

ESF Exploratory Workshop on

The Ecology of Crusading
The Environmental Impact of
Conquest, Colonisation and
Religious Conversion in the
Medieval Baltic

Malbork (Poland), 4-6 September 2009

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The workshop took place at the Karwan Conference centre at Malbork Castle in Poland, between Friday 4th and Sunday 6th September, 2009. Participation numbered 23 people from 10 countries (UK, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Israel). Delegates included historians, archaeologists, palaeobotanists, zooarchaeologists and geoarchaeologists. The primary presentations of the workshop took place on Saturday 5th, but discussions on various aspects of the research programme were ongoing from Friday through to Sunday. A second, seminar-style discussion took place on Sunday afternoon involving five delegates. The general atmosphere of the meeting was incredibly productive and optimistic, sustaining discussion between delegates over a period of three days. Feedback from all the delegates has been very positive, and all are looking forward to the development of this international research programme.

Main Objectives of the Workshop

The crusades in the Baltic from the 12th-16th centuries AD had a significant impact on the region, and are fundamental to understanding the development and consolidation of a European society, united under Christianity. This project aims to explore the environmental impact of this process, with the aim of establishing an interpretative framework that can be employed in other European frontier regions which experienced colonisation, crusading and inter-cultural interaction.

The aim of the one-day workshop was to establish a new and cohesive approach to the ecology of crusader sites. An alternative way of looking at this is to consider what impact the construction of castles, settlements and towns – as well as the introduction of a Christian worldview – had on the physical and conceptual environments of the Baltic during the crusading period?

The proposed project will address five primary research questions:

1) How were local environments in the eastern Baltic region transformed from the 13th–15th centuries with the establishment of castle and settlement sites by crusading institutions? To what extent did landuse and biogeography change during this period? Did the development of castle and settlement sites result in new provisioning needs and supporting hinterlands?

2) How were wild and domestic fauna exploited at and around sites associated with crusading institutions in the Baltic, and how did their appropriation compare with contemporary monastic, aristocratic and urban sites? Is there a ‘crusading’, ‘Christian’ or ‘European’ signature that we can identify?

3) How did the process of Christianisation, in part driven by the crusades of the Teutonic Order and other institutions in the Baltic, change the way indigenous pagan groups conceptualised the natural world? Did the introduction of parochial networks, monasteries and castles obliterate pagan spiritual landscapes?

4) To what extent did the crusading movement at the frontiers of medieval Christian Europe represent a force of ecological transformation? Was there a significant change as a result of crusading, colonisation and Christianisation? Or did incomers simply adopt existing methods of environmental exploitation?

5) What can the ecological impact of the northern crusades on the physical and conceptual landscapes of the medieval Baltic inform us about the process of colonisation, environmental exploitation and resulting cultural changes in other regions of Europe (especially the Near East and Iberia)?

The workshop brought together researchers from across Europe working on the archaeology and history of the Baltic region, as well as those offering comparative perspectives. As this is a novel and ground-breaking research topic, such a workshop is a vital pre-requisite for a successful inter-regional, collaborative scientific programme.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Discuss the research objectives of the proposed project.
- Establish the logistics of collaboration.
- Develop a coherent theoretical framework and methodology.
- Outline approaches to different types of site and different forms of archaeological and historical sources, and discuss inter-regional and inter-disciplinary synthesis.
- Plan future funding strategies, particularly EU FP7.

Workshop Agenda

The workshop was structured into thematic sessions, where delegates were asked to present a contribution of no more than 15 minutes on the relevant topic, addressing the research objectives (see above), theoretical framework, methodologies and collaborative strategies. The workshop concluded with an extended discussion, introduced by Professor Jozsef Laszlovszky, aimed at collating the main points in the context of the research objectives. The language of the workshop was English.

Overall conclusion and dissemination

The specific details of the research programme were debated, and several conclusions reached (see scientific report). It was decided that the results of the workshop should be compiled as a single, joint-authored paper (Pluskowski, Gerrard and Boas) for submission to an appropriate peer-reviewed scientific journal (e.g. *Medieval Archaeology*).

2. Scientific Report

The sessions were sub-divided into themes, and each contributor was asked to consider a series of key questions, situating their presentation within the wider objectives of the research programme. Abstracts of contributions were not requested.

