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## THE PREPARATIONS FOR WAR EXPEDITIONS TO LITHUANIA AND SAMOGITIA ACCORDING TO THE CHRONICLE BY WIGAND OF MARBURG

The chronicle written by Herald Wigand of Marburg at the close of the fourteenth century, when the grand master of the Teutonic Order was Conrad von Wallenrod (1391-1395), begins in 1311. It was then that Grand Commander Karol de Befart of Treviso<sup>1</sup> was elected grand master of the Teutonic Order. The book deals with the history of wars fought by the Teutonic Knights. The rhymed chronicle was written in German and a few original extracts of the book as well as its Latin translation, inspired by Jan Długosz (Johannes Longinus), have survived to the present day. The very first leaves of the work convey an impression of the task of a lifetime that the Teutonic Knights assumed at that time and express the spirit of crusades against the heathen barbarians.<sup>2</sup> This idea predominates throughout the book. Wigand created a knightly ballad describing the events of the war fought by the Teutonic Knights against the Lithuanians and the Samogitians that occurred between 1311 and 1394 in detail and year by year. The chronicle deals with plundering expeditions to, among others, the territories near the Niemen and the Neris rivers and to Miednica district, which was practically unfortified. Such raids were organized twice or three times a year

for a century.<sup>3</sup> The expeditions of destruction, called *reisen*, were held almost in all the seasons of the year, but the knights mostly set off in late summer, after harvest, and in winter, when the marshes and woodlands froze. These expeditions were called big *reisen*. The small *reisen* set off from the borderland castles and fortified Teutonic abodes. They were led by individual commanders, land officers and camerarii. Many local knights participated in such raids. Organizing *primam suam reysam in Lithuaniam* was the chief goal of each new commander or camerarius of a borderland castle. That was also the case with the brave Brother Wigand von Boldersheim, the camerarius of Insterburg,<sup>4</sup> who would lead his best knights to the neighbouring woodlands to plunder and harass their heathen inhabitants<sup>5</sup>. He was elected commander of Ragnit in 1380 and celebrated the event by organizing an expedition to Shiauliai district. On their triumphant return, nine young men, including Bartholomeus Percevant, received a knighthood.<sup>6</sup> Ceremonies of this type

<sup>1</sup> The publisher of Wigand of Marburg's Chronicle was Th. Hirsch, *Wigand von Marburg, "Cronica nova Prutenica"*, [in:] *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft*, ed. Th. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke, vol. 2, Leipzig 1861. The publisher of the Polish version, a translation of the Latin text prepared by J. Voigt, was E. Raczyński: *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu, dziejopis polskim, to jest: Kronika Wiganda z Marburga (...)*, Poznań 1842. For further information on Wigand of Marburg see: S. Zonenberg, *Kronika Wiganda z Marburga*, Bydgoszcz 1994; by the same author, *Pochodzenie kronikarza Wiganda z Marburga, "Zapiski Historyczne"*, vol. LIX, 1994, fasc. 1, pp. 97-107.

<sup>2</sup> K. Lohmeyer, *Geschichte von Ost- und Westpreussen*, vol. 1, Berlin 1908, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup> According to J. Voigt, the aim of both the small, local expeditions and the general ones called big expeditions was to plunder and destroy with fire and sword the whole land – "(...) plunderte und verwüstete mit Feur und Schwert das ganze Land" – J. Voigt, *Geschichte Preussens*, vol. V, Königsberg 1832, p. 265. Werner Paravicini estimates that about 300 *reisen* were organized in the years 1305-1409 – W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen des europäischen Adels*, part 2, Sigmaringen 1995, p. 19 and table 49, pp. 20-40.

<sup>4</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 192 seqq.

<sup>5</sup> At least two such expeditions reached the Niemen River in 1372 – *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 196 seqq.

<sup>6</sup> Percivaux, Percival – *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 248 seqq. The expedition organized by the commander of Ragnit most probably set off between Easter and Whitsuntide in 1380. The phrase "cum multis" was used in the account and the knights traveled mostly in boats after the ice had thawed. – W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 2, p. 33, table 49, item 214. For further information about Bartholomeus zum Persevant see: by the same author p. 129.



were common during such war expeditions, but they usually took place after the knights return. Bartholomeus and the other men must have deserved the honour. In addition, he was a *persivant* (*pursuivan*), that is, the herald's helper responsible for displaying the coats of arms.<sup>7</sup> He may have been Bartholomäusem Luthenberg, the man who was honoured with the title of Herald of Grand Master Conrad Zöllner von Rotenstein in 1388.<sup>8</sup> The commander of Ragnit died during the siege of one of the castles, when a stone thrown from a ballista "caput commendatoris amputari" in 1384.<sup>9</sup>

