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## THE IMPACT OF THE CRUSADE IDEAS IN WESTERN POMERANIA (FROM THE TWELFTH TO THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY)

**Abstract.** The paper outlines the impact of the crusade ideas in Western Pomerania from the twelfth to the end of the first quarter of the thirteenth century, showing how it affected the region in three essential stages. The Western Pomeranians – attached to a traditional, native belief system – first encountered the crusade movement in the first half of the twelfth century, initially as its victims. Subsequently, the crusade ideas spread among the Western Pomeranian knights in the second half of the twelfth century as an element of the new, Christian culture. In the third stage, the region's inhabitants became directly involved in the Fifth Crusade. In keeping with the historical methodology, the study is an attempt at a new, more comprehensive approach to the propagation of the crusade ideas in Western Pomerania and its effect on the locals. Also, the findings demonstrate that further research into the issue would be highly recommended.

**Keywords:** Western Pomerania, Pomeranians, Duchy of Pomerania, crusade ideas, crusade movement, Middle Ages.

### 1. THE POMERANIANS AS VICTIMS OF THE CRUSADE MOVEMENT

Western Pomerania was incorporated into the Piast domain in the 960s by Mieszko I (Strzelczyk 2016, p. 157). The Pomeranians thus found themselves within the sphere of influence of the Polish Church, which at that time was new and weak, barely in its formative stage. The sole bishopric, established in Poznań in 968, was unable to pursue Christianization effectively throughout the country (Jurk 2018, pp. 67-69). It is to be conjectured that this was one of the reasons why in Western Pomerania, Christianity was adopted merely by a narrow group of people, the previous tribal elite (Labuda 1993, p. 47).

Under the provisions of the Congress of Gniezno, efforts were made to establish ecclesiastical structures in the region, with a diocese founded in Kołobrzeg in 1000 (Piętkowski 2017a, pp. 31-32). It was headed by Reinbern, a German

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clergyman from the shire of Hassegau (Rosik 2000, p. 85; 2020a, p. 252). However, the attempt proved unsuccessful. After several years, the Pomeranians rebelled against the Piast state, taking advantage of its involvement in the war against the Empire. In doing so, they rejected the Christian religion, forcing bishop Reinbern to flee (Labuda 1993, p. 47).

In the first half of the twelfth century, continued adherence to the pagan traditions made the Pomeranians the target of forays by Polish magnates, increasingly influenced by the crusade ideas that had spread across Central Europe (Wybranowski 2001, pp. 8-9). The conquest of their lands and the consequent Christianization were among the cornerstones of the foreign policy of Bolesław III the Wrymouth (see Rosik 2013, pp. 155-216). The prince regarded the campaigns against the Pomeranians as religious wars (von Güttner-Sporzyński 2017, pp. 51-75; 2020, pp. 393, 401-402). In his accounts, Bolesław's chronicler Gallus Anonymus emphasized that prior to combat, Polish knights attended religious services and won victories not single-handedly but by divine intervention (Maleczyński 1952, bk. 2, ch. 44, p. 115; bk. 2, ch. 47, p. 117; bk. 3, ch. 1, p. 127; see Grabski 1961, pp. 55-63; Hertel 1982, pp. 65-75). The conquest of Western Pomerania was a long process, completed around 1122 (Rosik 2013, p. 183; Wybranowski 2017, pp. 89-91, 104). As a result, a local ruler named Warcisław paid homage to Bolesław, recognizing himself as his vassal (Spors 1988, pp. 144-148; Rosik 2020b, pp. 351-352).

On the initiative of the Polish duke, the inhabitants of Western Pomerania were subjected to mass Christianization through missionary campaigns. In the 1120s, these were led at first by Bernard, a Spanish monk (Boroń 2009, pp. 33-35) and, subsequently, by Otto, bishop of Bamberg (Rosik 2020c, pp. 365-377). Simultaneously, the foundations of the ecclesiastical structures were laid, culminating in the foundation of the diocese of Pomerania with its headquarters in Wolin in 1140 (Labuda 1992, pp. 15-28; Piętkowski 2015, p. 33)<sup>1</sup>. Even so, the country was still considered a pagan land, and the Pomeranians were attacked by the knights taking part in the Wendish Crusade who arrived near Szczecin in the summer of 1147. According to the account of the Bohemian clergyman Vincent, a canon and notary of the Church of Prague, the inhabitants of the settlement then raised crosses above the defence walls and sent envoys – with bishop Adalbert in attendance – to the crusaders (Wattenbach 1861, p. 663; see Górski 2018, pp. 7-32). A combination of the demonstration of orthodoxy and mediation ended the siege; nevertheless, a year later Ratibor, a Pomeranian duke, solemnly assured the Saxons at Havelberg of his commitment to the Catholic faith, which he swore to defend and promote (Pertz 1859, p. 190; Dalewski 2020, pp. 523-525).

