In this vein, he narrates the earlier history of the Order as a time not only of consummate bravery at arms, but also as a time of stern, single-minded spirituality. The convent at Balga twice serves as a model to demonstrate the exemplary devotional lives which the brothers had led in the early days.

Qualis vite puritas quantaque  
virtus abstinencie et quantus  
rigor regularis fuerit discipline  
inter fratres de Balga et de  
aliis castris predictis, nemo  
novit, nisi ille, cui omne cor  
patet, et quem nullum latet se-  
cretum. Oratoria nunquam vel  
raro fuerunt sine oratore, nec  
erat angulus in dictis castris,  
in quo post completorium et  
matutinas non lateret frater  
aliquis, qui virgis affligeret  
corpus suum.

What purity of life and how much  
virtue of abstinence and how much  
rigor of the discipline of the  
Rule existed among the brothers  
of Balga and of the other houses  
no one knows save that One to  
whom all hearts are open and no  
secret is hidden. The oratory was  
never or rarely ever without  
prayer, neither was there a  
corner in said house in which,  
early and late, some brother did  
not remain to scourge his body.

Chron. III 22, p. 63

Dusburg calls upon an outside observer to lend  
objective credence to his description.

Ad castrum Engelsbergk venerunt  
quidam religiosi viri, qui dum  
viderent statum et conversacionem  
fratrum ibidem, quesiverunt, quod  
esset nomen castri. Quibus cum  
diceretur, quod Engelsbergk i.e.  
mons angelorum vocaretur,  
responderunt: vere nomen habet a  
re, quia habitantes in eo  
angelicam ducunt vitam.

To the house of Engelsberg came  
certain men of orders who, when  
they saw the situation and the  
practices of the brothers in that  
place, asked what the name of the  
house was. When they were told  
Engelsberg, i.e. mountain of  
angels, they responded: "Truly  
that name makes sense, because  
the inhabitants of it lead their  
lives like angels."

Chron. III 22, p. 63

Another story involves the same Balga house and a  
similar visit -- this time, however, the visit is from a  
senior representative of the Samibitas, with whom the  
Order was temporarily at peace. The visitor came with the  
purpose of finding out just what it was that made the  
Order seemingly invincible. He returned to his kinsmen  
with a formidable message -- a model which Dusburg holds  
up to the brothers of his own day.

Scitote, quod fratres sunt homines sicut et nos . . . in armis, cibis, et aliis satis conveniunt nobiscum, sed in hoc differunt a nobis; habent enim unum opus in consuetudine, quod sine dubio destruet nos. Ipsi singulis noctibus surgunt de stratu suo, et conveniunt in oratorio, et in die pluries, et exhibent reverenciam deo suo, quod nos non facimus. Unde in bello nos sine hesitatione aliqua superabunt.

Know that the brothers are men just like ourselves; in arms, in food, and in other matters, they correspond sufficiently with us. But in this one thing they differ from us; they have one customary act which will without doubt destroy us. These men each night arise from their beds and convene in the oratory and show reverence to their God. By day, they also show reverence several times, which we do not do. Thus in war they overcome us without any hesitation.

Chron. III 70, p. 90

This description at once parallels the Maccabean model of prayer and Scripture reading before battle <sup>111</sup> and renders into a concrete example the abstracted ideal of the Waffenallegorie, where the novum genus bellandi is

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<sup>111</sup> I and II Maccabee passages involving prayer before successful battles.

II Macc. 12: 15

II Macc. 13: 12

II Macc. 8: 23 - Makkabäerbuch v. 9,300-9,315

I Macc. 3: 48 - Makkabäerbuch v. 2,287

The Pfaffe Konrad's Rolandslied has a famous scene of Charlemagne's army reading Scripture and praying before battle (v. 245 ff.), while at the same time the Moors, with their holy book, engage in a grotesque perversion of this activity. Gesta dei per Francos v. 746 provides another provocative parallel:

"Christiana pietas in castris vigeat. . ."

Christian piety thrive in the camp. . .

spiritual as well as material. 112

In addition to his examples of collective worthiness and spirituality, Peter von Dusburg also provides his listeners with exempla of individual piety from the Order's past. He tells, for example, of the saintly and rigorously ascetic life of Thammone of Balga 113 and of Albertus de Misna. 114 But the moral heroism of Brother Bertoldus of Königsberg provides us with what is surely the most splendid example of Dusburg's stern spirituality. 115 In Bertold's story we see at its best Dusburg's earnest sincerity, his admiration for the heroes of his Order and his Biblical line of argumentation. Furthermore, and somehow appropriately, this story also

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112 "De Prima Fundatione Monasterii Olivae" (p. 684), with Dusburg as its source, also tells the story of the piety at Engelsberg. The Oliva monastery was Cistercian and favorably disposed toward the Order. Nonetheless, because its author lacked Dusburg's direct involvement and pedagogical concern, the retelling flattens and banalizes Dusburg's message. Nicolaus' translation in his Kronike (v. 9,833 ff.), on the other hand, expands the story and heightens its drama to make it even more effective.

Beyond prayer, Dusburg also stresses the administering of the Sacraments directly before battle, e.g. Chron. I 1, p. 29.

113 Chron. III 339, p. 185.

114 Chron. III 230, p. 149.

115 Chron. III 236, p. 151.

contains what is perhaps Dusburg's only flash of humor. 116

Wishing to retreat from the active life of his earlier years, Bertold entertained the thought of entering the Teutonic Order, but questioned his worthiness. Of the three monastic vows, Bertold felt confident he could uphold poverty and obedience. Ah, but chastity.

". . . sed tercium scilicet  
castitatem esse unum de arduis,  
quia nemo potest esse castus,  
nisi deus det . . ."

. . . but the third one, that is  
chastity, is a particularly  
difficult one, because no one can  
be chaste unless God grants it .  
. .

Bertold felt he needed to test his moral strength before he presumed to join the Teutonic Order. He therefore subjected himself to a trial which was both unusual and fraught with danger ("aggressusque est rem inusitatam et plenam periculo"). Bertold sought out a virgin who was "in the entire region without equal in beauty." For more than a year the two slept in Bertold's bed, "naked but unto themselves," in perfect continence -- "nunquam ipsam carnaliter cognovit". 117

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116 Jeroschin's translation introduces, among other things, considerable humor into Dusburg's earnest and dry narration. See below, Chapter 6, passim.

117

"Ipsa per sacramentum suum postea affirmabat, et integritatis sue signa ostendebant, nunquam ipsam

"Ecce mira res et stupenda!" exclaims Dusburg, as he launches into a Biblical elaboration of his wonderment at the moral example of this dauntless knight.

Samson fortissimus, David  
sanctissimus, Salomon  
sapiientissimus mulieris victi  
blandiciis ceciderunt: hic  
sponte consorcium ejus  
amplectens, vicit, et in virtutum  
culmine est erectus. Numquid  
ergo forcior Samsone, sanctior  
Davide, sapiencior Salomone? Si  
audeam dicere, salva pace ipsorum  
utique in hoc casu.

Samson, most powerful; David,  
most holy; Solomon, most wise -  
all fell down defeated before the  
flattery of women. But this one  
(Bertold) freely sought out the  
company of woman. And he  
withstood the test and arrived at  
the pinnacle of virtue. Can it be  
that someone is stronger than  
Samson, more holy than David,  
wiser than Solomon? If I may dare  
to say so with your permission:  
certainly in this case.

Chron. III 236, p. 151 118

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carnaliter cognovit."

Chron. III 236, p. 151.

She later swore these things on oath and the signs of her undisturbed  
Virginity demonstrated that he had never known her carnally.

118 The relevant parts of the Order's Rule dealing  
with strict sexual abstinence are:

Rule 28 (Perlbach pp. 50-51; Sterns, p. 232-233)

Rule 31 (Perlbach p. 52; Sterns, p. 235)

Law 36:2 (Perlbach p. 80; Sterns, p. 270)

Law 38:6 (Perlbach p. 84; Sterns, p. 274)

Law 39:6 (Perlbach p. 86; Sterns, p. 277)

Also:

"It is these who have not defiled themselves  
with women, for they are chaste."

Revelation 14: 4

Let us conclude this lengthy chapter by summarizing the significance of Peter von Dusburg's Chronicon Terrae Prussiae within the overall context of the Order's Biblically-founded apologia during its generation of crisis.

Dusburg composed his Chronicon to be more than simply an historical narrative. His work is at once a history of his Order, an apologia for the Order's existence and mission and a pedagogical treatise directed at its members. Modern scholars miss the point who criticize the work simply on the basis of the historical facts which it purports to narrate.<sup>119</sup> As a pedagogical and polemical

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119 Töppen, writing one hundred years ago, at least pointed in the right direction when he stated:

"Dusburg schreibt seine Chronik mit durchaus andächtigem Sinne, und lässt keine Gelegenheit vorüber, in derselben erbauliche Betrachtungen anzubringen."

Dusburg writes his chronicle in a thoroughly pious frame of mind and he does not let a chance go by to bring in pedagogical remarks.

Max Töppen, Geschichte der preussischen Historiographie (Berlin: W. Hertz, 1853), p. 13.

Töppen also later speaks of Dusburg's "Vorliebe für erbauliche Betrachtungen" - preference for pedagogical observations.

Only Funk seems to approach the true significance of Dusburg when he writes, in the context of an article dealing with the spirituality (and not the history) of the Teutonic Order.

Die lehrhaften und erbaulichen Teile der Ordensregel

writer who is immersed in the traditions of his Order and committed to their defense, Dusburg draws heavily upon the Order's Biblicism. Indeed, Dusburg's Chronicon and its immediate translation into Middle High German are best understood as being part and parcel, perhaps even the culmination, of that very tradition. Dusburg repeatedly complains that it would be impossible for him to recount all of the wonders which God had wrought in Prussia. 120

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und die Motivierungen dieser köstlichen  
Heldenerzahlungen sind aus einem Guss.

The pedagogical parts of the Order's Rule and the motivations for these delightful stories of heroism are cast from the same mold.

Philipp Funk, "Zur Geschichte der Frömmigkeit und Mystik im Ordensland Preussen," Kultur- und Universalgeschichte; Walter Goetz zum 60. Geburtstag (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1927), pp. 69-90.

Since, as I have demonstrated in Chapter 2 above, the Order's Biblicism arose out of its devotion to its Rule, Funk's statement implies my contention, albeit in an indirect way. Funk falls short, however, when he speaks of only "die lehrhaften und erbaulichen Teile." As I have attempted to demonstrate in this chapter, the entire Chronicon, not merely Dusburg's didactic digressions, purveys his pedagogical and apologetic message.

120 Of the many cases, the following are exemplary.

Chron. II 2, p. 34

Chron. III 155, p. 124

Chron. III 198, p. 139

Chron. III 259, p. 159

Such statements as "nullus posset ad plenum perorare" and "Non posset ad plenum scribi" echo similar statements which abound in I and II Maccabees.



But, as we have seen in this chapter, he nonetheless proceeds to tell a great many tales of Maccabean-like heroism "lest they be forgotten."

Longum et supra ingenii mei parvitatem esset singulariter enarrare, quam potenter et magnifice, quam eleganter et strenue magister et fratres predicti, tanquam alteri Machabei, in ampliando fines Cristianorum et dilatando, in impugnando hostes, in expugnando municiones ingesserint manus suas, quorum prelia et triumphos usque ad finem seculi narrabit omnis ecclesia sanctorum.

It would be far beyond my meager talent to narrate in detail how powerfully and magnificently, how skillfully and ingeniously the grandmaster and brothers, like new (other) Maccabees, took upon themselves the spreading of the borders of Christendom, the combating of its enemies and the destruction of hostile fortifications. The Church of the saints will speak of these battles and triumphs until the end of time.

Chron. III 31, p. 66

Dusburg's earnest, personal involvement in his task repeatedly breaks through his narrative in the form of first person exhortations to his brothers. His call "aperi oculos tuos et vide" in his prologue serves as an excellent example of this.<sup>121</sup> To the multitude of Biblical exempla he cites, Dusburg appends such admonitions as "Sis ergo tu David"<sup>122</sup> and, in so many words, "Sis ergo tu Judas Machabeus." From the pages of his crisis-born chronicle, Dusburg addresses his listeners with the same urgency that his predecessors, the Order's Biblical translators, had used before him.

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<sup>121</sup> Chron. "Prologus" p. 23.

<sup>122</sup> Chron. II 8, p.43.

Obsecro ergo eos, qui hunc librum  
lecturi sunt, ne abhorrescant  
propter diversos casus, sed  
reputent ea, que acciderunt, non  
ad interitum sed ad correctionem  
generis esse nostri . . . (Deus)  
nunquam a nobis misericordiam  
suam amovet; corripiens vero in  
adversis populum suum non  
derelinquit.

Now I beg those who read this  
book not to be depressed by such  
calamities, but to recognize that  
these occurrences were designed  
not to destroy, but to discipline  
our people . . . God never  
withdraws His mercy from us. Even  
when He subjects His people to  
great adversity, he does not  
desert His own.

Chron. III 172, p. 130

This direct, first person appeal to his listeners  
forcefully sums up Dusburg's pedagogical purpose in the  
Chronicon Terrae Prussiae. Fittingly, the passage also  
places in clear perspective Dusburg's inherited Biblical  
tradition within the Order: this, his appeal, is a  
verbatim quotation of II Maccabees 6: 12-17.

