TEUTONIC HIEROTOPY: ST. CHRISTOPHER AT LOCHSTEDT

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Il y a bien des choses dans cette légende, et ces choses sont d'un genre à part. Il semble qu'elle porte non pas tant sur les vertus de saint Christophe, et qu'elle nous déclare mystérieusement, symboliquement, prophétiquement peut-être, une exception extraordinaire. Saint Christophe déclare qu'il n'est pas apte à ce qu'on lui demande d'abord. Il a le sentiment d'une nature exceptionnelle, entraînant une volonté exceptionnelle et une vocation exceptionnelle. Sa vocation sera la bonté et il le sent bien, la bonté d'avoir égard à la nature. Il passera les hommes d'une rive à l'autre, et parmi les passagers se trouvera Jésus-Christ. Qui peut donc compter les sens de ce mot: passer les hommes d'une rive à l'autre?[3]

Abstract: *This collaborative article provides the first in-depth analysis of the fresco of St Christopher in the castle of the Teutonic Order at Lochstedt. It first contextualizes the placement of the Christopher fresco in relation to the other images in the castle, followed by a new dating of the image to c. 1420–1430, not the late fourteenth century. Based on these findings, a specific patron of the fresco emerges, Heinrich von Plauen, Grand Master of the Teutonic Order. The fresco is then analyzed within the context of Alexei Lidov's theory of hierotopy (the creation of sacred spaces). Using the links between the iconography of the image, its popularity in late medieval Germany and the events surrounding the Heinrich von Plauen's tenure as Grand Master, the article suggests the reasons for which Heinrich chose the image to decorate his private quarters in the castle. It concludes by demonstrating that the image of St. Christopher at Lochstedt serves as a rare example of the creation of private sacred spaces in Late Medieval Prussia.*

Keywords: *fresco, hierotopy, Prussia, St. Christopher, Teutonic Knights*

Until 1945, visitors of East Prussia could admire a castle on the northeastern shore of the Vistula Lagoon on a small hill called Lochstedt, which is now outside Pavlovo, on the northern edge of the town of Baltiisk, in the Kaliningrad *oblast'* of Russia[4]. According to Peter von Dusburg

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[3] HELLO 1907, 393–394.

[4] The hill is located to the northeast from the intersection of the Botkina Street with the road going to Primorsk. See SUZDAL'CEV ET ALII 2005, 28. For the location of the castle on the northern shore of the Vistula Lagoon (Frisches Haff, in German), or rather of its bay now known as Bukhta Primorskaia, see STREHLKE 1861, 442 (lines 12,068–12,073): "Darnâch man dî andre sî / sach bûwin sô hin abe / ûf dem vrischen habe / nâ bî der gesalznin sê; / Witlandisort hîz sî ê, / *nû heizit sî Loucstiete*" (emphasis added). For the destruction of the castle by the Soviet army, see HERRMANN 2007, 571–573. The site was surveyed by Vladimir I. Kulakov in 1977, but no archaeological excavations have so far taken place on the hill.

(1326), the priest and chronicler of the Teutonic Order, the castle was built to "curb the wickedness of the Sambians," and was named after a local chieftain called "Laucstiete"[5]. Following its construction ca. 1270, Lochstedt became a significant castle of the Teutonic Order. For a short time in the late thirteenth century, this was the seat of a commandery (*Komturei*)[6]. By 1320, however, Lochstedt was the seat of the Amber Master (*Bernsteinmeister*), the most important collection point for the entire Baltic Sea shore, which has the richest deposits of amber in the entire world[7].

The image

To art historians, Lochstedt is particularly significant because of the frescoes in its interior, namely those in the commander's private rooms. Those rooms were located in the western wing of the castle, which was built a century after its foundation, namely in the 1370s[8]. The frescoes are in the northwestern corner of the building[9]. The Lochstedt murals, now lost, have been first studied in detail by Conrad Steinbrecht. He described the iconographic program in all three rooms: the *Gebietiger-Gemach* (private quarters), a small room attached to it, and the *Wohnstube* (sitting area)[10]. There were frescoes on all four walls of the *Gebietiger-Gemach* – figures of saints and Biblical stories. On the northern wall was the scene of the adulteress before Christ (John 8:1–11), next to the Annunciation. The lower portion of the eastern wall was destroyed at a later date to make room for a larger window, but no alterations were made to the scene of the Resurrection of Christ, carrying the Order's banner. On the opposite, western wall was an image of the Archangel Michael slaying the dragon (Revelations 12)[11]. In the adjoining, smaller room were hunting scenes with exotic animals, St George slaying the dragon, as well as the Adoration of the Magi (Matthew 2:1–12)[12]. More exotic animals appear in the *Wohnstube*, along with figures of the Nine Worthies, hinting at values of 14th-century chivalric culture[13].

At a first glimpse, it is quite clear that those images mirrored the spirituality of the Order as an organization engaged in the worldly struggle against pagans (in this case, the Grand Duchy

[5] SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 232 (3.112): "[…] et in successu temporis castrum Wiclantsort, quod dicitur nunc Locstete, a nomine cujusdam Sambite, dicti Laucstiete, qui ibidem morabatur, edificarunt, munientes ea, ut facilius compescerent maliciam Sambitarum".

[6] The first commander appears in 1305: VOIGT 1843, 91; TORBUS 1998, 111–112. A commandery was a fortified monastery, which, according to the Order's rule, had to have at least twelve brothers, a commander, as well as a chapel, a refectory, and a dormitory. See PERLBACH 1890, 41 (Rule 13): "Daruber sal man daz behalten in allen hûseren, dâ convent von brûderen ist, daz sint zwelf brûdere unde ein commendûr *zu der gezal der iungeren unseres hêrren Jhêsu Christi*" (emphasis added). The number of brothers required for each commandery castle was meant to allude to the number of apostles surrounding Jesus Christ. See CLASEN 1979, 13–14; TORBUS 1998, 52–5; JÓŹWIAK/TRUPINDA 2012.

[7] STEINBRECHT 1910, 1–3; CLASEN 1979, 45–56. For the distribution of Baltic amber and the deposits in the Sambian Peninsula as the richest in the world, see BLIUJIENĖ 2011, 5–13.

[8] CLASEN 1979, 60; 104. The date of the western wing was established on the basis of comparison with the castle in Tapiau (now Gvardeisk, Kaliningrad region of Russia), which is known to have been built in 1351 by the Grand Marshal and commander of Königsberg, Siegfrid of Danenfeld. For a comparison between the rooms in Lochstedt and those in Tapiau, see STEINBRECHT 1910, 30; TORBUS 1998, 115 believed Tapiau and the late wing at Lochstedt to have been designed by one and the same architect.

[9] STEINBRECHT 1910, 14.

[10] STEINBRECHT 1910, 22–25.

[11] STEINBRECHT 1910, 21–22, outlines the artistic program in the *Gebietiger-Gemach*. For the destruction of the eastern wall, see STEINBRECHT 1910, 21: "Auf der vierten (i.e., eastern) Wand, nach dem Hofe zu, sind durch spätere Vergrößerung der Fenster die Unterteile der dort befindlichen Gemälde zerstört".

[12] STEINBRECHT 1910, 22.

[13] For the Nine Worthies as a literary and artistic topos of courtly literature, see SCHEIBELREITER 2006.

of Lithuania, which officially converted in 1386), as well as the spiritual struggle common to military monastic organizations[14]. While the Annunciation points directly to the Marian identity of the Order, and St George reflected the earthly struggle of the knights, the Resurrection of Christ (with the Order's banner) was meant as a symbol of the *ecclesia triumphans*[15].

There are two images on the southern wall of the *Gebietiger-Gemach*, symmetrically placed across the room from the murals on the northern wall. Opposite the scene of the Annunciation was the Crucifixion, while opposite the scene of the adulteress before Christ, directly above the door to the smaller, adjacent room was an image of Saint Christopher carrying the Christ Child (Fig. 1)[16]. Christopher is depicted frontally, larger than any of the human figures in the other murals, an old man with beard and long hair. His right hand rests on the trunk of a tree, the branches of which are indicated by three leaves. The tree roots are visible in the water (rendered by wavy, blue lines) through which Christopher is shown walking. The lower, right part of the mural, as Steinbrecht saw it in 1910, was damaged, and Christopher's left foot cannot be seen. His right, bare foot, however, is shown as he steps into the water. Next to it, immediately to the left is a fish. The saint's left hand is slightly bent and raised from the shoulder, in a body posture meant to show him moving. The end of Christopher's blue robe, which is thrown across the left shoulder, billows out behind him to the left, in the direction of three trees depicted on what looks like a hill, on the right side of the mural. The billowing robe accentuates the sense of Christopher moving from left to right. The saint advances towards the viewer, but looks over his shoulder to his left. On the left shoulder, badly damaged, is the image of the Christ Child, holding the orb (a symbol of the world). The child seems to be sitting in a kneel position, with the left thigh shown right above Christopher's shoulder. The child's head is surrounded by a cruciform halo, and his body blocks a good portion of the larger, simple halo around Christopher's head. To the saint's right side, behind jagged rocks, is another human figure, a man in a crouching position, shown as half the size of Christopher's body. The man is dressed in a monk's robe with scapular and cowl, as well as a hood covering the head with moustache and long beard. Above the head of the monk are three trees, the mirror image of those on the right side of the mural, but placed somewhat higher. In his hands, the man holds an object with a rounded top and an opening on the side – no doubt, a lamp. The scene appears against a flat background of brownish red color, the same color as that of the decorative pattern below the scene, showing curtains hanging from appliques in the form of lion heads.

While the ideology of the Order and chivalric values are readily recognizable in the other scenes of the *Gebietiger-Gemach*, the meaning of the image of Christopher in this context is not as easy to understand. It has in fact never been studied in detail. Judging by the number of surviving images in the lands of medieval Prussia, the saint was not particularly popular in the lands of the Order (or, for that matter, *for* the Order)[17]. The only other image of Christopher carrying the Christ Child across the river appears in a fresco inside the Kaarma

[14] SARNOWSKY 1998a, 86–87; SARNOWSKY 1998b, 120–121; CZAJA 2005, 11–14.

[15] CZAJA 2005, 11, emphasizes the role of the visual culture of the military orders in examining aspects of identity and self-understanding. More recently, see WÜST 2013, 220–226, who specifically outlines Lochstedt and its reflection of the Order's corporate identity in the Late Middle Ages.

[16] The following description is based on STEINBRECHT 1910, plate II. This is a drawing of the murals on the southern wall of the *Gebietiger-Gemach*. The drawing was made by the German painter August Oetken (1868–1951).

[17] *Contra*: PLUSKOWSKI 2013, 280, who believes that St. Christopher "was one of a number of popular European saints adopted within the Order's state". Two other images of St. Christopher exist, one at Bärwalde (Niedzwiedzica, Poland), and another in the church at Kumehnen (Kumachevo, Russia); see HERRMANN 2007, 213–214. For the veneration of saints in the Teutonic Order, see WÜST 2013, 13–31. For the dedication of churches in medieval Prussia, see ROZYNKOWSKI 2009.

Church on the island of Saaremaa, in Estonia. That church was erected shortly after the conquest of the island in the winter of 1227. The mural in Kaarma is badly preserved and barely visible today, but what survives is sufficient to assign a date within the thirteenth century, at least a century earlier than the image of St. Christopher in Lochstedt[18]. The image of Kaarma was most likely frontal, not in a movement, and no other elements may be found that are common to both murals.

Nor is there evidence of a cult of the saint in Prussia. There were many relics in Marienburg, where the headquarters of the Order moved in 1309. Those relics were particularly important to pilgrims coming for the annual *Reisen* against the Lithuanians, in addition to serving the needs of the brethren as a monastic order. However, there were no relics of St. Christopher[19]. To be sure, the feast of St. Christopher (July 25) is mentioned as *commemoracio* in the Order's *Rule*[20]. Christopher's story also appears in the *Passional*, a 13th-century Middle High German translation of the lives of the saints[21]. This text was read at communal mealtimes in commandery castles, such as that of Lochstedt[22]. It is therefore necessary to turn to the story of St Christopher in order to understand the meaning of the fresco at Lochstedt.

