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SACRED SPACE AND CORPORATE IDENTITY:
THE BLACK HEADS' CHAPELS IN THE
MENDICANT CHURCHES OF
TALLINN AND RIGA

The Brotherhoods of the Black Heads – confraternities of journeyman and foreign merchants – which were active in three large Livonian Hanse towns, have repeatedly been the subject of scholarly studies since the nineteenth century.¹ Due to the availability of sources, the research has concentrated on Tallinn (German Reval) and Riga, because the archives of the Black Heads in Tartu (Dorpat) have not been preserved. The brotherhoods in Tallinn and Riga, first noted in sources in 1400 and 1413, respectively, chose mendicant churches as their main religious centres: in Tallinn, the St Catherine's church of the Dominicans, and in Riga, the St Catherine's church of the Franciscans. Strong connections with the mendicants continued for more than a century, until the Reformation events in 1524 and the subsequent dissolution of the friaries.

The relations between the Black Heads and the mendicants have been touched upon in several studies, especially in overviews of the histo-

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¹ Gotthard Tielemann, *Geschichte der Schwarzen-Häupter in Riga nebst einer Beschreibung des Artushofes und seiner Denkwürdigkeiten* (Riga: Häcker, 1831); Friedrich Amelung, Georges Wrangell, *Geschichte der Revaler Schwarzenhäupter* (Reval: Wassermann, 1930; the first part of the book, Amelung's study of the medieval period, was originally published in 1885); Herbert Splet, *Geschichte des rigischen Neuen Hauses, des später sogenannten König Artus Hofes, des heutigen Schwarzhäupterhauses* (Riga: Verlag Ernst Plates, 1934); *Tallinna mustpead: Mustpeade vennaskonna ajaloo ja varadest = Die Revaler Schwarzenhäupter: Geschichte und Schätze der Bruderschaft der Schwarzenhäupter*, toim. Juhan Kreem, Urmas Oolup (Tallinn: Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, 1999).

ry of the particular confraternities,² but also in surveys of the religious behaviour of urban society,³ and in the discussions of extant artworks⁴ and former church silver of the confraternity.⁵ The main focus of this article is on the altars and church furnishings of the Black Heads: for the first time, the questions will be raised of where these objects were actually located, what kind of rituals were performed there, what role they played in the social and devotional life of the confraternity, and how they shaped the sacred space, meaning the interiors of the mendicant churches. Thus, our aim is not only to list what can be deduced from the written sources about the commissioning of sacred objects and church furnishings, but to contextualize them: to study them, as far as the sources allow us, in the contemporary spatial and liturgical framework.⁶

Although it is a long known fact that in the Franciscan church in Riga the Black Heads not only had their own altar but an entire chapel,⁷ and the existence of the confraternity chapel in Tallinn has also been briefly referred to,⁸ it is quite surprising that, in the art historical and architectural studies of these friaries, little attention has been paid to these chapels

² Amelung, Wrangell, *Geschichte der Revaler Schwarzenhäupter*, 30–36, 51–54; Splet, *Geschichte des rigischen Neuen Hauses*, 116–121; Tiina Kala, Juhan Kreem, Anu Mänd, “Mustpeade vennaskond keskajal = Die Bruderschaft der Schwarzenhäupter im Mittelalter”, *Tallinna mustpead = Die Revaler Schwarzenhäupter*, 12–13, 15–16, 62–64.

³ Gustavs Strenga, *Devotion, Donation, and Memoria: Urban Society and the Dominicans in Late Medieval Reval (Tallinn)*, unpublished M.A. thesis (Central European University in Budapest, 2006), Ch. 3.1.

⁴ Recent studies of the altarpiece of the Tallinn Black Heads: Anu Mänd, “Tallinna Mustpeade vennaskonna Maarja altarist ja selle ikonograafia = Über den Marienaltar der Revaler Schwarzenhäupter und seine Ikonographie”, *Eesti kunstisidemed Madalmaadega 15.–17. sajandil = Die Kunstbeziehungen Estlands mit den Niederlanden 15.–17. Jh.*, toim. T. Abel, A. Mänd, R. Rast (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstmuuseum, 2000), 219–227, 228–238; *idem*, “Lucia legendi meister identitseeritud? Lucia legendi meistri, Tallinna mustpeade retaablist ja Eesti kunsti ajaloo 2. kõite avapeatükist”, *Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi*, 1–2 (2007), 173–190; *idem*, “The Altarpiece of the Virgin Mary of the Brotherhood of the Black Heads in Tallinn: Dating, Donors, and the Double Intercession”, *Acta Historiae Artium Balticae*, 2 (2007), 35–53; Kerttu Palginömm, “Luxusartikel auf dem Revaler Retabel des Meisters der Lucia-Legende als eine Einladung in die Stadt Brugge”, *Baltic Journal of Art History* (Autumn 2011/Spring 2012), 89–114.

⁵ Anu Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara: altariistad keskaegsel Liivimaal* (Tallinn: Muinsuskaitseamet, 2008), 46–49, 51–52, 196–202, 210–223.

⁶ A similar study has recently been undertaken on the chapels of St Nicholas' parish church in Tallinn. Kersti Markus, Kaire Tooming, “Hiliskeskaegsest Niguliste kirikust hingepalvete ja eneseeksponeerimise peegliks”, *Acta Historica Tallinnensia*, 16 (2011), 31–66.

⁷ Constantin Metting, “Die Kapelle der Schwarzen Häupter in der ehemaligen, den Franziskanern gehörigen St. Katharinen-Kirche in Riga”, *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1889* (Riga, 1890), 99–106; Splet, *Geschichte des Neuen Hauses*, 117–120. Neither of the authors referred to any sources that contain the word “chapel”.

⁸ Amelung, Wrangell, *Geschichte der Revaler Schwarzenhäupter*, 30; Mänd, “Über den Marienaltar”, 231.

and no attempt has been made to locate them or to reconstruct their interiors.⁹ It is true that no more than ruins survive from both churches; to be even more precise, in Riga only some wall fragments remain, and they are incorporated into later buildings.¹⁰ It should also be noted that documentary evidence which could shed light on the building history of both churches and the entire complex of the friaries is extremely scarce. For instance, concerning the friary in Tallinn, thus far only a very few written records have been found.¹¹ Therefore, when trying to date the construction of the church and its later additions, scholars have mainly relied on the method of stylistic analysis, and several questions cannot be answered with certainty.

However, sources exist which historians of architecture have completely overlooked: some account books of the Black Heads. From Tallinn, an account book of the altar wardens (Low German *vorstender der altare*) of the confraternity has been preserved from the years 1418–1517.¹² From Riga, the most helpful sources for our purposes are two account books of the treasurers (*kemerer*) from 1413–1443 and 1441–1523.¹³ These manuscripts include, among other information, records of the objects purchased, donated or made for the confraternity altars and the chapel in which these were located. Naturally, the aim of the altar wardens or treasurers was not to describe the artworks and the interior of the chap-

⁹ On the architecture of the friaries, see Wilhelm Neumann, *Das mittelalterliche Riga: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der norddeutschen Baukunst* (Berlin: Springer, 1892), 28–30; Eugen von Nottbeck, Wilhelm Neumann, *Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Reval* (Reval: Franz Kluge, 1896–1904), 124–130; Ernst Kühnert, “Das Dominikanerkloster zu Reval”, *Beiträge zur Kunde Estlands*, 12, 1–3 (1926), 5–46; Rihards Malvess, Gunārs Jansons, *Pētījumu materiāli par arhitektūras pieminekli – bijušā franciskāņu klosterā atliekām Rīgā*, 4 sēj. (Rīga, 1964–1970), manuscript in the archives of the State Inspection for Protection of Monuments, Riga; Elfriede Tool-Marran, *Tallinna dominiiklaste klooster* (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1971); Anneli Randla, “Tallinna dominiiklaste kloostri ehitusloo ülevaade”, *Vana Tallinn V (IX)* (Tallinn, 1995), 35–57; *idem*, *The Architecture of the Mendicant Orders in Northern Europe*, unpublished PhD dissertation (University of Cambridge, 1998), 79–116, 226–234; *idem*, “Dominiiklasted Vana-Liivimaal: linnastumisesest ja arhitektuurist”, *Kunstiteaduslikke uurimusi* 9 (Tallinn: Teaduste Akadeemia Kirjastus, 1998), 7–19; Andris Caune, Ieva Ose, *Latvijas viduslaiku mūra baznīcas: 12. gs. beigās – 16. gs. sākums: Enciklopēdija* (Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2010), 305–313.

¹⁰ See August Reinberg, “Ueberreste der St. Katharinenkirche, des ehemaligen Franziskanerklosters zu Riga”, *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1889* (Riga, 1890), 22–25; Jānis Zilgalvis, Marina Levina, “Svētās Katrīnas baznīca”, *Rīgas dievnami: Arhitektūra un māksla* (Rīga: Zinātne, Mantojums, 2007), 328–335.

¹¹ For a discussion of these sources, see Randla, “Tallinna dominiiklaste kloostri ehitusloo ülevaade”, 36–37.

¹² Staatsarchiv der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg [hereafter StAH], coll. 612-2/6, no. E 1. Useful information can also be found in no. D 1 (1430–1527) and B 1 (1515–1565).

¹³ Dokumentesammlung des Herder-Instituts in Marburg/Lahn [hereafter DSHI], coll. 120, no. 64 (1413–1443), no. 5 (1441–1523).

els in detail (much less the rest of the church), but to note down the cost of the objects and the reconstruction projects. However, taking into account the hitherto extremely scant evidence for the spatial arrangements of the mendicant churches, even these few records represent invaluable additions to the cultural and architectural histories of Tallinn and Riga.

WHY DID THE BLACK HEADS ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS WITH THE MENDICANTS?

The foundation of an altar and the joint participation in religious rituals were cornerstones of medieval corporate identity. Each guild or confraternity aimed to establish its own altar or, if they were wealthy enough, even several. After the doctrines related to purgatory and penitential liturgy had been established in the high Middle Ages, the interest in investing in intercessory prayers and masses increased considerably and, as a consequence, more and more chantries (Lat. *vicaria*), and sometimes even chantry chapels,¹⁴ were established by those who could afford them: wealthy associations, families and individuals. In the large towns of Livonia, as in large Prussian towns,¹⁵ corporate forms of religiosity of the mercantile elite intensified beginning in the first decades of the fifteenth century. For instance, the most influential guild in Tallinn, the Great Guild of merchants, with whom the Black Heads had close connections, had four altars, two in both parish churches.¹⁶ As this practise was widespread in other parts of Europe, the offices of chantry priests at the Great Guild's altars were often reserved for sons of guild members.¹⁷ Thus, the guild provided paid positions for those sons of merchants who chose clerical careers and, in doing so, contributed to the mutually beneficial social and religious networks.

¹⁴ See, e.g. Simon Roffey, *Chantry Chapels and Medieval Strategies for the Afterlife* (Stroud: The History Press, 2008); Antje Grewolls, *Die Kapellen in norddeutschen Kirchen im Mittelalter* (Kiel: Ludwig, 1999). The (lay) chapels in mendicant churches have been briefly discussed in Wolfgang Schenkluhn, *Architektur der Bettelorden: Die Baukunst der Dominikaner und Franziskaner in Europa* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000), 222–223.

¹⁵ Roman Czaja, “Korporative Formen der Religiösität des Patriziats in den preußischen Großstädten”, *Quaestiones mediae aevi novae*, 2 (Warsaw, 1997), 118.

¹⁶ Anu Mänd, “Suurgildi ajalugu kuni Liivi sõjani”, Ivar Leimus, Rein Loodus, Anu Mänd, Marta Männisalu, Mariann Raisma, *Tallinna Suurgild ja gildimaja* (Tallinn: Eesti Ajaloomuuseum, 2011), 81–82.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 82. Some chantry priests, e.g. Albert Westermann Jr., were also members of the guild.

The issue of the chantry priest was most likely one of the reasons why the Black Heads in Riga and Tallinn chose a mendicant church as their religious centre. The majority of the Black Heads were young and unmarried: if they had their altar in a parish church, they would have faced the constant problem of who to hire as a chantry priest whereas, in a mendicant church, they could be certain that there would always be a friar to serve at their altar. Another reason for choosing a mendicant church was the fact that, in general, the Black Heads as journeymen or aliens were not citizens of the town and did not belong to the congregations of the parish churches.¹⁸ Only members of parish churches were allowed to found a chapel.¹⁹ However, the confraternity needed a church where they could fulfil their religious obligations, receive Holy Communion, and bury and commemorate their dead. The latter may have been of particular relevance for foreign members, who did not have families or relatives in the town.