## Chapter 6:

### Nicolaus von Jeroschin's

### Kronike von Pruzinlant

Almost immediately after Dusburg completed his Chronicon Terrae Prussiae, the Order took steps to have it translated into Middle High German. So important was this project that two successive grandmasters -- Luder von Braunschweig (1231-1235) and Dietrich von Altenburg (1335-1341) -- actively worked to push the German version through to completion. The gifted translator of the Chronicon was one Nicolaus von Jeroschin, <sup>1</sup> chaplain

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<sup>1</sup> The name Jeroschin is probably associated with a village near Kalisch in Kulmland. Though Nicolaus von Jeroschin was, as this chapter will demonstrate, one of the great stylists of early German, some have argued that Luder's mother tongue was not German. Jeroschin writes in his introduction:

Und want ich tummer sinne bin,  
meisterlicher kunste wan,  
darzu lutzil dutschis kan,  
ot also mich di larte,  
der spune mich e narte.

Kron. v. 302-306

I am feeble-brained and without the skill of a master. In addition, I know little German - only as much as she who once nursed me could teach.

Jeroschin's text is also full of Slavic loan words. Nonetheless, Nicolaus probably spoke German natively. His denegation of his own language skill most likely reflects literary convention of the time. The author of the Order's Daniel, for example (Dan. v. 49 ff.), makes a similar disclaimer. Beyond mere convention, however, Jeroschin's remarks introduce us to a warm and sensitive

(capelanus) of the Order's house in Königsberg (Kron. v. 179). <sup>2</sup> Nicolaus had earlier distinguished himself with his translation of Johannes Canaparius' Vita Sancti

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personality. He is certainly the most human and individualistic of all Order writers.

For more thorough biographical treatments of Nicholas von Jeroschin, see:

a) Udo Arnold, "Nicolaus von Jeroschin," Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon, gegründet von Wolfgang Stammer, zweite Ausgabe herausgegeben von Kurt Ruh (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977-), Band 6: 1,082-1,089.

b) Ernst Strehlke, "Einleitung" Nicolaus von Jeroschin, "Kronike von Pruzinlant," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, p. 293.

c) Walter Ziesemer, "Nicolaus von Jeroschin und seine Quelle," Berliner Beiträge zur germanischen und romanischen Philologie, 31 (1907), pp. 78-79.

d) Ottokar Lorenz, Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter (Berlin: W. Herz, 1886-1887), Band 1, p. 207.

e) Evald Johannson, Die Deutschordenschronik des Nicolaus von Jeroschin: Ein Beitrag zur Erforschung der Ordenssprache (Lund-Kopenhagen: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1964), p. 31.

f) Mary Ellen Goenner, Mary-Verse of the Teutonic Knights (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1943 / The Catholic University of America Studies in German, 19), p. 208.

2 Citations from Jeroschin's Kronike are taken from:

Nicolaus von Jeroschin, "Di Kronike von Pruzinlant," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1861 / Frankfurt: Minerva GMBH, 1965), Band 1, pp. 291-624.

Adalberti and he was probably selected for the important task of translating Dusburg's Chronicon in recognition of an earlier job well done. <sup>3</sup>

In his introduction, Nicolaus spells out what he intends his German chronicle to mean to his Order.

warf er vor der cronken buch  
von Pruzin, di des pristirs ruch  
brudir Petirs von Dusburc  
vor etslichir jare schurc  
beschribin hatte zu latine,  
und hiz di sinne mine  
mich daruf arbeitin  
unde in dutsch bereitin,  
uf daz er sus beduten  
mug allen dutschin luten  
die wundir unde zeichin gots,  
di nach gute sins gebots  
in Pruzinlande sin geschen

He (Dietrich von Altenburg)  
placed the Chronicle Book of Prussia before me which Brother Peter von Dusburg wrote in Latin with priestly care a few years ago. He asked me to apply my mind to it and render it into German so that he could interpret to all German people the wonders and signs of God which, according to the goodness of God's commandments, have come to pass in Prussia.

Kron. v. 153-165 <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> St. Adalbert of Prague (+ 997) was venerated as the patron saint of the Königsberg cathedral and in all of Samland. Komptur Gottfried von Heimbürg had missed the story of Adalbert in the Order's Passional and instructed Jeroschin to provide a translation of Canaparius' Vita Sancti Adalberti.

Jeroschin's German Life of St. Adalbert survives only in meager fragments:

Nicolaus von Jeroschin, "Leben des heiligen Adalbert: Fragment," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlke, Band 2, pp. 423-428.

<sup>4</sup> Near the end of the work, Jeroschin also writes:

Nu hab ich mit der gotis hant,  
als ich mich da vor vorbant,  
di cronke von Pruzenlant,  
als ich si zu Latine vant,  
zu Dutsche schribende volent,  
wit tifen worten nicht hehent,

As those ignorant of Latin are able to hear, in German, of God's mighty works in Prussia, they will grow spiritually and grow in their effectiveness as warriors.

darumme, swer da lese  
diz buch, daz im der wese  
zu wunsch in heilis hi gereit  
und dort ewigir selikeit.

Therefore, may he who reads this  
book have the way prepared for  
him to desired salvation and  
eternal blessedness.

Kron. v. 173-176

Nicolaus von Jeroschin's Kronike von Pruzinlant is a thorough and meticulous translation of Dusburg's Latin original.<sup>5</sup> Nicolaus worked under the official auspices of the Order and, in his introductory remarks, he affirms his own sense of pedagogical responsibility.<sup>6</sup> All of the

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want si vornemen mag ein kint;  
ouch han di rimen recht gebint;

Kron. v. 26,656-26,663

Now, with the help of God's hand, I have, as I intended, completed bringing into German the Chronicle of Prussia which I found in Latin. I certainly did not allow hard words, because I wanted a child to understand. I also turned some good rhymes.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Kletke, Die Quellenschriftsteller zur Geschichte des preussischen Staates (Berlin: Verlag E. H. Schroedin, 1858), p. 81.

H. Vildhaut, Handbuch der Quellenkunde zur deutschen Geschichte (Weil: Verlag der A. Stein'schen Buchhandlung, 1909), Band 2, p. 550.

Ottokar Lorenz, Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen, Band 1, p. 207.

Die Deutschordenschronik des Nicolaus von Jeroschin, herausgegeben von F. Pfeifer (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1854/1966), p. xvii.

<sup>6</sup> Through his introduction and incidental running

stories of heroism which Dusburg tells and which we examined in the previous chapter, Nicolaus retells in German vernacular. With conscientious exactness, Jeroschin follows Dusburg in pointing out the same Biblical parallels to the Maccabees, David and his mighty men and Nehemiah's rebuilders.<sup>7</sup> The Waffenallegorie is

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comments, we learn a great deal about Nicolaus von Jeroschin. He is perhaps the first Order writer who comes through to us as a true individual. We have already noted (footnote #1 above) his extreme cautiousness about his abilities in German. Elsewhere in his introduction (Kron. v. 196-220) and in his concluding remarks (Kron. 26,656-26,670), Jeroschin states his name, but only so that he, and not others, might be held responsible if flaws be found in the translation. As we shall see (below and note #54), Jeroschin was indeed to suffer the pain and indignity of having his manuscript torn up by angry brothers.

See Lorenz, Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen, p. 207

See Johannson, Die Deutschordenschronik des Nicolaus von Jeroschin p. 31.

See Goenner, Mary-Verse, p. 208

<sup>7</sup> Jeroschin is superior to Dusburg in his artistry of language, and Jeroschin often returns closer to the actual words of the Vulgate than Dusburg had. Cited here, as an example, is Jeroschin's passage based upon those verses so beloved in Order literature: II Esdras (Nehemiah): 4: 16 ff.

si inmustin von der stat  
 einis odir me ufstan  
 zu wer und zu strite gan  
 von der viende drangin  
 so daz man in zulangin  
 di schrift wol mocht in glichir  
     pflicht,  
 di sus von den judin spricht.  
 do si soldin buwin  
 und andirweit vornuwin

also presented in stirring German verse, laced with the same Biblical imagery and crescendo of crusading passion that occur in Dusburg's narrative. Accordingly, all that has been said in the preceding chapter concerning Dusburg as a summation and culmination of the Order's Biblical tradition carries over with equal validity into the Middle High German verse translation. Jeroschin's translation brought to the rank and file of Order knights the same

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Jerusalem di heilige stat,  
 daz si grozin widirsat  
 hattin von den heidin,  
 so daz si mustin scheidin  
 sich und teilin in zwu schar.  
 Di eine nam der arbeit war;  
 di andre stunt gereit mit wer  
 zu pfege kegn der viende her,  
 von daz der morginrot ufdranc,  
 unz daz man sach di sterne  
 blanc.

Eine hant des werkis wilt  
 und daz swert di andre hilt.  
 In semelichir bittirkeit  
 daz gotis volc zu Pruzin leit  
 unsprechliche swere  
 und doch wundirbere  
 gedult da binnen ubete.  
 Kein jamir si betrubete,  
 daz si doch quelte alle stunt.

Kron. v. 15,255-15,277

They had to go out before the city to meet many uprisings perpetrated by the enemy. Thus they came to the same duties which were said of the Jews. They were commissioned to build and renew Jerusalem, the Holy City, but they had stubborn resistance from the heathens. Accordingly, they had to divide themselves into two groups. The one took up the work, the other, from the red of morning until they saw the bright stars of night, stood ready with weapons to move against the enemy. One hand plied the work, the other held the sword. Under great hardship, God's people struggled unspeakably in Prussia, but nonetheless, they showed hearty endurance. No adversity daunted them, though they were dogged every moment.



message which Dusburg's original carried to the Order's educated leaders and to powerful circles beyond the borders of Prussia.

With the fact of Jeroschin's fundamental solidarity with Dusburg clearly in mind, we may now proceed to examine Jeroschin's innovations -- those areas where he impresses his own personality and genius to effect development and change upon the perennial message of Order literature. Here, just as we have seen in the Order's Latin to German translations of Scripture, a translation proved to be more than merely a translation. <sup>8</sup>

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Jeroschin brings four readily apparent alterations to the Dusburg text beyond transforming it into German and into verse. First, he replaces Dusburg's introductory

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<sup>8</sup> Nicolaus von Jeroschin stands alongside Heinrich Hesler as one of the two truly great artists the Order was to produce. Like Hesler, Jeroschin's circumspect knowledge and his powerful use of German verse defy simple classification into a literary tradition. Like Hesler, Jeroschin is of such a stature as to mock the historian's all-too-tidy categories and neat sense of periodization. With Jeroschin, what we have been viewing thus far as an ordered and purposeful evolution of a literary tradition seems to become more diffuse.

Jeroschin wrote at a time when the Order was emerging from its crisis and moving into a new phase of its history. Jeroschin's Kronike, as we shall see, reflects this reality. But equally important is the fact that Jeroschin's artistic originality would set him apart in any period.

remarks with an introduction of his own that contains highly personal reflections (Kron. v. 1-330). Secondly, Jeroschin quite effectively incorporates Dusburg's Pars IV -- the survey of universal history -- into the running narrative of events in Prussia.<sup>9</sup> Thirdly, Jeroschin's German Kronike expands the Latin Chronicon with some independent commentary and a few additional stories drawn from sources other than Dusburg.<sup>10</sup> And finally,

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<sup>9</sup> Dusburg's material on world history (his Pars IV) is inserted by Jeroschin into the following places:

- a) Kron. v. 5,733-5,864
- b) Kron. v. 9,239-9,728
- c) Kron. v. 15,363-15,802
- d) Kron. v. 18,036-18,295
- e) Kron. v. 21,346-22,161

Jeroschin is not only a skilled stylist, he also shows a keen sense for balance, organization and chronology. In his introduction (Kron. v. 282-293), Jeroschin seems to "think out loud," pondering the problems of organizing his material.

<sup>10</sup> For a list of the dozen or so important pericopes which Jeroschin adds to the Dusburg text, see:

- a) Gerhard Eis, "Die Literatur im Deutschen Ritterorden und in seinen Einflussgebieten," Ostdeutsche Wissenschaft: Jahrbuch des Ostdeutschen Kulturrates 9 (München, 1962), p. 84.

More complete and detailed are:

- b) Walter Zieseimer, Nicolaus von Jeroschin und seine Quelle (Berlin: E. Ebering, 1907), p. 79 and passim.

Jeroschin carries events in Prussia onward for one more year beyond Dusburg (through 1331 -- Kron. v. 27,583-27,738).

Perhaps the most important of Jeroschin's additions to the actual body text comes at the completion of a battle narrative. Here he introduces a Verfolgungslied (Kron. v. 23,721-23,744) as bellicose as any that Order literature had produced heretofore, including Judith's bloody song of victory.<sup>11</sup> Standing under the strong influence of the Passional, Jeroschin's abrupt switch to shorter, more staccato poetic lines makes this warriors' song particularly effective.

Nu volgit nach mit schallen,  
daz spil ist uch gevallen:  
jagit, helde, jagit!  
di heidin sin vorzagit.

Now follow with shouts, the game  
is up: Chase them, chase them,  
you heroes! The pagans have lost  
their courage.

Kron. v. 23,760-23,763    12

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c) Max Töppen, "Einleitung," Dusburg "Chronicon Terrae Prussiae," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Band 1, pp. 10-12.

This chapter will mention only those additions which are germane to our topic of the Order's Scripturally-based program of self-justification.

<sup>11</sup> See Chapter 3 above.

