

ARTICLE

Crusade, Politics, and Pastoral Care in the Klosterneuburg Sermons of 1467

Pavel Soukup 

Centre for Medieval Studies, Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague, Czech Republic
Email: soukup@flu.cas.cz

Abstract

This article examines sermons for the crusade against the Hussite king of Bohemia, George of Poděbrady, preached by Thomas Harder, an Augustinian canon and parish priest in Klosterneuburg, in the summer of 1467. These texts give us a direct insight into how preachers in fifteenth-century parishes might have dealt with the general commission to publicize the crusade, as they incorporate the crusade agenda into the pastoral content. Like his twelfth and thirteenth-century predecessors, Thomas Harder knew how to exploit the penitential and edifying potential of the crusade, combined with concerns for individual religious improvement and moral reform. Through an analysis of intertextual links, this study shows that he also systematically gathered, processed and disseminated topical information relevant to the fight against Bohemian heresy. Although he followed in the footsteps of high medieval crusade preachers in the themes he addressed, he also drew on more contemporary and local sources to inform his discourse and provide explanation of the immediate political circumstances.

Keywords: crusades; Hussites; crusade sermons; Thomas Harder; Bohemia; preaching

Over the past few decades, research into the history of crusading has substantially increased our knowledge of how the crusades impacted Christian society.¹ Scholars have noted the omnipresence of the crusades in the West in the last centuries of the Middle Ages. Plenary and partial indulgences have been discussed not only from the theological point of view but also from the ways in which their marketing reached literally every parish in Latin Christendom.² Historians have described the participation of non-combatants in crusading through penitential and intercessory actions and analyzed the relevant liturgical sources, largely neglected by older scholarship.³ Others have elucidated the multifarious preparations for crusades in the fields of diplomacy and logistics. Specifically in the fifteenth century, when Europe faced the Ottoman advance, crusading engaged the political and intellectual elite, required reconsideration of strategy, and kept large parts of the ecclesiastical and secular administration busy.⁴ Considerable attention has also been given to crusade preaching. The classical treatments of the

¹This study was prepared at the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences and supported by a grant from the Czech Science Foundation (GA ČR) “From Performativity to Institutionalization: Handling Conflict in the Late Middle Ages” (19-28415X).

²R. N. Swanson, ed., *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits: Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe* (Leiden, 2006); Andreas Rehberg, ed., *Ablaskampagnen des Spätmittelalters. Luthers Thesen von 1517 im Kontext* (Berlin, 2017).

³Amnon Linder, *Raising Arms: Liturgy in the Struggle to Liberate Jerusalem in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2003); M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, *Invisible Weapons: Liturgy and the Making of Crusade Ideology* (Ithaca, 2017); Jessalynn Bird, “Rogations, Litanies, and Crusade Preaching: The Liturgical Front in the Late Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries,” in *Papacy, Crusade, and Christian-Muslim Relations*, ed. Jessalynn Bird (Amsterdam, 2018), 155–93.

⁴Norman Housley, *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat, 1453–1505* (Oxford, 2012); Benjamin Weber, *Lutter contre les Turcs: Les formes nouvelles de la croisade pontificale au XV^e siècle* (Rome, 2013).

twelfth and thirteenth-century campaigns⁵ have been supplemented with studies evaluating in more detail the content of crusade preaching and pursuing the matter into the first half of the fourteenth century.⁶ The recent study of the later crusades has by no means neglected military history, but its greatest progress has concerned our understanding of the large-scale recruitment campaigns and the animated crusading home front. What emerges from this research can be aptly termed “la croisade au quotidien.”⁷

Nevertheless, the realities of crusade recruitment at the lowest level often remain beyond the reach documented by historical sources. Our knowledge of crusade propaganda rests on texts of a more or less normative nature. The papal bulls that authorized crusades typically contain general provisions on proclaiming the cross. Yet letters emanating from papal envoys or local church administration may illuminate further stages of publicizing these crusade bulls. In relatively rare cases, we have instructions for preachers issued by those in charge of crusade preparations. These mostly deal with the organizational aspects of the campaign; only in exceptional cases do they go as far as suggesting what should be preached to the would-be crusaders.⁸ Even in cases where sermon texts survive, they give us only an indirect insight into what crusade preachers told their audiences. Model sermons of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are usually deprived of references to the concrete circumstances of the campaign. These were mostly authored by high-profile theologians and top-level churchmen; if traces of the original delivery are kept, it is often thanks to the exceptional occasion and elite audience.⁹ Compared to the previous two centuries, full-text crusading sermons from the fifteenth century are relatively rare. The most famous crusade preachers of the period, including Giovanni da Capestrano and Roberto Caracciolo, did not leave us the texts of their speeches, and the surviving crusade sermons of another Franciscan star, Giacomo della Marca, await more detailed treatment.¹⁰ The documented crusading appeal of Jean Germain belongs to the elitist environment of the Burgundian court, as one of his treatises contains the sermon he gave at a meeting of the Order of the Golden Fleece.¹¹ The performance of crusade propaganda at the lowest levels of the Church structure thus remains largely unexplored.

The material presented in this study is able to partly fill this gap. The manuscript CCl 933 of the Augustinian Canons' Priory in Klosterneuburg in Lower Austria (7 miles from Vienna) contains three pieces of homiletics identified by marginal inscriptions as crusade sermons. All three are said to have been compiled and preached by Master Thomas Harder, who is known from other sources as a Klosterneuburg canon and parish priest. The inscriptions give precise dates of delivery, all within two weeks in August 1467. The purpose of the sermons is characterized as “taking up the cross against the

⁵Penny J. Cole, *The Preaching of the Crusades to the Holy Land, 1095–1270* (Cambridge, MA, 1991); Christoph T. Maier, *Preaching the Crusades: Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1994).

⁶Miikka Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching and the Ideal Crusader* (Turnhout, 2018); Constantinos Georgiou, *Preaching the Crusades to the Eastern Mediterranean: Propaganda, Liturgy and Diplomacy, 1305–1352* (London, 2018).

⁷Weber, *Lutter contre les Turcs*, 429.

⁸An eloquent example from the period in question is Cardinal Bessarion's instruction: L. Mohler, “Bessarions Instruktion für die Kreuzzugspredigt in Venedig (1463),” *Römische Quartalschrift* 35 (1927): 337–49, reprinted in Stuart Jenks, *Documents on the Papal Plenary Indulgences 1300–1517 Preached in the Regnum Teutonicum* (Leiden, 2018), 155–66, no. 35. Cf. Housley, *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat*, 153–54; Carlo Delcorno, “Apogeo e crisi della predicazione francescana tra quattro e cinquecento,” *Studi Francescani* 112 (2015): 399–439, at 414–15.

⁹Christoph T. Maier, *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology: Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross* (Cambridge, 2000); Georgiou, *Preaching the Crusades*, 193–268.

¹⁰Johannes Hofer, *Johannes Kapistran. Ein Leben im Kampf um die Reform der Kirche*, 2 vols. (Heidelberg, 1964–65), 2:365; Giacomo Mariani, *Roberto Caracciolo da Lecce (1425–1495): Life, Works, and Fame of a Renaissance Preacher* (Leiden, 2022), 137. For Giacomo, see Iulian Mihai Damian, “San Giacomo della Marca e la cristianità di rito greco: l'ultima missione nell'Europa centro-orientale (1456–1457),” in *Biografia e agiografia di san Giacomo della Marca*, ed. Fulvia Serpico (Florence, 2009), 39–55, at 43–46; Delcorno, “Apogeo e crisi,” 415–16.

¹¹Eric Burkart, *Kreuzzug als Selbstbeschreibung. Burgundische Statuspolitik in den spätmittelalterlichen Traktaten des Jean Germain* (Heidelberg, 2020), 17–21 and 347–49.

heretics.”¹² Based on these indications, there is no doubt that the sermons belong to the context of the crusade proclaimed by Pope Paul II against the Hussite King of Bohemia, George of Poděbrady. Nevertheless, the content of these sermons shows that they were not ad hoc performances but regular sermons given on liturgical occasions of the year. The crusade agenda was incorporated into and combined with the pastoral content, which allows us a direct insight into how preachers in parishes may have dealt with the general commission to publicize the crusade.

By analyzing these sermons, I argue that the war against George of Poděbrady was also waged by means of full-fledged crusade propaganda. After three decades of mostly peaceful contact between Hussite Bohemia and its neighbors following the *Compactata* treaty of 1436, the shift of the Roman curia toward a new crusading war apparently provoked no raised eyebrows. This was probably because the excommunication and deposition of the heretical king and the crusade against his subjects were communicated on a near daily basis to the largest possible audience. Further, it fit into the preexisting conceptual framework of anti-heretical rhetoric, which may have been blurred by the period of truce but was never fully suppressed. Historians have approached the lively and colorful polemical exchange between the opponents and supporters of George of Poděbrady through treatises and satirical pamphlets written by outstanding intellectuals of the time.¹³ The less elaborate but more effective dissemination of confrontational messages to wider audiences has remained unknown to us due to the lack of adequate sources. Using the unique example of the full-text crusade sermons from the Klosterneuburg parish, I show in this article how anti-heretical arrangements were communicated and how the crusade was approached by the curate clergy. Through an analysis of intertextual links, I demonstrate that crusade preachers (at least some of them) systematically gathered, processed, and transmitted information relevant to combating the Bohemian heresy.

Thomas Harder and the Crusade Against King George

By the time that Thomas Harder climbed to the pulpit to preach against George of Poděbrady, the fight against the Hussites had absorbed the energies of a second and even third generation. The religious reform movement in Bohemia, led by the preacher and university master Jan Hus, grew into a rebellion against the ecclesiastical and secular authorities. Hus’s execution at the stake in Constance in 1415 did not stop his followers from introducing religious novelties, the most visible of which was the practice of giving communion to laymen of both kinds (*sub utraque*—hence called Utraquism). Faced with the radicalization of the Hussites, who rejected Sigismund of Luxembourg as the Bohemian king, the papacy joined Sigismund in open warfare. The first wave of generally unsuccessful anti-Hussite crusades (1420–31) was concluded by the fathers of the Council of Basel in a compromise known as the *Compactata*, which was reached between the Council and the Bohemians and Moravians. This agreement, sealed in 1436 after prolonged negotiations and disputations, gave hope for a more peaceful period, as it accepted the Hussites back into the Roman Church and allowed Utraquism as a legitimate liturgical practice in Bohemia and Moravia.

