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The Self and the Other, or Christian Knights and Pagan Lithuanians in the Chronicles of the Teutonic Order from the Fourteenth Century

Annotation: The article is devoted to the representation of Christian knights of the Teutonic Order and pagan Lithuanians as the Self and the Other in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order from the 14th century. The primary criteria for evaluating the Self and the Other (faith, belief, actions) and the terms used to identify the pagan Lithuanians as the Other are studied. The characteristic features of the Christians and the pagans described in the Teutonic chronicles are examined. In this way, the author attempts to analyse the methodological approaches used by the chroniclers to portray and emphasise the otherness of the Lithuanians as a way to explain and justify the Crusade of the Teutonic Order in this region. The author claims that in order to achieve this goal, the narrators not only used specific and often metaphorical terms and characteristics to distinguish the pagans, but also put emphasis on their negative traits and described cruel rituals that could hardly be accepted by the Christian Church, listed all destructive deeds and crimes committed by the Lithuanians in the Christian lands during their attacks. Since religion was the main regulating force of a society in the medieval era, it was God who was supposed to correct the lifestyle of the pagans or punish them for their crimes, if not with his own hands, then with the help of real people acting on his behalf. Therefore, the depiction of divine retribution or God's punishment was one more effective method to represent the otherness of the pagan Lithuanians in comparison with the Christian knights of the Teutonic Order.

Keywords: Lithuania, the Teutonic Order, the Baltic Crusade, Christians, pagans, the Self, the Other.

Swoi i Obcy, czyli rycerze chrześcijańscy i poganie litewscy w kronikach zakonu krzyżackiego z XIV wieku

Streszczenie: Artykuł jest poświęcony przedstawieniom rycerzy chrześcijańskich zakonu krzyżackiego i pogańskich Litwinów jako Swoi i Obcy w kronikach Zakonu Krzyżackiego z XIV wieku. Analizowane są podstawowe kryteria oceny Swojego i Obcego (wiara, przekonania, postępowanie) oraz określenia używane do identyfikacji pogańskich Litwinów jako Obcych. Badane są cechy charakterystyczne chrześcijan i pogan opisane w kronikach krzyżackich. W ten sposób Autor podejmuje próbę analizy sposobów stosowanych przez kronikarzy do ukazywania i podkreślania odmienności Litwinów w celu wyjaśnienia i uzasadnienia krucjaty krzyżackiej na tym terenie. Aby osiągnąć ten cel, narratorzy nie tylko posługiwali się specyficznymi, często metaforycznymi terminami i cechami wyróżniającymi pogan, ale także kładli nacisk na ich negatywne cechy i opisywali okrutne rytuały, które trudno było zaakceptować Kościołowi chrześcijańskiemu, wymieniali wszystkie niszczycielskie czyny i zbrodnie popełnione przez Litwinów na ziemiach chrześcijańskich podczas ich napadów. Ponieważ religia była główną siłą regulującą społeczeństwo w epoce średniowiecza, to Bóg miał korygować styl życia pogan lub karać ich za ich zbrodnie, jeśli nie własnymi rękami, to przy pomocy ludzi działających w jego imieniu. Dlatego też wskazywanie na karę Bożą było skuteczniejszym sposobem przedstawienia odmienności pogańskich Litwinów w porównaniu z chrześcijańskimi rycerzami Zakonu Krzyżackiego.

Słowa kluczowe: Litwa, Zakon Krzyżacki, krucjata bałtycka, chrześcijanie, poganie, swój, obcy.

Chronicles are considered the primary sources on the mediaeval history as they contain valuable information about events that took place in specific territories. While early chronographs and chronicles mainly listed and briefly described the most important events – human deeds and natural prodigies – later medieval narrative sources became richer in their content. They proved to be invaluable historical sources of the events and processes in a society, especially in those cases where a chronicler had personal knowledge of the recorded data. Moreover, the mediaeval chronicles often illustrated the author's assessment of the events, which could be seen as evidence of the ideas prevalent in a particular society at the exact time. Therefore, the analysis of such chronicles allows researchers to study not only particular historical events, but the worldview of a medieval man.

