Saints and Sainthood around the Baltic Sea
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Identity, Literacy, and Communication in the Middle Ages

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I N THE 1390s, THE glorious Teutonic Knights, who were at that time at the peak of their power in Prussia, made a strange choice: they picked a widow from Gdansk as their patron saint. Or did they really? The patronage of St. Dorothy of Montau over the Teutonic Order is one of the stories of her life that has been repeated over the centuries—although there is little historical evidence to support it. Dorothy was a peasant’s daughter, a sword maker’s widow and the mother of nine children, of which only one survived childhood. She was walled into a cell at the cathedral in Marienwerder, today Kwidzyn, for the last three years of her life, where she died, most likely of starvation, after a life of more than forty years of constant self-abuse. At the time of her death, her body was covered with self-inflicted wounds, some of which she had kept consistently open throughout her adult life.¹ The pathological aspects of Dorothy’s *imitatio Christi*, her masochistic relationships, first to her violent husband, and later to her confessor Johannes Marienwerder, and finally Dorothy’s visions, which centered on mystical pregnancies and the infant Jesus, made her a strange choice as the patron saint of the Order of the Knights of St. Mary, who ruled over the entire civilized Northeast as defenders of the Christian faith against the Slavic pagans. How did Dorothy become the patron saint of both the Teutonic Order and of Prussia? The answer lies in the historiography and hagiography of twentieth-century scholars, rather than in the medieval sources themselves.

Prussia was a contested area from the time the Teutonic Order entered the territory, and the cult of Dorothy of Montau was part of the ideological struggle for the possession of the land. This struggle was par-
ticularly infected during the interwar period and the Second World War (WWII), and, even after 1945, significant groups in Germany kept up the hope of regaining the “German East.” St. Dorothy is one of the saints used in order to establish a tangible continuity of German settlement and culture in this region (St. Hedwig is another example). Her assumed patronage not only of the region, but also of the Teutonic Order, further connects her to the medieval German colonization of the East.

Recently, a number of studies, anthologies, and conferences have dealt with the “patriotic” aspects of saints, mainly the medieval attempts to claim saints as patriots for a particular town or territory, which in some cases persisted until the modern era. In St. Dorothy’s case, the medieval attempts to define her as a local saint for the diocese of Pomesania are well visible in the sources, while in the modern era her cult was literally invented as an ethnic German cult. The people and groups who produced this invention were Catholic historians and theologians from Prussia and Silesia, and their reading of the medieval sources is an example of the continuous political importance of saints’ cults, and of the transformations of these cults over time.

I will address St. Dorothy’s cult as a process of interaction between the saint’s identity and image in the hagiographic records, especially the acts of the canonization process, on the one hand, and the political and religious identity of those who promoted and made up her cult, on the other hand. Of late, the issue of “patriotic saints” has, for the most part, dealt with the patron saints of towns in western and central Europe and with the Scandinavian Holy Kings, focusing on the relationship between canonization or cult development in general and authority and regional identity. Two issues are particularly relevant for the interpretation of Dorothy of Montau as a German patriotic saint and of the instrumentalization of her cult; first, her presumed role as the patron saint of the Teutonic Order and of its ongoing struggle with the Lithuanians in the East, and second, the question of the German character of the cult community based on the witnesses involved in the canonization process. Both of these issues were raised by those who promoted Dorothy’s cult until she was finally canonized in 1976, a group of displaced German Catholics from Gdansk and Frombork, who gathered in West Germany after WWII.

I will address the issue in inverse chronological order, starting with the scholars who investigated Dorothy’s cult before and after WWII and who focused on the German character of both the saint and the region. Then I will go back to the medieval sources, especially Dorothy’s 1404
canonization process, and will pay particular attention to the different ethnicities mentioned in the medieval material—or the lack thereof.

