



Estonian Clergymen and Denmark during the Middle Ages

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This article deals with the activities of members of the Estonian clergy in Denmark during the Middle Ages. Even though Northern Estonia was part of the Danish realm for over 120 years, and the bishopric of Reval remained part of the Danish church province until the Reformation, the subject has hitherto only received little attention, especially when it comes to other members of the clergy than the bishops. This article thus not only deals with the eight Danish bishops in Danish Estonia, but also with monks and canons from the Duchy as well as other Livonian clerics who interacted with the Danish church and state. Through some well-documented cases, members of the Livonian clergy are shown as having played a small, but nonetheless important role not only in the ecclesiastical, but also in the political life of the Danish realm.

Since Robert Bartlett published his seminal work *The Making of Europe* in 1993, much has been written about the expansion of “Christianitas”, i.e. the spread of the social and cultural values of Latin Europe during the High Middle Ages from its Western European core (Bartlett 1993). Among other things his work also led to a renewal of interest in the expansion of Latin Europe into the Baltic through crusade and missionary work. Even though we now know a lot more about the coming of Christianity to the eastern Baltic, some questions remain unanswered still.

The Danish kings began relatively soon after Denmark’s conversion to Christianity with their own expansion into the Baltic. At first, this was mainly with plunder and conquest in mind. But very soon the element of Christian conversion of pagan people began to play a role beside plundering and the subjugation of said peoples. Already St Canute (king 1080–86) had undertaken campaigns in the eastern Baltic during the reign of his brother in the 1070’s with the double purpose of plunder and conversion – at least if we can trust the chronicler Saxo, who wrote 100 years after the events. Saxo even included stories of subjugating the Eastern Baltic into his narrative about the mythical kings of the distant past, like Frode Fredegod (Saxo XI, 8.8 and XI, 11.1; Saxo V:8.6)

In the 1120's and 1130's, raids were undertaken against pagans in Småland, Pomerania and on Öland, while an effort was made by duke Knud Lavard to subjugate and convert the heathen Obodrits and the Vends in Eastern Holstein, where he was elected as their "knes", i.e. their prince. His successes were cut short when he was murdered by his rival, prince Magnus, in 1131 which resulted in a prolonged civil war in Denmark, where rival pretenders struggled to gain the upper hand (Saxo XIII, 5,5; *Ágrip*, p. 52; Helmold I, chs 49–51, 67 and 84). This was exploited by the plundering Rani, a tribe from from the Island of Rügen, who used the opportunity to plunder and pillage in much of Denmark from the 1130's until they were finally subjugated and converted in 1168/69 (Saxo XIV). While this was still ongoing, the Danish church was already planning converting the people of the Inner Baltic to Christianity. These plans quite early on included the Estonians (Fonnesberg-Schmidt 2007: 48–75).

The source material regarding this early period of the Danish involvement in the Eastern Baltic is quite fragmentary. We do not know what exactly the Danish king Sven Estridsen did mean, when he in 1070 told the visiting cleric Adam of Bremen, that he convinced a merchant to build a church in Courland (Adam of Bremen, bk IV, ch XVI). Where was this church located and what happened to it? And what did Fulco, the first bishop of the Estonians, actually achieve after he had been appointed and consecrated by archbishop Eskil of Lund in the 1160's? Did Fulco go to Estonia at all?¹ The sources just state, that he intended to go, but not that he actually went. It seems that Fulco was lacking enough money and support for his undertaking, even though archbishop Eskil and later also Eskil's successor, Absalon, provided him with some assistance.² And who was the monk of Estonian origin, who at the time was living in a monastery in Norway and was to accompany Fulco to Estonia?³ How did this monk end up in Norway in the first place?

Unless there is an extensive archaeological breakthrough or the discovery of a

¹ DD I:3, no. 21 (1171–72) and 34 (7th of September 1171–72). For a discussion of whether Fulco actually made it to Estonia or not, see Nyberg 1998: 60–62, Rebane 2001: 45–47 and Johansen 1951: 92–93. Peter Rebane also argues in his 1986-article, p. 127, that Fulco was a monk of Danish origin but provides no proof for that assumption. While the name "Folke" was quite common in Sweden, this was not so in Denmark. I would rather like to assume that he was French or Italian, where the name Fulk (Fulco) was quite common at the time. This would also be in line with Eskil and abbot Peter of Mortier-la-Celle picking someone who had been brought up in this eastern French monastery, which is the assumption that also Fonnesberg-Schmidt states (2007: 53).

² DD I:3 (no. 21, 22, 26, 28 (1171–72); 29 (1171–73); 34 (1172–74), 81 (1178–80), 88 (1179–80), 90 (1180).

³ DD I:3, no. 26 (9th of September 1171–72).

sealed and forgotten vault in the Vatican archives with records of the early missionary work in the Baltic, we will most likely not get an answer to these questions. While there are quite a number of such unanswered questions with regard to the early missionary work in the Baltic, we are on firmer ground when it comes to the developments in the area from the end of the twelfth century and onward. In later years, a quite substantial number of new books and articles on the subject have also increased our knowledge with regards to the Danish involvements in both the mission and the development of the church in Estonia.⁴

We know that the Danish king Canute VI campaigned in Finland in 1191 and in Estonia in 1196 or 1197.⁵ As mentioned in a previous chapter, this renewed campaigning could be due to the alleged sacking of Sigtuna in 1187, and the killing there of archbishop John of Uppsala by the raiders, even though this event has not been confirmed through the archaeological evidence at Sigtuna.⁶ In 1206, king Valdemar II and archbishop Andrew of Lund led an expedition to Estonia, possibly to punish and/or convert the Osilians, who had raided and pillaged in Blekinge in 1203.⁷ But they achieved little and could not establish a permanent Danish presence there. Only in 1217 did count Albert of Orlamünde, the nephew of Valdemar II, go to Livonia to campaign, possibly to reconnoiter in advance of a renewed Danish effort in Estonia, which resulted in the Danish conquest of Northern Estonia in 1219.⁸

Even though the Duchy of Estonia was part of the Danish realm for over 120 years, it has generally attracted little attention from Danish historians, even though the Danish kings here – against initial resistance from both the local Estonians AND the Order of the Sword Brothers, who opposed the Danish involvement in Livonia and even forcefully expelled the Danish presence from Estonia for a time – founded a principality along feudal lines, converted the populace and established a church organization with parishes, monasteries and a bishopric in Reval. The towns of Reval and Narva grew, received royal charters and privileges, and became integrated in the

⁴ For instance, Bysted, Jensen, Jensen & Lind 2012; Fønnesberg-Schmidt 2007; Rebane 1986; Nyberg 1998: 49–72; Kala 2013.

⁵ *Annales Lundense*, in *Danmarks middelalderlige annaler*, p. 60.

⁶ *Annales Dano-Svecani* 826–1415, in *Danmarks middelalderlige annaler*, p. 302; Rebas 2015: 13–36; Nilsson 1998: 146; Harrison 2009: 220.

⁷ *Annales Lundense*, in *Danmarks middelalderlige annaler*, p. 61; Henry of Livonia, X:13; Skyum-Nielsen 1971: 281.

⁸ Henry of Livonia XXI & XXII, 1; *Annales Lundenses*, in *Danmarks middelalderlige annaler*, p. 62; Skyum-Nielsen 1971: 281–285.

Baltic trade network (Skyum-Nielsen 1981: 112–135; Riis 2018: 377–393; Bunge 1877).

While precious little research has been done on these subjects, the role of the clergy, the people that not only populated and developed the various church institutions during these years, but also played vital roles in the social and political life of Livonia has especially been neglected. As Peep Paul Rebane pointed out in his 1974-article on the Danish bishops of Tallinn, their role in Estonian and Danish history has almost been completely neglected (Rebane 1974: 315–328). While this is true, some details have come to light. The activities of bishop Thorkil, who was the bishop of Reval (Tallinn) between 1240 and 1260, and his interactions with the Danish kings during that period were analyzed in detail by Paul Johansen in his work “Die Estlandsliste des Liber Census Daniae”. Also, the Baltic-German historian F. G. von Bunge briefly dealt with the bishopric of Reval in his work about the Danish Duchy of Estonia. But it must be said that the main emphasis of the older generations of historians has been on the political, administrative, and constitutional history of Estonia (Johansen 1933: esp. 143–147; Bunge 1877: 180–189). Meanwhile the role of the church in general was sadly neglected, especially considering the interaction between Denmark and Estonia and the activities of members of the Estonian clergy in Denmark. This interaction was not limited to clerics from the Duchy of Estonia itself, which only comprised the northern parts of modern Estonia, but also involved clerics from the neighboring bishoprics of Dorpat, Ösel, Kurland and Riga, which were independent ecclesiastical states in Livonia.

While it was quite common to find Danish clergy in Danish Estonia, be it as bishops, abbots, monks, or parish priests, it was more unusual to find Estonian clergymen in Denmark. Nevertheless, there was some interaction between the bishop of Reval and the political elite in Denmark, while lower-ranked members of the Estonian clergy also found their way to Denmark, be it as monks at different monasteries or as canons at the various Danish cathedral chapters. In this article, I want to present some of the most well-documented cases of members of the Estonian clergy acting in Denmark in order to show that the Estonian clergy indeed played a small, but nonetheless important role not only in the ecclesiastical, but also in the political life of the Danish realm. The bishops not only secured privileges for the fledgling church in Estonia, thereby primarily securing a financial basis for it to thrive on, but also acted as royal ambassadors and increasingly became the spokesperson of the entirety of the Duchy when dealing with the Danish king and his council, not only in clerical, but also in worldly matters. One gains the impression, that the Estonian towns and vassals found out that they could achieve more, if they had just one common spokesperson, who always could get the ear of the Danish king.