Christianization of Western Pomerania definitely increased pace in the second half of the twelfth century, which should be attributed to the efforts of the ducal court, Pomeranian bishop Conrad of Salzwedel as well as the Benedictine,

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<sup>1</sup> The Episcopal seat was moved to Kamień Pomorski in 1176. Piętkowski 2017b, p. 49.

Premonstratensian and Cistercian orders (Bobowski 1995, pp. 10-13). These changes contributed significantly to the perception of the Pomeranians, their enemies included. Both the Saxons, who fought the Pomeranians in the 1160s, and the Danes, who waged a war against them in the subsequent decade, saw them as ordinary opponents, not pagans in need of conversion (Wybranowski 2001, p. 12). Still, the lower social strata in Western Pomerania remained attached to the old traditions and their Christianization was superficial. The fact was underlined by the Danish chronicler Saxo Grammaticus, who stated that the people there were Christian in name only (Friis-Jensen 2015, bk. 14, ch. 51.4, p. 1388).

## 2. THE SPREAD OF THE CRUSADE IDEAS IN WESTERN POMERANIA (SECOND HALF OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY)

Given how that society functioned, the introduction and propagation of Christianity marked a revolutionary shift. The mentality of the Pomeranians, their perception of the world, their value system all underwent a dramatic transformation. For one thing, the processes taking place within local mores and customs prompted growing curiosity among the elites about the Holy Land and the crusades, an integral part of the Christian culture. Simultaneously, the news of expeditions to the Middle East reached Western Pomerania through political dealings and trade, not to mention religious orders whose structures facilitated the flow of ideas and concepts between different regions of the Christian dominion (Bobowski 1995, p. 10).

It should be inferred that the Pomeranians were well aware of the expeditions undertaken in the neighbouring lands. In 1153 or 1154, Henry the duke of Sandomierz set off for the Holy Land (Gładysz 2004, pp. 99-106; Teterycz-Puzio 2009, pp. 64-84). In 1172, Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony and Bavaria, headed there as well, accompanied by Przybysław, the Obodrite ruler of Mecklenburg (Fried 1998, pp. 121-122). The undertakings of the Danes are equally worth mentioning; having conquered Rügen in 1168 or 1169, they turned their attention to the territories in the eastern part of the Baltic region (Bysted, Jensen C.S., Jensen K.V. and Lind 2012, pp. 139-155), for which they gained the support of pope Alexander III (bull *Non parum animus noster* of 11 September 1171/1172; Migne 1855a, no. 980, pp. 860-861; see Fonnesberg-Schmidt 2009, pp. 58-63).

Not infrequently, those who had participated in the Middle Eastern campaigns would come to Pomerania and share their experiences. One such veteran was Jaksa, a witness to the deed of the Pomeranian bishop Conrad I to the Premonstratensian monastery in Grobi in 1178 (Klempin 1868, no. 74, pp. 48-49)<sup>2</sup>. Most

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<sup>2</sup> The bishop corroborated the endowments from Ratibor I, Bogusław I and Casimir I as well as the tithes granted to the Premonstratensians by his predecessor, bishop Adalbert. On the dating of the document issued by Conrad I see Kozłowska-Budkowa 2006, no. 92, pp. 155-156; Bobowski 1985, pp. 236-237.

likely, it was none other than Jaksa of Köpenick, a Polabian duke and a pilgrim to Palestine<sup>3</sup>. His eminent social position was duly reflected in the bishop's document in which he was listed as the first testator, preceding even the Pomeranian dukes Bogusław I and Casimir I (Klempin 1868, no. 74, p. 49).

The propagation of the crusading ideas in Western Pomerania inspired Bogusław I to bring the Knights Hospitaller there in the early 1180s (Starnawska 1999, p. 35; Smoliński 2008, p. 94; Klasa 2012, p. 33). Their presence in the region is attested in Lucius III's bull of 23 October 1182 (Friedrich 1904-1907, no. 298, p. 268). It may be conjectured that the duke had the brothers settle in Stargard, while his initiative indirectly contributed to the establishment of the order's centre in Sławno in Central Pomerania, founded by Ratibor (Klempin 1868, no. 354, p. 264), in all likelihood a son of Bogusław I (Powierski, Śliwiński and Bruski 1993, pp. 103-104; Klasa 2012, p. 32; see Smoliński 2008, p. 69-82).

