

Divine Vengeance and Human Justice in the Wendish Crusade of 1147

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Most of the sources for the First and Second Crusade contain references to divine vengeance. After the conquest of Jerusalem in 1099, the idea of crusading as vengeance spread among the clergy and laity. In a direct sense, what the Muslims experienced during the First Crusade was the just punishment of God, also known as ‘divine vengeance’ (*ultio Dei, vindicata*).¹ Therefore, the inhumanity of the Muslims encouraged vengeance and war, rather than conversion. This is why in the powerful rhetoric of the First Crusade, the seizure of Jerusalem by the Muslims had been avenged. The liberation of Jerusalem as being part of a divine retribution is expressed in a letter written by Pope Paschal II (1099-1118) to the Pisan consuls in 1100, where he praises the piety and devotion of the Pisan people and their achievements in the Holy Land: ‘the Christian people...most strenuously avenged [Jerusalem] for the tyranny and yoke of the barbarians and, with God helping, restored those regions, sanctified by the blood and presence of Jesus Christ, to their former refinement and majesty with adornment and veneration.’²

In Eastern Germany, the idea of crusading as divine vengeance had been expressed in the so called ‘Magdeburg letter’ which was written between 1107 and 1110, most probably in late 1107 or 1108. The anonymous author is believed to have been a Flemish clerk from the circle of the archbishop of Magde-

¹ For more details regarding the idea of crusading as vengeance in the Holy Land see Susanna A. Throop, *Crusading as an Act of Vengeance, 1095–1216* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

² ‘*Christianus populus in nomine Domini exercituum congregatus, atque Syriam vel potius Terram promissionis ingressus, sanctam anno iam praeterito civitatem, terrestrem nempe Ierusalem, urbem equidem perfecti decoris et gaudium universae terrae, in qua praestantissima redemptoris nostri monumenta refulgent, a barbarorum tyrannide et iugo strenuissime vindicavit atque plagas illas, lesu Christi sanguine et praestantia sanctificatas, pristino cultu, maiestati decori atque veneration.*’ *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacri spectantes quae supersunt aevo aequales ac genvinae. Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088-1100; eine Quellensammlung zur Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, ed. Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner’schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung 1901; reprint Hildesheim: Olms, 1973), 180; Throop, *Crusading*, 44.

burg.³ The letter had the form of an appeal for help against the Wends⁴ and it seems to have been addressed to prelates and princes from the West, such as Robert of Flanders who had participated in the First Crusade with great success. The author of the letter described the Wendish attacks on the Christian territory across the Elbe⁵ made by ‘the most cruel gentiles,’ who destroyed churches and sacrificed Christians in the name of their pagan gods.⁶ Therefore, these actions need divine vengeance, because the ‘inhuman’ pagans are ‘men without mercy’ and their souls cannot be saved through conversion but only through subjugation.⁷ Also, the land across the Elbe is described as ‘our Jerusalem’

³ Giles Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008), 200.

⁴ From the sixth century onwards the exonym *Wenden* had been used by the Germanic peoples to refer to speakers of Western Slavic languages, from Holstein in the north to Carinthia in the south. Most of the Latin sources connected with the crusades do not use the exonym *Wends*, but the terms *Slavi* or *Sclavi*. Ane L. Bysted *et al*, *Jerusalem in the North: Denmark and the Baltic Crusades, 1100-1522* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 24, 27. However, in his *Chronicon*, Henry of Livonia uses the exonym *Wendi* five times. The Wends of Henry have been considered a small tribe of uncertain ethnic origins, either Slavic, Baltic or Finno-Ugric. Thus, Henry uses the name which probably is taken from the local pronunciation, without connecting it to the ancient *Veneti* and also not to the Slavs. Wolfgang Laur, “Die sogenannten Wenden im Baltikum,” *Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung* 21 (1961): 431-38. Some historians argued that the Wends of Livonia were most probably of Slavic ethnicity. By the end of the thirteenth century, they were largely assimilated with the Lettgallians and disappeared. *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. James A. Brundage (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), 66, 93, 100, 170, 201, 232; Alan V. Murray, “Henry of Livonia and the Wends of the Eastern Baltic: Ethnography and Biography in the Thirteenth-Century Livonian Mission,” *Studi Medievali*, 54 (2013): 807-33; Nils Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World-System in the European North (AD 1075-1225)* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 320-21. It seems that the hypotheses connecting the Wends with the Western Slavs is not confirmed by the archaeological record. Thus, the idea that the Wends were a separate Finnic ethnic group from Kurzeme has been advanced. Zigrīda Apala and Jānis Apals, “The Vendic hill fort on Riekstu kalns in Cēsis,” in *Strongholds and Power Centres East of the Baltic Sea in the 11th-13th Centuries*, ed. Heiki Valk (Tartu: University of Tartu, 2014), 115-38. For a more extensive discussion of this terminology in Byzantium and the Western world in the Early Middle Ages see Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c.500–700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 36-73.

⁵ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades: 1147-1254* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 29-30.

⁶ The original title for this letter is *Epistola pro auxilio adversus paganos (Slavos)*. In this paper, I use the original text in Latin by Wilhelm Wattenbach, “Handschriftliches,” *Neues Archiv* VII (1882): 623-24 and the English translation by Louise and Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: Idea and Reality, 1095-1274* (London: E. Arnold, 1981), 75.

⁷ ‘*Qui Gallos ab extremo occidente progressos in brachio virtutis sue contra inimicos suos in remotissimo triumphavit Oriente, ipse tribuat vobis voluntatem et potentiam hos affines et inhumanissimos gentiles subjugare et in omnibus bene prosperari.*’ Wattenbach, “Handschriftliches,” 626; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 75. In fact, the author of the letter proposes

(*Hierusalem nostra*). Therefore, the Wendish territory needs to be liberated by the Christians like the Holy Land was liberated by ‘Gauls’ in a ‘holy war’ against the ‘enemies of Christ’ (Wends).⁸ Like the First Crusade, the appeal promised to Christians of Saxony, France, Lorraine and Flanders some spiritual rewards which can be ‘an occasion for you to save your souls.’⁹ But what are these spiritual rewards and how can they be achieved? It is interesting that, in our case, the author of the letter offered no indulgence or remission of sins, which were papal privileges. In Spain, in 1101, the crusaders received from Paschal II the same indulgences as the crusaders in the Holy Land when fighting against the Muslims. In 1108, Paschal II refused to authorize any preaching for this planned campaign which never took place and in which the Danish king Niels (1104-1134) was ready to participate.¹⁰ In that time, the Danish king sought to enlarge the power and influence of the monarchy through the aid of the church. This policy led to an issue regarding clerical celibacy which had strong feelings among the Danish laity. It was obvious that Paschal II would be against this policy since he exhorted Niels to help to impose clerical celibacy through cooperation between the clergy and the Danish laity.¹¹ This explains the struggle between the papacy and Niels and the refusal of Paschal II to authorize the proposed campaign of 1108, in which the Danish king sought to extend his realm.¹²

an expedition against the Wends similar to the expedition of 1096-1099 to the Holy Land, in which the “crusaders” could be certain of spiritual and material gains (acquisition of land and spiritual salvation). See Klaus Guth, “The Pomeranian Missionary Journeys of Otto I of Bamberg and the Crusade Movement of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries,” in *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. Michael Gervers (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), 15.

⁸ ‘*Sanctificate bellum, suscite robustes. Surgite principes, contra inimicos Christi arripite clypeos... Erumpite et venite omnes aratores Christi et ecclesie, et sicut Galli ad liberationem Hierusalem vos preparate.*’ Wattenbach, “Handschriftliches,” 625-26.

⁹ Louise and Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 77.

¹⁰ Kurt Villads Jensen, “Martyrs, Total War, and Heavenly Horses: Scandinavia as Centre and Periphery in the Expansion of Medieval Christendom,” in *Medieval Christianity in the North: New Studies*, eds. Kirsi Salonen, Kurt Villads Jensen, and Torstein Jørgensen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 100.

¹¹ For more details regarding the struggle between the Danish Church and the papacy see Frederik Pedersen, “‘A good and sincere man ... even though he looked like a Slav:’ Asger of Lund, canon law, and politics in Denmark, ca 1085–1140,” *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 20 (2010): 141-62.

¹² Another reason which led Paschal II not to authorize any preaching for this campaign is that the speech from the letter corresponded so closely to the political plans of the King Henry V. A meeting between Henry V and a great number of prelates and nobles of Germany took place at the time set for their departure. The reign of Henry V coincided with the final phase of the great *Investiture Controversy* between the papacy and the secular powers. A supporter of Henry V was Adalgot who was appointed in 1107 as Archbishop of Magdeburg by the German King. Some historians believe that the Flemish clerk wrote the letter at the order of Adalgot. Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading*, 48.