The story

Based on the *Legenda Aurea* (c. 1260) of Jacobus de Voragine (d. 1298), the *Passional* was written in Middle High German at some point around 1280[23]. Most likely produced in Elbing (Elbląg, Poland), the *Passional* quickly became very popular throughout the Order's territory in Prussia[24]. Much like the *Legenda Aurea*, the *Passional* has three parts with a total of over 100,000 verses. The first two parts narrate the birth of Mary, the childhood and life of Jesus, the death of Mary, and the lives of the Apostles. The third part includes lives of saints[25]. Communal reading at mealtimes (*Tischlesung*) was required in the Order's Rule for all convents[26]. Besides the Bible, such readings typically included the *Passional* and the lives of the saints[27]. The *Passional* was a model for the brothers in the Order to emulate, both in their spiritual lives and in their

[18] For churches on Saaremaa (Ösel), in general, see ALTTOA 2003. For fortified churches on the island, see TUULSE 1942, 85.

[19] Such relics were certainly available in Western Europe after the Fourth Crusade. See DURAND 1998, 151–167. Moreover, all evidence pertaining to a cult of St. Christopher in the lands of the Order post-date the murals in Lochstedt. A chapel dedicated to the saint was built in the Kreuzkirche in Königsberg by Grand Master Frederick, the duke of Saxony (1498–1510). Grand Master Albert of Brandenburg-Ansbach (1510–1525) dedicated an altar to St. Christopher in that same chapel in 1514, so that masses could be celebrated there for the souls of the Order's Grand Masters and of the clergy. During the 15th century, a castle chapel was dedicated to St. Christopher in Christburg (Dziergoń, Poland), and an altar in the Cathedral of Riga. See ROSENFELD 1937, 337. For relic inventories in the castles of the Teutonic Order, see ZIESEMER 1916; ZIESEMER 1921.

[20] PERLBACH 1890, 7.

[21] KÖPKE 1852, 345–353.

[22] For the importance of the *Passional*, see HELM/ZIESEMER 1951, 48–71. See also MENTZEL-REUTERS 2003, 81.

[23] KÖPKE 1852, i-xi. In other words, the compilation of the *Passional* coincides in time with the building of the castle in Marienburg (Malbork, Poland), for which see SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 142 (3.208): "Anno mcclxxx castrum Santirii mutato nomine et loco translatum fuit ad eum locum, ubi nunc situm est, et vocatum nomen ejus Mergenburgk i.e. castrum sancte Marie, ad cujus ladem et gloriam hec translacio facta fuit".

[24] HELM/ZIESEMER 1951, 67–68. Elbing was an important spiritual center of Prussia, which had one of the region's most sacred relics: a piece of the True Cross. Elbing served as head convent until the transfer of the Order's headquarters to Marienburg in 1309. See KOWNATZKI 1981, 46; PLUSKOWSKI 2013, 136 and 155.

[25] HELM/ZIESEMER 1951, 54–55.

[26] PERLBACH 1890, 41 (*Rule* 13): "in omnibus domibus…leccio continue ad mensam habeatur".

[27] MENTZEL-REUTERS 2003, 81.

actions on the battlefield[28]. The preference for martyrs in the *Passional* and the Order's monastic Calendar demonstrates the didactic function of their *vitae*. Of 75 *vitae* in the *Passional*, 47 are of martyrs, all of whom were commemorated in one way or another, mostly at the level of *lectiones*. In other words, those *vitae* were to be read aloud, which highlights the relationship of the *Passional* to the Teutonic Order's daily life[29]. Most popular among the saints that appear in the *Passional* were George (second only to the Virgin Mary in terms of popularity in medieval Prussia) and Catherine[30]. Lesser-known saints associated with the Order, such as Nereus and Achilles, offer a deeper glimpse into veneration practices. St. Christopher belongs to that group of lesser-known saints[31].

The story of St Christopher in the *Passional* is structured very much like those of other saints: life before his conversion, conversion to Christianity, mission to non-Christian people, and martyrdom[32]. However, unlike other *vitae*, Christopher's story begins with a distinction between proper and improper service. "Service" (*knechte*) is a key theme in the story, as the saint changes from a worldly to a spiritual servant[33]. The story of Christopher follows closely that in Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*, and could be summarized as follows[34]. A young man of impressive physique, Christopher (whose initial name was Reprobus) is a Canaanite by birth (*man saget unz, daz er queme / von dem Kannaneenlande*)[35]. Knowing the value of his strength, he wants to put that to good use, and therefore seeks "the greatest leader in the world," in order to place himself in his service[36]. He succeeds in finding a king whom he then serves faithfully, until one day the king hears the name of the devil during a minstrel's performance. He signs himself with the sign of the Cross, a gesture that confuses Christopher, for he "knew not the ways of the Christian faith." When the king explains that he crossed himself out of fear of the devil, Christopher realizes that there is another power that is stronger than the king whom he has so far served, so he departs to find the devil[37].

[28] MENTZEL-REUTERS 2003, 79–80; MENTZEL-REUTERS 2008, 358–363. Also see WÜST 2013, 174–80. For works in English on the *Passional*, see FISCHER 2001; FISCHER 2010, 2–3.

[29] PERLBACH 1890, 41.

[30] For the cult of the Virgin Mary in Prussia, see GIERLICH/MÜLLER/POSPIESZNY 2009. For the cult of St George, see WÜST 2013, 22–24; ROZYNKOWSKI 2006, esp. 52–76.

[31] PERLBACH 1890, 5. Regardless of their individual status in the Order, the martyrs formed the backbone of its spiritual calendar.

[32] KÖPKE 1852, 345–353. His story takes up eight pages and 774 lines in Köpke's 1852 edition of the text. The *vitae* of the main saints venerated in the Order are much longer: St George's covers 11 pages with 1,200 lines; St Catherine's is 23 pages long, with 2,263 lines.

[33] The emphasis on service betrays the influence of courtly literature. Service is a prominent theme in a Middle German poem (the text of which is known as "version B" of the legend of St. Christopher) preserved in a 15th-century manuscript now in the library of the Charles University in Prague. In that text, Christopher offers his service first to a knight, then to a count, followed by a king, an emperor, and finally the pope, before realizing that the greatest lord is Christ. Published by SCHÖNBACH 1874, the poem was most likely written in Bavaria or in Austria by a churchman. Its date, however, is a matter of debate. Some have dated the original text three or four decades before the *Legenda aurea*, and even claimed that "version B" or another source close to it influenced Jacobus de Voragine's account of St. Christopher. See SZÖVÉRFFY 1972, 28. For the text originating in Bavaria or Austria, see RICHTER 1896, 73 and 89; KOST 2015, 137 with n. 311.

[34] For the *vita* of St. Christopher in *Legenda Aurea*, see MAGGIONI 1998, 663–69. An English translation of the text is published in RYAN 2012, 396–400.

[35] KÖPKE 1852, 345 (line 9). As BITTMANN 2003, 12 notes, at the origin of the idea that Christopher was from Canaan is the confusion between his epithet "Canineus" (dog-headed) and "Cananeus" (from Canaan).

[36] KÖPKE 1852, 345 (lines 25–9): "ich wil mich nu verandern / und also verre wander, / unz ich durch kumpftigen vrumen / *muge an den grosten herren kumen*, / *den die welt indert hat*" (emphasis added). It has long been suggested that Christopher placing himself in the service of a great lord betrays the influence of the Percival tradition. See SZÖVÉRFFY 1954, 67–68; DIVJAK 2015, 604.

[37] MAGGIONI 1998, 664–65; KÖPKE 1852, 346 (lines 27–75).

Finding him in the wilderness (*wiltniss*), Christopher serves in the army of the devil for a while, until he and his fellow soldiers see a cross on a road[38]. The devil orders his army to turn away, and take a detour, in order to avoid the cross[39]. When Christopher requests an explanation, the devil tells him about his fear of Christ. At this point, Christopher determines that Christ must be more powerful than the devil, so he leaves the latter and begins to seek out the former[40].

Christopher first finds a hermit (*einsidel*), who lives an ascetic life for the love of God[41]. From him, Christopher learns about Jesus Christ, and the hermit teaches him the rudiments of the Christian faith. He also tells Christopher that his service to God was to carry people across a dangerous river. Thus, Christopher is to put his strength and large size to a good cause, something that will please God[42]. He establishes himself on the bank of the river, across which he now carries all those who wish to go. One day, Christ comes disguised as a child wishing to cross the river. Christopher takes the child on his shoulders and begins the crossing, but almost drowns on account of the weight, for the child is as heavy as lead[43]. The child tells Christopher that he is carrying on his shoulders "not just the weight of the world", "but He who has created the world"[44]. Christ then disappears and Christopher crosses back to his shelter. Following the episode with the Christ child, he decides to go on a mission to Lycia "to bring the people to Christ"[45]. The main problem, however, is that he does not know the language of the natives. After praying to Him, Christopher receives from Christ the ability to speak the local language. His mission of conversion is therefore framed in the context of miracles (*wunder*). While there, he is confronted by the pagan inhabitants, and struck by one of them. Instead of fighting back, he tells the attacker: "I have such great strength above me, that I shall overcome you, for I must hold back my vengeance, for I am a Christian"[46]. Christopher vows to convert the Lycians through a miracle. The main *wunder* concerns his own staff, which he plants into the earth. After praying to the Lord, the staff turns into a beautiful tree bearing fruit[47]. Later on,

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[38] KÖPKE 1852, 347 (lines 17–23): "Der tuvel vurte sinen knecht [Christopher] / … / nu kamen si die straze / verre hin uf eine stat, / *da waz ein kruze gesat* / *bi einen wec, der was breit*" (emphasis added). In fact, *wiltniss* was the word used to refer to Samogitia (Žemaitija, now in northwestern Lithuania). See TÖPPEN 1866, 596, an account of the Battle of Rudau (1370): "Des vilen tod den tag von gotis gnaden der heiden bey V^M und wol V^C man, und szuaderlich dy Rewsen, *ane dy in der wiltnisse hungers und frustes not storben*" (emphasis added). For the "Great Wilderness" of Lithuania, see PARAVICINI 1995, 88–95. For castles in the Great Wilderness, see HERRMANN 2004; PLUSKOWSKI 2013, 162.

[39] KÖPKE 1852, 347 (lines 24–31): "der tuvel sach die heilikeit, / die im daz kruze erzeigete. / … / mit ime brachte er [the devil] den andern / *uf einen unwec vil hart*" (emphasis added).

[40] KÖPKE 1852, 347 (lines 73–5): "so dunket mich, daz iener Crist / uber dich vil hoher ist, / *des zeichen du vlien must* / … / *so wil ich din urloub haben* / *und immer Cristum suchen*" (emphasis added).

[41] KÖPKE 1852, 348 (lines 2–11).

[42] KÖPKE 1852, 348 (lines 2–93).

[43] KÖPKE 1852, 349 (lines 56–9): "Daz kleine kint, daz er truc / ducte in mit voller swere / rechte als ob ez were / *gar ein blistucke*" (emphasis added).

[44] MAGGIONI 1998, 666; KÖPKE 1852, 349 (lines 86–93): "*Du hast nicht alleine* / *getragen die werlt gemeine.* / *sunder ouch den, des wiser rat* / *alle die werlt gemachet hat,* / *den hastu uf dir nu getragen*" (emphasis added).

[45] KÖPKE 1852, 350 (lines 38–45): "sin [Christopher] amt liez er do underwungen / durch bezzerunge allermeist, / *als in iagete gotes geist*, / *und quam so hin in eine stat*, / *da michel not uftrat* / *den geloubigen an Crist*, / *wand man si sluc in der vrist*, / *als der heidenschaft gezam*" (emphasis added). No city is mentioned here, while MAGGIONI 1998, 398, refers to Samos.

[46] KÖPKE 1852, 350 (lines 64–78): " 'Nu schouwe', sprach er [Christopher], 'ob ich han / sulche kraft, daz ich dich / muge treten under mich. / ich muz min rechen vristen / *wand ich bin ein Cristen*" (emphasis added).

[47] KÖPKE 1852, 350 (lines 8–29): "In der nacht wart gezogen / sin stab zu eime boume. / *An vruchtige doume* / *hete er gruse und saf*, / *Daz sich unz an di blut traf* / *und darnach biz an di vrucht*." Voragine's account has "leaves sprout[ing] instantly" (MAGGIONI 1998, 666).

Christopher instructs two pagan maidens in the matters of faith, which again, is described as a miraculous act[48].

