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## THE BALTIC AS A COMMON FRONTIER OF EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

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The purpose of this article is to discuss the Baltic Sea and Basin as a region in which there developed a common frontier of the culture of East and West European Civilization during the Middle Ages,<sup>1</sup> particularly after the beginning of the Christianization of the region. In designating West European Civilization in this period, the terms "Roman Catholic" and "Latin" Europe are used synonymously therewith, and the term "Orthodox East" is used interchangeably with "East European Civilization." Elsewhere, to the south of the Baltic Basin, a common frontier of the two cultures was also in existence,<sup>2</sup> but is not included in the scope of the article.

In a physical sense Europe does not lend itself easily to meaningful broad geographic divisions, except perhaps insofar as the great plain east of the Baltic Basin and the Carpathians, now mostly occupied by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, can be logically designated as a unit to which we may apply the term "Eastern Europe." The article is not intended as an investigation of the regions of European physical geography but as a discussion of the frontiers of European civilization as historical, social, and cultural phenomena.

The adjective "European," while synthetic and inadequate, is used for lack of a more precise term; "Christian" would not be applicable before the fourth century A. D.; and "Western" seems much too indefinite. Implied in the use of "European Civilization" is the conception of a society still in existence, with historical continuity, whose origins are at least as early as those of the Greek city -states — a society that began in the Mediterranean Basin and expanded until it included all physical Europe as well as other continental areas. "Eastern Europe" and "Western Europe" in the title of the paper refer to the civilization and not to physical geography.

The history of the Baltic as part of geographical Europe (approximately to the end of the eleventh century) is discussed in detail in Archibald R. Lewis' **The Northern Seas: Shipping and Commerce in Northern Europe A.D. 300 -1100** (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958). This work details the economic relations between the Christian and non Christian peoples of Northern Europe until the great changes that occurred following the cessation of the Scandinavian raiding activities and the establishment of relative stability in the politics and trade of the North by the Danish kings and the German settlers, traders, and sailors. But these changes would hardly have been possible without the earlier work of the Frankish monarchy and the influence of the Latin Church, which paralleled the northward moving influences of Orthodoxy and Kievan Russia.

From the Carolingian base the Latin missionaries projected their faith into the countries of the Baltic Basin; as a result of their activity most of the peoples of the Baltic Basin today are Catholic or Protestant rather than Orthodox. The advance of Latin Christianity was slow but sure and steady. By the end of the thirteenth century the Baltic had become almost a Latin and Germanic lake.



The climax of the earliest development of European Civilization, which began with the political struggles of the Greek city-states and the inception of their formal and systematic philosophy and science during the sixth century B.C., occurred at the time of the partial integration of Hellenistic people and cities with the non-Hellenistic among the societies of the Mediterranean Basin. The factor responsible for the integration was the Roman Republic and its means were the Roman diplomacy and policy. This integration, occurring in the first four centuries A.D., was never completely successful; the process of assimilation of cultural minorities was arrested before its fulfillment had been achieved in the Semitic areas of the Eastern Mediterranean. The integration continued with the further centralization of power and the equalization of opportunities of political advancement during the first two and a half centuries of Imperial rule. The Emperor was the center and symbol of this vast effort to unite disparate cultures with a common political bend.

The failure of this effort at a moment when the patterning of a common culture seemed reasonably close to realization has been the cause of subsequent political and social schisms in the fabric of European Civilization. Today, after a period of nearly seventeen hundred years since the Roman Empire exhibited its first signs of social stresses preceding the contraction of its dominion, European society, or the societies which have issued from the parentage of the Roman state, are oriented toward re-integration. The political, social, religious, and ideological elements of the cultures of Europe, while still discordant, are more capable of rationalization and of harmonization than at any former time since the later Middle Ages.

Since the third century A.D. there has been an expansion of the geographical boundaries of that civilization of Greek, Roman, and Judaeo-Christian heritage which is associated with the use of the word "Europe."



Fragment of the Mikolaus from Kuza map of Central Europe, modified by Wapowski. From the Ptolomeus Atlas published in Rome in 1508.

At the height of its expansion, the Roman Empire included only a fraction of the territory of the subcontinent of Europe — mostly the lands draining into the Mediterranean and into the Atlantic from Gibraltar northward to the mouth of the Rhine.

The major centers of the development of European Civilization, both East and West, had been established during the first period of integration which ended with the division of the Empire in 396 A.D. Rome and Constantinople — the New Rome — were these two centers; the latter maintained its political, economic, and cultural importance during the first half of the Middle Ages, until the first collapse of Byzantine power in Asia Minor under Seljuk Turk pressure and the advent of the Crusades. Constantinople was a center of ecclesiastical organization and of Christian missionary activity. While Rome declined politically and economically after the foundation of the second capital, it too remained a major center of ecclesiastical organization and missions. These characteristics compensated for its political and economic decline: within the first half millennium of the medieval period it had instituted and implemented a policy of hierarchical centralization that focused in the Bishopric of Rome a more effective authority, of much wider geographical jurisdiction, than was even to be enjoyed by the See of Constantinople. In the later Middle Ages, the Bishop of Rome was able to exercise substantial administrative control over the Christian Church in Western as well as in a large part of Central Europe, an area to which the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Constantinople did not approximate after the Islamic invasion of Syria and Egypt.

The contrast between the West and the East is heightened still further by the establishment of additional patriarchates in Eastern Europe, the most significant of which was to be that of Moscow, created in 1589.<sup>3</sup>

The wealth of the western Roman Empire, to which the Kingdom of the Franks largely succeeded, although perhaps on the economic side small as compared with the resources of the eastern Roman Empire, was diffused through an area which tended to expand as the area ruled by Byzantium shrank.<sup>4</sup> Eventually hundreds of towns that were to be subject to the

Roman See were founded or revived, while during the later Middle Ages the eastern Roman Empire contracted until by the opening of the fifteenth century it had become hardly more than a city. Its intellectual and artistic glory continued, but by the eleventh century Constantinople had become a passive port and its politics and commerce were increasingly influenced by foreign intervention, particularly Italian. Meanwhile its religion, art, and architecture were radiating through Eastern and South Central Europe and creating a Byzantine-oriented civilization.

The emissaries of Rome established the Latin Rite throughout Western Europe and eventually along the coasts of the Baltic. The missions were part of a spiritual army — a militant monastic movement rising across the length and breadth of Western Europe. This movement revitalized the hierarchy of the secular clergy as well as the office of the Roman Pontiff, which was supported and strengthened by a concept of sovereignty derived from the Roman law as well as a claim to universal spiritual dominion based upon venerable tradition and the apostolic Biblical injunction to Peter.

The organization and discipline of monasticism in the tenth and eleventh centuries made viable the theocratic element in the government of medieval Western Europe where theocracy competed with feudal, military, Roman monarchic, civil and municipal elements for social and political authority. In contrast with this centralization the Orthodox Church of Eastern Europe was divided into autonomous jurisdictions.