When the grand master and the grand marshal of the Order invited knights from Western Europe to Prussia and there arrived some outstanding personages, such as dukes and counts, with their men, big, spectacular expeditions were held. Scotsmen, Englishmen, Portugese knights and Frenchmen from Bretagne and Normandy, Flemish and Dutch men arrived in Prussia by sea. Others traveled along the northern land route via Deventer, the duchy of Geldria, Bremen, Stade, Hamburg, Lübeck or along the southern route, the Köln road from Maastricht and Aix-la-Chapelle via Bielefeld and further through Mecklenburg and Pomerania to Gdańsk. Still other knights traveled from the south via Prague, Wrocław to Toruń and further to Malbork (Marienburg) and Königsberg, the seat of the marshal of the Order, where most of the expeditions started.<sup>10</sup> A mention of 1433 found in *Die aeltere Hochmeisterchronik* says that numerous knights and servants of the Christian world desired to see the Order and arrive in Prussia with their forces and spend some time in Königsberg. They always brought their own stocks and many of them looked forward to the annual expedition. They seemed to be very eager to fight the enemy.<sup>11</sup>

The expeditions were considered crusades – war expeditions organized in order to convert heathen peoples to Christianity.<sup>12</sup> The men who arrived

in Prussia wanted to meet the knights of contemporary Europe, see the things which were worth seeing at that time, particularly the world-wide famous Teutonic Order, the seat of the grand masters and the Teutonic castles situated in the Order's state in Prussia or simply to demonstrate their courage. Many of them spend their free time listening to music or poetry sung by bards. In Toruń Jean de Blois hired three *menestrels*, who performed during the feast held by Grand Master Winrich von Kniprode and some commanders from Prussia in Lithuania on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1363.<sup>13</sup> The bards "recruited" under the banner of St. George, performed near the castle of Welun on the shore of the Niemen.<sup>14</sup> The raids were organized at the most suitable time of the year. Wigand of Marburg writes that "in Prussia the knights left for Lithuania in winter, when the weather was frosty, while in rainy weather they stayed at home sadly."<sup>15</sup> The troops often got bored during the sieges of castles and fortresses when a siege dragged on and on. That was the case with the siege of Kovno, which lasted for four weeks in 1362. Having asked his elite officers for advice, the grand master decided to launch an introductory attack and storm the castle in order to entertain his gusts and the knights.<sup>16</sup>

A war expedition required a lot of preparations. After a long journey, the knights' equipment was often damaged. On arrival in Gdańsk, Toruń, Malbork, Elbląg or most frequently in Königsberg, all the necessary repairs were made and the missing spare parts purchased. Horse harness was ordered, swords, daggers, armour, plate armour (*platen*), barbuts, which were a very popular type

(the Prussian Order) and *freres de Pruce* (brothers of Prussia) to denote "an expedition to Prussia" ("*le voyage de Pruce*", "*Preussenreise*"). The term is derived from the Latin word *expedicio*, meaning a war expedition, for example "a reysis versus Litwinos" (*Preussisches Urkundenbuch*, vol. VI, L. 1, 1986, pp. 116, no. 199). Geoffrey Chaucer used the word *reise* in his *Prologue* (about 1386): "In Lettow hadde he reysed"; for further examples see: W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 2, pp. 13 seqq.

<sup>13</sup> W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 2, p. 72.

<sup>14</sup> W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 2, p. 128.

<sup>15</sup> "(...) similiter in terra Prussie tempore hyemali et rigidio disponere reysas; pluviosis vero temporibus tristes domi residebant" – *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 280 seqq.

<sup>16</sup> "Attediati temen omnes fueruntin exercitu de longa statione et fatigue, que iam duraverat in diebus [sic.] Magister vero cum conoultatione preceptorum proposuit cum impetu attemptare et aggredi" – *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 124 seqq; J. Voigt says that the siege of Kovno lasted from 13<sup>th</sup> March to 10<sup>th</sup> April. – J. V o i g t, *op. cit.*, p. 156, note 1.

<sup>7</sup> W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 2, p. 134, table 59, unit 27.

<sup>8</sup> W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 2, p. 129.

<sup>9</sup> The accident probably happened near Wylkenberg during the big *reise* which set off from Ragnit about May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1384 and whose participants allied themselves with the crew of Duke Vytautas. – W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 2, p. 35, table 49, unit 231.

<sup>10</sup> W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen des europäischen Adels*, part 1, Sigmaringen 1989, especially pp. 192-214, tables 27, 28, 29, 30-36.

<sup>11</sup> W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 1, p. 272.