In Tallinn, the St Catherine's church of the Dominicans was a natural choice for the Black Heads: it was the only male religious house in the town. The friary was active from about the middle of the thirteenth century and had become rather popular among the urban inhabitants, which was sometimes seen as a threat by parish priests.²⁰ The Dominican church was impressive in size: with a ground plan of approx. 1220 square metres, it was the largest church in the town.²¹ It was a very prestigious place as well, because among its supporters were the town council, who

¹⁸ They became citizens when they married, entered the Great Guild and took the citizen's oath. For the general pattern and exceptions, see Mänd, "Suurgildi ajalugu", 21–23; *idem*, *Urban Carnival: Festive Culture in the Hanseatic Cities of the Eastern Baltic, 1350–1550* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 36–38.

¹⁹ Grewolls, *Die Kapellen in norddeutschen Kirchen*, 104.

²⁰ See Tiina Kala, "Vend Lucas, dominiiklane", Tiina Kala, Juhan Kreem, Anu Mänd, *Kümme keskaegset tallinlast* (Tallinn: Argo, 2006), 188–190; Bernd-Ulrich Hergemöller, "Der Revaler Kirchenstreit (1424–1428)", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 109 (1991), 13–30; Tiina Kala, "Dominikaanit Liivinmaalla = Dominicans in Old Livonia", *Dominikaanit Suomessa ja Itämeren akuella keskiajalla = Dominicans in Finland and Around the Baltic Sea During the Middle Ages*, ed. by K. Virtanen *et al.* (Turku: Turun maakuntamuseo, 2003), 59–60, 65.

²¹ Length of the nave (including the apse) 67.7 m, width 18.5 m. Villem Raam, "Dominiiklaste Katariina klooster Vene t. 12–20", *Eesti Arhitektuur 1: Tallinn*, peatoim. V. Raam (Tallinn: Valgus, 1993), 269.

had their altar and pews there beginning in the late fourteenth century,²² the goldsmiths, who founded their altar in 1471,²³ and the Great Guild, who did not have an altar there but who commissioned vigils and masses for the dead from the Dominican convent, contributed to the running costs of the Black Heads' altars and acted as their altar wardens.²⁴ From the records of 1519–1521 and about 1525, it is apparent that the supporters of the Dominicans included St Olaf's guild, the confraternity of St Job, the barbers, and the guild of St Luke for painters and woodcarvers.²⁵ The names of individual benefactors, including representatives of the nobility and the urban elite, are too numerous to mention.²⁶

It should also be noted that, over the course of time, the Tallinn Black Heads not only developed their relationships with the Tallinn convent but managed to create connections with the higher authorities of the Order of Preachers, culminating in a charter from 1478 sent to the Black Heads by Master General Leonardus de Mansuetis, in which he obliged all the Dominican convents to pray for the Tallinn confraternity.²⁷

In Riga, there were two mendicant friaries, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, both founded in the thirteenth century.²⁸ Why the Black Heads there decided in favour of the Franciscans remains unknown. The

²² In 1386, the town council endowed a daily mass at the altar of St Dominic, in front of which stood their pews (*raetstole*). Dieter Heckmann, *Revaler Urkunden und Briefe von 1273 bis 1510* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 1995), no. 44. For the *rades altar*, occasionally also *rades vicarie* or *altar vor deme radestale* (presumably identical with the St Dominic altar), see also *Liv-, Est- und Kurländisches Urkundenbuch*, Zweite Abteilung [hereafter LUB, 2]:I, hrsg. von Leonid Arbusow (Riga, Moskau: Deubner, 1900), no. 898 (Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 219); *Kämmereibuch der Stadt Reval 1463–1505*, Halbband 2, hrsg. von Reinhard Vogelsang (Köln, Wien: Böhlau, 1983), no. 2036, 2111, 2744, 2750; Tallinn City Archives [Tallinna Linnaarhiiv; hereafter TLA], coll. 230, inv. 1, no. Ad 32, fol. 21r, 29r, 36r, 42r, 52r, 61r, 75r, 87v, 99v, 110r, 121r, 130r, 140r, 152r, 162r, 162v (1523). The town council also supported the altar of St Dorothy, the altar of the Virgin Mary (see below), and the illumination of the Sacrament.

²³ Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 50, 208–209.

²⁴ Mänd, "Suurgildi ajalugu", 83–85. The earliest surviving record of the payment for masses and vigils is from 1433. TLA, coll. 191, inv. 2, no. 16, pag. 25: *It. gegeben den monniken vor missen vnd vor vigilien 18 or.*

²⁵ Gertrud von Walther-Wittenheim, *Die Dominikaner in Livland: Die Natio Livoniae* (Roma: S. Sabina, 1938), 141–142; TLA, coll. 230, inv. 1, no. Bk 3, fol. 23r–23v, 27r–27v; no. Aa 15a, fol. 33r; Kala, "Vend Lucas, dominiiklane", 197.

²⁶ See Heckmann, *Revaler Urkunden und Briefe*, no. 89; Kala, "Vend Lucas, dominiiklane", 194–197; Gustavs Strenga, "Bidden vor myner sele. The Dominicans as Intercessors between Townspeople and God in Late Medieval Reval", *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU*, 13 (Budapest, 2007), 113–121, 126–129.

²⁷ Kala, Kreem, Mänd, "Die Bruderschaft der Schwarzenhäupter", 63–64, see also 127, fig. 32.

²⁸ The Dominican friary was founded in 1234. Walther-Wittenheim, *Die Dominikaner in Livland*, 6–7, 135, no. I, 144–145, no. XI. The Franciscans were first referred to in 1248, and the convent existed at the latest by 1253. Leonhard Lemmens, *Die Observantenkustodie Livland und Preussen* (Düsseldorf: L. Schwann, 1913), 15.

reason may have partly been socio-topographical: the Franciscan church, situated on the corner of *Gildestaven* and *Scho* Streets,²⁹ was physically very close to the house of the Great Guild, and also somewhat closer than the Dominican church to the market place, where the Town Hall and the confraternity house (New House) stood. The Franciscans certainly had good connections to the urban elite: the town council of Riga had their pews in the church beginning in at least the early fifteenth century, and in 1429–1430 they also donated a window.³⁰ It is possible that the councillors also had a chantry there, and their example could have been a decisive factor for the Black Heads. From the spatial point of view, there would have been no apparent reason to prefer one church to another, because the Franciscan and Dominican churches were of comparable size and – unlike in Tallinn – much smaller than the main parish church, St Peter's.³¹ The construction history of both churches is unclear (see below), but it is probable that at the time the Black Heads founded their chantry in the 1420s the Franciscan church was undergoing considerable modernisation, whereas the Dominican church was largely rebuilt only later, at the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century, and may have therefore been less attractive.

The "home church" of the Black Heads in Tartu is not known, but we may assume that a similar pattern was followed there as well, meaning that it was most likely the church of the Dominicans, because the Franciscan friary was founded there as late as between 1466 and 1472.³²

²⁹ Modern Latvian street names: Amatu and Šķūņu.

³⁰ *Kämmerei-Register der Stadt Riga 1348–1361 und 1405–1474*, hrsg. von Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands, bearb. von August von Bulmerincq (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1909–1913), 107 (1413–14): *radstul to sunte Katherinen*, 154, 172 (1428–29): *to deme nien rathstole to sunte Katherinen*, 174 (1429–30, pews and window), 177 (1430–31, pews and window), 305.

³¹ The actual ground plan of the Dominican St John's church and the reconstructed ground plan of the Franciscan St Catherine's church were published in: Caune, Ose, *Latvijas viduslaiku mūra baznīcas*, 270, 311 respectively. For St Peter's, see *ibid.*, 332.

³² Lemmens, *Die Observantenkustodie*, 32–33, no. 108–109. The Dominicans in Tartu appear in sources beginning in the late 13th century. See Richard Otto, "Ueber die Dorpater Klöster und ihre Kirchen", *Verhandlungen der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft*, 22:2 (1910), 54–55, 58, 65; Kaur Alntoa, "Kloostriitest keskaegses Tartus", *Ajalooline Ajakiri*, 4 (2008), 302–303, 305–307.

THE ALTARS OF THE BLACK HEADS IN TALLINN

The earliest document in which the Tallinn Black Heads are referred to is a contract between the wardens of the confraternity and the Dominican friary from the Sunday of mid-Lent (i.e. 28 March) 1400.³³ The document first defined the rights of ownership over the objects that the Black Heads would bring into the church, such as liturgical vestments, books, statues, chalices, and other big and small items. These had to remain in the control of the wardens of the confraternity, and the friars were not allowed to sell or pawn these or to remove them from the church for any reason.³⁴ The objects had to be kept at the altar of the Virgin Mary, which in the document was also called the Black Heads' altar. Then, the contract determined how the offerings of the churchgoers (in cash, silver, wax, fur or livestock) were to be divided between the confraternity and the friars and how this income would be used.

Thus, in March 1400, the confraternity already had its own altar. The same document also reveals that it was decorated with a statue of the Virgin Mary (*vnser leuen vrouwen bilde*). However, the account book of the altar wardens indicates that the altar was consecrated three years later, on the Sunday before mid-Lent (18 March) 1403, and that the patrons were the holy virgins St Gertrude and St Dorothy.³⁵ It is unknown why there was such a delay: perhaps the altar was not yet entirely ready when the contract was drawn up. Or if it was ready and in use in 1400, it may have been necessary, for some reason, to re-consecrate it in 1403. Although the consecration was not recorded in the account book of the altar wardens in the same year, but in 1418 when the book was established, it is stated there that it was copied from an older note (*scryff*) and there is no reason to suspect that the warden misread the date. Another possible cause could have been the construction work which was carried out in the church around this time (see below).

³³ TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 88; *Liv-, Est- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten* [hereafter LUB], IV, hrsg. von Friedrich Georg von Bunge (Reval: Kluge und Ströhm, 1859), no. 1503.

³⁴ TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 88: [...] *sint eyns gheworden* [...] *vmme dat misghewede, boke, bilde, kelke vnde wat se in vnse kerken tughen, dat sy dat mynneste ofte dat meyste, des solen de voermundere der swarten houede mechtich syen to vorwarende vnde to vorstaende, [...] des en sole wy brodere van sunte Katerinen nyne macht hebben to vorkopende ofte to vorpandende eder in nynerleie ander wijs vte der kerken to vntferdighende, sunder to godes deynste vor vnser leuen vrouwen altaer, daer se et to getughet hebben, to bliuende.*

³⁵ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 1v; transcription and translation into Estonian in Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 210.

The other altar of the Black Heads, first referred to in January 1418, was consecrated in September 1419 in honour of the Holy Trinity, St John the Baptist and St Christopher.³⁶ In all other references, it is referred to as the altar of the Holy Trinity, just as the first altar was named after the main patron saint, the Virgin Mary.

In the account book, there is detailed information on liturgical vessels and paraments (various cloths for the altar and the priest's vestments), but also on the statues and retables purchased for these altars during more than a hundred years' period. Since much of this information has been referred to in earlier writings,³⁷ only a brief summary is necessary. At the time that the altar wardens' account book was established in 1418, the Black Heads were already in possession of the following items: a large silver gilt chalice, a pair of silver altar cruets (*appollen*), a missal, a large silver censer and a large silver monstrance. Most likely, these were first used at both altars. The following items belonged solely to the Virgin Mary altar: three pewter candlesticks, a brass plate for four candles, six palls (altar covers) and two antependia. The Holy Trinity altar had two pewter candlesticks, four palls and one antependium. In 1440, another silver gilt chalice (weighing about 470 grams) was obtained and, soon thereafter, the second antependium was bought for the Holy Trinity altar, suitably decorated with the image of the Trinity.³⁸

On the Virgin Mary altar, there was originally a statue of the Virgin Mary, most probably of wood, wearing a chaplet of pearls. It was consecrated and anointed in 1403, together with the altar.³⁹ In 1418, an altar "foot" (i.e. predella) was carved by the Tallinn woodcarver Menneke. In the predella stood the twelve Apostles, and two years later it was painted by the master Kersten *meler*. These records indicate the making of a retable, which from then on most likely housed the statue of the Virgin.⁴⁰ The same two masters also made a baldachin (*schur*), which was not only painted but also gilded but, since this was described as hanging above the Virgin Mary altar, it could not have been attached to the retable.⁴¹

³⁶ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 1v; transcription and translation in Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 210–211.

³⁷ See above footnotes 4–5.

³⁸ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 2r–3r; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 211–213.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, fol. 1v, 2v; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 210, 212.

⁴⁰ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 5r, 7r; Jan von Bonsdorff, *Kunstproduktion und Kunstverbreitung im Ostseeraum des Spätmittelalters* (Helsinki: Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistys, 1993), 39–40. For Menneke *snitker* and Kersten *meler*, see Rasmus Kangropool, Mai Lumiste, "Tallinna maalijad ja puunikerdajad 14. ja 15. sajandil", *Kunstiteadus, kunstikriitika*, 4 (Tallinn: Kunst, 1981), 161–162, no. 8–9.

⁴¹ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 6r, 7r; cf. Bonsdorff, *Kunstproduktion*, 40.