**Borderland History and Hagiography**

Scholarly investigation of St. Dorothy started in the late nineteenth century, when the German vita by her confessor, John of Marienwerder, was edited as part of the *Scriptores rerum prussicarum* series. The question of Dorothy of Montau as a German saint was debated at that time. This debate, however, was closely connected to the broader—and much more politically explosive—question of the *Volksgeschichte* (national or ethnic history) of the German–Polish borderlands. At the same time, the cult of Dorothy was also an integral part of the spiritual life of many Catholics in Prussia, and many of those who promoted her canonization after the war had already started publishing material about her before and during WWII—both in Catholic journals and in those devoted to the political mission of revisionism. The Latin hagiographic records remained unprinted, but several extensive articles had been published by the beginning of WWII. These dealt with Dorothy’s mysticism and with her confessor Johannes, a priest in the Teutonic Order and canon in the Marienwerder cathedral chapter. They were published in such journals as “Zeitschrift für Ostforschung” and “Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands,” which during the Weimar Republic had increasingly become organs for German scholars resisting the modification of German territory on the basis of the Versailles Treaty. In the 1920s and 1930s, historical research about East and West Prussia, as well as about Silesia, was mainly research to prove either the German or the Polish character of the region. Both Polish and German academic institutions received support from their respective governments to undertake research into the controversial area of the cultural and ethnic heritage of the contested territories.

The period of the Teutonic Order’s conquest and the subsequent colonization are crucial for the Germans’ argument. Just as was the case in the later St. Dorothy cult, two issues were intertwined; the definition of the order’s conquest as a crusade and as a conscious attempt to export German culture to the East, and the presumed German character of the region or at least of its cultural elites. Evidence of this was said to be found in various aspects of early settlement, such as the spread of Lübeck law and the predominance of German names, and thereby a presumed majority of ethnic Germans, in Prussia.
As modern research into these topics has shown, most of the methods traditionally used serve no purpose for analyzing ethnicity in Prussia because of the comprehensive processes of cultural assimilation. Grischa Vercamer, for example, found, in his dissertation on rural settlement in the Kaliningrad region, that processes of assimilation on different levels were ongoing in the fifteenth century: the Prussians lived together with Germans in villages under German law, and there were freeborn Prussians who founded villages under German law, many of them bilingual. Vercamer determined that 20 percent of the Prussian peasants had German names, as did 40 percent of the Prussian rural upper class—the numbers in the towns might have been even higher, and by the Reformation Prussian names had disappeared entirely. Consequently, it is impossible for modern scholars to deduce the ethnicity of the population of Prussia on the basis of medieval sources. Nonetheless, contemporary scholars working on medieval Prussia and the Teutonic Order show little interest in criticizing in a consistent way the previous, ideologically problematic studies or in reassessing their results. It is also the case that in research about St. Dorothy many names are cited that warrant a critical reassessment.

“Katholiken für Hitler”—Paul Nieborowski

One of the first men to promote Dorothy’s cult to a broader public was Paul Nieborowski, historian, priest, and author. For his monograph “Die Selige Dorothea von Preußen,” published in Wrocław (Breslau) in 1933, he was the first to make use of the extensive acts of the canonization process, which had not yet been printed at that point. It is unclear how Nieborowski gained access to the documents; however, a copy is now preserved in the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin (GStAPK), which was then located in Kaliningrad (Königsberg). Nieborowski claims that in 1938 a copy of the acts of the medieval process had been sent to Rome to promote the reconsideration of the canonization—postwar Catholics never indicated the exact year the acts were submitted nor who initially started the reassessment. Nieborowski was also the first to acknowledge the highly relevant nature of the canonization process of Dorothy of Montau for the cultural history of “all the estates of the German Prussian people.” For this, later scholars dealing with Dorothy frequently cited him and assigned him the requisite scholarly credit. His importance for the establishment of Dorothy as a patriotic saint has been noted by David Wallace, who discusses Nieborowski’s presentation of
Dorothy as a very significant saint both in the ongoing struggle for the German East and in the references by the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) [The National Socialist German Workers’ Party] to the Teutonic Order and the crusade in the East in general, without, however, addressing Nieborowski’s general political commitment.9

Nieborowski was an interesting figure both in the context of German Catholicism and of Ostforschung. An ordained Catholic priest, he had been heavily involved in the political debates around the plebiscite regarding the nationality of Silesia after the First World War. When Poland received parts of the territory, he resigned his position as a priest and began working full time as a propagandist. Nieborowski, who sometimes published under the pseudonym Paul Walter von Marienburg, founded a publishing house that mainly distributed his works, along with some by other people, all of which fell under the rubric of “Schutz und Ruhm der Deutschen Ostmark, das ist unser Ziel!” [Protection and Glory for the East German territory, that is our goal]. His company’s coat of arms was that of the Teutonic Order, a black and white shield with a crest.10