<sup>12</sup> The terms *Reise*, *Reisa*, *reze* are to be found in fourteenth century German, French and English sources. They are used next to the expressions *ordre de Pruce*



of helmet in the fourteenth century, steel gauntlets, crossbows and bolts, spearheads, "Prussian" shields, which were used not only by the commanders and the participants of noble birth but by the courtiers, such as minstrels, *trouveurs*, *minnesingers*, painters etc. as well, were bought. The horses were exhausted after the long journey, so the troops had to have a rest or new animals were purchased.<sup>17</sup> During his stay in Elbląg in 1344, a knight from the Netherlands bought a stallion from a Teutonic knight for 70 "small guldens".<sup>18</sup> There are more examples of such deals. The most outstanding guests were given horses from the Teutonic stables and white woolen cloth for making coats from the Order's stocks.<sup>19</sup> During the horrible winter expedition of 1386-1387, the mayor of Königsberg presented Count Ostrevent with 20 ells of cloth for making scarves, worth 8 marks.<sup>20</sup>

Before the war expedition of 1363, Jean de Blois<sup>21</sup> ordered new armour (*armurye*), clothes and food to be bought and all the necessary repairs to be made.<sup>22</sup> The prince's armour fastenings (*maelge harnase*) were mended in the local workshops, which cost 16 scoti, his sword was cleaned and mended 17 scoti, a pair of steel gauntlets was repaired 5 scoti, a new pair of gauntlets was purchased for 12 scoti and a pair of steel knee defences was bought for 8 scoti.<sup>23</sup> In addition, two spearheads (*glavyen* – 4 scoti), six broad, steel fastenings for the "large shields" (*paveyen* – 7 scoti), and two cases for Jean de Blois' escutcheons with his armorial bearings to be carried during the expedition 8 scoti were bought. What is more a craftsman was paid 4 scoti for restoring the polychrome decoration on these shields. A case for Jean de Blois' helmet (*miete*) was also bought for 6 scoti. The troops ordered cases for 20 tents, 14 scoti each, another tent case 15 scoti, fastenings for the duke's crossbow (4 scoti), 180 arrows for "hand-bows" (2 marks 6 scoti), and 1200 bolts

for "small and large foot bows" (6 marks 12 scoti).<sup>24</sup> Finally, the army needed 60 torches used for setting fires during an expedition, which cost 1 mark, 25 big and small spades, 2 hatchets, 250 big and small nails, worth 12 scoti. Two workmen (*pijnres*) who carried the supplies onto the ship, which could carry 21 lasts, were paid 1 mark and 1 scotus.<sup>25</sup>

A knight had to take care of his horse, his groom and servants, who cleaned the weapons, saddled the horses, put up the tent and cooked the meals.<sup>26</sup> An expedition lasted from a few days to a fortnight. Longer expeditions were sometimes held as well. During a short *reise*, a knight needed only two horses: a young horse (*palefridus*, *palefroi*) and a battle stallion, called a *dextrarius* (*dextrier*), which the knight mounted just before battle. The knecht's servant led the horses on the right side.<sup>27</sup> Great *reisen*, especially the ones organized by Winrich von Kniprode, lasted for over a dozen days. The expedition of 1365, described by Wigand of Marburg, can serve as an example here. The grand master, Thomas de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, Daniel van der Merwede coming from the Netherlands, the count of Jülich, Wilhelm IV, Robert of Namur,<sup>28</sup> Thomas Offart, an Englishman, as well as Jan, bishop of Warmia (Ermeland), and Bartholomew, bishop of Samland,<sup>29</sup> participated in the raid. The most numerous expeditions, composed of crews of many knights had to be tactically split into two or three parts. One of the biggest expeditions described by Wigand of Marburg, set off in the spring of 1377. The most outstanding knights took part in the *reise*. Among the knights there were the grand master, Ulrich, Bernhard, Christoph and Friedrich,

<sup>24</sup> The two types of bow may have been the small eastern bow and the large European bow; English bows were the largest and they used to be leant against the foot while shooting arrows.

<sup>25</sup> In the fourteenth century, a last was a popular unit of the ship's volume. It equalled 12 barrells of herrings or 12 dozen skins. 1 last equalled 60 Danzig bushels of corn. 21 lasts equalled 252 barefuls of herrings. The supplies loaded onto the ship were to last Jean de Blois and his men six weeks. – W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen* ..., part 2, p. 75, table 53, unit 43.

<sup>26</sup> S. Ekdahl, *Das Pferd und seine Rolle im Kriegswesen des Deutschen Orden*, [in:] *Ordines Militares VI*, Toruń 1991, pp. 29-49.

<sup>27</sup> For further information see: K. Górski, *Studia i szkice z dziejów państwa krzyżackiego*, Olsztyn 1986, p. 107.

<sup>28</sup> W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen* ..., part 1, pp. 148, 171, 175, 176.

<sup>29</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu* ..., pp. 156 seqq.; J. Vóigt, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

<sup>17</sup> W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen* ..., part 1, table 37.

<sup>18</sup> W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen* ..., part 1, p. 277 and note 133.

<sup>19</sup> W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen* ..., part 1, p. 278.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>21</sup> For information on Jean de Blois' expedition and the expenses see: P. N. Van Doornick, *De tocht van Jan van Blois met hertog Aelbrecht maar Gerle Nov. 1362*, Haarlem 1899; ed. by the same author, *De tocht van Jan van Blois om Gelre 1371-1372*, Haarlem 1898.

<sup>22</sup> W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen* ..., part 2, pp. 74 seqq., table 53.