Since religion played significant role in the lives of most people, one of the main features of the mediaeval chronicles is their religious character. The ideology of the mediaeval chronicles is the idea that there is universal rule over everything and that human history is God's creation, while religion is seen as the driving force for continuous and sustainable development of a person and a state. Therefore, protection of the faith and persecution in the name of religion were widespread in the Middle Ages. It was depicted, among other things, in mediaeval narrative sources, especially those written by the chroniclers of Christian orders, including those of the Teutonic Order.

The Order of the Brothers of the German House of Saint Mary in Jerusalem (*Ordo Domus Sanctae Mariae Theutonicorum Hierosolymitanorum*), commonly known as the Teutonic Order, was one of the most influential Christian religious military orders of the Middle Ages, founded around 1189/90 in Acre, Kingdom of Jerusalem, by the German merchants. After taking possession of the land of Chelmino and establishing the

centre of the Teutonic monastic state there, they began their protracted military attacks on neighbouring lands, including those of Prussia and Lithuania. The Polish territories also suffered from their numerous attacks¹. After the conquest of Prussia, Lithuania² became the strongest enemy of the Teutonic Order. Due to its internal political and social processes, Lithuania began its state development in the mid-13th century. But it was the threat of the aggressive neighbour that played a crucial role in the unification of the pagan Baltic tribes, which subjugated the territories of Rus' and went forward to the formation of the state of Lithuania and later the Grand Duchy of Lithuania³. The 13th and 14th centuries were a time of strong military, political, social and, of course, religious confrontation between a new state and the Teutonic Order⁴.

The latter conducted an aggressive ideological and military policy against the afore mentioned territories, which enabled historians to speak of the Baltic Crusade⁵. Despite the fact that the Order's military campaigns did not have the pure character of a crusade and mostly pursued their own political and economic goals, it was the activities in the name of God and the attempts to convert the neighbouring barbarian (pagan) Baltic lands that were announced in the narrative sources as the main goals of the Teutonic Order in this region⁶.

Obviously, such an influential religious and even political organisation as the Teutonic Order had its own chroniclers, who often took an active part in the military events and therefore tried to share their experiences with the readers by describing the development and the activities of the Order as an institution as well as the events that took place in the neighbouring lands. The chroniclers document numerous attacks by the Teutonic Order on Lithuanian territories and Lithuanian campaigns in the Order's possessions⁷. In fact, the confrontation between the Teutonic Order and pagan Lithuania

¹ S. C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295-1345*, Cambridge 1994, p. 11; W. L. Urban, *The Teutonic Knights: A Military History*, London 2006, p. 11; K. Militzer, *From the Holy Lands to Prussia: the Teutonic Knights between Emperors and Popes and their Policies until 1309*, [in:] *Mendicants, Military Orders, and Regionalism in Medieval Europe*, ed. by J. Sarnowsky, Aldershot 1999, p. 73. See also: H. Łowmiański, *Agresja Zakonu Krzyżackiego na Litwę w wiekach XII-XV*, „Przegląd Historyczny”, vol. XLV (2/3), 1954, pp. 338-371; C. Higounet, *Die deutsche Ostsiedlung im Mittelalter*, Munich 1990, pp. 282-305.

² The term 'Lithuania' in the article refers not to the ethnic Lithuanian lands only, but to the forming Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

³ S. C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending...*, pp. 51-53.

⁴ A. Nikžentaitis, *Litwa i Zakon Krzyżacki w końcu XIII i w pierwszej połowie XIV w. (1283-1345)*, [in:] *Ekspansja niemieckich zakonów rycerskich w strefie Bałtyku od XIII do połowy XVI wieku. Materiały z konferencji historyków radzieckich i polskich w Toruniu z r. 1988*, ed. by M. Biskup, Toruń 1990, pp. 127-140.

⁵ E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier 1100-1525*, Minneapolis 1980; R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe. Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950-1350*, Princeton 1994; W. L. Urban, *The Baltic Crusade*, Chicago 1994; P. Hardwick, *The Knightly Class of Europe and the Lithuanian Crusades*, „Medieval Life”, nr 6, 1997, pp. 26-29; V. Elst, *Chivalry, Crusade, and Romance on the Baltic Frontier*, „Mediaeval Studies”, nr 73, 2012, p. 295.