The early bishops: Thorkil (c. 1240–1260) and Thrugot (1263–1279)

Hardly any of the church institutions and administration established shortly after the Danish conquest of Northern Estonia in 1219 survived the Estonian uprising in the 1220's, and the subsequent takeover of the region by the Order of the Sword Brothers, which lasted until 1238. Bishop Wesselin, the former chaplain of king Valdemar, who had been appointed bishop of Reval shortly after the battle at Lyndanise, where his predecessor Theoderick had been killed, was driven out of Estonia c. 1225 and did not return.⁹ Bishop Theoderick of Treyden, the abbot of the monastery in Dünamünde in Livonia, had been appointed bishop of Estonia by bishop Albert of Riga in 1211 but had switched allegiances to the Danes in 1218 (Henry of Livonia XXII:1; Rebane 2001: 66).

However, the Sword Brothers were catastrophically defeated by the Lithuanians in 1237 and subsequently absorbed by the Teutonic Order. As the pope demanded the return of Northern Estonia to the Danish king, and king Valdemar threatened to invade Estonia with a large army supported by a substantial navy if the Order did not comply, the Teutonic Order agreed to return northern Estonia to Danish rule. This was settled in the treaty of Stensby in 1238 (DD I:7, no. 9 (7th of June 1238); Jacobsen 1978: 327–328; Mäesalu 2013: 474–488).

Only then could king Valdemar and the Danish church gradually implement their control over the Duchy of Estonia. One of the first and most important actions king Valdemar had to take in this process was to appoint a new bishop of Reval. For this important office he chose a cleric from Ribe, Thorkil. In the following years Thorkil came to play an important role in the Danish administration in Northern Estonia and acted as a go between the vassals here and the king in Denmark. He was well suited for this role, for as a bishop within the Danish realm, the bishop of Reval was automatically a member of the king's council (Bunge 1877: 185).

In the spring of 1248, bishop Thorkil of Reval travelled to Denmark to make king Erik IV Ploughpenny confirm the privileges of Reval, which the king did without hesitation (DD I:7, no. 276 (15th of May 1248)). Afterwards, bishop Thorkil stayed on in Denmark, probably because he wanted to hear the king out about his plans to go on crusade in Estonia once again. While the previous attempt to go to Estonia in

⁹ Henry of Livonia XXIII:2. According to Bunge, Wesselin had left Estonia for Riga in 1225 to have a meeting with a papal envoy, after which he left for Germany. He is last recorded in Cologne in 1227. See Bunge 1875: 33–34. According to the theory of the Estonian historian Arthur Vassar, Wesselin was a native of Estonia. This however is highly speculative, and most likely only wishful thinking. The name would rather indicate that Wesselin was German. See: "Esimese Tallinna piiskopi päritolust", in *Keel ja Kirjandus* 1/1970: 30–34. Thanks to Anti Selart for this reference.

1242/44 had failed because of the growing tensions between the king and his brother Abel, Duke of Schleswig, the king had not yet given up on his plans. These involved a crusade against “the neighbors of the Estonians”, which could mean either the Livonians, the Cours, the Latgallians, the Semigallians, the Selonians, the Lithuanians, the Osilians, the Finns or even the Russians in order to defend the newly converted people against the threat from their pagan neighbors.¹⁰ Unfortunately, this plan never came into fruition as the conflict between king Erik and his brother Abel erupted once again in 1249. Before the royal plan had to be abandoned once more, Bishop Thorkil probably also was in contact with the Danish bishops with regards to a renewal of the Danish crusading effort in the Baltic. While we are unable to prove this for certain, we know that Thorkil at least acted, together with bishop Esger of Ribe, as a witness in a donation case in Ribe in July 1248, and thus was in contact with his Danish colleagues (DD I:7, no. 280 (3rd of July 1248)).

For the next decades, the sources for contacts between the highest Estonian prelates and Denmark become scarce, and so we can only assume continued contact between the diocese of Reval and Denmark during these years. Also, it did not help that there was a vacancy after the death of bishop Thorkil around 1260. Only in 1263 was Thrugot of Roskilde appointed as new bishop of Reval (DD II:1, no. 388–390 (11th of September 1263)). But while we can only assume that there must have been a degree of contact between the bishop of Reval and Denmark during bishop Thorkil’s later years as bishop, we know that there were lively contacts and ongoing exchanges between the Dominican province of Dacia and the newly founded Dominican monastery in Reval after 1246.¹¹ A number of monks were sent by the provincial chapter of Dacia in Lund (from the established monasteries in Lund, Aarhus, Viborg and Roskilde as well as from Randers and Horsens in Denmark and from the monasteries of Sigtuna, Västerås, Skänninge and Visby in Sweden) to Reval to establish a Dominican monastery in Reval in 1246. A previous attempt of establishing a monastery in Reval had been made in 1229, but the monks had been expelled by hostile Estonians.¹²

¹⁰ Skyum Nielsen 1971: 323; DD I:7, no. 165 (20th of February 1245), 168 (24th of February 1245), 169 (24th of February 1245), 170 (2nd of March 1245), 264 (26th of November 1247) and 265 (19th of December 1247); Fønnesberg-Schmidt 2007: 235–239.

¹¹ *Acta capitulorum provincialium provinciae OP Dacia*, pp. 551–565. The province of Dacia within the Dominican order was established between 1226 and 1228 and comprised all Dominican houses within the metropolitan provinces of Lund (and thus including the diocese of Reval), Trondheim (with the Faeroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland, Orkney, Shetland, the Hebrides and Man – the latter until 1266. No Dominican houses were founded outside of Norway proper, though) and Uppsala (including Finland and Karelia).

Bishop Jens (1280 –1287?)

Fortunately, we are on firmer ground from the 1280's and onwards. We can see that the Estonian bishops participated with increasing frequency in the meetings of the royal council, where they were especially able to give the king competent advice on matters concerning the Duchy. In 1280, shortly after his appointment, we thus see bishop Jens of Reval participate in the king's council in Odense, where king Erik V Glipping decided to give foreign merchants trading rights in Estonia.

Unfortunately, we have no information about Jens' background other than that he was a Dane. After the meeting in Odense, Jens travelled to Lübeck where he informed the local town council of the Danish king's new privileges and then confirmed with his seal that this was in the interest of the town council of Reval as well. After this, the bishop returned to Estonia,¹³ only to return to Denmark the following year, where he again attended the meetings of the king's council, this time in Aalborg. Here he was a witness when the king and the entire Danish church gave their assent to a settlement of the conflict over tithe payments that had recently been negotiated by the Estonian vassals and the bishop of Reval (DD II:3, no.7 (17th of July 1281)). Later, Jens also gave special privileges to the Hospital of The Holy Spirit in Roskilde (DD II:3, no. 10 (28th of August 1281)). Once more we see that the bishop of Reval acted as the sole representative of Estonia in Denmark.

Interestingly, it seems that bishop Jens did not participate in the Danehof of 1282, where king Erik had to sign a charter restricting the king's power in relation to the council of the realm in matters of jurisdiction, legislation, and taxation. Such a document was in Danish called a "håndfæstning". Neither did Bishop Jens of Reval participate in the meeting of the preliminary royal council in March nor in July, when the negotiations had led to an agreement and the finalized charter was signed by the king (DD II:3, no. 45 (29th of July 1282)). At first glance it can seem strange, that the bishop of Reval did not participate in such an important meeting, but the provisions of the new law were only in effect in Denmark, not in Estonia.

Nevertheless, bishop Jens was in Denmark again during the summer of 1283, where he witnessed the royal confirmation of the possessions of the monastery of Dünamünde in the Duchy and the new tithe agreement for Estonia, which the vassals and the bishop had agreed upon (DD II:3, no. 61 (13th of June 1283) and DD II:3, no. 64 (25th of June 1283)).

¹² *Scriptores Minores Historiæ Danicæ*, vol. II: *De Ordine Predicatorum*, pp. 371–374; *Diplomatarium OP Vol. 1 (1220–1299)*, <http://www.jggj.dk/DiplOPdacie.htm>.

¹³ DD II: 2, no. 408, 409 and 422 (10th of August 1280 and 8th of December 1280; this would indicate that bishop Jens was back in Estonia at that date the latest).

Finding a successor – the problematic period after bishop Jens of Reval's death.

According to the sources, bishop Jens of Reval was mentioned for the last time in 1287, and we do not hear about the election of a new bishop during the following years. Then, in 1294, a group of canons from Reval appeared before bishop Jens of Roskilde, and they declared that neither the present chapter nor its predecessors had had the right to elect a bishop of their diocese, as this right belonged exclusively to the king (DD II:4, no. 131 (25th of June 1294)). However, the dowager Queen Margaret Sambiria had already renounced that right on behalf of the Danish crown in 1277 and this action had been confirmed by Erik V Glipping in 1282, but only after he had appointed another bishop of Reval, namely the man mentioned above, bishop Jens of Reval. Yet now, king Erik Menved took the Reval chapter at their word and appointed Knut, a Dominican from Aarhus, as the next bishop of Reval. Knut accordingly went to Estonia and took up his new position.

However, when this appointment became known in Rome, the papacy intervened. The pope, Boniface VIII, ordered an investigation into the matter, as royal appointments of bishops were no longer the norm in Europe and were regarded as deeply uncanonical. In 1298, even before the investigation had come to a conclusion and a solution had been found to this touchy matter, the bishopric of Reval again seems to have become vacant. The cathedral chapter elected Johannes Tristevere, one of the monks, who a few years earlier had been a member of the delegation to Denmark, this time without interference from the king. Johannes then went to Rome to receive his investiture but died there before this had happened.

It is uncertain, why the Reval chapter suddenly acted so independently. Maybe the chapter felt the need to appoint a new bishop, as they wanted to prevent another long vacancy, especially now that the Danish monarchy was engaged in a bitter struggle with Jens Grand, the archbishop of Lund, over questions of ecclesiastical loyalty to the crown and the independence of the church. The king could have been tempted to leave the seat in Reval empty, as he would then receive the income from the bishopric himself, but that would leave the Duchy without an important administrative figure for years. The pope intervened again and appointed a man of his own choosing, a Franciscan by the name of Heinrich, who had previously worked as a papal aide.

The papal appointee – bishop Heinrich of Reval (1298–1318).