Considering the nature of their order, the Knights Hospitaller of Stargard and Sławno probably advocated the pilgrimages to the Holy Land among the local knights and promoted defense of Christianity as a decorous stance (Starnawska 1993, p. 111). Presumably, the Cistercians brought to Dargun and Kołbacz in the first half of the 1170s from the Danish monastery at Esrom, engaged in propagating such ideas as well (Szacherska 1968, pp. 30-54). After all, the latter order maintained close relations with the Roman Curia and supported organization of the crusades (Kłoczowski 2003, p. 205).

Concerning the spread of the crusading ideas in Western Pomerania, one cannot overlook its links with the Kingdom of Denmark (see Rymar 2013, pp. 143-179). Following a failed campaign, Bogusław I paid homage to Canute VI in 1185; the act was solemnly confirmed at Easter 1186 in Roskilde (Waitz 1892, p. 178). After the ruler's death in March 1187 (Rymar 2005, p. 113), his minor sons Bogusław II and Casimir II did likewise, having travelled to Scandinavia to receive a benefice (Waitz 1892, p. 178). The Pomeranians attempted to throw off the Danish supremacy as early as 1189 but without success. Their rebellion was suppressed and the incumbent regent – more precisely, a coregent sharing rule with duchess Anastasia (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 61, p. 146; Klempin 1868, no. 108, p. 83) – Warcisław II Świętoborzyc, was deposed and replaced by Jaromir I, duke of Rügen (Waitz 1892, p. 178; see Klempin 1868, no. 115, p. 89). Danish sovereignty over Western Pomerania lasted, perhaps intermittently (see Rymar 2013, pp. 153-169), until the 1220s (Gaebel 1908, pp. 199-200; Wybranowski 2003, pp. 22-23, 27).

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth mentioning that, for many years, in Polish historiography there has been a fierce discussion about identifying Jaksa of Köpenick with Jaksa of Miechów, a nobleman of Lesser Poland. See Mosingiewicz 1986, pp. 141-156; Bieniak 1990, pp. 67-107; Kiersnowski 1992, pp. 153-160; Kała 2011, pp. 35-58; Wędzki 2014.

The Danes were extremely involved in the crusade movement. After Saladin's army captured Jerusalem, they responded to the appeal of pope Gregory VIII (bull *Audita tremendi* of 29 October 1187; Migne 1855b, no. 4, pp. 1539-1542; see Christiansen 2009, pp. 103, 155) and took part in another crusade, contributing e.g. to the siege of Acre (Jensen 2018, pp. 49-89). In 1191, they undertook an expedition to Finland, whereas in 1194 and 1196/1197 they invaded the pagan lands of Estonia (Christiansen 2009, pp. 154, 161; Bysted, Jensen C.S., Jensen K.V. and Lind 2012, pp. 141, 146, 164). However, it is difficult to determine if the Danish forces at the time comprised any troops from Western Pomerania. In any case, this should not be ruled out in view of the dependencies between the Pomeranian principalities and Denmark (see Wybranowski 2001, p. 13).

### 3. THE FIRST EXPEDITIONS OF THE POMERANIANS TO THE HOLY LAND

The propagation of the crusade ideas ultimately saw the Pomeranians journey to the Holy Land. In the 1190s, Warcisław II Świątoborzyc, a devout and ardent supporter of the Church, decided to go there (Jähnke 1881, p. 46; Rymar 2008b, p. 121). It was he who brought the Cistercians to Kołbacz (Friis-Jensen 2015, bk. 14, ch. 43.3, pp. 1348-1351). Between 1187 and 1189, he acted as coregent in Western Pomerania since dukes Bogusław II and Casimir II had not yet come of age, only to be demoted from power by king Canute VI as a rebel. It is to be assumed that he was forced to leave the country but his destination remains unknown, perhaps somewhere in the Empire, where his wife may have come from (Rymar 2005, p. 178). While in exile, he decided to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and did set off only to die en route in 1196 (Prümers 1877, p. 484), never reaching Palestine (Jähnke 1881, p. 46; see Rymar 2008b, p. 121).

Grzegorz Jacek Brzustowicz linked Warcisław's expedition with the crusade of Emperor Henry VI Hohenstauf, announced in the spring of 1195 (Brzustowicz 1995, p. 25). While this is an interesting notion, it is not very likely. The crusaders did not set out for the Middle East until 1197, after the death of Warcisław (see Loud 2014, pp. 143-172). Furthermore, an entry in the so-called *Stargard Genealogy*, the only source to mention the magnate's journey to the Holy Land, suggests that he participated in a pilgrimage rather than a crusade: "Wartislaus II genuit Batholomeum et obiit in peregrinatione ad terram sanctam" (Jähnke 1881, p. 46; see Rymar 2008b, p. 121).