By the end of the thirteenth century, the Roman Church had enveloped the Baltic littoral, except for Lithuania. The forcible Christianization of the area had been carried forward by the conquests of Latin military orders — the Teutonic Knights and the Livonian order, the Brothers of the Sword.

In the thirteenth century, the Teutonic Order, after prolonged warfare against the Prussians, a pagan people south of the Baltic, had brought to the Eastern and Southeastern Baltic regions modified types of the feudal institutions which has been established in the regions of Latin Christendom.<sup>5</sup> In the same era, Lithuanian penetration into Western Russia had been preparing the ground for the introduction there of a feudal regime.<sup>6</sup>

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the eastward advancement of the Germans into territories disputed with the Slavs had produced the development of military control over areas recently conquered or tenuously held. The conquests of the Teutonic Order were the climax of the eastward expansion and represented the extension farthest east of German power.

To facilitate a solution of the problems of political consolidation and socio-cultural and economic integration, the adoption of German town law in Central and Eastern Europe was promoted as a means of producing greater political, administrative, and legal homogeneity. The codes of such cities as Lübeck and Magdeburg were adopted by other towns to the east;<sup>7</sup> in the adoption it was not uncommon for the stipulation of the right of judicial appeal to one or another of the more important towns to be included.<sup>8</sup> The political frontier of the civilization of Latin and Roman Catholic Europe was being extended eastward into the Baltic Basin. By the thirteenth century dozens of towns in this region had adopted the German codes, and common legal systems tended to draw to one another towns located in the Empire and those of the Territories of the Teutonic Knights. The liaison thus established also drew in Polish and Russian towns,<sup>9</sup> where the trading middle class was often German or Jewish, especially in Poland; and German codes regularly served as models for Polish town law.<sup>10</sup>

In the Territories of the Teutonic Order the tendency to effect similarity in judicial practice was paralleled by a tendency to uniformity in administrative procedure, developed by the maintenance of a collective overlordship in the organization of the Order, which was more highly centralized in its operation than most feudal regimes.<sup>11</sup>



*The Battle of Grunwald (Tannenberg), Vytautas the Great, Grand Duke of Lithuania, led the Lithuanian and Polish armies into battle and annihilated the forces of the Teutonic Order on 10 of July 1410. ( Matejko: National Gallery of Art, Warsaw)*

To the east the Russian city-republic of Novgorod dominated the northern half of a vast continental plain.

The law of Novgorod, while differing from that of the German towns to the west, was founded upon the necessities of trade and of commercial and financial contracts. In the midst of Novgorod there was settled a large foreign colony — that of the Germans,<sup>12</sup> who maintained the economic customs and practices and the political concepts of the Germanic and Latin West within the boundaries of the Russian republic.<sup>13</sup> This circumstance constituted one example of the inter-penetration of Eastern and Western European culture to be found in the Baltic Basin or on its periphery.

Other examples were the presence in the predominantly Germanic towns of Estonia, Livonia, and Courland of an Orthodox minority. In the thirteenth century both Danes and Germans had moved eastward across or around the Baltic Sea in the conquest of these provinces. The greater numbers and the superior organization of the Germans were advantages permitting them to obtain a larger share of the territory, and the Danish-held territories were eventually assimilated to those of the Order when the rights of the Danish crown were transferred to the Grand Master of the Order of the Teutonic Knights.

Efforts of the Order at conquest farther to the east were checked by the Russians, led by Alexander Nevsky, at the Battle of Lake Peipus in 1242; in the fifteenth century the eastward flow of the Germanic tide was reversed when the Order was defeated at the Battle of Tannenberg or Grünwald (1410). Subsequently its territory began to come under Polish jurisdiction, and the decline of its power was later accelerated by the Protestant Reformation and by the secularization of the Order. The major heir to the power and territories of the Order in the early modern period was, however, not Poland, but the family of the Margrave of Brandenburg, who was to create the state of Brandenburg - Prussia from the amalgamation of his territories within and outside the Empire.

Undoubtedly, the more effective political, economic, and military aggrandizement of Latin Europe in the Baltic Basin during the later Middle Ages must be attributed, at least in part, to the misfortunes overwhelming the Russian peoples in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, particularly to the invasion from the east of the Pechenegs, Cumans,<sup>14</sup> and Mongols, the last of whom occupied most of Eastern and Central Russia, as well as to the confusion attendant upon the breakup of Kievan society, much of which can be traced to the weaknesses of its polity.<sup>15</sup>

A military system with strong feudal elements prevailed first in the territories of the Teutonic Knights, then in Poland and Lithuania.<sup>16</sup> Missionary activity and military were synchronized; the castles of the German lords were constructed in Baltic provinces to serve as salient bastions of Latin power. The conversions of the Poles and Lithuanians to Christianity, although occurring at widely different times, were effected by Roman Catholic missionaries. Within the Roman Catholic area, there arose in the thirteenth century conflicts between the secular hierarchy and the civil-feudal authority of the Teutonic Order<sup>17</sup> and between the hierarchy and the mendicant orders.<sup>18</sup>

The German cities of the North Sea and Baltic coasts became centers of export of religious concepts<sup>19</sup> as well as of the artwork associated with the Latin Church and the Romanesque and Gothic styles.<sup>20</sup> Germany was a source of population expansion and also of technical skills.<sup>21</sup> The names of German merchants were inscribed in the registers of Stockholm and other Scandinavian towns.<sup>22</sup> German ecclesiastics passed not only northward to Scandinavia but also eastward to the Baltic provinces.<sup>23</sup> But the German art and religion were essentially the Latin art and religion as they had developed north of the Alps. In comparison with the German towns as centers from which went forth cultural embassies to the other regions of the Baltic Basin, even a great city such as Novgorod had relatively little influence.

A most distinctive feature of the development of the society of medieval Latin Europe was the combination of land tenure based upon military service with forms of allegiance derived from Christian usage. This would not have been possible without the pervasive influence of the Church in Western Europe, a Church that was not subordinated to the State, but, on the basis of its claim to spiritual supremacy over the State, exercised a quasi-independent supranational jurisdiction over the inhabitants of Western Europe. By German population expansion this system was carried into the lands south and east of the Baltic and then through the territories of Poland-Lithuania.

