


morsels to enjoy in this book. The focus is upon the Middle Ages, of course, but the topic requires Dyer's gaze to sweep across developments from Late Antiquity onward. Some generalizing remarks are therefore necessary, though in his introduction, he rightly admits that he "cannot presume to have covered adequately all dimensions" of the relevant history (13). I fear that some users of this text will still take the book as just that sort of manual, as Dyer freely draws on comments from reformers, church fathers, modern liturgists, and late medieval resources like *The Lay Folkes Mass Book*. But this is unavoidable and cannot be seen as a criticism. The volume is an absolute delight to read, as well as a considerable resource. I hope it enjoys a wide audience.

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Risk, Emotions, and Hospitality in the Christianization of the Baltic Rim, 1000–1300. By Wojtek Jezierski. Early European Research 17. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2022. 356 pp. €50.00 hardback; €50.00 e-book.

The book by Wojtek Jezierski investigates how risk, danger, and uncertainty were experienced by missionary and crusader societies and communities and local populations in the Baltic Sea region during its Christianization between c. 1000 and 1300. These themes are explored through more "tangible" and thus registered in available primary sources descriptions of emotions and practices of hospitality.

In a long introductory first chapter, the author goes into detail about the research methods and tools which he adopted or crafted for his investigations. The second, also introductory, chapter briefly discusses previous scholarship on the conquest and conversion of the Baltic region. Rather than trying to comprehensively outline the vast body of research, Jezierski focuses on positioning his own investigations and highlighting their novelty. Similarly, rather than characterizing particular primary sources, the author paid more attention to his and previous researchers' approaches to them. It was a good decision, given that the analyzed sources are well-known among medievalists and were frequently revisited.

The book comprises six "main" analytical chapters arranged in chronological order, which can be read separately. Some of those chapters are built upon the author's previously published scholarly pieces, which are clearly stated in the acknowledgements. Despite this, useful cross-references were introduced in all the chapters, which helps the reader to better navigate the book and allowed the author to avoid unnecessary repetitions.

The third chapter demonstrates how hagiographers and chroniclers living and writing around the Baltic Sea, such as Rimbart, Adam of Bremen, Helmold of Bosau, and Henry of Livonia, perceived and described fear and terror experienced (and sometimes inspired by) missionaries evangelizing pagan peoples. Jezierski makes interesting points. According to some of those medieval authors, not every missionary had to live up to the alleged fearlessness of St Ansgar. Authors who experienced the threat of heathens first

hand, such as Helmold, were more likely to accept fear among clerics as a natural and common response to danger and violence than “armchair missionaries,” such as Adam.

The fourth chapter investigates guest–host interactions between Christian missionaries and non-Christian communities receiving them between the late tenth century and mid-twelfth century on the examples of Adalbert of Prague, Bruno of Querfurt, Bernhard the Spaniard, and Otto of Bamberg. The author studies how those two parties, guests and hosts, created, used, and negotiated “spaces of hospitality,” where notions of space, power, identity, and emotions intertwined. Those encounters, either peaceful or hostile, would often determine whose social, political, and religious order would triumph.

In the following chapter, Jezierski studies the rituals, customs, and abuses of hospitality reported by Helmold of Bosau’s *Chronica Slavorum*. The examples investigated in the chapter involve not only missionaries and pagan Slavs on the southern Baltic coast, but also secular and religious elites of the Kingdom of Denmark and the German Empire. Jezierski made a highly relevant observation regarding different perceptions of hospitality and hostility in the chronicles of Adam of Bremen and Helmold of Bosau. The former medieval author strongly separated them and emphasized the alleged hospitality of the Northerners. Conversely, according to Helmold’s chronicle, the rituals of hospitality could be easily abused and hospitality could quickly turn into hostility or involve certain hostile aspects from the beginning, thus endangering the evangelizing effort. The two texts were set apart not only by 100 years, but also by their authors’ different social environments and missionary agendas.