The only spiritual reward offered by the author of the letter is the salvation of soul, which is connected with the acquisition of land. In the rhetoric of the letter, presumably crusaders could have gained spiritual rewards even if they did not obtain lands beyond the Elbe, and the spiritual rewards are eternal, while material ones are temporal. Friedrich Lotter emphasized that this promise of double reward was adopted from Robert the Monk and originates from the Bible. According to Matthew 19:29, Christ himself said: ‘Every one that has forsaken houses or lands ... for my name’s sake shall receive an hundredfold’; and according to Exodus 3:8: ‘Palestine is a land flowing with milk and honey’.¹³ This is why in the crusading ideology the prospect of obtaining lands was an additional inducement.¹⁴ In this case, the author of the letter uses the rhetoric from Clermont by saying that ‘these gentiles [pagans] are most wicked, but their land is the best, rich in meat, honey, corn and birds; and if it were well cultivated none could be compared to it for the wealth of its produce. So say those who know it. And so, most renowned Saxons, French, Lorrainers and Flemings and conquerors of the world, this is an occasion for you to save your souls and, if you wish it, acquire the best land in which to live.’¹⁵

As we have seen, the author of the letter was familiar with the development of the idea of crusading at the Council of Clermont in 1095, when Pope Urban II (1088-1099) had promised the crusaders both spiritual and material rewards for their divine work. The crusaders responded enthusiastically and undertook a successful campaign which established several crusader states in the Holy Land. Thus, in the twelfth century, Christian settlements in former pagan lands had proven to be the only way to advance Christianization. Therefore, the only authority to do this came from the church.¹⁶

¹³ Friedrich Lotter, “The Crusading Idea and the Conquest of the Region East of the Elbe,” in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, eds. Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (Oxford: Clarendon Press and Oxford University Press, 1989), 276.

¹⁴ Some historians stated that the definition of indulgence originated from the theological distinctions between eternal and temporal punishment and between forgiveness of sin and the remission of punishment for sin. These distinctions were made in the twelfth and mid-thirteenth centuries. See Bysted *et al*, *Jerusalem*, 8. Ane Bysted falls firmly on the side of historians (including Jonathan Riley-Smith) who see the papal grant of an indulgence as essential to crusading and as an important indicator of the ideology and theology of crusading. The debate over the precise nature of the spiritual reward offered by Urban II at Clermont in 1095 continues to shape the historiography and the very definition of the crusades. For more details see Ane Bysted, *The Crusade Indulgence. Spiritual Rewards and the Theology of the Crusades, c. 1095-1216* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); eadem, “The True Year of Jubilee: Bernard of Clairvaux on Crusade and Indulgences,” in *The Second Crusade: Holy War on the Periphery of Latin Christendom*, eds. Janus Møller Jensen and Jason T. Roche (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 35-49.

¹⁵ Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 76-77.

¹⁶ All of the accounts were written down quite a bit later than the Council and this is why they follow different literary traditions and differ widely from one another. In the accounts of Fulcher and Robert, Urban II offers his audience remission of their sins. Guibert has him offer the chance to become martyrs, while in Baudry’s account the reward offered is not

One knows that most of the clerical writings contain biblical allusions in order to justify their legal and moral authority, hierarchy and also material aims. So, another question is how consciously did the author of the letter quote the Bible? In our case, a biblical passage from the New Testament may be the key which can help us to understand the rhetorical devices of the author, who wants to justify the occupation of a region through the idea of violence as vengeance ordered by divine authority: ‘For he is God’s minister to thee, for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear: for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God’s minister: an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.’¹⁷ For the author of the letter, the lessons of obedience to superiors and mutual charity of St. Paul can be good examples of human justice, legal and moral authority for the noble laity from Saxony, France, Lorraine and Flanders who can get more land across the Elbe. These biblical themes of divine wrath and human justice were popular among contemporary authors such as Anselm of Canterbury. In his epoch-making book, *Cur Deus Homo* (1090s), he outlined a new theory of Divine Retribution. Thus, the disobedience against those of high rank demanded a divine punishment or, in its place, satisfaction relative to the nature of the insult and the rank of the one offended, lest the social order be unbalanced. Anselm developed his theory within the church’s system of penance and thought of satisfaction as the payment of debt as a moral duty. In *Cur Deus Homo*, in a dialogue with one of his students, Anselm states that the vengeance is God’s work, who can also let His anger be executed by human justice.¹⁸

Regarding the so called ‘Wendish Crusade’ from 1147, modern scholarship has seen this campaign in the broad framework of the Second Crusade.¹⁹ For this, the main character was the Cistercian abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, the famous propagandist who tried to define the campaign as part of a great battle against all of the enemies of Christendom. The Second Crusade was called by Pope Eugen III (1145-1153) in response to the fall of the County of Edessa in 1144. Bernard recruited first the French king, Louis VII, and after the German king, Conrad III, to take an army and reconquer Edessa from the Muslims. The Saxons preferred to attack their pagan neighbors rather than setting out to save the Holy Land, as Bernard intended.²⁰ Therefore, the Saxons received papal

only spiritual but also material. For more details see Niall Christie and Deborah Gerish, “Parallel Preachings: Urban II and al-Sulamī,” *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 15/2 (2003): 139-48.

¹⁷ Romans 13:4.

¹⁸ *Cur Deus Homo*, I, 12 in *Anselm: Basic Writings*, ed. Thomas Williams (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007), 263. For more details see Richard W. Southern, *St. Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 211-20.

¹⁹ For a bibliography of works on the Wendish Crusade, see Alan Murray, ‘Select Bibliography’ in *The Second Crusade: Scope and Consequences*, eds. Jonathan Phillips and Martin Hoch (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 215-16.

²⁰ Otto of Freising tells that the Saxons refused to take the Cross for the Holy Land, because they had neighboring tribes that were given over to the ‘filthiness of idolatry’. ‘*Saxones*

authorization (the bull *Divina dispensatione* II – 11 April 1147) to organize a military campaign against the Wends.²¹

In determining why the Saxons refused to fight in the Holy Land, it is first necessary to place these events in a broader context. Therefore, we need to look at the men who led the campaign and their desire to grab Wendish land instead of campaigning in the Holy Land. In other words, the Saxons were interested more on conquering land rather than winning souls.²² One must understand that for noble laity the acquisition of land played an essential role in motivating men to go on the campaign and not to follow the opportunity for spiritual rewards in the Holy Land.²³ This suggests that for the Saxons a unity of purposes created by material and spiritual rewards did not match the reality of the situation. In this way one can explain Bernard's changing attitudes towards the Wends, which created a situation that forced Saxons to join the campaign.²⁴

Another essential contextualization is to analyze the relationship of the Wends with their Saxon neighbors across the Elbe. In this sense, one must pay attention to the papal interests towards the Wends. It seems that the main instrument of the papacy in the Wendish campaign, Bernard of Clairvaux, was quite familiar with the struggle between the two sides. His active involvement is highlighted by Friedrich Lotter, who believes that Bernard meant only the death of the Abodrite state, not the massacre of the Abodrites and the rest of the Wends. Therefore, they had only the alternatives of being submerged politically and culturally or becoming a Christian state within the Church and the Empire.

vero, quia quasdam gentes spurciciis idolorum deditas vicinas habent, ad orientem proficisci abnuentes cruces itidem easdem gentes bello attemptaturi assumpserunt. *Ottonis et Rahewini Gesta Friderici I. imperatoris*, eds. Georg Waitz and Bernhard von Simson, MGH, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* 46 (Hannover: Hahn, 1912), 61.

²¹ Alan V. Murray, *The Crusades to the Holy Land: The Essential Reference Guide* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2015), 77-78.

²² In this way, Helmold stated that the campaign against the Wends was dominated by the material desire of the Saxon duke, Henry the Lion, who was not interested in conversion, 'but only in money'. *The Chronicle of the Slavs by Helmold, Priest of Bosau*, trans. F. J. Tschan (New York: Octagon Books, 1966), ch. I, 68. This opinion is also shared by the chronicler Vincent of Prague who confirms Saxon intentions to grab more lands rather than any conversion. *Vincenti Pragensis Annales*, ed. Wilhelm Wattenbach, in MGH, *Scriptores* 17 (Hannover: Hahn, 1861), 663. In the *Annales Palidenses*, composed between 1182 and 1197 at the Premonstratensian monastery of Pöhlde, there are reports on the quarrel between the Saxon nobles who had already begun to distribute the Wendish land which had not yet been conquered. *Annales Palidenses*, ed. Georg H. Pertz, in MGH *Scriptores* 16 (Hannover: Hahn, 1859), 82.

²³ Even in the Holy Land the matter of land estates played a significant role, one that may have been equal to the salvation of soul promised by the pope.