Heinrich was sent to Denmark, and there he almost immediately came to play a quite important role in Danish politics, as Rebane also points out (Rebane 1974: 319). In January 1299, he was appointed by king Erik VI Menved to be his main spokesperson in the conflict with Jens Grand. In the following months, Heinrich tried to arrange

a meeting where the quarrelling parties could resolve their differences (DD II:5, no. 5 (12th of January 1299)). In this capacity, he travelled widely throughout Denmark and Northern Germany. While in Schleswig on his way to meet Jens Grand, who had fled to Lübeck, Heinrich handed out indulgences to anyone who would support the rebuilding of St. John's monastery in Odense, which had recently been devastated by fire (DD II:5, no. 6 (22nd of January 1299)). During the following meeting with the Danish archbishop in Lübeck in February, Heinrich acted on behalf of the king, offering 3000 marks of silver (to be paid in three rates of a 1000 marks each) as compensation for previous royal wrongdoings instead of the 49.000 marks the pope had demanded as the price for a reconciliation between king Erik and the Church (Andersen 1944: 60, 67–68). Heinrich promised Jens Grand safe-conduct to a meeting in Copenhagen, where the two parties could negotiate and reach an agreement. Jens Grand then asked for additional guarantees with regard to his personal safety, which Heinrich promised him on behalf of the king, if only the archbishop agreed to come to Denmark (DD II:5, no. 9 (11th of February 1299)). A formal agreement was signed, and Heinrich travelled back to Denmark to inform the king of the results of the negotiations (Fonnesbech-Wulff, Fritzbøger, Jensen, Kræmmer & Palsgaard 1999: 198). Erik Menved approved of Heinrich's results and accepted that Jens Grand could come to Denmark for negotiations, even though he changed the conditions slightly.

The question now is: why did Heinrich of Reval of all the Danish bishops get the assignment to negotiate with Jens Grand? Rebane never touched upon that question, but it seems quite straightforward. The rest of the Danish bishops were out of favor with Jens Grand, as they had not supported him against the king (Ingesman & Petersen 2012: 707), while Heinrich was a papal appointee without any previous connections to other members of the Danish church. Thus, he must have been acceptable to Jens Grand as a neutral negotiator. Additionally, as a former aide to the current pope, Heinrich would have been familiar with tricky negotiations and had undoubtedly picked up some diplomatic skills along the route.

Jens Grand accepted the changed conditions and came to Denmark in June 1299 to hear the king out. But the negotiations stalled very quickly, as the king was unwilling to accept that he should pay the archbishop 49.000 marks of silver (DD II:4, no. 278 (23rd of December 1297)). Instead, the king's lawyers again presented the charges, which had already once before been made against the archbishop, while the legal representative of the archbishop countered these charges with a summary of the king's misdeeds (Andersen 1944: 72–131). The negotiations then broke down, even though the papal legate Isarn in July 1299 tried to bring about a new settlement between the two parties. But this settlement would involve the take-over of all royal

lands in the diocese of Lund by the church (Andersen 1944: 132–137). In the beginning of August, the king responded to this “settlement” by giving Jens Grand and his followers only a few days to leave Denmark – if they were not to leave before the 15th of August, he could no longer guarantee their safety. Meanwhile, the king began to seize all church property in the diocese of Lund. Additionally, he sent a representative to the pope and appealed to him to broker a settlement that would take the king’s accusations against Jens Grand into account, which also included accusations that Jens Grand had been aiding the convicted murderers of his father, who now were on the run (DD II:5, no. 66 (15th of September 1299) and 78 (5th of November 1299); Andersen 1944: 137–142).

As the negotiations had failed and no settlement was achieved, the pope saw no other possibility than to reopen the case. While this was ongoing, in December of 1301 bishop Heinrich of Reval was rewarded by the pope with the right to give absolution to those clergymen of his own diocese, who had not complied with the interdict (DD II:5, no. 159 (7th of December 1301)). The entire kingdom of Denmark – and thus also the Duchy of Estonia – had been put under interdict after the king had unlawfully imprisoned the archbishop, a decision that was inculcated by the papal legate Isarn, when he came to Denmark in 1298 (Andersen 1944: 66). The rest of the Danish realm remained under interdict until Easter 1303 (Andersen 1944: 154). Earlier church historians have attributed Heinrich’s privilege to the special situation in Estonia, where the young church was likely to lose believers, if the harsh conditions of the interdict were upheld (Andersen 1944: 148n17). This might be part of the explanation, but maybe this special treatment of Heinrich’s diocese was a special favor to Heinrich due to his efforts in trying to achieve a settlement between Erik Menved and Jens Grand? It seems that Heinrich even gained the respect of Jens Grand, although he acted as the representative of his opponent, king Erik. At least Jens Grand trusted him enough to lend him a substantial sum of money – which Heinrich had not yet paid back when Jens Grand died in 1327 (DD II:5, no. 102 (c. 1300); DD II:9, no. 408 (After 29th of May 1327)).

In Rome, Jens Grand again accused Erik Menved of having imprisoned him and plundered both his personal possessions and the possessions of the church, hoping that these renewed accusations would lead to the final downfall of the Danish king. Instead, king Erik changed tactics: he formally submitted to the pope, an act that was well received by Boniface VIII, who himself was engaged in a bitter struggle with the French king concerning the question of the supremacy of the Church over the monarchy. Erik wrote to Boniface, that he would accept any burden the Holy Father chose to lay on his shoulders, and he would gladly compensate the diocese of Lund

for all his wrongdoings, but he would never forgive the archbishop for supporting and protecting the men, who had murdered his father. The pope accepted the king's submission and in February 1302 passed his final verdict in the case (DD II:5, no. 175 (before 23rd of February 1302) and no. 177 (23rd of February 1302); Andersen 1944: 142–148). Boniface wanted to end the protracted conflict within the Danish church, and his final sentence reflected that. King Erik was to return to the diocese of Lund the income and properties he had confiscated earlier and confirm the privileges of the Church. But, as a sign of papal favor to king Erik, he was no longer obliged to pay 40.000 out of the 49.000 marks of silver, which pleased Erik. Additionally, Jens Grand was moved from the archbishopric of Lund to the archbishopric of Riga, where the incumbent had recently died – which pleased Erik even more. The settlement, even though not to the personal liking of Jens Grand, gave the diocese of Lund new possessions on Bornholm and in Scania, and the interdict, which had been a burden upon the Danish people, was finally lifted during Easter 1303 (DD II:3, no. 181-186 (30th of March 1302)).

After the former papal legate Isarn in 1302 had succeeded Jens Grand as archbishop of Lund, pope Benedict VIII rewarded one of his clerks, Tue Tuesen, for all the support he had given to Isarn previously, both in Livonia and in Denmark.¹⁴ Tue had formerly been a canon in Dorpat (Tartu) and later also in Lund. Now he – even though he was born out of wedlock – was promoted to become the new dean of Lund. However, he had to give up his canonry in Dorpat (DD II:5, no. 281 (17th of December 1303)). It is possible that the promotion of Tue happened on the basis of an initiative of Isarn himself – as the new archbishop maybe wanted someone already known to him to support him in Lund, where he had no previous connections and networks. From the documents dating to Isarn's period as archbishop, we can see that he mostly surrounded himself with Italian and French clerks and he must have felt himself an outsider. This, and the often so dreary Danish weather could be the reason why, after a few years he was transferred again, this time to Salerno in sunny Italy. Unfortunately, he died en route to his new diocese.

In 1304 and 1305, we once more meet bishop Heinrich of Reval in Denmark. In September 1304, he was in Denmark on his way back to Estonia from Rome, where

¹⁴ Isarn had previously been papal legate to Denmark and tried from 1295–99 to settle the conflict between Jens Grand and Erik Menved. Shortly after he returned to the papal court, he was appointed as archbishop of Riga in 1300 as a reward for his efforts in the Jens Grand-case, even though he had been unsuccessful. When pope Benedict XI decided that he would move Jens Grand to Riga, he instead appointed Isarn to the Archbishopric of Lund, where Isarn stayed until he was moved to Salerno in 1310. Unfortunately, he died on the way to his new see and could not enjoy a few additional years in the Italian sun.

archbishop Isarn in March had mediated in the conflict between the Teutonic Order in Livonia and the city of Riga. Possibly Isarn had requested the advice of bishop Heinrich with regards to the current case. Furthermore, bishop Heinrich could have given pope Benedict advice on whom to appoint as the new archbishop of Riga, now that Jens Grand had rejected his appointment to the diocese (DD II:5, no. 318 (21st of March 1304), no. 319 (21st of March 1304), no. 338 (11th of September 1304)). In May 1305, Heinrich handed out indulgences to anyone, who would support the rebuilding of the fire-damaged cathedral in Odense. A few days later, he must have been present when king Erik promised merchants from the Hanseatic towns of Rostock and Stralsund free passage to Novgorod via Estonia and the river Narva (DD II:5, no. 363 (9th of May 1305), no. 365 and 366 (18th of May 1305)). He also seems to have been present when king Erik in July 1305 in Søbørg received a delegation from Estonia, who had come to Denmark begging for forgiveness for the vassals' occupation of the royal castles in the Duchy. They had done this out of dissatisfaction, as they feared that the Duchy would be transferred from the rule of the king to the rule of his brother, Christopher, who had been appointed duke in 1303. The vassals had feared that Christopher would come to Estonia himself and impose a more direct ducal control over them, which was not to their taste. King Erik forgave them as "they only had the Duchy's best interest at heart." (LECUB I:2, no. 615 (25th of July 1305)) The vassals accordingly handed the castles back to the king and bishop Heinrich was to act as the king's representative in this case (LECUB I:2, no. 621 (22nd of September 1306)). This most likely had been agreed upon during the meeting in Søbørg and happened soon after Heinrich's arrival in Estonia.