⁶ S. C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending...*, p. 11; S. Ekdahl, *The Treatment of Prisoners of War during the Fighting between the Teutonic Order and Lithuania*, [in:] *The Military Orders. Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, ed. by M. Barber, Cambridge 1994, pp. 263-269; E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, p. 250; J. Nikodem, *Chryścianizacja wschodnich pbrzeży Bałtyku*, [in:] *Chryścianizacja „Młodszej Europy”*, eds. J. Dobosz, J. Strzelczyk, M. Matla, Poznań 2017, pp. 182-183.

⁷ E. Gudavičius, *Polityczny problem Królestwa Litewskiego w połowie XIII w.*, [in:] *Ekspansja niemieckich zakonów rycerskich w strefie Bałtyku od XIII do połowy XVI wieku. Materiały z konferencji historyków radzieckich*

is one of the central themes presented by the chroniclers. This antagonism depicted in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order makes it possible to distinguish two confronting groups and analyse the image of the Self and the Other, the Christian knight and the pagan enemy⁸. It should be noted at this point that the study of the phenomenon of otherness cannot be carried out (and above all not) on the basis of the geographical origin or the political structure of the political bodies mentioned above, but mostly on their religious and cultural background⁹.

The main aim of this study, then, is to examine the image of the Self and the Other in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order from the 14th century. The questions to be answered in this study include: the primary criteria for evaluating the Self and the Other (faith, belief, actions); the terms used to identify the pagan Lithuanians as the Other; the characteristic features of the Christians and the pagans described in the Teutonic chronicles; methodology used by the chroniclers to portray and emphasise the otherness of the Lithuanians in the narratives under study. It is important to point out that the present study on the Self and the Other is limited to the analysis of the methodology used by the chroniclers to emphasize the difference between the knights of the Order and the pagan Lithuanians. However, the question of identity in the worldview of a mediaeval man is much broader and can be the subject of separate studies¹⁰.

This study is mainly based on the data from such Order chronicles from the 14th century as *Chronicon terrae Prussiae* by Peter of Dusburg, *Chronica nova Prutenica* by Wigand of Marburg, and *Die ältere Chronik von Oliva*¹¹. The *Chronicle of Prussia* by Nico-

i polskich w Toruniu z r. 1988, ed. by M. Biskup, Toruń 1990, pp. 61–84; S. C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending*, pp. 8–9; Z. Kiaupa, J. Kiaupienė, *Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie od powstania państwa do unii lubelskiej*, [in:] Z. Kiaupa, J. Kiaupienė, A. Kuncevičius, *Historia Litwy. Od czasów najdawniejszych do 1795 roku*, transl. by P. Grablunas, J. Niewulis-Grablunas, J. Prusinowska, R. Witkowski, Warszawa 2007; D. Prekop, *Wojna Zakonu Krzyżackiego z Litwą w Latach 1283–1325*, Toruń 2014; A. Ehlers, *The Crusade of the Teutonic Knights against Lithuania Reconsidered*, [in:] *Crusade and conversion on the Baltic frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. by A. V. Murray, Ashgate 2001, p. 29.

⁸ The concept of otherness and depiction of the Self and the Other in the mediaeval chronicles was analysed in such studies as: J. le Goff, *Mentalities, sensibilities, attitudes*, [in:] *Idem, Civilisation de l'occident medieval*, Paris 1965; S. Kowalczyk, *Podstawy światopoglądu chrześcijańskiego*, Wrocław 1986, pp. 16–18, 26–28; C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, Cambridge 1989, pp. 25–52; A. Reckwitz, *Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A Development in Culturalist Theorizing*, "European Journal of Social Theory", nr 5 (2), 2002, pp. 243–263; B. Stock, *The Integrated Self: Augustine, the Bible, and Ancient Thought*, Philadelphia 2017. For the general perception of the enemies in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order, see: M. Fischer, *Des tu vils kint? The German Order's Perception of its Enemies as Revealed in the Kronike von Pruzinlan*, *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*", nr 244, 2007, pp. 260–275.