The Hussites (also known as Utraquists) profited from the rise to power in the Kingdom of Bohemia of the Czech aristocrat George of Poděbrady. George, who came to prominence in 1448 when his party seized control of the Bohemian capital of Prague, chose the coexistence of the two confessional groups,

¹²Klosterneuburg, Stiftsbibliothek, CCl 933 [hereafter CCl 933], fol. 122r: “Sermo factus et collectus per magistrum Thomam Harder de dominica X^{ma} et de cruce signandis contra hereticos anno etc. LXVII^o”; fol. 135r: “Factus dominica XI post Penthecosten et collectus per magistrum Thomam Harder anno LXVII^o” (the rest of the numeral is cut off, but there can be no doubt that it was 67, too); fol. 147r: “Collectus de Assumpcione Marie et de cruce signandis LXVII^o per magistrum Thomam Harder.”

¹³Max Jordan, *Das Königthum Georg’s von Poděbrad. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Entwicklung des Staates gegenüber der katholischen Kirche* (Leipzig, 1861); Johann Loserth, “Die Denkschrift des Breslauer Domherrn Nikolaus Tempelfeld von Brieg über die Wahl Georgs von Podiebrad zum König von Böhmen,” *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte* 61 (1880): 89–187; Paul Joachimsohn, *Gregor Heimburg* (Bamberg, 1891); Jan Drabina, *Rola argumentacji religijnej w walce politycznej w późnośredniowiecznym Wrocławiu* (Kraków, 1984).

stipulated by the *Compactata* treaty, as his political program.¹⁴ He governed the country during the minority of King Ladislav and was elected King of Bohemia following Ladislav's death in 1458. Although a convinced Utraquist, George's position was initially relatively favorable as he maintained good relationships with the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus as well as with Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III. George further enjoyed the toleration of the popes Callixtus III and Pius II, who hoped that he and Matthias would reinforce the Ottoman front. The curia agreed to George's accession to the Bohemian throne on the condition that he take a secret coronation oath of allegiance to the universal Church (a phrase that gave rise to conflicting interpretations). However, as George's intervention against the Ottomans never materialized, the king gradually lost the favor of the papacy. In 1462, Pius II proclaimed the *Compactata* void, and before his death two years later, he had a citation drafted for George to appear before his court.

The summons were made public by Pius's successor, Pope Paul II, in the summer of 1465. About the same time, the pope commissioned his *legatus missus*, Rudolph of Rudesheim, with a number of tasks regarding the trial against George, including the proclamation of the cross if need be. The series of judicial measures culminated shortly before Christmas 1466 when Paul II pronounced the final sentence, proclaimed George an obstinate heretic, excommunicated him, deposed him from the throne, and forbade every contact with him. George's opponents within the Bohemian Crownlands sensed an opportunity and began to coordinate their actions more closely. The Catholic barons' league entered an alliance with the city of Wrocław in Silesia, which had been a center of opposition against the Utraquist king for years and now intensified the pressure on the curia to call a crusade. On 26 April 1467, legate Rudolph preached the cross in Wrocław against George and his adherents.¹⁵ Although fighting broke out immediately, it concentrated around smaller power centers scattered across Bohemia and Silesia. Any larger international intervention was wishful thinking at this point.¹⁶

In the absence of a Catholic champion from among the great princes, volunteers were recruited in Catholic regions adjacent to Bohemia. Legate Rudolph organized crusade preaching from his headquarters in Wrocław. On 4 May 1467, he appointed the Observant Franciscans Paul of Moravia and Bonaventure of Bavaria, guardians in Prague and Graz, respectively, general commissioners of the crusade in Germany.¹⁷ In his respective letters, Rudolph referred to his now two-year-old authorization and prescribed that the crusade's plenary indulgence be administered according to Pius II's anti-Ottoman bull *Ezechielis prophete* from 1463. It was only on 15 May that Paul II issued special regulation of indulgences for fighting the Hussites and renewed Rudolph's powers as crusade legate.¹⁸ Nevertheless, on 20 May 1467, Rudolph nominated further preachers of the cross—the Viennese official Alexius Tumer, the Observant guardian of Vienna Angelus of Styria, and the Passau cathedral preacher Paul Wann—with a letter of the same wording as he had used before.¹⁹

As far as we can tell from the sources, the recruitment campaign was especially intense in Bavarian and Austrian regions. The chain of commission in Austria can be reconstructed in some detail. The official Tumer was charged by the legate with local organization of the campaign on 20 May 1467, but he took until mid-July to pass the command on to individual parishes.²⁰ Thomas Harder, in his capacity as

¹⁴On the significance of the treaty, see most recently Adam Pálka, "The Basel Compactata and the Limits of Religious Coexistence in the Age of Conciliarism and Beyond," *Church History* 92 (2023): 534–58.

¹⁵On George's judicial trial and international politics, see Otakar Odložilík, *The Hussite King: Bohemia in European Affairs 1440–1471* (New Brunswick, 1965), 160–91; Frederick G. Heymann, *George of Bohemia: King of Heretics* (Princeton, 1965), 381–455.

¹⁶Petr Čornej and Milena Bartlová, *Velké dějiny země Koruny české*, vol. 6 (1437–1526) (Prague, 2007), 241–48.

¹⁷Jenks, *Documents*, 171–76, no. 38 (Paul) and MS. Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms 1092, fol. 253v (Bonaventure).

¹⁸Hermann Markgraf, ed., *Politische Correspondenz Breslaus im Zeitalter Georgs von Podiebrad*, *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum*, vol. 9 (Wrocław, 1874) [hereafter SRS 9], 233–36, no. 365, reprinted in Jenks, *Documents*, 176–79, no. 39.

¹⁹Jenks, *Documents*, 179–83, no. 40.

²⁰See the letter to George Talhaymer, parish priest and dean of Zwettl, from 15 July 1467 in the MS. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3484, fols. 18v–19v. For comparison, Paul Wann at Passau did the same in late June and early July: MSS. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 16188, fols. 255v–256r (28 June 1467), and Kremsmünster, Stiftsbibliothek, CC 23, fols. 380r–380v (3 July 1467).

the parish priest of Klosterneuburg, delivered his first crusade sermon on 2 August 1467. On 26 August, the chaplain of the Lords of Walsee, Achacius, is known to have sought advice on his own crusade preaching.²¹ The campaign was overseen by the high-ranking papal diplomat Gabriel Rangoni, who visited Alexius Tumer in the summer and praised him in a letter to the legate Rudolph of Rüdeshheim.²² Around the same time, another legate, Lorenzo Roverella, and Bonaventure of Bavaria both preached against George at the Imperial Diet in Nuremberg. Roverella supported the recruitment in Austria and Bavaria, which allegedly yielded eight thousand crusaders to join the troops already in Bohemia. Another report mentions the “flow of crusaders” who were sent to Moravia in September and October of that year.²³ The sermons of Thomas Harder at Klosterneuburg thus formed part of a concerted action aimed at mobilizing both financial and human resources, with the volunteers having a real prospect of intervening in the war.

Taking part in the campaign as a parish rector, Harder was exceptionally well prepared for his task through his education (which is also the reason why his sermons were put down in writing in the first place and survived). A native of Klosterneuburg, he studied at the university in Vienna from 1451 and became a Master of Arts in 1461. He lectured on Aristotle’s logic in the following academic year. Following this short academic career, Harder joined the Canons Regular of St. Augustine in his hometown.²⁴ In 1467, he is attested as the rector of the Klosterneuburg parish, which used the monastery’s main church (*Stiftskirche*) as its seat. In this position, he assumed the responsibilities of a crusade preacher and confessor and carried out this task at least until the spring of 1468. On 10 April of that year, he issued a confessional letter to a certain Clara, bestowing on her the plenary indulgence granted by Pope Paul II “to those Christians who take the cross, fight, or contribute something against the faithless heretics.”²⁵ In 1470, Thomas Harder took part in an embassy that brought to Rome the files regarding the proposed canonization of St. Leopold (d. 1136), the Margrave of Austria and founder of the Klosterneuburg Priory, who was proclaimed saint in 1485. Harder used this opportunity to petition the papal curia for a perpetual confessional letter for himself.²⁶ At that point, he was a *custos* of his monastery, which probably marks the end of his term as the Klosterneuburg parish priest. In 1485, he oversaw the election of a new provost, and from that same year until 1490, he served as the parish rector in Korneuburg, a town just across the Danube.²⁷ He probably died in 1494.²⁸

Two manuscripts from Klosterneuburg’s library document the literary activity of Thomas Harder. The codex CCI 1129 was copied, and for the most part also compiled, by him in 1477.²⁹ It contains two

²¹The case is known from a letter to Achacius by the Viennese Dominican, Leonard Huntpichler. In the articles appended to the letter, Huntpichler suggested some themes for a crusade exhortation, focusing on the role and duties of the nobility (appropriate enough, given that the addressee was the chaplain of a noble house). The document is discussed and edited in Pavel Soukup, “Leonarda Huntpichlera návod ke kázání kříže proti českým kacířům,” *Acta Universitatis Carolinae: Historia Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis* 56, no. 1 (2016): 65–80.

²²MS. Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M. ch. q. 15, fol. 115v (23 July 1467).

²³František Palacký, ed., *Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte Böhmens und seiner Nachbarländer im Zeitalter Georg’s von Podiebrad*, Fontes rerum Austriacarum. Zweite Abtheilung, vol. 20 (Vienna, 1860), 474, 487, and 489, nos. 405B, 417, and 419; Hermann Markgraf, ed., *Historia Wratislaviensis von Peter Eschenloer*, *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum*, vol. 7 (Wrocław, 1872), 145 (quote); Wilhelm Wattenbach, ed., “Annales Mellicenses,” in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores*, vol. 9 (Hannover, 1851), 479–569, at 521.

²⁴See Repertorium Academicum Germanicum, <https://resource.database.rag-online.org/ngEU9V577DM38tauyD7t8CqV5Dx>; Paul Uiblein, “Die Kanonisation des Markgrafen Leopold und die Wiener Universität,” *Jahrbuch des Stiftes Klosterneuburg* N.F. 13 (1985): 21–58, at 34. Uiblein compiled a concise biography of Harder *ibid.*, 26–27, n. 32.

²⁵CCI 933, fol. 111v.