<sup>23</sup> W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen* ..., part 2, table 53, units 1-4 and 9.

the four von Lichtensetein brothers, who accompanied the Austrian prince Albrecht III.<sup>30</sup> Albert, Duke of Lothringen, and Pope Gregory XI's nephew participated in the expedition of 1378.<sup>31</sup> The participants of the expedition of 1377 made an unknown German nobleman their commander and swore allegiance to him. This does not, however, seem to have been a common practice.<sup>32</sup> The forces entered the enemy's territory, that is to say, Koltyn district, under the banners of the Order and Austria and approached the enemy in serried ranks.

Great importance was attached to the choice and preparation of an appropriate route. The areas lying near the Niemen and Neris rivers and in Samogitia were covered in dense forest and full of small rivers. In the marshes, traditional horn-beam bridges had to be built by both the Lithuanians and the Prussians.<sup>33</sup> The fast moving troops used the land's numerous water routes. In his book *Kronika polska, litewska, zmodzka i wszystkich Rusi*,<sup>34</sup> Maciej Strykowski frequently mentions the "water cannons", that is, the Teutonic and Lithuanian river vessels. The ships were absolutely indispensable and if some of them were destroyed in battle, new ones were instantly built.<sup>35</sup> The bigger ones, *naves*, carried twenty armed men and the smaller boats, called *navicula*, held only six persons. The boats and ships performed concrete functions. The smaller ones quickly carried the knights upstream. When they reached the Niemen's tributary, the passengers changed boats. They used the big ships moored in the tributary. Wigand describes these practices and says that the *navicula* were built in the forest and then "per alterum medium miliare trahunt per terram in Pristen."<sup>36</sup> The *naves* must have been large vessels, because during the attack on the stronghold of Brześć (on the river Bug?), one of the Teutonic knights, hit with a battering ram, was laid on a rug and carried onto one of the

ships while the other boat carried 40 other soldiers (these brave Teutonic men had been chased by some heathen warriors, attacking them, piercing them with their lances (six *lanceas*) and shooting arrows at them from their crossbows, but they managed to escape).<sup>37</sup> Sometimes the knights arriving from the west had to hire sailors. In 1363, Jean de Blois' crew was composed of twenty Seelanderers who worked for 10 days and were paid 2 marks and 12 scoti.<sup>38</sup>

The passage of forces composed of, among others, the most distinguished Teutonic officials and the most outstanding guests by land was a memorable event. The army was numerous and the troops would frequently stop off on their way to Lithuania. The expedition dragged on and numerous knights accompanied the main participants. The grand master had six horses at his disposal. He was accompanied by two knights with their servants, two foot messengers, two packhorses and the servants. The grand marshal traveled with the vice-marshal, two vitingas, a man carrying the pennon and two Teutonic knights-brothers. There were also additional packhorses and servants. The grand commander's crew was formed in a similar way.<sup>39</sup> One can, however, wonder, what the Order's officials' crews taking part in the war expeditions to Lithuania and Samogitia looked like.

The crews of the guest knights were larger than the Teutonic ones. As a result, they needed more supplies.<sup>40</sup> The preparations for an autumn

<sup>30</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, p. 218; J. V o i g t, *op. cit.*, pp. 276 seqq.

<sup>31</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 222 seqq; J. V o i g t, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>32</sup> "(...) compromittunque in quendam nobilem teutonicum obedienciam tamquam in capitaneum" – *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, p. 220.

<sup>33</sup> For example, the bridges discovered by Hugo Conventz in Bongard. Also J. V o i g t, *op. cit.*, p. 270, note 1.

<sup>34</sup> M. S t r y k o w s k i, *O początkach, wywodach, dzielności, sprawach rycerskich ...*, ed. J. Radziszewska, Warszawa 1978, pp. 245 seqq.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 246.

<sup>36</sup> The incident described by Wigand took place during the great autumn *reise* of 1376. – *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 1212 seqq.

<sup>37</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 212 seqq.

<sup>38</sup> W. P a r a v i c i n i, *Die Preussenreisen ...*, part 2, p. 71.

<sup>39</sup> For information on the Teutonic crews, their march and camp rules see: K. G ó r s k i, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-110.

<sup>40</sup> In April 1363, before a six-week expedition, in Königsberg, Jean de Blois ordered his men to purchase the following goods: 5040 loaves of wheat and rye bread for 14 marks, baking ingredients for 25 marks, as well as some barrels of beer, some barrels of "native" wine, some barrels of "Gubenscher Wein", and some barrels of mead, which cost 110 marks altogether. They also bought 360 mugs and 10 wooden horns (special measures used for selling beer) for 6 scoti 20 denarii. In addition, 23 oxes and a cow were purchased for 52 marks 8 scoti (2 marks 4 scoti 20 denarii each) and 74 sheep, 8 scoti each, were bought. The person who would skin the sheep as well as prepare, salt down and put the meat in barrels was paid 1 mark 3 scoti. The army needed 57 stones of salt, 2 scoti each, 43 barrelfuls of salted beef, 2 scoti each. They also paid 1 mark 20 scoti for closing the barrels, 4 marks 9 scoti for pickling the meat of 12 pigs, 5 marks 10 scoti for 12 pairs of game hams, 4 marks 3 scoti for 75 pork shoulders, 2 marks 7 scoti for 244 pork sausages, 3 marks 18 scoti for 60 hams made from young pigs in Elbląg. The men bought 240 live chickens, 1 scotus each, 53 pieces of poultry pâté, 1 scotus each, 70 dried salmons