⁹ The attempt to analyse the pagan Lithuania as the Other in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order has been made by Kristina Markman in her PhD thesis from 2015. See: K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds: A Comparative Study of the Representations of Pagan Lithuania in the Chronicles of the Teutonic Order and Rus'*. PhD dissertation, Los Angeles 2015. Nonetheless, some issues require further clarification.

¹⁰ For contemporary approaches to the construction of identity, see, among others: K. Woodward, *Concepts of Identity and Difference*, [in:] *Identity and Difference*, ed. by K. Woodward, London 1997, pp. 18, 23; W. Pohl, *Introduction: Strategies of Distinction*, [in:] *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities*, 300–800, eds. W. Pohl, H. Reimitz, Leiden 1998, pp. 5–12; A. Classen, *Introduction: The Self, the Other, and Everything in Between: Xenological Phenomenology of the Middle Ages*, [in:] *Meeting the Foreign in the Middle Ages*, ed. by A. Classen, New York 2002, pp. xi–xxiii.

¹¹ *Die ältere Chronik von Oliva*, [in:] *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*, eds. Th. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke, vol. 5, Leipzig 1874, pp. 591–624; Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, [in:] *Scriptores*

laus von Jeroschin is also of great importance for the specifics of this study. Although the latter author mainly used the data from the chronicle of Peter of Dusburg, he evaluated the events himself, highlighting and depicting those that were noteworthy from his point of view as a clergyman. This refers, among other things, to the representation of the enemies of Christianity, namely the pagans, and the explanation of the warfare against them¹². In some cases, the author of this article also finds it reasonable to refer to the *Chronicon Livoniae* by Hermann von Wartberge, a priest of the Livonian Order that was a branch of the Teutonic Order at the time under study¹³.

It should be emphasised that the image of the pagan Lithuanians presented in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order was strongly influenced by the ideology of the Crusades. The author of the article shares the view of Rasa Mažeika that the depiction of the strong antagonism between the Lithuanians and the knights of the Teutonic Order, as well as the representation of the latter as victims of Lithuanian aggression, was ideologically extremely important for the explanation and justification of the Baltic Crusade¹⁴. At the same time, the methodology of narrative representation of the Lithuanians as the Other is not unique and can be found earlier in reference to the Prussian campaigns and, moreover, in the texts of the first Crusades¹⁵. Therefore, the distinction of the Self and the Other, the Christians and the pagans, as well as the justification of a holy war against the barbarians, was not a new idea in the fourteenth century. It was Bernard of Clairvaux who obtained papal authorisation for the war against the "Slavs and other pagan inhabitants of the north and to subject them, with the Lord's assistance, to the Christian religion" in *Divina dispensation II* which dates back to 11 April, 1147¹⁶. This influenced the way the mission of the military orders was presented in the documentary tradition of the Christian military orders, including the Teutonic Order¹⁷. Therefore, the

Rerum Prussicarum, eds. Th. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke, vol. 1, Leipzig 1861, pp. 3–269; Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, eds. S. Zonenberg, K. Kwiatkowski, Toruń 2017. For the general background of the creation of the chronicles and their ideological foundations, see: H. Bauer, *Peter von Dusburg und die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens im 14. Jahrhundert in Preussen*, Berlin 1935; H. Boockmann, *Die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens. Gattungsfragen und 'Gebrauchssituationen'*, [in:] *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im späten Mittelalter*, ed. H. Patze, Sigmaringen 1987, pp. 450–454.

¹² *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin. A History of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia, 1190–1331*, ser. *Crusade Texts in Translation*, transl. by M. Fischer, vol. 20, Routledge 2010.

¹³ Hermann de Wartberge, *Chronicon Livoniae*, [in:] *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Cronicon Terrae Prussiae*, [in:] *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*, eds. Th. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke, vol. 2, Leipzig 1863, pp. 21–116.

¹⁴ R. Mažeika, *Violent Victims? Surprising Aspects of the Just War Theory in the Chronicle of Peter von Dusburg*, [in:] *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier*, ed. A. V. Murray, Ashgate 2009, p. 136; K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds...*, p. 16.