The Dorpat intermezzo

After his long absence from his diocese, Heinrich finally seems to have gone to Reval in the summer of 1305, presumably together with the delegation of vassals from the Duchy. In the following years, he seems to have been able to concentrate on administering his diocese and dealing with matters in Estonia instead of acting as a royal diplomat. But for a time after his arrival, he acted as the king's representative in Estonia, de facto as a provisional viceroy (DD II:2, no. 6 (26th of March 1306)). It seems that during the few next years there was an increased collaboration between the Duchy and its almost-neighbor, the prince-bishopric of Dorpat. Both territories were sitting on the edge of western Christendom and faced many of the same problems. While the bishops of Dorpat were mostly on good terms with the Teutonic Order, there were always both internal and external threats, which made the position of the prince-bishop precarious. The risk of another uprising from the local population was

always looming on the horizon and the Russian princes were only waiting for an opportunity to exploit any weaknesses in the defenses of the Livonian territories. This situation led to a natural rapprochement and closer collaboration between Dorpat and the Duchy, who could give each other mutual support in case the Russian princes took action and intervened in Livonian affairs.

In 1313, Nicolaus, the bishop of Dorpat, even tried to strike a deal with the bishop of Schleswig, Jens Bocholt, to swap dioceses. The bishop of Dorpat would have liked to become bishop of Schleswig and suggested to the current bishop of Schleswig that he should take over his place in Dorpat in return. But Jens Bocholt wanted none of this. Why should he go to Dorpat and an uncertain future, and leave his secure bishopric of Schleswig behind? He informed Erik Menved, that he had been approached, but declared under oath that he would not go to Dorpat – unless the king approved of it (DD II:7, no. 96 (18th of September 1313)).

Why was it that bishop Nicolaus wanted to leave Dorpat and go to Schleswig instead? We know that Nicolaus had been in Avignon earlier in 1313 where he got a loan of 1500 guilders that was to be used to safeguard the diocese of Dorpat and the needs of his flock (Walther-Wittenheim 1928: 18). But his situation must still have seemed dire in spite of the substantial cash injection. Instead of going home to Dorpat, he therefore wrote Jens Bocholt in Schleswig proposing the swap – and was promptly turned down.

But bishop Nicolaus did not take no for an answer, especially since Jens Bocholt in his refusal had written that he would not agree to such a swap unless the Danish king consented. Maybe, if Nicolaus were to persuade him instead that the swap was in his interest? King Erik Menved was willing enough to hear Nicolaus out and gave him right of passage to Denmark so that he might present his arguments. In order to gain the king's support and further his case, Bishop Nicolaus even vouched for archbishop Esger Juul, so that the king would trust the archbishop to uphold a newly agreed settlement (DD II:7, no. 146 (19th of April 1314)). While it seems that Erik Menved considered bishop Nicolaus' proposition, he could not make up his mind, as to whether this would be such a good idea (DD II:7, no. 290 (10th of August 1315)). In the end, nothing came of it, and bishop Nicolaus had to return to Dorpat none the wiser.¹⁵ Nevertheless, this might suggest that Erik Menved at least thought of strengthening his own position in Estonia through indirect control over Dorpat. However, he must have preferred to have a willing vassal in Dorpat to collaborate with him instead of having the full obligation and responsibility of having to defend

¹⁵ Bishop Nicolaus was in Pernau (Pärnu) in 1316. See: *Akten und Rezesse der Livländischen Ständetage*, no. 12d (p. 761) (29th of September 1316).

the bishopric of Dorpat as well. Erik Menved was busy enough during these years with his involvement in the conflict with the Hanseatic towns of Rostock, Wismar, Stralsund, and Greifswald (Skyum-Nielsen 1994: 197–200).

When his plan to leave Dorpat and become bishop of Schleswig came to nothing, bishop Nicolaus of Dorpat had to think twice about his situation. Even though he was on good terms with the Teutonic Order now, alliances in the medieval world were fleeting. What would happen if the Russian princes attacked his bishopric? Would the Teutonic Order and/or the Danish king support him then? In the end, it was always better to have additional allies in case the bishopric needed it, and so bishop Nicolaus in the spring of 1319 went first to Lübeck and then to Denmark to try and gain the king's support (LECUB VI, Reg. 778a). In addition, it seems that he also wanted the king to hunt down and punish those robbers that were plundering and pillaging not only Dorpat, but also were active across the border in parts of Russia and afterwards sought refuge in the Duchy. Gerhard, master of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order, had earlier written to the Lord Lieutenant and the town council of Reval and asked them to take action against those robbers, but seemingly nothing came of it at that point.¹⁶

Unfortunately, Erik Menved died in November 1319 without a son and heir. His brother, Christopher, who from 1303-1307 had been duke of Estonia, was the most likely successor. But in order to become king, Christopher had to sign a rather harsh "håndfæstning", a charter which severely limited his rights as king and gave extensive concessions to the leading noblemen of the realm. After some negotiations, a text was agreed upon, and on the 25th of January 1320 the agreement was signed by the new king. One of the witnesses was – Nicolaus of Dorpat (DD II:8, no. 176 (25th of January 1320)).

We do not exactly know, what role Nicolaus played during the negotiations surrounding the "håndfæstning", or even if he had a say at all. He may just have been asked to act as witness, because bishop Heinrich of Reval had died in 1318 at the latest, and no new head of the church in the Duchy had been elected or appointed. Thus Nicolaus de facto came to act as the representative of Danish Estonia as he was the only representative from Estonia at hand when Christopher signed his coronation

¹⁶ DD II:7, no. 334 (3rd of February 1316–1322); DD II:9, no. 94 (3rd of February 1324). The dating of the second document must be wrong, as brother Gerhard, who is the sender of the letter, was Master of the Livonian branch of the Order only until 1322. The wording of the document in II:9 is also surprisingly similar to the document in II:7. Maybe two copies of the same letter – or even the same? As the seal on the document is of a type that was used from 1316-22, it seems likely, that the issue raised here was among those raised by the bishop of Dorpat in Denmark.

charter in January 1320. Strictly speaking, it was not necessary for a representative from Estonia to be present at the negotiations, as the coronation charter only applied to Denmark itself, but not to Estonia. No Estonian representative had been present at the negotiations concerning king Erik V Glipping's charter in 1282. But as bishop, Nicolaus may very likely have been legally trained, and his attestation of the document would have been seen as a guarantee that everything had gone according to the normal legal procedures. Also, as a member of the clergy, who had nothing at stake during the negotiations, he would have been regarded as an impartial witness.

We can thus see that the clerical interaction and collaboration between the Diocese of Dorpat and the Duchy of Estonia intensified over the first half of the fourteenth century. Thus, for instance, the provost of Dorpat in 1333 would get the supervision rights over the monastery of Padis together with the bishops of Reval and Ösel (Schmidt 1939–40: 74).

Bishop Oluf – the last Danish bishop in Reval (1323–1350)

On the 2nd of October 1323, prior Arnold from the Dominican convent in Reval acted as the Danish representative at the peace negotiations between the Christian powers in Livonia and the king of Lithuania, Gediminas, in Vilnius. That Arnold had to act as the Danish representative was probably due to the continued vacancy of the bishopric (DD II:9, no. 67 (2nd of October 1323)). Only around the time of the negotiations a new bishop was finally appointed after a vacancy of five years.

This man was Oluf, who had been a canon at the chapter of Roskilde and been designated by king Christopher II. The chapter in Reval had already elected one of its own canons, Otto, but the pope decided to confirm the election of Oluf and transferred Otto to the bishopric of Kulm in East Prussia instead. Soon after coming to Estonia, Oluf took a friendly attitude toward the Teutonic Order, as he saw the Order as the only regional power that could guarantee the integrity of the territory of the Duchy. He travelled to Denmark in 1328 to deliver the feudal payments from Estonia to king Christopher II and to gain his continued support in the defense of the Duchy. Christopher may already then have been thinking about selling or pawning the Duchy in order to get some much-needed cash. The active foreign policy of his brother had emptied the Danish royal coffers, and Christopher was in dire straits (DD II:10, no. 34 (10th of June 1328)). In 1329, bishop Oluf returned to Denmark and had king Christopher sign a promise, that the king would never sell Estonia, which seems to indicate that Christopher at least was thinking about just that. In addition, the king gave further privileges to his Estonian vassals in order to ensure them of his continued interest in Danish Estonia (DD II:10, no. 152 (21st of September 1329)). But the

king's promise was not worth much – in November 1329, Knud Porse, a daring adventurer, who had already been appointed duke of Halland and Samsø, also was made hereditary duke of Estonia.¹⁷ In this situation, bishop Oluf had had enough.

In November 1330, he asked the viceroy and the town council of Reval not to follow the interdict, which the pope had laid upon the Kingdom of Denmark as a consequence of the imprisonment of bishop Tyge of Børglum by the king (DD II:10, no. 280 (10th of November 1330)). He probably no longer felt that he owed Christopher II anything, since he had so blatantly broken his promise. He seems to have realized that the Duchy was now to fend for itself and that it could no longer expect anything from its liege lord.

It has been suggested that the bishop's independent course after the death of king Christopher II in 1332 was due to the imprisonment of his brother by the viceroy Marquard Breide in 1333. His brother, Bo Pakke, was only released from the dungeons of Reval castle after the bishop of Ösel had negotiated a deal, and bishop Oluf had agreed to pay a hefty ransom for the release of his brother (DD II:11, no. 86 & 87 (26th of December 1333) and no. 260 (6th of January 1336)). Rebane suggest that the brother together with a number of fellow conspirators had tried to interfere with the viceroy's handing over the castles of Narva and Reval to some undetermined person, which according to Rebane could have been the bailiff of Järva and thus in effect the Teutonic Order (Rebane 1974: 321–322). However, the newest research suggests otherwise. Rebane has here relied on the Baltic-German historian Friedrich Georg von Bunge 1877-interpretation of the sources, which however has been proven to be an incorrect construct based on a faulty interpretation of the sources. The sources clearly tell a different story. Marquard Breide had no intentions of handing over the royal castles to the Teutonic Order – and thus there was no conspiracy trying to prevent this. Upon hearing of king Christopher II's death on the 2nd of August 1332, Marquard Breide simply resigned from the office of viceroy before the 30th of June 1333 (LUB I:2, no. 754; DD II:11, no. 155) and handed the royal castles over to the vassals as the new caretakers (Mäesalu (printing 2021)). Thus, he had nothing to do with the release of the bishop's brother in December 1333. Bo Pakke's imprisonment must have a different cause, which no longer can be determined.