Jezierski uses the sixth chapter to discuss emotions that occurred during and were inflicted by sieges described in the chronicles by Helmold of Bosau and Henry of Livonia. As Jezierski puts it, “[a] medieval siege was, above all, a nerve-wrecking game” (176) that invoked strong emotions, such as (dis)trust, hope(lessness), anxiety, terror, and despair in both the besieged and the besiegers. The author employed digital tools to conduct semantic analysis of word co-occurrences in the *Livonian Chronicle of Henry* and proved the close association of the words “fear” and “terror” with castles.

The seventh chapter returns to the quantitative analysis of the politics of emotions and empathy walls in the chronicle by Henry of Livonia and the anonymous *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*. By surveying emotion words, Jezierski investigated what emotions the medieval authors ascribed to their communities and adversaries. Interestingly, Jezierski makes a point that for the anonymous author, the adversaries, that is, the out-group, were lesser and inferior versions of his in-group. For Henry, the opponents of Livonian Christians were incapable of experiencing certain, typically positive, emotions, which made them more alien. The quantitative analysis is followed by qualitative case studies involving joy and rejoicing, fraternity, love, grief, and consolation.


In the eighth chapter, the author revisits the anonymous *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* and, to a lesser extent, the chronicle by Henry of Livonia to study further hospitality and host–guest relations in thirteenth-century Livonia. The chapter focuses on feasting and festivities, bathing, metaphorical descriptions of warfare, exchanging hostages, and a certain miracle story. It is followed by a short concluding “Epilogue” and an impressive bibliography of more than 60 pages (285–346).

The author skilfully crafted the theoretical framework for his research. He derived ideas not only from medieval studies on emotions, hospitality, and the history of the Baltic region, but also from cultural anthropology and social sciences. Jezierski refers to and successfully applies, for example, the concepts of “risk society” used and promoted by Ulrich Beck and “emotional communities” coined by Barbara H. Rosenwein, modifying them to suit his research on this particular region and period.

One could argue that the theoretical parts of the book are too elaborate and pose a risk of eclipsing the actual source material analysis. Admittedly, one of Jezierski's previous scholarly pieces published in *Making Livonia: Actors and Networks in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region*, ed. by Anu Mänd and Marek Tamm (Routledge, 2020), and included in the reviewed volume has been criticized for revisiting widely known and well-researched Livonian chronicles. According to the reviewer, it hardly brings new observations, despite using sophisticated methods and interpretations (see the review by Matthew F. Stevens in *Zapiski Historyczne*, 86/3 [2021], 162).

I would argue, however, that Jezierski's book not only conveys well-thought-out knowledge about interactions and encounters between native pagans, missionaries, and crusaders in the high medieval Baltic region built upon previous scholarship, but also includes clearly innovative elements. The author made highly relevant interpretations and reinterpretations regarding those frontier societies, their emotions, practices of hospitality, and perceptions of objective dangers and subjective risks, and supported his conclusions with careful reasoning.

Thus, the volume is a welcome and valuable addition to the vivid research on the conquest and conversion of the Baltic region (see, e.g., Mihai Dragnea, *Christian Identity Formation Across the Elbe in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* [Peter Lang, 2021] and Gregory Leighton, *Ideology and Holy Landscape in the Baltic Crusades* [Arc Humanities Press, 2022]).

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***The Prester John Legend Between East and West During the Crusades: Entangled Eastern-Latin Mythical Legacies.* By Ahmed M. A. Sheir. Mediterranean Studies in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 1. Budapest: Trivent Publishing, 2022. 367 pp. \$155.00; \$124.00 pdf.**

In *The Prester John Legend Between East and West During the Crusades: Entangled Eastern-Latin Mythical Legacies*, Ahmed Sheir offers two theses. The first challenges Eurocentric interpretations of the Prester John legend through a meticulous uncovering of the Eastern Christian components of the story. Second, he argues that the legend itself had a hand in shaping inter-European politics and the course of the Crusades during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This study is grounded in analysis of Arabic, Coptic, and Syriac, as well as Latin, sources.

According to stories that spread across Europe beginning in the twelfth century at the time of the Crusades, Prester John was a mythical Christian king who ruled over a fabled Christian empire in the East. This "East" was variously located in India, Central Asia, and Ethiopia. These stories persisted into the early modern period. Until the 1980s, scholars focused on the literary and philological aspects of two extant sources that mention Prester