²⁶*Repertorium Germanicum Online*, RG IX 05878, <http://rg-online.dhi-roma.it/RG/9/5878>.

²⁷Uiblein, “Die Kanonisation,” 27, 33, and 36.

²⁸Uiblein (*ibid.*, 27) gives the date of Harder’s death as 21 January 1494, with a question mark. In the necrology of Salzburg Cathedral, Harder features under 17 November, but together with six other Klosterneuburg canons: Theodor Wiedemann, “Die Nekrologien des Domstiftes Salzburg,” *Archiv für Kunde österreichischer Geschichts-Quellen* 28 (1863): 1–286, at 155.

²⁹A description of the manuscript by Edit A. Lukács und Maria Stieglecker is on *Manuscripta.at. Mittelalterliche Handschriften in Österreich*, <https://manuscripta.at/?ID=162> (06.11.2023).

large compilations extracted, respectively, from Henry Suso's *Horologium divinae sapientiae* and Pseudo-Augustine's *Soliloquia animae ad Deum* (also known as *Meditationes*). While the latter is labeled as Harder's excerpts from the Church father's work, the former, entitled *Monitorium piarum mentium*, features there as Harder's own compilation from 1475, without any reference to Suso's original text.³⁰ A twofold reflection on the care of souls follows. Its first part contains a harsh critique of clerical absenteeism and the leasing of benefices to vicars, called here "mercenaries." The second part, gathered from canonical sources, deals with the requirements curate clergy must meet.³¹ Next, come notes against clerical lechery, resting mostly on the authority of Thomas Aquinas.³² There is probably no reason not to ascribe all three compilations to Thomas Harder as well. The last item in the manuscript is Harder's copy of an anti-Hussite treatise known as the *Vulpecula*. The text is likely of Bohemian origin and was probably brought to Klosterneuburg from Třeboň in southern Bohemia by another canon, Matthias Klinsler. Harder copied it from the Klosterneuburg exemplar CCI 497.³³

The interests of Thomas Harder as the compiler and copyist of CCI 1129 point intriguingly in the directions that concern us here, namely the struggle against Hussite heresy as well as pastoral care and moral reform. In the crusade sermons preserved in manuscript CCI 933, this thematic and spiritual orientation finds its full expression.³⁴ The codex contains ten sermons that can be attributed to Thomas Harder. They are dispersed in the first, third, and fifth parts of the manuscript, while parts two and four include anti-heretical and anti-Jewish materials from the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century, predating Harder's time by approximately one hundred years.³⁵ While parts three and five (fols. 203–38 and 373–415) are each made up of three of Harder's sermons, part one (fols. 1–166) is more varied in content. Besides the sermons of Thomas Harder, we find there Hildegard of Bingen's *Responsum ad decanum Philippum*, the treatise *De praedicatione crucis contra Sarracenos* by Humbert of Romans, and a number of letters pertaining to the controversy around King George of Bohemia.³⁶

The authorship of four of Harder's sermons—the three crusade speeches and a sermon to the nuns of Klosterneuburg—is confirmed by handwritten headings,³⁷ while in the case of the others it can be inferred on the basis of internal features, especially the stereotypical formulas in the opening passages and the vernacular rendering of the Gospels of the day. The three sermons concerned with bestowing the cross from August 1467³⁸ are followed by two Advent sermons,³⁹ two sermons on St. Stephen,⁴⁰ and two for the second Sunday after Epiphany.⁴¹ As one of the sermons on St. Stephen (to be discussed later) also dates from 1467, it seems reasonable to assume that all the sermons just mentioned come from December

³⁰See Pius Künzle, *Heinrich Seuses Horologium sapientiae* (Freiburg/Schweiz, 1977), 243–44.

³¹CCI 1129, fols. 123v–125r (*Circa curam seu regimen animarum*) and 125r–126v (*De regimine seu cura animarum*).

³²Ibid., fols. 126v–130v (*De detestanda luxuria sacerdotum et ecclesie ministrorum*).

³³Ibid., fols. 131r–303r. See Pavel Soukup, "Antihussitisches Schrifttum in der Stiftsbibliothek und die sog. *Vulpecula*," in *Gotteskrieger. Der Kampf um den rechten Glauben rund um Wien im 15. Jahrhundert*, ed. Maria Theisen (Klosterneuburg, 2022), 64–67.

³⁴I dealt with these sermons briefly in "Magister Thomas Harder und Klosterneuburgs hussitische Nachbarschaft," *ibid.*, 145–48.

³⁵For a description of the codex, see *Manuscripta.at. Mittelalterliche Handschriften in Österreich*, <http://manuscripta.at/?ID=1179>.

³⁶The presence of *De praedicatione crucis* next to anti-Hussite sermons and letters has been noted by Valentin L. Portnykh, "Le traité d'Humbert de Romans (OP) « De la prédication de la Sainte Croix ». Une hypothèse sur son utilisation dans les guerres saintes du XV^e siècle," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 109 (2014): 588–624, at 595–606.

³⁷"Sequitur sermo primus de Nativitate Domini, quem collegit et scripsit ac pronuncciando ad moniales sorores nostras in vulgari fecit anno M^o CCCC^o LXVIII magister Thomas Harder de Newburg Claustrali, professus ibidem." CCI 933, fol. 18v, and *note 12* above.

³⁸*Circumdabunt te inimici tui*, *ibid.*, fols. 122r–134v; *Omnis, qui se exaltat, humiliabitur*, fols. 135r–145v; *Veni coronaberis*, fols. 147r–153v.

³⁹*Nolite ante tempus iudicare* (Third Sunday in Advent), *ibid.*, fols. 203r–211r; *Fratres, gaudete in domino* (Fourth Sunday in Advent), fols. 218r–226r.

⁴⁰*Lapidatus est Naboth*, *ibid.*, fols. 227r–237r; *Ecce video celos apertos*, fols. 157r–158v (unfinished).

⁴¹*Qui coniugia ita suscipiunt*, *ibid.*, fols. 373r–384r (unfinished); *Ioachym accepit uxorem*, fols. 388r–401r.

1467 and January 1468. Finally, two fragmentary versions of a Christmas sermon for the nuns are dated to 1469.⁴²

Thomas Harder emerges from these sources as an educated and dutiful priest. University education was not exceptional among Klosterneuburg canons of the period, although it was by no means a mandatory part of every brother's curriculum. Harder's repeated appointments as parish priest suggest that his community had every confidence in his learning, pastoral skills, and character, since pastoral work was considered something potentially dangerous for a regular canon.⁴³ The parishes of the *Stiftskirche* and of St. Martin in the lower town of Klosterneuburg were administered by the monastery from its beginning in the twelfth century. Over time, further parishes were linked to the monastery by incorporation or patronage, and the majority of them were staffed by secular priests. In 1418, when Klosterneuburg was subject to a visitation, there were ten parishes controlled by the priory, out of which only three were served by canons and seven by secular clergy.⁴⁴ In this situation, Thomas Harder's appointment to the parishes was far from obvious. The preserved sermons show that he met the standards of pastoral work and pursued the task with due diligence. The Latin version of his first crusade sermon, if read as it stands in the codex, would take approximately one hour, a fairly long time for a sermon to the laity of a parish. Its extraordinary length may be explained by the intrusion of the crusade theme into Sunday preaching. Here, the significance of crusade as a means of pastoral care, substantiated by crusade ideologists on the theoretical level, was put to a practical test.

Crusade Propaganda and Pastoral Care

The connection between crusade ideology and pastoral concerns predates the wars against George of Poděbrady by almost three centuries. It formed a vital part of the complex changes in crusading that occurred in the wake of the loss of Jerusalem in 1187. Popes Gregory VIII, Clement III, and Innocent III sought support for the crusade not only among the military class but also among non-combatants. They designed a program of communal prayer, penitential processions, and fasting, proposing it to those who wished to help the cause without leaving for the East (or South, as the case may be, for the Albigensian Crusade was an integral part of this development, thus further reinforcing the idea that anti-heretical crusading was equal to that aimed at the Holy Land in terms of spiritual merit). The purpose of establishing what historians usually term the crusading home front was to placate God, whose wrath over the Christians' sins apparently hindered the military efficiency of the crusade. On the premise that defeats were permitted by God because of the moral decay in Christendom, the internal purgation of all Christian society was a logical remedy. Fasting and penitence were imposed as part of preparations for the Third Crusade, and a special set of prayers, the so-called crusade clamor, was to be recited in every church. Pope Innocent III established a special weekly mass in all Christendom and, some years later, he introduced monthly processions that combined penitence, preaching, and fundraising for the crusade.⁴⁵

This reorientation of crusade recruitment was accompanied by ideological elaboration that both drove and justified the changes. In the campaigns preceding the Fourth and Fifth Crusades, the popes closely cooperated with Paris-trained theologians and preachers who imbued the crusade with their ideals of reform and pastoral renewal. The Victorines and the members of Peter the Chanter's circle were able to combine crusade ideology with harsh criticism of clerical misconduct and usury and insisted on the interconnectedness of these two concerns. Their common ground was the emphasis put on repentance. The crusade was an act of penance for both the active combatants and those on the liturgical front, and it was from whence spiritual benefits (formalized as indulgences) actually sprang. The defense

⁴²Sara peperit Ysaac, *ibid.*, fols. 18v–19r and 19v–20r.

⁴³“Cura animarum ... est officium nimis periculosum”: CCI 1129, fol. 123v.

⁴⁴Hartmann Zeibig, ed., *Urkundenbuch des Stiftes Klosterneuburg bis zum Ende des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Vienna, 1857–1868), 1:L–LI; Clemens T. Galban, *Provost Georg Muestinger and the Introduction of the Raudnitz Reform into Stift Klosterneuburg 1418 – ca. 1421* (Vienna, 2020), 94–98.