In 1343, bishop Oluf had to play a major political role once more. In the face of the Great Estonian popular uprising and the Russian Princes invading the bishopric of Dorpat, the Teutonic Order saw their chance to take control over Danish Estonia and thereby force a sale of the Duchy to the Order. The Livonian Master, Burchard

¹⁷ DD II:10, no. 171 (11th of November 1329). Knud Porse's appointment never became of any significance, as he already died in 1330 without ever having been to Estonia.

von Dreileben imprisoned the Danish viceroy, and then sent a force into Danish Estonia and defeated the rebels outside of Tallinn. The royal councilors and the vassals of Danish Estonia then elected, presumably because they were pressured to do so, Dreileben as the “extraordinary guardian, viceroy and protector of us and our land” and handed the most important administrative centers of Northern Estonia – the royal castles of Reval and Wesenberg – over to him, so that he “could hold and preserve them for the Danish king”.¹⁸

On the 27th of October 1343, bishop Oluf, the chapter in Reval, the priors of the monasteries of Roma and Padis, the vice prior of the St. Katharina monastery in Reval, the town council of Reval and several of the king’s vassals in Estonia issued a common declaration, in which they explained that they had been in severe danger because of the Estonian uprising, which threatened the survival of the Duchy and the Christian Church itself. Handing over control to the Teutonic Order had been the only viable solution (DD III:1, no. 376 (27th of October 1343)). With the arrival of the new Danish viceroy, Stig Andersen, in the fall of 1344, bishop Oluf could once again concentrate on administering and advancing the Church in his diocese, which he did until his death in 1350. In 1346, the new Danish king Valdemar IV Atterdag had sold the Duchy off to the Teutonic Order, as he could neither spare the manpower to reclaim the Duchy from the Order by force nor the resources to pay the Order off. Also, he needed the money which he got from the sale for his redemption of the pawned other parts of the Danish kingdom (DD III:2, no. 273 (29th of August 1346)).

King Valdemar and John of Wesenberg - an Estonian cleric with a past

Even though he had sold the Duchy of Estonia, Valdemar Atterdag was not done with Estonia yet. While his predecessors, his father as well as his uncle, had frequently been quarreling with members of the church, most notably archbishop Jens Grand of Lund, king Valdemar chose to follow another course with regards to the church. Already early on, when he was only a claimant to the Danish throne, he could count on the support of notable Danish churchmen, who gave him money and advice in his quest to claim the crown. The Danish church was highly interested in a new king, who could provide protection, stability and rule of law as opposed to the lawlessness and oppression under the foreign rulers, who had dominated the country during the interregnum in the 1330’s. In 1336, for instance, bishop Jens of Roskilde had complained about the proliferation of theft, plunder, sacrilege, the whipping of

¹⁸ DD III:2, no. 322; DD III:1, no. 337 (July-October 1343); Rebane 1974: 322; Akten und Recesser der livländischen Ständetage, pp. 22–23; Tägil 1962: 118.

monks and killing of priests. The archbishop of Lund, who had labelled the evildoers “devils from the depths of Hell”, prayed that the Kingdom would be delivered through the coming of a new king (DD II:11, no. 324 (31st of August 1336), 325 (9th of September 1336) and 335 (1st of November 1336)). Bishop Sven of Aarhus even had to go into exile because of his support of Valdemar (Skyum-Nielsen 1994: 256–262; Tägil 1962: 23–24).

In May 1338, when Valdemar visited Greifswald in order to get the support of the Hanseatic towns, he was accompanied by bishop Sven and two canons from Aarhus. One of these canons was John of Wesenberg, who originally came from Estonia (DD II:12, no. 82 (9th of May 1338)). His origin is confirmed in a letter from 1313, where he is mentioned in connection with the Danish vassals in Estonia (DD II:7, no. 111 (1313)). The question is now – how did he end up as a canon in Aarhus?

In order to answer this question, we have to go back to the 1320's. In 1323, bishop Nicolaus of Dorpat (today's Tartu) died. During his reign, John of Wesenberg had tried to gain a vacant canonry in Dorpat, but bishop Nicolaus had turned him down and had not accepted John's papal provision to a canonry in Dorpat. It is possible that John did not take this rebuttal up kindly but started to engage in a feud with the bishopric of Dorpat and even asked his friends and family in Danish Estonia to participate in the feud. John was later accused of having committed murder, ravaged the lands of the bishopric and done all kinds of other heinous crimes (Regesta Vaticana: John XXII, p. 357, no. 88. (24th of December 1328)).

On the 22nd of October 1324, the pope then – presumably because John himself had applied for the job - appointed John of Wesenberg provost of Dorpat cathedral, and gave him a canonry and a prebend there, thus effectively making him head of the cathedral chapter (Regesta Vaticana: John XXII, p. 354, no. 69 (22nd of October 1324)). This position became vacant, when the former provost Engelbert von Dolen was elected bishop. But the chapter at Dorpat – unsurprisingly - was quite uneasy about this papal appointment. Bishop Engelbert appealed the appointment to the curia, stating that John was not welcome, as his appointment would be deeply resented by the canons in Dorpat and would cause all kinds of trouble.

Eventually, Engelbert and the Dorpat chapter must have won their case at the curia, thereby barring John of Wesenberg from the office of provost in Dorpat for good. The pope wrote to the bishop of Ösel, the provost of Ösel and to magister Jacob of Mutina, a canon of Cambrai in December 1328 and he authorized them to give bishop Engelbert the authority to appoint a suitable person as the new provost of the cathedral chapter of Dorpat (Regesta Vaticana: John XXII, p. 357, no. 88 (24th of December 1328)).

On the same day that the pope sent his letter, bishop Engelbert wrote to the pope to confirm the appointment of John of Vyffhusen, an “excellent scholar”, to the vacant canonry and prebend, which had opened up at the chapter in Dorpat (this was not the provostship). John of Vyffhusen was at the time at the curia, and he may have been the man arguing the case of the Dorpat chapter during the case against John of Wesenberg. But by the time bishop Engelbert’s letter reached the curia, John of Vyffhusen had unfortunately already died (LECUB 6, page 41 (of the Regesten), no. 867 b (24th of December 1328)). Confusingly, another cleric also named John of Vyffhusen later became bishop in Dorpat in 1346. In 1348, his nephew, Dietrich of Vyffhusen, who at the time was a canon in Dorpat as well as in Lund and was in line for yet another canonry on Ösel, was given a papal promise that he would be appointed for the next office at the cathedral chapter in Dorpat (DD III:2, no. 21 (29th of April 1348)). He later became dean here, yet was allowed to keep the canonries in Lund and Ösel, the latter of which had become a reality in the meantime (DD III:2, no. 565 (23rd of June 1352)).

Ravaging plunderer or not, John of Wesenberg had alternatives too and was not strictly dependent on the position in Dorpat. Since 1321, he was already a canon in Reval and was appointed to a canonry in Aarhus. This was a newly established canonry founded by the canon Broder Degn – and he specifically wanted John of Wesenberg to take up this office. John must have been well known to Broder – maybe they had studied together, or he had met John on some previous occasion where he had made an impression. John is described as a sociable, but modest man of good morals, of scholarly demeanor, yet well versed in the ways of the world – one thinks and wonders whether this in reality was a euphemism for his days of pillage and plunder in Livonia? Bishop Esger of Aarhus (1310–1325) approved of Broder’s decision and was happy to welcome John among the canons (DD II:8, no. 341 & 342 (26th of April 1321)). In 1333, John also held a canonry in the diocese of Ösel, and he was present to witness the settlement between the bishop of Reval, Oluf, and some vassals in Estonia which secured the release of the bishop’s brother from captivity (DD II:11, no. 86 (26th of December 1333)). The same day he also witnessed the settlement between the former Lord Lieutenant, Markvard Breide, and the vassals regarding Markvard’s relinquishment of the castles in Reval and Narva (DD II:11, no. 87 (26th of December 1333)). In 1338, when we meet John of Wesenberg again in the sources, he also held the position of schoolmaster at the cathedral school of the bishopric of Ösel. As such he could not be an absentee from Ösel forever. Thus, it seems that John of Wesenberg have split his time between Ösel and Aarhus, for at the time of

the meeting in Greifswald, he was in the retinue of bishop Svend of Aarhus, who was in exile at the time.

John's knowledge of Estonian conditions must have made him a valuable asset to bishop Sven of Aarhus who during the 1330's was one of the chief advisors and staunchest supporters of the young prince Valdemar, who tried to gain as much support as possible in his struggle to become king of Denmark. His position as duke of Estonia was one of the strongest assets he still had. And John of Wesenberg could provide him with needed knowledge of conditions in the duchy. Unfortunately, we do not hear of John after he accompanied Valdemar to Greifswald, and so have no knowledge of his fate. It is possible that John had died by 1343, as he is absent from a charter signed by all the canons in Reval – but he could also have taken up residence in Denmark permanently, and his absence could be explained by the long travel time to Estonia.

King Valdemar IV's use of Estonian clerics

In the decades after his accension to the throne in 1340, king Valdemar tried to use his influence at the papal court to gain promotions and appointments to important clerical offices for a number of churchmen, who had been in his service or had done him valuable services. In 1346, he applied at the papal court for a canonry and a prebend at the chapter in Schleswig for Meinrich Mornewech, a canon of Dorpat.