Feudalism probably originated as a result of endemic conflict in border areas, where almost constant vigilance against the enemy was at first necessary. However, this was only the beginning of its evolution; in its origins it did not differ from other protofeudal military societies in other parts of the world. This is essentially a system in which power is derived first from seizure of territories on or near the peripheries of society. It might perhaps be designated as march or frontier feudalism. In the long period which is known in Western Europe as the Middle Ages — approximately the thousand years following the demise of the Western Roman Empire — it appears in one form or another in several parts of the world — in Japan, in China, in the eastern Roman and Ottoman Empires. It even reappears, in modified form, after the end of the Middle Ages, in the Americas, where its power still lingers. It is probably directly related to the expansion of nations, empires, and civilizations in the medieval period, which created so many new frontiers in Eurasia. In each civilization in which it appeared its forms were influenced by precedent institutions and ideas. In Western Europe its growth was conditioned by the strength of the Latin Church, which reached the zenith of its social power almost simultaneously with the ascendancy of feudalism.

From the seventh century the land holding families of Western Europe had been gradually entrenching themselves in power and in economic enjoyment of the land — a process that reached its climax about the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The multiple weaknesses of the Empire of Charlemagne and his descendants produced strains and fissures which eventually dissolved this state before the end of the ninth century. Its reconstructed form, instituted in the tenth century as the predominantly Germanic Roman Empire, suffered a temporary collapse in the thirteenth because of the decentralizing tendencies which the Emperors could not overcome. Though the rulers of this Germanic Empire struggled to hold it together it was weakened by the failure of the Emperor to control its clergy, princes, and barons.

However, despite the decline of the Imperial central power the Germans pushed eastward into the Baltic Basin. By the fifteenth century the German expansion had reached its zenith and checks were put upon it by the expansion of the Lithuanians and Poles, whose political destinies became joined in the last medieval centuries. The outward expansion of the Germanic social and political frontier was decelerated and arrested by the counter-expansion of the Poles and Lithuanians (to whose counterforce that of the Muscovites was to be added).

Yet this arrestment did not bring as a concomitant the closing off of the German economic frontier. German merchants and German commerce surmounted the national barriers and penetrated into the interiors of the Polish,<sup>24</sup> Lithuanian,<sup>25</sup> and Russian societies.<sup>26</sup> German merchants resided and conducted business in Polish and Lithuanian towns and in Novgorod;<sup>27</sup> a substantial share of Polish trade was in German hands. When competition in interregional trade eventually did appear for the Germans in the late medieval period it came not from the east but from the west — from English and Netherlandish sailors and merchants.<sup>28</sup>

It would seem that the successful penetration of the Polish and Russian East by the German merchants was due not only to their geographic proximity and to a habit of adventurous, far-ranging commerce but also, in comparison with the Poles and Russians, to the technical advantages which they possessed in economic and transit activities related to commerce. These same advantages were possessed in comparison (although not necessarily in the same degree) with two other Baltic nations, Sweden and Denmark.<sup>29</sup> From the thirteenth century until the dawn of the modern period the external commerce of these countries was dominated by the Germans, and in Sweden there were many resident merchants of German descent.<sup>30</sup>

The dominance of the Germans in the commerce of the Baltic Basin was surely due not only to an aggressive disposition; this the Poles and Lithuanians possessed politically and the Novgorod Russians economically. The territories of the former and the fur- and forest-empire of the latter attest to their initiative. The higher degree of success enjoyed by the Germans in manufacturing and trading would seem to indicate that they were more conversant, for three or four centuries at the end of the Middle Ages, with late developments in navigation, commerce, banking, and generally the arts and sciences necessary to international trade, which they effectively studied, utilized, and augmented.

It is quite evident that it was possible to effect a reconciliation of an urban economic existence with a high degree of territorial political decentralization, toward which the Holy Roman Empire was moving in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>31</sup> The Empire was becoming a political crazy-quilt of ecclesiastical and hereditary principalities and of towns, an increasing number of which, as Free Imperial Cities, were being chartered directly by the Emperor and thus became for all practical purposes self-governing. Unlike absolutism in later medieval France, the Imperial monarchy did not regain the strength to revoke or suppress municipal privileges once extended, and the apogee of the medieval power and wealth of the trading towns of the German Hansa came in the centuries when the German king was relatively weak as a national sovereign. The fragmented and quasi feudal state of a large part of Germany did not prevent the development of a rather large volume of commerce, and North Germany ranked with North Italy and the Low Countries in wealth derived from trade.

Opportunities for improvement of their economic position were seized with great eagerness by the German merchants who, along with the Italians and the Flemish, promoted their business with an almost American enthusiasm and zeal. Further to implement their effectiveness and to guard against any insecurity attributable to the loosely organized condition of the Empire, first the North German merchants and then their native cities formed an association, or Hansa, which with the cooperation of its members in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries sustained itself as a major power in the Baltic Basin. The German Hansa was originally composed of smaller regional associations bearing such names as Saxon, Wendish, Prussian,<sup>32</sup> and Livonian,<sup>33</sup> which drew together into

a common front during the war with Waldemar Atterdag of Denmark in 1361, forming at Cologne in 1367<sup>34</sup> a larger and more effective organization embracing the members of the regional associations in the Empire, the Netherlands, and the Territories of the Teutonic Knights.<sup>35</sup>



*Fragment of the 1539 Olaus Magnus -map of Northern Europe.*

Allying itself with North German territorial rulers, the Hansa contained for the moment the ambitious expansion of Waldemar,<sup>36</sup> which however was to be resumed by his daughter Margaret and to reach a climax in the establishment of the Union of Kalmar (1397), bringing Norway, Sweden, and Denmark under the rule of the Danish royal house. In the fifteenth century the power of Denmark and of the Hansa was maintained in the regions of the Western Baltic Basin, while in the East Poland, Lithuania, and Muscovy expanded and acquired new territories. The Muscovite conquest of Novgorod weakened but did not destroy the position of the Hansa in the Eastern Baltic Basin. The growth of Poland - Lithuania and Russia projected strong new national elements into its complex social and cultural patterns.

From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries the peoples of Catholic Europe were experiencing an intellectual renaissance. Universities were founded and new areas of philosophic and scientific study derived from Arabic scholarship and science were being opened up. This renaissance spread northward to the Catholic countries of the Baltic Basin, but little of the new learning passed eastward beyond the borders of German and Polish territories. From the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries the Central and East Russian states were under the suzerainty of the Mongol Khan, for whose favor the Russian princes competed. Kiev, the first center of Russian civilization, was crushed by the Mongols. Western Russia came under Lithuanian dominion, and only Novgorod in the North remained independent. While Catholic Europe progressed intellectually, the progress in the Orthodox area was spiritual, economic, and political rather than intellectual.

Until the reign of Peter the Great, Muscovy was to a very great extent technologically behind the West, and its dependence thereupon was indicated in the presence of a large foreign colony in the "German Quarter" of Moscow. When Peter began his attempt to bridge the gap between Russia and her more advanced neighbors to the West he moved in the direction of the Baltic, establishing his new capital in the area most suitable for communication with Latin Europe.