The two maidens appear in the story as serving the king of Lycia, who sends them to tempt Christopher, in the hopes that they could sway him. Through his successful conversion of the people at Lycia, Christopher gains the attention of the king, who is adamantly pagan. Christopher is summoned before him, and when asked to worship the pagan gods, he refuses. The king has Christopher imprisoned[49]. The two maidens are actually sent to his prison cell. But he instructs them in the Christian faith, and when they return to the king, they profess that they are now Christian[50]. When threatened, they assure the king that they only wish to serve him, as well as the pagan gods. They convince him to summon a meeting at the temple, "so that they can make offerings to the gods"[51]. However, when everyone is gathered, the maidens and the people "ripped the many idols from their stands and threw them upon the ground," which resulted in the abandonment of idolatry by all the remaining people there. The king ordered the execution of the two maidens, who thus suffered martyrdom patiently[52]. Christopher's own martyrdom follows, but not before a variety of tortures, which are meant to strengthen the idea of divine intervention in the story. The king has a scalding helmet placed on Christopher, and he strikes him, but it does no good, for "Christopher did not die, because God did not want him to"[53]. The king then has him tied up and shot with arrows, but "there was a great miracle among them" when Christopher did not die. In fact, an arrow ends up striking the king, and wounding him[54]. The king went to inspect Christopher, and "witnessed God's power that stood by him [Christopher]." Christopher then taunts the king, and reminds him how "great good overcomes great evil" before expressing his wish to die. Christopher is brought forth on the next day, and beheaded on the king's orders, while he is praying. His *vita* concludes with an interesting characterization: "He was joyous at the time when he received the martyr's crown"[55].

This story was of venerable age and had gone through many transformations by the time Jacobus de Voragine wrote his *Legenda Aurea* in the 1260s. The result of a combination of an episode in the apocryphal *Acts* of Andrew and Bartholomew and of an early 4th-century martyrdom account, the story stood behind the cult of St. Christopher that emerged in the 5th century[56]. Two churches dedicated to the saint existed in Constantinople in the 6th century[57]. To that same century may be dated the terracotta plaque from Vinica (Macedonia), in which St. Christopher is represented with a dog head[58]. This points to the fact that in

[48] KÖPKE 1852, 352 (lines 1–9), refers to 'a sign of the great god' (*da geschach ein ziechen…von deme guten gote*) in the context of two maidens' conversion. In contrast to Jacobus de Voragine's version, the two maidens are not named.

[49] KÖPKE 1852, 351 (lines 57–95).

[50] KÖPKE 1852, 352 (lines 1–9).

[51] KÖPKE 1852, 352 (lines 22–7): "do sprachen die vrowen zwo: / 'ist dir lieb, daz wir leben / und dinen goten opfer geben, / so la daz volc zusamme gan / unde zu deme templo alle stan, / daz si unser opfer mugen sên".

[52] KÖPKE 1852, 352 (lines 32–56). This is in contrast to the version of Voragine, who has the two maidens loosen their girdles, tying them around the idols, and throwing them to the floor in the temple (MAGGIONI 1998, 399–400).

[53] KÖPKE 1852, 352 (lines 83–4): "doch wolde in [Christopher] nicht lan toten / got in solche noten".

[54] KÖPKE 1852, 353 (lines 1–2): "idoch gewart *ein wunder* / *harte groz darunder*" (emphasis added).

[55] KÖPKE 1852, 353 (lines 43–9): "an nichte er do dawider vacht, / niwan daz er mit andacht / *sprach an gote sin gebet*. / *zubant, als in er ouch daz getet,* / *do sluc man im daz houbt besit*. / *im wart vrolich in der zit* / *der merterere krone*" (emphasis added).

[56] AMEISENOWA 1949, 43–44; WOODS 1994, 181. As RACINE 2007, 114 notes, the martyrdom account "quickly evolved and developed in parallel with" the *Acts*.

[57] ROSENFELD 1937, 8 and 10.

[58] BALABANOV 2011, 164, 165 fig. 15, 230–231 fig. 32. The dog-headed saint is identified by the inscription XPOFORUS running vertically down the left side of the plaque. The dog-headed saint also appears on 7th century

Eastern Christianity, he was believed to have come from among people living on the edges of the world, the Cynocephali. In the earliest versions of the story known from the East, he was born Reprebus ("the Wicked"), captured by the Romans and recruited for the Roman army. He learned Latin by the intervention of an angel, and began to show deep sympathy for Christians, who, after the persecution of Decius, were tortured in prisons. He fled to Syria together with the soldiers sent after him, and was baptized Christopher by the bishop of Antioch[59]. Captured in that city, he was tortured and eventually beheaded. In later versions of the story, Reprebus was a ferryman, but when a little child asked to be carried across the river, life took a sudden turn. Reprebus began the crossing, but the child became heavier and heavier, as he approached the middle of the water. He could not go any farther, at which point, the child revealed that He was Christ. Having learned his lesson, Reprebus humbly devoted his life to Christian service, and, as a consequence, he received a new name, Christopher, which means "Christ-bearer".

The earliest evidence of the cult in the West is a monastery dedicated to the saint in the diocese of Taormina and mentioned in a letter of Pope Gregory the Great dated to November or December 598[60]. Although no traces of the cult exist in Apulia, it was believed that the water across which the saint carried Christ was the narrow strait between the port of Brindisi and the sea[61]. However, the specific feature of the cult in Italy is that churches dedicated to St. Christopher appear primarily along the Via Francigena, because at a relatively early date, the saint became a patron of pilgrims[62]. In Germany, the earliest evidence of the cult is a church dedicated to the saint in 772 in Sindlhausen (Bavaria), but there are only a few other indications before ca. 1300[63]. For example, Archbishop Brun of Cologne acquired relics of the saint from Pope Agapitus II in 954 or 955. A church was dedicated to the saint in Cologne in the 12th century, and from Cologne the cult spread into the environs and down the river Rhine[64]. The saint is almost entirely absent from East Central Europe, with most dedications in Poland and elsewhere post-dating the mid–13th century[65]. It is precisely during the second half of the 13th century, when both the *Legenda aurea* and the *Passional* were written, that the number of images

stelae in Armenia, as well as on of the plaques in the late 7th – to 8th-century hoard discovered in Velestino (Greece). See AKOPIAN 2015, 120–23; VACHKOVA 2016, 156–157; CURTA/SZMONIEWSKI 2019, 57–60. A Mozarabic sacramentary preserved in a 9th century manuscript (but based on a 7th-century text) is the earliest source in the West to mention the saint as a dog-headed giant, see FEROTIN 1912. For the dog-headed saint, see also BENKER 1975, 33–36.

[59] RACINE 2007, 115.

[60] Gregory the Great *ep*. IX.75, in HARTMANN 1899, 93. The earliest image of the saint in the West is the fresco in the Church Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome, which may be dated to the 10th century. The image is that of a young man, with no dog head, and no child in his arms or on his back, see ROSENFELD 1937, 22; 147 and 378–379.

[61] ROSENFELD 1937, 17. The earliest images of Christopher carrying Christ cannot be dated before the 12th century, see BITTMANN 2003, 13.

[62] Lucca played a prominent role in the spread of the cult, with one of the earliest churches established in the town in 812 being dedicated to St. Christophorus. Two xenodocheia (one in Altopascio, the other in Sienna) were dedicated to him, see ROSENFELD 1937, 37, 155, and 158. Similarly, a large number of churches dedicated to St. Christopher appear in the 10th century along the Camino de Santiago, and relics of the saint are said to have been deposited in the cathedral in Compostella, see ROSENFELD 1937, 61–62. SCHRÖDER 2008, 233–234 notes that the saint "specialized" from an early stage in the protection not just of pilgrims, but of many other people threatened by sudden, accidental death – rafters, sailors, bridge builders, miners, and travelers.

[63] The reason for this curious reluctance of Christians in the German lands is not easy to find. ROSENFELD 1937, 108 believes that, unlike Italy, France, and Spain, in Germany the idea of a dog-headed saint was not appealing.

[64] ROSENFELD 1937, 111–113, 117 and 290–91.

[65] The same is also true for Bohemia. There are no dedications to the saint in the bishoprics of Merseburg, Meissen, in Lusatia, or in Silesia, see ROSENFELD 1937, 123–214, 139–140 and 338.

– frescoes or stained glass – of St. Christopher began to multiply in France[66], England[67] and in the Holy Roman Empire[68]. However, the earliest illustration of the story in *Legenda aurea*, with Christopher crossing the water while leaning on his staff (which has already turned into a tree), and with the Christ Child on his left shoulder, cannot be dated before 1300.

How did the Teutonic Knights understand the story of St. Christopher? Although no direct evidence exists, it is worth exploring what the text of the *vita* could have offered to an audience of brethren. Particularly important must have been the distinction between proper and improper service, which applied directly to the concept of knighthood that the brethren were expected to emulate. That the insistence in the *vita* upon proper service was meant to be an example for the Teutonic Knights results from them being frequently called "God's servants" with particular emphasis upon their battles against the unbelievers. This goes back to the time of the Order's *Rule*, which was composed in the thirteenth century[69].

Equally significant is the emphasis on the symbolism of the cross. Ever since receiving a part of the True Cross from Emperor Frederick II in 1233, the Order in Prussia had a penchant for the Cross[70]. Fragments of the True Cross were later distributed to Elbing, Rehden (Radzyń Chełmiński, Poland), Thorn (Toruń, Poland), Christburg (Dzierzgoń, Poland) and Marienburg (Malbork, Poland)[71]. The relics established a direct connection to the Holy Land and to Christ himself, and the Order's banner had a cross on it, as shown in one of the murals in Lochstedt[72]. The task assigned to Christopher must have resonated with the Teutonic Knights, especially in the light of the *Prologue* to the Rule of the Order. The knights were connected to earthly and heavenly knighthood and existed to fight the enemies of God, and their duties were pleasing to God, just as Christopher's labors were[73]. Even the person who assigned that task to Christopher, the hermit, must have had a certain appeal to the knights in the audience, all of whom had taken the monastic vows. Moreover, the knights encouraged the veneration of local hermit saints, such as Jutta of Sangerhausen (d. 1260) and Dorothea of Montau (d. 1394)[74]. Constant prayer and meditation, like those practiced by the hermit in the story, were also codified in the Order's Statutes[75].

The point of Christopher being ferryman is that his spiritual, and not physical strength mattered, a message clearly meant for the ears of the brethren. Unlike the knights, and despite his physique, Christopher never engages in battle. Instead, his story emphasizes the strength of his spirit. The message of non-violence would have certainly applied to the brethren, reinforcing that they were to do their best to refrain from unnecessary violence. Such messages were indeed needed. In 1308, the Knights attacked Danzig (Gdańsk, Poland), killed many of its inhabitants and burned the Christian city to the ground. That triggered a long-drawn conflict with the kingdom of Poland that resulted in the Order attacking Gniezno in 1331[76].

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[66] ROSENFELD 1937, 195, 210, 213 and 233.

[67] ROSENFELD 1937, 276–279.

[68] ROSENFELD 1937, 289, 291, 292, 295, 298, 299, 300, 301, 305, 310, 327–28; pl. I figs. 2, 3; pl. II fig. 5.

[69] For example, see PERLBACH 1890, 24 (*Gotes rittere*), 27, 129 (citing Psalm 86:2, *salvum fac servum tuum*), 130 (*fratres karissimi…qui corpore ac mente perfecte continenciet pudicicie se servituros Domino devoverunt*), 132 (*die brûder…vlîzen sich sô an Gotes dînest*).

[70] See SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 32 (1.5).

[71] ZIELIŃSKA-MELKOWSKA 1995, 243–244; CZAJA 2013, 46–48. For Marienburg, see VOIGT 1824, 536–537, an indulgence for visiting a fragment of "the wood of the Holy Cross" (*lignum sancte crucis*) in 1358. Also see ZIESEMER 1916, 122–135.

[72] STREHLKE 1870, 13–14.

[73] PERLBACH 1890, 22–26, goes in detail over the Biblical predecessors of the Order.

[74] For Jutta, see NEMES 2009. For Dorothea, see HELM/ZIESEMER 1951, 130–134.

[75] PERLBACH 1890, 36–37.