⁴⁵Gaposchkin, *Invisible Weapons*, 13–15 and 198–207.

of the faith and of the Church represented one of the most meritorious works. By joining or supporting the holy war, one helped oppressed Christians, and by the same logic, the charitable contributions normally made on the level of parishes were oftentimes channeled to support the crusade. Through benefaction and through improving one's own moral profile, the faithful helped—both materially and supernaturally—Christendom's battle with their enemies. Thus, good pastoral work reinforced the crusade, and the crusading arsenal encompassed pastoral care.⁴⁶

However, sources from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries suggest that large-scale involvement of parish clergy in preaching the cross was not something envisaged by those in control of the campaigns. Instead, the popes relied on their special envoys who were responsible for preaching, while the role of local lower clergy was to support them materially and logistically. This changed little when the new mendicant orders were entrusted with crusade preaching. While directly appointed preachers continued to be sent to special recruitment missions, the thirteenth-century popes typically employed mendicants as a group to carry out preaching campaigns alongside the local Church hierarchy. The friars were considered better trained than the diocesan clergy, and we can assume that they eclipsed the parish rectors in crusade preaching.⁴⁷ The dominance of the mendicants abated somewhat in the fourteenth century. The popes showed more trust in the secular clergy, whose education and preaching capacity had by this time increased. They nominated secular clerics and mendicants in turn, or expected them now to cooperate in recruitment campaigns.⁴⁸ The more intensive involvement of diocesan clergy in crusade preaching continued in the fifteenth century. The period after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453 witnessed the dynamic arrival of the Observant Franciscans on the preaching scene,⁴⁹ but the parish rectors and preachers retained their role in communication about the crusade.

The parish clergy of the late Middle Ages could contribute to crusade recruitment in several ways. One means of transmission that was likely to reach the lowest level of Church administration was the publication of papal letters. Charters related to the fight against the enemies of the Church, especially the excommunication bulls, often included the clause that they be read on Sundays and feast days in every church. In this aspect, their impact might have resembled that of crusading liturgy, which was also supposed to be performed in every church.⁵⁰ Following the tradition born after 1187, later medieval popes further consolidated the liturgical front. In the early fourteenth century, Clement V ordered the insertion of a set of three crusading prayers in every mass said in Christendom. In contrast to earlier crusade liturgy, their wording omitted specific references to the Holy Land, thus making the appeal even more universal. When the Ottomans were besieging Belgrade in 1456, Pope Calixtus III called for one of these prayers to be said within a mass *contra paganos* throughout Christendom. He also requested that bells be rung during this mass so people who found themselves outside the church could pause and pray. Moreover, processions, modeled in substance after those introduced by Innocent III, formed a regular part of liturgical programs in support of the crusade.⁵¹ The ensuing omnipresence of the crusade contributed to its embedding in religious life at the local level and enhanced the popularity of donations, wills, redemptions, indulgences, and fines that were earmarked for crusade within parishes.⁵²

⁴⁶Jessalynn Bird, "Reform or Crusade? Anti-Usury and Crusade Preaching during the Pontificate of Innocent III," in *Pope Innocent III and his world*, ed. John C. Moore (Aldershot, 1999), 165–85; eadem, "The Victorines, Peter the Chanters's Circle, and the Crusade: Two Unpublished Crusading Appeals in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Latin 14470," *Medieval Sermon Studies* 48 (2004): 5–28; Timothy Guard, "Opus caritativum: Crowdfunding the Later Crusades. The English Evidence," in *Crusading Europe: Essays in Honour of Christopher Tyerman*, ed. G. E. M. Lippiatt and Jessalyn L. Bird (Turnhout, 2019), 211–33, esp. 212–14.

⁴⁷Cole, *The Preaching of the Crusades*, 109, 162, and 185; Maier, *Preaching the Crusades*, 61 and 95.

⁴⁸Georgiou, *Preaching the Crusades*, 189; for examples of nominations, see 24–29, 43, and 49.

⁴⁹Housley, *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat*, 136–59.

⁵⁰Weber, *Lutter contre les Turcs*, 413–17.

⁵¹Linder, *Raising Arms*, 118–19; Weber, *Lutter contre les Turcs*, 439–44; Gaposchkin, *Invisible Weapons*, 240–41. The idea of bell ringing dates back to at least to 1229, see Linder, *Raising Arms*, 52.

⁵²Timothy Guard, "Pulpit and Cross: Preaching the Crusade in Fourteenth-Century England," *The English Historical Review* 129 (2015): 1319–45, at 1344.

The institutionalization of crusade propaganda in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries impacted preaching practice as well. In theory, every preacher had been required to advertise the crusade at least once a month since the time of Innocent III. The conflation of penitential, reform, and crusade contents facilitated this task. Preachers could turn to the imagery of the passion and imitation of Jesus Christ and a range of examples related to personal conversion and salvation through self-restraint and suffering. In medieval sermon collections, crusade themes are usually found in sermons for Lent (especially the *Laetare* Sunday), Holy Week, and the feasts of Invention and Exaltation of the Cross. While originally the evocation of Christ's cross served preachers as an incitement for would-be crusaders to choose to make the crusading vow, now the crusading ideals were evoked in regular preaching to induce all faithful to penitence.⁵³ It was likely that a parishioner in the thirteenth century (certainly in the core regions of crusade recruitment such as France, England, and the Holy Roman Empire) would hear about the crusade even without attending a performance of a special crusade commissioner. The inclusion of crusade-related themes in some of the common sermon collections suggests that this practice survived into the fourteenth century and possibly beyond.⁵⁴

While sermon texts attest, generally speaking, to crusade propaganda having penetrated the pastoral discourse, they are at best suggestive of what was actually preached in individual, ordinary parishes. The extant crusade sermons from the thirteenth century are models authored by "best-selling," mostly mendicant authors and spread in large numbers of copies. While, by medieval standards, their transmission amounted to mass communication and told us a lot about large-scale trends in religious education, the application of the model text naturally varied in individual cases.⁵⁵ How closely the cyclical crusade preaching in parish churches followed the transmitted models remains unclear due to the lack of historical evidence. With their language and learned apparatuses, the texts we have rarely match what one would imagine as everyday (or every Sunday) popular preaching.⁵⁶ That said, the crusading themes found in Sunday and feast day sermon collections of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries still provide a link between special crusade propaganda and regular preaching. Shared imagery facilitated the imbuing of the crusade with concerns of Christian reform and, vice versa, the blending of pastoral preaching with penitential ideals of the crusade. In the fifteenth century, the connection between crusade and reform was still intense, and reform-minded churchmen and crusade recruiters were no less heavily invested in the care of soul.⁵⁷ If the earlier collections witnessed crusade preaching permeating Sunday sermons, in the Klosterneuburg case we can observe how regular Sunday sermons were put to the service of the crusade.

Harder's Sermons, I: Crusade on Sunday

The three surviving crusade sermons of Thomas Harder resemble each other in how they incorporate a topical message into regular religious instruction. They were preached on two subsequent Sundays, 2 and 9 August 1467 (sermons *Circumdabunt te inimici tui* and *Omnis, qui se exaltat, humiliabitur*), and on the following Saturday, 15 August 1467, which was the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary (sermon *Veni, coronaberis*). Since Harder repeatedly pointed to his commission as a parish priest to proclaim the excommunication of George of Poděbrady,⁵⁸ there is no doubt that the sermons were preached to the lay

⁵³Jean Flori, *Prêcher la croisade (XI^e-XIII^e siècle): Communication et propagande* (Paris, 2012), 327–28.

⁵⁴Georgiou, *Preaching the Crusades*, 134–35; Guard, "Pulpit and Cross," 1326–27.

⁵⁵David L. d'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused From Paris before 1300* (Oxford, 1985), 128–30; Maier, *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology*, 17–31.

⁵⁶One exception may be the English Carmelite sermon from 1386, see Guard, "Pulpit and Cross," 1340–41.

⁵⁷Birgit Studt, "...den boesen unglauen gantz vertilgen? Zur Verknüpfung der causa fidei und der causa reformationis in der antihussitischen Propaganda von Papsttum und Konzil," in *Propaganda, Kommunikation und Öffentlichkeit (11.–16. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Karel Hruza (Vienna, 2002), 153–65; Norman Housley, "Crusade and reform, 1414–1449: Allies or Rivals?" in *Reconfiguring the Fifteenth-Century Crusade*, ed. Norman Housley (London, 2017), 45–83.

⁵⁸CCI 933, fol. 149v: "eciam michi preceptum est et commissum, ut talia vobis insinuem", and fol. 128r: "ego animarum vestrarum curam post prelatum in presenti parochia gerens."

congregation in the *Stiftskirche*. The religious life in the parish is referred to several times in the relevant passages of the Sunday sermons. Given their purpose, the language in which the sermons were delivered was undoubtedly German. The texts survive in a Latin version, with the *thema* (the biblical verse the sermon is based on) being translated into German at the beginning of each sermon. In the case of the two Sunday sermons, the entire Gospel reading of the day is given in German translation. The lengthy excommunication formula in German, translated word by word from Rudolph of Rudesheim's letter from 12 May 1467, is included in the first sermon and referred to in the two others.⁵⁹ Apparently, Harder recorded the key passages in the vernacular to avoid mistakes or doubts while preaching in German from a script in Latin.⁶⁰

The only part that the preacher recited also in Latin was the *thema*, and the way this part is announced hints at the question of the audience being more complicated than it might first appear. The listeners are normally addressed with the neutral "dilectissimi in Deo" (beloved in God, a dozen times over the three sermons); "karissimi fratres" (dearest brothers) or just "karissimi" appear several times, too. However, the *thema* in Latin is always introduced as follows: "the words I said at the beginning and set them forth *vestris caritatibus* (to your charities) in the Latin tongue." While the address "vestra caritas" was sometimes used for lay people, it was predominantly associated with addressing clerics, even more so, the words "coram dignitatibus vestris" (before your dignities) point to priests rather than lay parishioners.⁶¹ In one instance, we find a direct address in the second person: "you simple people of lower status ... and you priests."⁶² All this leads me to assume that the sermons were preached in the *Stiftskirche* to a mixed audience, consisting of the parish laity and the local Canons Regular. Unfortunately, the sources are rather limited concerning the audiences of the parish sermons at Klosterneuburg. The 1371 statutes detail the liturgy of the "public mass," but are silent about the sermon. The 1420 statutes also speak about the public mass and insist on carefully listening to the Gospel and Epistle and observing its "sermones et exempla" (sayings and examples).⁶³ The passages dedicated to the public mass in the statutes suggest that canons were supposed to attend it.