²⁴ Friedrich Lotter suggests that the Saxon nobles refused to join the eastern crusade because they didn't want to submit to the leadership of Hohenstaufen king. Those who had not yet taken the cross for the eastern crusade were allowed by the papacy to take it on equal terms against the Wends. Lotter, "The Crusading Idea," 287.

This was the choice offered by Bernard. In choosing *fides catholica*, the Abodrite leaders made an end to the ancient hostility between Saxons and Wends possible.²⁵ The first major records of the relationship between Saxons and Wends are from the reign of Charlemagne. In the Frankish campaign against the pagan Saxons, Wends plays an important role as allies of the Franks. As a reward, they received from Charlemagne a large part of the Holstein region, which was inhabited by Saxons.²⁶ From this time, it was obvious that the Saxons will search for revenge against the Wends. Adam of Bremen mentions that the Abodrites, together with the Frisians, were often used by the Franks ‘to secure their borderlands either by treaties or by war against the Saxons who, though peaceful at home and benignly mindful of the welfare of their tribesmen, were excessively restless and troublesome to the settlements of their neighbors.’²⁷ Starting with the first king of the Saxon line, Henry I, the Saxons tried to expand their realm all the way to the Oder by creating an eastern mark and bringing the whole territory up to the border of Poland under Saxon control.²⁸ At the end of the tenth century, Wends had pushed the Saxons back across the Elbe and stopped paying tribute to the Saxons. For the next one and a half centuries, the

²⁵ For the history of the German eastward migration, missionary activity and the Wendish-German relations see Friedrich Lotter, *Die Konzeption des Wendenkreuzzugs. Ideengeschichtliche, kirchenrechtliche und historisch-politische Voraussetzungen der Missionierung von Elb- und Ostseeslawen um die Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1977); Hans-Dietrich Kahl, *Heidenfrage und Slawenfrage im deutschen Mittelalter. Ausgewählte Studien 1953-2008* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011). For authors of missionary hagiography such as Adam of Bremen and Helmold of Bosau, ‘hostility from pagans was what missionaries usually expected.’ For more details, see the recent study of Wojtek Jezierski, “*Convivium in terra horroris*: Helmold of Bosau’s Rituals of Hostipitality,” in *Rituals, Performatives, and Political Order in Northern Europe, c. 650–1350*, eds. Wojtek Jezierski, Lars Hermanson, Hans Jacob Orning, and Thomas Småberg (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 139-73.

²⁶ Charles Oman, *The Dark Ages: 476-918* (London: Rivingtons, 1898), 349; Joachim Herrmann, *Die Slawen in Deutschland* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1970), 7.

²⁷ Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, I, 5, trans. Francis J. Tschan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 9; Oman, *The Dark Ages*, 357-60.

²⁸ For more information about the Ottonian policy across the Elbe see Christian Lübke, “Die Erweiterung des östlichen Horizonts: Der Eintritt der Slaven in die europäische Geschichte im 10. Jahrhundert,” in *Ottonische Neuanfänge. Symposium zur Ausstellung ‘Otto der Große, Magdeburg und Europa’*, ed. Bernd Schneidmüller (Mainz: Phillip von Zabern in Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 2001), 113-26; Matthias Hardt, “Kirchenorganisation oder Aufstand. Die Christianisierung von Sorben, Elb- und Ostseeslawen in Ottonen- und Salierzeit,” in *Schwertmission. Gewalt und Christianisierung im Mittelalter*, eds. Hermann Kamp and Martin Kroker (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013), 53-66; Laurence Leleu, “*Nobiles utraeque ripae Albiae*. On both sides of the Elbe: Saxon élites facing Slavs in the Ottonian age,” in *Potestas et communitas. Interdisziplinäre Beiträge zu Wesen und Darstellung von Herrschaftsverhältnissen im Mittelalter östlich der Elbe*, eds. Aleksander Paroń, Sébastien Rossignol, Bartłomiej Sz. Szmoniewski, and Grischa Vercamer (Wrocław and Warsaw: Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii PAN and Deutsches Historisches Institut, 2010), 305-38.

Ottonians and the Salians tried to retake control across the Elbe and re-Christianize the Wends. Therefore, from the point of view of the Saxons, the Wends were apostates because they rejected the Saxon *imperium Christianum*. Thus, at the end of tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh century, the term *pagani* was applied also to designate apostates. For the missionary bishops like Bruno of Querfurt (probably a relative of Emperor Otto III), and Thietmar of Merseburg, the Wends were ‘apostate pagans’ within the Church.²⁹ Helmold of Bosau also mentioned the apostasy of the Wends. He stated that the Wendish revolt of 1018 took place because the Wends were pursued by Margrave Dietrich of Wettin and the Saxon duke Bernard II with such cruelty that they were ‘villainy forced into apostasy... and finally threw off the yoke of servitude, and had to take up arms in defense of their freedom.’³⁰

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, various writers expressed the view that apostates or heretics deserved divine punishment.³¹ Therefore, in order to defend Christianity, the papacy accepted the use of force against the Baltic apostates such as the Wends,³² the Livonians and the Prussians. From the Danish

²⁹ Henrik Janson suggests that ‘the question of fidelity to the right power structure seems accordingly to have been of great importance in deciding the status of religion in the North.’ Therefore, the Wendish uprising starting in 983 led by Mstivoj, who was a Christian, had less to do with the ‘pagan resistance’ and more with the refusal to pay the tribute. A rebellion against the Saxon nobility was a rejection of Christianity. For more details regarding the Wendish apostasy see Henrik Janson, “What made the pagans pagans?” in *Medieval Christianitas: Different Regions, ‘Faces,’ Approaches*, eds. Tsvetelin Stepanov and Georgi Kazakov (Sofia: “Voenno Izdatelstvo” Publishing House, 2010), 171-91; Henrik Janson, “Pagani and Christiani – Cultural Identity and Exclusion Around the Baltic in the Early Middle Ages,” in *The Reception of Medieval Europe in the Baltic Sea Region*, ed. Jörn Staecker, Acta Visbyensia XII (Visby, 2009), 171-91; Bysted *et al*, *Jerusalem*, 26, 51; Hans-Dietrich Kahl, “Compellere intrare: die Wendenpolitik von Querfurt im Lichte hochmittelalterlichen Missions- und Völkerrechts,” *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 4 (1955): 161-93, 360-401.

³⁰ Helmold, *The Chronicle of the Slavs by Helmold, Priest of Bosau*, ch. I, 16.

³¹ The Cathars and the Waldensians in southern France and northern Italy were considered heretics by the Catholic Church. Pope Innocent III attempted to end Catharism by sending missionaries and by persuading the local nobles to act against them. The failure of these missions made the papacy launch the Albigensian Crusade which was fairly successful in ending heresy. For more details about the Cathars and the Crusade against them see Mihai Dragnea, “Cruciada Albigensă și apariția Inchiziției. Considerații istorice,” *Studium* VII (2014): 21-32; Constantin Zamfir, “Fecioara Maria în viziune cathară,” *Hiperboreea* II, 2 (2013): 4-7 (<http://revistahiperboreea.ro/>).

³² One Saxon contingent of the 1147 crusaders found themselves besieging the recently Christianized Stettin, where the Pomeranians had not passed to apostasy. It seems that, in the spring of 1125, a pagan reaction started in Wollin and Stettin and therefore, a second mission by Otto of Bamberg was necessary. For more details about the conversion of Stettin by Otto of Bamberg see Jay T. Lees, “‘Why Have You Come with Weapons Drawn?’ The Leaders of the Wendish Campaign of 1147,” in *The Second Crusade: Holy War on the Periphery of Latin Christendom*, eds. Janus Møller Jensen and Jason T. Roche (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 274-75; Friedrich Lotter, “The Crusading Idea and the

point of view, the Wendish apostasy was confirmed by a papal bull to Absalon, bishop of Roskilde. The document was issued in November 1169 by Pope Alexander III and contains arguments against the Wends in accordance with Canon Law. There is explicit papal authorization for a crusade against the Wends because the Danes are fighting a just – defensive – war against the cruel enemies of Christ. Therefore, their apostasy deserves a divine punishment.³³

Marek Tamm believes that ‘if the legal argument that the conversion of pagans was grounds for a crusade was first employed in the middle of the twelfth century, with reference to the southern coast of the Baltic, it acquired a more specific significance and meaning during the conquest of the eastern coast of the Baltic, at the beginning of the thirteenth century.’ Thus, in his bull issued in 1197, Pope Celestine III seemed explicitly to emphasize that the Livonian crusade waged by Christians was necessary for compelling apostates back to Christendom.³⁴ In the *Chronicon Polonorum*, written by Vincentius of Cracow between 1190-1208, the Polish expeditions of Bolesław III “Wrymouth” in 1109 against the Pomeranians, Bolesław IV “the Curly” to Prussia in 1147 and 1166, and Casimir I “the Just” in 1191-92 against the Sudovians, are all portrayed as crusading campaigns. The author also describes the Prussians as ‘Saladinistas’, and clearly favours the use of force against them as apostates to compel them to accept Christianity.³⁵

Otto III’s campaigns across the Elbe were an attempt to protect the fragile remains of Christianity among the Wends.³⁶ To be again part of the *imperium Christianum*, it was not sufficient to submit to the Saxon dukes and pay tribute. It was also necessary to submit to the Saxon Church in which they were integrated in the time of Otto I “the Great” and to which they still belonged. In the middle of the tenth century, Otto I subdued all Wendish tribes in the area between the Elbe-Saale in the west, the Erzgebirge (Ore Mountains) in the south, and the Oder-Bober line in the east. In his *Gesta*, Adam of Bremen tried to promote the interests of the archdiocese of Hamburg-Bremen and emphasized

Conquest of the Region East of the Elbe,” in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, eds. Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (Oxford: Clarendon Press and Oxford University Press, 1989), 279.