[76] See SARNOWSKY 1998a, 45; MILLIMAN 2013, 190–194; PLUSKOWSKI 2013, 18 and 140. Gniezno

In the story, Christopher's encounters with paganism reflect his spiritual strength, for his struggles with the pagan people of Lycia involve conversion, not violence. In fact, the brethren could have hardly missed the link between spiritual strength and paganism in the story of St Christopher. Their military campaigns were predicated upon the idea of war against the pagans (*der tanz mit heiden*)[77]. It was indeed a key motivator in recruiting new members, as well as supporters of the Order. However, it also had deep spiritual roots in the Order's historical texts[78]. The struggle against paganism was represented in terms of heavenly salvation, with images from the *Speculum humanae salvationis* painted on the walls of churches throughout Prussia. This concept was not exclusive to the Teutonic Order or its churches. Churches used by guests (*peregrini*) had the same iconography, as in Königsberg[79]. Janusz Trupinda has suggested that that iconographic program was at play in the Virgin Chapel at Marienburg, as well[80]. The *Speculum* may have adorned the walls of the churches in Juditten and Arnau (Rodniki, in the Kaliningrad *oblast'* of Russia), both painted in the late 14th century[81]. In any case, that iconography helped the Order frame its wars against Lithuanians as a form of salvation, and as continuation of the events of the Old Testament. The role of miracles in the *vita*, particularly those related to Christopher's staff, is of considerable significance to the historical writings of the Teutonic Order, for in Peter von Dusburg's chronicle the "signs and wonders" (*signa et mirabilia*) of Christ framed the entire history of the Teutonic Order in Prussia[82]. This indeed reflected Peter's worldview, his perception of time, and how he described the history of Prussia: a place sanctified by the early struggles and battles of the brethren, and marked by miraculous visions of saints and the Virgin Mary[83]. Moreover, the Teutonic Order's chronicles often framed the Order's wars as expanding the "Lord's vineyard" (*vinea Domini*)[84].

After wonders, the destruction of idols (*abgote*) and the zeal for martyrdom, so prominent in the *vita* of St. Christopher, definitely matched the martial elements of the Teutonic Order's ideological program. Destroying pagan idols was part of a long history of missionary expeditions and wars against the north European peoples, and already in the 8th century there were laws issued on the destruction of sacred trees of the Saxons. As Hans-Dietrich Kahl has demonstrated, the problem was of outmost importance both before and after the Northern crusades[85]. The Middle High German word for "idol" that is used in the *Passional* also appears in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, which was written a decade or so later (c. 1290) most likely by a member of the Order. In that text, the Baltic god of thunder, Perkunas, is called an *apgot*[86].

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was the center of the cult of St. Adalbert, who had attempted to convert the Prussians to Christianity and was martyred in April 997. In Livonia, the papal legate, Francis of Moliano, threatened the Order with excommunication in 1311, see SELART 2015, 286–291.

[77] See STREHLKE 1863, 165: "*Ein tanz mit haiden wart getreten*, / daz ir wol sechzig bliben tôt." (emphasis added).

[78] PERLBACH 1890, 22–26. Also see WEISE 1963, 458. For more modern interpretations, see SARNOWSKY 1998a, 86.

[79] For example, see PARAVICINI 1989, 305; MENTZEL-REUTERS 2008, 357–359.

[80] TRUPINDA 2008.

[81] GAUSE 1981; PARAVICINI 2008, 15–54. For Arnau, see JAKUBEK-RACZKOWSKA 2013, 191–192.

[82] SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 28.

[83] VERCAMER 2011, 14; WÜST 2013, 73.

[84] For example, see SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 28 (1.1), citing PERLBACH 1890, 23–26.

[85] WERMINGHOFF 1851, 170: "de arboribus et lucis destruendis canonical observetur auctoritas"; KAHL 2011, 381–397, 409–430 and 565–576.

[86] MEYER 1876, 33 (line 1436), mentions "Perkunas, their idol" (*Perkune, ir apgot*) when referring to the people of the island of Ösel (present-day Saaremaa, Estonia). Moreover, in a letter of 1403, concerning the conflict between the Order and the kingdom of Poland, the idol worship of the Lithuanians is called *apgoterye*, see VOIGT 1861, 156.

Martyrdom, the final and most important theme of the *vita* of St. Christopher would have definitely resonated with the brethren in both Livonia and Prussia. Key battles in the Order's history in which brethren had died were commemorated as acts of martyrdom, both in the Order's narrative histories, and in its necrologies. The battles of Saule (1236), Durben (1260) and Karuse (1270) in Livonia[87], as well as Crucke (1249), Pocarwis (1261) and Labiau (1263) in Prussia were all framed as martyrdoms in the Order's chronicles[88]. Even later battles, such as Streba in 1348 or Rudau (Mel'nikovo, Kaliningrad *oblast'*) in 1370, were commemorated as martyrdoms. Fallen officers were named, and sometimes had commemorative monuments erected in their honour. One of those killed at Rudau, Henning Schindekopf, the Marshal of the Order, had a memorial cross built near the local parish church, to commemorate his death[89]. Gustavs Strenga has shown that in both Livonia and Prussia martyrdom was a powerful element for solidifying the communal bond of the brethren and for strengthening their identification with the regions in which they battled the pagans[90].

There was therefore much in the story of St Christopher to recommend him as an important saint. In other words, sufficient reasons existed for his presence on the walls of the *Gebietiger-Gemach* at Lochstedt. The *vita* of the saint encapsulated many fundamental themes of the Teutonic Order's spiritual life as expressed in such historical texts as Peter von Dusburg's

[87] For Saule, see von BUNGE 1853, cols. 191–193, here col. 191 (no. 149), where the master and many pilgrims slain by the Livonians are commemorated: "…magister et quinquaginta *fratrum eiusdem militia ac peregrinorum plurium*, paganorum saevieute perfidia, noviter pertulerunt…postulantes, spe sibi proposita, quod, cum *praefati magister et fratres strenuam et famosam habeant in sua domo militiam, thesauro pretiosus arbitrantem, animam pro illo ponere*". Also LAPPENBERG 1856, 363: "Facta est maxima strages peregrinorum in Livonia circa festum Mauricii. Theoricus de Haselitor ibi cecidisse dicitur"; *Livländische Reimchronik*, 44–45 (lines 1906–1958), here 45 (lines 1941–1949) for the death of Volkwin and 48 brothers (*achte und vierzik der dâ bliben*), and their martyrdom with many pilgrims (lines 1953–1958); Ernst Strehlke (ed.), Hermann of Wartberge, *Chronicon Livoniae*, in: *SRP* 2, 33. For the Battle of Durben, see *Livländische Remichonik*, 128–135 (lines 5583–5871), which states that the army lay on the field of Durben "as martyrs" (*daz er die bitter martir leit / zû Dorben… / dâ was ouch manich pilgerîn, / der dâ leit die selbe nôt / durch got unde starken tôt*); SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 204-06 (3.84); Nicolaus von Jeroschin, *Di Kronike von Pruzinlant*, *SRP* 1, 424–427 (lines 10,513–10,732); Max Töppen (ed.), 'Canonici Sambiensi epitome gestorum Prussie', *SRP* 1, 282; Hermann of Wartberge, *SRP* 2, 41. For Karuse, see *Livländische Reimchronik*, 177–183 (lines 7804–7997), here 181 (lines 7905–7907): "dâ wart geslagen in der nôt / der gûte meister Otte tôt / und zwêne und vumfzic brûdere gût." See also Strehlke (ed.), Hermann of Warberge, *SRP* 2, 47: "fuit autem Otto magister occisus a Letwinis in Maritima circa Karuszen cum LII fratribus ac VIc fidelibus".

[88] For Crucke, see SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 184 (3.66): "Volve et revolve omnia scripta martirologii, non occurret tibi tale genus martirii…Inter istos quidam frater sic martirium fuit passus." Also Ernst Strehlke (ed.), 'Zwei Fragmente einer kurze Reimchronik von Preussen', *SRP* 2, 3: "Von Cristis geburte tûsent jâr / zwei c und ix und xl gar, / dâ an sante Andreas / abent der strît zu Krucken was, / dô wurden erslagen in der nôt / vier und vunfzig brûder tôt / und pilgerîm ein michel teil / Got gebe allen sêlen heil!" For Pocarwis, SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 214 (3.91): "Nota hic, quod idem Henricus et plures alii sub iramento suo postea affirmabant, quod, cum idem burgensis in equo cremates emitteret spiritum, viderunt ex ore ipsius colmbam albissimam evolantem"; Max Töppen (ed.), Annales Pelplinenses, *SRP* 1, 270. Also see Max Töppen (ed.), Epitome gesotrum Prussie, *SRP* 1, 282: "a. d. MCCLXI. fuit conflictus in Pokarwen, ubi occisi sunt fratres et peregrini multi"; Strelhke (ed.), Kurze Preussische Annalen, *SRP* 3, 2; Strelhke (ed.), Annales Expeditialis Prussici, *SRP* 3, 10; Strelhke (ed.), Annalista Thorunensis, *SRP* 3, 61. For Labiau, SCHOLZ/WOJTECKI 1984, 242 (3.123): "In hoc loco [near Labiau castle] certaminis postea quidam heremita habitans vidit…candelas ardentes pluribus vicibus, *que interfectos ibi iam coronam martirii apud regem martirum adeptos manifestus declarabant*".

[89] For the Battle of the Streba, see VOIGT 1848, 80–81 (no. 58), a letter from 1350 on the events of the battle. Also see Wigand of Marburg, *Cronica nova Prutenica*, *SRP* 2, 512–513. For Rudau: Wigand of Marburg, *Cronica*, *SRP* 2, 568; *Der ältere Hochmeisterchronik*, *SRP* 3, 596: "Von den cristen bleben to Hennyngk Schindecop obirster marschalk…mit andern XX brudern mit etczlichen gutten mannen awsz Prewsen, von gesten bleben tod drey strenge man…*so doch von gotis gnaden con unszern mynner wen III^C tod bleben, den got gnade*." For the construction of the Rudau monument, see VOIGT 1832, 217–220.

[90] STRENGA 2017, 347–360.

Chronicon terre Prussie or the so-called "Hermann of Salza Letter" of *c.*1247[91]: service to the true master (Christ), the importance of the cross, the miracles of conversion, the destruction of idols and, most importantly, being ready for martyrdom. The story of Christopher also emphasises temperance and spiritual strength, not only warfare against the pagans. In fact, that may explain the lack of significant shrines associated with Christopher in medieval Prussia. Unlike St. George, he was not warlike *enough* to be called upon in the heat of battle[92]. But the choice of St Christopher for the private room at Lochstedt cannot be accidental.

The date

At a quick glimpse, the scene of St. Christopher carrying the Child draws directly from the story in the *Passional*. The orb in the hand of the child (symbolizing the world, the weight of which Christopher was carrying on his shoulder), the saint's staff miraculously turned into a tree, and the presence of the hermit are all good indications of the close relationship between text and image. To be sure, the image condenses chronologically distinct episodes of the story: St. Christopher carries the Child across the water, but his staff has already turned into a tree[93]. In this respect, the mural is different from the illuminations in the *Liber pictus*, a manuscript now in the National Library in Vienna. The illuminations, dated to ca. 1330, have separate scenes for separate episodes. For example, Christopher is shown on folio 51 talking with the hermit, then there is a scene showing Christopher building his house on the bank of the river, followed by another in which he carries people across the water, and the scene of him carrying the Child[94].

At a closer examination, however, the scene in Lochstedt contains details that do not appear in the *Passional*. For example, the hermit holds a lamp, which is not mentioned either in the *Passional* or in the *Legenda Aurea*[95]. Similarly absent from the *Passional* is the fish depicted next to the saint's right foot. Both details must be interpreted symbolically. The light of the lamp is meant to guide Christopher (even though he appears to look in the opposite direction), and as such the lamp must refer to the teachings that the saint received from the hermit[96]. The fish swims to the opposite bank, as if guiding the saint's steps, but the fish is an old Christian symbol

[91] For the text, see HIRSCH 1874, 153–168. The letter is attributed to Heinrich von Hohenlohe, the seventh Grand Master of the Order. See ARNOLD 1981, 757. The "Hermann of Salza Letter" marked the earliest translation of the Order's crusading ideology directly to Prussia. The letter contains all essential elements of that ideology: martyrdom, the holiness of fighting the pagans, and the patronage of the Virgin Mary see, WÜST 2013, 58.