One of the first commissions from abroad was the altarpiece for the Holy Trinity altar. In 1424 the local woodcarver Hans Kanklowe made a retable (*tafel*) with a predella, which was a half-ready product, because in 1429 it was shipped to Germany to be painted by a “black friar from Hamburg”, who, as scholars agree, can be identified as the famous Dominican painter Master Francke. In 1436, the retable was back in Tallinn.⁴²

In 1480, the Black Heads decided to commission a large silver statue of the Mother of God from Lübeck. Apparently, the resources of the confraternity were not sufficient, and therefore they decided to sacrifice for this purpose their large silver monstrance (they also had a smaller one) and 38 pieces of jewellery that had been donated to the statue of the Virgin. Also, some gold was sent to Lübeck for the gilding of the statue. It was ready by 1486, weighing about five kilograms, and it was described as “holding a monstrance in her right hand”.⁴³ The altar wardens also had two new headgears made for the statue of the Virgin, which also had a crown and at least two dresses of different materials and colours, probably one for daily use and the other for important feast days.⁴⁴

In 1481, the confraternity commissioned two cloths for the Virgin Mary altar from Bruges: a painted canvas depicting the Passion of Christ and a new antependium, which, according to a record from 1486, represented the Virgin Mary, St Victor and St Maurice.⁴⁵ In 1493 a new altarpiece arrived from Bruges, being a joint commission of the Black Heads and the Great Guild, and this has survived until the present day.⁴⁶

Thus, as the wealth of the confraternity accumulated, they purchased new items for their altars, and nothing but the best satisfied them. The fact that several large objects were commissioned from leading art centres in northern Germany and the Low Countries is a direct indicator of the high position and social prestige of this elite confraternity.

The two altars of the Black Heads were established quite close temporally (1400/1403 and 1418/1419) and in the same church. During the next hundred years, until the end of the Catholic period, the confraternity did

⁴² StAH, no. E 1, fol. 11r, 16r (*de sal ze vns tho Hoemboerch enen swarten monyck malen laten*), 24r; Bonsdorff, *Kunstproduktion*, 91–92. For Kanklowe, see Kangropool, Lumiste, “Tallinna maalijad ja puunikerdajad”, 162, no. 12.

⁴³ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 50v, 61r; LUB, 2:I, no. 106; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 214–215, 217.

⁴⁴ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 50v, 61r; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 214–216.

⁴⁵ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 56r, 61r; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 215–216.

⁴⁶ Mänd, “The Altarpiece of the Virgin Mary”, 39.

not endow new altars, neither in this or any other church. According to records from the 1470s onwards, the Black Heads had their own pews in the north aisle of St Nicholas' church (and from 1492 in the recently completed New Chapel)⁴⁷ and, together with the Great Guild, they contributed to the commissioning of the extant retable for the high altar from Lübeck (completed in 1478–1481), as testified by the coat of arms painted on the artwork.

The names (and thus also the origin) of the Tallinn Black Heads for about the first fifty years of their existence are not known: the earliest surviving list of the participants at the drinking feast dates from 1446.⁴⁸ Therefore, the relative number of local and foreign members cannot be determined. It can only be assumed that one of the reasons for establishing ties with the parish church was that, over the course of time, young men of local origin (i.e. sons of members of the Great Guild) began to predominate in the confraternity.

THE ALTARS OF THE BLACK HEADS IN RIGA

In Riga, the situation was somewhat different from Tallinn: there the Black Heads established connections with two churches early in their development. According to their statutes from 1416, the confraternity had their deceased members commemorated with vigils and masses for the dead in St Catherine's church of the Franciscans and in the parish church of St Peter.⁴⁹ However, their first altar was founded in the Franciscan church. The year of the consecration and the patron saint of the altar are not known, but in 1421 a chantry was endowed jointly with the Great Guild, for which the Black Heads provided 47 marks, 20 *Ore*

⁴⁷ Mänd, "Über den Marienaltar", 238, note 32; TLA, coll. 31, inv. 1, no. 216, fol. 73r: *Anno 92 des donredages na Seruacij do entf. ik van Bernt Paell van den swarten houede wegen – 10 mk. rig. Hir vor sall ik ene laten maken 2 swarte houede in de nige kappelle an dat nige stolte to settende etc.*

⁴⁸ TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 20, pag. 5–8. Prior to 1446, only a few names are known.

⁴⁹ Wilhelm Stieda, Constantin Mettig, *Schragen der Gilden und Aemter der Stadt Riga bis 1621* (Riga: Häcker, 1896), 553, § 25–27.

and one Arnhem guilder.⁵⁰ It is somewhat doubtful (though certainly not impossible) that such an elite confraternity would have previously existed without an altar, especially taking into account the early foundation of the Virgin Mary's altar in Tallinn. Perhaps masses were read for the Black Heads at some existing altar until the confraternity raised funds for their own endowment.

A detailed list of the Black Heads' treasures in St Catherine's church survives from 1441, containing not only information about the objects extant in that particular year, but also including notes about when various objects were purchased or donated and by whom.⁵¹ The list reveals that the chantry of the Black Heads, for which the "monks" (i.e. the friars) had issued a charter, had been founded on the south side of the church.⁵² The Black Heads had also had their altar built and the stone for the mensa had been donated by a man named Hans Hatkesborch. It seems that the altar was indeed established no earlier than in 1421 because a chalice, a paten and an altar cloth were commissioned in 1422, and a pair of altar cruets in 1423 – the mass cannot be celebrated without Eucharistic vessels. An altarpiece, bought from Lübeck for 74 marks, had arrived in Riga in 1431.⁵³ The list includes information on several other objects as well, some of which will be referred to below, in the discussion of the chapel.

This altar was, for unknown reasons, re-built in 1445. The stone for a new mensa was brought from St Peter's church, a box with a relic (*hilgedom*) was enclosed in the altar, and several new objects were purchased, including a panel with the "face of Our Lord".⁵⁴ The bishop

⁵⁰ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 41: *Anno domini 1421 jare do antworde ik Albert Krensouwe vnde wi kemeres van dussem vorgescr. gelde [...] 47 mrk. vnde 20 or vnde 1 Aremschen gulden vnd dit gelt hebben se vort bestedeget to der vickerygen vnde vppe rente*, pag. 42: *It. int jar vnse heren 1421 do worden ens de ganse selschop der swarten houe [...] met endracht broder des groten gildestouen, alse Hans Vickinc, Herman van der Molen, Wilm Dalhusen, Cord Ouerdic, Hans Geresem, als vmme de vickerynghe de de swartenhoue hebben ghemaket to sunte Katerinen*, pag. 48 (1422): *It. zo is noch geantwerdet det dessen naschreuenen kemereres de breue alzo uppe de vikkerige vnd uppe de rente vnd alle kleinet dat to der vikkerigen gegheuen is*.

⁵¹ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 4–7; LUB, IX, no. 704; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 196–199.

⁵² LUB, IX, no. 704, § 2; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 197, § 2. The charter was, together with other documents, kept in a lockable chest. *Ibid.*, 199, § 13.

⁵³ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 3–5; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 197, § 3–5. See also DSHI, no. 64, pag. 42 (chalice), 51 (cruets), 59 (mensa), 71 (altarpiece).

⁵⁴ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 36–37; Mettig, "Die Kapelle", 105–106. The panel could not have been an altarpiece, as suggested by Mettig, because it cost only three marks.

(most likely Archbishop Henning Scharpenberg) received four marks for the consecration.⁵⁵

According to the inventory list of 1441, the confraternity did not have an altar in St Peter's church at that time; they only kept there (more precisely, in the chapel of St Nicholas) four large candelabra (*luchterbome*),⁵⁶ most likely wooden objects with high stems and lantern-like tops, which could also be carried in processions. In 1470, the confraternity donated a stained-glass window for the south side of the church.⁵⁷ In 1481, the town council gave permission to the Black Heads to build an altar and pews in St Peter's church, and in 1487 the confraternity endowed a chantry in the church in honour of Sts George, Maurice, Gertrude, Francis and Reinhold.⁵⁸ (Special permission from the town authorities was most probably needed because the Black Heads were not citizens and therefore, as explained above, not eligible to found an altar in the parish church.) About six years later, they commissioned an altarpiece for 300 marks, again from Lübeck, one of the leading art centres at the time.⁵⁹ The main patron saint of this altar was most likely St George, as it was decorated with a wooden statue of this saint, containing his relics, and in 1503 the confraternity decided to commission a silver statue of St George.⁶⁰ The chantry chapel of the Black Heads in St Peter's church was located on the south side of the church.⁶¹ However, the analysis of this altar and chapel is not among the aims of this article.

⁵⁵ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 39.

⁵⁶ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 9; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 198, § 9.

⁵⁷ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 129: [...] *dat fenster steyt to sunte Peyter an der suder syden vnd der suarten houfede patrounen stant in demme fenster, summa – 78 mark*. The church was enlarged from 1456 to 1473 and the donation of windows and the establishment of the altar could be related to this work. For construction history (and historiography), see Caune, Ose, *Latvijas viduslaiku mūra baznīcas*, 329–345.

⁵⁸ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 154; no. 7, pag. 31–32; Hermann von Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet nach dem Brauche der Rigaschen Kirche im späteren Mittelalter* (Riga: Häcker, 1904), 417–418.

⁵⁹ DSHI, no. 7, pag. 36.

⁶⁰ For these and other treasures of the Black Heads in St Peter's church, see DSHI, no. 7, especially pag. 306a–306b (transcription in Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 200–202); LUB, 2:II, no. 464; Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, 418–420; *Der Silberschatz der Compagnie der Schwarzen Häupter aus Riga*, Katalog zu den Ausstellungen in Bremen, Roselius-Haus 23. März – 1. Juni 1997, und Bielefeld, Kunstgewerbesammlung der Stadt Bielefeld 21. Juni – 28. September 1997 (Bremen, 1997), 32–37.

⁶¹ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, 418 (1487): [...] *in st Peters kerken bynnen Rige in eyner clape]llen in der suder syden belegen*; DSHI, no. 8, pag. 1: *It. dyt bock hort to der wyckerrygen der swarten houeden yn sunte Peters kerken to Ryghe belegen an der sudder syde*.

THE CHAPEL OF THE VIRGIN MARY IN TALLINN: THE
INTERIOR AND ILLUMINATION

The chapel of the Virgin Mary itself is mentioned in the account book only three times,⁶² and that is probably because the wardens referred to the objects or reconstruction projects in relation to the altars for which they were purchased or near which something was built.

The confraternity had pews in front of both altars: those at the Virgin Mary altar existed as early as 1418, whereas those at the Holy Trinity altar were made in 1421.⁶³ It is not known how many people could fit in the pews. It would have been unthinkable to make pews for the entire confraternity – there was simply not enough space for that. If the pews were only for the elders, room for about four to six men would have sufficed.

Near the Holy Trinity altar, there was a pillar and, attached to it, a nameless “figure” belonging to the Black Heads.⁶⁴ In the chapel, there was also an image of Christ bearing the Cross,⁶⁵ in front of which a lamp had to burn day and night.⁶⁶

From 1419 to 1422, several projects were undertaken in the proximity of the Virgin Mary altar. In 1419, the vaults above it were painted (presumably decorated with murals), the glass window was repaired, the wall behind the altar was built higher, and a carved baldachin to be hung above the altar was commissioned.⁶⁷ In 1421, the painted and gilded baldachin was hung from the ceiling with the help of an iron

⁶² StAH, no. E 1, fol. 2v (1418, *in vnser vrouwen cappellen*), 13r (1426), 18r (1429).

⁶³ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 2v, 8r: *so gaff ik vt vor der swarten houede stoelte vor der hylghen drevaldycheyt tho makende*; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 212.

⁶⁴ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 2v: *de fyguere de am [!] dem pyler steyt by der hylgen drevaldicheyt altare*, 8r: *noch gaff ik [...] 3 mark rig. tho der fygueren, de an der hylghen drevaldycheyt pyler steyt, de fyguere hoert den swarten houeden*.

⁶⁵ The translation of *dracht vnser heren* as the Cross-bearing Christ is somewhat problematic. The word *dracht* has several other meanings in addition to “carrying” (Ger. Tragen), e.g. burden, pregnancy, escort and procession; see Karl Schiller, August Lübben, *Mittelniederdeutsches Wörterbuch*, 1 (Bremen: Kühtmann, 1875), 561–562. In one of the entries of the account book E 1, *dracht* is equated with the crucifix (fol. 18r; see below note 78); however, in some other records, these two are clearly treated as separate objects (no. E 1, fol. 81v; no. B 1, unnumbered page glued to the inside of the cover; TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 93).

⁶⁶ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 4r (1418): *It. de lampe vor den dracht vnser hern solen de vorstender der altare helden vnd de lichte to ewigen tiden*; TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 93: *It. de lampe sal bernen nacht vnde dach dat jar ouer*.