Welcome by Convenor: The Ecology of Crusading and the idea of the medieval human environmental 'niche'

Aleksander Pluskowski (Dept of Archaeology, University of Reading, UK)

The major themes of the project were introduced and situated within the context of Europeanisation, and more specifically the construction of new human ecological niches in the medieval Baltic. Examples were given to illustrate the range of environmental impacts resulting from crusading and colonisation.

Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)

Bernhard Palme (ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities -SCH)

The operational structure of the ESF, its policies and grants were clearly outlined and hyperlinked.

Morning Session 1: Archaeology of Medieval Baltic Societies

Key Questions:

- What are the key themes in the archaeology of medieval Baltic societies (e.g. colonisation, religious conversion, crusading, social transformation)?
- What are the key sites?
- What are potential sites for this project?

Presentation 1: Poland

Tomasz Nowakiewicz (Department of Early Medieval Archaeology, IAUW)

The history of the archaeology of medieval Prussia (north Poland) was outlined, along with problems and limitations associated with previous excavations, as well as key sites and recommendations for particular sites which could be incorporated into the project. The focus was on pre-Christian settlements and strongholds, rather than the monuments of the Teutonic Order.

Presentation 2: Estonia

Heiki Valk (Institute of Archaeology, University of Tartu)

The history of the archaeology of medieval northern Livonia (Estonia) was outlined, followed by a discussion of key castle and settlement sites, with a focus on particular sites, including recent collaborative work conducted at Karksi castle.

Presentation 3: Latvia

Gundars Kalniņš (Cesis castle museum, Cesis)

The history of the archaeology of medieval southern Livonia (Latvia) was outlined, followed by a discussion of the state of castle archaeology, and a discussion of sites where relevant environmental data could be obtained.

Presentation 4: Lithuania

Vykintas Vaitkevičius (Klaipeda University)

The development of medieval archaeology and the diversity of sites in Lithuania was outlined, followed by a consideration of existing work and the potential of recovering environmental data from key stronghold and settlement sites.

Presentation 5: Finland

Henrik Jansson (Department of Archaeology, University of Helsinki)

Following a general overview, the impact of Swedish (and potentially Danish) colonisation associated with 'crusading' was discussed in relation to ongoing excavations in Finland, suggesting possible castle and coastal settlement sites for the project, and indicating the diverse range of multi-disciplinary techniques already in use.

Morning Session 2: Applying Environmental Archaeology

Key Questions:

- What is the potential and limitation of environmental data?
- What can an ecological perspective offer to understanding cultural processes in the medieval Baltic region?

Presentation 1: Zooarcheological data in Klaipeda castle, Lithuania

Linus Daugnora (Lithuanian Veterinary Academy, Kaunas)

A specific case study of a number of faunal assemblages recovered from Klaipeda castle, illustrating the diversity of domestic and wild animal exploitation by a community at such a site.

Presentation 2: Zooarchaeological perspectives: culture and technology

Krish Seetah (Dept of Archaeology, University of Cambridge)

A range of techniques were introduced; detailed butchery analysis and associated technological reconstruction, the application of geomorphometrics to the study of animal remains, isotopes and DNA in examining faunal assemblages from medieval contexts in the Baltic.

Presentation 3: Medieval zooarchaeology in Latvia

Arnis Mugurēvičs (Latvijas Lauksaimniecības universitāte)

A series of faunal assemblages from castle sites in Latvia were compared, illustrating the diversity of (particularly wild) species and a shared ecological profile in the context of animal exploitation.

Presentation 4: Palaeo-environmental studies in Lithuania

Migle Stancikaite, Dalia Kisieliene (Institute of Geology and Geography, Vilnius)

The history of pollen analysis in Lithuania was outlined, followed by case studies from prehistoric and historic sites (e.g. Vilnius castle) where multi-disciplinary palaeo-environmental analyses had illustrated important episodes of environmental exploitation.

Presentation 5: Pollen analysis in Poland and Estonia

Alexander Brown (Dept of Archaeology, University of Reading)

The potential of pollen analysis in medieval Prussia and Livonia was illustrated with a discussion of techniques, possible sites and existing work in the landscapes around Malbork in Poland and Karksi in Estonia.

Presentation 6: Potential applications of geoarchaeology

Lisa-Marie Shillito (Dept of Archaeology, University of Reading)

A series of geoarchaeological techniques and related questions pertaining to aspects of environmental exploitation and the reconstruction of daily life at individual sites were outlined, as well as the pre-requisites, with particular reference to Grudziądz castle in Poland and Margat castle in Syria.