<sup>12</sup> Other extended lyrical pieces are Jeroschin's "Klage ums heilige Land" (Kron. v. 21,935-22,047 -- based in content upon Chron. IV 79, 80) and his highly original complaint concerning the assassination of Grandmaster Werner von Orseln (see below).

See below for some remarks on Jeroschin's style. The

More subtle additions to Dusburg's Chronicon are dozens of short, emotive prayers (Stossgebete) addressed directly to God, Christ or, especially, to the Virgin Mary. Through these, Jeroschin engages and involves his listeners in the drama of the cataclysmic struggle between Good and Evil.<sup>13</sup> Jeroschin seems to be, if anything, even harsher than Dusburg in his condemnation of paganism.<sup>14</sup> But this is balanced by a heightened concern and hope that those living in heathen darkness might one day be converted. To this end, Jeroschin stresses the responsibility of the missionary clergy to work for conversions (echoing Hesler in earlier decades). On several occasions, he modifies the Dusburg text to create scenes where the Pruteni hear, in direct speech, of the

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concluding chapter will touch upon Jeroschin and Hesler as craftsmen of German verse.

13 Examples of Stossgebete -- short, evocative prayers which Jeroschin introduces:

Kron. v. 315 ff., 7,438 ff., 26,671 ff.

14 An interesting example of this may be seen in Jeroschin's more judgmental description of a pagan holy place:

"Romene, que sacra fuit secundum eorum ritus."

Chron. III 259

Daz dorf al di Ousteten  
gar vor heilic heten  
nach irre tummin wise."

Kron. v. 20,300

saving mission of the Teutonic Order in Prussia. <sup>15</sup>

Secht, do wurdin si (Pruteni)  
bericht  
von eime Polene der geschicht,  
den si gevangin vurtin do.  
Er sprach: "daz volc, daz ir  
also  
hat gesehen hute,  
daz sint begebene lute;  
di sint zu strite helde  
unde rittere uzirwelde.  
Der pabist hat si hergesant  
von dutschin landen in diz lant,  
daz si zu allin ziten  
wider uch sullin striten  
unz si gar betwingin  
uch und darzu bringin,  
daz ir den heiligin touf  
intpfat nach des gelouben louf,  
den Cristus geboten hat,  
unde zu gebote stat  
der romischen kirchin dort.

See how they (the Pruteni) were told this story by a captured Pole. He spoke: "the men whom you saw today - they are heroes in battle and knights unequaled. The Pope sent them here to this country from German lands in order for them to wage war against you at all times. They do it to tame you, to bring you baptism according to the Faith and to place you under the laws of the Roman Church.

Kron. v. 3,589-3,610 <sup>16</sup>

Jeroschin's extension of Dusburg's chronicle through the year 1331 (Kron. v. 27,583-27,738), as well as his German rendering of the original Dusburg text, are noteworthy in that Jeroschin is here much bolder than Dusburg had been in facing up to the intermittent wars the Order had waged and was still waging with Christian Poland. <sup>17</sup> Jeroschin, in other words, defines a further

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<sup>15</sup> Compare Chron. III 31, pp. 66-67 and Kron. v. 5,865-5,593, pp. 370-371 for still another example of Jeroschin's expanded and dramatized praise of his Order.

<sup>16</sup> It is not without significance that Jeroschin casts a Pole in this preaching role.

<sup>17</sup> One must not exaggerate the thoroughness of

broadening of the role of the New Maccabees (nuwe Machabei) and an expanded interpretation of the new war (nuwe forme des stritis) in which they were engaged. King Vladislav Lokietek of the fledgling Polish state is never called, as Sventopelk had been, an outright apostate and servant of the Devil. But he is described as being a pernicious liar and hypocrite: "Loket . . . der valsche vurst" (Kron. v. 27,075). He is also guilty by association, for he deals openly with the pagan Lithuanians. These pagans he woos as allies to carry out his machinations (Kron. v. 27,600 ff.). As had been the case with Sventopelk in earlier decades, the Order stood firm against the "scheming Pole." Alluding to the well-known German proverb, Jeroschin assures his listeners that:

Sus in di grube, di er grub,  
der Loket vallis selb entsub.

The hole which Lokietek dug to  
entrap others, he fell into  
himself.

Kron. v. 27,623-27,624

Jeroschin is also able to reconcile himself to the capture and humiliation of Christian soldiery fighting in Lokietek's service (Kron. v. 27,620 ff.). As Dusburg had done before him (Chron. V 12, p. 216), but here, in an

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Jeroschin's treatment of the Polish wars. Zieseemer is correct when he writes: "Jeroschin hat zuletzt den grossen Polenkrieg recht flüchtig und oberflächlich behandelt" (Zieseemer, Nicolaus von Jeroschin, p. 11). What we should note, however, are the perceptible tendencies present in Jeroschin's treatment of this obviously delicate topic. Somewhat painfully he emerged with the idea that it was proper for the Order to fight the Poles.

even higher pitch of enthusiasm, Jeroschin sees the fight against Poland as necessary in order to preserve the "inherited conquests of the fathers" (der vetre erbe -- Kron. v. 27,119). One recalls that, according to the terms of the Waffenallegorie, physical as well as spiritual arms are justified in such a situation as this. 18

Di virde sache ist vride,  
durch di wir di gelide  
mit wapin deckin glich,  
uf daz wir mugin vridelich  
besitzen unse habe.

The fourth cause for which we  
immediately cover our limbs with  
armor is to preserve our  
possessions in peace.

Kron. v. 3,255-3,258 19

Di vumfte sache ist sus gewant,  
daz wir widir zu der hant  
gewinnen daz vorlorne gut;

The fifth cause is to win back  
into our hands lost possessions.

Kron. v. 3,286-3,288 20

Jeroschin states the Order's case against Poland in conjunction with a paraphrase of I Maccabees, Chapter 2 21 (Kron. v. 27,105-27,134). Here Jeroschin, ever with a sense for the dramatic, portrays the grandmaster and his

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18 See Chapter 5 above.

19 See Chapter 5 above for Dusburg's Latin text of this "cause" -- Chronicon II 9, p. 45. One has here an excellent example of the way Jeroschin breathes vitality into Dusburg's wooden, legalistic style.

20 See Chapter 5 above for Dusburg's Latin text of this "cause" -- Chronicon II 9, p. 45.

21 I Macc. 2: 49 ff. and 67 ff.

troops reading together the exhortations of Mattathias Maccabee to his sons. A new generation, they read, must preserve and expand upon the works of the fathers. The knights take this message to heart and set out upon their raid against the Poles. Jeroschin follows Dusburg's Chronicon in this dramatization (Chron. V 12, p. 216), but new in Jeroschin's version are direct references to the Polish king -- "der valsche furste" -- who must be met in virtuous battle -- "tugendhaften striten." At issue are God's honor -- "der gotes e" -- and lands promised to our fathers -- "der vetre erbe" (Kron. v. 27,105 ff.). Jeroschin follows this grand scene with further thoughts on the subject:

Dirre guten lere wort  
und der noch vil vorgit di  
    schrift,  
namen in des herzen grift  
der meister und di brudre do  
und beriten sich also,  
daz si wolden Pruzelant  
daz e was uz der heiden hand  
mit unzellicher kost entnumen  
und an di cristenheit so kumen,  
beschirmen menlich unde wern  
und den glouben drinne nern,  
    . . .  
vor kunge Lokete,  
der des begunst dort hete,  
daz er lant und gelouben  
wolde gar betouben  
und di brudre storen dan,  
di den gelouben da vorstan.

The brothers and the master took to heart these good teachings and more which the Scriptures proclaim. They accordingly prepared themselves to defend, protect and nurture the Faith in Prussia, which had earlier been taken from the hands of the pagans and brought to Christianity with countless losses . . . [they would defend this land] against King Lokietek who desired to devastate the land and disrupt the brothers who were guardians of the Faith.

Kron. v. 27,132-27,153



Jeroschin's willingness to confront the political reality of the Order's conflict with Poland reveals a circumspect writer who was composing at a time of renewing self-confidence and security in Prussia.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, one sees in Jeroschin's Kronike hints of local, secular chronicling which had already become the norm in the Altreich.<sup>23</sup> To be sure, Jeroschin's Kronike is still a far cry from contemporaneous works, such as the Sachsenspiegel and the Schwabenspiegel: Jeroschin still views history as being universal and sub specie aeternitatis; his ideological commitment remains fixed

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22 By the 1340's the military situation had finally turned in the Order's favor. Organized Pruteni resistance was now a thing of the past. Pomerelia was being assimilated and the Lithuanian frontier had been stabilized through a series of border forts.

Less satisfactory was the political situation. To be sure, Casimir the Great of Poland was to conclude a treaty in 1346 recognizing de facto provincial boundaries. Nonetheless, Polish animosity remained a given in Order foreign policy. In Rome, Poland had brought formal suit against the Order in 1319, 1328 and in 1338.

23 On the general topic of the transition from universal history to regional, secular history, see:

a) Herbert Grundmann, Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter: Gattungen, Epochen, Eigenart (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1969).

b) Vildhaut, Handbuch der Geschichtsquellen, Band 2, pp. 1-13.

c) Lorenz, Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen, Band 1, p. 1 ff.

upon non-territorial concepts such as his Order, Christendom, crusade and Heilsgeschichte. But the newer impulses characteristic of regional, secular histories of the period are also present: <sup>24</sup> Jeroschin shows exacting

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<sup>24</sup> Only one true monograph has been written with Nicolaus von Jeroschin and his Kronike as its subject:

Walter Zieseemer, Nicolaus von Jeroschin und seine Quelle (Berlin: E. Ebering, 1907).

This work, already frequently cited in this chapter, is rich in detailed information and is the beginning point of any serious study of Jeroschin. Zieseemer's general interpretive tendency, however, wrongly portrays Jeroschin as the herald of a new age who basically puts Dusburg's crusading ethos to rest. Zieseemer was a literary scholar. As such, his well-founded admiration of Jeroschin as a master of German letters led to an exaggeration of Jeroschin's originality as an historian. As I have tried to demonstrate, Jeroschin still stands squarely within the Biblical, historical tradition of the Teutonic Order, even if his singular talents do set him somewhat apart.

As an example of Zieseemer's blind spot, one notes that he is unable to make sense of Jeroschin's careful translation and independent application of the Waffenallegorie (see my discussion above). Zieseemer only mentions the Waffenallegorie as "die lange Waffenallegorie, die Jeroschin leider (!) beibehielt" / "the lengthy weapon allegory which Jeroschin unfortunately retained." (Zieseemer, Nicolaus von Jeroschin, p. 27).

Two fine recent studies which support my contention of a Dusburg/Jeroschin continuity rather than discontinuity are:

a) Odilo Engels, "Zur Historiographie des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter," Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 48 (1966), pp. 336-363.

b) Udo Arnold, "Geschichtsschreibung im Preussenland bis zum Ausgang des 16. Jahrhunderts," Mittel- und Ostdeutschland, 19 (1970), pp. 75-125.

Also helpful are several insightful remarks in:

familiarity with Prussian geography and place names; he demonstrates a love of local landscapes and their unique flora and fauna; he is fully committed to his vernacular as a valid means of expression.<sup>25</sup>

In the Kronike, we see flashes of optimism which look beyond the immediate crisis in the Order to more secure times. As an example, we can turn to Jeroschin's expansion upon Dusburg's description of the arrival of Otto von Braunschweig and his relief forces in Prussia (Kron. v. 5,509). Jeroschin makes a point of mentioning that Otto brought with him his hunting hounds. With thinly disguised pride and satisfaction, Jeroschin touts the fact that his Order, unlike the Hospitalers, allows its knights to engage in certain types of hunting.<sup>26</sup> The

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c) Wolfgang Wippermann, Der Ordensstaat als Ideologie (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1979), pp. 47-48.

d) Helmut Bauer, "Peter von Dusburg und die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens im 14. Jahrhunderts in Preussen," Historische Studien, Heft 272 (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Emil Ebering, 1935).

25 See my discussion below.

An extremely helpful work dealing with Jeroschin's vocabulary and word-formations is:

Evald Johansson, Die Deutschordenschronik des Nicolaus von Jeroschin. Ein Beitrag zur Erforschung der Ordenssprache (Lund-Kopenhagen: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1964).

26 Hunting is the topic of Rule #28 (Stirns, pp. 228-229). The permission to hunt is granted under very strict guidelines and two specific situations receive

Order's Rule, in his opinion, rightly sees that this activity, far from being self-indulgent and useless, actually develops skill at arms and promotes courage. <sup>27</sup> This is certainly not the trivial "Freude am ritterlichen Leben" which contemporaneous courtly literature celebrated. It is, however, an indication that Jeroschin felt at least some freedom to view his Order in more relaxed and non-moralizing terms. The brothers even heard in Jeroschin's narrative occasional asides which implied gentle criticism of Order leaders and Order campaigns. <sup>28</sup>

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mention where "jagehunde" are not allowed. Law III, 7 (Stirns, p. 270) lists as a punishable offense "If a brother, except as permitted by the Rule, hunts or follows the hunt."

See also Strehlke's footnote in his edition of Jeroschin "Kronike von Pruzinlant," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Band 1, Note #2, p. 366.

<sup>27</sup> For example: ". . . the brethren may also shoot birds to practice shooting and increase their skill." Rule #25 (Stirns, p. 229).