Due to the contribution of Robert Klempin, it was widely presumed in the nineteenth-century German scholarship that an expedition to Palestine was undertaken by Warcisław II's son Bartłomiej. The researcher believed that the magnate went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1219 and, while in the Holy Land, he joined the campaign against Egypt, during which he was taken captive. He is supposed to have stayed there until the 1230s and then returned to Pomerania (Klempin

1868, pp. 147-148). However, Klempin drew his conclusions from erroneous genealogical analyses by Frederick von Dreger (von Dreger 1768, pp. 340, 389; see Zdenka 1984, pp. 73-88). He was convinced that Bartłomiej lived longer than was actually the case and associated him with events from the life of his grandson, his namesake (Klempin 1868, pp. 147-148).

The alleged expedition of Bartłomiej the Elder (as he is now called) to the Holy Land has persisted in Polish historiography. Edward Rymar found that he may have accompanied his father on a pilgrimage to Palestine (Rymar 1976, p. 139) and taken part in the Fifth Crusade, in a contingent assembled by Casimir II of Demmin, during which he died (after 19 November 1219; Rymar 2005, p. 180). G.J. Brzustowicz, on the other hand, stated that Bartłomiej went to the Middle East together with Warcisław, whereby he surmised that after the latter's death he participated in the crusade of Henry VI Hohenstauf, eventually returning to Pomerania once it ended, in 1198 (Brzustowicz 1995, p. 25).

Admittedly, Bartłomiej the Elder is a somewhat mysterious figure. He probably appeared for the first time in a document of duke Grzymisław dated 11 November 1198, as a witness to the deed of estates in Eastern Pomerania to the Knights Hospitaller, including the castle in Starogard and the church in Lubiszewo inclusive of stipend (the name stated in the document is *Bartholomeus de Stetyn*; Perlbach 1882, no. 9, 10, pp. 6-10)<sup>4</sup>. Subsequently, he was attested in 1208, alongside his brothers Conrad and Casimir – among the counter-signatories of the foundation of the Premonstratensian monastery in Białoboki: the work of the Pomeranian dukes Bogusław II and Casimir II and their mother, duchess Anastasia (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 86, pp. 205-206; Klempin 1868, no. 146, pp. 112-114)<sup>5</sup>. Between 1216 and 1219, he may have held the office of a castellan of Gützkow (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 106, p. 246; no. 107, p. 251; no. 127, p. 289; Klempin 1868, no. 170, p. 128; no. 171, p. 139; no. 195, p. 141), as strongly argued by E. Rymar (Rymar 2005, pp. 179-180). On 4 April 1218, together with his son Warcisław, he authenticated duke Bogusław II's confirmation of the estate of Hilda Abbey (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 118, p. 271; Klempin 1868, no. 188, p. 138).

The sources provide no information concerning Bartłomiej's expedition to the Holy Land, but a pilgrimage alongside his father should not be ruled out. In contrast, his participation in the campaign of Emperor Henry VI Hohenstauf was unlikely. Had Bartłomiej been in the Holy Land, especially as a crusader, the fact would have probably been highlighted in later documents in which he was referred to. The notion that he took part in the Fifth Crusade must be rejected. When

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<sup>4</sup> The endowment from Grzymisław and the questionable authenticity of the document are discussed in very extensive literature. See Smoliński 2006, pp. 24-41.

<sup>5</sup> This was the second foundation of the monastery in Białoboki; the first took place in the 1170s. See Simiński 2015, pp. 163-165.

Casimir II's detachment was engaged there – probably from spring 1217 to spring 1219 – Bartłomiej was in Pomerania, certifying a legal transaction to the benefit of Hilda Abbey.

#### 4. POMERANIANS IN THE FIFTH CRUSADE

The propagation of the crusading ideas in Western Pomerania was specially pronounced during the pontificate of Innocent III. Vanquishing the enemies of Christianity and the Church – involving prospective recapture of Jerusalem, among other things – was one of the cornerstones of his policies. Barely a few months after assuming the Chair of St. Peter, the pope called the faithful to launch a crusade (bull *Post miserabile* of 15 August 1198; Migne 1855c, no. 336, pp. 308-312). However, the expedition undertaken in 1202-1204 ended rather unexpectedly with the capture of Constantinople instead of the Holy City (Philips 2017, pp. 336-340).

Innocent III was not discouraged by the setback. In the spring of 1213, he announced a new crusade agenda (bull *Quia maior* of April 1213; Migne 1855d, no. 28, pp. 817-822) and embarked on preparations for another campaign. Its organization and objectives were discussed in detail at the Fourth Lateran Council (Baron and Pietras 2007, constitution no. 71, pp. 314-325) and promulgated in the bull *Ad liberandam Terram Sanctam* of 14 December 1215 (Migne 1855e, no. 233, pp. 269-273; see Smith 2018, pp. 219-239).