In 1355, he provided one Johan Tois with a canonry on Ösel, even though he already held an office at the chapel at Odenpäh in the diocese of Dorpat (DD III:2, no. 262 & 263 (30th of July 1346); DD III:4, no. 305 (7th of September 1355)). The Tois family was an important family of vassals in Estonia, who already were mentioned in the *Liber Censu Daniaë*, the royal census from the second half of the thirteenth century. Additionally, the family had interests in Denmark, but also an uneasy relationship with Erik Menved. But because of this strained relationship to the king, we know of another family member. Peter Fod, who died in 1313 as the archdeacon of Roskilde (*Liber Daticus Roskildensis*, p. 65 (24th of July 1313)). According to Svend Aakjær, the publisher of the *Liber Censu Daniaë*, he too was a member of the von Tois family (*Kong Valdemars Jordebog*, vol. 1, f. 41v and vol. 2, p. 365–367). In 1307, Peter finally inherited his father Jon Fod's estates in north-western Zealand and around Holbæk. Jon – who had also been a canon – had been captured, had had his lands confiscated and was himself executed by king Erik Menved in 1290 for being a supporter of the Norwegian king during the then ongoing conflict between the two Nordic kings over the inheritance after queen Ingeborg of Norway, who was the mother of king Haakon V, but also a princess of Denmark (DD II:6, no. 147 (before

the 29th of August 1308); Hørby 1989: 158–159). Peter Fod afterwards bequeathed the estate in the vicinity of Holbæk to the monastery of Sorø (DD II:6, no. 60 (1st of May 1307)).

In 1364, king Valdemar went to the papal court in Avignon. Danish historians have always expressed some surprise about the timing of king's journey to the pope in 1364. Why would he leave his kingdom for almost a year in the middle of a war with the Hanseatic cities to go and see the pope? But the journey must not be attributed to a sudden fancy, but to crafty planning with the purpose of gaining new allies, isolating his enemies and improving his future political position not only towards the Hanseatic cities but also in other areas, among them Livonia.

Valdemar secured a papal safe-conduct for the journey (DD III:6, no. 414 (24th of December 1363)), and left Denmark in late October 1363. He first headed for the court of the duke of Pomerania-Wolgast. By doing so, he was free to travel before the truce with the Hanseatic cities expired on the 6th of January (DD III:6, no. 407 (20th of November 1363)). In Wolgast, he met with delegates from the Hanseatic cities, but to no avail. No resolution of the conflict was reached, and the war would continue as soon as the truce expired. But instead of returning home, Valdemar continued to Krakow, where he used the opportunity to negotiate an alliance with the king of Poland (Böcker 1998: 273; Tägil 1962: 246–252).

Valdemar's next goal was the imperial court of Prague. Emperor Charles IV was a staunch supporter of Valdemar, as he saw him as an ally in his efforts to expand imperial influence in Northern Germany. The emperor thus again transferred the right to levy the Imperial tax of the city of Lübeck to Valdemar. In doing so, he clearly signaled that he supported Valdemar in his struggle against the Hanseatic cities (Tägil 1962: 252–261; DD III:7, no. XXX (7th of January 1364)). From Prague, Valdemar left for Strasbourg via Nürnberg and Heilbronn at the beginning of February (DD III:7, no. 12 (1st of February 1364)). From Strasbourg he followed the Rhine to Basel (DD III:7, no. 18 (11th to 14th of February 1364)) and continued from there to Lausanne and Avignon, where he arrived at the end of February 1364.

King Valdemar was officially welcomed by pope Urban V on the 3rd of March 1364 and awarded the Golden Rose, an award which was only conferred upon the most deserving prince at the papal court. This clearly shows that king Valdemar was most welcome and in high standing with the pope. Valdemar did not waste any time, but quickly displayed a high degree of activity at the papal court. He applied for and was rewarded with numerous papal favors, and he went to great lengths in order to secure appointments to high church offices for his chaplains, advisors and chancellors.

Already on the 5th of March, he handed in the first of a whole string of applications (DD III:7, no. 25 (5th of March 1364)). Among other things, king Valdemar sought to obtain the royal right to appointment to two canonries of his own choice at each of the Danish cathedral chapters, as well as the right to keep one additional prebend. This wish the pope granted with restriction – Valdemar was allowed to appoint one canon of choice at each chapter (DD III:7, no. 31 (7th of March 1364)). Additionally, Valdemar applied for a substantial number of prebends and positions at different cathedrals both in his own realm and across the continent. These were to be filled with clerics, who had done him valuable service. In general, these applications were approved without batting the eye. Among those that were rewarded were several clerics from the dioceses of Reval, Dorpat and Ösel.

On the 7th of March, Valdemar secured the canonry at the see of Kammin for Lyder Colver, who according to the application had been a student of law in Paris and Rome. This was approved under the condition that Lyder gave up all earnings from his positions in various parishes in the diocese of Reval and at the cathedral there (DD III:7, no. 40 & 41 (9th of March 1364)). On the 9th of March, Valdemar asked for the provision of an income at the cathedral of Mainz for Conrad Creutzebach, who had been a “vicarius” at Dorpat cathedral (DD III:7, no 43 (9th of March 1364)), while on the 25th of March he asked for and got a position in Utrecht for Thidericus Vrese, in spite of the fact that Thidericus already received an income at both the Reval and Dorpat dioceses (Arbusow 1902: 78). He only had to give up his income from a position of parish priest in Goldenbeck in the diocese of Ösel, as he could no longer provide pastoral care for the people there, if he were to go to Utrecht.¹⁹ Valdemar further advanced Vrese’s career when he in 1367 asked for a canonry and a prebend for him in Lübeck.

While in Avignon, Valdemar also asked for a canonry and an income from the diocese of Ösel for Gerlachus de Castella (Costelen), who had previously held a position in Merjuwa, Ösel diocese. The bishop of Dorpat, John of Vifhusen, was additionally to provide him with a canonry there (DD III:7, no. 73 & 76 (25th of March 1364)). Furthermore, king Valdemar asked that John of Thisenhusen was appointed to a canonry and given an important prebend at the chapter of Dorpat, which the pope confirmed on the same day (DD III:7, no. 74 (25th of March 1364)).

So, as king, Valdemar went to great lengths when trying to secure positions for members of the Estonian clergy, even though he had sold the Duchy over 20 years earlier. The question is now whether there was an underlying plan behind this or

¹⁹ DD III:7, no. 73 & 77 (25th of March 1364). This was approved by the pope later that same year, see no. 99 (15th of May 1364) and 156 (3rd of October 1364).

whether the king simply wanted to reward those clerics for good service to him. It could be argued that providing these clerics with well-placed canonries was well-thought out. Valdemar rarely did something without gaining something for himself. In Avignon, he also secured positions within the cathedral chapters of Lübeck, Schwerin and Rostock for clerics that had previously been in his service, while also doing favors for the bishop of Lübeck.²⁰ This could be seen as an indirect method of gaining influence in precisely those Hanseatic cities that he was presently at war with, or at least a way to have a source of information from within those towns. However, many of those that Valdemar provided with new positions were in addition also related to the most important families that regularly had members appointed town councilors and thus shaped the policy of their towns.²¹

Was there a similar plan with regards to the Estonian bishoprics? When Valdemar became king, he solemnly declared in January 1341 that he would not touch the Swedish king Magnus Eriksson's possession of Scania, Halland and Blekinge (DD III:1, no. 129–131; Skyum-Nielsen 1997: 18–19; Hoffmann 1998: 280). King Magnus had in 1332 had paid 34.000 marks for these lands (DD II:10, no. 403 (November 1332)). However, when king Valdemar in 1360 had finally succeeded to bring all Danish lands west of the Sound under his control, he did not hesitate to reconquer Scania, Halland and Blekinge in a sudden and quick military action, which Magnus Eriksson was unable to respond to. Afterwards, Valdemar also gained possession of the island of Gotland, thereby obtaining a key point from which he could control the trade network of the Baltic and have a springboard towards Livonia (Skyum-Nielsen 1997: 46–48). In his later years, Valdemar also tried to gain control over the Duchy of Schleswig, which was in the possession of a cadet branch of the Danish royal house, but which the kings of Denmark had tried to reclaim for a substantial amount of time. This was ultimately unsuccessful due to Valdemar's death in 1375. But it shows that he had a keen notion of what was "legitimately" his and saw it as his purpose to reunite all former Danish possessions under his rule. Maybe his efforts to advance Estonian clerics and put them in a position of power all over Estonia, not only in the territories of the former Duchy, but within the bishoprics of Dorpat and Ösel as well, was a long-term preparation for the reconquest of Estonia as well?

²⁰ DD III:7, no. 42 (9th of March 1364); no. 50 (12th of March 1364); DD III:8, no. 69 (13th of November 1367); Bracke 1999: 176.

²¹ Böcker 1998: 261–286, especially 269–272 and 285–286; DD III:3, no. 287 (18th of May 1350); DD III:3, no. 455 (7th of July 1351); DD III:4, no. 293 (7th of September 1355); Friderici 1988: 150, 323–328; HUB II, no. 425, 508, 549, 552, 557, 566, 569, 614, 622, 725 (all the documents are from the period 1324–1342); HUB III, no. 660 (20th of September 1344).

Unfortunately, we know only very little about the background of these Livonian clerics that Valdemar provided with high church offices and good incomes, but we do know a little bit. With regards to John of Thisenhusen, we know that his family originally came from Saxony, where in the twelfth and early thirteenth century they were “ministeriales”, unfree nobles that served under the counts of Wölpe and as liegemen to the counts of Hoya. As new opportunities for adventurous settlers arose in regions further to the east, several ancestors took the chance and established themselves as vassals in Holstein, Mecklenburg and at the end of the thirteenth century also in Livonia. His grandfather, also called John of Thisenhusen, is mentioned as a vassal under the archbishop of Riga around 1300, when he took possession of the castle in Kokenhusen. His uncle, Nicolaus, became the dean of Dorpat, while he himself also entered the church and eventually the service of Valdemar Atterdag, where he apparently must have done well (Arbusow 1914: 217–218). A probable relative of Theodericus Vrese, Heinrich Vrese, was a member of the Reval town council from 1334–1350 (he became a member of the town council for the first time in 1334, and after that served every second year from 1340–1350). He also had family connections to Lübeck (Bunge 1874: 8, 35, 95; LECUB vol. 2, no. CMXXIII).