³³ Niels Henrik Holmqvist-Larsen, “Saxo: On the Peoples beyond the Baltic Sea,” in *Saxo and the Baltic Region. A Symposium*, ed. Tore Nyberg (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2004), 87-88.

³⁴ For more details regarding the legal arguments of the Livonian Crusade see Marek Tamm, “How to justify a crusade? The conquest of Livonia and new crusade rhetoric in the early thirteenth century,” *Journal of Medieval History* 39 (2013): 431-55.

³⁵ Vincentius Kadlubek, *Ex magistri Vincentii Chronica Polonorum*, in *MGH, Scriptores* 29 (Hannover: Hahn, 1892), IV, 19.

³⁶ Jürgen Petersohn, “König Otto III. und die Slawen an Ostsee, Oder und Elbe um das Jahr 995. Mecklenburgzug – Slawnikidenmassaker – Meissenprivileg”, in *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 37 (2003): 99-139.

the conversion of the Wends.³⁷ For Adam it is Christianity that triumphs across the Elbe rather than the greed and ambition of Saxon lords who seek more land. This is because he believes that the Saxons should not force pagans to accept Christianity. As an alternative, Adam suggests that the Wends could be Christianized if their nobles were Christian.³⁸ Anyway, this idea turned out to be impossible since the Christian Abodrite King Henry did not dare to Christianize his Wendish subjects for fear of endangering his rule. Even in Havelberg and Brandenburg there were Wendish nobles who were Christians, but ruled over a pagan population.³⁹

Indeed, the Wendish campaign was an action carried out in economic and political interests, but its character was not an offensive one, at least not for the Saxons,⁴⁰ who wanted to reconquer their lands which had been lost after the Wendish uprising.⁴¹ This intention is confirmed by the so called “Magdeburg

³⁷ An alternative history of the archdiocese of Hamburg-Bremen that claims ecclesiastical authority over the whole northern world (Swedes, Danes and Wends), is the work of Eric Knibbs, which is based on the less-studied foundation documents of the archdiocese. Eric Knibbs, *Ansgar, Rimbert and the Forged Foundations of Hamburg-Bremen* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).

³⁸ Adam mentions a Wendish ruler who was Christian (Prince Gottschalk) and who tried to convert his people, but he was slain by the pagans who fell into apostasy. Adam von Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. Bernhard Schmeidler, MGH, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* 2, 3rd ed. (Hannover: Hahn, 1918), III, 50, p. 156.

³⁹ The Wendish count of Havelberg, Meinfrid, who was one of Henry’s governors, was murdered by the pagans. In Havelberg, in 1136, the sons of a Christian ruler called Witi-kind, who were pagans or apostates, destroyed the church in the fortress. It seems that the Wendish leaders realized that even under German rule they could maintain their social position by supporting the process of Christianization. Friedrich Lotter, “The Crusading Idea,” 273, 281, 297.

⁴⁰ Those who participated in the campaign in 1147 against the Wends were Saxons, Danes, and Poles. Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes*, 25. For the Danish expansion in the Baltic region, the royal ideology of Valdemar I which follows a pattern for legitimizing warfare against heathens and the vision of a Danish kingdom with the same glory as the Roman Empire see Janus Møller Jensen, “*Sclavorum expugnator*: Conquest, Crusade, and Danish Royal Ideology in the Twelfth Century,” *Crusades*, 2 (2003): 55-81; idem, “Denmark and the Holy War: A Redefinition of a Traditional Pattern of Conflict in the Baltic in the Twelfth Century,” in *Scandinavians and Europe 800-1350: Contact, Conflict, and Coexistence*, ed. Jonathan Adams and Katherine Holman (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 219-36; Bysted *et al*, *Jerusalem*, 23-88; Kurt Villads Jensen, “Bring dem Herrn ein blutiges Opfer. Gewalt und Mission in der dänischen Ostsee-Expansion des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts,” in *Schwertmission*, eds. Kamp and Kroker, 139-58. For the Polish participation in the Wendish Crusade see Mikołaj Gładysz, *The forgotten crusaders: Poland and the crusader movement in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 67-95.

⁴¹ This opinion is also shared by Jay T. Lees who believes that ‘any (Saxon) incursion into Wendish territory was made with the conviction that the invaders were advancing claims to what they already considered to be their land.’ Lees, “Why Have You Come with Weapons Drawn?” 290, 297.

letter” from 1107/1108⁴² and also by the late twelfth-century chronicler Helmold of Bosau, who tells that in the siege of Demmin in 1147, the Saxons complained that they had made a mistake in attacking the Wends who paid them tribute: ‘Is not this land which we are devastating our land, the people we are plundering our people?’⁴³ In this case, it is possible that some of the Wendish tribes accepted paying the tribute, while most of them refused. This is why the refusal to pay tribute to the Saxon dukes was a great sign of disobedience for both the Saxons and the Church. The disobedience of Wends made them become apostates, and therefore, this action needed a divine punishment.⁴⁴ This was a good exercise in the expansion of Christianity along with the Saxon intentions to grab more land. The combination of Bernard’s persuasiveness and the changing attitudes toward the Wends and their land created a situation that forced Saxon dukes to join the campaign in 1147.⁴⁵ In Bernard’s Frankfurt speech on 12-13 March 1147 there was to be no difference between the spiritual and material rewards of the crusaders from the Holy Land.⁴⁶ The initiative carried out by Bernard was good enough because he was faced with the possibility of completely losing Saxon support for his campaign against ‘Christendom’s enemies’. In his attempts to justify the ‘crusade’ against the Wends, Bernard gives a good example of the combination of divine vengeance and human justice, following the same biblical rhetoric of St. Paul: ‘God has aroused the spirit of kings and princes to take vengeance on the heathens and to extirpate from the earth the enemies of the Christian name.’⁴⁷ So, this speech suggests that for Bernard, a crusade against the Wends could be a good opportunity for the

⁴² Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 76. Friedrich Lotter believes that the Christian intention to reconquer the whole region east of the Elbe is first attested in the “Magdeburg letter”. See Lotter, “The Crusading Idea,” 275.

⁴³ Helmold has a critical attitude towards the Saxon material intentions and did not mention any efforts to convert the Wends. *The Chronicle of the Slavs by Helmold, Priest of Bosau*, I, 56-57, 65, pp. 166-69, 180.

⁴⁴ Friedrich Lotter believes that there is no evidence that Bernard regarded the Wends as apostates. Lotter, “The Crusading Idea,” 291.

⁴⁵ Lees, ‘Why Have You Come with Weapons Drawn?’, 276.

⁴⁶ Some scholars believe that only Bernard and German magnates defined the aim of the expedition as the conversion of the Wends. Unlike them, Eugen III only supported the expedition, but he did not initiate it and did not define its purpose as a spiritual aim for conversion of the pagans. See Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes*, 37. Friedrich Lotter suggests that Eugen promised those fighting against the Wends an analogous remission of sins, but only on condition that nobody took money from the pagans in exchange for allowing them to remain infidels. Eugen appointed Bishop Anselm of Havelberg as papal legate in order to ensure ‘peace and unity’ among the crusaders and to remind them about the main goal of the crusade: submission of the Wends to the Christian faith. Lotter, “The Crusading Idea,” 288.

⁴⁷ ‘*Suscitaverit spiritum regum Deus et principum ad faciendam vindictam in nationibus et extirpandos de terra christiani nominis inimicos.*’ Bernard of Clairvaux, ‘Letter 457’ (12-13 March 1147), Hans-Dietrich Kahl, “Crusade Eschatology as Seen by St. Bernard in the Years 1146 to 1148,” in *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. Gervers, 42.