For Nieborowski, Dorothy of Montau was unquestionably a German saint. Many German Catholics had found it difficult to prove their national loyalty during the nineteenth-century Kulturkampf, and were again treated with suspicion under National Socialism, with the Gestapo maintaining large departments entirely devoted to the surveillance of Catholic groups and orders. However, for Nieborowski, there was no contradiction between Catholicism and National Socialism. He supported the new order wholeheartedly, even though he never joined the NSDAP. In 1934, he wrote two articles for the Westdeutscher Beobachter, which were subsequently reprinted in a special edition entitled “Katholiken für Hitler” under the question “Wie urteilt ein katholischer Geistlicher über den Nationalsozialismus?” [How does a Catholic priest assess National Socialism?] The answer was unambiguous:

[Thus] I find it necessary and a matter of duty as a Catholic priest to bear witness for the Führer and for his method of governing the state [...] The victory of Adolf Hitler was a victory for the seriously endangered Christianity of Germany and Europe, a victory as grand and far-reaching as that of Constantine the Great in 313 [...] This glorious man, who has saved Christianity, and with it Catholicism, in Germany, sees himself in his humility only as an unworthy tool of divine providence [...] This is why my German priest’s heart has been won over by him!11
Nieborowski became a member of the Reichsschrifttumskammer, both as an author and as a publisher, despite the rather moderate income from his business. In 1944, he was still receiving “public support” as a “verdienter Volkstumskämpfer.” The connection between Catholicism and National Socialism, and as a consequence, of the promotion of the cult of Dorothy and revisionist and fascist politics, is, in any case, quite pronounced. While not all German Catholics who supported the cult of Dorothy also supported the NSDAP, the German character of Prussia played a crucial role in all of their works, and, as a result, the arguments developed by Nieborowski were also adopted by scholars who were less supportive of National Socialism.

Post-War Alliances

Nieborowski died in 1948, but his works continued to be frequently quoted in postwar scholarship about Dorothy—which increased and flourished. In 1950, the Dorotheenbund, an association entirely devoted to her canonization, was founded. It consisted of Catholic refugees from Pomesania and Warmia, most of whom had relocated to Westphalia, and who even in West Germany maintained contact and a strong common cultural identity.

They raised money, supported the dissemination of source materials about Dorothy, and published their collective efforts in a magazine, Der Dorotheenbote. In this monthly publication, one would find scholarly works about all aspects of Dorothy’s life, reports on the progress made in editing the source materials and a lot of devotional material—people would report that Dorothy had helped them on their way from Prussia to Germany, in fleeing the communists, or in reconnecting with lost friends and relatives in their new homeland. Dorothy was frequently addressed as the “patron saint of Prussia,” thereby establishing a close connection between the refugees, their cultural identity, and the saint’s presumed identity. The promotion of the saint’s cult became a part of the exile identity of a large group of Germans who hoped to soon return to Prussia.

The Dorotheenbund was formed by scholars, Catholic priests, and lay people closely connected to the political lobby groups—the Vertriebenenverbände—that the refugees formed in West Germany. It also employed the same rhetoric: fascism and the war were catastrophes lacking apparent historical and economic grounds, and the biggest catastrophe of all was the forced flight of the Germans from the East and the loss
of their homes. Compared to the suffering of the Germans, the Holocaust was barely noted. Both anti-communism and revanchism were, however, strong common features.\textsuperscript{13}

The history of the Catholic expellees has until now been mainly a topic of interest for Catholic research, in the search for a model of successful diaspora organization and pastoral care.\textsuperscript{14} The Catholic religion was—alongside ethnicity—a factor supporting the common identity of the Germans from the East. This common sense of identity was to be maintained in exile, with collaboration with the nonreligious and often more radical \textit{Vertriebenenverbände} not appearing entirely self-evident for the Catholic expellees.\textsuperscript{15}

The veneration of domestic saints played a central role in the identity politics of Catholic bishops and priests, as has been shown by the case of St. Hedwig and the role she played for the expellees in the Oldenburg region.\textsuperscript{16} To a lesser extent, the cult of St. Dorothy also constituted one of the arguments for the Germans’ strong ongoing connection to what they perceived as theirs—the loss of direct access to Dorothy’s cell and cult sites in her hometown of Montau and Marienwerder being a major source of distress.