News of the new crusade reached Western Pomerania, although Zygmunt, bishop of Kamień, had not attended the council (Wciślak 2019, pp. 7-61). It should be assumed that the news was broken to the powerful figures in the region by the Cistercians or the Knights Hospitaller, engaged by the pope to organize the expedition, or by the envoys of the Danish king Waldemar II, the feudal overlord of the Pomeranian dukes. The news caused a stir among the knights, exposed to the ideas and stories of the crusades for several decades (Smoliński 2004, pp. 180-181).

The papal address was followed by Casimir II, the duke of Demmin. The ruler probably took crusader vows during the celebrations of a holiday, either towards the end of 1216 or in early 1217. He was followed by some eminent figures, including Rochil, the castellan of Demmin, and perhaps tribune (*wojski*) Andrew, a clergyman named Markward and Dobiesław, later chamberlain of duke Warcisław III (Wybranowski 2001, p. 20). Rochil sold two villages to the Cistercian monastery in Dargun to meet the costs of his participation (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 162, pp. 377-388; Klempin 1868, no. 201, p. 146). The Pomeranian interest in the crusade was noted in the Kołbacz Annals (*Annales Colbacenses*), in which the entry for 1217 features the following remark: “Hic motio christianorum facto euntium Jerusalem” (Prümers 1877, p. 484).

No details concerning Casimir II's expedition can be traced in the source material. It should be assumed that the duke set out in the spring of 1217, to reach the



muster of the Christian armies set by the late Innocent III on time<sup>6</sup>. As determined by Marek Smoliński, his detachment probably joined the crusaders who had gathered at Vlaardingengen in the Netherlands and shared their fate (Smoliński 2004, p. 195).

The Christian army from the north included troops from Flanders, the Rhineland, Friesland and Norway (Svenungsen 2017, p. 224). Commanded by William I, count of Holland, they embarked and left the imperial territory on 29 May 1217, heading to Dartmouth. Along the way, their fleet was joined by the ships from other English ports. At the destination, the crusaders held a council, during which the rules of the expedition were laid down. They also made peace with one another and pledged to abide by the accord. This was extremely important as their army included many people hostile to each other (Powell 1994, p. 123).

On 10 July 1217, the crusader fleet sailed into Lisbon where it was asked to participate in an assault on Alcácer do Sal, a town on the Sado River, which at the time was held by the Almohads (O'Callaghan 2016, p. 137). Most agreed to help in the siege but, after replenishing the supplies, the Frisian troops sailed for the Holy Land on 26 July 1217. Along the way, they plundered Santa Maria de Faro, Rota and Cadiz and called at Tortosa and Barcelona (Villegas-Aristizábal 2018, pp. 95-103). The remaining crusaders marched to Alcácer do Sal and captured it jointly with the Portuguese army on 18 October 1217. They then decided to winter in the Iberian Peninsula and did not set out for the Middle East until March 1218, reaching Acre in late April/early May (O'Callaghan 2016, p. 139). It remains unknown whether Casimir II's detachment went with the Frisians or stayed with the others.

The principal objective of the crusade was to retake Jerusalem. To this end, the Christians decided to weaken the Ayyubids in Egypt (Murray 2017, pp. 128-131), which is why seaborne forces were deployed to Damietta, where the first troops appeared on 27 May 1218 (Powell 1994, p. 123). It is reasonable to assume that the Pomeranians took part in the siege of the city. They were excellent warriors, skilled in both land and naval warfare. After all, use of ships in the Nile Delta was crucial to the success of the whole enterprise, as may be gathered from the descriptions of the operations by Oliver of Paderborn, a German clergyman who participated in the expedition (Hoogeweg 1894, pp. 179-180, 182-186). They probably fought in Egypt from the spring or summer to autumn of 1218 (Smoliński 2004, pp. 195-197). They did not get to see the capture of Damietta, which fell many months later, on 5 November 1219 (Powell 1994, p. 162).

Casimir II and his force returned to Western Pomerania in the spring of 1219. Participation in the crusade probably took its toll on the health of the duke who lived only several months more. Before his death, the ruler performed two legal acts in favour of the Cistercians: he conveyed the villages of *Dirsowe* and

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<sup>6</sup> According to the bull *Ad liberandam Terram Sanctam*, the crusaders were to be ready to depart on 1 June 1217. Migne 1855e, no. 233, pp. 269.