expedition started as early as the summer. On their way, the knights' diet was enriched with game and the meat of looted farm animals. Wigand writes that during the preparations for the *reise* which was to start on the first Sunday of the Great Fast of 1390, the food was loaded onto the wagons, "which had never been done before."<sup>41</sup> The most outstanding participants took part in the expedition which was held in August. Among the knights were Vytautas, who was flattering the Teutonic Knights after he had quarreled with Wladyslaw II Jagiello<sup>42</sup> and fled to Prussia, Henry, Earl of Derby, the son of John, Earl of Lancaster, and many knights from Germany and England. Henry and his 300 men came to Gdańsk by sea. They were accompanied by 900-1000 men.<sup>43</sup> The forces stayed on the bank of the Motlawa River for a short time to subsequently set off for Malbork (Marienburg). Henry was the personal guest of Grand Master Conrad Zöllner von Rotenstein, who was fatally ill at that time and who remained the grand master until 20<sup>th</sup> August 1390.<sup>44</sup> Some French knights also participated in the expedition. First, the forces arrived in Stare Kovno. Then they forded the Niemen River and approached Vilna. However, a bridge had to be built across the Neris River. Wigand writes that the whole host of knights and their servants arriving from the west turned out to be so attractive to the locals that lots of them

"came to meet the army and they started trading with the Christians."<sup>45</sup>

In 1361 the commander of Ragnit, Heinrich von Scheningen, "sent craftsmen to Kovno in order to have the thickness, the depth and the height of the castle's defensive wall measured. He also ordered engines of war and battering rams to be made. The craftsmen were to report on their work to the grand master, who intended to attack the town the following winter." The measurements must have been precise and the engineering works useful, because Kovno was seized the following winter.<sup>46</sup>

The main initiator of the military activities near Kovno and the siege of the town was the then grand master Henning Schindekopf (1359-1370). When he was the commander of Ragnit, Schindekopf fought against Lithuanian forces and participated in almost all the expeditions led across the Curonian Lagoon to Vilna.<sup>47</sup> He and the grand commander Wolfram von Baldersheim (1360-1374) had been inventing stratagems to take an advantage over Kovno ('premiditantur insidias contra Kawen').<sup>48</sup> Wigand gives the following account of the siege: "Brother Henning, the marshal, was ordered by the grand master and obligated to divide the troops into groups and to give each unit a task to fulfill. Part of the troops was sent to the island in order to guard their ships and one third of the soldiers were placed around the castle of Kovno and the bravest men were to protect the abatisses. Meanwhile he had the siege machines and the other instruments raised so that they reached the castle, which was very tall and strong." When the defenders repelled the attack, the original positions had to be moved and "Markward, a master carpenter from Malbork,<sup>49</sup> built and tied a machine, that is, a battering ram, which was called a *tumeler* ('machinam sive arietem, vulgaliter tumeler'). The engine was used to knock down one of the flanking towers on the side of the Niemen River. Also Master Maciej, a carpenter

for 6 marks 20 scoti, 150 pieces of stockfish for 12 scoti 15 denarii, 40 cods for 20 scoti, a barrelful of salted cods for 2 marks, 150 live breams for 4 marks 2 scoti (in addition, a man was paid 2 scoti for dressing, salting down and putting the fish in barrels), as well as some eels and 1200 herrings for 2 marks 12 scoti. A man who had been buying the eels for two days was given 8 scoti. The supplies included two barrelfuls of salt, two and a half barrelfuls of butter, some oil, 2340 eggs, 30 barrelfuls of honey, a barrelful of sturgeons, four barrelfuls of "Edix" beer, four barrelfuls of peas from Elblag, a barrelful of charlock, some kitchen utensils, such as hooks and benches for dressing meat and fish with "notches and steel hinges", 840 big and 420 small bowls, which were packed in barrels. There were also 20 barrelfuls of spices, for example saffron, sugar from the Crimea (?), "Tartar", candied fruits, raisins, figs, almonds. More equipment, clothes, cloth and cases were purchased. The goods and gifts bought and the fees paid were worth over 511 marks altogether. – W. Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen* ..., part 2, pp. 70 seqq., table 52.

<sup>41</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu* ..., pp. 328 seqq.

<sup>42</sup> H. Łowmiański, *Prusy – Litwa – Krzyżacy*, ed. M. Kosman, introduction by M. Kosman, Warszawa 1989, p. 212.

<sup>43</sup> J. Voigt, *op. cit.*, p. 542.