The Baltic Sea was part of a vast transitional region between the more progressive West and the Orthodox East. A revolutionary change had occurred between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries. In the eleventh the culturally more advanced regions of Europe had been in the South: the eastern Roman Empire and Islamic Spain. It had appeared that Kievan Russia and the revived "Roman Empire," embracing Germany and Northern Italy, would attain a cultural and political ascendancy, in their respective areas, the former under the influence of Byzantium and the latter under the influence of a complex of ideas inherited from Greco - Roman Civilization. Eventually, under internal influences effecting the disintegration of the central power, as well as external pressures, political and military decentralization took place.

Had it not been for the onslaught of the Cumans and the Mongols, Kievan Russia might have survived in a somewhat weakened state, as did the Holy Roman Empire after the thirteenth century. Instead Kiev collapsed, creating a power vacuum into which the Mongols, the Lithuanians, and Poles moved. The disorganization of the lands held by the Kievan state occurred to the east and southeast of the Baltic Basin. With the disappearance of Kievan power, the greater part of the trade along a north-south axis in Eastern Europe, which Kiev had dominated, shifted to other regions. East - West trade routes — in the South, across the Black and Mediterranean Seas, and in the North, through the Baltic, the Sound, and the North Sea — connected Byzantium and the Arab states with Latin Europe, on the one hand, and Northwest Europe with Novgorod and the Eastern Baltic cities on the other. Moreover, internal north-south routes in Western Europe acquired new importance from the eleventh century onward. The Alpine routes steadily ascended in commercial significance from then until the end of the Middle Ages, while in Russia the Dnieper route by way of Kiev seems to have been temporarily eclipsed. There was much circulation around — rather than through — Kiev; and the Golden Horde, Moscow, and Novgorod all profited thereby. At the same time there was a convergence upon the Baltic which exceeded the traffic of the earlier Middle Ages in this area, and a commercial activity of ascending proportions comparable to the rise in Mediterranean trade. A very great amount of this activity was in the hands of the cities of the German Hansa.

As the chief organizing factor in the Hansa, the city of Lübeck occupied an especially strong position. Lübeck was to a great extent the mind and soul of the Hansa, despite the prominent roles played therein by other towns, notably Danzig and Cologne.

The capture and sack of Wisby on the island of Gotland, in the mid-Baltic, by Waldemar Atterdag of Denmark, in July, 1361, had lasting effects upon the trade of the Germans, who had used Wisby as a principal entrepot in the transmaritime trade from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. Thereafter more direct communication existed between Lübeck and the towns of the Pomeranian coast, on the one hand, and the towns of the Eastern Baltic, on the other.<sup>37</sup> The former quite, possibly gained economically by this change, the Wisby middleman being eliminated. Under other circumstances, the loss of Wisby might have been a great disaster, but instead it seems to have served as a stimulus to the further development of the coastal towns and to the unification of the German Hansa — in the last analysis the Danish king rendered the Germans an inverted, unrealized, and unintended service in his attack on Wisby.

Of greater consequence to the Hansa and its relations with the East was the collapse of the power of Novgorod in the fifteenth century. The perimeter of this commercial empire, which had been a major Orthodox power from the eleventh century, had been successfully defended by Alexander Nevsky against the Swedes in 1220, the Teutonic knights in 1242, and the Lithuanians in 1245. Although successfully defended against Scandinavian, German, and Lithuanian aggression, Novgorod eventually succumbed to the Muscovites' ambitions to enlarge their grand principality into a pan-Russian dominion.

The Germans were compelled to yield their privileged position in Novgorod, and in the sixteenth century relations were opened to establish a new commercial bridge between Eastern and Western Europe through English enterprise. This marked a change from one of the main characteristics of the relations between Eastern and Western Europe since the eleventh century — the relatively close connections maintained through German commerce between the Orthodox and Catholic regions of Europe after the schism of 1054.

To attempt a generalization concerning the efforts of the Germanic peoples to play a role in the history of Eastern Europe:

(1) Before the Christianization of the Scandinavians and the Eastern Slavs the former had thrust themselves into the territory and affairs of the latter,<sup>38</sup> and Scandinavian contingents were present as far south as Constantinople.<sup>39</sup> From the ninth to the eleventh centuries they contributed politically to the development of the Eastern Slavic society, being meanwhile assimilated into that society. This period more or less coincided with Scandinavian naval domination of the Baltic and of the Northern Seas in general. It was a period of some confusion and of reorganization in Latin Europe, of disintegration of the Germanic Carolingian Empire, when this Empire, its successor states, and also the British Isles were periodically subject to attacks by Scandinavian elements, against which they found it difficult or impossible to organize an adequate defense. This period came to an end with the incorporation by conversion of the Scandinavians, both in their original territories and in those in which they had settled, into the fabric of Christian West European society. The end of the period coincided with — may indeed be partly due to — something approaching a technological and industrial revolution affecting Christian Western Europe, which began in the ninth and continued for several centuries, gaining momentum therewith, and which augmented the population through augmentation of productivity in agriculture and manufacture and enhanced the related financial and transportation industries. These were crucial centuries for the world, for in Western Eurasia and the Mediterranean Basin the balance of power was swinging away from the Islamic and Byzantine South and East and in the direction of Christian Western Europe. Had Kievan Russia not been crushed beneath the weight of its internal and external problems in the same centuries there might have occurred an upward surge in the life of Eastern Slavic society as well.

(2) The West European peoples who most thoroughly benefited by the period of industrial and technological advancement were the Italians and the Germans, who were the most aggressive in their commercial

enterprise by land and by sea; the Italians from their bases in the Mediterranean and the Germans from theirs in the North and Baltic Seas. The Germans participated in and contributed to the medieval technological and industrial revolution to a greater extent than those later Scandinavians who remained in their homelands. They were able to wrest control of the Northern Seas from the Scandinavians and to respond successfully to attempts of the Scandinavians to regain such control, as for example that of the Danish King Waldemar Atterdag in the fourteenth century. The advantages which they possessed *vis-a-vis* the Russians of Novgorod were not as great as those which they had in relationship to Scandinavia. While much of the trade, and almost all the external trade, of Scandinavia passed into the hands of the Germans, Novgorod had a well-organized commercial empire, the point of whose contact with the Germans was the city itself. The barriers of Poland and Lithuania also severely limited German economic or political penetration into the East beyond the boundaries of the Territories of the Teutonic Knights.



*Vytautas The Great, Grand Duke of Lithuania.*

Among the Scandinavian peoples discussed in the foregoing outline the Swedes seemed to have played a special role. Even before their conquest of Finland in the twelfth century, they had attempted to dominate the northern and southern coasts of the gulf separating the country from Estonia. In the ninth and tenth centuries the Swedes extended their influence eastward and southeastward across the Baltic,<sup>40</sup> invading Russia and settling there.<sup>41</sup> From the eastern coast the Scandinavians pushed into the interior, becoming a trading and often also a ruling element in a chain of towns reaching from Lake Ilmen eventually far down the Dnieper.<sup>42</sup> Their first major base of political conquest was Novgorod, but by the end of the ninth century they had established themselves in Kiev. Through their conversion to the Eastern Orthodox form of Christianity<sup>43</sup> (along with the Slavs among whom they settled) they abandoned much of their earlier culture and were instrumental in the introduction of Byzantine Civilization into the great East European plain.