An Unlikely Couple? Richard Stachnik and Anneliese Triller

A central figure in the \textit{Dorotheenbund} was Richard Stachnik, a complex personality. Stachnik, born in 1894 in Piła, in northwest Poland, was ordained shortly after the First World War, during which he had studied theology and philosophy in Pelplin. He worked as a priest and religious instructor in Gdansk beginning in 1928, as well as being responsible for the pastoral care of students at the town’s \textit{Technische Hochschule}. In 1930 he became leader of the Gdansk section of the \textit{Zentrumspartei}, the party for political Catholicism. As a consequence, he was banned from preaching and pastoral care in 1937, losing his teaching position as a result. In 1944, Stachnik was incarcerated in the Stutthof concentration camp as a political prisoner for a week, from August 23 to September 1.\textsuperscript{17} He spent the remainder of the war in Gdansk, then ended up in a Russian war prison, before fleeing to Westphalia in 1946. Until 1955, he worked as a religious instructor at a high school in Herne, eventually receiving greater responsibility in the curial administration. He also served as the priest at a convent in Coesfeld, remaining in this position until his death in 1982.
Stachnik’s own experience as a victim of Nazi crimes did not—according to his writings—prevent him from being a deeply committed German and Prussian patriot, and his devotion to Dorothy was part of this. Richard Stachnik edited most of the hagiographic material about Dorothy, in many cases working with the archivist and cultural historian Anneliese Triller, who was also a devoted Catholic and a refugee from the former German East. Born Birch-Hirschfeld, she had converted to Catholicism in 1924. In 1933, she became custodian of the Episcopal Archives in Frombork (Frauenburg), a duty she fulfilled until she was forced to flee from the Red Army in 1945. Her main work was to provide people with evidence for their *Ariernachweise*, i.e., certification of their non-Jewish descent in the previous two or three generations. In order to be able to process the numerous requests more effectively, Birch-Hirschfeld developed an indexing system for the Episcopal Archives, which according to her own statements was a duty that also served her own interest in family history and genealogy.

Anneliese Birch-Hirschfeld requested membership in the *Reichsschrifttumskammer* in May 1938, so as to be permitted to publish her dissertation. The request was denied, since writing was not her main profession, and she was advised to request a specific attestation for her dissertation instead. Since the *Reichsschrifttumskammer* was not only a professional organization, but also an institution for the political surveillance of its members, her request was accompanied by a note from the leader of the political department of the NSDAP-Gau, who attested that Birch-Hirschfeld “was not a member of the NSDAP, had never attended any party meetings nor done anything else to demonstrate her positive attitude towards the state.”

In 1941, she married Alfons Triller, a Slavic languages lecturer at the academy in Braniewo (Braunsberg), who was categorized as “entirely unpolitical” when his department was checked for political enemies in 1938. Anneliese Triller’s scholarly career is an example of the continuity of *Ostforschung* both personally and with regard to content, even though she had not been actively involved with National Socialism. Triller wrote many articles concerning “new evidence on the German character (*das Deutschtum*) of southeastern towns in Prussia;” she was a member of the *Historischer Verein für Ermland* before, during, and after the war; and an article commemorating her eightieth birthday was printed both in a scientific *Festschrift* and in the organ of the right-wing, revisionist organizations of East Prussia, *Landsmannschaften.* In this article, she recalls
with delight her time as custodian of the Episcopal Archive and the large amount of work she was responsible for in connection with the many people who came to the archive needing to prove their Aryan ancestry—nothing is said about those who failed this test, which was obligatory for most professional organizations under National Socialism. The little that she wrote after the war that was critical toward National Socialism primarily addressed the Nazis’ attempt to limit Catholic devotion and organization.\textsuperscript{23} Even if she lacked a particular devotion to National Socialism, Anneliese Birch-Hirschfeld did not lack an interest in the ideological support for the German claims in the East. She published articles about “Prussia’s mission and achievement for the German \textit{Völksstum}” and positively reviewed Nieborowski’s book about Dorothy.\textsuperscript{24}

In a way that was similar to Richard Stachnik, who published in favor of Dorothy’s canonization even before and during WWII, Anneliese Triller’s engagement on behalf of the saint-to-be had begun as early as 1934, when she published a series of popular articles in the Warmia church magazine. She also analyzed the German character of St. Dorothy’s cult in the canonization process, discussing the medieval sources themselves.