<sup>44</sup> J. Voigt, *Namen-Codex der Deutschen Ordens-Beamten* (...), Königsberg 1843, p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu* ..., pp. 330 seqq.

<sup>46</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu* ..., pp. 116 seqq.

<sup>47</sup> For a concise biography of Henning Schindekopf, see: P. Pizunski, *Krzyżacy od A do Z*, Skarszewy 1999, pp. 206 seqq.

<sup>48</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu* ..., pp. 118 seqq.

<sup>49</sup> Wigand says clearly that Markward was a "magister carpentarium de Marienburg" – *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu* ..., p. 120. In his commentary "Magister carpentarium, Magister faber lignorum, Magister lignarius", J. Voigt argues that the term denoted a master carpenter, a master of wagons or a master of catapults (blydenmeister). – J. Voigt, *Geschichte*..., p. 155, note 1.



(*faber lignorum*) from Königsberg, erected similar machine, which destroyed the flanking tower overlooking the Neris River by repeatedly hitting the wall. The men of Brodnica succeeded in damaging the walls by means of their machines too. Then Markward of Malbork made an engine which was as high as the castle up to the moat and Master Maciej together with another carpenter coming from Elbląg pushed it downhill on the eastern side, where there were the positions manned by the brothers of Ragnit.<sup>50</sup>

The *machinae* and *instrumenta* mentioned by Wigand were well known and described by Janko of Czarnków, Deputy Chancellor of Casimir III the Great. Such engines were used in 1376, when the castles of Kujawy were being attacked during the fights with Wladislaw the White, Duke of Gniezko.<sup>51</sup> The machines threw stones, which not only damaged the walls but caused heavy losses among the defenders too. Marian Głosek quotes the example of Kazimierz, Duke of Słupsk and Dobrzyń.<sup>52</sup> The duke was fatally wounded as a result of the use of such engines and this incident clearly corresponds to the situation described by Wigand. Battering rams, called *tumeler*, originated in antiquity. They were modernized at the close of the Middle Ages and presented in Conrad Kyeser's *Bellifortis* together with other technical "novelties".<sup>53</sup> Besides all sorts of stone throwing machines – balistas, catapults, arrows and battering rams, called *barany* (rams) in Polish and *tumelers* in German, Wigand mentions "alia instrumenta erigere in altitudinem domus", which means siege machines the height of the castle.<sup>54</sup> Phillipe Contamine enumerates various types of siege towers, tower machines and timber castles. Such structures sometimes had very funny and "crude" names. They could be wheeled or pushed along logs towards the wall. They were the height of the rampart so that the bowmen and the crossbowmen could shoot their arrow at the defenders and the knights could easily reach the walls of the fortress.<sup>55</sup>

In the case of the castle of Kovno, Duke Kestutis, the son of Gediminas, and the grand duke of Lithuania Olgierd "together with their boyars (...)" were watching the battle from the other bank of the Niemen. They "were discussing the situation and trying to find a way to free the besieged castle. Master Winrych (Winrych von Kniprode) and his officials were thinking (...) of a way to destroy the castle completely."<sup>56</sup> Thus the moat was filled with earth and a structure "the height of the w rampart" was erected "so that the soldiers could climb it and enter the castle." Wigand, or to be precise, the translator who translated the chronicle into Latin, used the expression "structura equalis altitudinis domus."<sup>57</sup> Such engines were called Ebenhöhen in German.<sup>58</sup> Each tower had a drawbridge which was lowered onto the wall. The attackers used it to reach the castle. In order to avoid this sort of attack, the walls were equipped with special logs, protruding at an angle.

Finally, a number of raids were launched and the attackers reached the area between the walls on one side of the castle. A very precise description offered by Wigand, allows us to reconstruct the outer, defensive line of walls, which was so badly damaged by the Christian knights that it "even fell onto the ground." The first defensive line was seized and the final storming began. The attackers set fire to the first buildings of the castle and "none of the people who were there survived because the fire devoured them all."<sup>59</sup>

However, the siege was not over yet. At the very foot of the rampart, "Brother Markward built a new machine and he began hitting the castle wall again. He managed to weaken the rampart, which started to fall (...). A number of bricklayers who were standing alongside the wall under fire, were also damaging the wall with their tools. The rampart was constantly being repaired from the inside and the Christian knights were attacking the workers from the outside."<sup>60</sup> The siege lasted throughout the Holy Week of 1362. On the Teutonic side another "timber structure as high as the wall [was built] in order to break through the rampart. When the machine was pulled towards the castle wall, the bricklayers set fire to it."<sup>61</sup> On

<sup>50</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 120 seqq.

<sup>51</sup> Janko z Czarnkowa, *Kronika Polska*, ed. A. Bielowski, Warszawa 1961, pp. 659 seqq.

<sup>52</sup> M. Głosek, *Artyleria przedogniowa*, [in:] *Uzbrojenie w Polsce Średniowiecznej 1350-1450*, ed. A. Nadolski, Łódź 1990, p. 154.