[92] See PARAVICINI 1995, vol. 2, 139–152.

[93] According to the Middle High German poem known as "version B", the saint's staff begins to blossom while he is still crossing the river ("die rueten, *die er do trug,/die was grozz vnd vngefug,/die ward im gruenend in der hand*", see SCHÖNBACH 1874, 120). While it would be tempting to see the influence of the poem upon the mural in Lochstedt, Christopher crossing the river with a staff turned into a tree appears in the 14th century in many other images in the German lands.

[94] Cod. 370 of the National Library in Vienna, for which see BENKER 1975, 24–25 with fig. 20.

[95] The motif first appears in the Middle High German "version B": "des het der einsiedel herzenlait./ein lucerne er pald nam/mite inter cherzen, die dar in pran", see SCHÖNBACH 1874, 120. Darkness is also implied in KÖPKE 1852, 349 (lines 20–23), as the child woke Christopher from sleep in the middle of the night ("Diz was *in einer truben nacht* / Do er [Christopher] gewonlichen slief / Ein kindes stimme im do rief / und wolde gerne uber kumen") (emphasis added). But there is no reason to believe that any particular motif must have first been mentioned in a text, before appearing in a mural. As KUNSTMANN 1973, 22 notes: "most images of the Christ-Bearer are not illustrations of the surviving legends. Rather, the legend derives from the already existing images".

[96] Some maintain that the lamp is meant to indicate that St. Christopher crossed the river with the Child on his shoulder in the middle of the night. The hermit was therefore holding the lamp on the opposite bank of the river, in order to show him the way. See MEDIANERO HERNÁNDEZ 2002, 247; PIETERS 2005 155–156 with n. 39. For the hermit in images of St. Christopher, see STAHL 1920, 66–69.

for Christ[97]. As such, the fish appears frequently in fourteenth and early fifteenth-century depictions of the saint[98]. Moreover, the symbolism of the fish was well known in the Baltic region, where it was employed in a similar manner for other images. For example, in the Church of St Barbara at Althaus Kulm (Stargorod Chełmiński, Poland), "herrings" and "fishes" (*heringen… fyssche*) surrounded the reliquary image of the saint. Her relics (a head, an arm, and a braid of hair) were discovered during the siege of Sartowitz (Sartowice, Poland) in December of 1242. Inventories taken in the 15th century point to the iconographical additions to the reliquary, both at the main shrine in Althaus and at Marienburg (where there was a relic of St Barbara and chapel dedicated to her)[99].

The earliest representations of St. Christopher carrying the Child are from the late 11th century[100]. Such images show the saint frontally holding the Child in his left and the staff (turned into a tree) in his right hand[101]. In the German lands, most images of the saint with the Child on his left shoulder cannot be dated before the year 1200[102]. The earliest image of Christopher crossing the water is that from the Church of St. Elisabeth in Marburg, which was consecrated in 1283[103]. Shortly before 1400, the image of St. Christopher crossing the water and carrying the Child on his left shoulder, and leaning against his staff turned into a tree was relatively common in the German lands[104]. However, no image can be dated before 1400 that has all the elements of the Lochstedt mural: St. Christopher crossing the water with the Child on his left shoulder, holding the staff-turned-into-a-tree in his right hand, his head turned to the left (in the direction of Christ), with just one fish shown in the water, next to his feet, and the hermit holding a lamp on the opposite bank[105]. Jan van Eyck's famous drawing (now at the Louvre), which is dated ca. 1420, has all the features of the Lochstedt iconography, except the

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[97] BRUYN 2005, 31.

[98] E.g., the panel with St. Christopher painted at an unknown date by Lorenzo Bicci (c. 1350–1427), now in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg; see https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/01.+Paintings/29486 (visit of January 30, 2019). For more than one fish in the water, see the scene of St. Christopher in the Church of St. Michael in Hannoversch Münden (Lower Saxony, Germany), which is dated to the first half of the 14th century, see DÜLBERG 2001, 184.

[99] See ZIESEMER 1921, 515, an inventory taken in 1452: "Item boden dem howbte Sente Barbare eyn snůre vol czeihen von sylbern gebylde von *heringen*, awgen, herczen, satele, *fyssche, schiffe, behne*, ingegraben bilde und derglich und etliche gulden mit czweyn obergulten vorspannen". There was also an amber reliquary of St Barbara recorded at Althaus in 1432, see ZIESEMER 1921, 507 (line 26): "*1 burnsteyn Barbara mit eyner silberyn crone*". For the relic of St Barbara at Marienburg, see ZIESEMER 1916, 129 (line 33); for the chapel to St Barbara in the Chapel of St Laurence, see ZIESEMER 1916,130 (line 40). The discovery of St Barbara's relics goes back to the Order's earliest historical writing in Prussia. See HIRSCH 1874, 160–161. See also STARNAWSKA 2017.

[100] ROSENFELD 1937, 368 and 392; BENKER 1975, 46; EXNER 2001, 17 and 16 fig. 10.

[101] The frontal image of the St. Christopher with the Child in one hand and the staff in the other remained basically the same between the early 14th century and 1400, as demonstrated by the frescoes in in the Church of the Nativity of Our Lady in Průhonice (near Prague, Bohemia) and the Church of St. Catherine at Tiers (southern Tyrol). See BARTUŠEK/PEŠINA 1958, 184–185 and pl. 47; BENKER 1975, 58 fig. 64.

[102] ROSENFELD 1937, 394–95.

[103] ROSENFELD 1937, 395; BENKER 1975, 66; PIETERS 2005, 149–150. KUNSTMANN 1973, 22 believes that the image spread from Tyrol and the Rhineland to northern Italy, as well as to the other parts of Germany.

[104] It appears in a large fresco on the western wall of the southern aisle of the minster in Constance, see ROSENFELD 1937, 305. In the choir of the abbey church in Maulbronn, Christopher carrying the Child across the water appears as a young, not an old man; see WILHELM 1997, 427. The same image appears on a late 1t4th-century wooden statue now in the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Franscisco, which was most likely made in Bohemia, see MÜLLER 1967.

[105] STAHL 1920, 19. RICHTER 1896, 169 has called this image the "German type" of St. Christopher's iconography. As such it also appears in the Church of St. James in Kőszeg, in western Hungary, see RADOCSAY 1954, 159 and pl. CIII.

fish and the fact that the saint holds the staff in the water with both hands[106]. Of the same date is the image of St. Christopher in the the so-called Boucicault Hours, a book of hours illuminated by the Spitz Master, active in France (Paris?) between 1415 and 1425. The image does not have the fish, but has a number of other details in the water and on the banks, for which there are no analogies in Lochstedt[107]. The earliest woodcut from the German lands, dated to 1423, has the same exact iconography, but with the saint moving from right to left, holding the staff with two hands, and with many other details on the bank behind him[108]. A monumental image of St. Christopher crossing the water from left to right, holding the staff-tree (with no leaves) in his right hand, a fish between the feet (but also a crab next to his right foot), and the hermit on the bank behind him (but next to a house) appears in the Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Wismar, and has been dated to the second quarter of the 15th century[109]. Very similar in that respect is the image of the saint in another book of hours produced in Flanders in the mid–15th century, now in the British Library[110].

Conrad Steinbrecht dated the murals in Lochstedt between 1370 and 1390 on the basis of the dress and armor of the knights that appear in the murals of the *Gebietiger-Gemach* and the *Wohnstube*. According to him, that armor was in fashion between ca. 1360 and ca. 1410, but the accompanying knightly belt (which appears in the scenes of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection in the *Gebietiger-Gemach*) makes it possible to narrow down the dating to the last decade of the 14th century[111]. On the basis of the date established by such means, Steinbrecht then advanced the idea that responsible for the iconographic program was Johann of Lorich, the commander of the castle (and the Amber Master) between 1389 and 1394[112]. Leaving aside the unwarranted assumption that all murals were done at the same time, Steinbrecht's dating based on the armor can only be considered a *terminus post quem*, as the idealized nature of the representations precludes the interpretation of soldiers in the Crucifxion and Resurrection scenes as knights dressed up and wearing armor of the latest fashion. To be sure, Steinbrecht's dating has been accepted by everybody. He has himself compared the murals to those of the high castle in Marienburg (now Malbork, in Poland)[113]. Some went as far as to see that castle as the model for all other monuments of architecture and decorative painting in Prussia[114]. If one can trust August Oetken's drawings of the now lost murals at Lochstedt to be faithful reproductions of the originals, with no significant additions, then one can certainly find good stylistic parallels to the pilgrimage church of St Mary in Juditten (now Mendeleevo, in the district of Gur'evsk, Kaliningrad *oblast*), which has been dated on the basis of heraldic attributes associated with a number of knights, one of whom is probably Engelhard Rabe, Grand Marshal from 1387 to

[106] LUGT 1968, 3–4.

[107] Boucicault Hours, see http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/103432/spitz-master-saint-christopher-carrying-the-christ-child-french-about–1420/?dz=0.5000%2C0.3860%2C0.86&fbclid=IwAR0YbDRilyDFeE0AHTyNRsJvNXjiwmhJC8zgFE7Z6akvGapi4CORHdkLQyg (visit of January 30, 2019).

[108] BOINET 1960, 402–403; BENKER 1975, 63 fig. 69; WEBER 2004, 74; NOLL 2017, 118 with n. 16 points out that the 1423 woodcut must have been made for use in the monastery.

[109] NICKEL 1979, 153 and 157 fig. 89. In northern Germany, no representation of St. Christophorus with the hermit can be dated before ca. 1400, see DÜLBERG 2001, 186. However, even after 1400, St. Christopher appears in northern Germany without any hermit; see KAIB 1989, 267.

[110] Harley ms. 2846, f. 38 v, see http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/features/flemish/flemish009lge.html?fbclid=IwAR0Za1yvtAmOwAf6lqvLtK-KQBmnn1I4GGBQ-ygPf9GjGxMX4Zh7JC9gXv8 (visit of January 30, 2019).

[111] STEINBRECHT 1910, 23. Moreover, Steinbrecht identified the same armor in the portrait of Kuno of Liebenstein on his tombstone in the Church of Neumark (now Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, near Ostroda, in Poland). Kuno of Liebenstein died in 1391. For his tombstone, see also NICKEL 1955; JURKOWLANIEC 2009, 190.

[112] STEINBRECHT 1910, 25.

[113] STEINBRECHT 1910, 23. Following Steinbrecht, see CLASEN 1927; TORBUS 1998, 116.

[114] HERRMANN 2007, 573.

1392[115]. Juditten was one of the shrines most important for the "guests" of the Teutonic Order, i.e., for members of the European nobility who journeyed to Prussia for the *Reisen* ("expeditions"), the annual crusades organized in the 14th century against the pagan Lithuanians. To commemorate their visit to the Marian shrine there, pilgrims had their coats of arms painted on the walls of the church[116]. But there was no image of St. Christopher in Juditten, and no stylistic parallel can be established between the portrait of the saint in Lochstedt and the images of knights in Juditten. Moreover, the armor could not have been in use only for a couple of decades. In short, nothing prevents expanding the chronological span of the circumstantial evidence pertaining to the Lochstedt murals by two or three decades, i.e., until ca. 1420. As a matter of fact, the cult of St. Christopher reached its largest popularity in the German lands during the 15th century[117].

In the German lands, the saint was often depicted by the entrance into the church. For example, in the abbey church of St. Emmeram in Regensburg, a statue of the saint was placed in 1320 or 1330 on the left side of the double portal on the northwestern side of the building[118]. Three or four decades later, another statue was placed next to the southern portal of the minster in Freiburg[119]. More often than not, however, the image of St. Christopher was painted, not carved. At Untermais (now in Meran, Italy), an oversized portrait of the saint was painted ca. 1340 on the outside wall of the church, on the right side of the entrance[120]. At Sebeş, in Transylvania, the image of Christopher is on the southern side of the Lutheran church, near the portal[121]. Oversized portraits of Christopher on outside walls appear also in secular buildings. At Hocheppan, a castle built in the early 12th century, a giant image of St. Christopher was painted on the outside wall of the castle chapel at some point between 1300 and 1330[122]. The image was meant to be seen from all windows of the hall, situated on the opposite side of the castle[123]. In the Mauterndorf Castle (near Salzburg), the late 14th-century image is on the granary (barn), to be seen from the windows of the tower and of the residential quarters. A large portrait of St. Christopher was painted in 1372 on the façade of a market house in Cologne, which belonged to the butchers' guild[124]. There is, however, no example of a *private* use of the image, such as that in the *Gebietiger-Gemach* of Lochstedt. Except for the mural in Prussia, the earliest evidence of the display of the image of St. Christopher in a private space is *The Annunciation,* a painting now in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Brussels, which is attributed to the circle of the Master of

[115] STEINBRECHT 1910, 25; HERRMANN 2007, 573: "Der aus dem späten 14. Jh. stammende Wohnbereich des Pflegers im W-Flügel mit den komplett erhaltenen Wandmalereien religiösen und weltlichen Inhalts war in seiner Vollständigkeit einmallig." See also PARAVICINI 1989, vol. 1, 307 with note 365.