¹⁵ K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds...*, p. 12; F. H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, ser. *Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought*, third series, vol. 8, Cambridge 1975; K. Armstrong, *Holy War*, London 1988; J. Trupinda, *Ideologia Krucjatowa w Kronice Piotra z Dusburga*, Gdańsk 1999, p. 19. The idea of the sacred war was analysed in: C. Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, ed. and transl. by M. W. Baldwin, W. Goffart, Princeton 1977.

¹⁶ Bernard of Clairvaux, *epistula 457*: "ad delendas penitus, aut certe convertendas nationes illas [...] eamdem eis promittentes indulgentiam peccatorum, quam et his qui versus Hierosolymam sunt profec". Cited as in: K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds...*, p. 47. See also: Bernard of Clairvaux, *Proclamations of Northern European Crusades*, [in:] *The Crusades*, eds. S. J. Allen, E. Amt, Toronto 2010, p. 259.

¹⁷ K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds...*, p. 48; For more details on Bernard of Clairvaux's influence

similar ideas the otherness of the pagans can be seen in the later privileges granted to the crusaders in the Baltic region, including the territories of Lithuania¹⁸.

Nevertheless, the possibilities of the documents in terms of ideological background and explanation of the Crusade, as well as their audience, were quite limited. In this respect, the chronicles were of great importance. The authors had the possibility not only to describe the origin and development of the Order, focusing on the most important events in its history, but also to present the ideological background of the Crusades, based on the distinction between Christians and pagans, or the Self and the Other, and justify the need for the war against the latter ones.

No doubt they needed some kind of catalyst for such a distinction. War can be seen as such a driving force. But the war between the Teutonic Order and Lithuania would not have been possible if there had not been some crucial differences that made it possible to identify the Lithuanians as the Other and, what is more, explain the need for the war against them. In this respect, the denomination of a state's population can be considered the most obvious criterion. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that Lithuanian "paganism" and the need for crusades in this region were quite controversial, since at the beginning of the fourteenth century the majority of the state's population were Christians (in particular, Orthodox), and the ruling elite and the princes were pagans. When the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was founded, there was a stratum of the old Ruthenian nobility that held a rather strong position and preserved the historical and religious traditions of Christianity. Since the Lithuanian rulers did not want to lose the support of this group, they did not try to destroy the old foundations, but preserved the existing state of affairs. Moreover, the pagan Lithuanian princes took Christian wives, their daughters and sons married representatives of the Christian rulers and were baptised. The local Orthodox nobility outwardly accepted the pagan rulers and, if necessary, provided them with military support¹⁹. At the same time, there was strong opposition from the pagan Baltic nobility, who were extremely critical of the ruler's conversion. The Lithuanian nobility tolerated the Christian God, but in everyday life they continued to worship the old deities. This was the Lithuanian phenomenon that was characterized by a tolerant attitude of the pagan rulers towards the Christian faith, their manipulation of religion to achieve political goals as well as participation of the Orthodox in political and religious policy of the state.

One can thus assume that it was not the domination of the population of the state, but the religion of the rulers and their entourage, as well as their military and political activity, that enabled the clergy of the Order to speak of the pagan state of Lithuania

on the ideology of crusading see: C. Tyerman, *Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades*, Oxford 2004, pp. 27–32; M. Barber, *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple*, Cambridge 2012, pp. 44–50. For more information on the ideology of the Baltic Crusade, see: S. Ekdahl, *Crusades and Colonization in the Baltic*, [in:] *Palgrave Advances on the Crusades*, ed. H. Nicholson, New York 2005, pp. 172–203.

¹⁸ Here one can point out the manifest issued in Catania in 1224, which announced Caesar the superior of the Baltic people who had not been baptised yet or had been recently baptised. One can also think of the act of Friedrich II from 1226, according to which the Teutonic Order got some lands, including the Prussian land, into its possession, as well as of the charter of Friedrich II issued in Verona in June 1245. *Fontes historiae Latioae medii aevi (Senas Latvijas vestures avoti)*, fasc. II, ed. A. Švabe, Rigae 1940, nr 279, p. 263.