<sup>28</sup> Examples of negative material not found in Dusburg or touched upon only lightly by him:

a) A thorough treatment of the pilgrimage of Grandmaster Burkhard von Schwanden to Acre (1290). Upon Burkhard's arrival in Acre, he resigned as grandmaster and joined the Hospitalers (Kron. v. 18,192 ff.). See also note #62 below.

b) An occasioned flight of the Brothers (Kron. v. 9,755).

c) A critical assessment of Brother Bertholt von Northausen (Kron. v. 16,544).

d) Frank discussion of the assassination of

Certainly nowhere does Dusburg, Jeroschin's source, show this maturing sense of self-confidence and security.

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Jeroschin's more relaxed disposition and bold use of the vernacular fostered a truly remarkable piece of narrative poetry. Walter Zieseimer, the great literary historian and student of Nicolaus von Jeroschin, expresses a well-founded enthusiasm for Jeroschin as a writer. Zieseimer hits the mark when he writes, "Dusburg reports; Jeroschin narrates."<sup>29</sup> Dusburg, in other words, lists off God's mighty works in Prussia; Jeroschin follows these same outward events into the hearts of men. Jeroschin's warmth and good humor speak directly to his listeners. We have already seen how Jeroschin could quote a German proverb to great rhetorical effect.<sup>30</sup> For all of his ideological commitment to his Order, Jeroschin does not restrain himself from recounting the delightfully human story of two women fighting over one man<sup>31</sup> or hold

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Grandmaster Werner von Orseln by Brother Johannes (Kron. v. 27,510 ff.). See Chapter 6 below.

29 "Dusburg berichtet, Jeroschin erzählt."

Zieseimer, Nicolaus von Jeroschin, p. 110.

30 Kron. v. 27,623-27,624 -- cited above.

31 Kron. v. 7,293.

back from jesting about his own bald head. <sup>32</sup> And in what is surely the most charming example of all, he has the Virgin Mary reprimand an Order knight by calling him "ein dummer affe" ("a stupid monkey" -- Kron. v. 4,703). <sup>33</sup>

32 Kron. v. 18,917 ff.

33 Further examples of Jeroschin's earthy, engaging style:

a) The relic of Barbara's head -- a true treasure, not like the manure of gold and riches:

kein dem daz golt zu achtin ist  
und allir richtum als ein mist.

Kron. v. 6,385-6,386

b) burghers of Riga -- rich town oxen:

di weligen statvarrin

Kron. v. 21,048

c) Swentopolk: des tuvils wigant (v. 6,200), es tuvils lastirbac (v. 6,714), der gotis grame (v. 8,992), ungetruwe (v. 7,803; v. 8,918), der sure (v. 8,329), der ungute (v. 8,491), der ungewere (v. 8,574), der tumme man (v. 6,874), der unreine (v. 8,996), der unvlate kolc der unreine Sw. (v. 8,744), der bose wicht (v. 8,802), der vorwazne man (v. 8,767), wutego (v. 7,364), der fif unwis (v. 8,725), unholde (v. 7,695), argin hunt (v. 6,1648; v. 7,671), dem gehunde (v. 6,225), tobinde unreine hunt (v. 6,167)

(This list compiled by Ziesemer, p. 86)

In a way that delights Germanists, Jeroschin lives up to his own evaluation of his style:

davon ouch umbesnittin  
nach hovelichin sittin  
mines mundis lippen sin

Kron. v. 307-309

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We have spoken in the last several pages of Jeroschin's increased sense of provincial pride, his more optimistic outlook and his love of a good story well told. But these impulses were not necessarily at cross-current with the inherited values which Jeroschin also sought to perpetuate. Jeroschin was worthy of his Order and its literature in that he never lost sight of the danger latent within literary works stressing delectare at the expense of prodesse. Jeroschin makes this explicit in his sensitive recounting of Mary's occasioned complaint to a monk-knight of her beloved Order.

Mary, it seems, often appeared in dreams to a saintly monk of the Order's Königsberg convent (Jeroschin's convent). On this particular occasion she appeared to the knight in a sad and distressed state. The knight immediately asked what it was that grieved Her so, and She .. replied:..

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The lips of my mouth are not circumcised in the manner of courtly costume.

mir ist daz ein ungemach,  
 daz di libin sune min,  
 des dutschin ordins brudre din,  
 ot ettiswenne pflagin  
 redin unde vragin  
 in collacien mit gir  
 von mime sune und von mir  
 und von der heiligin lebin.  
 Nu louft ir rede unebin;  
 swen si zusamin kumin,  
 ir kosen gibt unvrumin;  
 si trinkin odir ezzin,  
 unsir si vorgezzin  
 unde kerin irin sin  
 mit itillichin wortin hin  
 uf wertlicir vurstin tat,  
 waz der iclichir begangin hat;  
 daz sint in suze mere  
 und ist mir ein swere.

I am disturbed that my beloved  
 sons in your Teutonic Order,  
 during their mealtimes, only  
 occasionally speak of and ask  
 earnestly about my Son and Me and  
 about the lives of the saints.  
 Their talk is coarse. When they  
 assemble, their chatter is  
 impious - they eat and drink, but  
 forget about Us. They pervert  
 their minds with idle words about  
 the deeds of worldly princes and  
 their adventures. Such talk as  
 this is sweet to them, and this  
 fact grieves me greatly.

Kron. v. 10,432-10,450 34

Many of Jeroschin's independent insertions into his chronicle seem to be in answer to Mary's pleading in this dream. Uninhibited though he might have been in expressing his local pride and "secular" interests, Jeroschin makes these subservient to his spiritual commission. The final lines of his introduction (Kron. v. 315-330) are a dedicatory prayer to Mary, wherein Jeroschin entreats Her to guide him in writing a book worthy of her name and her Order. <sup>35</sup> Throughout the body text of the Kronike as

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<sup>34</sup> The parallel passage in Dusburg is Chron. III 81, p. 95.

<sup>35</sup>

dir, milde kuniginne;  
 nu bis min leitirinne,



well, the great Protectress of the Order receives repeated homage and prayers from Jeroschin. <sup>36</sup> Jeroschin describes Mary not as a heavenly queen, but rather as an immanent helper of men. She is close to Her land and close to Her knights who protect it. <sup>37</sup>

Jeroschin treats other saints in a similar way -- they are described as being close at hand and relevant to the knights' immediate needs in Prussia. In this, Jeroschin draws upon his own experience from translating the Life of St. Adalbert. And beyond this, he draws upon and transforms the Order's already rich hagiographical tradition as embodied in the vitae of the Passional, Das Väterbuch and Langenstein's Martina. <sup>38</sup> Jeroschin's Kronike thus becomes, to an even higher degree than

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want dir zu lobis winne  
diss buchis ich beginne.

Kron. v. 327-330

You, gentle Queen, be now my guide as I, in ecstasy of praise, begin this book.

These are the words which Grandmaster Marian Tumler inscribed in my copy of his book, Der Deutsche Orden im Werden, Wachsen und Wirken bis 1400 during my visits to the headquarters of the Teutonic Order in Vienna, August, 1975.

<sup>36</sup> Jeroschin also makes further dedicatory vows to Mary: Kron. v. 329, v. 3,683 ff., v. 1,502.

<sup>37</sup> See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the Cistercian roots of the Order's Marian piety.

<sup>38</sup> See Chapter 3 above.

Dusburg's Chronicon had been before, a rich synthesis of the three important strands of Deutschordensliteratur: the Biblical, the hagiographical and the historical.

Jeroschin mentions St. Elizabeth frequently and lovingly. As has been stressed already, Elizabeth had long enjoyed special veneration within the Order.<sup>39</sup> Grandmaster Luder von Braunschweig, Elizabeth's kinsman and Jeroschin's patron, used his influence to foster her memory and establish her in Prussia as a Landesheilige.<sup>40</sup> When this powerful and devout grandmaster commissioned Jeroschin to translate Dusburg's Chronicon, he most certainly saw to it that his great aunt not be forgotten in the pages of the Kronike.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See Chapter 4 above.

St. Elizabeth's life is Vita #73 in the Passional. Tilo von Kulm's Von siben Ingesigeln (dedicated to Luder von Braunschweig) praises St. Elizabeth (v. 78 ff.), as does Daniel (also dedicated to Luder von Braunschweig / v. 2,163 ff. and v. 8,305 ff.).

<sup>40</sup> See Chapter 4 above (and footnotes #58 and #59) for a fuller treatment of Luder von Braunschweig and his promulgation of the cult of St. Elizabeth. Chapter 4 also deals with Luder's other devotional projects, which Jeroschin discusses flatteringly and at some length (Kron. v. 27,657 ff.). Indeed, Jeroschin's entire treatment of the grandmastership of Luder von Braunschweig and Dietrich von Altenburg (his patrons: Kron. v. 27,626-27,738) is without precedent in Dusburg's Chronicon.

<sup>41</sup> Other of Luder's ancestors and kinsmen also receive flattering treatment from Jeroschin. We have already discussed Otto von Braunschweig (Kron. v. 5,509 ff.). In addition, Jeroschin speaks well of

Luder von Braunschweig also enlisted Jeroschin's aid in helping him localize and establish still another saint in the consciousness of the knight-monks.<sup>42</sup> This was St. Barbara.<sup>43</sup> Along with St. Elizabeth, Luder took great pains to see that Barbara be remembered in the Order's liturgy.<sup>44</sup> He also devoted one of his more important libres vulgares to the life of this third century Egyptian saint.<sup>45</sup> Luder's Vita of Barbara has been lost, but we may presume that it described Barbara's heroic death as well as the miraculous transport of her body and severed

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Albrecht the Great (Luder's father) and Henry the Lion (Luder's grandfather).

42 The Order's translation of Daniel also makes extensive mention of St. Barbara. As is the case with Elizabeth, Barbara appears in the course of the Pflanzenallegorie (see Chapter 3). The Lily symbolizes martyrdom, and Barbara assumes her place as the first of four female saints who are cited as having died heroically for the Faith (Dan. v. 2,070 ff.).

43 Though St. Barbara was a third century Egyptian figure, her cult flourished in Nicomedia in Asia Minor. In later centuries, crusaders brought her fame to Europe, where Dominicans were largely responsible for spreading it throughout German-speaking territories.

44 "Gesetze Luthers von Braunschweig" in Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens, herausgegeben von Max Perlbach (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1890), p. 148, para. #2 [Feier der heiligen Barbara erhöht wird].

Perlbach's remarks in his Introduction (p. LIV) are helpful.

45 Luder probably translated his Vita of Barbara out of a Latin original. The work was most likely intended to fill a gap in the Passional, just as Jeroschin's Adalbert had been.

head to the Baltic. <sup>46</sup> Barbara's blessed remains thus rested in northeastern Europe. Her violent end (beheading by her pagan father -- Kron. v. 6,385-6,386) made her the patroness of those exposed to sudden death. <sup>47</sup> Clearly,

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<sup>46</sup> Translacio Sancte Barbare is a late medieval Latin version of the life of St. Barbara. Zieseimer is sure (aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach -- p. 37) that the Translacio is a compilation and retranslation of Luder's lost work.

The Translacio concentrates its narrative on those parts of the vita associated with Prussia.

Chap. 1-3 Head of the saint comes to Pomerelia.

Chap. 4-9 Head comes to Sartowitz and then to Kulm.

Chap. 10-12 Miracles occurring at the shrine of the head.

The parallels are of course striking to the miraculous transport of the body of St. James to Spain and the Wars of the Reconquista.

"Translacio et Miracula Sanctae Barbarae," Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, herausgegeben von Max Töppen, Band 2, pp. 397-411.

<sup>47</sup> See Chapter 3 above for a discussion of the warrior-monks' understandable concern with martyrdom through violent death and the Biblical promise of eternal life for such martyrs of the Faith. For two exemplary passages where Jeroschin treats the joys of a martyr's eternal reward, see Kron. v. 20,720 and Kron. 21,340.

William Urban points out that Barbara was also a wintertime saint (her festival falls on Dec. 3) who protected those who braved snow and cold. Because of the rigorous Prussian climate and because most of the Order's campaigning was done in wintertime to allow full use of horses over frozen fenlands, St. Barbara must have seemed all the dearer to the Knights.

William Urban, Prussian Crusade (New York: University

Barbara was eminently well-suited to the devotional needs of the Teutonic Knights.

Jeroschin, citing Luder directly as his source , <sup>48</sup> fills several pages of his Kronike retelling, updating and localizing the Barbara story. Jeroschin writes how the Order captured Sartowitz, one of Sventopelk's castles on the Vistula (Kron. v. 6,276 ff.). Here, miraculously, Order warriors discovered the venerable head of the saint

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Press of America), p. 160.

See Dusburg's Chronicon III 36, p. 70 for the superficial coverage of the Barbara story in the Latin Chronicon.

48

Swer daz nu wil irjagin  
unde ouch wizzin ebin  
di martir und daz lebin  
Barbarin der herin,  
den wil ich wege lerin.  
Er suche an dem buche,  
daz mit grozim ruche  
von der selbin magit zart  
der herzoge lichtir art  
brudir Ludir, von Brunswic  
des stammis ein vurstlichir zwic  
und homeistir ouch irkorn  
dem dutschin ordene bevorn,  
hat gebracht zu dutsche ganz  
mit getichte ane schranz

Kron. v. 6,426-6,441

He who wants to pursue the matter, wishing to know of the life and martyrdom of Barbara the heroine - I shall tell him a way. He must search in the book devoted to this same tender maid which Brother Luder von Braunschweig, scion of a princely line and elected Grandmaster of the Teutonic Order, has, with great care, put into German in flawless rhyme.