Afternoon Session 1: Approaching Written Sources

Key Questions:

- What types of sources are available?
- How is it possible to integrate these sources with archaeological data?
- How much can they contribute to our understanding of physical and conceptual environmental transformation?

Presentation 1: Town archives

Juhan Kreem (Centre for Medieval Studies, Tallinn)

The range of written sources pertaining to town archives in Estonia was outlined, how this related to individual sites, and particularly to sites associated with the proposed project. The strengths and limitations of these sources, as well as their relatively late chronological range was discussed.

Presentation 2: Castle documentation

Marc Jarzebowski (Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut of History)

The range of written sources relating to castles in Prussia were presented, along with examples of published material, individual entries, key texts and the diversity of information relating to aspects of environmental exploitation.

Presentation 3: Latvian perspectives

Kaspars Kļaviņš (Faculty of Philology, University of Latvia)

A series of key points were related to the literature pertaining to the crusading period in Livonia. These included discussions of the environmental dimensions of pre-Christian religion, the impact of the Teutonic Order and the problems and benefits associated with using a range of later sources.

This was followed by a discussion of the relationship between history and archaeology, and the integration of different sources. We returned to this point in the main discussion.

Afternoon Session 2: Contextualising Ecological Changes

Key Questions:

- How can case studies from medieval archaeology be used to contextualise the environmental and cultural transformations in the Baltic?

Presentation 1: Lithuania in the 14th-16th centuries: the crossroads of Eastern and Western cultures. A study based on investigations in Vilnius Castle

Povilas Blaževičius (Klaipeda University)

The diverse range of material culture recovered from excavations at Vilnius was presented, highlighting the international significance of the site and its multi-cultural character. This was particularly useful for developing ideas of inter-regional connections and the significance of terms such as Europeanisation.

Presentation 2: Christianisation in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and pilgrimage interplay with the Teutonic Order and Livonia

Eugenijus Svetikas (Lietuvos istorijos institutas)

A detailed typological survey of a range of decorated brooches was used to highlight trends in pilgrimage and the impact of the Teutonic Order in Livonia. This illustrated an important aspect of medieval archaeology in the region, introducing one of the most abundant forms of material culture used to assess the impact of crusading.

Afternoon Session 3: Comparative Perspectives

Key Questions:

- What lessons can we learn from comparative studies?
- Is there an ecological dimension to the cultural processes in these regions?
- Will an interpretative framework based on Baltic studies be useful for other regions?

Presentation 1: Near East

Adrian Boas (Department of Archaeology, Haifa University)

The archaeology of the Latin East was outlined, followed by the state of research on the environmental impact of the crusading movement, demonstrated with reference to specific sites. The relevance of the research programme was discussed, particularly in relation to the key site of Montfort, the main castle of the Teutonic Order in Outremer.

Presentation 2: Iberia

Chris Gerrard (Department of Archaeology, Durham University)

The archaeology of medieval Spain and perspectives on the Reconquest were outlined, followed by the range of environmental exploitation relating to settlement and landscape transformation. Key sites in Aragon were referred to, and the relevance of the research programme in developing an intellectual framework which could be adopted in the region was discussed.

Afternoon Session 4: Discussion and Follow-up Research

Chaired by József Laszlovszky

(Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University)

Key Questions:

- How useful and practical are the research objectives of the proposed project?
- Is there a coherent theoretical framework and methodology?
- Is it possible and desirable to develop inter-regional and inter-disciplinary synthesis?
- Is there a strategy for funding – i.e. local case studies or inter-regional projects?

The discussion was introduced with a presentation from the chair highlighting key themes; the relationship between history and archaeology, the definition of ecology and niche, sites and their hinterland, representative sampling and the concept of frontiers. Each of these points was then systematically discussed with widespread contributions from the body of delegates. The most important conclusions were:

- *To focus on a limited series of specific sites, rather than attempt comprehensive coverage.*

- *To focus on sites which had a significant amount of associated written sources, which included the major castles of the Order in Prussia (Malbork) and Livonia (Viljandi, Česis).*
- *To define clearly the notion of a hinterland on the basis of relevant historical data pertaining to individual sites, and to focus environmental sampling within these areas*
- *To consider patterns in rural settlement within the hinterlands of chosen sites..*
- *To incorporate theoretical discussions of frontier, colonisation and Europeanisation, enabling scholars from other disciplines (e.g. geography) to benefit from this research, and to comment on the results of the project.*
- *To include folk history and encourage local community interest in the project.*

3. Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome

A great deal of information was processed and synthesised during the discussion, resulting in a series of new research objectives (see above).