Fig. 1. The putative itinerary of the expedition of the Pomeranian crusaders (1217-1218). Reconstructed by Kamil Wasilkiewicz, based on the hypothesis advanced by Marek Smoliński, developed by Anna Głód

*Malescise*<sup>7</sup> to Hilda Abbey, which he did with the consent of their previous owner Warcisław, lord of Gützkow (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 126, pp. 281-282). Furthermore, he confirmed the estates, rights and revenues granted by his uncle Casimir I to the monks of Dargun (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 128, pp. 291-292; Klempin 1868, no. 193, pp. 139-140). He probably died in December 1219 (Rymar 2005, pp. 132-133).

The participation of Casimir II and his detachment in the crusade reverberated throughout Pomerania, giving rise to a legend told by later chroniclers (Smoliński 2004, p. 199). Their accounts, however, had little to do with the reality. In the fourteenth century, the *Genealogy of the Pomeranian Dukes* recorded that the duke had visited the Holy Sepulchre and died there (Rymar 2008a, pp. 116-117); John Parleberg stated the same in his fifteenth-century annals (Kosegarten 1857, p. 83).

<sup>7</sup> *Dirsowe* was the village of Dersekow, located 5 km south-west from Greifswald. *Malescise* was to be found in the Gützkow land and most likely it were abandoned in the thirteenth century.

In *Pomerania*, written a century later by John Bugenhagen, was repeated the information: Casimir died in Jerusalem, having seen the Holy Sepulchre (Balthasar 1728, bk. 3, ch. 11, p. 130; Heinemann 1900, bk. 3, ch. 11, p. 109; see Jähnke 1881, p. 56). The somewhat younger Thomas Kantzow gave discrepant accounts relating to the Pomeranian ruler in the two versions of his chronicle. In the Lower German edition, the duke is said to have wished to visit the Holy Land and set off with a substantial retinue in 1217. Having arrived at his destination, he suddenly fell ill and died, leaving behind his wife Ingarda and son Warcisław (Kosegarten 1816, bk. 6, p. 223; Böhmer 1835, p. 74). However, in the Upper German version, Kantzow noted that Casimir had travelled to the Holy Land, but died en route in 1211 (von Medem 1841, bk. 7, p. 147; Gaebel, 1897, bk. 6, pp. 143-144).

##### 5. ATTEMPTS TO RECRUIT POMERANIANS TO FIGHT AGAINST THE PRUSSIANS

The lands of Prussia had still not been Christianized in the early thirteenth century. Pagan incursions were extremely troublesome for the inhabitants of Mazovia, Kuyavia and Eastern Pomerania. Thus, an idea was conceived in Greater Poland to dispatch a mission to encourage the Prussian peoples to convert to Christianity voluntarily. Having obtained the consent of pope Innocent III, the mission was undertaken by the Cistercians from Łekno Abbey in 1206 at the latest (Philippi 1882, no. 4, pp. 2-4).

In 1210, Danish king Waldemar II embarked on a campaign against Prussia, having communicated beforehand with Innocent III, who approved of the expedition hoping to expand the borders of the Christian world. He sent a letter to the Danes, urging them to join in the enterprise, and guaranteed forgiveness of sins to its participants. However, the expedition had no lasting effect in religious terms (Migne 1855d, no. 103, pp. 116-117; no. 104, pp. 117-118; Fønnesberg-Schmidt 2009, pp. 98-100).

In 1210, the Cistercians in Prussia came to be headed by Christian<sup>8</sup>, whom scholars associate with the abbeys of Kołbacz and Oliwa, a figure originating possibly from Western Pomerania (Zielińska-Melkowska 1994, pp. 38-41; Grochowski 2018, pp. 39-47). By virtue of a papal decision, ecclesiastical supervision of the mission was delegated to the archbishop of Gniezno, Henry Kietlicz. Shortly afterwards, the friars were settled in Zantyr (Santyr), an outpost from which they ventured to convert the communities on the right bank of the Vistula (Szczepański 2016, pp. 434-435; see Powierski 2004, pp. 44). Difficult as it was, the mission yielded palpable results. Many people embraced Christianity, including members of the Prussian tribal elite, Surwabuno and Warpoda (Philippi, no. 9, p. 7; no. 10, pp. 7-8). Following the success of the Cistercians, Christian was

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<sup>8</sup> At first jointly with another monk, Philip. Philippi 1882, no. 5, p. 4.

appointed bishop of Prussia in late 1215 or early 1216 (Wyrwa 2002, pp. 305; Grochowski 2018, pp. 59-61).

Christian's pontificate began rather inauspiciously, as pagan attacks on the Christian population intensified. At that point, the bishop probably decided to defend the newly converted by calling to arms the forces he was entitled to command. Still, in order to do so, he needed papal consent and the support of the magnates of Poland or Pomerania. It may be presumed that gaining allies was the main reason behind his visit to Kamień in the autumn of 1216. Christian met there with bishop Zygmunt and, incidentally, attested to the latter's deed to the Cistercian monastery in Dargun (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 110, pp. 259-262; Klempin 1868, no. 175, pp. 131-132; Wybranowski 2001, p. 17).