\textbf{“Ethnicity” in the Medieval Canonization Process}

In the canonization process, approximately 250 witnesses appeared and testified about miracles they had observed or personally experienced, either with the living saint or at her tomb. Of these 250, Triller identifies two with Polish names and two with Prussian names—thereby concluding that the cult of St. Dorothy was almost entirely German, deeply rooted in the culture of the Germanic Christian upper class in the Prussian towns.\textsuperscript{25} These results, based on the names in the medieval sources, constitute a circular argument and must be deemed unreliable on the basis of source criticism: when the person who wrote the acts or the report of the miracle was German-speaking, he was very likely to Germanize the names of the witnesses. Furthermore, the established principles for choosing witnesses suitable for a canonization were generally part of a delicate process that certainly did not take ethnicity in a modern sense into account, but rather emphasized the extraordinary nature of the miracle, a superior social status or a connection to the saint’s vita. Thus, the witnesses in a canonization process tell us very little about the “real” connection of a certain segment of the population to the saint’s cult.\textsuperscript{26}
Given the speed of assimilation and the right of connubium, especially in the Prussian towns, it is almost impossible to determine person’s ethnicity in the late fourteenth century. Additionally, Triller’s arguments for categorizing people as Polish are highly questionable: at one point, she defines someone as Polish because he reports a miracle happening on Christmas Eve, and from the vague circumstances Triller deduces that the family in question must have been drunk and thus must have been Polish—since it was only the Poles in the area who were in the habit of getting drunk at Christmas.27

Since the Teutonic Order was the institution that produced the overwhelming majority of source materials related to medieval Prussia, it is basically impossible to gather reliable evidence about the spiritual and religious preferences of certain segments of the population during this period. Officially, they were all Christians and adhered to the preferences in devotion to saints and feast days prescribed by the order. It was only in the late fifteenth century that a certain reformatory discourse criticized remaining pagan practices among the Prussians, but even these sources must be handled with care.28 Thus, an attempt to assign the primary support for the cult of Dorothy of Montau to a certain section of the Prussian population is doomed to failure, due to a lack of sources.29 Dorothy might very well have been a patron saint of Prussia, but this is not reflected in the medieval sources, and thus could be a much later phenomenon.

The Eastern Crusade

The second issue related to Dorothy as a German saint is her status as patroness of the Teutonic Order and the order’s crusade.

The Teutonic Order’s role as a territorial ruler in Prussia and its continuing attempts to expand its territory relied heavily on its crusade-based self-definition. During most of the fourteenth century, the Lithuanian nobles’ resistance to baptism legitimized the order’s attempts to subdue at least sections of Samogitia (Samaiten). This territory was located between Prussia and Livonia, which were themselves controlled by the order.

By the end of the century, however, the problem was that the surrounding enemies could hardly be defined as enemies of Christendom: the kingdom of Poland certainly did not require any help with conversion, and when it formed a political and personal union with Lithuania in 1387 and the Grand Duke of Lithuania converted, the last justification for a Christian mission was gone. The Teutonic Order’s repeated military expe-
ditions against Lithuania lacked legitimacy or were at least highly doubtful even according to crusading ideals, but nonetheless Lithuania is noted as a target for a crusade in Dorothy’s 1404 canonization process.

High Master Konrad of Jungingen and three Großkomture showed up during the process; Konrad witnessed *non monitus, non rogatus, non citatus neque ... in causa canonizandi productus* [not advised, not asked, not cited and not ... brought forward because of the attempted canonization], as it is recorded in the protocol. The functionaries of the Knights’ Order provided testimony about a miracle nobody had previously heard of: Dorothy is said to have predicted four specific dangers inherent in a “journey” to Lithuania, and according to the High Master’s testimony, they all came true.30 These journeys were the annual “reysen,” for which the Teutonic Order gathered adventurous young noblemen from the empire for military expeditions to Lithuania. In this context, Dorothy seems to have provided the order with aid in their warfare, or, in their own terminology, to their crusades and the spreading of Christianity among the heathens.