The content of the workshop and the discussion will be synthesised into a joint-authored paper, presenting a comparative survey of the Baltic, Iberia and the Middle East, in order to make this relevant to as broad an audience as possible.

The intention is to submit the proposal for this research programme to:

- **ERC: Starting Independent Researcher Grant**
- **ESF: Networks + Eurocores**
- **EU FP7: Calls in Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities**

As well as continue to apply to British research councils (e.g. The British Academy) for grants to develop case studies within the broader research programme.

4. Final programme

Friday 4th September, 2009

Afternoon Arrival
19.00 Informal get-together (Malbork Castle)

Saturday 5th September, 2009

09.00-09.15 Welcome by Convenor: The Ecology of Crusading and the idea of the medieval human environmental 'niche'

Aleksander Pluskowski (Dept of Archaeology, University of Reading, UK)

09.15-09.30 Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)

Bernhard Palme (ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities -SCH)

09.30-11.00 Morning Session 1: Archaeology of Medieval Baltic Societies

Presentation 1: Poland

Tomasz Nowakiewicz (Department of Early Medieval Archaeology, IAUW)

Presentation 2: Estonia

Heiki Valk (Institute of Archaeology, University of Tartu)

Presentation 3: Latvia

Gundars Kalniņš (Cesis castle museum, Cesis)

Presentation 4: Lithuania

Vykintas Vaitkevičius (Klaipeda University)

Presentation 5: Finland

Henrik Jansson (Department of Archaeology, University of Helsinki)

Discussion
Chaired by Aleks Pluskowski

11.00-11.20 Coffee / Tea Break

11.20-13.05 Morning Session 2: Applying Environmental Archaeology
Presentation 1: Zooarcheological data in Klaipeda castle, Lithuania
Linas Daugnora (Lithuanian Veterinary Academy, Kaunas)
Presentation 2: Zooarchaeological perspectives: culture and technology
Krish Seetah (Dept of Archaeology, University of Cambridge)
Presentation 3: Medieval zooarchaeology in Latvia
Arnis Mugarēvičs (Latvijas Lauksaimniecības universitāte)
Presentation 4: Palaeo-environmental studies in Lithuania
Migle Stancikaite, Dalia Kisieliene (Institute of Geology and Geography, Vilnius)
Presentation 5: Pollen analysis in Poland and Estonia
Alexander Brown (Dept of Archaeology, University of Reading)
Presentation 6: Potential applications of geoarchaeology
Lisa-Marie Shillito (Dept of Archaeology, University of Reading)
Discussion
Chaired by Aleks Pluskowski

13.05-14.30 Lunch

14.30-15.45 Afternoon Session 1: Approaching Written Sources
Presentation 1: Town archives
Juhan Kreem (Centre for Medieval Studies, Tallinn)
Presentation 2: Castle documentation
Marc Jarzebowski (Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut of History)
Presentation 3: Latvian perspectives
Kaspars Kļaviņš (Faculty of Philology, University of Latvia)
Discussion
Chaired by Aleks Pluskowski

15.45-16.30 Afternoon Session 2: Contextualising Ecological Changes
Presentation 1: Lithuania in the 14th-16th centuries: the crossroads of Eastern and Western cultures. A study based on investigations in Vilnius Castle
Povilas Blaževičius (Klaipeda University)
Presentation 2: Christianisation in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and pilgrimage interplay with the Teutonic Order and Livonia
Eugenijus Svetikas (Lietuvos istorijos institutas)
Discussion
Chaired by Aleks Pluskowski

16.30-16.50 Coffee / Tea Break

16.50-17.30 Afternoon Session 3: Comparative Perspectives
Presentation 1: Near East
Adrian Boas (Department of Archaeology, Haifa University)
Presentation 2: Iberia
Chris Gerrard (Department of Archaeology, Durham University)
Discussion
Chaired by Aleks Pluskowski

17.30-19.00 Afternoon Session 4: Discussion and Follow-up Research
Chaired by József Laszlovszky
(Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University)
19.00 End of Workshop