Christian advised the Holy See of the situation in Prussia (Philippi 1882, no. 15, p. 11). Meanwhile, the archbishop of Gniezno, Henry Kietlicz, and the Polish dukes who had committed themselves to a crusade to the Holy Land, and made efforts to have their crusade vows, commuted to the Baltic region (Gładysz 2002, pp. 152-154). Pope Honorius III responded to their appeals in a letter of 14 February 1217, in which he decreed that archbishop Kietlicz was exempt from the Levantine expedition, as were those whose health or shortage of funds prevented from participating. In addition, the inhabitants of Mazovia and probably Crakow, two principalities threatened by the pagan invasions, were not required to go to the Holy Land<sup>9</sup>. The crusaders were now tasked with defending the borders against Prussian attacks (Bottino 1879, no. 220, pp. 272-274). Meanwhile, on 3 March 1217, Christian received permission from Honorius III to conscript armed men, though the pope noted that those who had previously pledged to take part in a crusade to the Holy Land are to be excluded. Importantly, the Episcopal troops were to concentrate their efforts on defending Christians rather than attacking pagans (Philippi 1882, no. 15, p. 11).

Initially, the formal launch of the crusade in Prussia made little difference. Crusaders from the Polish lands did not embark on any major military undertakings, while Christian found it difficult to raise substantial forces. He was succoured by Honorius III who had a keen interest in the Baltic region in the first place and, secondly, may have wanted to make the most of the synergy which the crusade, announced by his predecessor, had engendered in the Christian world. The pope probably realized that potential combatants from Central and Northern Europe were unable or unwilling to take part in the Middle Eastern expedition but would be more inclined to become involved locally. He decided to channel their enthusiasm into Prussia (Fonnesberg-Schmidt 2009, p. 145; Gładysz 2002, pp. 181-182). On 5 May 1218, Honorius III called upon the faithful from Poland and Pomerania, as well as the provinces of Cologne, Salzburg and Mainz – specifically those who had not yet taken crusader vows – to make their way there (Hasselbach and

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<sup>9</sup> This was repeated in the bull of 16 April 1217. Philippi 1882, no. 16, pp. 11-12.

Kosegarten 1862, no. 115, pp. 266-267; Klempin 1868, no. 182, p. 135; Philippi 1882, no. 20, pp. 14-15). A day later, he made a similar appeal to the crusaders from the metropolises of Mainz and Cologne who were unable to travel to the Middle East due to poor health or lack of means, as well as to all those who had taken crusade vows in the metropolis of Salzburg (Philippi 1882, no. 21, pp. 15-16). On 16 May 1218, he requested that the German, Bohemian, Moravian, Danish, Polish and Pomeranian crusaders support bishop Christian and defend the Prussian Christians (Philippi 1882, no. 26, pp. 18-19)<sup>10</sup>. Finally, on 15 June 1218, he ordered news of the crusade to be conveyed to the hierarchs of the archbishopsrics of Mainz, Magdeburg, Cologne, Salzburg, Gniezno, Lund, Bremen and Trier as well as the diocese of Kamień. He sought to encourage the faithful who either had not committed themselves to fighting against the Muslims or found themselves incapable of fulfilling their crusade vows in the Middle East to participate in the expedition (Philippi 1882, no. 29, pp. 20-21).

It is difficult to determine how the Pomeranians responded to the papal exhortations. It may be reasonably assumed that a proportion of the knighthood was interested in the new initiative, as crusade ideas were quite widespread in Western Pomerania, while its social elites were probably well aware of the situation in Prussia. Supporting a crusade through direct or indirect participation (through individuals fighting on one's behalf) or donating funds to the cause raised one's status as well as guaranteed full absolution of sins by virtue of the privileges accorded by Honorius III (Bottino 1879, no. 220, pp. 272-274; Philippi 1882, no. 15, p. 11; no. 16, pp. 11-12). Nonetheless, one should remember that the crusading potential of Western Pomerania was at that time diminished by the units engaged in a crusade under duke Casimir II in the spring of 1217. Moreover, it is not unlikely that a number of knights were involved in the Danish campaigns in the Baltic region. It would thus follow that attempts to enlist Pomeranians for the operations in Prussia were not as effective as it had been anticipated.

In the spring of 1219, Christian went to Western Pomerania. In line with Honorius III's instruction of 23 May 1219, he was to go to Kamień to supervise the local chapter while a new bishop was elected. Zyggwin, the previous ordinary of the diocese, had asked to be relieved of his office due to ill health (Hasselbach and Kosegarten 1862, no. 124, pp. 279-280; Klempin 1868, no. 191, p. 139). For Christian, this was an excellent opportunity to solicit support for the Prussian campaign. However, his canvassing probably brought meagre results and Christian left for the court of duke Henry the Bearded in Silesia (Gładysz 2002, pp. 185-186).