⁶⁷ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 6r: *It. so gaff ik 6 f. vor dat welfte to malende bouen vnser leuen vrouwen. [...] It. noch gaff ik vt 1 f. vor dat vlazevynster [!] tho beterende by vnser leuen vrouwen altare. It. noch gaff ik her Ghert Wytken 5 mark rig. vor dey muren achter vnser leuen vrouwen tho vorhoghende. It. noch gaff ik dem mure mester de de mure vorhogede 2 or tho vordrynkende. [...] It. noch gaff ik Menneken dem snytker 4 or vnnd 3 mark rig. vor dar schur tho makende bouen vnser leyuen vrouwen altare*.

construction.⁶⁸ In the next year, a screen and a new collecting-box were made for the Virgin Mary altar⁶⁹ – the screen may have been wooden, or perhaps consisted of iron rails that separated the chapel from the rest of the church. The window glass was again repaired (and washed) and so was the tracery – a scaffold was set up for the stonemason.⁷⁰ An altar bell was attached to the wall with an iron construction and a “cupboard” (*schap*), i.e. most likely a niche, was hewn in the wall near the altar.⁷¹ The niche was probably used for the keeping of liturgical vessels, books and paraments, and perhaps also for some confraternity documents.⁷²

In 1424–1425 work was done near the Holy Trinity altar: the baldachin above it was lifted higher, and a niche or cupboard (*schap*) was made for the altar.⁷³ In 1426, another niche was made near the Virgin Mary altar, this time for the monstrance, and a year later it was provided with an iron grid.⁷⁴ Hence, this *schap* clearly indicates the existence of a sacrament house. In 1426, the entire chapel was built higher; its floor was evened and covered with tiles.⁷⁵ It is difficult to say what was meant by “building the chapel higher” – this might not have concerned the outer wall or the vaulting. Perhaps the accountant was describing, in this manner, the heightening of the internal wall(s) or the screen that sepa-

⁶⁸ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 7r: *It. noch gaff ik Kersten meler 12 mark rig. vor dat schure tho malende dat bouen vnser leuen vrouwen altare hengt. It. so leyt ik dar tho halen van Lubeke slaghen gholt, dat stunt 13 f. vnnd 2 or, dat quam dar ok to., fol. 8r: It. noch gaff ik 10 f. vor dat iseren werck tho dem schure quam bouen vnser leuen vrouwen.*

⁶⁹ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 9r (1422): *It. noch gaff ik vt vor dat scryn vnnd vor den bloeck dat vor vnser leuen vrouwen steyt [...] 7 f. rig. vnnd et stunt myt alleme beslage 6 mark myn 4 or.*

⁷⁰ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 9r: *It. noch gaff ik vt vor dat vlaes [!] vynster tho beterende vnnd tho wasschende by vnser leuen vrouwen 6 or. vnnd 5 mark rig. It. noch gaff ik vt 3,5 f. vnnd 1 or vor dey stellinghe tho makende vnnd ok em stenwerter de dat stenwerck kylde vnnd beterde.*

⁷¹ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 9r: *It. noch gaff ik vt 1 f. vor en kloecke by vnser leuen vrouwen altaer vnnd 6 or vor dat iseren tho lodende in dey muren. [...] It. so gaff ik vt 4 or vnnd 11 f. vor dat schaep by vnser leuen vrouwen altare steyt tho houwende vnd tho setende in de muren.*

⁷² According to a note from 1436, the statutes of the Black Heads were kept in the chancel and fixed there with a chain. StAH, no. D 1, fol. 27v: [...] *do let ik maken to den monnecken vp dat kor de keden, dar de scragen in sloten staen.*

⁷³ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 11r, 12r. According to the account book, the *schap* was made “under the altar”, which can refer to a cupboard hewn into the *stipes*. On the other hand, terms referring to space or direction in medieval texts should not always be taken literally.

⁷⁴ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 13r: *It. noch gaff ik vt vor dat schaep tho houwende vnnd to setende, dar de monstrancie inne steyt, by vnser leuen vrouwen altare 10 f. rig., fol. 14r: It. noch gaff ik vt vor de iseren gudderen, de vor der monstransyen schape henghet 8 mark rig. myn 15 or.*

⁷⁵ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 13r: *It. noch gaff ik vt vor de kappelle vor vnser leuen vrouwen tho vor hogende vnnd tho effende 4 or vnnd 2 mark. It. noch gaff ik vt 10 f. vor houwende vlysen de dar dey in de kappelle tho lygende quemen.*

rated the room from the rest of the church. Alternatively, the floor level of the chapel may have first been raised, then levelled and tiled.

The next major addition to the chapel was made in 1429–1430, when some kind of arch or arched niche (*swibogen*) was broken into the wall. The purpose of this was to place there a crucifix and the aforementioned figure of Christ carrying the Cross, together with “other images”. According to the wish of the altar warden Tideke van Bodeke,⁷⁶ who had largely financed the work, these images had to be illuminated in the same manner as the altars, and they had to be visible to everybody “in order to receive salvation from God and Our Beloved Lady, who have endured great suffering because of our sins”.⁷⁷ How should we interpret this record? The description seems to refer to two scenes of the Passion: the Carrying of the Cross and the Crucified Christ (unless they were identical; see footnote 66). It is not certain whether the “other images” represented, for example, the Roman soldiers and other people on the Road to Calvary, or, if they accompanied the crucifix, the Virgin Mary and St John the Evangelist, forming the Calvary group. It is also not clear if the arch denotes a larger niche in a side wall or an opening made high in the eastern wall of the chapel. Although the latter would be a logical place for a triumphal crucifix, it does not quite fit with the earlier construction work of 1419, when the wall behind the Virgin Mary altar was built higher. Also, considering the fact that a baldachin was hung above this altar (and in 1493, a 2.55-metre-high altarpiece arrived from Bruges), the sculpture group had to be very high and very large indeed to be visually accessible to everybody. Considering that the vaults of the nave have been calculated to have risen to approx. 22 m and those of the side aisles approx. 15 m,⁷⁸ there was enough space for the sculpture group. There are, however, records which seem to indicate that the figure of Christ carrying the Cross was not high up but placed in/on a (side) wall. For example, in 1441 a door was re-made (or repaired) in front of the Cross-bearing Christ.⁷⁹ There

⁷⁶ Altar warden 1424–1443, alderman of the Great Guild 1432–1434. Mänd, “Suurgildi ajalugu”, 84.

⁷⁷ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 17r (1430): *It. noech gaff ik vt dat ik vorlouet hebbe vor der swyckboghden tho brokende in de muren 3 mark, fol. 18r (1429): [...] dat crucefixus also de dracht vnser heren myt den anderen belden, dat he de let setten in vnser leuen vrowen capellen in den swibogen, den Tideke bekosteget hefft, myt susliken vorbeschede hefft Tideke dusse belde laten setten, dat de vormunder der swarten houede [...] solt dusse belde vorwaren myt luchtunge like den altaren vnd myt alleme to sene, also se wollen van Gode vnd van vnser leuen vrowen dat lon vntffangen erer beyder grote lyden vnd droffnisse, de se hebben gehat vme vnser sunde willen.*

⁷⁸ On the basis of Kalvi Aluve's reconstruction drawings, Tool-Marran, *Tallinna dominiiklaste klooster*, 86.

⁷⁹ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 29r: *De dor wedder to maken vor de dracht vnser heren.*

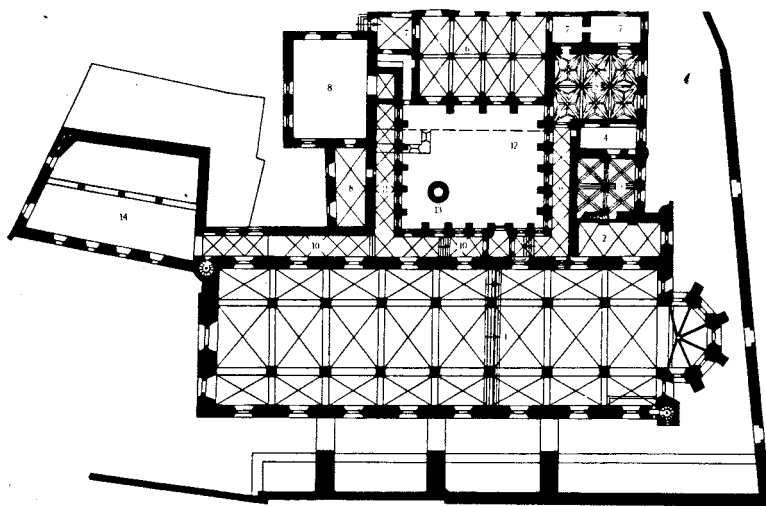


Fig. 1. Reconstructed ground plan of the Dominican friary in Tallinn. Plan by Kalvi Aluve and Elfriede Tool-Marran.

was apparently more than one entrance to the chapel, because in 1437 two doors had been made “in front of the Black Heads’ candles” (one of them may have been the one mentioned in 1441).⁸⁰

Recent research on late medieval chantry chapels has shown that these were not entirely “private” enclaves, and that the visual communication between the chapel and other areas in the church (particularly the chancel where the high altar stood, but also the public space in the nave) was often of great importance to the founders.⁸¹ The aforementioned entry from 1429 of the Black Heads indicates that public visual access to the religious images of the confraternity was important to them as well.

In 1438, a glazier was paid to make a new window and for the repairing of a small window, and nine iron wedges were made for the vaults.⁸² However, no large-scale construction work was done in the chapel after the 1430s. From time to time, snow was shovelled away from the vaults,⁸³ and in 1447 tombstones in front of the Virgin Mary altar were

⁸⁰ StAH, no. D 1, fol. 27v: [...] *noch maken to den monneken vor der swartenhouede lichte 2 dore, de staen – 2,5 mr. 1 s.*

⁸¹ Roffey, *Chantry Chapels*, 134–143.

⁸² StAH, no. E 1, fol. 26r: *It. so gaff yk deme glaseworter vor dat glase vinstre to maken – 10 mr. It. noch vor dat lutteke vinstre to verbeterer – 0,5 mr. [...] It. gegeuen vor 9 ysern kyle to den welfte – 1 mr.*

⁸³ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 25r (1437), 26r (1438), 29r (1441), 31r (1443).

evened, i.e. probably because of burials, which could have caused displacement of the large and heavy stone slabs which were (re-)placed on the level of the floor tiles.⁸⁴

Over the course of time, new artworks were commissioned for the chapel. In 1445, Marquard *meler* was paid for the carving and painting of a statue of St John (most likely the Baptist).⁸⁵ In 1507, the “wounds of Christ” are referred to in the account book, but since this image is listed in the same row with the Cross-bearing Christ and the cross (i.e. crucifix), it cannot be identical to the latter.⁸⁶

As light played a very important role in late medieval religious experience in general and in the liturgy in particular, the Black Heads paid great attention to the illumination of their altars and saints’ statues. In addition to windows, the sources of light were candles and lamps. In about 1418, 70 marks were given for the illumination of the Cross-bearing Christ; the annual interest on the sum was to cover the cost of half a barrel of seal blubber for the lamp.⁸⁷ A part of the income from each of the seven “courts” (periods of the social year), as well as of the annual festivals of their own and of the Great Guild, was targeted to the illumination of the altars.⁸⁸ According to the notes of the altar warden Evert van der Schuren (1476–1486), there were 17 candles in the chapel, which had to be replaced three times a year: at Christmas, at Easter and on the Assumption of the Virgin (15 August).⁸⁹ These 17 were: three candles on both altars, a chandelier of six pipes above the altar of the Virgin Mary, three candles in front of Christ carrying the Cross, one at the pillar, and one in front of the Crucifix at the Black Heads’ pews.⁹⁰ The candles in the chandelier had to be made of one pound of wax (416 g), and those at the altar of five pounds (2.08 kg). In addition, there were lamps, burning with the seal blubber, one in front of the Cross-bearing Christ and

⁸⁴ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 35r.

⁸⁵ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 33r: *It. gegeuen Marquerd den melre vor sunte Iohans belde to snyden vnd to malen – 13 mr.* He is identical to Marquard Hasse; see Kangropool, Lumiste, “Tallinna maalijad ja puunikerdajad”, 157, 163, no. 15.

⁸⁶ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 81v: *wunden vnser herren.*

⁸⁷ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 4r, 18r.

⁸⁸ StAH, no. D 1, E 1, *passim*. See also the decision from 1517 of the Great Guild about the new system of financing the illumination of the altars. StAH, no. E 1, fol. 90r.

⁸⁹ TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 93. In practice, new candles, particularly those of the chandelier, were occasionally also made for some other important feasts, e.g. Pentecost, the Visitation and the Purification of the Virgin, the Trinity and All Saints; StAH, no. E 1, fol. 52r, 53r, 54r, 59r.

⁹⁰ TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 93, see also StAH, no. E 1, fol. 63r, and no. B 1, unnumbered page glued to the inside of the cover.

the other one in front of the statue of the Virgin Mary. The lamps had to burn day and night throughout the year, and a (lay) brother was responsible for watching them, receiving a pair of shoes in return.⁹¹ Since wax was expensive, the large number of candles was another way to express the status and wealth of the confraternity. At the same time, it also increased the visibility of the rituals and of the carved and painted images, thus having a considerable impact on the communication of religious experience visually.