¹⁹ S. C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending...*, p. 47.

and to pursue a determined crusading policy towards its eastern neighbour. For this reason, the portrayal of the Lithuanian population and participants in the campaigns in the Teutonic chronicles was quite uniform. The focus was on the Lithuanians as non-Christians, and in most cases they were portrayed as barbarians or pagans in order to emphasise their otherness to the knights of the Order²⁰. And more importantly, not only the peoples of Lithuania were shown as the Other. The same was true of the landscape in which they lived. The land itself was portrayed as a hostile and unfriendly region, full of dangers for the Christian knights²¹.

When it comes to the specific terms used to refer to the Lithuanians as the Other it should be noted that they can vary. Obviously, the term *Lithuanians* was widely used²². At the same time, the word *pagans* was the most common word used by the chroniclers to emphasise the religious and cultural otherness of the population of Lithuania and its warriors that attacked Christian lands. This is the term used by all the authors of the Teutonic chronicles in the majority of cases²³. The Teutonic chroniclers could also use *heathens* (the Latin *infideli* or German *heiden*) as a term that identified the Lithuanians as the Other compared to the Christian knights²⁴. At the same time, it was extremely

²⁰ Nevertheless, in some cases the chronicles emphasise the difference between the Lithuanians and Ruthenians and mention both groups as participants of the campaigns against the brothers of the Order. Compare: "Gedemyni, regis Lithwanorum" (Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 150) or „quomodo Lithwani vellent impugnare castrum Bartensten" (Ibidem, p. 148) and „principes etc. contra Lithwanos et Ruthenos in eorum devastacionem" (Ibidem, p. 208). This could possibly be done due to the need for the distinction between pagan Lithuanian and Christian Ruthenian princes/nobility/warriors. This can be even better seen from the following abstract from the chronicle where the Ruthenians are differentiated from the pagan Lithuanians: "et fratres cum letitia revertuntur captivos ducentes Rutenos et paganos" (Ibidem, p. 128). The similar categorisation can be also found in other chronicles: *Die ältere Chronik von Oliva*, p. 724.

²¹ The strategy of depicting Lithuania as the hostile region was similar to the one used by the chroniclers of the Teutonic Order in reference to the lands of Prussia. The otherness of Prussian landscape in the context of the Baltic Crusade and its perception by the Order's chroniclers were analysed by George Leighton. The historian points out that describing the land of Prussia, Peter of Dusburg applies the biblical terms and metaphorical language. Therefore, he calls it the *terra horroris* ('land of horror') and the *terra promissionis* ('the promised land'). See: G. Leighton, *Did the Teutonic order create a sacred landscape in thirteenth-century Prussia*, "Journal of Medieval History", nr 44 (4), 2018, pp. 457–483; Idem, *Place and Landscape in Peter von Dusburg's Chronicle of Prussia*, Leeds 2022. The similar approach was used by the Teutonic chroniclers in reference to the lands of Lithuania: "pertranseamus ergo eos viriliter et dominus liberabit nos" (Petri de Dusburg, *Chronica Terrae Prussiae*, p. 157), "Sed deus, qui in se credentes populos nullis sinit concuti terroribus, sed sua pietate concessa pace Cristianorum fines ab omni hoste facit securos, quorundam in hac apostasia corda divinitus illustravit, qui omnia secreta hujus malicie detexerunt" (Ibidem, p. 161). Moreover, one should take into account that the methodology of the creation of the image of the Lithuanians was similar to the way of the representation of other pagans (especially the Prussians) in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order. See: V. Matuzova, *Mental Frontiers: Prussians as Seen by Peter von Dusburg*, [in:] *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier: 1150–1500*, ed. A. V. Murray, Aldershot 2001, p. 254.

²² For example: Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 157; Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 208.

²³ For example: "Paganis" in *Die ältere Chronik von Oliva*, p. 724; "paganis cum rege Gedemyno" in Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 152, etc.