[116] PARAVICINI 1995 remains the authoritative treatment of these expeditions and the role played by the European nobility in the later crusade movement in the Baltic region. For the importance of the Juditten church, see PARAVICINI 1989, vol. 1, 305-09, especially 305: "Auch die Kirche von Juditten war mit bedeutenden Fresken vom Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts geschmückt, darunter wiederum Ritterdarstellungen und Wappen, von denen möglicherweise einige von Preußenfahrern in Auftrag gegeben worden sind". For participants in *Reisen* as pilgrims, see EHLERS 2001, especially 31–32.

[117] FUHRMANN 1997, 18 and 26.

[118] MARTIN 1929, 26–31; MICK 1968, 15.

[119] MARTIN 1929, 29–30. For similar examples from England, see PRIDGEON 2013.

[120] MARTIN 1929, 32. In southern Tyrol, the association with the entrance appears in the 14th century in the Church of St. Martin at Zillis, at Maria Himmelsfährt, and the parish church in Terlan, MARTIN 1929, 33.

[121] MARTIN 1929, 34. In 14th and 15th-century Transylvania, the image of Christopher appears both inside and outside the church; see DRAGUȚ 1972, 601.

[122] The same is true for the castle chapel in Marburg, consecrated in 1290, see ROSENFELD 1937, 298; KUNSTMANN 1973, 39–41 and pl. 2.

[123] STAMPFER 1994, 694; HAHN-WOERNLE 1972, 10–11; FUHRMANN 1997, 17; EXNER 2001, 16–17.

[124] KEUSSEN 1986, 18.

Flémalle and dated between 1425 and 1430. The Virgin is shown reading from a book of hours in the room of a Flemish merchant house. Behind her, right above the chimney, is a color image of St. Christopher crossing the water with the Child on his back. To judge by the bent corners of that image, this was most likely a print, i.e., an image on paper obtained from a woodcut[125]. The painting illustrates the form of devotion to St. Christopher that may have been quite common in the early 15th century among the affluent urban class in Flanders. A similar image, but on parchment, and representing the head of Christ with a prayer text on two columns, appears on the wall in the background of a portrait of a young man (now in the National Gallery in London), which was made by Petrus Christus around 1425[126]. The wing of a now-lost triptych by the same painter and dated ca. 1450 shows a print with the image of St. Elizabeth on the wall behind a young woman praying[127]. Those were clearly devotional images of private use, but no other example exists of a *mural* in a private room[128]. A merchant could in principle place an image of St. Christopher above the entrance door, but not directly opposite from another image of the adulteress before Christ[129]. No other example exists of such an elaborate iconographic program for a room of private use. It is therefore necessary to turn now to a closer examination of the evidence pertaining to the owner of the *Gebietiger-Gemach*.

The patron

No information exists about who painted the rooms in Lochstedt, and upon whose commission. If the murals, however, were made at some point after 1400, perhaps during the first quarter of the 15th century, then chances are that they were commissioned by Heinrich von Plauen, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights between 1410 and 1413, who, after being demoted and thrown into jail in Danzig, was released in 1418 and became commander at Lochstedt. Von Plauen was elected Grand Master of the Teutonic Order in 1410, after the battle of Tannenberg[130]. As Stefan Kwiatkowski notes, his tenure was marked by an obstinate quest for avenging the defeat at Tannenberg, perhaps because he had not participated in the battle[131]. To be sure, according to the ältere Hochmeisterchronik (ca. 1440), von Plauen held the office of Grand Master for three years, during which he sought to right the wrongs done to the land of Prussia by the Order's enemies[132]. It was his desire for revenge that led to a series of charges, which ultimately resulted

[125] PAUWELS 1988, 17; KEMPERDIECK/SANDER 2008, 188–191. For the date of the painting, see ASPEREN de BOER 1992, 97–99; NOLL 2017, 114, who notes that the paper shows traces of wear, most likely to signal devotion. KEMPERDICK 1997, 85 notes that the image of St. Christopher, which was usually employed to fend off sudden death, has a different meaning in the painting: having been married for a while, Mary's (inner) desire to have a child is symbolically represented by the saint carrying that Child on his shoulder. SCHMIDT 2000, 72 further warns against taking the image as a realistic representation of devotion in a merchant's house.

[126] AINSWORTH/MARTENS 1994, 66; KAMMEL 2000, 12–13.

[127] AINSWORTH/MARTENS 1994, 131–135; KAMMEL 2000, 13. Joos van Cleve's *Annunciation* (1525) also shows a print nailed to the wall by the bed, see AINSWORTH/CHRISTIANSEN 1998, 364–365.

[128] For the notion of "devotional images of private use", see APPUHN 1977, 7. As OS 1994, 130–131 points out, devotional images of private use had also an apotropaic function, which clearly applies to images of St. Christopher, see also KAMMEL 2000, 21.

[129] KAMMEL 2000, 19.

[130] According to Johann von Posilge, the chronicler and assistant to the bishop of Pomerania, the Grand Master was descended from another Heinrich von Plauen, who had come to Prussia on crusade. The Grand Master had gained a reputation for being "a good warrior" who "lusted for battle" ("er was eyn gut orlowsman, und wuste vil von krige"), see STREHLKE 1866, 318–319. Heinrich von Plauen was indeed responsible for holding the Marienburg castle and refortifying it, thwarting the siege laid by the king of Poland, Władysław Jagiełło, which followed his victory at Tannenberg. For the earlier Heinrich von Plauen, see Wigand of Marburg, *Cronica*, 644.

[131] KWIATKOWSKI 2011, 156–157.

[132] TÖPPEN 1866, 629: "In dem salben jare am Sontage vor sinte Merten wart Hinrich von Plawen zcu dem

in Heinrich von Plauen's deposition in 1413. He was accused of not following the counsel of the highest officials, but instead "his own desires and the desires of foreign, worldly people" ("sunder noch syme eygenen willin fremdem rathe wertlicher lute"); of using the Order's funds to summon support against the Poles, thus maintaining the idea of waging war against Poland despite the Order signing the First Peace of Toruń in 1411; and of forging alliances with those who had previously fought against the Order[133]. The official version of history, as reflected in the *ältere Hochmeisterchronik*, simply glossed over such details, a clear indication that the removal of Heinrich von Plauen had not received widespread approval and may have caused embarrassment, if not tensions within the Order[134]. That Heinrich von Plauen relied on foreign mercenaries and refused to abide by the First Peace of Toruń is nonetheless confirmed by other sources.

While Heinrich von Plauen's tenure as Grand Master has been defined historically by his policies leading to his removal from office, scholars have not paid sufficient attention to his qualities as builder and a man deeply aware of the spiritual identity of the Order. He was the founder of a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary on the battlefield at Tannenberg, soon to become a pilgrimage site[135]. He also instituted a variety of commemorative practices and religious festivals throughout Prussia that were associated with that battle[136]. This was most likely in response to a number of significant changes taking place in the early 15th century, particularly in relation to the Order's self-understanding. The Lithuanians had officially converted to Christianity in 1386, the Order suffered a major defeat at Tannenberg in 1410, before being placed on trial at the Council of Constance (1414–1418), where Paulus Vladimir (ca. 1370–1435) significantly challenged the necessity and legality of the Order's crusade against the Lithuanians, an essential component of the Order's self-image and corporate identity[137]. Moreover, by 1400, the number of seasonal participants in the crusades against the Lithuanians began to decrease dramatically, which signaled the decline of the Order and the utility of its crusades for Christendom[138]. In the light of such circumstances, the charges brought against Heinrich von Plauen in 1413 essentially point to bankrupting his Order, and turning against it in pursuit of revenge.

After being removed from office in 1413, von Plauen was appointed *Pfleger* at Lochstedt in 1414, before being sent to Engelsberg (now Pokrzywno, Poland), and then held prisoner in Danzig[139]. Released from prison in 1418, he returned to Lochstedt, where he died in 1429. That throughout the last 15 years of his life, and despite all circumstances, von Plauen remained a well-to-do man results from a remark of Johann von Posilge, according to whom, when moved from Lochstedt, Heinrich's "best goods" were transported by sea to Danzig[140]. It is worth mentioning on the other hand that Lochstedt was far from being an insignificant place at that time. Around 1400, the Order was engaged in a thriving trade with amber, primarily harvested from

XXIIII hohmeister irkorn, und hilt das ampt III jar. Her wolde diszen schaden und dy unere, dy gote in dem lande von den heiden irboten wart, an den vinden rechten, und santé in alle lant noch hulfe".

[133] Johann von Posilge, *Chronik*, 335–336. It is important to note in relation to the second set of charges that in maintaining the need for war against the Poles, Heinrich von Plauen is said to have followed the will of the lesser officials of the Order ("cleynstin gebitegern").

[134] TÖPPEN 1866, 629: "I do not known why his officers removed him from the office of Grand Master" ("Addir ich weis nicht, was seyne gebittiger bedawchte, sy satczten en von dem meisterrampte").

[135] HERRMANN 2007, 128; KWIATKOWSKI 2011, 152.

[136] KWIATKOWSKI 2011, 156, citing Johann von Posilge, *Chronik*, 330: "Item in desim vorgangin jare [1412] und noch bis her wordin alle wochin *lobelichen gesungen dry messin uf allin husern, thumen, clostirn, steten und dorffern, und geschach gros gotisdinst*" (emphasis added).

[137] BISKUP 1986, 10–11; GÓRSKI 2014, 241–243; SARNOWSKY 1998a, 87–88; WÜST 2013, 255–273.

[138] PARAVICINI 2013.

[139] VOIGT 1843, 91.

[140] Johann von Posilge, *Chronik*, 342: "Un syn bruder hatte ale sin beste gerethe heymlich weg geschicket von Louchstete obir wasser und eyn wechsil gemacht mit etlichin koufflutin".

the hinterland of Lochstedt[141]. An inventory taken in 1392 mentions no less that 51 ½ tons of amber collected at the castle[142]. Next to nothing is known about von Plauen's involvement in the harvesting and collection of amber, but there is no doubt that his term as *Pfleger* of Lochstedt coincided in time with financial prosperity. Equally unclear are the details about the time he spent in Engelsberg and then in prison in Danzig, but it is likely that the experience of those five years left a deep impression upon him in terms of his devotion and piety.

St. Christopher

As previously mentioned, in the German lands, the iconography and cult of St. Christopher spread during the early Middle Ages from Cologne to other parts of the Rhineland. However, the inspiration for the iconography of St. Christopher in Lochstedt did not come from that region. Most murals in the Rhineland show the saint standing and carrying Christ as a young, bearded man, not as a child[143]. Images of Christopher moving across the water cannot be dated earlier than the mid–14th century, and none of them has the features of the mural in Lochstedt[144]. Southern Germany, and not the Rhineland, is the area in which the earliest examples of those details appear, which are symbolically used in the scene at Lochstedt[145]. But unlike churches and castles in that part of Europe, St. Christopher at Lochstedt appears in a private room. What could then be the meaning of the scene? During the 14th century, on the Continent, as well as in England, St. Christopher was venerated as guardian against unexpected death[146]. Because of that, his oversized image was meant to provide protection to all those who found themselves in danger of dying without the last rites. That is the explanation for the unusual depiction of the saint on exterior walls: the image was meant to be seen from afar. By contrast, the relatively large image of St. Christopher at Lochstedt, at least in relation to the other scenes in the *Gebietiger-Gemach*, was meant to be seen from a few feet away—the width of the room. Steinbrecht believed that even in the private room, the image of St. Christopher had the same purpose as on the outside walls of churches and castles, namely to ward off the danger of unexpected death[147].