THE BLACK HEADS' CHAPEL IN THE FRANCISCAN CHURCH IN RIGA

The chapel in St Catherine's church is mentioned in the treasurer's account book at least seven times, the earliest in 1458.⁹² It is referred to as "our chapel" or the "Black Heads' chapel", and never as the chapel of the patron saint (it is also possible that it did not have one). It was a lockable room,⁹³ probably separated from the rest of the church by a wooden screen or metal railings. In addition to the altar, the chapel housed several other objects.

As indicated by the statutes from 1416, the Black Heads had established connections with the Franciscan church years before the endowment of the chantry. But their relations can perhaps be traced back to an even earlier period, because in 1413 and 1414 the confraternity treasures included the statues of two female saints, St Apollonia and St Agnes.⁹⁴ Their location is not mentioned – they may have also been placed in the New House – and they were never referred to in later records.

The account books of the treasurers also reveal the existence of statues or paintings of other saints. In 1429, the Black Heads possessed a gilt statue (it is not mentioned who it represented) and a painted can-

⁹¹ TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 93; StAH, no. E 1, fol. 60r. The altar warden's account book reveals that a payment in money (about half a mark) was more frequently used to compensate the watching of the lamps. StAH, no. E 1, e.g. fol. 76r, 77r, 78r. From about 1507, it was the beguines who made the candles and watched the lamps. *Ibid.*, fol. 81v, 86v, 87v, 88v, 89v, 91v; no. B 1, fol. left of 2r, fol. 2v, 3v, 4v, 5v, 6v, 7v, 8v (1523/1524).

⁹² DSHI, no. 5, pag. 83 (*vnser kappelle*), 87 (*Swarten houede kappelle*), 94, 102, 103, 119, 124.

⁹³ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 102: *vor 1 slotel to der kappellen*.

⁹⁴ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 2; see also Konstantin Metting, "Über die vorreformatorischen Bildwerke der Schwarzen Häupter zu Riga", *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1906* (Riga, 1907), 65.

was showing the martyrdom of St James.⁹⁵ This probably depicted the beheading of St James the Elder. As testified by the inventory list from 1441, the painting was certainly located in the Franciscan church.⁹⁶ The list from 1431 includes a gilt statue of St Mary Madgalene,⁹⁷ which was most likely the nameless gilt figure from two years earlier. The statue is recorded in the same sentence as the mensa, which indicates that it stood in the Black Heads' chapel. Finally, a statue of St Martin (location not mentioned) is referred to in the sources from 1464.⁹⁸

The following is known of the illumination of the chapel. In 1413, years before the endowment of the chantry in 1421, the Black Heads had a window in St Catherine's church: in that particular year, it was necessary to repair the angels on it.⁹⁹ In 1430 the confraternity paid 107 marks for the making of two new windows and 21.5 marks for the grids in front of them.¹⁰⁰ At least one window, but most likely both, was decorated with their coat of arms.¹⁰¹ They had also quite early donated a chandelier (*krona*) to the church, first referred to in 1415.¹⁰² In 1441 it is described as having seven candles and hanging in front of the holy body (i.e. the Sacrament), meaning above the altar.¹⁰³ On the altar, there were three brass candlesticks, and another four candles stood in front of the Black Heads' pews.¹⁰⁴ Just as in Tallinn, it is not known for how many people the pews were made.

In 1458 a cross (most likely a crucifix) is mentioned as standing at the end of the chapel, and in front of it a "pan" (*panne*), some sort of basin or bowl for the candles.¹⁰⁵ Since the eastern wall was reserved for the altar, decorated with the altarpiece, the "end of the chapel" must refer to another wall (unless there was space for both the altar and a crucifix in the east¹⁰⁶). Somewhere in the chapel, there was also a lockable

⁹⁵ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 66 (1429), 68 (1430); Metting, "Über die vorreformatorischen Bildwerke", 65.

⁹⁶ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 14; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 199.

⁹⁷ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 69; Metting, "Über die vorreformatorischen Bildwerke", 65.

⁹⁸ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 103 (1464), 107 (1465); Metting, "Über die vorreformatorischen Bildwerke", 67; cf. Spliet, *Geschichte des Neuen Hauses*, 120.

⁹⁹ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 5 (1413): 5 *art. de engele to beternde to zunte Katerinen in der swarten houede vinstere*.

¹⁰⁰ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 71; LUB, IX, no. 704, § 12; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 198–199. Both windows were repaired in 1460. DSHI, no. 5, pag. 87.

¹⁰¹ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 60 (1453): 23 *s. vor dat vynster to bete(re)n dar dat zwarte houet in steyt*. The Black Heads' window in St Peter's church was also decorated with their coat of arms; see *ibid.*, pag. 129 (1470).

¹⁰² DSHI, no. 64, pag. 13. In 1420, one of the pipes was repaired. *Ibid.*, pag. 39.

¹⁰³ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 1; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 196. See also DSHI, no. 5, pag. 46, 68.

¹⁰⁴ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 8–9; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 198.

¹⁰⁵ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 83: *It. so let ik noch maken de panne vor dat cruce, dat dar stat to sunte Katrynen to endest vnser kappelle stat – 1 mr.* For the illumination of the cross, see e.g. pag. 90.

¹⁰⁶ The height of the surviving chancel walls is approx. 12 m.

cupboard (*schap*),¹⁰⁷ which could have been, as explained earlier, a niche in the wall or, since here the hewing is not mentioned, a free-standing wooden piece of furniture.

In addition to these items, as well as the altarpiece and liturgical vessels referred to above, the confraternity commissioned several other rare and costly objects to be used at their altar, for example, a liturgical fan of peacock's feathers, a priest's vestment embroidered with gold, a small marble plate on which the sacrament was consecrated, and so forth.¹⁰⁸ All this luxury can be regarded as a manifestation of their wealth and prestige, and the chapel must have been visually truly impressive.

LITURGICAL AND SPATIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The next relevant question is to consider what kind of liturgy was performed in these chapels and how many people had to fit in there. With regard to the liturgy, we have to differentiate between the masses celebrated for the Black Heads with or without their presence.

According to an entry from 1418, in the beginning of the altar wardens' account book in Tallinn, a daily mass had to be said at both confraternity altars. In return, the Black Heads had to give the friars a barrel of meat, a barrel of cod and a barrel of peas around Christmas, and mutton ("a good wether") at the Trinity.¹⁰⁹ In addition, they also paid a certain sum for the singing of the mass.¹¹⁰ After the friary was reformed in the 1470s – the *nijen reformerden broders* are mentioned in 1476¹¹¹ – the barrel of meat at Christmas was replaced by a barrel of fish (cod, salmon or herring), and the meat at Trinity with fresh fish and a barrel of beer.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 124 (1469).

¹⁰⁸ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 3, 7–8; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 197–198; for the marble plate, see also DSHI, no. 64, pag. 61 (1428), 64, 68.

¹⁰⁹ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 4r: *It. so scholen de vormunders der swarten houeden alle jar theghen wynachten geuen den moneken 1 tunne vlesches vnnd 1 tunne dorsches vnnd 1 tunne etwycke vnnd vp der hylghen drevaldicheyt daghe enen guden boetlynck. Hyr vor scholen de moneke de beyde altaer belezen dar vor dat altare alle daghe is en mysse scheyen.* For the actual food donations, see *ibid.*, fol. 7r, 8r, 9r, etc. The renewed version of the mutual obligations can be found in the inside cover of the next account book, no. B 1 (1515): *De forstender sullen den monken to Reuel van der selschup gelde geuen tegen de aduente ene tunne lasses, ene tunne dorsses, ene tunne aerweten. Des synt de monke weder plychtych dat jar auer alle daghe vor der altare en wort ene gheleuet etc.* See also TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 93.

¹¹⁰ In the 2nd third of the 15th century, it was one mark. StAH, no. D 1, fol. 7r, 10v, 11v, 13r.

¹¹¹ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 51r.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, fol. 52r, 53r, 54r, etc.

From the wardens' notes, we learn that the last mentioned "compensation" was for the singing of the mass at the Trinity altar on the feast of the Holy Trinity.¹¹³ Since the confraternity also regularly paid for the green branches (*mey*) to decorate the church on this feast,¹¹⁴ it is likely that the Black Heads, or at least some of them, took part in the mass on Trinity Sunday, although it was not required in any of their normative sources. One may assume that solemn masses were celebrated at their Virgin Mary altar on Marian feast days, but there is no direct evidence for that in the Black Heads' records. Indirect evidence is the making of new candles for the major religious feasts, which included the Assumption of the Virgin (see the section above on illumination).

In Riga, the parish priest of St Peter's had to pray for the souls of the Black Heads every Sunday.¹¹⁵ How often the masses and prayers were expected from the Franciscans is not articulated in the surviving sources. However, just as in Tallinn, the friars in Riga were regularly paid for the chantry and received food donations (oil, rice, cod, herring or Baltic herring).¹¹⁶

Evidently, the presence of the confraternity members at the daily or weekly masses was not required and, considering the great mobility of the (journeymen) merchants, would also not have been realistic. However, all the confraternity members were obliged to attend mass at certain feasts and festivals, especially towards the end of their main annual drinking feasts, which were the highlights of the social calendar. The absentees were fined.¹¹⁷ In Tallinn, the Black Heads gathered for mass in the Dominican church between eight and nine o'clock on one of the last days of their *drunke* at Christmas and Shrovetide.¹¹⁸ As indicated by the regulations from Riga, the mass was not only for the

¹¹³ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 73r: *It. noch gaffick den monken an der hylgen drefaldycheyt awent vor de mysse to singende vor wysse vnd vor de tunne bers 10 fer.*, fol. 76r: *It. noch gaffick den monken vor de mysse to syngende an der hylgen 3 foldycheyt dage 10 fer.*, fol. 89v: *vp der hyllygen dreuoldycheyt dach do wort de mysse sungen vor der hyllygen dreuoldycheyt altar*, see also fol. 77r, 78r, 79r etc.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 24r, 26r, 27r, 28r etc. In spring 1505, the weather was so cold that no greenery could be found (fol. 79v).

¹¹⁵ Stieda, Mettig, *Schragen*, 553 (statutes of 1416), § 27. See also DSHI, no. 64, pag. 23, 36.

¹¹⁶ In the 15th century, the friars received four marks a year. DSHI, no. 5, pag. 24, 43, 46, 52, 56 etc.; for food donations, see *ibid.*, pag. 46, 49, 53, 56, 58 etc., and no. 64, pag. 19, 36.

¹¹⁷ LUB, IX, no. 696 (regulations of the Tallinn Black Heads, 1441), § 10: [...] *weret dat jemant to der mysse ofte to der steven nicht en queme, de sal it betern myt 3 markpunt wasses.*

¹¹⁸ Mänd, *Urban Carnival*, 65, 254–255, 294, § 61. The festival regulations of 1513/14 only refer to the mass at the end of the Christmas *drunke*, but indicate that similar rituals were performed at Shrovetide. The notes of the stewards from 1500 onwards (TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 21) also prove that the members had to attend mass at Christmas and at Shrovetide.

benefit of the living but also for the remembrance of the dead: their statutes from 1416 reveal that the confraternity commemorated its dead in St Catherine's church with vigils on the Friday before Shrove Tuesday and with masses for the dead on Sunday (i.e. *Estomihi*, known as the *grote vastelavend*). In St Peter's church, the confraternity attended vigils on Ash Wednesday and, on the next day, masses for the dead.¹¹⁹ The Shrovetide regulations from the early sixteenth century mention the obligatory commemoration mass only in St Peter's church,¹²⁰ which may indicate a change in tradition.

According to Amelung, the Tallinn Black Heads were obliged to participate in the mass at the major religious feasts of Christmas, Easter and the Assumption of the Virgin, as well as on the day of St Catherine of Alexandria (25 November), the patron saint of the church.¹²¹ Amelung's assumption concerning the first three was probably based on the records of regular payments for new candles for these feasts (and concerning Christmas, the annual drinking feast), but there is no hint in the sources about the celebration of St Catherine's day by the confraternity members. It is very likely that the Black Heads, as with other town-dwellers, visited the church on the major religious feasts, particularly on Easter, but it was not required in their norms.

However, there was one other religious feast in which participation was obligatory – Corpus Christi, which is a movable feast celebrated on the second Thursday after Pentecost. In 1514, the Black Heads in Tallinn required all their members to be present, under threat of a fine of half a *Liespfund* of wax.¹²² The Black Heads in Riga regularly paid for the making of the candles for Corpus Christi.¹²³ The highlight of this feast was a procession, in which the guilds and confraternities marched, and a subsequent banquet in the association's hall.¹²⁴ Before the procession, mass was celebrated in the churches. The Black Heads in Riga provided candles for the Franciscan as well as for St Peter's church,¹²⁵ but it is not clear if they participated in mass *in corpore* in both houses of the Lord

¹¹⁹ Stieda, Mettig, *Schragen*, 553, § 25–26.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 575, § 121, 615, § 174; Mänd, *Urban Carnival*, 75, 80.