In this context, the difference between the process as it was planned by the cathedral chapter and the process as it finally unfolded is crucial, and the acts tell us about the difference in quite some detail. The Pomesanian cathedral chapter, which planned the process, made lists of potential witnesses based on the miracle journals they had been keeping at Dorothy’s tomb and sent them to the curia. Obviously, they did not want the order to dominate the process, despite the presumed greater likelihood that Dorothy would be canonized if some of the order’s prominent figures provided testimony—none of them were mentioned as potential witnesses in the lists.31 Instead, they planned the process as one for a local saint: they invited 110 witnesses, seventy of whom came from the home bishopric of Pomesania and thirty from the neighboring bishoprics of Culm and Warmia. Furthermore, these witnesses were common laymen and laywomen, not clerics or noblemen. In the parts of the acts’ texts that were meant to ensure the cathedral chapter’s control of the canonization process rather than as cult propaganda, Dorothy was portrayed as a saint closely linked to the peasant population and to the places where she lived. The term *patrona Prussie* does not appear in the canonization process. Not even High Master Konrad of Jungingen used the term. Rather than patrona Prussie or patron saint of the Teutonic Knights, she appears as *patrona Pomesaniae*.32
The picture of Dorothy as a patron saint of Prussia is seriously complicated by her supposed role as a saint in the context of crusades, i.e., in the Teutonic Order’s struggle with the Lithuanians. Dorothy appears on several occasions as an ally against the (supposedly still pagan) Lithuanians: one of the interrogation articles states: “In the common opinion, people believe that, with the help of the prayers and merits of Dorothy, the Christians will soon achieve victory over the unbelieving Lithuanians and many will convert to the Christian faith, as many already have been converted.”33 No wonder that even the High Master Konrad von Jungingen talks about Dorothy’s help in the conquest of Lithuania—the one common feature of the saint’s image shared by both the Teutonic Order and the Pomesanian cathedral chapter. A defeat of the order would also have weakened the position of the cathedral chapter, which was formally incorporated into the order but ruled the diocese independently. Furthermore, the crusade rhetoric was deeply rooted in the foundational texts of the entire order and endured until the end of the fourteenth century.34

**A Saint for Patriots**

Ironically, it was the Lithuanians who brought the attempts to obtain Dorothy’s official canonization to an end. Despite her prayers, they, together with the Poles, won the Battle of Tannenberg/Grunwald, after which Prussia’s leaders had other things on their minds. We have only scattered information about the cult of the almost-saint after 1410: Dorothy’s German Vita was the first book to be printed in Prussia in 1492. After the Reformation, her tomb and shrine in the cathedral church were destroyed and there has been no sign of her relics since that time.

During the Counter-Reformation, a Polish Jesuit attempted, with little success, to reestablish the cult. Then, in the nineteenth century, the aforementioned instrumentalization of research on Dorothy arose and claimed the cult as German. The cult of St. Dorothy and its presumed German character, as well as her status as a patroness of the Teutonic Order, are used as a small but distinct aspect in the broader propaganda presentation of the Teutonic Order as the bearer of superior German culture and as a defender against the threat from the East—previously the Lithuanians, by this point Bolshevism.35

From the point of view of modern hagiographic research, the national character of a saint or a saint’s cult is only one aspect of the entire phenomenon of the veneration of saints. East and West Prussia is a region
with an exceptionally turbulent past, but patriotic demands on saints have also been visible in other regions. The common factor is that the modern use of saints can be very far removed from what we actually find in the hagiographic records, since the images of the saints have to be adapted to very different political circumstances—see, for example, the importance of St. Birgitta and St. Erik for the national identity of Protestant Sweden. Additionally, the medieval hagiographic records do not present one uniform image of the saints; instead, the texts were adapted for different audiences. Canonization processes can present a saint entirely differently than do sermons directed at the population; the cult propaganda of different social groups present very different aspects of a saint’s vita—as in the case of the Marienwerder (Kwidzyn) cathedral chapter and the Teutonic Order. The cathedral chapter portrayed a humble helper and intercessor on behalf of the lower strata of the Prussian population, while the Teutonic Order portrayed a mighty fighter against the pagans on the outskirts of the Christian world.

Recently, a third group has quietly claimed St. Dorothy, and, for the first time, the multilingual and multiethnic population of medieval Prussia can be seen. This is not taking place at the cult’s original site, the Kwidzyn cathedral church, but in Dorothy’s natal village of Mątowe Wielkie (medieval Montau) where the church has long been a site for the veneration of the saint, a phenomenon that has flourished since the Germans left. The local priest, who is trying to reestablish a community life in an almost-deserted village, gives guided tours of the medieval church with its wooden interior, which include an introduction to Dorothy’s life and achievements as saint. One of his main points is that Dorothy always confessed in both German and Polish. Finally, with the Teutonic Order now gone, the recent Polish presidency of the European Union and what will hopefully be the final German acknowledgment of its eastern borders, there is no longer a need for a German saint in a contested region. St. Dorothy had probably never been a good candidate—she seems to be more of a saint for patriots than a patriotic saint.
NOTES