<sup>53</sup> *Conrad Kyeser aus Eichstätt, Bellifortis*, ed. G. Quarg, Düsseldorf 1967.

<sup>54</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, p. 120.

<sup>55</sup> Ph. Contamine, *Wojna w Średniowieczu*, translated by M. Czajka, Warszawa 1999, p. 110.

<sup>56</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 122 seqq.

<sup>57</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 122 seqq.

<sup>58</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 123 seqq. and note 15.

<sup>59</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 122 seqq.

<sup>60</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 124 seqq.

<sup>61</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 126 seqq.



Saturday a battering ram was pushed towards the wall and a hole was made. However, the opening was situated too high for a large group of soldiers to pass through. In addition, the defenders set fire to the section of the wall adjacent to it. Eventually, Kovno was seized, but both sides suffered heavy losses.<sup>62</sup> The Chronicle contains a most detailed account of the fight for this Lithuanian castle. The German lines, quoted by Theodore Hirsch in *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum* are characterized by great emotional involvement, which suggests that the author may have witnessed the events or attentively listened to the participants' account.<sup>63</sup> This emotional attitude is missing from Conrad Gesseler's translation, which according to Sławomir Zonenberg, tells the truth about a historical event but lacks the exceptional charm of the spirit of a crusade's description.<sup>64</sup>

Undoubtedly, the seizure of Kovno by the Teutonic Knights, Grand Marshal Henning Schindenkopf's practice of organizing annual "great expeditions against the heathen" ("magna reysa contra paganos"), as well as the plunder of the interior of the country all point to the weakness of Olgierd's state.<sup>65</sup>

Wigand mentions yet another detail which is evidence of the preparations made by the Teutonic Knights for the siege. The area near the besieged fortress where the Teutonic Knights and their guests made camp was surrounded by ditches and other defensive obstacles, making it difficult for the enemy to attack the positions from the outside.<sup>66</sup> In addition, basket, fascine and earthen fortifications were used to protect the place against attack. Obstacles of this type were erected during the blockade of the city of Malbork in the Thirteen Years War.<sup>67</sup> A similar function was performed by the ditches dug around the boats lying

on the riverbank during the war expedition of the autumn of 1364.<sup>68</sup> The castle in Kłajpeda, defending the isthmus leading to the Curonian Lagoon and burnt down in 1360, was also surrounded by a palisade till it was rebuilt a few years later.<sup>69</sup>

Firearms were used during the fight for the Teutonic castle Marienwerder, founded on the Niemen River near Kovno. Both the Lithuanians and the Teutonic Knights brought their artillery with them. The Lithuanians fortified the bridge and dug ditches at the foot of the castle walls. Then the two sides opened fire. A cannon called "magister bombardarum" was aimed at a "magna bombardata" and fired at the larger machine but it missed. "It fired again and hit the target so that it was completely destroyed and broken like an egg. The knights attacked the enemy from many sides with their firearms in their hands and killed the heathens in large numbers. The attackers repaired the bigger machine instantly, but brother Herman managed to destroy it again."<sup>70</sup> The incident is a spectacular example of the accuracy of contemporary artillerymen. Wigand mentions two types of cannons: the "magna bombardata", the large gun, and the "pixis", the hand box. While describing the attack on the walls of Marienwerder, Johannes Voigt adds that the Lithuanians stormed the rampart night and day using catapults, battering rams (tumlern) and heavy guns.<sup>71</sup> The defender of the fortress was Heinrich von Clee, the castle's commander. This is probably the earliest mention of the use of firearms by both sides in the period of war expeditions to Lithuania and Samogitia.

To sum up: It may be assumed that the Latin version of the Chronicle by Wigand of Marburg translated by Conrad Gesseler, a priest from St John the Baptist's and St John the Evangelists' churches in Toruń, is a reliable source of information despite the long, learned discussion about the faithfulness of this translation. A comparative analysis recently made by Sławomir Zonenberg of some surviving extracts from the original Chronicle, the work by the Gdansk chronicler Casper Schuetz and Gesseler's version of 1464 provides enough evidence in this respect.<sup>72</sup>

The ideology of the participants of such expeditions, particularly the motivation of the so-called

<sup>62</sup> J. Voigt, *Geschichte ...*, pp. 155-160.

<sup>63</sup> *Scriptores ...*, pp. 531-538.

"Mit herzen und mit sinnen  
Cawen daz hus zu gewinnen  
darumbe si wolte sterben  
odlervon got daz erwerben,  
daz si sucht zügen von hinnen,  
sin heten den zuvor innen"

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 441; S. Zonenberg, *Kronika Wiganda ...*, p. 49.

<sup>65</sup> W. Łowmiański, *op. cit.*, p. 208. For information on the destruction and seizure of Kovno see: M. Strzykowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 279 seqq.

<sup>66</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 126 seqq.