Between the Germans to the west and Eastern Slavs inhabiting the plain lived other Slavic peoples<sup>44</sup> who contested the control of territories between the Elbe and the Niemen. The contests were waged sometimes among the Slavs themselves, sometimes between the Slavs and their aggressive neighbors the Germans. Charlemagne had enlarged his Empire eastward to include as subject territories the lands between the Elbe and Oder. In his reign the Germanic frontier had been advanced eastward in the regions south of the Baltic. Within a hundred years the Carolingian structure had dissolved into fragments, but out of its dissolution emerged in the tenth century the Roman Empire of the German Nation, with a twofold orientation, southward toward Italy and eastward toward the vast expanse of the plain.

Through the conversion of the Poles to the Roman Catholic Church ecclesiastical policy transcended the limitations of the tenth century political frontier of the Empire. The Catholic religion was moved beyond the Imperial political frontier and a new Christian state, Poland, created with its own national hierarchy.



In the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, the Polish princes — sometimes vassals of the Emperor and sometimes not — struggled to gain the Polish throne and to wield influence over the territories between the Elbe and the Oder. The latter effort brought them into conflict with the Germans; marches were established along the eastern Imperial border to control Western Slavic incursions. The Emperors Henry II (in 1017) and Conrad II (in 1029) formed alliances with Yaroslav the Wise of Kiev to oppose Mieszko II of Poland, and this policy was continued in the reigns of Henry III and Henry IV.[45](#)

In the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries many Slavic towns were founded in the regions to the south of the Baltic, in the lands lying between the Elbe and the Vistula — towns which had military and ecclesiastical and sometimes also commercial and industrial quarters.[46](#) These towns were not provided with a law specifically suited to mercantile pursuits, which was a limiting factor upon the growth of their commercial activity. From the thirteenth century this need was to be supplied by the introduction into the towns of forms of law derived from Germany, and the original Slavic character of many cities was masked not only by the adoption of the new municipal codes but also by an influx of German colonists who came at the invitation of the territorial lords, desirous of benefiting by the commercial and industrial skills for which the Germans were renowned.[47](#) Thus even beyond the borders of regions indigenously Germanic in the rural and urban constitution, a layer of Germanic culture was spread, transforming or modifying municipalities in vital areas of city life such as mercantile and municipal law, the economy, architecture, the arts and crafts, and even language.

In the originally Western Slavic areas of Catholic Europe, therefore, we see the emergence of a mercantile class predominantly German who often appear to have a near monopoly of the commerce of these lands in the later Middle Ages. Moreover, in the Russian towns there were colonies of Germans resident for defined periods of time, and, though probably less frequently, Germans permanently settled as naturalized citizens. Elsewhere in the Baltic Basin, German mercantile families from the thirteenth century were inscribed in the registers of Swedish towns, where they had a very significant role in the economic development of their adopted country, [48](#) and Germans dominated external commerce in the towns founded in the Territories of the Teutonic Knights, which took on German characteristics in most aspects of their intellectual and physical existence.

By the end of the thirteenth century the Baltic Sea had become commercially almost a German lake, and in a cultural sense German influence was also most widely evident. However, these generalizations are advanced and are intended to have relevance and meaning only in relation to other considerations:

- (1) that the Germans were part of a larger cultural complex constituting the civilization of Western, Latin, or Roman Catholic Europe, the awareness of which they themselves indicated by entitling their polity the "Roman Empire of the German Nation";
- (2) that this civilization was germane to the civilization of Eastern, Orthodox, or Byzantine Europe, derived from "the Greek-speaking eastern Roman Empire";
- (3) that there was an affinity of these two societies which was abridged but not destroyed by the re-creation of the western Roman Empire in 800 and by the religious schism of 1054;
- (4) that this affinity could be and was realized and expressed through occasional and even continuous cultural and economic contacts and communication, for which contacts and communication the Baltic Sea and Basin afforded paramount opportunities;
- (5) that there was a certain noticeable commingling of Orthodox and Catholic Europe, both to the east and to the south of the Baltic, although in general the Germans, as the principal protagonists of the more strongly assertive Catholic society, pushed the frontier of this society vigorously eastward, first by commerce and then also by conquest and settlement, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, until it contained most of the territories of the Baltic Basin. When their efforts faltered, the Lithuanians, recently converted to Christianity, undertook to extend this frontier — first alone and then in alliance with the Poles. To these advancements the Russians opposed themselves to the best of their ability in the fragmented condition of their society invaded from both west and east, defeating the Teutonic Order at Pskov in 1242 and the Lithuanians in 1245. Novgorod successfully defended its independence against the aggressive forces from the West, perhaps successfully because of its vast politico-economic empire, drawing upon the natural resources of Northwestern and Northern Russia and upon the human resources and abilities of a thriving native merchant class.

Thus the Germans, although in the eleventh century temporarily arrested by the Slavs in their movement of conquest and colonization eastward along the south coast of the Baltic[49](#) achieved great success in commerce, both overland and maritime. From the tenth century German merchants had been appearing on the island of Gotland, a center of trade in the Baltic.[50](#) and traveling along the routes that connected Western Europe with the Slavic East.[51](#) In the Baltic their numbers were added to those of the Swedes, the Frisians, and the Slavs (including the Novgorod Russians). In the tenth century the Germans had begun significantly to increase their commerce with the Goths by sea and with the Slavs by land, and the volume probably continued to increase without significant recession. In such Russian cities as Kiev and Smolensk, German merchant colonies were resident by the eleventh century.[52](#)

The southward penetration of the Scandinavians and the establishment of a strong axis of north - south trade through Western Russia had re-enforced the economic position of Constantinople in the ninth and tenth centuries. Scandinavian and Kievan enterprise now connected the Baltic region more directly and frequently with the capital of the eastern Roman Empire and helped to extend Byzantine influence northward.<sup>53</sup> Scandinavians also raided coasts of the Black Sea;<sup>54</sup> but in general they were more peaceable and positive in their economic behavior, and at Constantinople a Scandinavian contingent entered the Imperial service in the later ninth century.<sup>55</sup> At least for the time being, the Baltic-Dnieper route, in the middle of the ninth century, assumed greater importance as an artery of trade than the older routes connecting the Baltic with Islamic Civilization<sup>56</sup> via the Volga and the Don, dominated by the Khazars.<sup>57</sup> From the tenth century, there was no state or society comparable in power to Kievan Russia elsewhere on the great East European plain. Kiev traded with Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, and Germany.<sup>58</sup> In attacking the Khazars, the Kievan princes bore down upon their economic and political rivals<sup>59</sup> but ended by destroying a buffer state which would have served later as a protective shield against the formidable invasions of the eastern peoples.