¹²¹ Amelung, Wrangell, *Geschichte der Revaler Schwarzenhäupter*, 31.

¹²² StAH, no. F 3, pag. 4; Mänd, *Urban Carnival*, 168, 288, § 6. *Liespfund* = 8.32 kg.

¹²³ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 5, 13, 23, 29 etc.; no. 5, pag. 18, 21, 24, 40 etc.

¹²⁴ For details, see Mänd, *Urban Carnival*, 163–169.

¹²⁵ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 39 (1420): *It. so hebbe ik vt geuen van der swarten houden wegen int ersten tegen des hilligen lychgams dage de lychte to sunte Katrynen vnde to sunte Peter to maken 14 ar.*

or divided into two groups. In their statutes, attention is paid to the economic use of the expensive wax candles: “if it were the case that the Black Heads’ candles remain (burning) in the church at the time when the Holy Body (i.e. the host) is carried around, and it happens due to the carelessness of the treasurers or the stewards, they must pay half a *Liespfund* of wax (to the confraternity)”.¹²⁶ Interestingly, according to a record from 1516, the Black Heads in Tallinn had a regulation regarding the celebration of the Corpus Christi mass at the Dominicans every single Thursday.¹²⁷ It is not clear if the confraternity had endowed the mass or if they simply contributed to its celebration.¹²⁸

In Riga, the Black Heads also celebrated the feast of St Martin on 11 November. Their statutes prescribed that the stewards had to purchase three torches for St Martin’s Eve, each of a pound of wax, when the confraternity sang praise to the saint.¹²⁹ The account book of the treasurers lists regular payments for the candles and torches of St Martin.¹³⁰ The church in which the liturgy was performed is not referred to in the statutes, but it must have been either that of the Franciscans or St Peter’s. It is also conceivable that the singing took place in the New House or, more likely, that the gathering in the confraternity house took place after the mass in the church. As mentioned above, the confraternity also had a statue of St Martin.

In addition to the religious feasts, the occasions when the Black Heads assembled in the church were the burials of their fellow members. This was obligatory, and also a matter of honour, for all those who were in the town.¹³¹ Both in Riga and Tallinn, the confraternity had a ceremonial coffin cover (*boldeke*) and a bier, which were used on these occasions.¹³² It is not known if the deceased were laid to rest only in the chapel or

¹²⁶ Stieda, Mettig, *Schrägen*, 554, § 33; Mänd, *Urban Carnival*, 165.

¹²⁷ StAH, no. B 1, fol. 1r. *It. anno [15]16, 8 dage na pynxten do toleuerde my [i.e. to the warden Hinrick Stumme] her Jurgen Bade der swarten hoffede lade, dar inne [...] vorsegelden breff, de holt vp des hylgen lychames mysse tom monken alle donerdage.*

¹²⁸ Cf. TLA, coll. 230, inv. 1, no. Aa 15a, fol. 33r.

¹²⁹ Stieda, Mettig, *Schrägen*, 551, § 6.

¹³⁰ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 19, 21, 24, 40, 52 etc. Occasionally, the St Martin’s candles are mentioned together with those for the chandelier which hung in St Catherine’s church (e.g. pag. 103), but this does not necessarily mean that the St Martin’s candles were also in this church. The last record of this kind is from 1522 (pag. 332).

¹³¹ LUB, IX, no. 696, § 13: [...] *oft dar jemant were, dar Got dat sine by dede, de vorstorve, degene, de hir jegenwardich were van unser selchop, de do wol unde helpe, dat he to der erden kome, dat is sin egen ere.*

¹³² In Riga, first referred to in 1416 (DSHI, no. 64, pag. 19), in Tallinn, in 1426 (StAH, no. E 1, fol. 12v). By 1441, the Black Heads in Riga had two coffin covers. LUB, IX, no. 704, § 11.

also elsewhere in the church or in the churchyard: a burial place inside the church was certainly more prestigious than outside in the yard. In Riga, a corrodian in St Catherine's friary had donated a tombstone to the Black Heads, which was placed before their altar.¹³³ There is no direct evidence that it was used as a collective tombstone for the confraternity members, although this cannot be excluded. In Tallinn, the Black Heads did not have a common tombstone,¹³⁴ and members who were buried in the chapel had individual grave markers.¹³⁵ It should also be noted that at the burials there were, in all likelihood, more people present than just the confraternity members, especially in the case of the Black Heads of local origin who had family and other relatives in the town.

Thus, when attempting to determine the possible location of the Black Heads' chapels, it is crucial to consider how large the space had to be. There are a few sources which allow us to determine the approximate size of the Tallinn and Riga confraternities over time. In 1413, which is the earliest record of their Shrovetide drinking feast in Riga, 41 *gesellen* were present, and also an unspecified number of guests.¹³⁶ The confraternity, which probably had only recently been founded, grew fast: in 1416 there were as many as 58 men, in 1417 – 78, in 1419 – 83, in 1424 – 90¹³⁷ and in 1443 – 116.¹³⁸ There is no comparable data from the second half of the fifteenth century, but it is reasonable to assume that by then there were well over a hundred.

In Tallinn, the names of the participants at Christmas and Shrovetide were recorded from 1446 onwards. In the latter part of the fifteenth century, there were about 90–120, and in the first quarter of the sixteenth

¹³³ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 10; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 198, § 10.

¹³⁴ They obtained collective burial places and tombstones no earlier than 1559; these were in the parish churches and in the Holy Spirit church. Amelung, Wrangell, *Geschichte der Revaler Schwarzenhäupter*, 131–132. In St Nicholas' church, their tombstone has been preserved, though in fragments.

¹³⁵ Tombstones in front of the Virgin Mary altar are referred to in e.g. 1447. StAH, no. E 1, fol. 35r. For some Black Heads who were buried in the Dominican church, see Anu Mänd, "Hans Bouwer, kaupmees", *Kümme keskaegset tallinlast*, 69–70, note 39. The tombstone of Bernd Pal (d. 1503), who was a citizen of Lübeck and a Black Head in Tallinn, has been preserved and is displayed on the south wall of the church.

¹³⁶ DSHI, no. 64, pag. 4.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pag. 17, 21–22, 32–33, 53–55. Our numbers differ from those published by Thomas Brück in his "Bemerkungen zur Kaufmannschaft Rigas in der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Schwarzhäupter zwischen 1413 und 1424", *'Kopet uns werk by tyden': Beiträge zur hansischen und preußischen Geschichte. Festschrift für Walter Stark zum 75. Geburtstag*, hrsg. von Nils Jörn, Detlef Kattinger, Horst Wernicke (Schwerin: Helms, 1999), 113; he has consistently counted many more participants, e.g. 105 men in 1417, whereas we counted only 78.

¹³⁸ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 8.

century, when the town was hit by several plague epidemics, around 100 members.¹³⁹ The highest number on record was at Shrovetide of 1494, when 171 men attended the drinking feast.¹⁴⁰ Because of the mobility of the Black Heads, the number of participants at their drinking feasts not only fluctuated over time but may also have differed between Christmas and Shrovetide of the same winter.

In spite of the obligation to take part not only in the festivities but also in the morning mass and the subsequent general meeting (*steven*), there were some who did not manage to attend after the long nights of celebrations. The stewards in Tallinn, who had to keep a list of all sorts of misdeeds, noted down the names of those who did not show up: for instance, in the winter of 1514/15 seven men were absent from the mass and the meeting at Christmas, and five at Shrovetide.¹⁴¹ But regardless of the number of the absentees, the chapel of the Black Heads had theoretically to be spacious enough to allow about 100–120 men to attend mass (unless most of them watched the liturgy through the screen).

THE LOCATION OF THE CHAPELS

Considering the fact that currently only fragments have been preserved from both mendicant churches, is there any way to determine the location of the Black Heads' chapels? Based on the discussion above, the room in Tallinn was vaulted, had two windows, a pillar, and at least three smaller niches and possibly a large arched niche in the wall. All this indicates that the chapel had to be incorporated into the main body of the church (since no outbuildings protruded from the rectangular edifice, except for the polygonal apse of the chancel), most likely in a side aisle, and at least two bays long to house the two altars, the pews and about 120 men.¹⁴² Wherever possible, the altar had to be oriented eastwards. It can be deduced from the records that behind the older altar, that of the Virgin Mary, was a wall (possibly to support the altarpiece), whereas the Holy Trinity altar stood near the pillar. The eastern part of

¹³⁹ Mänd, *Urban Carnival*, 91, charts 7–8.

¹⁴⁰ TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 20, pag. 332–336.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, no. 21, fol. 2r–3v. The expression was: *nycht to der myssen vnd steuen*. For the last time, the absentees from the mass were written down at Shrovetide 1524 (fol. 21r); by Christmas the Mass had been abolished as a consequence of the Reformation.

¹⁴² The bays in the side aisles measured approx. 30 m²; thus, at least two bays were needed.

the church, the three-bay-long chancel was reserved solely for the friars; therefore, one has to look for a suitable space in the five-bay-long western part, which was meant for the laity.

Since the patron saint of the chapel (and of the first altar) was the Virgin Mary, it is most likely that it was located in the north aisle, specifically in the eastern end of the lay section, where the altar of the Virgin usually stood in Scandinavia and elsewhere in northern Europe.¹⁴³ In northern German towns, the majority of the chapels dedicated to St Mary were situated on the north side of the church;¹⁴⁴ in some cases, when the chapel was attached to the chancel or the ambulatory, they were also situated on the north-east or east side.¹⁴⁵

The general architectural and written context is not very helpful in this respect. Only the outer walls of the church have been preserved and the crucial central section of the northern wall collapsed in 1844, together with the southern cloister walk abutting this wall. A drawing of the friary in the same year has been preserved, but it only shows the exterior side of the collapsed wall.¹⁴⁶ However, an important detail can be seen on it: the lower parts of the church windows in this section (as elsewhere in the northern wall) were covered up by the cloister walk and only the upper parts of the windows remained open, making this part of the church poorly lit.

There is no information on any (other) chapels in the north aisle or, indeed, elsewhere in the church. In 1419 and 1424 a chapel is referred to in the cloisters.¹⁴⁷ A contract from 1452 between the friary and Hans Lippe reveals that the latter had financed the building of a chapel on the north side of the church or friary, which housed an altar consecrated in honour of the Virgin Mary and the Apostles St James and St John.¹⁴⁸ The merchant Hans Lippe, a son of the town councillor Herman Lippe

¹⁴³ Anna Nilsén, *Focal Point of the Sacred Space: The Boundary between Chancel and Nave in Swedish Rural Churches* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2003), 127.

¹⁴⁴ Grewolls, *Die Kapellen der norddeutschen Kirchen*, 173, 183, 208, 215, 226, 230, 272, 281, 345.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 175, 176, 186, 293.

¹⁴⁶ The drawing is kept in the Russian State Archives of the Navy (Российский государственный архив военно-морского флота) in St Petersburg (coll. 3, inv. 26, no. 559) and a photo of it in the archives of the Tallinn Culture and Heritage Department.

¹⁴⁷ *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch 1382–1518*, hrsg. von Artur Plaesterer (Reval: Revaler Estn. Verlagsgenossenschaft, 1930), no. 593 (1419): *in der capellen in deme crucegange*; *Das drittälteste Erbebuch der Stadt Reval (1383–1458)*, hrsg. von Eugen von Nottbeck (Reval: Franz Kluge, 1892), no. 919 (1424): *in der capellen tho den moeniken in deme crucesgange*.

¹⁴⁸ LUB, XI, no. 232: [...] *beleggen in der cappellen vorbenomet in der noerdersiiden*. For the financing of the chantry, see also *Das drittälteste Erbebuch*, no. 1297 (1453).