The understanding of the meaning of the St Christopher scene depends upon its place in the iconographical program of the room. According to Steinbrecht's description, the mural was above the doorway leading into the *Komturs Remter*, that is on the eastern side of the southern wall. Next to the image of St. Christopher, on the same wall, was the scene of the Crucifixion, in which two brethren of the Order are depicted as if witnessing the event[148]. Across

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[141] SARNOWSKY 1998a, 75.

[142] ZIESEMER 1921, 7 (line 10): "51 ½ tonne bornsteynes czu Lochstete *by dem bornsteynmeister*" (emphasis added).

[143] For example, in the Church of St. Cyriacus in Niedermendig (near Andernach) or in the parish church in Almersbach (near Bonn), both painted in the mid–13th century, see PIETERS 2005, 145–146.

[144] PIETERS 2005, 150 and 152.

[145] St. Christopher was particularly popular in the German-speaking areas close to the passes across the Alps, especially in Switzerland and Tyrol, see HAHN-WOERNLE 1972, 27; FUHRMANN 1997, 17.

[146] The deep symbolism of the image was at work in that association between Christopher and unexpected death. The saint received his name for carrying Christ on his shoulder, while the last rites were essentially the administration of the Holy Communion as viaticum. In other words, the image was supposed to operate as the best possible substitute for taking the Body and Blood of Christ before death. It is quite possible that that was also why the saint never became popular in the lands of the Order, see DOBIOSCH 1987.

[147] STEINBRECHT 1910, 21: "Auf der Südwand, der Tür gegenüber, durch welche Hausherr morgens den Remter betrat, erblickt man den heiligen Christophorus: Für den Tag, da man ihn erschaut hatte, war man vor einem bösen Tod sicher!" For the role of images of Christophorus in bedrooms, see KAMMEL 2000, 21.

[148] STEINBRECHT 1910, 21.

from the Crucifixion, on the northern wall was a scene of the Annunciation, while the scene symmetrically opposing the image of St. Christopher was that of the adulteress before Christ (John 8: 3–11). This peculiar combination of biblical episodes baffled Steinbrecht, who attributed the choice to the whim of the patron[149].

If one takes at face value the idea that the principal meaning of the scene of St. Christopher was to ward off the danger of a sudden death, that meaning must have been apparent to anyone *leaving* the room through the main door, in order to get outside the building. What kind of unexpected death could the commander of Lochstedt fear? The castle was not a gathering point for the *Reisen* against the Lithuanians. That distinction fell to Königsberg, which was run by the Great Marshal, who was responsible for heading the campaigns[150]. As a consequence, the castle garrison at Lochstedt was not involved in the campaigns against the Lithuanians, and there was no apparent reason for the Amber Master to be afraid of dying in battle without the last rites. Moreover, and despite claims to the contrary, there is no evidence linking Lochstedt to participants in the *Reisen*[151]. Several outbreaks of the plague between 1373 and 1410 may be another, much more likely reason[152]. The popularity of St. Christopher at the time of the plague of 1347–49 needs no further explanation, and no other saint was regarded as a better protector from that kind of sudden death[153]. But any attempt to explain the scene of St. Christopher in isolation ignores the subtle relation between images decorating the walls of the *Gebietiger-Gemach*[154]. Why was St. Christopher placed across from the scene of the adulteress before Christ? Christopher, while walking towards the viewer, looks to his left, across the room, in the direction of the Annunciation scene. Can there be a symbolic association between the scene of St. Christopher and the Crucifixion, both on the same wall?

Inventories collected in the *Großes Ämterbuch des Deutschen Ordens* provide no detail as to how the room was furnished at the time the paintings were made. The earliest inventory taken for Lochstedt is from April 1399, when Albrecht von Hohenfeld resigned his office. While the entry mentions a considerable stock of horses and geldings at Lochstedt, there is no information about the rooms in the northwestern part of the castle[155]. An inventory of 1485 (without a date) refers to the contents of the *pflegers stob*, the private sleeping quarters of the Amber Master, which had "1 dresser drawer…, 1 brass chandelier, 4 candles, 1 bed, 4 hand towels, 4 table covers"[156]. In the absence of contextual information about the layout and interior decoration of the *Gebietiger-Gemach*, one needs to rely only on the murals, as shown in photographs, as well as in Oetken's drawings.

Hierotopy

No apotropaic meaning may be assigned to any of the scenes in the *Gebietiger-Gemach*, other than St. Christopher's image. Moreover, the profoundly religious symbolism of the scene

[149] On the western wall, in the corner next to the Annunciation was the Archangel, Michael slaying the dragon. On the opposite, eastern wall, was an unidentifiable image, which may well have been the scene of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22), with the Resurrection of Christ right above it.

[150] VOIGT 1843, xiii. Also see PERLBACH 1890, 103, 116–117, on the nature of the office of the Marshal.

[151] *Contra*: JAKUBEK-RACZKOWSKA 2013, 188–189; WÜST 2013, 220–226; KUTZNER 1995 35–36.

[152] JÄGER 1981, 230.

[153] BULST 1996, 74–76.

[154] Moreover, if in need of protection against sudden death, the commander of Lochstedt could have also appealed to St. Barbara, a much more popular saint among members of the Order. By 1400, both St. Christopher and St. Barbara were among the Fourteen Holy Helpers, see FUHRMANN 1997, 13 with n. 23.

[155] ZIESEMER 1921, 46.

[156] ZIESEMER 1921, 50: "Ins pflegers stoben: item ein schawbetisch, der zcum pflegerampt gehort, 1 messinges krone, do man 4 lichte mag uffstecken, item 1 betthe, item 4 hanttucher, item 4 tischtucher im convent".

on the eastern wall (Archangel Michael slaying the Dragon) betrays the general intention of the patron to turn the *Gebietiger-Gemach* into a sacred space. In that respect, the interpretation of the scene of St. Christopher can only be possible if understood as part of the hierotopy of Lochstedt. Hierotopy, the creation of sacral spaces, has recently been the topic of a number of significant studies of architectural settings and painted decoration[157]. But such studies have typically focused on Byzantine and Rus' art – churches and icons. Crusader art has only recently been touched by this approach to space[158]. There has so far been no attempt to apply the concept of hierotopy to the creation of sacred spaces in the Baltic lands of the Teutonic Order. To be sure, it is only recently that the sacral dimension of the Baltic crusades has attracted scholarly attention.

Research on the spiritual aspect of crusading in the Baltic has been largely confined to Polish and German scholarship. Karol Górski focused on the inner life of the Teutonic Order and opened up the study of the Order's spiritual identity in Prussia[159]. Roman Czaja examined the written, artistic, numismatic, and architectural evidence for the self-image of the Order as a religious institution, which was then presented to participants in the *Reisen*[160]. The sacral dimension of space (including landscape) has become a major research topic only in the last ten years or so[161]. One of the authors of this paper has suggested that specific acts mentioned in the texts (namely martyrdom and hierophany) reflect the contemporary understanding of the sacrality of mission in the southern Baltic during the 13th century[162]. Krzysztof Kwiatkowski has turned to the role of processions and masses on campaign, as a way to read the highly chivalric-oriented chronicle of Wigand von Marburg (c. 1394)[163].

To be sure, there is a longer tradition in both German and Polish historiography of studies of sacred places in Teutonic Prussia. For example, Rainer Zacharias and Kazimierz Pospieszny studied the castle in Marienburg as a pilgrimage centre[164]. Rafał Simiński, Waldemar Rozynkowski, Andrzej Radzimiński and others have also examined the sacral dimension of (interior) spaces in Teutonic Prussia, particularly in relation to the artistic program of the Order's state[165]. However, almost all those works deal with the artistic, ideological, and practical functions of *communal* spaces, namely the chapels in the Order's castles, and not with private rooms, such as that in Lochstedt. According to Monika Jakubek-Raczkowska, the role of art (in this case, at Lochstedt) "was to legitimize territorial power in the eyes of the German brothers themselves and the rest of Christian Europe." She had in mind participants in the *Reisen*, who came to support the Order against the Lithuanians[166]. Unlike Königsberg, however, the Lochstedt castle never served either as a gathering point for participants, or as a basis of operations for the *Reisen*. Moreover, there is no mention of crusaders visiting Lochstedt either in the *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*, or in collections of charters and letters written in Prussia between the 13th and the 15th centuries. In other words, there is no basis for establishing a supposed connection between images in the castle and the crusading propaganda. Instead, the iconographic program at Lochstedt must be understood in a private, not public key[167].

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157 LIDOV 2009; MELIUTINA/POPOVA/TEREBIKHIN 2016; ERDELJAN 2017.

158 WOLLESEN 2013.

159 GÓRSKI 1984.

160 CZAJA 2005, 11–15.

161 Notable examples include chapters in the following collections of studies: MURRAY 2001; MURRAY 2009; WENTA/KOPCZYŃSKA 2013; NIELSEN/FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT 2016.

162 LEIGHTON 2018.

163 KWIATKOWSKI 2013.

164 ZACHARIAS 1995; ZACHARIAS 2002, 17–18. See also POSPIESZNY 2000; POSPIESZNY 2009.

165 SIMIŃSKI 2013; ROZYNKOWSKI 2006, 229–241 (on hagiotoponomy).

166 JAKUBEK-RACZKOWSKA 2013, 188–189.

167 WÜST 2013, 221: "Damit sind die Malereien Ausweis eines Repräsentationsbedürfnisses des Pflegers und seines Selbstverständnisses als Ordensmitglied". *Contra* DOMASŁOWSKI 1978, 153–155.

The *Gebietiger-Gemach* at Lochstedt is an excellent and, at the same time, unique case of creating sacral space. Lochstedt therefore offers the opportunity to examine the role of the hierotopical approach in the understanding of *private* space. Whether the "concepteur" in this case was Heinrich von Plauen or someone else, the meaning of the scene of St. Christopher depends upon the programmatic goal of creating the sacred space of the room[168].

That the juxtaposition of the image of St. Christopher with other scenes depends upon a distinctly individual and polysemantic program should not surprise. Among several examples of iconographic programs in contemporary Europe, which include St. Christopher, one of the geographically closest is the series of decorative stone figures in the presbytery of the Church of St. Mary in Cracow, which was founded by Nicholas Wierzynek the Elder as expiation for the pledge he took in 1354 to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Over the windows on the southern side of the presbytery are the statues of St. Nicholas (the patron of the founder), St. Catherine (the patron of the founder's wife), and St. Christopher (the patron of pilgrims). Each statue is linked to figures in the individual windows. The figures represent the sins, with personifications of Luxuria and Voluptas above St. Christopher. Tomasz Węcławowicz has rightly noted that that is a direct reference to Nicea and Aquilina, the two maidens sent by the king to seduce Christopher, but who ended up being converted by him[169]. That hierotopy was ultimately the goal of the iconographic program in the presbytery results from the fact that Wierzynek's (failed) pilgrimage was treated in a wider context of human sins. Moreover, the monumental stone *aediculae* on buttresses on the outside of the presbytery walls correspond to the twelve gates of Jerusalem[170]. Could anything like that have been at work in the *Gebietiger-Gemach* in Lochstedt? To be sure, the iconographic program in the *Gebieitiger-Gemach* has many didactic functions. It provides a key insight into the spiritual life and private devotion of the patron. Iconographic programs have been particularly studied as means by which hierotopic projects were executed successfully. The castles of the Teutonic Order, when studied from the perspective of spatial organizations, are very similar to the above-mentioned case of the Church of St Mary in Cracow. They were organized along practical and ideological lines, symbolising the Heavenly Jerusalem, and the space within thus became a hierotopical project in itself[171].