In their surviving form, Harder's sermons are complete speeches with all elements written out in full, rather than drafts, which preachers sometimes took with them to the pulpit. Oftentimes, such comprehensive and polished texts represent a version edited by the preacher after the oral performance. These *sermons rédigés* might have been supplemented with additional material, and typically they were stripped of all references to the situation of their original delivery because they were intended to serve as models for future preachers (who found themselves in different situations) or to be read as contemplative or educative literature.⁶⁴ Since this is not the case with Harder's texts, I am inclined to suppose that he composed his crusade sermons *in extenso* before he preached them (which does not exclude their serving as a model for other preachers).⁶⁵ The sermons attributed to Thomas Harder in CCI 933 are all written in one hand. Some of them are annotated, supplemented, and their paragraphs rearranged by another hand, which can be identified as Harder's by comparison with his autograph in CCI 1129 (despite the different

⁵⁹The German *themata* on fols. 122r, 135r, and 147r, the Gospels on fols. 125r and 137v–138v, the excommunication on fols. 128r–131r, abbreviated to the first few words on fols. 142v and 149v. Rudolph's excommunication letter *Cum notorium sit adeo* is *ibid.*, fols. 109v–111r. Furthermore, exhortation to penance is given in German two times: "Ist ewch sein natt, so rëwschpht ewch," fols. 137v and 142v

⁶⁰The same function may have had the equivalent of the word "vigilia" ("der abent") on fol. 137v. The vernacular delivery is also attested by the heading of Harder's 1469 sermon to the nuns, see *note 37* above.

⁶¹CCI 933, fol. 122v: "Que verba a principio locutus sum et vestris caritatibus Latino sermone proposui."

⁶²*Ibid.*, fol. 143r: "vos simplices et inferiores ... vos quoque sacerdotes."

⁶³Galban, *Provost Georg Muestinger*, 240–44 and 278–79. The 1420 statutes derive from the statutes of Roudnice which served as an instrument for introducing reform to Augustinian houses; for the corresponding passage, see *Roudnická statuta. Zvyklosti augustiniánské kanonie v Roudnici nad Labem*, ed. Adéla Eberssonová (Dolní Břežany, 2021), 138–40.

⁶⁴The classic treatment is Louis-Jacques Bataillon, "Sermons rédigés, sermons reportés (XIII^e siècle)," *Medioevo e rinascimento* 3 (1989): 69–86.

⁶⁵If so, then the occasional switch from the first to the second person when giving instructions on what to say next and providing internal references should be understood as Harder speaking to himself. See, e.g., CCI 933, fol. 149v.

pen and script size). Thus, the sermons in CCI 933 were presumably copied by Harder's secretary and corrected by the author still prior to their delivery.⁶⁶ We can assume that Harder's speeches, although delivered in the German language, were very close in content to what we find in the manuscript.

It is unclear whether Harder continued to proclaim the crusade in the same way after 15 August, because sermons for the following feast days are missing. He may have considered the immediate mission completed by having preached three times. The speeches were partly repetitive, and three occasions probably allowed the message to reach everybody available. Two other crusade speeches in the same manuscript also belong to the context of the war against George of Poděbrady, but their authorship cannot be determined with certainty. The *Exhortacio bona ad pugnandum viriliter contra hereticos Boemos* (A good exhortation to fight manfully against the Bohemian heretics) is a fragment filling out two pages. As it lacks an introduction, it is unclear whether the sermon included, or should have included, the opening passages characteristic of Thomas Harder. The quote from "today's homily of Chrysostome" reveals that it was meant for the Fourth Sunday of Lent, which was a traditional day for crusade preaching. Because the sermon indicates that actual fighting was ongoing, the most likely date is 27 March 1468.⁶⁷

A sermon draft beginning "Quamvis ab eterno Deus noverit" is dated by the epistle of the day (Philippians 2:1–4) to the Friday after the Sixteenth Sunday after the Trinity. The sermon speaks about the necessity to fight heretics and points out that the pope had ordered processions to entreat God to give the crusaders victory. As processions on the first Friday of each month were instituted by the papal legate Lorenzo Roverella in July 1468, the likely date of this sermon draft is 7 October 1468. The style of the sermon does not match that of Harder very closely, but given the unfinished state in which the sermon has been preserved, conclusive evidence is missing.⁶⁸ Despite their uncertain authorship, the sermon fragments still illustrate well how crusading penetrated religious life in the Klosterneuburg parish, from listening to sermons and partaking in intercessory processions to contributing financially and, possibly, taking up the cross. Along with the indulgence letter issued by Harder in April 1468, they attest to the longevity of the crusading campaign on the local level, which went on in one place for over a year and maybe longer.

The three full sermons by the Klosterneuburg parish rector provide the best evidence for this campaign. They all follow a similar structure. The introductory paragraph always briefly discusses the *thema* and then connects it to the current situation, in this instance, the Hussite war. The first sermon took the line, "Thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee" (Luke 19:43), a quote from Jesus's lament over Jerusalem, as its point of departure, and the connection was not difficult to make: the Catholics should weep and repent as the threat of destruction from Hussite heretics was imminent. The second sermon was based on the famous saying, "Every one that exalts himself shall be humbled, and he that humbles himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:14). Here, the pride typical for heretics is found in the Bohemians, who believe themselves to be the only righteous ones while the entire Catholic Church is thought to have erred. Finally, the Assumption sermon starts from the line "Come, thou shalt be crowned" (Song of Songs 4:8), taken from the antiphon of the feast.⁶⁹ Just like the Virgin Mary was crowned having defeated the temptations of this world, those who take the cross, defend the faith, and fight against their own vices shall be rewarded.

The section that follows in both of the Sunday sermons after the introduction and the traditional Hail Mary is most telling with regard to the pastoral function of the sermons. In this section, Thomas Harder took care of his weekly agenda. Before embarking on preaching the cross, he announced to his

⁶⁶The sermon for St. Stephen's Day discussed below gives further evidence for this. From the three crusade sermons, only the middle one, *Omnis qui se exaltat*, has more marginal additions.

⁶⁷CCI 933, fols. 121r–121v. The Pseudo-Chrysostome homily was part of the daily office for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, see *Breviarium hiemalis partis et estivalis secundum chorum Pataviensis ecclesie* (Venice, 1517), fol. 123rb.

⁶⁸CCI 933, fols. 154r–156v. For the epistle, see *Missale Pataviense cum additionibus* (Vienna, 1512), fol. 175v; for Roverella's ordinance, see Jenks, *Documents*, 193–202, no. 44, at 194.

⁶⁹Cf. René-Jean Hesbert (ed.), *Corpus antiphonalium officii*, 5 vols. (Rome, 1963–75), 3:508, no. 5162.

congregation the feasts of the following week, introducing it with the following comment: “Most beloved in God, before I proceed to the body of the sermon, I shall announce the holidays we shall have in the upcoming week in order not to be hindered at the end by the usual procession.”⁷⁰ While this sounds as if, in Harder’s understanding, his work as a shepherd took priority over his commission as a crusade preacher, in fact, the crusading appeal intruded upon the weekly announcements as well. On 2 August, Harder first reminded his listeners that the same day was also the feast day of the Saint Pope Stephen I and concluded his short biography with a recommendation to invoke this saint for perseverance in faith and strength in fighting the heretics. He added a similar postscript to his sketch of the lives and martyrdoms of St. Sixtus, St. Felicissimus, and St. Agapitus (6 August), stressing the value of fighting to the death just like these martyrs had. The feast of St. Oswald (5 August) gave Harder the opportunity to point out that the saint king achieved victory in battle when he erected a banner with the cross and that he eventually died defending his fatherland, all of which made him a plausible intercessor for crusaders.⁷¹

The preacher had announcements for almost all other days of the week, albeit without direct crusade references. In total, the announcements took up only around one tenth of the sermon’s text,⁷² but their very inclusion shows that Harder insisted on this aspect of his task not being neglected. In his other Sunday sermon, he made similar announcements.⁷³ The preserved sermon for the Assumption does not include such announcements as it was a feast day, not a Sunday sermon. Half of its subsequent exposition is nevertheless devoted to Marian theology and piety presented in the same manner as Harder would do it had he not received any commission to proclaim the crusade. The same applies to the Sunday sermons. After the weekly agenda, they include the full Gospel pericope in German and its historical exposition. Next comes an informative passage about the Hussite heresy and George of Poděbrady’s depravity, followed by the declaration of his excommunication, which was the special task Harder was commissioned with. In all three sermons, the most bellicose passage follows, with which Harder fulfilled the second part of his commission, namely the exhortation to wage war against the Bohemian heretics. It concluded by reminding the listeners of the crusade indulgences and explaining briefly their value and function. To the second sermon, an extract from the anti-Ottoman bull *Ezechielis prophete* is appended, summarizing the terms and conditions of the plenary indulgence.⁷⁴

The image of crusading transmitted by Thomas Harder largely corresponds with that promoted in the thirteenth-century model sermons, although the three speeches given at Klosterneuburg naturally did not tackle all aspects of the issue.⁷⁵ The uncontested point of departure was the heretical status of Bohemian Utraquists. In accordance with the recent papal bulls, Harder focused his attack on George of Poděbrady and his adherents. The enemies feature collectively as “Hussite beasts” and “followers of Satan, more cruel than fierce animals”; their violent attacks upon the personnel, the buildings, and the sacraments of the Church were a commonplace in anti-Hussite polemic and could hardly have been omitted by Harder.⁷⁶ The Hussites’ lapse was all the worse because they had accepted the faith and baptism “along with us,” but lost this benefit through their negligence.⁷⁷ In Harder’s eyes, only one remedy existed, namely physical extermination. He conceded that Catholics should feel sorry about the

⁷⁰“Dilectissimi in Deo, antequam procedam ad corpus sermonis, ne in fine propter processionem consuetam impediatur, tempus sacrum, quod pro futura septimana habebimus, quovis intinabimus etc.” CCI 933, fol. 123r, and similarly fol. 136v (“Ne in fine tempus nobis breve fiat...”).

⁷¹The legend of St. Oswald, including the episode with the banner signed with the cross, survives in two thirteenth-century manuscripts from Klosterneuburg, CCI 131 and CCI 239.

⁷²CCI 933, fols. 123r–124r.

⁷³Ibid., fols. 136v–137v.

⁷⁴CCI 933, fol. 146r–v; cf. Jenks, *Documents*, 151–52, no. 34, § 33–40.

⁷⁵For a useful systematization of the model sermons’ emphases, see Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching*, 91–278.