1 Recently Dorothy has attracted the attention of an increasing number of German- and English-speaking scholars. The most recent studies addressing her mysticism and her vita are the contributions in Almut Suerbaum, ed., *Dorothea von Montau and Johannes Marienwerder: Constructions of sanctity*. Oxford German Studies 39 (Leeds, 2010). The most thorough study on the different hagiographic texts is Petra Hörner, *Dorothea von Montau: Überlieferung, Interpretation: Dorothea und die osteuropäische Mystik* (Frankfurt am Main and New York, 1993). The relationship between Dorothy and her confessor is analyzed in Dyan Elliott, “Authorizing a Life: The Collaboration of Dorothea of Montau and John Marienwerder,” in Catherine M. Mooney, ed., *Gendered Voices: Medieval Saints and Their Interpreters* (Philadelphia, 1999).


3 The *Scriptores* have lately been heavily criticized for their now hopelessly outdated editorial practices. Additionally, Polish scholars have criticized the patriotic goal behind these practices. See Jarosław Wenta, *Studien über die Ordensgeschichtsschreibung am Beispiel Preußens*. Subsidia historiographica 2 (Torun, 2000).

4 Hans Westpfahl and Richard Stachnik, *Beiträge zur Dorotheenforschung* (Braunsberg, 1942), with further references.


11 “... halte ich es für notwendig und pflichtgemäß, als katholischer Priester ein offenes Bekenntnis zum Führer und zu seiner Staatsführung abzulegen ... Der Sieg Adolf Hitlers war ein Sieg des sich in höchster Gefahr befindlichen Christentums in Deutschland und Europa, ein Sieg, so groß und folgenschwer wie jener, den Konstantin der Große im Jahr 313 errang ... Der herrliche Mann, der das Christentum und damit den Katholizismus in Deutschland gerettet hat, sieht sich in seiner Demut selbst nur als unwürdiges Werkzeug der göttlichen Vorsehung an ... deshalb fliegt ihm mein deutsches Priesterherz zu.” Katholiken für Hitler, Sonderdruck, 1934. Bundesarchiv Berlin (hereaftr: BA), VBS 47/2101/0905/15.

12 The “Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung” checked two books by Nieborowski for their accordance with National Socialist ideology in 1944, after a woman from Oppeln denounced him. The ministry found both of the books, written under the pseudonym Paul von Marienburg, unacceptable, but since both were out of print, and since inferences were made about the pension Nieborowski received as a fighter for the Volkstum, the ministry chose not to pursue the case. 2 Okt. 1944, Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung an Reichsschrifttumskammer. BA, VBS 47/2101/0905/15.


17 Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie, nasz znak DD-4370-292/12, I-III-27443, Akta personalne więźnia. Thanks to Dr Danuta Drywa for this information.

18 This devotion became most famous after Günter Grass wrote his novel “Der Butt” as some sort of reckoning with his former Latin teacher Richard Stachnik. See Wallace, *Strong Women*, pp. 46–52.


20 Antrag auf Aufnahme in die Reichsschrifttumskammer, BA, VBS 47/2101/0097/14.

21 Reichssicherheitshauptamt, Beurteilung der Dozenten an der Univ. Braunschweig, BA, R/58/5300.


25 Triller, “Kanonisationsprozess.”


27 Triller, “Kanonisationsprozess,” p. 339. The same argument was already brought forward by Nieborowski, *Die Selige Dorothea*, p. 186.


31 *Akten des Kanonisierungsprozesses*, pp. 22–47.

33 “Iuxta communem vulgi opinionem hominum partium Prussie firmiter tenetur et creditur, quod precibus et meritis beate Dorothee Cristiani contra Lituanos infideles in brevi victoriam obtinebunt et infideles quamplurimi ad Crisit fidei convertentur, sicut etiam plurimi sunt conversi,” *Akten des Kanonisationsprozesses*, p. 46.


35 On the modern historiography of the Teutonic Order see, for example, Wolfgang Wippermann, *Der Ordensstaat als Ideologie: Das Bild des Deutschen Ordens in der deutschen Geschichtsschreibung und Publizistik* (Berlin, 1979).

36 Personal observation during a visit in September 2010.