Much can be obtained from a careful examination of the orientation of the murals and the direction in which the depicted characters look, particularly in the west-east series of images. For example, Archangel Michael slaying the dragon faces an image of the Resurrection of Christ. The latter image is positioned on the eastern wall, much like in medieval churches, with the altar to the east. According to Matthew 24: 27, Christ will return from the east on the day of Judgement[172]. That the Resurrection scene is placed to the east needs no further explanation, but

[168] LIDOV 2006, 17–18. Similarly, the "scenes of piety" in one of the private chambers of the castle built at Trakai in the early 15th century may be interpreted hierotopically (and used as a good comparison for Lochstedt) as reflecting the devotion of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Alexander Vytautas (1392–1430), Heinrich von Plauen's contemporary. Unfortunately, next to nothing survives from that iconographic program, see MICKŪNAITĖ 1997, 263 and 261 fig. 2.2. In Toruń, badly preserved frescoes found in one of the rooms of the house at 17, Staromiejski Rynek and dated to the first quarter of the 15th century have been interpreted as having a religious meaning linked to the idea of moral rebirth. According to DOMASŁOWSKI 1990, 156 and 157 Toruń is the only place in the lands of the Order in which frescoes are known to have decorated the interior of urban houses.

[169] WĘCŁAWOWICZ 1995, 120–121. Nicholas Wierzynek the Elder was a merchant and a banker of Cracow who was later ennobled and became royal steward in Sandomierz. He died in 1360, see LICHOŃCZAK 1981.

[170] WĘCŁAWOWICZ 1995, 128.

[171] KWIATKOWSKI 1997, 117.

[172] The symbolism of the east in relation to the Second Coming is most evident in the west-east orientation of graves in Christian cemeteries. For the importance of that symbolism in the interpretation of the archaeogical record as indicating the conversion to Christianity in the Baltic region, see SVETIKAS 2003, 149–150; MÄGI 2004, 29–30; PLUSKOWSKI 2013, 204.

the image of the Archangel Michael killing the seven-headed dragon of the Book of Revelation (12:3) deserves further commentary. The passage mentioning the battle between the dragon and Michael assisted by other angels (Revelation 12:7) was understood as referring to events taking place before the creation of the world. The archangel battling the dragon is therefore an anticipation of the destruction of Death through Resurrection. That the two scenes are meant to be seen in symbolic symmetry results from the fact that the shield the Archangel carries in his left hand, against the seven heads of the dragon, is emblazoned with the coat of arms of the Order. On the other hand, in the Resurrection scene, Christ stepping out of the tomb surrounded by four faceless, dozing soldiers carries the banner of the Order[173]. The particular orientation of key scenes is present in other examples of sacred space in Prussia. The most famous among them is the cycle of paintings in the Chapel of the Virgin at Marienburg. Old Testament prophets and figures of the apostles were depicted on the eastern wall of the Chapel, and reflected the "sacred history" of salvation and the conquest of the Knights on earth as agents of God in heaven[174]. A similar program was present in the cathedral of Königsberg[175]. The striking parallel between Marienburg and Lochstedt in terms of orientation suggests that the private space of an official in a religious corporation was perceived as congruent to that of a church. The symbolism of the orientation is also pervasive in the figure of St Christopher, who is depicted moving from west to east, while carrying the Christ child on his shoulders.

A hierotopy-driven examination of the image program on the southern wall of the room may also elucidate the two scenes on the northern wall: the Annunciation to the west and the adulteress before Christ to the east. On the opposite, southern wall, the corresponding scenes are the Crucifixion and St. Christopher. The significance of the Holy Cross for the Teutonic Order (and in medieval Prussia, in general), has been discussed above. The Annunciation of the Virgin was an important feast day in the Order of the Teutonic Knights as a Marian institution[176]. It is important to note, however, that the Crucifixion and the Annunciation are the only scenes with inscriptions on ribbons rendering the words uttered by the thieves and Archangel Gabriel, respectively. The symmetry of the two scenes is of course to be understood symbolically in terms of Christ's life and death. In fact, the other two, neighboring scenes (adulteress before Christ and Christopher) may be interpreted in the same key. Not yet born in the Annunciation scene, Christ appears as a child on the shoulders of St. Christopher, and as a grown man in the scene of the adulteress, before shown in his death on the Cross. Moreover, the correspondences between images on the northern and southern walls echo those on the western and eastern walls, which emphasize the history of salvation.

There are also correspondences between neighboring images on the northern and southern walls, respectively. For example, the cross formed a key element of Christopher's journey to Christ in the saint's story as known from the *Passional*. In fact, the discovery of the Holy Cross is one of the stories in the collection, which suggests that its meaning was well known to the brethren in the Order[177]. Christopher witnesses a king making the sign of the cross to ward away the devil, in addition to his seeing the cross placed on a road, and causing his next leader (the devil) to change course. The cross thus guides Christopher along his journey to

[173] The symmetry is even subtler, when one considers the manner in which the Archangel brandishes his sword, a gesture similar to that of Abraham (whose sword however is stopped by an angel holding it by the blade) in the scene of the sacrifice of Isaac (combined with Moses receiving the law tablets), next to the Resurrection. The two swords have similar guards, which suggests a deliberate attempt to make them look alike, see STEINBRECHT 1910, pls. III and V.

[174] TRUPINDA 2008, 521–22. See also JÓŹWIAK/TRUPINDA 2012, 300.

[175] HERRMANN 2008, specifically 340–341.

[176] PERLBACH 1890, 3, lists the feast of the Annunciation as *totum duplex*.

[177] KÖPKE 1852, 265–290.

find his "true" (spiritual) master. Moreover, in Lochstedt St Christopher appears to walk in the direction of the scene of the Resurection (to the east), but he looks across his left shoulder, in the direction of both the crucified Christ and of the Annunciation scene (to the west). Moreover, the two scenes on the northern wall stand out among all others in the *Gebietiger-Gemach* by virtue of their vertical axes—the staff-turned-into-a-tree in the case of St. Christopher and the tree of the Cross in the case of the Crucifixion[178]. The meaning of the scene of St. Christopher in the context of the iconographic program seems to be that after serving false masters, he eventually came at the end of his life to Christ, and was thus saved.

Of all scenes in the room, the Adulteress before Christ is the most difficult to interpret, particularly in reference to St Christopher. Placing the Adulteress next to the scene of the Annunciation may have been a subtle commentary on two women in the life of Christ – one bearing Christ, the other being saved by Him. However, the scene of the adulteress is depicted as taking place outside the gate of a town, although the episode in John 8:2 is specifically mentioned as taking place in (or just outside the) temple. While the woman is in the center of the image, she is surrounded by her accusers, with Christ shown as larger than the other characters, standing on the right side of the image and looking to the east. In other words, the particular moment of the episode in John 8:1–12 that is depicted in Lochstedt is that when in response to the insistence of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus "raised Himself up and said to them, 'He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first'" (John 8:7). In the Gospel, Jesus then stooped down to write something on the ground. He rose again only when all the scribes and the Pharisees had left, and He was alone with the woman. Why then was this particular episode chosen for the iconographic program at Lochstedt? To be sure, the scene of the adulteress was not particularly popular in the Late Middle Ages. A few details in the Lochstedt mural point to specific reasons for the use of this image in the *Gebietiger-Gemach*. One of the accusers pushing the woman in front of Christ carries a sword, the pommel of which is identical to those in the scenes of the Archangel Michael battling the dragon and of Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac. This is probably not an accident, but a detail meant to draw attention to the threat of violence. However, the violence about to be inflicted upon the woman is by stoning, not by sword (John 8:5 and 7). The presence of the sword, therefore, must be understood as pointing to rash judgment, followed by execution and sudden death. By contrast, judging from St. Augustine's *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, the episode of the adulteress before Christ was understood in the Middle Ages primarily as prompting reflection and contemplation of one's conscience, as opposed to the scrutiny of other people's sins[179]. In this context, the images of the adulteress before Christ and of St Christopher depart somehow from the meaning of the other murals in the *Gebietiger Gemach*, which reflect the growing popularity of *devotio antiqua*. With its emphasis on the biblical prefiguration and the role of the Order as fulfilling God's will on earth, *devotio antiqua* was the hallmark of spirituality and devotion in the Teutonic Order during the Later Middle Ages[180]. The story of St Christopher in the *Passional* has been connected

[178] There are further similarities between the way in which the hermit is depicted kneeling in the scene of St. Christopher and the member of the Order shown kneeling on the right side of the Crucifixion scene, see STEINBRECHT 1910, pl. II. The association of the image of St. Christopher and the scene of the Crucifixion is also attested in the murals discovered in a room on the first floor of the house at 39, Piekary Street in Toruń. According to DOMASŁOWSKI 1990, 156, those murals must be dated to the second quarter of the 15th century. The two images are placed on different walls and are very different from those in Lochstedt, see DOMASŁOWSKI 1982, 31 and 34–35. For good color pictures, see http://www.turystyka.torun.pl/upload/image/lukcezaraIptrakttylny160215.png (visit of May 1, 2019).

[179] BERROUARD 1977, 702. For the English translation, see RETTIG 1993, 55–58, especially 55: "For they were slandering without, not examining themselves within. They saw an adulteress; they did not look closely at themselves".

[180] KWIATKOWSKI 1997, 117–118.

to proper, spiritual service to God, while the scene of the adulteress, otherwise interpreted as a rejection of sin, not of the sinner, was now given supplementary meanings concerning rash judgment. There is therefore a subtle contrast between the scene of the adulteress before Christ and Christopher carrying Christ. While Christopher was the exemplary, self-effacing servant of God, the scribes and the Pharisees were quick to condemn the woman, and ready to execute her by sword. While Christopher crosses the river with the assistance of the hermit's lamp and his own staff miraculously turned into a tree, the scribes and the Pharisees cross the field from the city gate to the place where Christ is standing and in the process pass by without even noticing the tree symbolizing the cross.

The *Gebietiger-Gemach* is therefore a sacred space by virtue of the multiple meanings conveyed by the images depicted on its walls, and their subtle associations. The history of Christ depicted on the northern and southern walls intersect with the history of salvation on the western and eastern walls. Both axes intersected most likely with the personal history of the owner (the room's occupant). Hierotopy is a manifestation of the creator's own spirituality, and reflects his or her connection on earth to the spiritual world in heaven[181]. For Heinrich von Plauen, who was most likely the patron of the murals at Lochstedt, this image organization could reflect his time in prison and his deposition from the office of Grand Master. Heinrich's desire for vengeance (noted above), and his repentance, are expressed in the figure of St Christopher and directional orientation of the room's image program. He may have viewed himself a victim of rash judgment, much like the adulteress depicted on the northern wall. Like the two brethren shown on the margins of the Crucifixion scene, he may have contemplated that image to find deeper meanings of his own existence. He most likely thought that the Order under his command had followed its own rules (much like those on the tablets that God the Father gives to Moses) and may have been ready to sacrifice its own members (much like Abraham was ready to sacrifice Isaac). In doing so, the Order had battled the enemies of Christianity, and taken as model the Archangel Michael and his fight against the seven-headed dragon. Howevever, it was ultimately the message of hope in the Resurrection that mattered most, as revelead by the Order's banner that Christ carried in his left hand when stepping out of His tomb. Moreover, the Archangel Gabriel bringing news to the Virgin Mary was a premonition of the devotion of the servant of God, whom Heinrich von Plauen wanted to emulate. In this context, St Christopher reflects his personal choice and individual idea of salvation. When leaving his (bed) room to go outside the castle of Lochstedt, he could look up the image of the saint carrying the Child. To many, that was simply an apotropaic device, primarily meant to ward off sudden death. To Heinrich von Plauen, who had been through great misfortune, it was a reminder that he had been serving God, not men.

Conclusion

The hierotopical program of the *Gebietiger-Gemach* in Lochstedt represents themes relevant to the communal identity of the Teutonic Order as the harbinger of God's message on earth, from the Old Testament to the Last Judgement. It also reveals how the concepteur, the former Grand Master Heinrich von Plauen, attached meaning to the visual program. In designing this private space along the lines of other (communal) sacred spaces, the room represents a unique application of hierotopical concepts to the Baltic lands in the Late Middle Ages. According to those concepts, the presence of the image of St Christopher may be explained in two ways. First, the saint was regarded as embodying the Order's mission, which made possible his association with the other images in the room. Second, he was most likely depicted on the walls of the room

[181] LIDOV 2006, 10.

as a mirror and reminder for the patron, prompting him to move toward personal salvation and a proper master. The latter explanation gains strength if one accepts the dating of the murals to Heinrich's second stay at Lochstedt, during the last years of his life.

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Fig. 1. St. Christopher. Southern wall of the *Gebietiger-Gemach* in the western wing of the Lochstedt Castle, ca. 1420. After Steinbrecht, *Schloss Lochstedt*, plate II.