In the Baltic, Swedish power extended to the south and west as well as southeastward. Birka, near modern Stockholm, was a major center of North European trade.<sup>60</sup> Swedish influence in the Eastern Baltic lasted from the seventh to the ninth centuries,<sup>61</sup> and trade routes to the eastern seaboard from Birka and Gotland were still Swedish-controlled in the tenth century.<sup>62</sup> The Swedes also interested themselves in the passage from the Baltic into the North Sea, control of this vital area being shared with Norway, then lost to the Germans in 934, from whom the Danes wrested it in 983.<sup>63</sup> The Danes were creating an overseas empire, including territories in England, from which trade routes ran to the Baltic.<sup>64</sup> In the eleventh century the importance of the latter route diminished considerably,<sup>65</sup> while on the other hand Frisian, Saxon, and Flemish trade to Scandinavia, Gotland, and Finland still flourished.<sup>66</sup>

Scandinavia and Finland traded with Bohemia by way of the Baltic and the Oder, but the economic growth of Bohemia and Poland was less than that of Germany.<sup>67</sup> In general, the advantages of trade possessed by the Germans were already manifested in the eleventh century:

- (1) These advantages were partly geographical and related German control of inland waterways and access to foreign centers of production such as Flanders, whose cloth was carried to Norway, Denmark, Gotland, Finland, and Novgorod.<sup>68</sup>
- (2) They were also partly economic and technological and related to the growth of such industries as shipbuilding, fishing, banking, and manufacturing.
- (3) There were probably also population advantages related to the expansion of both the internal and external frontier as well as to the foundations of hundreds of towns and villages and innumerable manors; the indications of a vigorous colonization in the form of new settlements are very frequent and continue for at least two centuries.
- (4) The Germans were in a more advantageous position because they had (assimilated Latin Civilization, with its greater intellectual and technological sophistication, two hundred years or more before their neighbors to the north: the Danes, Swedes, and Goths.
- (5) In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Germans augmented their commerce with North Sea countries — Norway and England — and Danish interest in trading with these areas decreased from the later eleventh century.
- (6) In the same century the first German merchant associations were being formed, in Gotland and elsewhere, whose solidarity was to be impressively effective in the control of northern international commerce in the later Middle Ages.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Baltic assumed a greater importance as a medium of commercial communication between Eastern and Western Europe. First merchants from Gotland<sup>69</sup> and then those of towns which began to be founded along the southern coast of the Baltic — preeminently Lübeck — engaged in the carrying of goods in both directions, such as wax and furs from the East and Flemish cloth from the West. Merchants of both East and West European origin remained active in the Baltic trade through the twelfth century, but after 1200 Russian ships seldom ventured west of Gotland.<sup>70</sup>

The extension eastward of the preponderance of Latin - Germanic influence, cultural as well as economic, is evident in the Romanesque characteristics introduced into the construction of churches in Novgorod, where from the eleventh or twelfth century a colony of German merchants enjoyed rights of self-government within their community. In some degree these characteristics present themselves as early as the eleventh and as late as the fourteenth centuries, and Western artisans participated in the building of an archiepiscopal palace in the North German Gothic style in the fifteenth century. In Northwestern Russian cities in communication with the West — particularly Pskov, Polotsk, and Vitebsk — West European architectural forms were superimposed upon the Byzantine between 1200 and 1500, and farther to the east buildings in Vladimir constructed between 1180 and 1200 exhibited a profusion of examples of Romanesque influence in form and decoration.<sup>71</sup>

The societal (as distinguished from the purely cultural) frontier of Latin Europe was also advanced eastward between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries.

At the beginning of this period, there remained in the regions lying inland from the Baltic coast between the Gulf of Finland and the German—settled area in the Elbe Basin, independent pagan nations — independent both of the Catholic Germans and Poles and the Orthodox Russians. The Western Slavs —Wends and Poles —separated the Germans from the Eastern Slavs, but the Wends, occupying the Baltic Coast immediately to the east of the Germans, probably had less in common culturally with the Christian Poles than with the Finns, Estonians, and Balts situated north and northeast of Poland. The political organization of these peoples, though somewhat loosely defined, was yet generally effective enough in repelling attempts at conquest on the part of Danes, Swedes, Poles, and Kievan Russians who sought to control the Baltic littoral.[72](#)

The peoples of this area constituted a pagan enclave in Christian Europe. Though their territory was gradually reduced by conquest and settlement in the course of the twelfth century, and though there were instances of voluntary conversion to Christianity, this pocket of resistance to the advancement of an aggressive civilization was not finally eliminated until the forcible subjugation of the Prussians by the Teutonic Order, and of Livonia by the Brothers of the Sword, in the thirteenth century, and the conversion of the Lithuanian Grand Prince Jagiello in the fourteenth. The success of the Order again moved farther eastward (as well as northward) the border between Catholic Europe and Orthodox Slavic territories, thus extending and supplementing the efforts at settlement in the Baltic Basin earlier begun by German princes, nobles, townsmen, and ecclesiastics, whose initiative had already moved the frontier to, or somewhat beyond, the Oder.

The partial population Germanicization of the region between the Oder and the Gulf of Finland was not reversed until World War II and the years immediately following, when the Germans were expelled from territories east of the Oder, but the imprint of their efforts is still left in the material culture (e.g., architecture) of lands in which they were formerly settled, and the introduction of West European forms of Christianity has not been effectively reversed.

Germany, although suffering in the latter half of the eleventh century from the stresses of the investiture controversy and of princely defiance of royal authority, had still some kind of political cohesion in this difficult era, while other nations drained by the Baltic or interested in its commerce — Sweden, Poland, and Russia — were weakened by internal dissension to an even more debilitating degree. The Kievan state began to disintegrate into a collection of principalities and city-states bearing only a nominal allegiance to the ruling house. The problems of Russia were complicated by the assault of eastern peoples upon its territories, but these assaults were more severely felt in the South; and in the twelfth century the decline of Kiev was balanced by the rise of northwestern, central, and northeastern principalities and of Novgorod; important east-west trade routes connected interior Russia with the Baltic through the latter and with the West through Galicia and the Danube Valley.[73](#)

From the middle of the twelfth century Polotsk, Vitebsk, and Smolensk were regularly visited by German merchants, traveling via the Danube Valley, with which route Riga was associated after its foundation in 1201. This trade, based upon the westward transport of wax, furs, tar, tallow, precious metals, and barley, and the importation into Russia of textiles, salt, fish, fruit, and metal goods, prospered for more than three centuries.[74](#)

Thus by the opening of the thirteenth century a firm foundation had been laid for the continued prosperity of Central Western and Northwestern Russian towns in communication with the Baltic and Germany. Despite the advancement into Russia of Mongol power from the east and Lithuanian from the west, these towns were generally able to maintain their economic vitality and, in the case of Novgorod, political independence as well. They were more deeply affected by the Lithuanian presence, which established eventually in Western Russia an extensive grand duchy exerting overlordship over town and countryside and introducing not later than the fourteenth century feudalism of the type which then flourished in Germany, Poland, and elsewhere. Although the bases of the system may have been erected in Kievan Russia, the complete feudal institutions (according to West European standards) seem to have flourished only in that part of Russia ruled by Lithuania.[75](#)

However, neither the Lithuanian-Polish state nor any other was able in the course of the following centuries to withstand the westward advance of Muscovite power. Muscovy became imbued with a sense of destiny that carried it in the modern period to the control of the East European plain.