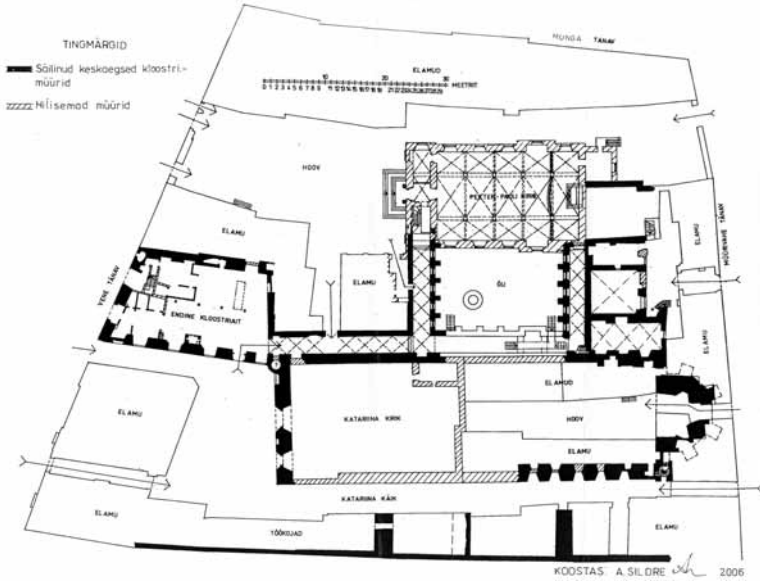


Fig. 2. Ground plan of the standing remains of the Dominican friary. Plan by Andres Sildre.

the second,¹⁴⁹ endowed a daily mass for the sake of his soul, of his deceased parents and of all of his kin. The phrase “on the north side” can be understood as pointing to the north aisle of the church (where an altar of the Virgin would perfectly fit); however, in another document, from 1471, the Lippe chapel is described as situated on the left side of the cloisters,¹⁵⁰ thus excluding the main body of the church. It is unlikely that the Lippe chapel was that of 1419/1424, because the contract from 1452 indicates that the building and consecration of the chapel had been comparatively recent events. The relevance of this chapel to our discussion lies, above all, in the fact that altars of the Virgin Mary could also be situated elsewhere than in the north aisle.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Hans Lippe entered the Table Guild of the Great Guild at Christmas 1438/39, and died by Easter 1483; Herman Lippe was a town councillor 1414–1434 (burgomaster from 1432) and died between Nov. 1435 and 1440. TLA, coll. 191, inv. 2, no. 1, fol. 15v, 42v; Torsten Derrik, *Das Bruderbuch der Revaler Tafelgilde (1364–1549)*, Mikrofiche-Ausgabe (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2000), 170–171, 478, 509.

¹⁵⁰ LUB, XII, no. 780: *in unser capellen in deme crucegange tho der luchereren hant.*

¹⁵¹ An altar in the cloister walk was not uncommon in medieval monasteries and cathedrals; chantry chapels could also be incorporated into or attached to the cloister walks. See e. g. Matthias Untermann, *Handbuch der mittelalterlichen Architektur* (Stuttgart: Konrad Theiss, 2009), 116–117. In Riga, there was a chapel in the cloisters of the Cathedral. *Die Erbebücher der Stadt Riga 1384–1579*, bearb. von J. G. L. Napiersky (Riga: N. Kymmell, 1888), 178, no. 225 (1510): *der selmissen capellen tom dome im crucegange.*

Furthermore, there was at least one more altar in the church dedicated to the Mother of God. In 1415, a St Mary's altar is described as "under the vaulting", in 1433 "under the chancel", and in regular entries from 1492 to 1523 variably as "under the vaulting", "in front of the chancel", "under the ambo", "in front of the ambo" or "in front of the sermon-chair".¹⁵² In all likelihood, the same altar is meant in these records. The alternative descriptions indicate that it must have stood in front of the screen which separated the chancel from the lay part of the church (which was some steps lower than the chancel, which probably accounts for the expression "under the chancel") and at which there was also an ambo. The supplements added to the town books were probably caused by the necessity of differentiating this altar of the Virgin Mary from that of the Black Heads.

As referred to above, there is no firm evidence to place the Black Heads' chapel in the eastern part of the north aisle. Moreover, the dedication to the Virgin Mary does not mean that the space we are looking for had to be situated in the north aisle of the church at all: St Mary's chapels could sometimes also be located elsewhere. For instance, at the parish church of St Olaf in Tallinn, it was built on the south side of the chancel.¹⁵³ In St Peter's church in Lübeck, a family chapel dedicated to St Mary was situated on the south side of the church, and in the churches of St James and St Aegidius of the same town, the chapel of the Hours of the Virgin was built south of the tower.¹⁵⁴

It should also be taken into account that if the Black Heads' chapel were in the north aisle, its windows would have faced the cloisters, i.e. inside the friary, and, as indicated above, after the erection of the southern cloister walk these windows were walled up to more than half of their height. However, it would be reasonable to assume that the elite confraternity wanted their window, which was probably decorated with their coat of arms, to be visible to the entire urban community, and this

¹⁵² *Das drittälteste Erbebuch*, no. 748 (1415): *under deme welffte*; *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch*, no. 868 (1433): *vnder deme kore*; *Kämmereibuch der Stadt Reval 1463–1507*, no. 2190 (*under deme welve*), 2228, 2313, 2357, 2401, 2523, 2639, 2677; TLA, coll. 230, inv. 1, no. Ad 32, fol. 21r (*vor deme kore*), 29r (*under deme ammbone*), 36r, 42r (*vor deme ambone*), 52r, 61r (*vor deme preddickstole*), 75r, 87v, 99v, 110r, 121r, 130r, 140r, 152r, 162r.

¹⁵³ For the construction, see Sten Karling, "Die Marienkapelle an der Olaikirche in Tallinn und ihr Bildwerk. Ein Beitrag zur Brabenderfrage", *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi Aastaraamat = Sitzungsberichte der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft 1935* (Tartu, 1937), 100–109; *idem*, *Tallinn: kunstiajalooline ülevaade* (Tallinn: Kunst, 2006), 42.

¹⁵⁴ Grewolls, *Die Kapellen der norddeutschen Kirchen*, 198, 208, 213.

was only possible if it were located in the south aisle. Also, the conditions of light were much better on the south side of the church, and the importance of light in the medieval context should not be underestimated. In Riga, both chapels of the Black Heads, in both the Franciscan and St Peter's churches, were located on the south side, as confirmed by written records.

The southern wall of the church has been preserved only in the eastern end (i.e. in the chancel). Its western part collapsed in 1861, but the façade before the collapse can be seen in the above-mentioned drawing of 1844. Five slender lancet windows pierced the nave wall, providing ample light. It is feasible that the two easternmost of them could have belonged to the Black Heads' chapel.

The construction history of the church is still unclear, but this is not the topic of the current article. However, it should be mentioned that major building projects were conducted in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, as confirmed by documentary evidence.¹⁵⁵ The chapel of the Black Heads formed a part of these projects and probably made a significant contribution to the advancement of the construction.

In Riga, at least the direction is clear: as repeatedly mentioned above, the chapel was located in the south aisle of the Franciscan church. Although the Black Heads had only one altar there, the chapel had to be at least two bays long, because the confraternity had donated two stained-glass windows there and over a hundred men would not have fit into one bay, even if most of them stood during the mass.¹⁵⁶ There are a few items in the treasurers' account book which link the Black Heads and the chancel: in 1458 or 1459 the confraternity paid for the repairing of a window in the chancel, and at Easter 1469 for the candles in the chancel and at their altar.¹⁵⁷ This may hint that the chapel was located near the chancel or that the latter was at least visible from the chapel. As the studies of chantry chapels in England have revealed, it was often the aim of wealthy founders to construct their chapels close to the high altars (or, in religious houses, near the monks' choir), i.e. as close as pos-

¹⁵⁵ LUB, IV, no. 1448 (1397): *den gevel und enen torne uppe de kerken; Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch*, no. 513 (1414): *8 pylre [...] vmme stuttynge willen der hilgen kerken*; Randla, "Tallinna dominiiklaste kloostri ehitusloo ülevaade", 37, 42–43.

¹⁵⁶ According to the reconstructed ground plan of the church by G. Jansons (see Caune and Ose, *Latvijas viduslaiku mūra baznīcas*, 310) the bays in the side aisles measured approx. 24 m².

¹⁵⁷ DSHI, no. 5, pag. 83: *It. vor dat glasevynster to sunte Kattrynen in den kore to beterende 2 mr., pag. 122: It. noch 0,5 lysslb. wasses to lichten in sunte Kathrinen kerke int kor vnd vpp dat altar tegen passchen.*

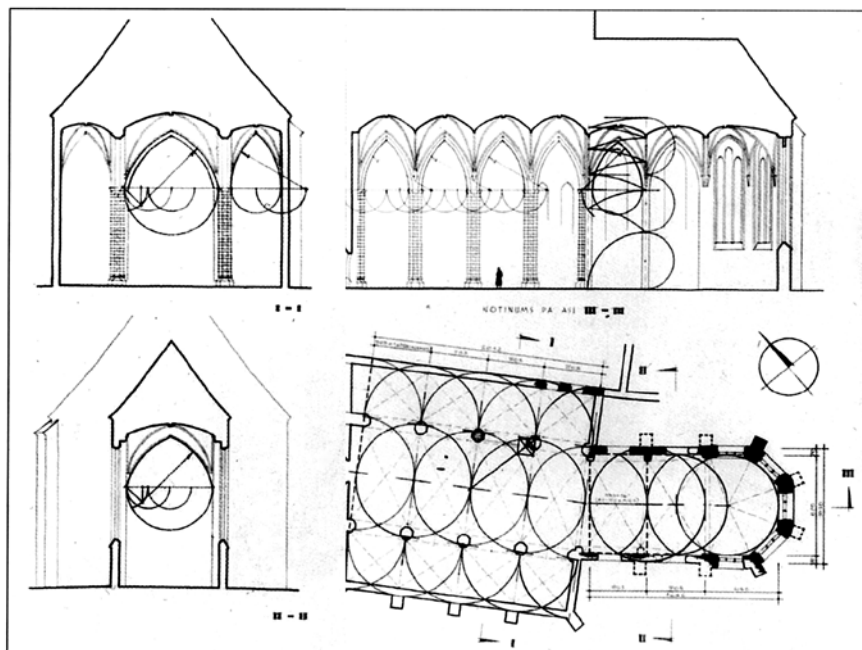


Fig. 3. Reconstructed ground plan and section of the Franciscan church in Riga. Darker lines show the existing remains of the church, and lighter ones the reconstructed parts. Plan by Gunārs Jansons.

sible to the central religious focus and the most prestigious place in the church, where regular services were performed.¹⁵⁸ On the other hand, the aforementioned records may simply imply that the Black Heads supported not only their own chapel but the church as a whole, and that, at the most important religious feast of the year, they wished their candles to burn not only at the confraternity altar but also at the high altar.

The physical remains of the church are scanty; apart from the chancel walls, only fragments of the north-east corner of the nave have been preserved. The axis of the nave had a slight inclination towards the north in relation to the axis of the chancel. It can be deduced from the written evidence that the lay nave had two side aisles, which consisted of four bays. If the nave was symmetrical and the chapel of the Black Heads was located in the two eastern bays of the south aisle, it would indeed have provided direct visual contact with the chancel. However, there is no firm written or architectural information that would allow us to locate the chapel with any greater certainty.

¹⁵⁸ Roffey, *Chantry Chapels*, 128–131.

THE VISUAL EXPRESSION OF CORPORATE IDENTITY
AND THE QUESTION OF OWNERSHIP

Visuality played a highly relevant role in the medieval society, being a part of symbolic communication. In order to mark their ownership, to advertise the confraternity and to clearly differentiate their treasures from other objects in the church, the Black Heads had not only windows but also their liturgical vessels and paraments often provided with the coat of arms of the confraternity (a black head in profile) or with a proper inscription. For instance, the Riga inventory list from 1441 indicates that the festive altar cloths, the chalice, the cruets and the banner were decorated with the *swartenhouede wapen*.¹⁵⁹ In Tallinn, one of the chalices and also the altar cruets bore the coat of arms whereas, on the foot of the other chalice, it was engraved that “this chalice belongs to the Black Heads”.¹⁶⁰ Every symbolic object was made of costly and prestigious materials. For example, in 1433 the confraternity decided to obtain a new coffin cover for which golden silk was bought from Novgorod and a collection was made among members to purchase expensive East-Indian fabric (*seter*) for the emblems. Finally, the coffin cover was decorated with four “black heads”, gold and pearls, and the rest of the brocade was used for a dress for the Virgin Mary statue.¹⁶¹ In 1438, the Black Heads donated 12 marks for golden vestments for the deacon and sub-deacon – again decorated with their coat of arms – to be used at mass.¹⁶² It is not known what was painted on the vaults or walls of the chapel or carved on their pews, but it would not be surprising if these were decorated with their coat of arms as well. For instance, in St Catherine’s church of the Franciscans in Lübeck, the emblem of the elite confraternity, the *Zirkelgesellschaft*, was depicted on their pews and altarpiece, and later, in the eighteenth century, also on the chapel walls.¹⁶³ It was a visual expression of the corporate identity.

¹⁵⁹ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 3–5, 14; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 197, 199.

¹⁶⁰ StAH, no. E 1, fol. 3r, 51r, 61r; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 213–215.

¹⁶¹ StAH, no. D 1, fol. 26v–27r: [...] *de 4 swarten houede vp dem boldek to neyende vnd vor de parlen vnd vor dat golt vnd vor lowent.*

¹⁶² StAH, no. D 1, fol. 7v (1438): *vortmer so gaff de meyne selschop der zwarten houede 12 mr. to diaken vnnd tho supdiaken kledinghe als men tor myse bedarf*, unnumbered page next to fol. 26r (1438): *do wart des de meyne selschop ens dat se geuen de 12 mr. to hulpen to dem gulden stukke et to dem mysgeweyde [...] dat se dar vp setten wolden laten en swart houet.*

¹⁶³ Sonja Dünnebeil, *Die Lübecker Zirkel-Gesellschaft: Formen der Selbstdarstellung einer städtischen Oberschicht* (Lübeck: Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck, 1996), 67–72, Abb. 14–18.

