The Expeditions of Henry, Earl of Derby, to Prussia and His Participation in the *Reysen* to Lithuania, 1390–1392: Socio-Economic Contacts with the Authorities of the Teutonic Order and the Local Population

Summary

The subject of this doctoral dissertation is the two expeditions undertaken by Henry, Earl of Derby, the future King Henry IV of England, to the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia in 1390–1391 and 1392. These expeditions formed part of the broader phenomenon of the *reysen* organised by the Teutonic Order against Lithuania, in which knights from Western Europe participated. Presented as crusading and missionary enterprises, these expeditions also provided opportunities to pursue chivalric ideals, gain military experience, and establish social and political contacts. Despite the baptism of Władysław Jagiełło, the *reysen* remained an important aspect of knightly activity towards the end of the fourteenth century.

The main aim of the dissertation is to reconstruct the course of both expeditions, examine the organisation and functioning of the group accompanying the earl, and analyse the contacts established with the authorities of the Teutonic Order and the local population. The research addresses issues related to travel, the organisation of logistical and economic support, the composition of the group, and its relations with the surrounding society. Particular attention is also devoted to the significance of the experiences gained in Prussia for the subsequent lives of the participants and for Anglo-Teutonic relations following Henry IV's accession to the English throne in 1399.

The analysis made it possible to reconstruct the itineraries of both expeditions in detail. During the first journey, Henry's group reached the Prussian coast by sea and subsequently travelled through Gdańsk and Königsberg to Lithuania, where it participated in the siege of Vilnius. Following the campaign, the group returned to Prussia, remaining there until the spring of 1391. The second expedition, undertaken in 1392, followed a different course. After arriving in Königsberg, the planned *reyse* did not take place, prompting Henry to continue his journey towards the Holy Land.

Another aspect of the research concerned the organisation of travel and the use of the transport infrastructure of the Teutonic State. The study demonstrated that the participants made use of the existing network of roads, waterways, and settlements, adapting their means of transport to geographical conditions. Waterways played a particularly important role, especially the Pregel, Neman, and Neris rivers, while horses and transport wagons were used on overland routes. An

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analysis of the accounts also made it possible to reconstruct the organisation of provisions and accommodation. During shorter stops, the group stayed at roadside inns, whereas longer stays frequently involved accommodation in properties belonging to ecclesiastical institutions, such as the episcopal manor at Biskupia Górka near Gdańsk. The study also established the scale of expenditure incurred during both expeditions, amounting to more than six thousand Prussian marks, demonstrating the considerable financial resources required to organise such undertakings.

An important result of the research is the reconstruction of the composition and internal structure of Earl Henry's retinue. Its members included knights, esquires, clergymen, household servants, and minstrels. A substantial proportion of the participants were connected with the Lancastrian household, either through service to John of Gaunt or through personal relationships with his son. An analysis of the responsibilities performed by individual members demonstrated that the group operated according to the organisational model of an English aristocratic household, adapted to the conditions of travel. The court hierarchy and division of responsibilities relating to finances, provisions, transport, religious duties, and ceremonial functions were maintained. Henry's expeditions can therefore also be examined as an example of the functioning of the travelling household of a late-medieval magnate.

An important part of the dissertation is devoted to analysing the contacts established by the participants with representatives of the Teutonic Order, particularly the Grand Masters, the Order's Marshal, and its commanders. Relations with Grand Marshal Engelhard Rabe were especially significant, as he cooperated with the English group during military operations and in organising its stay in Prussia. These contacts may have contributed to the development of more lasting personal ties, reflected in subsequent correspondence. Relations with Grand Master Konrad von Wallenrode were different, as they may have been influenced by disputes arising from the presence of the English in Prussia and by the internal political circumstances of the Order. Relations between the participants in the *reysen* and the Teutonic authorities therefore involved both cooperation and conflict.

The research also examined contacts with other social groups. In the case of secular and regular clergy, religious practices, the use of ecclesiastical properties, and the distribution of donations and alms were particularly important. These activities demonstrate the place of piety in the everyday functioning of the group. Relations with Prussian burghers, by contrast, were primarily economic in character. Merchants, craftsmen, and traders supplied food, textiles, and equipment necessary for the journey. English merchants residing in Prussia also played an

important role, potentially acting as intermediaries between the visitors and the local market. The surviving sources additionally provide information about contacts with local knights, the rural population, and other participants in the *reysen*, particularly French knights.

A separate aspect of the dissertation concerns contacts with representatives of the Polish-Lithuanian rulers and their entourages. These included attempts to secure the release of English knights captured during the siege of Vilnius, as well as a dispute involving the merchant Mikołaj Makenhagen, in which the Pomeranian and Teutonic authorities became involved. These cases illustrate the importance of local political and legal circumstances with which the English visitors were not always sufficiently familiar.

The final area of research concerns the subsequent lives of the expedition participants and Anglo-Teutonic relations after 1399. An analysis of the careers of Henry's former companions indicates that some participated in the rebellion against Richard II and subsequently received offices and honours at the court of the new monarch. It may be assumed that their shared experiences of travel and military campaigns helped to strengthen personal ties and loyalty towards Henry. In relations with the Teutonic State, attempts to resolve commercial disputes and maintain political contacts were also identified. Of particular significance is the evidence demonstrating Henry IV's enduring personal memory of his stay in Prussia, including his declaration in 1410, in which he described himself as a "child of Prussia".

The research has made it possible to present Henry's expeditions as complex undertakings combining military and religious objectives with the functioning of a travelling household and a network of social and economic contacts. The findings supplement existing scholarship on the participation of Western European knights in the *reysen* to Lithuania, the organisation of late-medieval aristocratic travel, and Anglo-Prussian relations. They also provide a basis for further comparative research into knightly mobility and the significance of personal contacts in the late Middle Ages.

Keywords: Henry IV, Henry of Derby, Teutonic Order, Prussia, Lithuania, *reysen*, Northern Crusades, English knighthood, aristocratic household, socio-economic contacts.