Saxons to demonstrate their loyalty and win the remission of sins. Therefore, in his mind, a crusade would have two components: spiritual and military.⁴⁸

In the medieval period, most of the chroniclers were clerics who used biblical allusions to authorize human justice when they feared that crusaders would go to the Holy Land only for their own advantage. In 1147, Bernard tries to bribe his audience in Frankfurt to go on the campaign against the Wends by offering them the spiritual rewards granted to those who go to Jerusalem. From his speech one notices his fear that the Saxons will cross the Elbe only for material interests (to take money or to collect tribute).⁴⁹ For that, Bernard tries to forbid this kind of actions using the same rhetoric for vengeance: 'We prohibit completely that a truce be made for any reason with these people [Wends] either for money or for tribute, until such time as, with the aid of God, either their religion or their nation shall be destroyed.'⁵⁰

One can assume that Bernard was familiar with the intention of the Saxon nobility to seize more land from the Wends. Between 1140 and 1143, some dozen Saxon noble families pushed into Wagria, built forts, and settled. Among them were the counts Adolph II of Holstein and his rival, Henry of Badewide. The first received Wagria and the second some parts of Holstein. New colonists were brought to clear unsettled areas and increase the revenues of the new Saxon landlords. With them, bishops like Vicelin of Oldenburg organized missions among the Wends.⁵¹ Later, Count Adolph II secured the colonization by making friends with the ruler of the Abodrites, Niclot, and his noble followers.⁵² Therefore, when he saw in 1147 that Saxon nobles were interested only in material gains, Bernard tried to convince them that a conversion would be more important than any material rewards.⁵³ The Cistercian abbot had already expressed his acceptance of divine vengeance in order to justify a military campaign against the Muslims after the fall of Edessa. In 1146, in a letter to the English people, Bernard used a biblical quotation when he urged the protagonists of the civil war to not kill each other and rather to 'take vengeance on the heathen and curb the nations' (Psalms 149:7).⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Bysted *et al*, *Jerusalem*, 48.

⁴⁹ Lees, "Why Have You Come with Weapons Drawn?" 288-89.

⁵⁰ *'Illud enim ommimodis interdiciamus, ne qua ratione ineant foedum cum eis, neque pro pecunia, neque pro tributo, donec, auxiliante Deo, aut ritus ipse, aut natio deleatur.'* Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Letter 457,' 42.

⁵¹ Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100-1525* (London: Penguin, 1980), 50.

⁵² Lotter, "The Crusading Idea," 285.

⁵³ Helmold tells that after his participation in the Wendish campaign in 1147, the margrave of Brandenburg, Albert the Bear brought a large number of 'Hollanders, Zeelanders and Flemings' to colonize the Wendish territory along the Havel and Elbe rivers. Helmold, *The Chronicle of the Slavs*, I, 89, pp. 235-36.

⁵⁴ An English translation of the letter no. 391 we can find in "St. Bernard Seeks English Participation in the Second Crusade," in *The Crusades: A Documentary Survey*, ed. James A. Brundage (Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), 91-93; Jonathan P.

All issues were fixed one month later after the speech in Frankfurt, when Eugen III issued his bull where he stated that the Wends need to receive Christianity by force, through subjugation – ‘*eos Christiane religioni subiugare*.’⁵⁵ In fact, it was a good strategy of Eugen III to reestablish the spiritual control over the Wends by using vengeance as a primary expression of God’s judgmental punishment.⁵⁶ For the papacy it was obvious that the Saxon loss of Wendish territory meant also a loss for the Church. This is why in 1147 the Crusade was led by many prelates who wanted to re-establish their episcopal sees across the Elbe.⁵⁷ Therefore, the military campaign against the Wends was sanctioned by the pope, who created an alliance between the ecclesiastical and secular authorities. War against pagans was now waged for a just cause (*bellum iustum*) and Christendom could be expanded. The papacy tried to justify the crusades by using the Augustinian ‘just war’-theory (*bellum iustum*), which allowed for violence in response to injury, as a means of self-defense war. At the end of the eleventh century, Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) had fixed the idea of a “holy war” (*bellum sacrum*). In his texts, Gregory VII had begun to use the term “*militia Christi*” – the soldiers of Christ – to encourage the use of knights to fight in defending the rights of the Church against its enemies.

Yael Katzir believes that the Gregorian Reform movement was affected by the First Crusade by transforming the Gregorian concept of *Ecclesia*. This legislation originates from Carolingian theologians, who developed a theory of *Ecclesia* that saw the papacy and the emperor as the supreme officials of two parallel hierarchies (clerical and lay). In the mid-eleventh century, however, the Gregorian reformers began to attack this theory, by trying to assume that *Ecclesia* comprised only the clergy, and that the laity were just passive communicants within it. With the First Crusade, ‘a new structure emerged in the Latin West: a purely clerical *Ecclesia* surrounded by, and forming part of, a larger Christian society that some contemporaries called *Christianitas*.’ By participating actively in the First Crusade, the laity was able to play an essential role within Christendom. This is why at Clermont, the call for the liberation of Jerusalem from infidels was the main task for the new *militia*.⁵⁸

Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 73.

⁵⁵ ‘*Quidam etiam ex vobis tam sancti laboris et premii participes fieri cupientes contra Sclavos ceterosque paganos habitantes versus aquilonem ire et eos Christiane religioni subiugare Domino auxiliante intendunt.*’ *Divina dispensatione II* (11 April 1147); Kahl, “Crusade Eschatology,” 43-44.

⁵⁶ In the Old Testament and also the New Testament, only God claims the right to vengeance. See Psalms 94:1, 149:7; Deuteronomy 32:35, cf. Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30.

⁵⁷ Lees, “Why Have You Come with Weapons Drawn?” 294.

⁵⁸ Between the late 1120s and the early 1140s, the idea of the Church’s coercive power was decisively linked with crusading. For more details about the evolution of the institution of crusades see Yael Katzir, “The Second Crusade and the Redefinition of *Ecclesia*, *Christianitas* and Papal Coercive Power,” in *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. Gervers, 3-11.

In the eyes of the papacy, the First Crusade was a war of reconquest, and not an offensive campaign against the pagans. In a letter sent to Pope Urban II in 1098, after they had conquered Antioch in Syria, the leaders of the First Crusade wrote that they had fought against Turks and pagans, and not against heretics and asked Urban to eradicate all heresies.⁵⁹ Both popes directed the soldier profession to ecclesiastical ends which became the Christian knighthood, obedient to the papacy. Therefore, the salvation could come through its weapons. At the end of the eleventh century, Bishop Anselm of Lucca in his collection of canon laws rediscovered and gathered the Augustinian texts regarding the *bellum iustum* theory for the first time. Augustinian texts about the just war theory appear only in some canonical collections after Anselm of Lucca; they rarely appear in the papal letters, sermons, chronicles, and popular literature of the crusade period. Therefore, in the ninth, tenth and early eleventh century, popes had no unified theory on warfare and this is why they waged aggressive warfare against anyone who stood against their policy, one in which personal survival was the most important thing. The reform papacy from Leo IX onwards extended warfare ideology by using scriptural imagery to show the juridical influence of a just war theory. In this rhetoric, divine vengeance can be used by the Christians in order to fight with enemies of Christianity. This situation created a type of institutionalized warfare that distinguished crusades from the holy wars of earlier ages.⁶⁰ Therefore, Augustine's theory had allowed the use of force in 'winning back' the former Christians (heretics and apostates) to justify a crusade. For Augustine, the just war theory is based on divine vengeance, because 'wars are usually called just which avenge wrongs, when a nation or a state has to be punished for refusing to make amends for unlawful deeds done by its citizens, or to restore what has been wrongfully carried off.'⁶¹ Thus, for the First Crusade, the papacy had no interest in converting Muslims.⁶²

⁵⁹ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 10.

⁶⁰ John Gilchrist believes that this theory of war widespread much later in the ninth century within the Carolingian state, because 'from the fifth to the eighth century, given the special conditions in the West, the Augustinian doctrine of the just war could not take root. In the disorder created by successive waves of Germanic invasion and settlement, the Church viewed the profession of arms with suspicion; it forbade clerics to fight or bear arms, and imposed penance upon soldiers for killing in battle'. For more details about the evolution of the 'just war'-theory of Augustine see John Gilchrist, "The Papacy and War against the 'Saracens', 795-1216," *The International History Review* 10 (1988): 174-97.

⁶¹ *Iusta autem bella ea definiri solent, quae ulciscuntur iniurias, si qua gens vel civitas, quae bello petenda est, vel vindicare neglexerit quod a suis improbe factum est, vel reddere quod per iniurias ablatum est.* *Questionum in Heptateuchum*, ch. VI, 10; Raymond H. Schmandt, "The Fourth Crusade and the Just-War Theory," *Catholic Historical Review* 61 (1975): 199.