In the Middle Ages there were founded two states — one primarily Germanic, the other Slavic — which assumed a succession to Rome. The Frankish monarchy was the foundation of the state which after a tenth century metamorphosis emerged as the Roman Empire of the German Nation. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the grand principality of Moscow began to regard itself as the translated form of the Roman Empire of Constantinople — the Third Rome.[76](#)

The two new Empires were reorganizations of dominant national states in their respective areas. Theoretically the Holy Roman Emperor considered himself to be the legitimate universal ruler of Christian society — as did also the Tsar — not only by virtue of credentials linking his state with the polity and prestige of Rome, but also through a legally recognized claim to be the secular head of that body of Christians holding the true faith — in the West, Catholicity, and in the East, Orthodoxy. As the Church was universal in its mission, being directed to the salvation of all mankind, so originally was

likewise in theory the Empire intended to be in a related and corresponding political sense; the Christian Roman Empire of Constantine and his successors could be defined as the polity of Christendom.

The Empire of the West and the Empire of the East were actually dissimilar in many respects: by the end of the sixteenth century the power and territories of the former has already been extenuated, but the latter continued to expand until its fall in 1917. The former was transformed into a loose association of hundreds of autonomous states, of which the Emperor continued to rule the largest and most powerful, while the latter, after a period of confusion in the early seventeenth century, gradually if perhaps always somewhat inadequately enhanced its condition of internal political centralization.

Until the eighteenth century, the Empire of the West was separated from the new Eastern Rome by the Baltic Basin in physical geography and by Swedish, Polish, and Lithuanian power politically. In the course of the eighteenth century an aggressive Russian external policy broke through these latter barriers, and they have not been effectively re-imposed or replaced. Today the Soviet Union, a Muscovite polity with strength, resources, and territories greater than those of its predecessors, is the most effective power in the Baltic Basin, facing a still disunited Western Europe whose contentious nationalisms perpetuate its disorganization and collective weakness.

1 The scope of the article extends principally from the ninth century to the fourteenth.

2 Emphasizing the modern period, Oscar Halecki, *Borderlands of Western Civilization: A History of East Central Europe* (New York: Ronald Press, 1952), presents an extended history of the interrelated evolution of Poland, Lithuania, and the Western Russian lands.

3 Dimitri Stremoukhoff, "Moscow The Third Rome: Spurces of the Doctrine," *Speculum*, XXVIII, No. 1 (January, 1953), 99-100.

4 The increase in the territorial size of the Frankish realm was paralleled by the eastward expansion of the area of Christian religious allegiance, in which expansion the political and military strength of the Franks played a vital role. See Richard S. Sullivan, "The Carolingian Missionary and the Pagan," *Speculum*, XXVIII, No. 4 (October, 1953) 705-740.

5 Walther Kirchner, *The Rise of the Baltic Question* (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1954), pp. 6-12.

6 See George Vernadsky, "Feudalism in Russia," *Speculum*, XIV, No. 3 (July, 1939), 322-323.

7 *Meklenburgisches Urkundenbuch* (hereinafter referred to as *M.U.*) (24 vols. Schwerin, 1863-1936), X, 264-265, No. 6944 (confirmation of privileges of Rostock by Duke Albert of Mecklenburg, acknowledging validity of the law of Lübeck or Schwerin therein, March 26, 1349); 267-268, No. 6947 (confirmation of the use of the law of Lübeck in Wittenburg by Count Nicholas of Tecklenburg and Schwerin, March 31, 1349); XIII, 262, No. 7711 (confirmation of the use of the law of Lübeck in Wittenburg by Count Otto of Schwerin, February 11, 1«353).

8 Philippe Dollinger, *La Hanse* (Paris: Aubier, Editions Montaigne, 1964), pp. 29-30. Within its territories the Teutonic Order attempted to limit the diffusion of Lubeck law — doubtless because of the degree of independence conferred on the cities adopting this law—in favor of the law of Magdeburg and Kulm. Cf. Gertrud Schubart-Fikentscher, *Die Verbreitung der deutschen Stadtrechte in Osteuropa* ("Forschungen zum deutschen Recht im Auftrage der Akademie für deutsches Recht," ed. F. Beyerle, H. Meyer, and K. Rauch, Vol. IV, No. 3.) (Weimar, 1942), p. 372.

9 Dollinger, p. 32.

10 The introduction of German town law into Poland was mainly the work of the Polish princes: but the Church and the nobility sought to induce Germans to settle in Poland or to establish Polish settlements according to German Law. Schubart-Fikentscher, pp. 237-238. By the end of the thirteenth century there were in Poland (exclusive of Poznan) ten cities of predominantly German origin with German law. *Ibid.*, pp. 311-312.

11 Dollinger, p. 142.

12 Samuel H. Cross, "Medieval Russian Contacts with the West," *Speculum*, X, No. 2 (April, 1935), 142-143.

13 The law governing the German colony in Novgorod was founded upon the codes of Soest, Lübeck, and Riga. Schubart-Fikentscher, p. 520. The Germans in Novgorod were under their own magistrates as well as their own law. *Ibid.*, pp. 518-519.

14 The invasion of the Cumans in the late eleventh century cut off Kiev, Smolensk, and Novgorod from the commerce with the Black and Caspian Seas. Routes by which Eastern wares had been brought to these cities were disrupted, affecting the nature of the cargoes in westerly traffic there from. Thereafter furs, wax, flax, linen goods, and in general the products of the forests and streams, constituted the exports reaching Baltic and German centers. Archibald R. Lewis, *The Northern Seas: Shipping and Commerce in Northern Europe A.D. 300-1100* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), pp. 482-483. However, Kiev reestablished commercial contacts with Constantinople around 1102. *Ibid.*, p. 488.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 468.