⁷⁶“Hii sunt satellites Sathane, ferris atrocissimis crudeliores, qui sacrilegis manibus suis timore Dei postposito et sue salutis inmemores tamquam fures et latrones cuncta pro Dei honore et divino cultu et ecclesiarum fundacione dedicata quasi penitus in regno suo everterunt et in personas ecclesiasticas et in Christi sacramenta suas sordidas manus et violentas iniquissime miserunt,” CCI 933, fol. 122r; “dyabolus, qui est mille artifex, per satellites suos, scilicet Hussiticas bestias,” *ibid.*, fol. 144r.

⁷⁷Ibid., fol. 122r.

eternal damnation of the Bohemians, but—in contrast to earlier crusade preaching and even to papal crusade appeals from the first phase of the Hussite wars—conversion as an alternative to the destruction of the heretics received almost no space in his speeches.⁷⁸

Harder's call to war was supported with a range of biblical models. In the sermon *Circumdabunt te* King David's resolution to fight in accordance with God's will (II Samuel 10:12–13) was quoted as an example worth following, and the struggle of the Maccabees for the laws of their ancestors is evoked as a task that has grown urgent once again with the emergence of Hussitism. The support from heaven had to be implored in the manner of Moses and Aaron, who supported Joshua in his fight against the Amalekites with their prayers (Exodus 17:10–13).⁷⁹ In *Omnis, qui se exaltat*, Harder recalled Samson, Samuel, and other figures enumerated by Paul the Apostle as those who prevailed through their faith (Hebrews 11:29–33) and exhorted his audience to fight the Hussites with the armor of faith as described in Ephesians 6:10–16. Subsequently, he adduced the examples of the Old Testament kings Hezekiah and Josiah who eliminated superstition and thus prefigured the war against Hussite heretics (II Chronicles 29 and 34), as did both Elijah and Phineas destroying those guilty of idolatry and lechery (II Kings 1, Numbers 25:5–8).⁸⁰ Interestingly, Harder adopted these examples into his third crusade sermon, *Veni, coronaberis*, where he described them with largely the same words; he also took over an entire paragraph about Mattathias (I Maccabees) from his first sermon.⁸¹ All these biblical models (perhaps with the exception of the less prominent Hezekiah) had gained currency already in twelfth- and thirteenth-century crusade writing and preaching.⁸² Thomas Harder succinctly expressed the overall message in *Omnis, qui se exaltat*: “May God, whose war is being waged, fight for us, just like he did for the sons of Israel.”⁸³

Unlike biblical figures and stories, the heroes of past crusades do not feature in Harder's discourse. His most pronounced example of a Christian warrior is the Emperor Constantine with his battle in the sign of the cross. Harder quotes this story from the Golden Legend's entry for the Invention of the Cross and urges every man fit to fight to take up the cross. Not only is the cross a sign of Christ's triumph, the preacher added in his first sermon, but it is also solely under this sign that one can gain the plenary indulgence according to the papal bull.⁸⁴ Harder also included a relatively extensive exposition of the conditions of just war. Leaning on Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* and Bernard of Clairvaux *De laude novae militiae*, Harder assured his audience that “it was just to fight against the heretics and to kill them.”⁸⁵ Again, he included the same exposition in his third sermon, where he also referred to the warriors of the cross, Constantine and St. Oswald, noting that “you have heard this from me before.”⁸⁶

⁷⁸Conversion is mentioned as an option only once: “et si non velint converti, heretici tamen, ut ne alios inficiunt, deleantur de terra,” *ibid.*, fol. 156r. Otherwise, Harder only complained about the long and vain wait for George's conversion and, following the excommunication ritual, he incited prayers for victory over, and conversion of, the heretics: *ibid.*, fols. 126v, 141v, and 136r. For examples of conversion rhetoric, see Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching*, 124–25; Jaroslav Eršil, ed., *Monumenta Vaticana res gestas Bohemicae illustrantia*, vol. 7, 3 parts (Prague, 1996–2001), 1:312 and 328, nos. 734 and 785; 2:627 and 681, nos. 1594 and 1758.

⁷⁹CCl 933, fols. 132v–133v.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, fols. 144r–145r.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, fols. 151r–152r.

⁸²See, e.g., John D. Cotts, “The Exegesis of Violence in the Crusade Writings of Ralph Niger and Peter of Blois,” in *The Uses of the Bible in Crusader Sources*, ed. Elizabeth Lapina and Nicholas Morton (Leiden, 2017), 273–94; Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching*, 46–47, 59–70, and 118; Cole, *The Preaching of the Crusades*, 134.

⁸³“Deus sit pro nobis pugnaturus, cuius bellum geritur, exemplo filiorum Israel,” CCl 933, fol. 145r–v.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, fol. 132r–132v; cf. Iacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea con le miniature del codice Ambrosiano C 240 inf.*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, 2 vols. (Florence and Milan, 2007), 1:516.

⁸⁵“Quod autem iustum sit punquare contra hereticos et eos interficere, hoc ostendit sibi sanctus Thomas...” CCl 933, fol. 131v. Cf. Pavel Soukup, “Legitimizing the Hussite Wars. Anti-Heretical Crusading in the Fifteenth Century,” in *The Defence of the Faith: Crusading on the Frontiers of Latin Christendom in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Paul Srodecki and Norbert Kersken (Turnhout, 2024), 361–75, at 364.

⁸⁶“Per assumptionem crucis, dico, quia in hoc signo, ut prius a me audistis, Christus contra dyabolum triumphavit, Constantinus imperator et sanctus Oswaldus hostes suos vicerunt, quod et nos facere possumus, si in hoc signo viriliter pro fide punquare voluerimus.” CCl 933, fol. 149v–150r.

Apparently, he ran out of preachable material by the feast of the Assumption, which supports the surmise that he only preached three crusade sermons in a row.

Ever since the widening of crusade recruitment under Innocent III, crusading was a universal obligation of all Christians. Accordingly, Thomas Harder beseeched “all and everyone who are made part of the Lord’s lot, noble and ignoble, rich and poor, religious and secular,” to provide everything they could so that “the Catholic Church and Christian faith are rescued in this time of great distress and a battle is fought against the blasphemous robbers and sacrilegious Bohemians.”⁸⁷ Yet, despite the universal appeal addressed to every Christian, the fight should be conducted according to social status.⁸⁸ Harder enumerated individual estates and specified their tasks in the war on heresy. He assigned a special position to the emperor, princes, dukes, and magnates, specifying in particular those from Austria, which was a neighbor of Bohemia and whose knighthood was once renowned as “the heart of all chivalry” and as the “knights of Christ.” If they failed to meet this obligation, they would lose the right to reign and risk deposition.⁸⁹ Harder substantiated this requirement with a quote from the epistle to the Romans (13:4) “for he bears not the sword in vain” and by the words “said to every prince in the person of Judas” (II Maccabees 15:16): “Take this holy sword a gift from God, wherewith thou shalt overthrow the adversaries of my people Israel.”⁹⁰

Similarly, Harder invited commoners of whatever condition to take up the cross and fight for the faith, while he reminded the clerics that they may be present in war but must not shed blood unless in cases of extreme necessity.⁹¹ The actual task of the clergy was spiritual support, prefigured by the prayers of Moses against Amalek and Judas Maccabaeus against Nicanor. The same thing was expected from secular non-combatants—women, elderly men, and small children.⁹² Everyone’s participation in crusading, either physical or devotional, would unite Catholics on a spiritual level, in the imitation of Christ. “If Christ voluntarily offered himself up for us unto death on the cross in order to promote the good in us and to redeem us from the power of the devil, how much more should we offer our lives? Therefore, the time of fighting for the faith has come.”⁹³ This is where the crusade met pastoral care most closely: should the struggle against heresy have any prospect for success, it required the pious minds of those participating. In his Assumption sermon, Harder linked crusading to Marian devotion and thus incorporated it into his pastoral concern of the day. Everybody who wanted to fight, he said, and also all those who wanted to help financially, should look at the Blessed Virgin and imitate her in humility and charity; then they could hope that their contrition and confession would bring them salvation.⁹⁴ Harder

⁸⁷“Idcirco vos omnes et singulos, qui de sorte Domini effecti estis, nobiles et ignobiles, divites et pauperes, religiosos et seculares, ... obnixie moneo et obsecro, ut, que comode potestis, in hac pugna contra infideles auxilia conferatis, quatenus in tempore tante necessitatis ecclesie katholice et fidei christiane subveniatur et contra blasphemos latrones et sacrilegos Bohemos ... pugna fiat et eorum malum congruo tempore de medio tollatur.” Ibid., fol. 150v.

⁸⁸“...heretice pravitati omnes unanimiter resistamus, quilibet secundum statum suum.” Ibid., fol. 143r.

⁸⁹“Et specialiter nunc resistere debent imperator christianus, principes et duces seculares et magni domini, presertim huius patrie, qui sunt in eorum vicinatu et quondam dicti sunt cor totius milicie eciam in longinquis partibus, ad quos singulariter spectat, ut manu forti exemplo suorum antecessorum, qui fuerunt fortes bellatores et milites Christi, tales hereticos et fidei impugnatores repellere et extirpare. Hoc enim facere tenentur sub pena peccati et deposicionis a suis presidenciis.” Ibid.

⁹⁰Ibid., fols. 131r–131v: “in persona Iude Machabei cuilibet principi christiano dicitur...”

⁹¹Ibid., fol. 143r.

⁹²Ibid., fols. 133r–v and 152v (“similiter mulieres, senes et virgines cum puerulis ad bellandum non dispositis in hoc facto fidei opem ferre debent sui oracionibus”); cf. Exodus 17:10–13 and I Maccabees 7:41–42.

⁹³“Si enim Christus sponte se obtulit pro nobis usque ad mortem crucis, ut nos in bono promoveret et a dyaboli potestate nos redimeret, quanto magis nos? Ex quo nunc instat tempus pugnandi pro fide.” Ibid., fol. 143r–v.