⁶² For more information regarding the 'just war' theory see John R. E. Bliese, "The Just War as Concept and Motive in the Central Middle Ages," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 17 (1991): 1-26; Brand, "The Fourth Crusade: Some Recent Interpretations," *Medievalia et Human-*

It seems that Augustine's interpretation about the war gave theological justification to the action advocated by Bernard of Clairvaux and by Vincentius of Cracow who stated that Bolesław IV was therefore obligated to assure the Prussians' salvation by 'compelling them' to undergo baptism.⁶³ Also, the Wends could be saved through a forced conversion, which works as a 'moral agency'. Bernard sought to reconcile the holy war theory by setting limits on ecclesiastical powers to initiate warfare. The responsibility to initiate a crusade was morally proper for the papacy and perhaps for other bishops, but it was quite improper for clerics. Later, Bernard would see a model for the collective identity of the crusading army in the monastic community. This concept of knighthood made the new crusaders dedicated to sacred violence and therefore, forms the central theme of Bernard's treatise on the Templars. Crusaders, after all, took vows as monks did.⁶⁴

This idea of salvation through forced conversion is also emphasized by the bishop of Havelberg, Anselm, who participated in the campaign of 1147 as a papal legate. Therefore, Pegatha Taylor believes that 'the Wendish Crusade borrowed from existing traditions of holy war, therefore, its object was not solely to defend Christian lands or even to force a ruler and his subjects to submit to Christian rule. Rather, it aimed to reform spiritually both of the societies involved.'⁶⁵ For the papacy, it was the mere denial of the Christian faith which made Bernard of Clairvaux ask for divine vengeance as the only option available; thus, the forced conversion acted as divine will which became human justice for the Saxon dukes.

Nicholas Morton suggests that 'the memory of the Maccabees and other Old Testament exemplars played an important role in shaping the idea of crusading and its subsequent evolution to encompass new frontiers in the Baltic and Iberia, as well as structural developments in crusading, such as the establishment of the military orders.'⁶⁶ In the two books of Maccabees one finds patterns relied on the wars fought by the Maccabees in the name of God against

istica 12 (1984): 33-46; Jill N. Claster, *Sacred Violence: The European Crusades to the Middle East, 1095-1396* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 36-37; Frederick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 16-39.

⁶³ Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, "Constructing memory: holy war in the Chronicle of the Poles by Bishop Vincentius of Cracow," *Journal of Medieval History*. 40 (2014): 284.

⁶⁴ For more details about the juristic concepts of Bernard of Clairvaux on crusade ideology see James Brundage, "St. Bernard and the Jurists," in *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. Gervers, 25-33.

⁶⁵ For more details regarding the forced conversion of the Wends in the eyes of Anselm of Havelberg see Pegatha Taylor, "Moral Agency in Crusade and Colonization: Anselm of Havelberg and the Wendish Crusade of 1147," *The International History Review* 22 (2000): 757-84.

⁶⁶ For more details about the Maccabaeian ideas in sources concerning the Crusades and divine vengeance see Nicholas Morton, "The defence of the Holy Land and the memory of the Maccabees," *Journal of Medieval History* 36 (2010): 275-93.

the unbelievers.⁶⁷ In the Wendish question one finds a close association between missions and defensive war against those who directly threatened Christendom. This suggests that there was no alternative to the use of force in order to crush those who refused to accept the conversion. For Helmold, the Wends are compared to the Amorites who were defeated by the Maccabees and the people of Israel (Saxons) as a result of divine vengeance.⁶⁸ In this way, the Saxons could wage a defensive war⁶⁹ to take back their territories, as crusaders did in the Holy Land. Bernard of Clairvaux used the same rhetoric in 1146, when he accepted a Muslim conversion as a merely hypothetical possibility. Thus, Bernard states that if the Muslims were subdued to Christian rule, as the Jews are, the Christians would wait for their conversion, but Muslims attacked the Christians and therefore had to be subdued.⁷⁰ This happened in 1147 when the two Saxon armies who fought against the Wends were accompanied by many clerics who tried to achieve conversion by force.⁷¹

The idea of forced conversion and mission by the sword has provoked much debate among modern historians. As we have shown, this action is a result of God's vengeance upon the Wendish apostasy. Even if forced baptism was forbidden by both canon law and theology, there are previous examples which go back to the end of the eighth century consisting of Charlemagne's intention to subdue the Saxons who were accused of apostasy. Thus, for Charlemagne, the Saxons⁷² had no choice but to accept baptism 'preached with the iron tongue'. In

⁶⁷ 'And Simon answered him, and said to him: We have neither taken other men's land, neither do we hold that which is other men's, but the inheritance of our fathers, which was for some time unjustly possessed by our enemies.' 1 Maccabees 15:33. In the letters of the popes from the twelfth century addressed to the military order of the Templars, the knights are called 'the true Israelites,' 'the new Maccabites' or 'the athletes of Christ.' See Gilchrist, "The Papacy and War against the 'Saracens'," 193-94.

⁶⁸ *The Chronicle of the Slavs*, ch. I, 22, 34, 64.

⁶⁹ Bysted *et al.*, *Jerusalem*, 52.

⁷⁰ Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches Toward the Muslims* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 60-61; Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes*, 32-33.

⁷¹ The spiritual leaders of the two Saxon armies were clerics like Archbishop Adalbero of Bremen, Archbishop Frederick of Magdeburg, Bishop Anselm of Havelberg (papal legate), Bishop Thietmar of Verden, Bishop Wigger of Brandenburg, Reinhard of Merseburg, Abbot Wibald of Corvey, Stavelot and Hartwig, the cathedral provost of Bremen. The archbishopric of Bremen had claimed the legal jurisdiction in the Wendish territory since the reign of Otto I, so this is why bishops like Vicelin were sent by Adalbero of Bremen to preach among the pagans. Lees, "Why Have You Come with Weapons Drawn?" 289, 296.

⁷² Linda Kaljundi believes that 'the genealogy of the Northern pagan barbarians goes back to the tradition about the Saxon wars. It draws on the hagiographic sources about the early missions to Germania and Scandinavia, and on the annals of monasteries that tell about the persecution of Christians during the Viking assaults, which relied in biblical tradition and gave many models for depicting the ferocity and cruelty of our enemies'. Linda Kaljundi, "Waiting for the Barbarians: Reconstruction of Otherness in the Saxon Missionary and

his eyes, the resistance of the Saxons which had undergone baptism and signed a treaty of allegiance amounted to political high treason and religious apostasy.⁷³ It seems that each and every act of misconduct mentioned in the Annals of Lorsch is listed in the *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae* as a capital crime. Yitzhak Hen suggests that ‘the *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae* was issued around 795 in order to pave the way for Charlemagne’s final attack and for the mass deportation of Saxons from their homes’. Thus, Charlemagne’s *Capitulatio* seems to have no precedent in the history of Christian mission where we could not find any attempts to convert by force which reached the level of legislation.⁷⁴ Two centuries later, the military campaigns of the Ottonians (Saxon dynasty) into the Wendish territory, pursued from the tenth century onward, used the same method of conversion, which could have been inspired by Charlemagne.⁷⁵ In his sermon from Clermont in 1095, Urban II praised the Franks because of the glory and greatness of Charlemagne who destroyed the kingdoms of pagans. The example of Charlemagne’s forced baptism could also be found in the *Gesta Francorum* of Robert the Monk.⁷⁶

Another example of forced conversion is the missionary expedition led by the German Bishop Otto of Bamberg. This missionary enterprise from 1124 included both German and Polish soldiers, but its composition was clerical (German monks from Otto’s monasteries and Polish chaplains). Before this missionary enterprise, in 1121, the Polish Duke Bolesław III made an expedition to Stettin and west of the Oder in order to subdue the Wends and to ensure the religious assimilation of his new tributaries. The conquest paved the way for the Christianization of Pomerania by Bishop Otto of Bamberg sent by Bolesław to

Crusading Chronicles, 11th–13th Centuries,” in *The Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Erik Kooper, (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2008), 113-27, 118-19.

⁷³ The Saxon rebellion against the Church, its members and also the apostasy are mentioned in the Annals of Lorsch: ‘*quasi canis revertit ad vomitum suum, sic reversi sunt ad paganismum quem pridem respuerant, ... conati sunt in primis rebellare contra Deum, deinde contra regem et christianos; omnes ecclesias que in finibus eorum errant, cum destructione et incendio vastabant, reiicientes episcopos et presbyteros qui super eos erant, et aliquos comprehenderunt, nec non et alios occiderunt, et plenissime se ad culturam idolorum converterunt.*’ *Annales Laureshamenses*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, in *MGH, Scriptores* 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1826), 35 (792).