"an sente Barbarn nacht" in the year 1242.<sup>49</sup> A letter from Barbara's bishop found on the shrine and the vision of an old woman then residing in the castle confirmed to the knights that which they longed to hear: this was indeed the head of the saint; Sventopelk was not worthy to possess the head; and Barbara desired to go "home" to Kulm, where she might hear masses sung in her honor. With great reverence and enthusiasm, Jeroschin describes how the knights forthwith brought St. Barbara to Prussia and laid her to rest in the Order convent of Kulm-Althaus. From that time to this, Jeroschin assures his listeners, faithful pilgrims flock to Kulm to experience the miracles possible through the intervention of St. Barbara.

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49 Kron. v. 6,319.

Das Haupt der Heiligen, doch wohl ein Kopfreliquiar mit einer Partikel vom Barbarahaupt.

The head of the saint (was) most likely a head reliquary with a fragment of Barbara's head. B

Karl Helm und Walter Zieseemer, Die Literatur des Deutschen Ritterordens (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1951), p. 93, note # 252 quoting:

E. Tidick, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kirchen-Patrozinien im Deutschordenslande Preussen bis 1525," Zietschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands 22 (1926), pp. 412 ff.

Di burc der alde Colmen ist;  
 da suchin iz noch hute  
 lute ubir lute,  
 want da ist der genadin vlut:  
 so groze wundir got da tut  
 durch Barbaram di magit gut  
 unde zeichin also vil,  
 daz ir niman weiz ein zil.

Kron. v. 6,622-6,629

At the castle of old Kulm it is.  
 There people and more people even  
 today seek it out (the relic),  
 because there is (found) the  
 flood of grace: God does so many  
 great miracles and signs there  
 through the goodness of the  
 maiden Barbara that no one knows  
 their full extent.

Jeroschin here fulfills the same function he had years before with his life of St. Adalbert. He fosters the devotion of a local saint, combining within her person the Order's inherited values of mission and crusade along with newly emerging love of Prussia as a geographical and political entity. "Prussia," Jeroschin writes as he addresses his brothers, "Barbara is in your bosom."

O wol dich, wol dich, Pruzinlant,  
 vrou dich, vrou dich immer mer,  
 daz der prisant also her  
 ruin wil in diner schoz  
 unde wesin din genoz!  
 Ouch vroie, vroie, vroie dich,  
 du dutschir ordin, sunderlich,  
 daz du sus begnadit bis!  
 Ja hast du des ein pfant gewis  
 von der suzin Barbaran,  
 daz si dich nimmer will vorlan.  
 Irbuit, irbuit ir wurde groz,  
 daz si vlechte sundir droz  
 zu dir in stetin gunstin sich  
 und mit dir blibe ewiclich:  
 so blibis du intladin  
 gar allirhande schadin  
 und stigis in den gradin  
 zuwachsindir genadin,  
 daz unz an dem jungistin tac  
 dir saldin nicht gebrechin mac.  
 O zarte Barbara, nu blib  
 bi uns unde von uns trib,  
 waz du uns weist widir sin,  
 durch di bittir martir din!

How lucky, how lucky you are,  
 Prussia. Rejoice, rejoice  
 forevermore that the saint will  
 rest here in your lap and be your  
 comfort. Rejoice, rejoice, German  
 Order that you have been blessed!  
 You have the true relic of St.  
 Barbara which will never leave  
 you. Honor, honor her high worth,  
 that she will serve you without  
 fail, keeping you in her favor  
 and remaining by you forever. So  
 you will escape all injury and  
 rise in the level of increasing  
 grace which Satan cannot break  
 even on Judgment Day. Oh, sweet  
 Barbara, remain with us and  
 through your bitter martyrdom  
 help us to be as you would wish.

(translation: Urban Prussian  
Crusade, pp. 184-185)

Kron. v. 6,646-6,670

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We turn now to that portion of the Kronike which is uniquely Jeroschin's own: his introduction (Kron. v. 1-330). On the basis of examples found therein, we will conclude our discussion of Jeroschin by focusing upon the independent and innovative Biblical imagery he uses to defend his Order.

Jeroschin, like Dusburg before him, draws heavily upon Scripture as he introduces his Chronicle. But unlike Dusburg, who ranges widely in his citations, Jeroschin opts to focus upon one principal story -- in this case,



Daniel's description of the heroic youths in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace.<sup>50</sup> This difference between the two writers may be viewed as fundamental. Jeroschin, the gifted narrator, prefers to concentrate upon a limited number of Biblical sources, drawing from them maximum theological and rhetorical force. Dusburg, by contrast, prefers making brief allusions to copious numbers of Scriptural passages.<sup>51</sup>

After an opening prayer which affirms a scrupulously orthodox Trinity (Kron. v. 1-86),<sup>52</sup> Jeroschin cites the story of the faithful youths in the fiery furnace (Daniel,

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50 Jeroschin does, as we shall see, call upon other Biblical stories, but the Daniel pericope is clearly the centerpiece of his introductory remarks. Jeroschin takes his lead in this from the "Prologue" to the Order's Rule, which also cites Daniel. See Chapter 2 above.

51 Ziesemer overlooks this fact when he portrays Jeroschin as being more secular than Dusburg. To be sure -- Jeroschin omits several of Dusburg's Biblical citations. But simple tallying of named Biblical passages cannot be viewed, in itself, as an accurate indicator of religious fervor.

52 Hesler's introduction to his Apokalypse had shown this same concern for affirming a scrupulously orthodox Trinity (Apok. v. 1 ff.).

Another theological issue which caused much concern in Jeroschin's day and which had, as yet, not been definitively settled was the immaculate conception of Mary. Jeroschin's high Mariology and his zeal to be scrupulously orthodox lead him to make repeated explicit and implicit affirmations of Mary's purity.

Chapter 3; Kron. v. 93-114). Jeroschin begins by quoting Nebuchadnezzar, when the king says:

Zeichin unde wundir hot  
getan bi mir der hoe got;  
des wil ich sine zeichin bloz  
predigen, want di sint groz,  
und kundin sine wundir  
want si sint starc besundir:

Almighty God has shown me signs  
and wonders. I shall proclaim his  
signs, for they are great and  
pronounce his miracles, for they  
are indeed mighty.

Kron. v. 87-92

got hat zeichen groz getan  
und wunder starc bi mir began.

God has shown great signs and  
performed mighty deeds in my  
presence.

Kron. v. 113-114 53

Jeroschin then focuses upon Prussia, quoting his own grandmaster and patron:

Di selbin wort wol eigintlich  
von Aldinburc brudir Diterich,  
des dutschin ordins homeistir,  
mac sprechin, sint ein reistir  
gevurstent er in dirre vrist  
der lande da zu Pruzin ist:  
Zeichin unde wundirtat  
der hoe got begangin hat  
bi mir in Pruzinlande  
in schichtin manchirhande  
an mines ordins kindin  
den brudrin, . . .

Brother Dietrich von Altenburg,  
Grandmaster of the Teutonic Order  
spoke indeed these same words -  
he who at this time was the  
ruling prince in the land of  
Prussia. Almighty God has shown  
me signs and miracles here in  
Prussia through frequent  
happenings involving my Order  
children, the Brothers.

Kron. v. 115-126

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53 This second passage reiterates the first and provides a lead-in to the same sentiments expressed by Grandmaster Dietrich von Altenburg.

These verses from Daniel provide excellent examples of Hebrew parallelism: expressing the same thought twice, with only slightly varied words and images. Jeroschin is, here and elsewhere, quite successful in translating and then adapting this rhetorical technique into his Middle High German.

Jeroschin now treats his listeners to a splendid example of refined Biblical imagery -- the likes of which so characterize his work. The oven glows seven times hotter than normal (Dan. 3: 19), but the youths survive, demonstrating their faithfulness and the power of God to protect them. Similarly Prussia, the testing hearth for the Order brothers, once flamed in the heat of seven-fold woes. But the knights, through their own efforts and with divine help, heroically prevailed against this testing fire.

(continuing Jeroschin's periodic sentence  
cited above . . .)

. . . mines ordins kindin  
den brudrin, di vor swindin  
notin ofte hat irlost  
sin vil zeichinlichir trost  
in des ovens getwenge  
gehorsamlichir strenge,  
der in was sibirwerf geeit  
mit sibinvaldir jamirkeit.  
Hitze, vrost, durst, hungirsnott,  
wundin, bant, den bittrrin tot  
dem oven si inmitten  
durch got mit willen litten,  
also daz ir menlichir mut  
in der mertirlichin glut  
ni wart vorsert mit ungedult  
(als ir hernach horin sult,  
wil got, daz wir gereichin  
zu der materien zeichin).

. .the Brothers to whom (He) has  
often shown His great consolation  
in the face of perilous need in  
the oven's confines. The oven was  
heated seven times over with  
seven-fold travail. Temperature,  
frost, thirst, starvation,  
wounds, exile, bitter death are  
contained in that oven, but  
endured (by the knights) at God's  
bidding in a way that their  
virile courage, in the glow of  
martyrdom, was never tainted with  
failing steadfastness.

Kron. v. 125-142

Jeroschin's introduction contains a second Biblical image which he includes almost as an aside. It is, however, of great interest to us. Beyond demonstrating

Jeroschin's art once again, this Biblical allusion further shows that internal stresses still plagued the Order. Jeroschin, it seems, had very personal reasons to temper his own general feelings of optimism.

Jeroschin tells his listeners that he had begun his translation under Grandmaster Luder von Braunschweig. With bitterness he reports that his substantial first manuscript <sup>54</sup> had been torn up "like Joseph's coat by a vicious animal" (Gen. 37: 23). <sup>55</sup> Only at the insistence

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<sup>54</sup> Jeroschin states that his first manuscript had been four quinterns in length ("quinternen me wen vire" Kron. v. 189). This means about 80 pages (Lorenz) or 6,000 verses (Eis). The entire work contains nearly 28,000 verses and covers 322 double columned pages in the Strehlke edition.

For purposes of comparison: Goethe's entire Faust (Parts I and II) numbers less than 17,000 verses; the Order's Passional numbers in excess of 110,000 verses.

<sup>55</sup>

Ich weiz, iz ist gnuc luten  
 kunt,  
 daz ich hatte vor der stunt  
 ouch zu tichtene begunt  
 bi meistir Ludere  
 (so got sin sele nere!)  
 diz buch dur sine bete  
 und des geschriben hete  
 quinternen me wen vire,  
 di von dem argen tire  
 vortilgit wurdin, goteweiz!  
 daz Josephis roc zureiz.  
 Davon, swaz ich nu mache,  
 des ist gar ein sache  
 der homeistir Ditirich.

of the succeeding grandmaster, Dietrich von Altenburg, <sup>56</sup> we in fact discover, was Jeroschin pressured into completing his work. (Kron. v. 177 ff.; 193 ff.).

Jeroschin uses his powerful Biblical image of Joseph's torn coat to broach the topic of a tense situation in which he himself was embroiled. Beyond personal animosities, this incident seems to indicate broader problems and conflicts still lingering within the Order. <sup>57</sup> Proposed explanations have ranged from

I realize many people know that, before this present time, I had already begun to compose this book under Grandmaster Luder (God preserve his soul!). At his bidding, I had written more than four quinterns of it which, God knows, were destroyed by the wild beast who shredded Joseph's coat. As a result, that which I now write is commissioned by Grandmaster Dietrich.

<sup>56</sup> Grandmaster Dietrich von Altenburg (1335-1341) was in every way a worthy successor to Luder von Braunschweig. Dietrich was especially zealous in continuing Luder's active support of literature and architecture. Under Dietrich, the Marienburg attained its finished form. Dietrich also saw to the carving and erecting of the famous twenty-six foot statue of Mary in the eastern, outside niche of the castle church. Notwithstanding praise bestowed upon him as a "patron of the arts" (eg., Goenner, Mary-Verse, p. 199, note #48), Dietrich, like Luder, supported literature and architecture principally because he saw them as serving a practical purpose.

<sup>57</sup> This was not the first time that an Order writer had been forced to cope with hostile opposition. Indeed, such complaints occurred with striking frequency.

Heinrich Hesler (so often Jeroschin's kindred spirit) complains that on one occasion he was "hit in the mouth" (vor den munt geschorft) because an incensed brother was dissatisfied with his rendering of a particular verse (Apok. v. 16,459 ff.).

In the face of "hate and envy" (hazzen unde niden)

theorized factionalism stemming from efforts to tighten the Order Rule, <sup>58</sup> to a postulated conservative reaction against Jeroschin's free treatment of Biblical stories and of Order history. <sup>59</sup> These theories, incidentally, might

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the author of the Passional hides his identity and appeals to his grandmaster and patron for protection:

daz ich so maniges niden  
muz umme dit buch liden  
und hinderwart bose wort  
die mir beide hie unde dort  
min gut wort underbrechen.

For the sake of this book, I have had to endure much envy and many secretive, mean-spirited words. This has disrupted my writing on repeated occasions.

Das Alte Passional, herausgegeben von K. A. Hahn  
(Frankfurt: Druck und Verlag von Heinrich Ludwig Broenner,  
1845), p. 333, v. 66-70.

The translator of Hester anticipates opposition to his work by immediately addressing eventual critics. As a part of his introduction (v. 37-45), he singles out listeners who might be angered (der sich dar an ergeren wil) and pleads for their understanding.