19.30 Dinner at Restauracja Piwniczka

Sunday 6th September, 2009

10.00 Tour of Malbork Castle

12.00 Viewing of material from site of Biała Góra

12.30 Viewing of potential sites for sampling within high castle

5. Final list of participants

1. **Aleksander PLUSKOWSKI**
Department of Archaeology
School of Human and Environmental Sciences
University of Reading
2. **Bernhard PALME**
Department of Papyrologie und Epigraphik
Institut für Alte Geschichte und Altertumskunde
Universität Wien
3. **Povilas BLAŽEVIČIUS**
Klaipeda University
Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology
4. **Adrian BOAS**
Department of Archaeology
Haifa University
5. **Alexander BROWN**
Department of Archaeology
School of Human and Environmental Sciences
University of Reading
6. **Linas DAUGNORA**
Osteological Laboratory
Department of Anatomy and Physiology
Lithuanian Veterinary Academy
7. **Chris GERRARD**
Department of Archaeology
Durham University
8. **Henrik JANSSON**
Institute for Cultural Research
Department of Archaeology
University of Helsinki
9. **Marc JARZEBOWSKI**
Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut of History
Freien Universität Berlin
10. **Gundars KALNINS**
Cesis Castle Museum
11. **Dalia KISIELIENE**
Institute of Geology and Geography,
Vilnius University

12. **Kaspars KĻAVIŅŠ**
Faculty of Humanities,
Daugavpils University,
13. **Juhan KREEM**
Centre for Medieval Studies
Tallinn University
14. **József LASZLOVSZKY**
Department of Medieval Studies
Central European University
15. **Arnis MUGURĒVIČS**
Latvijas Lauksaimniecības universitāte
16. **Tomasz NOWAKIEWICZ**
Department of Early Medieval Archaeology,
Instytut Archeologii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego
17. **Zbigniew SAWICKI**
Muzeum Zamkowe w Malborku
18. **Krish SEETAH**
Department of Archaeology
University of Cambridge
19. **Lisa-Marie SHILLITO**
Department of Archaeology
School of Human and Environmental Sciences
University of Reading,
20. **Migle STANCIKAITE**
Institute of Geology and geography,
21. **Eugenijus SVETIKAS**
Lietuvos istorijos institutas
22. **Vykintas VAITKEVIČIUS**
Klaipeda University,
Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology
23. **Heiki VALK**
Arheoloogia Tartu Ülikoolis
University of Tartu

6. Statistical information on participants

Name	Country	Age Bracket	Sex	Discipline
PLUSKOWSKI	UK	25-35	M	Zooarchaeology
BLAZEVICIUS	Lithuania	25-35	M	Archaeology
BOAS	Israel	35-45	M	Archaeology
BROWN	UK	25-35	M	Palaeobotany
DAUGNORA	Lithuania	35-45	M	Zooarchaeology
GERRARD	UK	45-55	M	Archaeology
JANSSON	Finland	25-35	M	Archaeology
JARZEBOWSKI	Germany	25-35	M	History
KALNINS	Latvia	25-35	M	Archaeology/Heritage
KISIELIENE	Lithuania	25-35	F	Palaeobotany
KLAVINS	Latvia	35-45	M	History
KREEM	Estonia	25-35	M	History
LASZLOVSZKY	Hungary	45-55	M	Archaeology/History
MUGURĒVIČS	Latvia	45-55	M	Zooarchaeology
NOWAKIEWICZ	Poland	25-35	M	Archaeology
SAWICKI	Poland	35-45	M	Archaeology/Heritage
SEETAH	UK	25-35	M	Zooarchaeology
STANCIKAITE	Lithuania	35-45	F	Palaeobotany
SHILLITO	UK	25-35	F	Geoarchaeology
SVETIKAS	Lithuania	45-55	M	Archaeology
VAITKEVIČIUS	Lithuania	35-45	M	Archaeology
VALK	Estonia	45-55	M	Archaeology

There was another female delegate, Linda Kaljundi (Estonia), who withdrew for health reasons a few hours before the start of the workshop.

Countries of origin

UK: 5 Lithuania: 6 Israel: 1 Finland: 1 Germany: 1 Latvia: 3
Estonia: 2 Hungary: 1 Poland: 2

Gender

Male: 19
Female: 3

Age bracket:

25-35: 11 35-45: 6 45-55: 5