⁷⁴ All the eighth canon of the *Capitulatio* does not leave much choice to the Saxons in order to avoid the baptism. Before the *Capitulatio* was issued, in October 782, at Verden, more than 4,500 Saxon rebels were beheaded in one day at the order of Charlemagne. Yitzhak Hen, “Charlemagne’s Jihad,” *Viator* 37 (2006), 34, 38-39, 47.

⁷⁵ Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, 68; Matthias Becher, “Der Prediger mit eiserner Zunge. Die Unterwerfung und Christianisierung der Sachsen durch Karl den Großen,” in *Schwertmission*, eds. Kamp and Kroker, 23-52; Hen, “Charlemagne’s Jihad,” 33-51.

⁷⁶ Robert the Monk’s *Historia Iherosolimitana* is a prose chronicle describing the First Crusade. The importance of this chronicle relies on the fact that Robert claims to have been an eyewitness of the Council of Clermont in 1095. Georg Strack, “The Sermon of Urban II in Clermont and the Tradition of Papal Oratory,” *Medieval Sermon Studies* 56 (2012): 35-36.

baptize the pagans.⁷⁷ After the departure of the missionaries led by the German bishop, who left behind them only a few priests and a neophyte community, a serious apostasy quickly followed supported by the pagan priests. They led attacks on churches, threatened Bishop Otto with spears and set ambushes for him. The opposition to the missionaries was, naturally, led by the men most closely identified with paganism. Thus, a second missionary expedition by Otto of Bamberg took place in 1128 before a Christian community and an ecclesiastical organization was permanently established in Pomerania. Robert Bartlett believes that the radical conversion of Pomerania implies some fundamental changes. For the Wends, loyalty to their own gods and hostility to other gods was part of defending their community which overrode loyalty to the prince. This identification had been heightened by the opposition between Wendish paganism and Pomerania's nearest Christian neighbor and enemy, Poland.

The military campaigns of Bolesław III "Wrymouth" in Pomerania are represented as wars of conversion not only by Vincentius of Cracow, but also by "Gallus Anonymus," Poland's first chronicler. In his *Gesta Principum Polonorum*, Gallus suggests that these holy wars had a just cause because they were a response to Pomeranian pillaging raids and incursions into Poland. Also, the author describes the apostasy of the pagan leaders and the attempts of the Polish dukes to maintain Christianity among these pagans living nearby: 'On the Northern Sea, [Poland] has as neighbors three most savage nations of pagan barbarians, Selencia, Pomerania, and Prussia, and the duke of the Poles is constantly at war with these countries, fighting to convert them to the faith. But neither has the sword of preaching been able to sway their hearts from faithlessness, nor the sword at their throats wipe out this generation of vipers in its entirety. Yet often their leaders, when defeated in battle by the Polish duke, have taken refuge in baptism, only to deny the Christian faith when they recovered their strength and took up arms afresh against the Christians'.⁷⁸

Starting with Mieszko I, the Piast dynasty became a pillar of the Church and facilitated deeper Christianization of the Poles and other pagan neighbors by supporting the foundation of abbeys, churches and monasteries. As a reward, the Church legitimized the authority of the dynasty (*divine sacrum*), declaring the Piasts to be the *domini naturales* of Poland. By the beginning of the twelfth century, under the first Piast rulers, the Church and the court adopted Latin as the official language. This action opened new communication channels between the Polish elites and Christendom, which led to a crusade ideology being introduced among Polish clergy. The ideals of canonists such as Anselm of

⁷⁷ For more details about the monastic reforms carried out by Otto and his missionary activity in the eyes of hagiographers see Mihai Dragnea, "Otto din Bamberg: Reformă Monastică și Misiune Apostolică," in *Timp, societate și identitate culturală. "Miniaturi" istorice*, eds. Ileana Căzan and Bogdan Mateescu (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, 2015), 25-48.

⁷⁸ *Gesta principum Polonorum: The Deeds of the Princes of the Poles*, ed. and trans. Paul W. Knoll and Frank Schaer (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2003), 12.

Lucca (1036-1086), Bonizo of Sturi (1045-1090), and Ivo of Chartres (1040-1115) had provided particular legitimacy for the theory of just war and crusading ideology. In the twelfth century, the inventory of the library of the cathedral school in Kraków indicates that the works of these canonists were available to the Polish clergy.

The holy wars waged by the Polish ruler Bolesław III against the Pomeranians and by his successors against the Prussians are an example of the close cooperation between the Church and the Piasts. In order to subdue the Prussian tribes, the Piasts copied the ideology and methods of conversion from Otto of Bamberg (Apostle of Pomerania). Among the “architects” of the conquest and Christianization of Pomerania were prelates such as Chancellor Michael Adwaniec, Archbishop Jakub of Żnin, Wojciech (Bolesław III’s chaplain and later bishop of Pomerania during the Wendish Crusade), and Bishop Alexander of Płock.⁷⁹

For the Pomeranian society, ‘this conversion represented a wrench because it meant a reorientation in so many everyday habits and responses.’ Some examples are ‘kinship patterns’ and ‘perception of time’. Thus, for Bishop Otto of Bamberg, his missions were attempts ‘to bring the Pomeranian family into line with the Christian ideal’ by using two powerful instruments of persuasion and control. In order to succeed, a precondition of Otto’s mission was the first and most important tactic: physical violence. For the Christians, fierceness was more than necessary. The fear of Polish reprisals made the Wends see Otto as a preacher, and not as a warrior. Therefore, he could act like a mediator between the Wends and the Polish armies. The only solution not to be punished was the acceptance of Christianity. In this way, Otto could protect them and bring peace to Pomerania.⁸⁰

A Danish perspective of forced conversion is offered by Saxo Grammaticus. In his *Gesta Danorum*, Saxo tries to convince his audience that the Rugians (a Wendish tribe from Rügen island), might only pretend to have become good Christians after they accepted forced baptism without protest. Saxo tells that the Rugians, after their defeat to the Danish forces of King Erik

⁷⁹ Regarding the forced conversion used by the Piasts, the author believes that according to Gallus Anonymus, the pagans sought baptism as a self-preservation measure under threat of death. Therefore, ‘their adherence to the Christian faith was short lived and as soon as the immediate danger of the retribution from Christian rulers had passed they rejected their forcibly acquired religion.’ For more details about the expansionary policy of the Piast dynasty, their holy wars against the pagans and their cooperation with the Church see Darius von Güttner Sporzynski, “Poland and the Papacy Before the Second Crusade,” in *La Papauté et les croisades/The Papacy and the Crusades: actes du VIIe congrès de la société for the study of the crusades and the Latin East/ Proceedings of the VIIth conference of the Society for the Crusades and the Latin East*, ed. Michel Balard (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 255-68.

⁸⁰ For more details about the conversion of Pomerania see Robert Bartlett, “The Conversion of a Pagan Society in the Middle Ages,” *History* 70 (1985): 185-201.

Emune in the 1130s,⁸¹ ‘they ordered to accept the solemn ritual of immersion, but they went to the pool rather to quench their thirst, than from zeal to enter the faith, and refreshed their weary bodies by pretending to undergo the holy rites.’ In Saxo’s mind, this false acceptance of Christianity was the reason for their apostasy, because later the Rugians ‘cast off their feelings for the hostages they had given, turned again to their old idolatry, and betrayed the divine truth which they had accepted.’⁸² Whether or not the Rugians really believed in Christ, their public immersion in water demonstrated their submission to the Christian Danes.⁸³ If, for the Church, the apostasy could be a reason for divine retribution, for the Danes, the imminent danger from the Wends was a physical one. According to Saxo, the Wends were pirates who pillaged Danish shores and in the twelfth century had become a huge threat for the Danes. This danger clearly justified the use of violence and cruelty.⁸⁴ In this sense, Saxo tells that the slaying of Wends was believed to be pleasing to God, since a Dane called Eskil ‘followed on foot after one of them who was fleeing as fast as he could go, unarmed, across the parts that were marsh; and while the feet of the Slav sank down into the soft mud, Eskillus ran on with ease, unencumbered either by the slime of the marsh or by the weight of his armour. And having caught the barbarian, he cut off his head... This deed, which deserves our pious admiration, was performed not by the agility of his feet, but by the grace of God, and we should ascribe it to a heavenly miracle, rather than to manly courage.’⁸⁵ Even when the Bishop of Roskilde, Absalon, had to interrupt his divine service during a campaign to resume fighting, he did so willingly because ‘what kind of

⁸¹ During the 1120s, Duke Canute (Knud) Lavard had secured a considerable extension of his lands east of the Elbe. He was appointed as ruler over the Abodrites by the German King Lothar and, because of that, became a serious rival for the Danish throne. In Saxo’s eyes, despite the struggle for the Danish throne, one common enemy (the Wends) was able to unite all competitors. For more details see Lars Hermanson, “Saxo and the Baltic. Danish Baltic-sea Policies at the End of King Niels’ reign, 1128-1134. Foreign Policy or Domestic Affairs?” in *Saxo and the Baltic Region*, ed. Nyberg, 105-13.