Brother Philipp's Marienleben seeks, in a similar way, to anticipate and thus disarm criticism (v. 10,094-10,109) and the author of Esdras und Neemyas (v. 24-28), confronts criticism by declaring "I will decide myself" (Daz wil ich noch selber mazen). See Chapter 3 above.

<sup>58</sup> The theory of factionalism arising out of Luder von Braunschweig's reform efforts seems to have been first proposed by Franz Pfeiffer in his review of Goedeke's then-appearing Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung [Germania, II (1857), p. 503]. It has been repeated often since then in handbooks and monographs, e.g., Bauer, "Peter von Dusburg", p. 56, note #1.

<sup>59</sup> One recalls (Kron. v. 196-220 and v. 26,556-26,570; see Note #6 above) that Jeroschin identifies himself as the author of the Kronike so that others might not be held responsible for his translations.

also serve to explain the grisly assassination of Grandmaster Werner von Orseln in 1330. Jeroschin's dirge for the grandmaster and his complaint against the assassin, "brudir Johan" (Kron. v. 27,509 ff.), are particularly memorable.<sup>60</sup> This sad case of brother slaying brother in personal and/or factional jealousy leads Jeroschin to cite and expand upon the story of Cain's murder of Abel (Kron. v. 27,554 ff.; Genesis, Chapter 4). Jeroschin artfully and astutely points out that Johan's murder of Grandmaster Werner von Orseln was, in a very real sense, more heinous than Cain's slaying of Abel. Cain slew only a brother, whereas Johan slew both his brother and his father.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Johann von Eindorf. This is a striking case of a great poet's immortalizing an individual who, save for the poet's eloquence in describing his evil deed, would be faceless and forgotten to history.

<sup>61</sup>

O we, Johan, o we, Johan,  
 du hast vil ubele getan!  
 Kain sluc den brudir sin;  
 noch grozir ist di schulde din,  
 want du irmortis gatir  
 brudir unde vatir.

Kron. v. 27,553-27,558

Oh woe, Johann, Oh woe Johann, you have done great evil! Cain killed his brother. Much greater is your guilt, because you murdered at the same time both brother and father.

To conclude this chapter on Nicolaus von Jeroschin, it is appropriate that we return to one final example of Jeroschin's powerful and purposeful story-telling genius (Kron. v. 4,655-4,744). In it, Jeroschin addresses the perennial issue of the Order's corporate survival and the Knights' struggle to keep its institutional ideals alive.

A warrior-monk of the Order, zealous to be holy but deceived by the Devil, decided to leave the Teutonic Order. The Prince of Evil had planted in his mind the idea that, as a knight-monk, he would lose his soul. A soldier-monk, so the Devil argued, did not lead a sufficiently prayerful life. The knight therefore resolved to seek acceptance in another, more devotional order. But in a dream, St. Bernard, St. Francis, St. Dominic and St. Augustine -- the founders and patrons of other orders -- appeared to him. The knight pleaded successively with each saint that he and his brothers be accepted into their orders. With each pleading, however, the knight received a categorical rejection. Then Mary, the Protectress of his own Teutonic Order, appeared to him, resplendent and at the head of a retinue of Ordensritter. Crestfallen and penitent, the knight asked to remain with Her. The Queen of Mercy reached out and accepted him back, but only after meting out a stinging



reproof, aimed at both him and other faint-hearted  
knights: 62

Nein, nein, iz invugt dir nicht  
want dich, tummir affe,  
dunkit, daz do slaffe  
din ordin allis jochis vrie  
und daz darinne nicht insie  
zu lidene nach dinre ger!"

No, no. This cannot be, because  
you seem to think, you stupid  
monkey, that your Order sleeps,  
free from all discipline and that  
it doesn't have the character to  
suffer as you would wish.

Kron. v. 4,702-4,707

With these words, Mary drew back the white mantles of  
the Order brothers around her, revealing the scars and

62 There were at least two dramatic cases in Order history of ranking members leaving the Teutonic Order to join another brotherhood. In 1245, Grandmaster Gerhard of Malberg fled to join the Templars. Even more hurtful was the memory of Grandmaster Burkhard of Schwanden's going over to the Hospitalers during the last desperate days of the siege of Acre in 1290. Laws II d and e of the Order Rule address the problem of individuals leaving the Order.

Grandmaster Karl von Trier (1311-1324) caused great consternation when he simply left Prussia to return to his Rhineland home (See Chapter 1 above). Though his precipitous action left the Order awash for a considerable time, there is no indication that he sought admission into another religious order.

It is characteristic of Jeroschin's more confident and objective outlook that he discusses in detail the case of Burkhard von Schwanden (Kron. v. 18,192-18,292). Dusburg, in his Chronicon, skips over it lightly (Chron. IV 70, p. 205).

See Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici ex Tabularii Regii Berolinensis Codice Potissimum, herausgegeben von Ernst Strehlike (Berlin: Weidmann, 1867 / Jerusalem: H. E. Meyer, 1975), #483 (1245), p. 361. Also #486 and #488 I b IV.

See: Sterns, pp. 109-110.

Eric Christiansen, The Northern Crusades (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 75.

death wounds Her warriors had received in defending Her  
and the Church of Her Son. 63

. . . .Nu sich!  
mac daz icht gedunkin dich,  
daz hi dise brudre din  
icht gelidin habin pin  
durch den minnesamen  
Jesu Cristi namen?

See here! Doesn't this make it  
sink into your head that these,  
your brothers, have suffered  
torment in the blessed name of  
Jesus Christ?

Kron. v. 4,717-4,722

The wayward brother then awoke and went straightway  
to confess his fault before the assembled community.  
Shortly thereafter he, too, met a martyr's death in an  
encounter with the heathens (Kron. v. 4,723 ff.).

Damitte vur di vrouwe her  
und zoch di mentele besit  
den bruderin, di in der zit  
bi ir alda stundin,  
und wiste im di wundin  
und di slege manicvalt,  
damit si in den tot gevalt  
warn durch des geloubin schirm  
von den heidin ungehirm

Kron. v. 4,708-4,716

## Conclusion

In the same decade that Nicolaus von Jeroschin completed his Kronike von Pruzinlant, the anonymous author of Historien des Alden E <sup>1</sup> presented to his brothers their final Biblical translation. The Biblically-based, literary tradition of the Teutonic Order appropriately ended as the Order emerged from its generation of crisis and stood on the threshold of its great age of prosperity and power. <sup>2</sup> This is not to say that Ordensland Prussia

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 3 above.

<sup>2</sup> The grandmastership of Winrich von Kniprode (1352-1382) is generally looked upon as the Golden Age of the Teutonic Order. It spans the years between the Treaty of Kalisch (1343) with Casimir the Great of Poland and the ominous marriage of Prince Jagiello of Lithuania and Jadwiga of Poland (1385) which created the united and Christian Kingdom of Poland-Lithuania. The year 1410 and the Battle of Tannenberg marked not only the definitive end of the Order's great age, but also the beginning of the end for its very existence in Prussia.

See the timeline of Order history in the Introduction above.

Helmut Bauer makes the following statement at the conclusion of his chapter on Dusburg and Jeroschin. The same thought is later echoed by Helm and Zieseemer.

Es ist auffällig, dass die Blüte der Ordensliteratur nicht zusammenfällt mit der politischen Höhe des Ordens unter Winrich von Kniprode, sondern vorher liegt.

It is remarkable that the blossoming of Ordensliteratur does not occur at the same time as the political peak of the Order under (Grandmaster) Winrich von

ceased producing literature altogether, or even that literature of a religious and historical nature stopped. But in the words of Odilo Engels, what had been "ordensintern" gave way to "ordensfremd" expression.<sup>3</sup> Such works as Johann von Marienwerder's Life of Dorothea von Montau and Johann von Posilge's Prussian Chronicle were written beyond the walls of the Order houses by men for whom Old Testament models and crusading vows appeared irrelevant. The new authors represented the values and interests of the lay burghers in the towns.<sup>4</sup> This was a nascent provincial literature in the true sense of the

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Kniprode, but occurs before it.

It is hoped that this dissertation, identifying as it does a generation of crisis and a literary response to this crisis, provides a response to this wonderment.

Helmut Bauer, "Peter von Dusburg und die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens im 14. Jahrhunderts in Preussen," Historische Studien, Heft 272 (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Emil Ebering, 1935), p. 59.

Karl Helm und Walter Zieseimer, Die Literatur des Deutschen Ritterordens (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1951), p. 165.

<sup>3</sup> "Internal to the Order" / "foreign to the Order." Odilo Engels, "Zur Historiographie des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter," Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 48 (1966), pp. 336-363.

<sup>4</sup> A "Wappenherold" named Wigand von Marburg composed a Reimchronik at the end of the fourteenth century. This work survives only in fragments and in a Latin version. Wigand's descriptions of lusty battle scenes reflect the interests of the secular knightly class who fought Lithuanians for sport and booty during this period.

word. It was foreign, and at times even hostile, to the Teutonic Order.<sup>5</sup>

Surveying the literary production of the Teutonic Order during its generation of crisis (approx. 1295-1345), one may confidently say that this literature of Biblical self-definition and self-defense fulfilled its purpose admirably. It would, of course, be absurd to claim that the Marienritter survived whereas the Templars perished simply because the German brothers listened nightly to readings from Luder's Makkabäerbuch and Jeroschin's Kronike. But by the same token, the Order's Biblical literature, both in its composition and in its strictly regimented and enforced adhibition, was itself part and parcel of the dramatic struggle for survival.<sup>6</sup> It was

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5 In terms of the paradigm put forward in Chapter 3, there ceased to be a clustering of characteristic indicators around these later chronicles needed to qualify them as Deutschordensliteratur. Furthermore, Biblical translations, which had been the wellspring of all Deutschordensliteratur, ceased completely.

6 It is interesting to note that after the Battle of Tannenberg in 1410, and with increasing desperation after the First and Second Treaties of Thorn (1411 and 1466), Order brothers struggled once again with external threats and internal decline. The long-term pressure would lead this time to the Order's dissolution in 1525. In this new age of crisis, the Order once again commissioned chronicles which Odilo Engels classifies as "ordensintern" and which show several of the indicators characteristic of the earlier Deutschordensliteratur. The Ältere Hochmeisterchronik and the Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik are the two significant examples of this neo-defensive literature. These well-meaning but pitiful works attempt,

both an instrument for survival and a record of that very struggle.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, to an ideologically committed organization in an age of faith, the motivating power of Biblical words must not be underestimated, especially as these words flowed into tales of local saints and legends of the founding fathers. Ideological commitment has always shaped and directed the outward actions of men.<sup>8</sup> And for the group and age in question, the hortative words of the Order's Biblical literature lay bare its deepest

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as of old, to glorify the early days of the Order in Prussia. They tell once again of exemplary heroism in battle and abstemiousness in daily life. A prose expansion of the Book of Esther provides a faint echo of the Order's earlier Biblical translations.

7 At the Council of Constance (1414-1418), Poland brought suit against the Teutonic Order. The grand-master's proctor, Peter Wormditt, defended the Order in the old and time-honored way. He reminded the assembled churchmen that, when Satan had sent pagan hordes against the Poles, the Teutonic Order arrived as God's Maccabees to fight His war of defense.

E. Weise, Die Staatsschriften des Deutschen Ordens, Veröffentlichungen der Niedersächsischen Archivverwaltung XXVII (Göttingen, 1970) as quoted by:

Eric Christiansen, The Northern Crusade (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 223.

8 This statement might appear trite. Nevertheless, my exhaustive work with primary and secondary German sources in this study leaves me with the general feeling that English-speaking historians would do well to concern themselves more intensively with what their German colleagues term Geistesgeschichte. On the other hand, German historians, in their quest to grasp elusive Zeitgeiste (see, for example, Introduction, note #12), would do well at times to temper their zeal with a healthy dose of Anglo-Saxon descriptive pragmatism.

motivating commitments.

"So he armed every one of them, not with defence of shield and spear, but with very good speeches and exhortations."

II Maccabees 15: 11

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In his book Feudal Germany, a work to which English-speakers still turn to learn about the Germanic eastern movement of the Middle Ages, James Westfall Thompson cites, in German, the following passage describing the early settlers:

"Wer mit der einen Hand den Pflug fasst und die andere am Schwertgriff halten muss, der hat für die Feder keine frei."

He who holds the plow in one hand and must keep his other hand on the hilt of a sword, that man has no hand free to hold the quill.

9

Thompson is dead wrong. And it is dishearteningly ironic that the formulation Thompson cites corresponds so closely to a Biblical passage which the Teutonic Order loved and repeated often in its rich literature -- Nehemiah 4: 16-18. Disheartening too is the fact that Thompson's source is Heinrich von Treitschke, the nineteenth century Prussian imperialist who distorted Order history in this and so many other ways. <sup>10</sup> Clearly, the Biblical literature of the Teutonic Order stands in

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9 James Westfall Thompson, Feudal Germany (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 588.

10 Heinrich von Treitschke, Das deutsche Ordensland Preussen (Leipzig: Insel-Bücherei Nr. 182, 1915).

defiance of Thompson and Treitschke. The muses were not silent in the armed ranks of the Teutonic Order, but their song was of arms and men; of an Old Testament warrior God; and of a divine Protectress who was merciful, yet mighty in war. This was a literature of determined purpose and only under this aspect of purposefulness are Treitschke-like categorical statements appropriate:

Nirgens sonst in der altdeutschen  
Versdichtung geht es so  
ausnahmslos um die Richtigkeit  
und Zweckdienlichkeit des Inhalts  
wie in der Deutschordens-  
literatur.