If this can be regarded as the typical background of the Livonian clerics which were endorsed by Valdemar Atterdag, there remains the possibility that the Danish king sought out clerics from notable families in Livonia, and via these connections strove to retain some influence and information sources in the region, which he would be able to use politically – when the opportunity arose. This would correspond to his doings with the Wendic Hanseatic towns.

The rotation of Dominican friars between Denmark and Estonia

Apart from the politically motivated doings of king Valdemar, there were some other Livonian clerics who made their way to Denmark. These were primarily Dominican friars, who came to Denmark because the order needed them to. As stated earlier, monks had been sent in 1246 from a wide range of Danish and Swedish monasteries to populate the monastery in Reval (Halvorsen 2002: 253–257; SRD V, p. 501). But from the surviving records of the provincial chapter of the Dominican order in the province of Dacia, which details the proceedings of these meetings and gives a short summary of the decisions taken, we know that there was a substantial transfer of brothers between individual monasteries. The brothers might possess special skills that were needed somewhere else, or they were selected to gain new skills and qualifications at educational centers all across Europe or sent abroad to defuse brewing conflicts within different convents.

During the meetings in the thirteenth century, it was decided to transfer a few monks to and from Reval at almost every provincial meeting. In only a few cases the reason for these transfers were explicitly stated.²² We know that brother Hermann, who originally had been a brother at the monastery of Visby, had been in Reval for a few years before 1291, but was then again transferred, this time to Helsingborg. The same year, Lydelphus of Reval was transferred to the convent at Schleswig.²³ In return, brothers Gusterus and Laurentius were transferred to Reval from Odense in 1254, while brothers Bernardus and Elvadás were sent to Reval after the meeting in 1291.²⁴

From the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, a registry of the documents concerning the provincial chapter of Dacia survives in Rome, and this also contains a few cases concerning the convent in Reval, which remained a part of the province of Dacia until 1517.²⁵ Thus, we know of the transfer of the acolyte Andreas from Halmstad to Reval in October 1475 by the master general of the order himself. Andreas must have been very disobedient and was punished for this by being sent far away, though he was not to be punished further, than being denied any further transfer without the explicit permission of the provincial chapter (*Handlinger rörande dominikaner-provincen Dacia*, p. 13).

Brother Michael Johannis from Odense, who had been in Italy for a while, most likely at the studium generale in Naples, was ordered to Reval at the same time. He had apparently caused some complaints while in Naples, and then he had left Italy without permission - even before the complaints against him could be submitted to the master general during his visit to Naples. But seemingly, Michael soon managed to reconcile himself with the master general, who just a few days later reversed the decision and assigned him to the convent in Strasbourg (prov. Teutonia) instead. Eventually, though, Brother Michael was allowed to return to his home convent in Odense in June 1476 after having asked to meet the prior provincial of Lombardia inferioris; perhaps as a consolation for this, he was allowed in July 1477 to attend a

²² *Acta capitulorum provincialium provinciae OP Dacia* (1849–52): 551–565. These are the surviving acts from five provincial chapters of the Dominican province of Dacia. The chapters are those of 1246, 1252, 1253, 1254 and 1291.

²³ *Acta capitulorum provincialium provinciae OP Dacia* (1849–52): 559–565.

²⁴ *Acta capitulorum provincialium provinciae OP Dacia*, (1849–52): 555–565.

²⁵ Walther-Wittenheim 1928: 12. Already in the late fourteenth century it had been tried to transfer the convent of Reval to the province of Saxony, but the general chapter of the order declared that the convent had to remain with the province of Dacia. See *Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica VIII*, p. 98.

general chapter no matter where it was held.²⁶ By the fifteenth century, being sent to Reval and thus to the edges of Latin Christendom, was apparently no longer seen as a privilege and an honor as in the thirteenth century, but as a punishment!

The bishop of Reval as suffragan of Lund after 1346

While Northern Estonia was no longer in the hands of the Danish kings, the bishopric of Reval remained part of the Danish church province up to the sixteenth century. As suffragan to the archbishop of Lund, the bishop of Reval was subject to Lund's authority, and this would normally imply that the archbishop of Lund would confirm the election of a new bishop and invest him in his office accordingly. But already by 1300, the pope had monopolized the right of investiture, having the new elect invested at the Curia (LECUB I, no. 2761). After 1346, the new bishop had to take the oath of the Teutonic Order, whereupon he was either invested at the seat of the Teutonic Order in Marienburg or at the Curia (Hasselblatt 1890: 464). But the pope continued to stress that the bishop was formally subject to the archbishop of Lund.²⁷ Thus, the bishop of Reval was invited to the provincial synod that was to be held in Copenhagen in June 1425. He did not participate however, nor did he send a representative of his chapter, which the final document from that synod remarks rather sadly.²⁸

Instead, the bishop of Reval participated in the Livonian provincial synod held in Riga in 1428 (LECUB VII, no. 685). This could seem like an obvious violation of the obligations of the bishop of Reval towards his metropolitan, the archbishop of Lund. But there was a good reason for his attendance in Riga. The meeting in 1428 was preceded by discussions on church matters at the Livonian Diet in 1422. The Livonian diet was an assembly of the Teutonic Order, the bishops, their vassals and the towns, where all the territories could make joint decisions for all of Livonia. The Diet was beginning to include church matters among the subjects that were being discussed in the forum that year. Already in 1421 had the bishops of Reval and Dorpat participated in the provincial diet.

So, the fact that the bishop of Reval took part in the provincial synods in Riga,

²⁶ Handlinger rörande dominikaner-provincen Dacia, p. 13; *Diplomatarium diocesis Lundensis* vol. IV no. 262; *Diplomatarium OP Dacia*, vol. III (1400–1499), 24th of October 1475 <http://www.jggi.dk/DiplOPdacieIII.htm>.

²⁷ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 3rd of August 1405 <https://diplomatarium.dk/dokument/14050803001> and 22nd of September 1405 <https://diplomatarium.dk/dokument/14050922002>; LECUB VII, no. 355; Hasselblatt 1890: 466.

²⁸ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 21st of February 1421 <https://diplomatarium.dk/dokument/14250221001> and 12th of July 1425 <https://diplomatarium.dk/dokument/14250712001>.

even though he was not a suffragan of the archbishop of Riga may be related to these earlier discussions with other bishops in 1421–22, as well as to the occasional meetings of the bishops and higher clergy of Livonia during the Livonian Diets. These people were acquainted with each other and acted together (or against each other depending on the political situation) and the bishop of Reval used the opportunity to discuss matters of politics as well as faith with his neighboring bishops.²⁹

However, it must be stressed that it seems the bishop of Reval had never participated in a Danish synod before, as no record can be found of any Estonian participation in the synods of 1245, 1256, 1314, 1345 and 1425.³⁰ So the condemnation of the bishop of Reval in 1425 by the Danish clergy for not attending is more an expression of the Danish clergy upholding the idea of the affiliation of Reval with the metropolitan see of Lund than a recognition of the realities.

King Erik VII of Denmark as “protector” of bishop Christian of Ösel

When king Erik in June 1429 held a conference in Nykøping with representatives of the Hanseatic cities to achieve a peace settlement, the Danish archbishop Peter Lykke also simultaneously held a synod of the Danish church here. Present were not only the majority of the Danish bishops (Roskilde, Odense, Ribe and Aarhus), but also the bishops from Oslo in Norway, Linköping and Växjö in Sweden and finally Christian from Ösel.³¹ While in Denmark, bishop Christian acted as a mediator between the Hanseatic cities and the Danish king alongside the duke of Brunswick and the representatives of the Grand Master (LECUB I:8, no. 22 (1st of July 1429)). Afterwards bishop Christian was on his way to Rome to see the pope (LECUB I:8, no. 25 (3rd of July 1429)).

That he was present can possibly be explained by the fact that king Erik had taken the bishopric of Ösel into his protection in 1420 and again in 1425, and the bishop now needed the king's help. He wanted king Erik to take the bishoprics of Riga, Dorpat and Ösel into his protection once again and subsequently act as mediator between the bishoprics and the Order, especially between the Order and himself. Bishop Christian was not well liked by the Order, who had rather not seen him elected to the Ösel bishopric due to his hostile attitude towards the Order. Christian had, together with the archbishop of Riga and the bishop of Dorpat, denounced the attempt

²⁹ Rand 2015: 167–192, especially pp. 168, 183; Raudkivi 2018, especially pp. 87–90; Pii-
rimäe 2013: 44, 51–52, 64.

³⁰ DD I:7, no. 167 (22nd of February 1245); DD II:1, no. 176 (6th of March 1256); DD
II:7, no. 201 (12th of September 1314); DD III:2, no. 153 (9th of May 1345) and SRD VI, pp.
451–458 (15th of July 1425).

³¹ Hamsfortii Chronologica Secunda, in: SRD I, Copenhagen, 1772, p. 327 (Anno 1429).

of the Order to incorporate the bishoprics into the territories of the Teutonic Order and had done so most vocally (Jähning 2004: 120). The king was at first positively inclined towards the Order (he had signed an alliance with the Order in 1423) and so the bishop most likely felt it was necessary to gain the support of the pope instead (LECUB I:5, no. 2503 (25th of September 1420); LECUB I:7, no. 334 (18th of August 1425)).

How much the Order hated bishop Christian can be seen from a letter by the general proctor of the Teutonic Order, who advised the Grand Master to have Christian poisoned during his journey to Rome! Such behavior was by no means beneath the Order. In fact, in March 1428, an embassy of Livonian clerics, who had been on their way to Rome to complain to the pope about the machinations of the Teutonic Order, was ambushed by a henchman of the Order, robbed of their accusatory documents and then drowned in a nearby lake.³² Bishop Christian himself, who hastily fled Livonia for Rome when he heard of this, informs us that 30 assassins were on his tail while he was on the journey to Lübeck, only waiting for the right moment to strike (Jähning 2004: 127). Fortunately for bishop Christian, this did not happen (LECUB I:8, 36 (12th of July 1429)). Most likely Christian survived the journey to Rome because he visited Sigismund, king of the Romans, took his bishopric as a fief from Sigismund (most Livonian bishoprics were imperial fiefs) and went to Rome as Sigismund's official envoy (LECUB I:8, no. 138 + 139 (22nd of December 1429); no. 154 (8th of February 1430)).