⁹⁴“Idcirco hii, qui pugnare voluerint, et eciam persone cuiuscumque status, sexus aut condicionis existunt, que tales adiuvare et de suis rebus cause fidei auxiliari voluerint, primo pre oculis habeant gloriosam virginem Mariam eiusque exempla sequantur humilitatem servantem, caritatem ad invicem habentes et per contricionem veram ac puram confessionem se a peccatorum sordibus mundantes. Quo facto spem bonam habeant, quod omnipotens Deus pro talibus, que pro defensione fidei faciunt, post hanc mortem indubie vocabit ad eterne glorie coronam.” Ibid., fol. 150r. Marian devotion played an important role in earlier phases of the crusades, especially in the Baltic and in Iberia. See Christopher Tyerman, *God’s War. A New History of the Crusades* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), 687–88; Amy G. Remensnyder, *La Conquistadora: The Virgin Mary at War and Peace in the Old and New Worlds* (Oxford, 2014), 15–118.

commented that in contrast to the remission gained from peregrinations, the crusade indulgence guaranteed that anyone who died on the crusade would achieve martyrdom. And, using the words of the bull *Ezechielis prophete*, he insisted that eternal salvation was at stake in any case: not only could it be gained by participating, but also lost if one failed to assist the cause—such was the urgency of the crusade.⁹⁵

Harder's Sermons, II: Politics from the Pulpit

The devotional aspect of crusading as a penitential exercise enhanced the universal applicability of crusade rhetoric in a range of contexts. In the case of the Klosterneuburg parish, the appeal to imitate Christ and Mary through supporting the holy war appeared more urgent because that war was being fought not at the margins of Christendom but against George of Poděbrady and his adherents. The Moravian border was only 30 miles away from Klosterneuburg, and Thomas Harder emphasized the vicinity of the realm of heretics more than once. He was concerned about both fellow Catholics in the Czech Lands and a possible advance of Hussite armies into his homeland. “It is to be feared,” he said, “that if those heretics seize control over the Christians who are in the Kingdom of Bohemia, they would not be content with that but would turn their army against us Austrians, who find ourselves in their vicinity.” He insisted that “if we do not support the Christians in Bohemia soon, those heretics would besiege our country,” and he derived this menace directly from the Gospel pericope, “as if the Savior said: Oh, Austria, thy enemies, i.e., Bohemian heretics, shall cast a trench about thee and destroy thee.”⁹⁶

Similarly, Harder interpolated the bull *Ezechielis prophete* with topical reference: where Pope Pius II back in 1463 praised the readiness of Duke Phillip the Good of Burgundy to go on crusade, in 1467 Thomas Harder beseeched his audience to “follow the example of the virtuous Christians in Bohemia and Moravia, who expose themselves daily [to peril] for the faith.”⁹⁷ The call to the Austrian nobility quoted above also referred to geographical proximity. The passage threatening Austrian lords, including the emperor, with deposition in case of idleness was potentially explosive, although it is unclear that Harder intended to draw any immediate political consequences. The same passage also turned to the past, reminding nobles of their valiant ancestors. In a similar vein, the *Exhortatio bona* claimed that the Austrians’ fight against the Bohemians had lasted for two hundred years.⁹⁸ Its author probably had in mind the war between Rudolph of Habsburg and Přemysl Otakar II; in any case, he insinuated an agelong enmity between the neighboring nations.

Although the Czech Lands bordered Lower Austria and the Klosterneuburg Augustinians demonstrably had contacts there, it seems that Harder’s information about the Czech heretics came from written materials rather than eyewitness reports or hearsay. The identification of sources is crucial for any analysis of sermons. In the case of Harder’s crusade orations, the question is what texts he quarried for information about Hussite heresy, what he was able to learn and impart about the current political situation, and what inspired his crusade rhetoric. The evaluation of authorities Thomas Harder used in his extant preaching work renders a telling picture of the author’s intellectual horizon. Most of the non-biblical sources he explicitly quoted come from Augustine, which is no surprise given Harder’s religious affiliation. Other popular authors include Jerome, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Thomas Aquinas, as well as Aristotle, Gregory the Great, and Gratian. Patristic and medieval authorities form equally large groups,

⁹⁵Ibid., fol. 153r–v; cf. Jenks, *Documents*, 152–53, no. 34, § 43–45.

⁹⁶“Timor est, quod si isti heretici vim obtinerent super christianos, in Regno Bohemie existentes, quod extunc incontinenti aciem suam adversus nos Australes verterent, qui sumus in vicinatu eorum constituti... In propinquo si non subveniremus christianis in Bohemia, ipsi heretici circumdarent terram nostram. Racione cuius nos ammonet de tali periculo, ut pre oculis habeamus, Salvator noster, Luce 19. capitulo dicens: ‘Circumdabunt te inimici tui,’ ac si diceret: O Austria, inimici tui, id est heretici Bohemi, circumdabunt te et destruent.” CCL 933, fol. 122v.

⁹⁷“Exemplum recipite de istis probis christianis, qui se cottidie in Bohemia et Moravia exponunt pro fide.” Ibid., fol. 150v.

⁹⁸“Iam tempus tante necessitatis nunc iminet, quale a ducentis annis fuit contra blasphemus latrones et sacrilegos Bohemos,” ibid., fol. 121r.

with as much as 13 percent of quotations belonging to classical antiquity. Understandably, around a quarter of the sources come from exegetical handbooks, glosses, and homilies of the Church fathers, and around 40 percent from other theological works. Jurisprudence, on the other hand, makes up only 10 percent, and history and natural history even less.⁹⁹

All of this corresponds well with the entries in the surviving register of library loans from Klosterneuburg.¹⁰⁰ In addition to the necessary liturgical books, Thomas Harder borrowed some theological and canonical handbooks—the *Margarita Decreti* by Martinus Polonus (preserved in the monastery library as CCl 96) and tables to the *Sentences* by Peter Lombard (probably the work by Robert Kilwardby in CCl 292). He also worked with writings by Gerhoch of Reichersberg, John of Wales, and the *Speculum militare* by John of Viktring (the latter preserved in CCl 318 a 688). Besides medieval literature, he also read humanist literature, namely the letters of Enea Silvio and the *Facetiae*, a collection of jokes by Poggio Bracciolini, both of which are preserved in Klosterneuburg as incunabula.¹⁰¹ The list also includes works that Harder demonstrably copied or edited: Suso's *Horologium*, three copies of which have survived in Klosterneuburg to this day,¹⁰² and the aforementioned *Sanctilogium sive Vulpecula*. All in all, Harder's choices as a reader suggest that his purview transcended the walls of the monastery. Although he was himself no humanist, he was interested in recent literature and intellectual trends, and he also informed himself on the current controversy surrounding Hussitism.

To the above-mentioned passage exposing the pride of the Hussites who thought they were the only orthodox believers, Harder added a paragraph describing the origins of the Utraquist doctrine. The Czechs had converted to Christianity 834 years earlier and had been communicating under one kind ever since, until the diabolical men John Wyclif of England, Jan Hus of Bohemia, and his friends invented a new heresy. Although Hus and his colleagues at Prague University, Jerome (of Prague), Jakoubek (of Střibro), and Mark (of Hradec), had received the communion *sub una* as students, as they advanced in knowledge, they sank into pride and began to give communion under both kinds. Now they give the cup to everyone in the church as in a tavern. This very specific information is silently taken from the treatise against the Four Articles of Prague by John Jerome of Prague, a Camaldolese monk and Bohemian émigré, who presented this treatise to the Council of Basel in 1433. Harder simply added thirty-four years to John Jerome's confusing and imprecise statement that Bohemia had been converted eight centuries earlier, allegedly under Pope Sergius IV.¹⁰³ He also turned John Jerome's personal recollection of living with the Wycliffite students in one of the colleges in Prague into an objectively worded account of heretical pride.¹⁰⁴ John Jerome's treatise, which survives in at least twenty-six copies, is not preserved in the Klosterneuburg library, but Thomas Harder was ostensibly able to obtain a copy for himself.

Other passages of Harder's on the Bohemian heresy concerned recent developments in international Church politics. In the sermon *Circumdabunt te*, he still touched on history when he recalled the condemnation of Hussitism at Constance and Basel, but he devoted more space to the recent crimes of

⁹⁹The figures are based on 169 quotations from 85 different sources as found *ibid.*, fols. 122r–145v, 147r–158v, 203r–237r, and 373r–401r.

¹⁰⁰Theodor Gottlieb, ed., *Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Österreichs*, vol. 1: *Niederösterreich* (Vienna, 1915), 118–20.

¹⁰¹If Harder used the surviving copies, this would shift the dating of the loan register to after 1481. Cf. Incunabula Short Title Catalogue, ip00723000 und ip00863000, <https://data.cerl.org/istc>.

¹⁰²CCl 372, 796, 942; cf. Künzle, *Heinrich Seuses Horologium*, 140–41.

¹⁰³The count gives the year 633, while Sergius IV ruled in 1009–12. The pope might have been confused with Sergius II under whom the Bohemian chiefs accepted Christianity in 845, but the whole indication is still contradictory. A marginal note says that Utraquism was introduced in 1419 and has lasted for forty-five years, which—confusingly again—gives the year 1465.

¹⁰⁴CCl 933, fols. 135v–136r; cf. Iohannes Hieronymus de Praga, *Tractatus contra quattuor articulos*, MS. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. lat. 12532, fol. 78r (the passage is missing in the edition in Gian Benedetto Mittarelli and Anselmo Costadoni, ed., *Annales Camaldulenses Ordinis sancti Benedicti*, vol. 9 (Venice, 1773), 767). On John Jerome's memory about the origins of Hussitism, see Jan Stejskal, "The Approach to Spiritual Revival in the Life and Work of John-Jerome of Prague," in *Geist, Gesellschaft, Kirche im 13.–16. Jahrhundert*, ed. František Šmahel (Prague, 1999), 169–75, at 170; František Šmahel, *Život a dílo Jeronýma Pražského. Zpráva o výzkumu* (Prague, 2010), 20 and 122 n. 34.