Nowhere else in Old German poetry  
is there such an invariable  
concern with correctness and  
purposefulness of content as  
there is in the literature of the  
Teutonic Order.

11

The Zweckdienlichkeit ("purpose-servingness") of the Order's officially commissioned and rigorously applied literature stands out as clearly as does the purposeful presence of the Ordensburgen which still dominate the landscape of old Preussenland. One sees expressed in the Order's castles the same ethos in brick and mortar that Order literature expresses in word and poetic cadence. <sup>12</sup>

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11 Gerhard Eis, "Die Literatur im Deutschen Ritterorden und in seinen Einflussgebieten," Ostdeutsche Wissenschaft, Jahrbuch des Ostdeutschen Kulturrates 9 (München, 1962), p. 58.

12 The most important of the Biblical translators, as well as Nicolaus von Jeroschin in his Kronike, expressed themselves in German verse. The conscious and deliberate way in which these poets constructed their verse and their strict adherence to an accepted model tells a great deal about them, about their poems and about their Order. In matters of prosody, as in matters of



Stated conversely and perhaps even more fittingly, the Makkabäerbuch and other literary works of the Order are defensive fortresses of the spirit in the form of word, rhyme and pulsating iambs.

The symbolic correspondence between the Order's Biblical words and its fortifying stone is strikingly appropriate, eliciting as it does the kind of concrete, late medieval imagery of which the warrior-monks themselves would have approved. A further elaboration of this metaphor thus provides a fitting summary and conclusion to these chapters on the Biblical literature of the Teutonic Order.

The Marienburg presents to the world a harsh and foreboding exterior.<sup>13</sup> The uniform lines of unadorned

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theology and exegesis, Order brothers were neither innovators nor were they particularly gifted. But Order poets consciously thought about and deliberately applied the outward forms of "bound speech." The Order's two greatest poets, Heinrich Hesler and Nicolaus von Jeroschin, both interrupt their narratives to address formal considerations involving the use of German verse (Hesler: Apok. v. 1,328-1,482; Jeroschin: Kron. v. 236-301). This was the first time since the ninth century poet Otfried von Weissenburg that vernacular poets had done so. Such explicit concern for exact form and rigidly correct structure provides dramatic insight into the disciplined ethos of the entire brotherhood of Christian soldiers. The severe and controlled cadence of the Makkabäerbuch would purvey the Marianer ideals of order, discipline and obedience even if the denotative content of its Biblical words were entirely lacking.

13 During my travels through the old Order lands in the autumn of 1975, my memorable visit to the Marienburg was without question the high point. To the undying

brick and mortar announce stern Cistercian purposefulness and functionality. Local materials of Prussian clay, sand and lime were employed in its construction, but these Prussian bricks were laid according to fundamental designs first learned and developed in Palestine. The very name of this and other fortresses -- Marienburg, Thorn (Torun), Starkenburg (Monfort) -- evoke memories of the Order's earlier service in Christ's own land where the Maccabees had once fought. Within the Marienburg were displayed only such objects of art as would serve to edify the warrior-monks. The most striking example of this was a mural depicting the Maccabees, along with life-sized portraits of the Order's grandmasters -- the successors to these same Maccabees. A great, twenty-six-foot statue of the Virgin adorned the outside of the apse of the castle

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credit of the Polish nation and people, the Marienburg has been restored to its original glory after its destruction in 1945. The Marienburg has, from its beginning, been a structure rich in symbolism and historical importance. This most recent event, the Marienburg's faithful restoration by the very people who have good reason to despise it, imparts to the old fortress a new and most becoming symbolic significance: that of human reconciliation and tolerant objectivity toward the past.

church. <sup>14</sup> The Madonna was clad in mosaic tile, preserving the Byzantine features She had presented in the Holy Land where the knights first learned to love Her and seek Her guidance and protection. Mary stood outside and high upon the eastern of the church so that She might gaze eastward over Her new land -- a land which still awaited complete redemption from pagan darkness through the efforts of Her beloved sons, the New Maccabees of the Teutonic Order. <sup>15</sup>

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The introduction to this dissertation states that it would seek to broaden understanding of the Teutonic Order through an examination of the Order's Biblical literature. A secondary, but important related goal was to be the illumination of at least a small area in the general darkness of our knowledge concerning the Bible and its use during the late Middle Ages. It is to this second matter

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<sup>14</sup> R. Bergan, "Die mosaicierte Marienstatue zu Marienburg und deren Restauration," Altpreussische Monatsschrift 6 (1869), pp. 639-644.

" . . . wohl die grösste Statue des gesammten Mittelalters . . . "

Bergan, p.639

. . . certainly the largest statue of the entire Middle Ages . . .

<sup>15</sup> This Order's beloved statue of Mary was utterly destroyed in 1945 and has not been replaced.

that we now direct our concluding remarks.

The simple existence of the Order's eleven German translations of Biblical books refutes at least two persistent, yet false notions concerning the Bible in the Middle Ages: 1) Martin Luther was certainly not the first to translate the Bible into German <sup>16</sup> and 2) the Roman Catholic Church never issued and never enforced any general ban against vernacular Scripture. <sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> For a brief and systematic listing of the pre-Luther German Bibles, see:

Paul Heinz Vogel, "Die deutsche Bibel vor Luther," Libri 7 (1956), pp. 269-278.

The definitive work on vernacular Bibles of the pre-Luther period is:

Wilhelm Walter, Die Deutsche Bibelübersetzung des Mittelalters (Braunschweig: H. Wollermann, 1889-1892 / Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1966), 3 Bände.

<sup>17</sup> The best general treatment of this matter is:

Friedrich Kropatscheck, Das Schriftprinzip der lutherischen Kirche (Leipzig: Deichert, 1904). Volume 1 of this work is entitled Das Erbe des Mittelalters, with Chapter 3 addressing the topic: "Das sogenannte Bibelverbot der Kirche."

This book is by a Lutheran apologist, written at a time of confessional polarization in Germany. Such a background notwithstanding, Kropatscheck's chapter is a model of scholarly objectivity. He is cited and praised by his Catholic colleague, Hans Rost, who addresses the same issue of vernacular Bibles from the point of view of a devout Roman Catholic.

Hans Rost, Die Bibel im Mittelalter: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Bibliographie der Bibel (Augsburg: Kommissions-Verlag M. Steitz, 1939), p. 66 ff., especially

Considering first the more general issue of the Church's position vis-à-vis vernacular Scripture, the translating work of the Teutonic Order provides us with a near perfect model. The Order's free and unimpeded translating project demonstrates clearly that the Church did not object to Scripture in the vernacular. But the medieval Church did move vigorously and decisively to confront and subdue insubordination and heresy. The vernacular translations of the Albigensians and the Waldensians, of Wycliffe and Hus were unacceptable to the Church because they were produced by aberrant groups and individuals who were insubordinate in matters of Church polity and heretical in matters of belief. The Lollards, for example, translated without Church approval and Church supervision and they went on to use their Scriptures to teach and thus further promulgate their unacceptable independence and heterodoxy. The idea of Scripture in the vernacular, per se, did not alarm the Church under the condition that proper Church authorities could 1) supervise the translating process and 2) control any and all teaching based upon these (or any other) Scriptures. <sup>18</sup>

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pp. 78-79.

<sup>18</sup> The medieval Church did not consider direct acquaintance with the Bible to be necessary for salvation. Generally speaking, there was no official encouragement of private Bible reading among the laity. But the Church in no wise forbade the private study of the Bible, whether in

The translating of the Teutonic Order provides a clear case of the process being carried out with prudence, propriety and scrupulous orthodoxy.<sup>19</sup> The Teutonic Order was hardly interested in flouting Rome. Quite to the contrary, one of the important goals of the whole translating project was to improve the Order's status in the eyes of the religious establishment. As has been noted frequently in the preceding chapters, the Order translators introduced their works with statements of abject obedience to the Universal Church and its Pope. Christ, the Trinity, the Holy Spirit and Mary are invoked for guidance and they are described with scrupulous orthodoxy. Translators insist again and again that the

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Latin or in the vernacular.

See: W. B. Lockwood, "The Vernacular Scriptures: Germany and the Low Countries," The Cambridge History of the Bible, edited by G. W. H. Lampe (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1969), Volume 2, Chapter 9, p. 435.

<sup>19</sup> The case of the Teutonic Order and its translating project is all the more striking for the fact that, during its period of crisis, the Order would have been the last to undertake anything theologically questionable or politically dangerous.

The French translation prepared for St. Louis during his sojourn in the Holy Land (1250-1254) is another good example of vernacular Scripture being commissioned by a true son of the Church.

See: C. A. Robson, "The Vernacular Scriptures: France," The Cambridge History of the Bible, edited by G. W. H. Lampe (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1969), Volume 2, Chapter 9, pp. 443-444.

Vulgate text and their approved German renderings are to be copied with absolute fidelity. All the Order translators repeatedly state that the ordained clergy are the only appropriate interpreters of the Scripture, which the brothers are privileged to hear in the vernacular. <sup>20</sup> The Daniel translator -- an ordained priest himself -- hammers home this point with the most jarring frequency, but the words to the same effect by Luder von Braunschweig are even more moving. Luder was the scion of a princely house, the powerful grandmaster of a military-religious order and the learned master of languages who could translate from Latin into the standard German of his day. But he was a layman. <sup>21</sup> As a layman, he humbly deferred to his Order's clergy concerning matters of correct interpretation.

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It is clear that the Order's caution and subservience in its Biblical interpretations precluded any striking originality: there was certainly no distinctive

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<sup>20</sup> Hesler was hit in the face by an enraged brother who took issue with at least part of Hesler's German translation of the Book of Revelation. Hesler continued his work, however, finding strength in the fact that he was answerable to the ordained clergy, not to the whim of an individual brother. See Chapter 3 above.

"Exegetical School of the Teutonic Order." But, by the same token, what Order translator-exegetes did have to say belies Beryl Smalley's blanket assertions characterizing the entire 14th and 15th centuries as a time of uninspired decline.<sup>22</sup> The Teutonic Order's contributions in the realm of Biblical hermeneutics were modest and circumscribed to say the least, but they bear witness to the fact that there was not complete silence between the death of Nicolaus of Lyra and the coming of the Reformation.

Order commentators never consciously innovated in their explication of Scripture; they always sought to understand and explain in sensu patrum, thus preserving scrupulous orthodoxy. But the interesting fact emerges that the Order did show some progressive tendencies and that these tendencies arose out of the Order's very zeal to preserve what was old, safe and orthodox. In a similar ideological dynamic, the Cistercian Order, the spiritual parent of the Teutonic Order, came into being as a "new"

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Quantum differt lux a tenebris,  
tantum differt ordo sacerdotum  
a laicis.

Honorius Augustodunensis

As much as light differs from shadows, that much the order of priests differs from the laity.

<sup>22</sup> Beryl Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952), p. 357.



Order because certain Benedictine brothers struggled to revive and preserve "old" values. <sup>23</sup> The Rule of the "New Monastery" which these reformers founded stipulated for itself and any daughter houses that nothing new be tolerated.

"St. Stephen (Harding) was a declared enemy of innovations under any shape and form . ."

"St. Bernard's principle was this: in the solemn service of God nothing novel or frivolous should be tolerated."

24

"New," to the Cistercians, meant "like unto and worthy of the old" <sup>25</sup> and it was in this sense that the

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<sup>23</sup> It is most enlightening to read the entries under "novus" in a comprehensive Latin dictionary, particularly one which includes medieval usage.

On the topic of "new as old/old as new" see:

J. Spörl, "Das Alte und Neue im Mittelalter," Historisches Jahrbuch, 50 (1930), p. 297 ff. and p. 498 ff.

Walter Freund, Modernus und andere Zeitbegriffe des Mittelalters (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1957 / Neue Münsterische Beiträge zur Geschichtsforschung, 4).

<sup>24</sup> A Father of the Abbey of Gethsemani, Compendium of the History of the Cistercian Order (Gethsemani, Kentucky: Order of Cistercians of Strict Observance, 1944), p. 131.

Louis J. Lekai, The Cistercians: Ideals and Reality (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University, 1977), pp. 250 and 253.

<sup>25</sup> This was the whole basis for the Teutonic Order's returning to its Rule as a means of saving itself. See Chapter 2 above.

Teutonic Order borrowed from the Cistercians such terms as New Maccabees, New Israel, New Jerusalem, New Promised Land and new kind of war. But, just as crusading conditions forced the Order brothers to combine within themselves the functions of knight and monk, so also the new (i.e. previously unknown) challenges of crusading in Prussia forced them to combine within themselves two ways of being "New" Maccabees. They were called to be the arch-conservative preservers of old values and they were expected to be bold innovators in the face of strange and novel exigencies.

This creative tension residing in the concept of "novus" is reflected in the Biblical translating and explicating of the Teutonic Order. The knights, as we have seen, fostered the memory of the Maccabees and thus played a progressive role in reviving the nearly forgotten Books of Maccabees. Because of their dangerous profession and their repeated reading of II Maccabees, the brothers of the Teutonic Order were, along with the Cistercians, forward-looking in their support of the still-developing doctrine of Purgatory. Similarly, their love for their Protectress led them, along with the Cistercians and Franciscans, to espouse the progressive cause of ever-expanding veneration of Mary. The Order took a firm position on such debated issues as Mary's immaculate

conception and Her bodily assumption into heaven.