16 Vernadsky, *Speculum*, XIV, No. 3, 322-323.

17 Exemplified in the conflict between the Order and the Archbishop of Riga: in 1366 Duke Albert of Mecklenburg requested the Teutonic Order to restore the Archbishop Fromhold in Riga. *M. U.*, XVI, 29-30, No. 9475.

18 *M. U.*, X, 103-104, No. 6742 (exclusion of mendicant and evangelical friars by Bishop Henry of Schwerin from the church in Butzow, April 2, 1347); XIII, 277-278, No. 7722 (instruction of Pope Innocent VI informing all bishops that they were to permit Brothers of the Order of St. Anthony to collect alms freely in their dioceses, February 22, 1353).

19 Dollinger, pp. 24 - 25; Lewis, p. 480.

20 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 143.

21 Dollinger, pp. 53-54.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 53-54.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 25.

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 32, 157-158.

25 The internal commerce of Lithuania was in the hands of towns located in the Territories of the Teutonic Order, especially Danzig. In 1323 Prince Gediminas of Lithuania had established a settlement of Germans in his territories. Schubart-Fikentscher, p. 224.

26 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 141-142, 143; Lewis, pp. 480-481.

27 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 142-143; Lewis, p. 480.

28 Dollinger, pp. 54-55.

29 Including superiority in navigation because of the greater utility in commerce and colonization of the German *Kogge* as compared with Scandinavian ships. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 39-40. For the relative incapacity of Norwegian vessels (which contributed to the increasing German dominance in Norwegian commerce), see *ibid.*, p. 55.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

31 Decentralization of political power in Germany may indirectly have contributed to the emancipation of the towns and the formation of leagues of cities. The territorial princes, commanding limited resources, conferred political privileges on the towns in return for the financial assistance of the wealthy townsmen. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 142. The mortgaging of feudal properties to burghers was not uncommon. *M.U.*, X, 242-243, No. 6919; 244-246, No. 6918; and *passim*. In military conflicts from the middle of the fourteenth century the townsmen used gun powder, which the feudal lords were sometimes too poor to buy. Karl Pagel, *Die Hanse* (Oldenburg: G. Stalling, 1943), p. 181. After the middle of the fourteenth century, the power of the greater princes within their

individual domains began to increase somewhat, perhaps because of improved economic conditions, and they occasionally attempted to restore their authority over the towns and to impose thereupon their own economic policies. These efforts led to conflicts between princes and towns. Cf. Dollinger, pp. 142-143. Towns such as Dortmund and Braunschweig became involved in costly wars with their territorial overlords. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

32 *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

34 *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

35 *Hansisches Urkundenbuch* (hereinafter referred to as *H.U.*) (11 vols. Halle and Leipzig, 1876-1939), IV, 80-82, No. 215, July 11, 1367 (agreement of Prussian and Netherlandish towns); *Die Recesse und Andere Akten der Hansetage von 1256-1430* (8 vols. Leipzig, 1870-1897), I, 373-376, No. 413, November 19, 1367 (confederation of Cologne); *Codex Diplomaticus Lubecensis. Liibeckisches Urkundenbuch* (11 vols. Lu-beck, 1843-1905), III, 703-707, No. DCLIX, June 24, 1368 (ratification of Treaty of Cologne); *Die Recesse und Andere Akten der Hansetage von 1256-1430*, I, 439, No. 483, October 6, 1368 (ratification of Confederation of Cologne).

36 The war was terminated by the Peace of Stralsund, generally favorable to the Hansa. See *H.U.*, IV, 141-145, No. 343, May 24, 1370. For a study of the significance to the Baltic of the Peace, see David K. Bjork, "The Peace of Stralsund," *Speculum*, VII, No. 4 (October, 1932), 447-476.

37 Cf. Ernst Hering, *Die Deutsche Hanse* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 1940), p. 106.

38 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 138; Samuel H. Cross, "The Scandinavian Infiltration into Early Russia," *Ibid.*, XXI, No. 4 (October, 1946), 506-507.

39 *Ibid.*, pp. 508, 513.

40 Cf. Lewis, p. 356.

41 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 138.

42 Cross, *ibid.*, XXI, No. 4, 513-514.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 513.

44 Dollinger, pp. 31-32.

45 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 139.

46 Dollinger, pp. 31-32.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

49 Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24; Lewis, pp. 455, 465, 468; Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany: The Reformation* (New York: Alfred A. Knof, 1959), p. 5.

50 Gotland may have retained a commercial ascendancy in the Baltic even during the Western Slavic resurgence of the eleventh century. Cf. Dollinger, p. 20. Schleswig also became a major center of exchanges where Flemish traders met Danish, Swedish, and Russian (*ibid.*) as a result of the destruction of the town of Hedeby during the struggle between the Scandinavians and the Wends in the middle of the eleventh century. Lewis, pp. 464-465.

51 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 143.

52 Lewis, pp. 480-481.

53 Political relations between Kiev and the eastern Roman Empire, especially the possible dependency of the former on the latter, are discussed in A.A. Vasiliev, "Was Old Russia a Vassal State of Byzantium?" *Speculum*, VII, No. 3 (July, 1932), 350-360.

54 Cross, *Speculum*, XXI, No. 4, 508.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 513.

56 The existence of a direct trade between the two areas is supported by numismatic evidence for the period 700 to 850. Lewis, pp. 214-216.

57 The high period of the importance of the Dnieper route was probably from the middle of the ninth to the middle of the eleventh century. Cf. Cross, *Speculum*, XXI, No. 4, 507.

58 Cross, *ibid.*, X, No. 2, 141-142.

59 Cross, *ibid.*, XXI, No. 4, 511-512.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 505.

61 Scandinavians were active in the trade of Novgorod before the rise of Kiev (c. 850). *Ibid.*, p. 507.

62 Lewis, p. 356.

63 *Ibid.*

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 334-335.

65 *Ibid.*, pp. 472-473, 474. On the other hand, Danish trade with Novgorod via Gotland may have been temporarily augmented. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 466. The general trend of Danish and Swedish trade with the West and East seems to have been downward, and is possibly related to unsuccessful efforts of the Danes and Swedes to take and hold the Eastern Baltic coast in the eleventh century. *Ibid.*, p. 465.

66 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 479.

67 *Ibid.*, p. 481.

68 *Ibid.*, p. 478.

69 These merchants were among the first to engage in the importation of Flemish cloth into Russia and in the exportation of Russian products there from. Dollinger, p. 21.

70 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 142-143.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 144.

72 Lewis, p. 465.

73 Cross, *Speculum*, X, No. 2, 144.

74 *Ibid.*, p. 143.

75 Vernadsky, *Speculum*, XIV, No. 3, 322-323.

76 For a discussion of the ideological origins of the conception that Moscow was the continuator of the Roman Empire, see Stremoukhoff, "Moscow the Third Rome: Sources of the Doctrine," *Speculum*, XXVIII, No. 1, 84-101.