<sup>67</sup> A. R. Chodyński, *Znaczenie zaginionego obrazu "Obleżenie Malborka w 1460 roku" z Gdańskiego Dworu Artusa w studiach nad orężem schyłku XV wieku*, "Rocznik Elbląski", vol. XVII, 2000, pp. 18 seqq.

<sup>68</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 146 seqq.; J. Voigt, *Geschichte ...*, pp. 169 seqq.

<sup>69</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 102 seqq.; J. Voigt, *Geschichte ...*, p. 134, note 3.

<sup>70</sup> *Spuścizna po Janie Długoszu ...*, pp. 306 seqq.

<sup>71</sup> J. Voigt, *Geschichte ...*, p. 438.

<sup>72</sup> S. Zonenberg, *Kronika Wiganda ...*, – passim.

guests arriving from Western Europe to Prussia, is worth considering too. In the fourteenth century, war expeditions against heathen peoples were still regarded as crusades and the knights taking part in such raids were called the "knights of Christ." One can, however, wonder whether the fourteenth century *reisen* discussed above can be compared with the crusades to the Holy Land organized two and a half centuries earlier.

Some fourteenth century knights fought both in the Holy land and Eastern Europe. For example, Engelbert III, Earl of Mark (from 1347 onwards), went on a pilgrimage to Palestine (in 1353) and took part in two expeditions to Livland and Prussia (1353/1354 and 1381/1382).<sup>73</sup> Also, Count Wilhelm IV of the Netherlands set off on a pil-grimage to the Holy Sepulchre on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1343. On his way back, he arrived in Venice and traveled via Vicenza, Vienna, Brno and Wroclaw to Toruń, where he arrived on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1344. His force was composed of 19 knights, 13 grooms and over 100 other men. The expedition started on 19<sup>th</sup> February and ended on 4<sup>th</sup> March.<sup>74</sup> Count Wilhelm IV, Engelbert III and probably other knights too traveled to the Holy Land first and then to Prussia. Expeditions of this type were very expensive. According to Udo Arnold, during the second expedition to Eastern Europe (to Livland in the summer of 1381 and to Prussia in 1382) Engelbert III participated in the *reise* against Trakai and Soleczniki district led by the grand marshal of the Teutonic Order.<sup>75</sup> In 1381, the earl of Mark and his vassals celebrated Christmas at the grand master's place in Malbork. Engelbert's second crusade was a consequence of the vows he had made before Pope Innocent VI many years earlier.<sup>76</sup>

Therefore, one can assume that members of the European aristocracy participated in such war expeditions to fulfill the vows they had made or in order to do penance for their sins. Their willingness to visit the world or to practise their military skills was of secondary importance. Some of the participants were eager to meet new people and see new lands. However, a desire to travel round the world was not considered a fine quality in a man and the participation in a war expedition against the heathens was used as a pretext for traveling and as an excuse acceptable for the Church. It should also be noticed that the fourteenth century *reisen* were a turning point in the spiritual and personal spheres of the knights' life. These expeditions were by no means as dangerous as the bloody crusades to the Holy land held in the preceding period and the first battles fought by the Teutonic Knights in Prussia.

The Chronicle written by Peter of Dusburg lacks the anecdotes from the knights' military life found in the work by Wigand of Marburg. It justifies the use of force against the heathens and presents the participation in an expedition as a condition for receiving indulgence.<sup>77</sup> The examples quoted by Peter of Dusburg, among others, the story of Brother Gerard, who was a carpenter (*carpentarius*) by profession and built engines of war with great skill, resemble morality plays and are almost hagiographic in character. The aim of such stories was to encourage people to pray to God, live holy lives (*vita sancta*) and become members of the Teutonic Order.<sup>78</sup>

Translated by Zuzanna Poklewska-Parra

<sup>73</sup> Engelbrecht III. Graf von der Mark, seine Kreuzfahrten ins Heilige Land, nach Livland und nach Preussen [in:] Acta Prussica. Abhandlungen zur Geschichte von Ost- und Westpreussen. Festschrift für Fritz Gause, ed. K. Forstreuter, Würzburg 1958, pp. 29-46. The text of the Chronicle was also published in: Beiträge zur Geschichte Dortmunds und der Grafschaft Mark, vol. 64, 1968, pp. 79-95; it was discussed by U. Arnold, Engelbrecht III hrabia Marki i jego wyprawy krzyżowe do Ziemi Świętej, Inflant i Prus, [in:] U. Arnold, Zakon krzyżacki z Ziemi Świętej nad Bałtyk, Toruń 1996, pp. 160-180.

<sup>74</sup> H. Ems von Gelder, Do Ziemi Świętej i Prus. Kasa podróżna hrabiego Wilhelma IV, Toruń 1994.

<sup>75</sup> U. Arnold, Engelbert III ..., pp. 167 seqq.

<sup>76</sup> Ibidem, p. 173.

<sup>77</sup> J. Trupinda, Ideologia krucjatowa w Kronice Piotra z Dusburga, Gdańsk 1999, p. 194.

<sup>78</sup> Ibidem, p. 193.