The Order's contact with the Church Fathers, from whom they swore they would not stray in exegetical matters, generally came indirectly through the pages of Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica. This, as we have repeatedly seen in previous chapters, drew them perforce in certain directions. Comestor's literal-historical interest and his penchant for moral issues rather than speculative theology, <sup>26</sup> reinforced the Order's own practical and circumscribed Sinnhorizont. Accordingly, Order commentators quickly dropped complicated exegetical schemes such as the four senses of Scripture <sup>27</sup> and speculative Biblical epochs in human Heilsgeschichte. On the other hand, this same straightforwardness in exegetical procedure led the Order into a bold and innovative use of Old Testament prefiguration.

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<sup>26</sup> Martin Grabmann speaks of Peter Comestor, along with Peter Chanter and Stephen Langton as belonging to what he calls the "Biblical-Moral School" at the University of Paris during the mid-twelfth century.

Martin Grabmann, Geschichte der scholastischen Methode (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1957), Band 2, p. 476 ff.

<sup>27</sup> Commentary in the Order's Job translation struggles in the early chapters to follow St. Gregory's framework for explicating the several senses of Scripture. Quite soon, however, the whole approach is dropped, being clearly too complex and irrelevant for the writer and his audience. This is typical of Order commentaries.

From the time of the Church fathers, Biblical commentators always approached the Old Testament with confidence that what the Old Testament had to reveal found its fulfillment in the New Testament. Conversely, events in the New Testament could always be found prefigured in the Old Testament. Medieval commentators never thought to question St. Augustine's formulation of a given truth:

Et in Vetere Novum lateat,  
et Novo Vetus pateat.

St. Augustine 28

In the Old Testament the New  
Testament lies hidden. In the New  
Testament the Old Testament  
reveals itself.

According to this scheme, the New Testament speaks directly to the present, the Old Testament speaks to the present only after it has been rendered comprehensible and meaningful through the advent of Christ as described in the New Testament. Thus, Old Testament stories and teachings pass to the New Testament and the Christocentric New Testament speaks to the Christian in his present need.<sup>29</sup> The wonderful illustrations of the Biblia

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28 St. Augustinus, "Quaestio in Exodum, Cap. 73," Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1844-), Volume 34: 623.

29 For excellent discussions of this matter, see:

James Samuel Preus, From Shadow to Promise: Old Testament Interpretation from Augustine to Luther (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969).

Johan Chydenius, Medieval Institutions and the Old Testament (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1965).

pauparum make this routing of the Biblical logos absolutely explicit.<sup>30</sup>

Commentators of the Teutonic Order dutifully struggled to preserve this pious, unstated exegetical directive. The progression "Esther prefigures Mary and Mary, Christ's holy Mother, speaks to us" was sound commentary in the inherited sense. Awkward, anachronistic statements often attest to dutiful but frustrated efforts to explicate correctly. Not infrequently, however, Order writers bow to their own immediate instincts and Comestor's literal-historical model. They bypass the New Testament in their treatment of Old Testament prefigurations and say, in effect: "the Maccabees of old directly prefigure us today who are the New Maccabees." Though the writers themselves, in their theological innocence and naïveté did not realize it, this was an extremely bold innovation in the exegetical process. Even Martin Luther, two hundred years later, was cautious on this account. It was left to a very tentative John Calvin and then especially the Radical Reformers to carry to completion this independent use of the Old Testament.

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<sup>30</sup> See Chapter 5, note #54 above.

The Order's molding of the German vernacular constitutes a final area where the Order's Biblical work had a progressive theological influence in spite of its writers' best efforts simply to preserve what was old. Translations always prove to be more than simply translations. Martin Luther's Septemberbibel is history's greatest proof of this, but Luther had his precursors in the pious German translators of the Teutonic Order.

The classic age of Middle High German courtly literature, which preceded the generation of Deutschordensliteratur by approximately one hundred years, greatly deepened the expressive capabilities of the German language. But this was a courtly and secular literature. Theological and philosophical conceptualization in German had to develop elsewhere. In this realm, historians of the German language rightly turn first and foremost to the late medieval German mystics and the followers of the devotio moderna whose struggle it was to "express the inexpressible" of their direct and personal religious experiences.<sup>31</sup> But the sober, craftsman-like translating

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31 See, for example:

Adolf Bach, Die Geschichte der deutschen Sprache (Heidelberg: Quelle und Meyer, 1956).

John T. Waterman, A History of the German Language (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), p. 100 ff.

efforts of the Order writers ought not be overlooked. To be sure, the earthy, historical books of the Old Testament were the principal focus of these writers. But in realms dear to them, such as Purgatory and the veneration of the Virgin, they contributed to the store of German words and phrases which were to later express the theological content of the northern European Reformation.

The obvious question which emerges here is, of course, whether the Biblical translations of the Teutonic Order in any way influence the epoch-making translation of Martin Luther. Strong evidence, both circumstantial and textual, in fact supports the possibility.

Luther never traveled to Prussia, but he was aware of (and outspokenly critical of) the Teutonic Order as an ecclesiastical corporation. With the onset of the Reformation and the Order's crumbling situation vis-à-vis Poland in the early decades of the 16th century, Grand-master Albrecht von Brandenburg corresponded with Luther, petitioning his advice on possible courses of action. On the basis of this correspondence <sup>32</sup> and a journey to Wittenberg to confer with Luther face to face, Albrecht in 1525 abdicated as grandmaster and transformed Prussia into

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<sup>32</sup> "Exhortation to the Lords of the Teutonic Order." Cited in part above, in my Introduction.

a secular principality. <sup>33</sup>

Obviously, Martin Luther had abundant opportunity to learn of and perhaps use the Order's translations in his own hurried efforts to bring out a German Bible. The timing would have been right, especially for the first edition of the entire Bible, which Luther gave to his followers in 1534. There are, of course, no grave chronological reasons why he could not have used the Order's Apostele Tat and Apokalypse in his New Testament Septemberbibel (1522) or in his later revisions of both

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"Et vide mirabilia: ad Prussiam pleno cursu  
plenisque velis currit Euangelion.

Martin Luther

See the miracle! On a rapid course and under full sail the Gospel [i.e. the Reformation] hastens to Prussia.

Martin Luther, "Prologus: Deuteronomion Mosi cum annotationibus," Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Weimar: Hermann Böhlau, 1895, Band 14, p. 499.

For overviews of the end of Order rule and the secularization of Prussia, see:

Harry G. Plum, The Teutonic Order and its Secularization (Iowa City: The University Press, 1906).

Walter Hubatsch, "Der Ausgang des Ordensstaat in Preussen," Eckpfeiler Europas (Heidelberg: Quellen und Meyer, 1953).

Walter Hubatsch, "Die inneren Voraussetzungen der Säkularisation des deutschen Ordensstaates in Preussen," Archive für Reformationsgeschichte 43 (1952), p. 145-172.



New and Old Testaments culminating in the definitive 1545 Ausgabe letzter Hand. It is true, of course, that Luther was extremely critical of the Teutonic Order as an ecclesiastical organization and that many of the books which were particularly dear to the Order, such as I and II Maccabees, Luther relegated to the secondary status of Apocrypha. Luther also strove to go back to the original Greek and Hebrew tongues and thus bypass Jerome's Latin upon which the Order's translations were based.

Nonetheless, Luther would have had reason to at least consult Order translations, assuming that Grandmaster (later Duke) Albrecht had made them available to him. In the pressure of his translating labors, Luther would have had in the Order translations provisional German formulations in what was essentially his own dialect.<sup>34</sup> The Order's translations were unencumbered with scholastic accretions which Luther detested and they emanated the kind of moral earnestness to which Luther would have certainly responded.

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34 Even if the Order translators contributed nothing else to prepare the way for Luther, they and the Order in general played a significant role in spreading the Eastern Middle German dialect of the colonial borderlands. Luther later used this dialect as the basis for the compromise language of his epoch-making translation. Furthermore, the direct and earthy German of such Order translators Claus Cranc and Nicolaus von Jeroschin demonstrates admirably that Martin Luther was not the first translator "dem Volke aufs Maul zu schauen, wie sie reden."

Luther's very aversion to many of the books the Order loved -- Judith, I and II Maccabees, Revelation -- actually enhances the possibility that he might have used the Order's renderings of them. As Luther's translations show and as he himself freely admitted, Luther concentrated his efforts upon those books which he deemed particularly transparent to his Gospel of Grace through Faith. To provide more time for work on his favored "canon within the canon," Luther superficially rushed through such books as the "too Jewish" Book of Esther and the "confusing" Book of Revelations." <sup>35</sup> It was while working with such Scriptures as these that Luther did most of his "corner-cutting" by cribbing from earlier German translations. To this end, Order translations might well have stood on his shelf beside other translations it is known that he used.

Tentative textual studies comparing Luther's Septemberbibel of 1522 with Order translations have been conducted by Walter Ziesemer, the Germanist so closely associated with the literature of the Teutonic Order. After examining both the Prophetenbuch <sup>36</sup> and the Apostele

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<sup>35</sup> Other possible cases: Luther would have found help in translating the Minor Prophets in Claus Cranc's Prophetenbuch and in translating his Apostelgeschichte (Acts) in the Order's Apostele Tat.

<sup>36</sup> Helm und Ziesemer, Die Literatur des Deutschen

tat,<sup>37</sup> Zieseemer tentatively concludes that Martin Luther did not know and use the Order's translations. He surmises that the striking similarities of phonology, morphology, syntax and orthography between Claus Cranc and the anonymous Apostele translator on the one hand and Martin Luther on the other can be explained by their common use of an increasingly standardized Eastern Middle German, separated though they were by nearly two hundred years.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, the issue of the influence of Order Biblical translations upon the translation of Martin Luther remains open.<sup>39</sup> The pages of nearly identical parallel texts which Walter Zieseemer has compiled,

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Ritterordens, pp. 124-126.

37 Walter Zieseemer, "Einleitung," Eine ostdeutsche Apostelgeschichte des 14. Jahrhunderts (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1927 / Altdeutsche Texte, 24).

38 See note #34 above.

39 One possible path of influence traces the following course:

The first complete, printed Bible in the German language was the so-called Mentel Bible (Strassburg, 1466). Few question that this translation influenced Luther. Though this version was ultimately printed in Strassburg, far to the west, its provenance was one hundred and fifty years earlier in German-speaking Bohemia. There, the time and place were right to receive influence from one or several of the Order's canon of Biblical books. In this way, the Order's translations well might have influenced Luther through the intermediary Mentel translation.

juxtaposing Luther's Apostelgeschichte and Der Apostele tat, taunt the ambitious researcher to further and deeper study.

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"To know Martin Luther's German Bible," so goes the oft-repeated dictum, "is to know and understand him and his religious movement." <sup>40</sup> The same may be said with equal validity concerning the Teutonic Knights and their translations of Holy Writ. By this standard, few people know and understand the Teutonic Order. Nevertheless, virtually every modern textbook which so much as mentions these warrior-monks, casts them in a negative and condemning light. Clearly, any fair and meaningful historical assessment of the Ordensritter must take into full account what they themselves had to say in their own defense. The judgment of historians has fallen heavily upon the Teutonic Order in the past. A revised judgment which fairly weighs the Order's own Biblical apologia will surely fall less harshly.

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<sup>40</sup> For a recent, popular treatment of this and other matters relevant to the present topic, see:

John H. P. Reumann, The Romance of Bible Scripts and Scholars: Chapters in the History of Bible Transmission and Translation (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1965).

Standing historical trial today, even as they stood trial during their generation of crisis seven hundred years ago, the Teutonic Knights possess in their own literature a vision of how they would wish themselves to be seen. Das Väterbuch describes not an earthly trial, but rather the apocalyptic Judgment of all men before the throne of God.<sup>41</sup> In this final scene, the Teutonic Knights appear in the company of St. Benedict, St. Antony, St. John and St. Bernard encircling their beloved Heavenly Protectress. Having served Her in life by loyally defending the Faith of Her Son, the Knights glory in Mary's protection. With their record of crusading service and with Mary as their advocate, the Brothers stand tall and unafraid. They fear neither the historical judgment of men, nor God's final Judgment in which all human history will end.

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<sup>41</sup> Das Väterbuch, herausgegeben von Karl Reissenberger (Berlin: Weidmann, 1914 / Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters, 22), v. 40,757 ff.

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## VITA

Date of Birth: September 28, 1943 / Ellensburg,  
Washington

Education: Benson Polytechnic High School,  
Portland, Oregon, 1961

B.A., History, Willamette University,  
Salem, Oregon, 1965

M.A., Religion, Claremont Graduate School,  
Claremont, California, 1967

M.A., Germanics, University of Washington,  
Seattle, Washington, 1978

M.A., History, University of Washington,  
Seattle, Washington, 1979

Ph.D., History, University of Washington,  
Seattle, Washington, 1989

Teaching: English (Peace Corps)  
Collège d'Enseignement Général: Korhogo  
Ecole Normale: Daloa, Côte d'Ivoire  
(Ivory Coast), West Africa, 1968-1970

English, Social Studies and Religion  
Staatliches Herzog-Wolfgang-Gymnasium,  
Pfälzisches Melanchthonheim,  
Zweibrücken, West Germany, 1970-1975

Director, Deutsches Haus,  
University of Washington, 1978-1981

German and French  
Transition School,  
Center for the Study of Capable Youth,  
University of Washington, 1984-

Hobbies: Backpacking, Cross-country skiing, bicycling,  
Scandinavian folkdancing.