²⁴ K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds...*, p. 18. For example: "... none videtis, quomodo domini nostri fratres pugnant cum infidelibus?" (Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 98) or "King Vytenis, the proud Heathen" ("an kunge Witene, dem homütigen heidin", *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von*

important for the chroniclers not only to emphasise the otherness of the pagans, but to also their negative character. Characteristics such as *sinner*, *defilers of the faith and the name of the Lord*, and *children of the devil*, which were used by the narrators, suited this purpose better than others.²⁵ Moreover, the Lithuanians were portrayed not only as the Other but as *hostes fidei*, the enemies of the faith²⁶. This was a thoughtful strategy of the chroniclers to create an impressive background for the explanation and presentation of the knights' activities in their fight against the Lithuanians as a defence of Christianity²⁷. It was therefore extremely important to show them not only as different or pagan, but as aggressive, dangerous and destructive enemies.

The chroniclers therefore not only applied the specific terms to demonstrate the difference and contrast between the Christian knights of the Order and the pagan Lithuanians, but also described the positive features of the brothers and the negative traits of the pagans. The nature of the Order as a spiritual institution and its declared aim of fighting the heathen determined the Order chroniclers' perception of themselves (the Self) and their crusade²⁸. Great attention was paid to the brothers' reverence for the faith and the Church. The knights of the Order were shown as faithful and honoured heroes, and their military activity in the Lithuanian lands – as God's will, or the sacred warfare²⁹. The events described by the chroniclers depict them as pious, noble, generous,

Jeroschin, p. 256; Nicolaus von Jeroschin, *Di Kronike von Pruzinlant*, [in:] *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*, eds. Th. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke, vol. 1, Leipzig 1861 (here and further – SRP, I, 1861), p. 574). As Alan V. Murray pointed out in his article from 2010, in some cases, namely those when the English crusaders participated in the missions to the Baltic region, including the lands of Lithuania, the term 'Sarraceni' in relation to the pagans could be used. For instance, forty knights took part in the summer campaign to Lithuania in 1349. In their petition to the pope concerning the construction and maintenance of a castle in Prussia, they mentioned its location as the one "on the frontiers of Prussia in the land of the Saracens, that is to say, [the land] of the king of Lithuania" ("in confinibus Spruce in terra Sarracenorum videlicet regis de Letto"). Cited as in: A. V. Murray, *The Saracens of the Baltic: Pagan and Christian Lithuania in the Perception of English and French Crusaders to Late Medieval Prussia*, "Journal of Baltic Studies", nr 41(4), 2010, p. 416. Obviously, this term should have been known to the clergy of the Teutonic Order. What is more, it could be used in relation to the barbarians but as a knight's nickname. For instance, Peter of Dusburg mentions a brother Hermann called Sarraceni who fought against the pagans and died on the battlefield ("que fuerunt anime fratris Hermann, dicti Sarraceni". Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 98). Nevertheless, this term can be hardly found in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order under study in relation to the pagans of Lithuania.

²⁵ For example: "Extunc fratres percusserunt peccatores in ira sua..." (Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 172), "blasphemus nominis Jesu Christi" (Ibidem, p. 176); "semine suo dyabólico" (Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 236).

²⁶ "inimicos fidei" Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 139.

²⁷ K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds...*, p. 79.

²⁸ "Sunt et caritatis beneficiis affluentes, hospitum, peregrinorum et pauperum receptores." Cited as in: G. Leighton, *Place and Landscape in Peter von Dusburg's Chronicle of Prussia*, p. 29. See also: K. Kwiatkowski, 'Christ ist erstanden...' i chrześcijanie zwyciężają! sakralizacja w porządku liturgicznym zbrojnej walki przeciwko poganom jako element określający tożsamość członków korporacji zakonu niemieckiego w Prusach, "Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie", nr 4, 2009, pp. 472–473; M. Wüst, *Studien zum Selbstbildverständnis des Deutschen Ordens*, Weimar 2013, pp. 67–87; A. V. Murray, *Heathens, Devils and Saracens. Crusader Concepts of the Pagan Enemy during the Baltic Crusades (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries)*, [in:] *Crusading on the Edge: Ideas and Practices of Crusading in Iberia and the Baltic Region, 1100–1500*, eds. T. K. Nielsen, I. Fønnesberg-Schmidt, Turnhout 2017, pp. 199–224.