Although in several cases an object (or silver for an object) is described in the sources as being given “for the grace of God”,¹⁶⁴ it deserves to be noted that all the liturgical vessels, cloth and church furniture that was brought by the Black Heads to the church, cannot be regarded as donations, but must instead be seen as deposits because they were still regarded as the property of the confraternity. As it was stated in the Tallinn contract from 1400 and also in the account book of the altar wardens, the friars had to take good care of the items and to use them only at the confraternity altars; they were not allowed to sell or pawn these items or to remove them from the church.¹⁶⁵ The Dominicans, when noting down their treasures in about 1495, also made a distinction between the items belonging to the friary and to the Black Heads.¹⁶⁶ Thus, in this respect, the inventory of the confraternity was treated differently than the donations made by private individuals. Moreover, if the Black Heads decided at some point to “sacrifice” some old items, including liturgical vessels, for the sake of obtaining new ones, they had every right to do so (as illustrated above in the case of the silver statue of the Virgin Mary in Tallinn).

THE FATE OF THE BLACK HEADS' INVENTORY DURING THE REFORMATION

The Reformation events in 1524 and the role of the Black Heads in it have been repeatedly discussed by scholars;¹⁶⁷ therefore, we shall only briefly remark on how the connections with the mendicants came to an end and what happened to the confraternity treasures. In Riga, the events turned out to be quite dramatic because the young Black Heads played a major part in the iconoclastic acts on March 10: in St Peter's church, they destroyed everything that belonged to their altar, including the altar-piece, missal, corporal, chalices, patens, candlesticks and other items.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ LUB, IX, no. 704, § 4, 6, 7, 9, 12; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 197–198.

¹⁶⁵ LUB, IV, no. 1503; StAH, no. E 1, fol. 2r; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 212.

¹⁶⁶ LUB, 2:I, no. 106; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 216–218.

¹⁶⁷ Leonid Arbusow Jr., *Die Einführung der Reformation in Liv-, Est- und Kurland* (Leipzig: M. Heinsius Nachfolger, 1921), 292–295, 304–305, 309–311; Spliet, *Geschichte des Neuen Hauses*, 142–153.

¹⁶⁸ DSHI, no. 7, pag. 39: [...] *in de kerke lepen vnde tho breken vnde vorstorden alle dat to der swartenhoueden altare horde also de grote taffel myt den clenen taffelen, myssal, corporal, kelke, patenen, luchtere vnde aller wat dar wasz, ok so dat de vycтарыe myt aller tobehorynge vnde myssen ganz vorstoret wart*; Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, 418–419.

Apparently, things somehow got out of hand, because the elders of the Black Heads had that same morning decided that they would bring their treasures from St Peter's church to the New House, but there was no time to do so.¹⁶⁹ As it is regrettably noted, the demolition was made "with foolish and insane heads and without the general consent".¹⁷⁰ It is not known if the Black Heads also rampaged in the Franciscan church but, in any case, the connections with the town were broken, since on 2 April 1524, the town council forced the friars to leave the town.¹⁷¹

Perhaps in order to avoid in Tallinn a scenario similar to that of 10 March, the Black Heads there removed their treasures from the Dominican church at the end of July¹⁷² (the iconoclastic acts took place one and a half months later, in mid-September). The receipt for this removal has been preserved, though badly damaged. Among the objects that can be identified are two chalices with patens, a silver censer, a small monstrance, and a silver statue of the Virgin Mary, holding a monstrance in her hand.¹⁷³ There are also items which do not appear in any of the earlier lists and which were probably obtained shortly before 1524, such as a silver crown of thorns, which could have been a separate cult object or may have been worn by the Crucified Christ. None of the silver objects has been preserved. In Riga, the Black Heads decided in 1526 to have secular drinking vessels made out of their chalices, altar cruets and other things.¹⁷⁴ In Tallinn, the silver statue of the Virgin Mary was sold in 1531 for 517 marks.¹⁷⁵ Thus, the attitude towards the former church silver of the confraternity was quite pragmatic, and they were easily sold or converted into new symbolic objects which corresponded to the needs of the new era. All that survives from the medieval sacred objects is the aforementioned altarpiece of the Black Heads in Tallinn, the silver St George reliquary from Riga, and two (prior to World War II,

¹⁶⁹ Spliet, *Geschichte des Neuen Hauses*, 145.

¹⁷⁰ DSHI, no. 7, pag. 39: [...] *de gantse gemene hurpe der junghen broder myt enen dullen vnsynnygen koppe vnde myt gantser vnstymycheyt*; Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, 418; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 48.

¹⁷¹ Spliet, *Geschichte des Neuen Hauses*, 146, see also 149.

¹⁷² StAH, no. B 1, fol. 9v.

¹⁷³ TLA, coll. 87, inv. 1, no. 101; Mänd, *Kirikute hõbevara*, 221–223.

¹⁷⁴ DSHI, no. 7, pag. 41–42; Spliet, *Geschichte des Neuen Hauses*, 149.

¹⁷⁵ StAH, no. E 2, fol. 12v. The exact sum was 517 marks and ½ *Ferding*.

three) wooden sculptures that formerly stood on the Black Heads' altar in Riga,¹⁷⁶ probably in St Peter's church.¹⁷⁷

CONCLUSION

The comparatively abundant source material allowed us to reconstruct the interior of the Black Heads' chapels in Riga and Tallinn and to study the changes over time – how new artworks, liturgical objects and pieces of furniture were commissioned and the old ones repaired or replaced. The patronage of the two altars expressed both the religious and the secular aspirations of the confraternity: on the one hand, more altars meant more masses and intercessory prayers that would shorten the suffering in purgatory and lead to salvation; on the other hand, the number of the altars, their sumptuous decorations and illumination manifested the status, power and wealth of the association. The amount, material and costliness of the treasures also demonstrate the high social position that these elite confraternities had in the late medieval urban context. The frequent use of the coat of arms of the Black Heads on their vessels and furniture functioned as a marker of their corporate identity, strength and continuity, as well as being a bearer of collective memory.

The study of the mutual relationships between the Black Heads and the mendicants revealed how closely the material and spiritual world were interconnected. In return for annual material donations (money, food and clothing) to the friars, the latter had to perform regular services at the confraternity altars. Commemorative masses and prayers, celebrated daily, were expected to positively affect the souls of every living and deceased individual, as well as to ensure the afterlife of the entire confraternity. At important religious feasts, the Black Heads attended mass as a group, demonstrating their unity, piety and common

¹⁷⁶ For the sculptures, see *Melngalvju nams Rīgā = Das Schwarzhäupterhaus in Riga = The Blackheads House in Riga*, ed. by Māra Silīņa (Riga: Rīgas Vēstures un Kuģniecības Muzejs, 1995), 37, 196–197; Elita Grosmane, “Hochmittelalterliche Plastik im Ostseeraum und ihre Stilverbindungen”, *Die Stadt im europäischen Nordosten: Kulturbeziehungen von der Ausbreitung des Lübisches Rechts bis zur Aufklärung*, hrsg. von Robert Schweitzer, Waltraud Bastman-Bühner (Helsinki, Lübeck: Aue-Stiftung, 2001), 537–539.

¹⁷⁷ It has been assumed that these figures belonged to the Black Heads' altar in the Franciscan church (Grosmane, “Hochmittelalterliche Plastik”, 537), but they depict Sts George, Maurice and Gertrude, who were all among the patron saints of the chantry endowed in 1487 in St Peter's church.

values. The frequency and solemnity of the liturgy was another indicator of social prestige.

The combination of written and architectural evidence allowed us to cast new light on the spatial arrangements of the mendicant churches; however, due to the fact that only fragments survive of the walls, the exact location of the chapels can not be ascertained. A normal placement of a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary would be on the north side of the church but, in Tallinn, the construction history and the considerations of light indicate that it might have stood in the south aisle, possibly in the two easternmost bays of the lay part. In the Franciscan church of Riga, the chapel in the south aisle was likewise at least two bays long and was probably located at the east end of the lay part. The ownership of the chapels emphasises the outstanding position of the Black Heads – neither in Tallinn nor in Riga is there any evidence for the chapels of the Great Guild.

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KOKKUVÖTE: Sakraalruum ja korporatiivne identiteet: mustpeade kabelid Tallinna ja Riia kerjusordude kirikutes

Ehkki varasemas ajaloo- ja kunstiajalookirjanduses on Mustpeade vennaskondade ja kerjusordude vahelistel sidemetel korduvalt peatunud, on väga vähe tähelepanu pööratud mustpeade kabelitele, mis rajati 15. sajandi alguskümnendeil Tallinna dominiiklaste Katariina kirikusse ja Riia frantsisklaste Katariina kirikusse. Kuna mõlema pühakoja ehituskehand ja sisustus on suures osas hävinud, on peamisteks infoallikateks kabelite kohta mustpeade altarieestseisjate ja varahoidjate arveraamatud, mis asuvad tänapäeval Saksamaa arhiivides.

Artikli algul otsitakse vastust küsimusele, miks sõlmisid mustpead esmalt sidemed just kerjusordudega ja alles tunduvalt hiljem kihelkonnakirikutega. Seejärel analüüsitakse, mida on arhiiviallikate põhjal võimalik teada saada nende kabelite sisustusest: altaritest ja enam kui saja aasta jooksul nende jaoks tellitud kaunistustest, erinevatest pühakujudest, liturgilistest nõudest ja tekstiilidest, seinaniššidest, pinkidest ja muudest mööbliesemetest. Püütakse rekonstrueerida nende objektide ruumilist ja liturgilist konteksti: kus esemed paiknesid, kuidas kabelit ja konkreetseid pühakujusid valgustati, millist liturgiat ja teisi rituaale nende juures läbi viidi ning kes ja millal neis osales. Sellega seoses peatutakse ka vennaskonna ja kerjusedude vastastikustel kohustustel – vastutasuks regulaarsete toidu- ja rahaannetuste eest tuli vennaskonna altaritel iga päev viia läbi missa ja lugeda hingepalveid elavate ja surnute heaks. Mõnedel tähtsamatel pühadel peeti lisaks teenistusi, millest osavõtt oli kõigile mustpeavendadele kohustuslik.

Artikli teises pooles arutletakse nende kabelite võimaliku asukoha üle. Kuna Tallinna mustpeade kabel kandis Neitsi Maarja nime ja selles asus ka 1403. aastal sisse pühitsetud Maarja altar, oli esimeseks mõtteks otsida kabeli asukohta kiriku põhjalöövist, täpsemalt selle ilmikutele mõeldud tsooni idaotsast. Kabel pidi olema vähemalt kahevõlviline, et mahutada kahte altarit ja mõlema eest asuvaid pinke; ka on allikates juttu piilarist. Siiski tundub usutavam, et kabel asus lõunalöövist. Nimelt selgub mustpeade arveraamatust, kui olulist rolli mängis vennaskonna jaoks valgus, samuti mainitakse seal kahte akent. Seoses lõunaristikäigu ehitamisega müüriti aga kiriku põhjalöövi aknad enam kui pooles kõrguses kinni, mistõttu see lööv oli halvasti valgustatud. Lõunalöövist oleks kõige prestiižsemaks asukohaks olnud jällegi ilmikute tsooni ida-

poolne ots, ent kuna ka pikihoone lõunaseinast on alles vaid väike osa, jääb kabeli paiknemine siiski vaid oletuste pinnale.

Riia mustpeade kabeli kohta on teada, et see asus lõunalöövis, oletavasti selle idapoolses otsas. Ka see kabel pidi olema kahevõlvikuline, sest mainitakse kahte akent ning sinna pidi, sarnaselt Tallinnale, suuremate pühade ajal mahtuma sadakond vennaskonna liiget.

Allikatest selgub, et mustpeadel oli tavaks endile kuuluvaid või kirikule annetatud esemeid kaunistada vennaskonna vapiga. Profiilis „musta pead“ võis näha nende akendel, pinkidel, armulauakarikatel ja teistel liturgilistel nõudel, vennaskonna altaritel teenivate preestrite rüüdel, kirstukatetel ja mujal. Vapi kasutamisega visualiseeriti korporatiivset identiteeti, väljendati omaniku-uhkust ning rõhutati vennaskonna kestvust ja tugevust – kõik see mängis olulist rolli keskaegsele ühiskonnale omases sümbolises kommunikatsioonis.

Oma altari(te) ja kabeli rajamine oli jõukohane vaid varakamatele organisatsioonidele ja üksikisikutele, rõhutades nii omanike religioosete taotluste kõrval ka nende sotsiaalset staatust ja jõukust. Mustpeade kabelid ühes sisustusega mõjutasid oluliselt Tallinna ja Riia kerjusordude kirikute arhitektuurilist kujunemist 15. sajandil, nende ruumilahendust ja seal läbiviidavat liturgiat.