The Order then sent an envoy to king Erik to ensure him that bishop Christian was lying when accusing the Order of planning an attack on the king in alliance with the three bishoprics (LECUB I:8, no. 30 (9th of July 1429)). As the situation on Ösel escalated and the bishopric was occupied by the Order³³, king Erik in May 1430 wrote the pope after a conference with the Hanseatic League had ended, informing him of what had happened on Ösel. He apologized for his inability to prevent the occupation of the diocese by the Order and asked the pope's permission to reestablish the peace, upholding the rights of the bishop in the process (LECUB I:8, no. 220 (24th of May 1430)). The Order, having occupied Ösel, on the other hand threatened that if bishop Christian should ever try to hand over his castles to the Danish king, they would see to that Christian was evicted from the bishopric (LECUB I:8, no. 240 (9th of June 1430)).

³² Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie, vol. 4 (1429–1436), pp. 9, 29–30, 37, 59–60, 81, 83, 95, 97, 109, 131–132, 142–143, 149, 191, 332–333, 344 & 382; Jähning 2004: 123.

³³ LECUB I:8, no. 150 (25th of January 1430); no. 174 (17th of March 1430); no. 230 (29th of May 1430).

Bishop Christian spent the remainder of his life at the papal curia denouncing the Order, making a list consisting of 233 (!) complaints public, which really hurt the reputation of the Order. He never wavered and was adamant that the Order had to be punished for their repressions. He even demanded that the territories of the Order should be laid under interdict.³⁴ Unfortunately, he died in Rome in 1432, shortly before the Order was ready to accept a compromise (LECUB I:8, no. 613 (7th of August 1432); no. 617 (14th of August 1432); no. 748 (1433)). The pope then appointed John Schutte, a canon on Ösel and in Dorpat, as the new bishop on Ösel, as he conveniently happened to be at the curia at the time of Christian's death (LECUB I:8, no. 748 (1433), p. 434). John returned to his bishopric in 1433, made an agreement with the Teutonic Order and regained control of his bishopric.

Last contacts before the Reformation

The last major contact between the Estonian and the Danish church before the Reformation was established in 1515. Bishop Johan Blankenfeld of Reval was in Copenhagen as a papal legate to give the pope's blessing to Christian II and his bride, Elizabeth of Habsburg, at their wedding. The pope had, in addition to his blessing, authorized bishop Johan to grant every attendee of the wedding complete absolution and forgiveness of all sins.³⁵ However, the main purpose of bishop John's attendance at the wedding was to persuade king Christian to keep the peace with Sweden – but this was in the end in vain (Allen 1865: 223–224). The wedding was also so delayed that bishop Johan did not want to wait in Denmark for months on end, and thus he handed over the authority to bless the married couple to the bishop of Roskilde whereupon he left the country.³⁶ During the following few years, there was quite an

³⁴ LECUB I:8, no. 158 (20th of February 1430); no. 162 + 163 (9th of March 1430); no. 230 (29th of May 1430); no. 287 (11th of August 1430); no. 316 (14th of September 1430); no. 326 (23rd of September 1430); no. 333 (September–October 1430); no. 404 (January 1431); no. 443 (10th of May 1431); no. 465 (20th of June 1431); no. 483 (29th of July 1431); no. 492 (19th of August 1431); no. 493 (20th of August 1431); no. 509 (20th of September 1431); no. 579 (11th of April 1432); no. 584 (25th of April 1432); no. 595 (3rd of June 1432); *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie*, vol. 4 (1429–1436), pp. 9, 23, 26, 64, 94, 99, 105, 117, 123, 128, 131, 135, 138–143, 149, 150–153, 155, 159, 161, 164, 173, 177, 180–188, 195, 202–204, 206, 208, 211, 214–222, 225, 234, 240, 244–247, 252–257, 259, 272, 285, 292, 295, 317, 322, 333, 336, 343, 347, 350, 362, 373, 382, 393, 395, 398, 403, 417, 419, 430, 443, 455, 471 & 495; Jähning 2004: 127–135.

³⁵ *Acta Pontificum Danica*, vol. 6, no. 4520 (6th of May 1515); *Regesta Diplomatica Historicae Danicae* II:1,2, no. 10164 (6th of September 1516); Schuchard 2002: 38; Allen 1865: 202.

³⁶ Bisgaard 2019: 177. Here Bisgaard calls bishop Johan bishop of Riga (sic!) but he only became archbishop of Riga in 1524. At the time of the wedding, Johan Blankenfeld had just

intensive contact between the bishop of Reval and Denmark. In June 1516, bishop Johan of Reval, together with the papal legate at the Imperial court, Christian II and the Master of the Livonian Order, negotiated an agreement on the transfer of clerical jurisdiction in the diocese of Reval from Lund to Riga.³⁷ In early 1517, bishop Johan of Reval approached Christian II one last time in order to facilitate the transfer of the landed possessions of Roma monastery in Estonia to the bishopric of Reval – and to support his efforts to gain papal acceptance thereof.³⁸

The question of true Estonian-Danish ecclesiastical interaction remains. When I originally set out to write this article, I wanted to examine to what degree there were interactions between Danes and native Estonians who had become part of the clergy. It seemed unlikely that the clergymen we read about in the sources all were members of the Danish-German elite. Some native Estonians must eventually also have entered the church. But if native Estonians were recruited into the clergy, did they receive their instructions locally or were they integrated into the great network of the Catholic church, maybe even going to Denmark or even France, Germany and Italy and having a career there? This is harder to answer, as the traditional Estonian names of these men and women must have changed from their originally Estonian form into a Christian name. We know that Danes for quite while bore a Christian name in addition to their Nordic names. Examples hereof are Sven, the son of Harald Blue-tooth, who according to Adam of Bremen received the name of “Otto” upon his baptism³⁹, king Erik Lam, who according to the *Annals of Erfurt* also was called David, and king Svend, co-king of Valdemar I in the 1150’s, who also held the name of Peter. This practice of dual names is likely to also have continued in the newly converted parts of Livonia.

I, like so many researchers before me, then speculated on the role of the hostages taken from the leading families of Livonia upon their defeat. These hostages were to act as a guarantee that the Estonians and Livonians would not attempt to resist the Danish and German conquerors of their lands. Presented with these young boys, would it not have been the logical move of the new authorities to educate these

been appointed bishop of Reval (see *Acta Pontificum Danica* vol. VI, no. 4483, 30th of October 1514), which Bisgaard correctly addresses him as on page 234.

³⁷ *Regesta Diplomaticum* vol. II:1,2, no 10145 (29th of June 1516).

³⁸ *Acta Pontificum Danica* vol. VI, supplementum (1915), no. 4607 (2nd of February 1517).

³⁹ Adam of Bremen, book II, chapter 3; *Cronica Sancti Petri Erfordensis*, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, *Scriptorum* VI, Hannover, 1844, pp. 536-541; DD I:2, no. 117.

hostages in the culture of the conquerors, maybe even to let them become members of the clergy and thus promote the new religion?

Kristjan Kaljusaar argues quite convincingly in his paper on the practice of taking hostages in Medieval Livonia, that while it has been suggested that hostages taken from prominent Livonian families were taken off to German (and perhaps Danish) monasteries, or other centres of learning, where they were given a Christian education, there are no reports that a hostage, often presumed to have studied in a cathedral school, was involved in any missionary work. Religious education may have been somewhat secondary in the upbringing of hostages, and more often gave these hostages the cultural background and understanding to function as a future ally to the new Danish-German rulers, which could draw on some local support of their rule through these former hostages, when they had grown up and taken their place as leading figures in their communities. Kaljusaar concedes, that while there was an emphasis on the potential military and political roles of hostages, one cannot completely reject the theory that they also did some missionary work. The Catholic conquerors could especially in the early period of the conquest benefit from preachers who not only spoke the local language but were also familiar with local customs and had personal connections (Kaljusaar 2016: 23–46, esp. pp. 31–34 and 37–40).

However, the sources that deal with the hostages that the Danes had taken in Northern Estonia by the mid-1220's clearly state that they all stayed at the castle in Tallinn and had not been sent abroad (Henry of Livonia XXIX:7). Of later periods, we simply have no sources that tell us what happened to the hostages. So, the question of true Danish-Estonian ecclesiastical interaction at this level must remain unanswered.

Conclusion

Based on this survey, we can conclude that while the source material is fragmentary and will often not yield an answer to all the questions we might want answered, we can see a tendency towards a quite intense interaction between the Danish and Estonian clergy in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, both with regard to purely ecclesiastical, but also political questions. The bishop of Reval came to act as the main spokesperson of the entire Estonian elite as he had automatic access to the Danish king as the member of the royal council and thus the elite were ensured that their position was heard. Estonian clerics also played an important mediating role during the conflict between the Danish king and the archbishop of Lund around 1300. Also, there was a regular exchange of monks between the monasteries in the province of Dacia, which also included the Dominican monastery in Reval.

However, this interaction and exchange was at times hampered by the distance between Denmark proper. Also, Estonian church officials could not attend church meetings if they were announced with short warning and held outside the sailing season (April-October), which further complicated the interaction within the metropolitan province. This was especially true for synods of the Danish church. The clerical interaction did not only involve people from Danish Estonia, but also from the neighboring bishoprics of Ösel, Dorpat and Riga.

While the contact between Denmark and Estonia seems to have become less intensive after the Danish king sold Danish Estonia to the Teutonic Order in 1346, Estonia remained part of the Danish church province until the Reformation, and so there remained at least a verge of contact between Denmark and Estonia until then, especially when the Estonian church wanted help against the dominance of the Teutonic Order. Also, it seems like especially Valdemar IV Atterdag in the late 14th century, through the advancement of Estonian clerics from families of importance, tried to gain influence and sources of information in Livonia. This could have been of value, if ever the opportunity of regaining Estonia arose – an idea which remained in the back of the mind of the Danish kings throughout the next few centuries.

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