Meanwhile, Casimir II returned to Western Pomerania from the crusade. The prince may have been interested in the Prussian affairs, but even if he planned to

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<sup>10</sup> On 12 May 1219, he warned the same group of crusaders against the temptation of reaping spoils during the Crusade in Prussia as well as against incursions – without Christian's approval – into the lands held by Christians or those with expressed willingness to be baptized. Philippi 1882, no. 31, p. 22.

take any action, he was not meant to carry it through, as he died a few months later, probably in December 1219. Shortly afterwards, on 23 or 24 January 1220, his brother Bogusław II passed away as well (Klempin 1868, no. 198, pp. 143-145; Rymar 2005, pp. 129-130, 132-133). Western Pomerania entered the regency of the widows they left behind, Ingarda and Mirosława. As Dariusz Wybranowski rightly observed, as a result the Western Pomeranian knights remained uninvolved in the crusading movement for some time (Wybranowski 2001, p. 23).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the impact of the crusade ideas in Western Pomerania from the twelfth to the first quarter of the thirteenth century may be described as moderate. In the main, this stemmed from the fact that the region's inhabitants adopted Christianity relatively late. Following an analysis, three stages of the process in question can be distinguished.

In the first stage, the Pomeranians were victims of the crusade movement. In the second decade of the twelfth century, they were attacked by Polish knights by orders of Bolesław III the Wrymouth (Olejnik 1999, p. 84) who intended to conquer the land and Christianize its inhabitants. He saw the struggle against the Pomeranians as a religious war, a notion probably nurtured by the spread of the crusade ideas in Central Europe. Subsequently, in 1147, the area of the Duchy of Pomerania was targeted by forces of the German knights of the Wendish Crusade, a part of the Second Crusade. It is curious that the incursion took place, given that the country was at least formally Christian. The crusaders marched to Szczecin, probably expecting substantial spoils, but eventually abandoned the siege following mediation and conspicuous demonstration of faith from the Pomeranians.

The second stage saw the propagation of the crusading ideas among the Pomeranian knights as part of the new Christian culture. Their interest in the Holy Land grew successively in the second half of the twelfth century and was rekindled through their political and commercial contacts with people from the Empire, the Kingdom of Denmark, or the Polish principalities. The monastic orders in the region, the Cistercians for instance, also contributed to the popularity of the crusades. Here, three major outcomes should be noted. First, the Knights Hospitaller – a military order fighting in the Holy Land – were brought to Western Pomerania in the early 1180s. Second, the Pomeranians probably joined the Danish expeditions following the homage paid by the Duchy of Pomerania to Canute VI (it may be noted at this juncture that more extensive research on the Pomeranian involvement in the Baltic campaigns of the Danes would be highly recommended). Third, as the crusade ideas spread in Western Pomerania, its inhabitants first made pilgrimages to the Holy Land, which fact may be poorly attested in the sources but is

evident in the example of Warcisław II Świętoborzyc and possibly his son, Bartłomiej. It should be added that at the time, the scale of the pilgrim movement in the region was anything but massive; it became more widespread only towards the end of the thirteenth century (Majewski, Rębkowski and Simiński 2016, p. 143).

In the third stage, crusade ideas spread among the Pomeranian knights even further, prompting their direct involvement in the Fifth Crusade. Duke Casimir II of Demmin went to Egypt which had become the target of the campaign. He was probably accompanied by several dozen armed men. It must be assumed that the detachment left Western Pomerania in the spring of 1217 and joined the crusaders who had gathered at Vlaardingen in the Netherlands, fighting subsequently in the battles on the Iberian Peninsula and during the siege of Damietta. Nonetheless, their movements and engagements as part of the crusade might have been different as conclusive testimonies are lacking (see Włodarski 1924, pp. 36-36; Rymar 2005, pp. 131-132; Wybranowski 2001, pp. 22-23). In the meantime, bishop Christian endeavoured to recruit the knights who remained in Western Pomerania for the defence of the Christian population in Prussia. He was supported by Honorius III, who formally launched another front of the Fifth Crusade there in the first half of 1217, while the Pomeranians themselves were one of the groups to whom the Pope addressed a series of letters in May and June 1218. Even so, the attempts to have them join the campaign in Prussia were not very successful. That phase came to an end with the death of the Pomeranian dukes, Casimir II and Bogusław II, after which the involvement of the Western Pomeranian knights in the crusade movement went into a hiatus.

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