⁸² *Saxo Grammaticus: Danorum Regum Heroumque Historia, Books X-XVI*, ed. Eric Christiansen (Oxford: BAR, 1981), XIV, 1.

⁸³ For more details regarding the ritualization practices and manipulation in the *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo Grammaticus see Kim Esmark, “Just Rituals: Masquerade, Manipulation, and Officializing Strategies in Saxo’s *Gesta Danorum*,” in *Rituals, Performatives, and Political Order in Northern Europe, c. 650–1350*, eds. W. Jezierski *et al.* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 237-67.

⁸⁴ For the relations between Danes and other peoples around the Baltic Sea Kurt Villads Jensen, “The Blue Baltic Border of Denmark in the High Middle Ages: Danes, Wends and Saxo Grammaticus”, in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, eds. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 173-93.

⁸⁵ *Saxo Grammaticus: Danorum Regum Heroumque Historia*, XIV, 32. For Saxo Grammaticus, the opposition between Danes and Wends made him designate all the peoples of the Baltic region as *barbari*. The Northern region (*aquilo*) played no role in Saxo’s *Gesta Danorum*.

sacrifice could we consider more pleasing to the Almighty than the slaughter of wicked man?’⁸⁶

In conclusion, I can emphasize that the institutional religion had rejected vindication as usurpation of right that is God’s, yet clerics approved God’s vengeance when it served his purpose and was carried out by his human agents. The objects of God's wrath were always human beings, but ‘other’ people, like pagans, could be enemies. Therefore, divine vengeance could be exacted by Christian believers who thought to be on a mission of God.

From the primary sources we find out that for the Saxons, their wishful vengeance must have been requests for divine vengeance, otherwise it would have been considered a sin. This action had to be authorized by the pope, who sought to legally and morally justify the war against the Wends as a real crusade. Therefore, God's vengeance was the expression of a legal justice, like a 'sanctified law'; a punishment for the Wends’ apostasy. Thus, a crusade against the Wends became an institutionalized warfare which could follow the lineaments of the Augustinian 'just war' theory.

Analyzing the vocabulary of vengeance, I noticed that the perception of God and his divine justice in punishing the ‘enemies of Christ’ was the pillar of the “holy war”-ideology which was carried out also in 1147. At the same time, the Wendish Crusade marked further development of the institution of crusades. Therefore, it can be concluded that vengeance was a tool of both divine and human justice, and it had an important position within the twelfth-century Christendom. The equality between these two components also influenced the strengthening of the link between human vengeance and justice, which was often represented as being divinely inspired.

⁸⁶ *Saxo Grammaticus: Danorum Regum Heroumque Historia*, XVI, 5.

Appendix: Vocabulary of Vengeance and Human Justice

Source	Latin	English
The letter of Paschal II (1100)	‘Christianus populus... a barbarorum tyrannide et iugo strenuissime vindicavit atque plagas illas, lesu Christi sanguine et praestantia sanctificatas, pristino cultu, maiestati decori atque venerationi’.	‘The Christian people...most strenuously avenged [Jerusalem] for the tyranny and yoke of the barbarians and, with God helping, restored those regions, sanctified by the blood and presence of Jesus Christ, to their former refinement and majesty with adornment and veneration’.
The Magdeburg letter (1108)	‘Qui Gallos ab extremo occidente progressos in brachio virtutis sue contra inimicos suos in remotissimo triumphavit Oriente, ipse tribuat vobis voluntatem et potentiam hos affines et inhumanissimos gentiles subjugare et in omnibus bene prosperari’.	‘May he who with the strength of his arm led the men of Gaul on their march from the far West in triumph against his enemies in the farthest East give you the will and power to conquer (subjugate) those most inhuman gentiles who are near by and to prosper well in all things’.
The Magdeburg letter (1108)	‘ Sanctificate bellum , suscite robustes. Surgite principes, contra inimicos Christi arripite clypeos... Erumpite et venite omnes araatores Christi et ecclesie, et sicut Galli ad liberationem Hierusalem vos preparete’.	‘Prepare holy war , rouse up the strong. Arise, princes, take up your shields against the enemies of Christ ... Sally forth and come, all lovers of Christ and the Church, and prepare yourself just as did the men of Gaul for the liberation of Jerusalem’.
Letter of Bernard of Clairvaux to England to Summon the Second Crusade (1146) (Psalms 149: 7)	‘Ad faciendam vindictam in gentibus increpationes in populis’.	‘To take vengeance on the heathen (nations), and curb the nations’.

Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Letter 457' (12-13 March 1147)	'Suscitaverit spiritum regum Deus et principum ad faciendam vindictam in nationibus et extirpandos de terra christiani nominis inimicos'.	'God has aroused the spirit of kings and princes to take vengeance on the heathens and to extirpate from the earth the enemies of the Christian name'.
Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Letter 457', (12-13 March 1147)	'Illud enim ommimodis interdicimus, ne qua ratione ineant foedum cum eis, neque pro pecunia, neque pro tributo, donec, auxiliante Deo, aut ritus ipse, aut natio deleatur '.	'We prohibit completely that a truce be made for any reason with these people [Wends] either for money or for tribute, until such time as, with the aid of God, either their religion or their nation shall be destroyed '.
Papal bull <i>Divina dispensatione</i> II (11 April 1147)	'Quidam etiam ex vobis tam sancti laboris et premii participes fieri cupientes contra Sclavos ceterosque paganos habitantes versus aquilonem ire et eos Christiane religioni subiugare Domino auxiliante intendunt '.	'Certain of you, however, [are] desirous of participating in so holy a work and reward and plan to go against the Slavs and other pagans living towards the north and to subjugate them, with the Lord's assistance, to the Christian religion '.

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71

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VON GERHARD JARITZ

GEDRUCKT MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG DER KULTURABTEILUNG
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niederösterreich kultur

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Inhaltsverzeichnis

Vorwort	4
Mihai Dragnea, Divine Vengeance and Human Justice in The Wendish Crusade of 1147	5
Ingrid Matschinegg, Das ambivalente Schwein: Sichtweisen in den Tierkunden des Mittelalters	28
Angelika Kölbl, Betwixt Respect and Disregard: Pigs in Medieval German Secular Literature	34
Gerhard Jaritz, Unexpected Modifications? Perceptions of Animals and Their Visual Images in the <i>Hortus Sanitatis</i>	40
Buchbesprechung	55
Anschriften der Autorinnen und Autoren	59

Vorwort

Der erste und umfangreichste Beitrag des vorliegenden Heftes beschäftigt sich mit einem Thema und Forschungsansatz, die recht weit von alltagsgeschichtlichem Interesse entfernt erscheinen. Göttlicher Zorn und seine Rezeption und Umsetzung durch mittelalterliche Menschen stellen jedoch einen Bereich dar, welcher regelmäßig in schriftlicher und bildlicher Überlieferung auftritt und mit dem sich Jeder konfrontiert sehen konnte. Die kritische Analyse von Mihai Dragnea zum Wendenkreuzzug von 1147 zeigt deutlich, in welchem Maße politische, religiöse und wirtschaftliche Konfrontationen und Krisensituationen einerseits Hand in Hand auftraten und andererseits nicht nur die in den Quellen genannten handelnden Protagonisten betrafen, sondern natürlich gravierende Einflüsse auf alle Gruppen der Bevölkerung hatten, die sich der Krisensituation ausgesetzt sahen. Der Aufsatz stellt daher einen wichtigen Beitrag zu auslösenden Faktoren für einen „Alltag in der Krise“ dar.

Die drei weiteren Beiträge beschäftigen sich mit einem bedeutenden alltagsbestimmenden Thema, mit welchem sich *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* schon des Öfteren beschäftigte: der Beziehung von Mensch und Tier im Mittelalter. Eine Spezies, die in unterschiedlichsten Überlieferungstypen regelmäßig in oft kontrastierender Bewertung auftritt, ist das Schwein. Ingrid Matschinegg und Angelika Kölbl widmen sich einerseits Tierkunden und andererseits weltlicher deutscher Literatur des Hoch- und Spätmittelalters und untersuchen die Rolle des Schweines in den Aussagen dieser Quellengruppen. Mein Beitrag beschäftigt sich schließlich mit der sichtbaren Rezeption der Tierillustrationen in einer der wichtigsten naturkundlichen Enzyklopädien des endenden Mittelalters und der beginnenden Neuzeit, dem *Hortus Sanitatis*.

Gerhard Jaritz