King George, such as the imprisonment of the papal envoy Fantino della Valle. Here Harder quoted from Paul II's letter from early 1466, in which the pope replied to George's queries about the ecclesiastical penalties inflicted on him.¹⁰⁵ Another extensive passage listing George's offenses including the breach of his coronation oath and his close association with the Utraquist archbishop, the "heresiarch" John Rokycana, was taken from the papal brief of 6 August 1465, by which the pope had commissioned Rudolph of Rüdeshheim to proclaim the penalties. A more recent set of censures was reproduced by Harder from the bill of deposition of 23 December 1466. In the next, no less extensive passage, Thomas used the executive mandate attached to the bull of deposition to announce the prohibition of any contact with and adherence to George. Just before pronouncing the excommunication, he explained how the commission to proclaim the ban had passed from the papal legate through the Viennese official (Alexius Tumer) to him as a parish priest.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, in the sermon *Omnis, qui se exaltat*, Harder used a number of papal letters to construct an account of George's heresy and condemnation.¹⁰⁷ He quoted long passages from the pope's reply to George, arguing that a heretic must not be given an audience. He also reminded his listeners that it was unjust for Christians to obey a heretic and quoted the papal bull of 8 December 1465, by which Paul II released George's subjects from all vows of obedience. And again, he introduced the excommunication formula with quotes from various letters of commission.¹⁰⁸

Including summaries of papal letters in a crusade sermon was probably common in the late Middle Ages. A surviving sermon fragment from the English crusade against Castile in 1386 epitomizes this approach in succinct form. The unknown Carmelite author reported on four papal letters and, similar to Harder, discussed the issue of sacred warfare before elaborating on the power of indulgences. In this particular English case, the preacher spoke of the admissibility of killing enemies of the faith and granting crusade indulgences for money, in both cases refuting Wycliffite criticism.¹⁰⁹ But while the English preacher simply enumerated with the utmost brevity four additional faculties granted to the crusade commissioners, which had apparently just arrived as a bundle of new documents, Thomas Harder made use of at least six different papal or legatine letters that had been issued in the previous two years. This means that the canons of Klosterneuburg had been collecting documents on George's trial long before the crusade recruitment was initiated in the *Stiftskirche*.

Indeed, one such collection survives in the same manuscript, CCI 933.¹¹⁰ It contains letters both predating and postdating Harder's sermons, which means he could not use it in its surviving material form. Nevertheless, all the charters that have been identified as his sources are found in this collection. Such dossiers of letters and charters relating to George's condemnation, deposition, and the crusade against him are not rare in late medieval manuscripts from Central Europe. In fact, one part of the Klosterneuburg collection, a series of eleven documents, survives in the same order in a manuscript now in Berlin.¹¹¹ This suggests that such dossiers were not necessarily the result of a long-term gathering effort by their owners but could have been copied as a whole. Whatever the case with the Klosterneuburg collection, Thomas Harder used the contemporary political correspondence to inform his crusade

¹⁰⁵CCI 933, fols. 126r–128r. The papal letter has been printed in SRS 9:150–54, no. 313. On Fantino, see Odložilik, *The Hussite King*, 140.

¹⁰⁶Cited letters: Palacký, ed., *Urkundliche Beiträge*, 362–66, no. 336, reprinted in Jenks, *Documents*, 167–68, no. 36; SRS 9:210–14, nos. 345A–B; Jenks, *Documents*, 181, no. 40.

¹⁰⁷CCI 933, fols. 139r–142r.

¹⁰⁸The letter from 8 December 1465 is in SRS 9:147–49, no. 311; I have not yet been able to identify the particular mandate to proclaim the excommunication Harder quoted.

¹⁰⁹Walter Waddington Shirley, ed., *Fasciculi zizaniorum magistri Johannis Wyclif cum tritico* (London, 1858), 506–11; cf. Guard, "Pulpit and Cross," 1340–41.

¹¹⁰CCI 933, fols. 76v–118v. For a description, see the files available from the site *Manuscripta.at. Mittelalterliche Handschriften in Österreich*, <http://manuscripta.at/?ID=1179>, reproduced and supplemented in Portnykh, "Le traité d'Humbert de Romans," 597–604.

¹¹¹The corresponding parts are MS. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. lat. qu. 225, fols. 1r–23v, and CCI 933, fols. 96r–111r. Other collections of documents related to George's trial include MSS. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3484 and Cod. 4975, and Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 1092.

preaching. In contrast, I have found no trace of him using Humbert of Romans's *De predicacione crucis*, although it survives in the same manuscript. Harder diligently compiled the data from his sources and combined them in ways that served his agenda as a preacher. The way he incorporated them into his sermons shows once again that he never separated his task as a broadcaster of crusade and excommunication from his pastoral task as a parish priest.

Conclusion

During the Christmastide of 1467, the war against Bohemian heretics found its way into Thomas Harder's preaching again. His sermon for St. Stephen's Day includes a large marginal addition, written in Harder's hand. The main text contained a line from John 3:36, "He that believes not shall not have life everlasting," whereby the preacher intended to speak against superstition as a violation of belief. This was apparently a major pastoral concern on Christmas since, as Harder put it, foretellers and sorceresses strove to obtain hidden knowledge from demons during this sacred period.¹¹² Yet, even before the parish priest could pronounce his warning, he received a letter from the Viennese official Tumer, dated 24 December 1467. Tumer announced that Ulrich of Grafenegg, in his capacity as the Supreme Captain of Austria, was raising troops against certain rebellious Austrians who had brought to Austria swarms of Hussite heretics.¹¹³ At issue here were the mercenary companies, consisting at least partly of Czech warriors and oftentimes led by Czech captains, that had operated in Austria from the early 1460s in the service of various branches of the feuding Habsburg family.¹¹⁴ Having not been paid according to their expectations, the companies began to seek redress through plundering. Emperor Frederick III tried to solve the situation in person in early 1467, aiming his wrath primarily at the mercenary captain George of Stein, who had recently declared his disobedience. George of Poděbrady took Stein, in whose army there were "many Bohemians," formally under his protection. As the conflict remained unsettled, the talks held in Linz and Korneuburg notwithstanding, Frederick III commanded Grafenegg to launch a military intervention.¹¹⁵

Grafenegg achieved some success, among others, in taking the town of Ybbs that had been held by the companies. On 11 November, George of Poděbrady wrote to the brothers Stephen and Oswald of Eitzing and asked them to help George of Stein, whose castle Wald was besieged by Grafenegg with his "imperial crusaders" ("*mit etlichen kaiserlichen krewczelern*"). On 30 November, the king wrote directly to Stein to assure him of his support. The crusaders were indeed joining Grafenegg's army to fight heretics and their allies in Austria rather than march to Bohemia and Moravia. On 19 December, Frederick III asked the legate Rüdeshheim to confirm that this kind of service would count toward the crusade indulgence, for which one had to spend at least six months in the field.¹¹⁶ Rüdeshheim apparently agreed, as Alexius Tumer's letter from 24 December proclaimed exactly this. Moreover, Tumer enjoined every parish priest to announce from the pulpit on feast days that all who had taken the cross should immediately join Grafenegg's troops. In a postscript, he added that new crusaders were welcome too. In a second postscript, he said that on that very day he had learned about a great army of heretics assembling across the frontier swamp near Hodonín and advised crusaders to be ready yet await further directions. In this rapidly changing situation, Harder made a marginal addition to his sermon, summarizing Tumer's

¹¹²"Sic sunt ariolatrices et ariolatores, vitonisse [sic, i.e., phitonisse], qui hoc tempore sacro occulta querunt a demoniis, quod est peccatum grave." CCI 933, fol. 236v.

¹¹³The letter survives *ibid.*, fols. 112r–113r.

¹¹⁴Alois Niederstätter, *Österreichische Geschichte 1400–1522. Das Jahrhundert der Mitte. An der Wende vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit* (Vienna, 1996), 250–55; Uwe Tresp, *Söldner aus Böhmen. Im Dienst deutscher Fürsten: Kriegsgeschäft und Heeresorganisation im 15. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 2004), 51–52.

¹¹⁵See Soukup, "Leonarda Huntpichlera návod," 67–69; Max Vancsa, *Geschichte Nieder- und Oberösterreichs*, vol. 2 (Vienna, 1927), 477–81. Quote from Adrian Rauch, ed., *Rerum Austriacarum historia ab anno Christi M. CCC. LIIII. usque ad annum Christi M. CCCC. LXVII.* (Vienna, 1794), 167: "was besambt mit vil Behemen."

¹¹⁶SRS 9: 248–50, nos. 376–78 (quote p. 248).

message. He described those who invited and assisted heretics as similar to Christmas sorcerers, and in his call to arms, he invoked love and help for one's neighbor.¹¹⁷

Once again, the crusade permeated the pastoral discourse at Klosterneuburg monastery and parish church. Although Thomas Harder made remarks suggesting that the crusade distracted him somewhat from his regular pastoral work, we cannot attribute to him a disinterest in crusading. He considered his commission to preach the cross subordinate to his responsibility as parish priest, but the former was part of the latter. When asked by his superiors to publish anti-heretical measures, he did so reliably and in short order. While from a certain point of view crusade and excommunication were just two notifications among others in his weekly announcements of opportunities for spiritual ascent, they certainly took the largest space in each sermon under scrutiny. Like his predecessors in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Harder knew how to use the penitential and edifying potential of the crusade combined with concerns of individual religious improvement and moral reform. Instead of arranging a special occasion, engaging a guest speaker, or waiting for the visit of an indulgence commissioner, Harder took charge of the issue himself as the parish rector and handled it in two weeks and three sermons. Whenever the crusade reappeared on his agenda in the same and the following year, he took care of it in the same pastoral framework, be it through preaching or granting indulgences to pious non-combatants.

Although following in the footsteps of high-medieval crusade preachers in terms of the topics he covered, Harder did not (as far as we can say) look into the thirteenth-century preaching handbooks and model crusade sermons for material to reuse in his sermons. Rather, he drew on more contemporary and local sources that would enter his discourse and provide explanation of the immediate political circumstances. For this purpose, preachers of the cross traditionally used the respective crusade bulls. Thirteenth-century popes sometimes even enjoined them to read out the bull word by word.¹¹⁸ However, simply reading the bull was not the choice made by Thomas Harder. Instead, he processed a number of papal letters and compiled extracts from them into a coherent narrative of his own. He also procured additional sources illuminating the controversy with the Hussites. This confirms the importance of information gathering in fifteenth-century crusading and religious controversy.¹¹⁹ Harder's discussion of the heretical king and his followers was up-to-date and topical. Thanks to the extant sermons, we can observe a preacher at work, not only producing his crusade-related message but adjusting it for the given context and incorporating it into his pastoral performance. The sermons of Thomas Harder offer an intimate insight into the realities of crusade recruitment in the clearly circumscribed locale of one particular parish.

Competing interests. The author declares none.

¹¹⁷CCl 933, fol. 236v.

¹¹⁸Maier, *Preaching the Crusades*, 101–4 and 116–17; Guard, "Pulpit and Cross," 1327.

¹¹⁹See Norman Housley, "Gathering and Using Information at the Fifteenth Century Church Councils: The Example of Crusade," *Journal of Medieval History* 46 (2020): 198–216.