²⁹ „in protectionem fidei etc. venit, volens intrare Lituaniam”. Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 142. See also: K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds...*, p. 12; A. Pluskowski, *The ravages of holy war:*

obedient to God, humble, brave, merciful and fearless people who fight courageously against the strong enemies of Christianity³⁰. A typical and characteristic description of the Christian knights can be found in the chronicle by Nicolaus von Jeroschin: „They were conscientious monks in their worship, vigils and kneeling in prayer and yet they attacked the heathens with the courage of knights in the fearless battle they waged against them [...] In his youth the devil had used his tricks to arouse in him the desires of the flesh, which consumed him and caused him great distress, but God’s pure warrior resisted with all his might, reining in his desires by starving himself and by other means both day and night”³¹.

The knights were, of course, only human and could also commit the crimes. But these were exceptions and they were always punished for their misbehaviour³². In many cases their crimes were not caused by their inborn sinfulness but by the temptation of the Devil. And the cases of successful overcoming of such a seduction by the brothers were highlighted. But either way, they were punished by God in some way, which restored the balance of the Christian world and was a good example for another brothers³³. When it comes to the devastation of the lands, destruction of the castles and cities, capturing and killing the enemies, it was perceived as an integral part of the campaigns at that time³⁴. As the campaigns against the Lithuanians were on behalf of God and were aimed at the protection of faith, they got the Lord’s approval, forgiveness and assistance: “unde fratres cum infinita rapina ipsis a Deo data festinant in Kalis”³⁵.

The pagan Lithuanians formed the opposition to the Christian knights and were portrayed as treacherous, crafty, sly, malicious, deceitful, cowardly, cruel and easily oath-breaking people, enemies³⁶. As it says in the chronicle of Wigand of Marburg, it was typical for the pagans to break the peace: “est ex condicione paganica pacem violatam”³⁷. That is why no one could rely on them. Of course, such an image was often stereotyped. For the Germanic clergy, it was important to portray their ene-

Crusade and colonisation in the thirteenth century, [in:] Idem, *The Archaeology of the Prussian Crusade. Holy War and Colonisation*, London 2012, p. 91.

³⁰ For example: „Hic frater Ulricus totus fuit magnanimus” (Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 139). See also: *Die ältere Chronik von Oliva*, p. 710; Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 160.

³¹ The translation is as in: *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin*, p. 213.

³² „quem frater Johannes de Gindorf ex concepta malicia, quam gessit dudum in corde suo propter correctiones, quas meritis suis exigentibus a magistro sustulerat, ductu impulsu maligni spiritus cultello transfixit caput eius in transitu. Nec mora propter hoc forefactum incarceratur, ubi in dolore vitam terminavit”. Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 168.

³³ The similar descriptions and characteristics of the knights can also be found in other chronicles of the Teutonic Order. For more examples, see: Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, pp. 149, 189; *Die ältere Chronik von Oliva*, p. 710; Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 160.

³⁴ „...transeunt et multa mortalitate, incendio et vastacione terram consumunt et post breve tempore festinant ad opidum Friensstad, quo igne destruxerunt [...] castrum impugnant, quod vi obtinuerunt, in quo senes et iuvenes occidunt et captivant et igne consumunt”. Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 172.

³⁵ Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 174.

³⁶ Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 179; *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin*, p. 256.

³⁷ Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 144.

mies as violent blasphemers and evildoers in order to emphasise the contrast between them and the pious knights, and in this way to explain why it was crucial to protect the Christian territories and their inhabitants from this cruelty and to bring corrective faith to the barbarians³⁸. The authors repeatedly mention that the pagan neighbours should renounce pagan deities, in particular Perun, and turn to Saint Mary and Christianity³⁹. As a result, one can find many examples of the fights between the Christians and the pagans (which means – between the true faith and the evil) in the Order chronicles.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that despite the generally negative characterisation of the Lithuanians in the chronicles of the Teutonic Order, the authors emphasise their war skills and courage, which they demonstrated in battles against the Christian knights. For example, Peter of Dusburg describes the beginning of the war against the Lithuanians in 1283 and portrays them as powerful and strong people skilled in warfare⁴⁰. These abilities to be courageous warriors are not denied by the chroniclers and even emphasised: “The heathens are famously well-built, strong and daring, swift, courageous, bold, fierce and skilful at war, because they practise continuously from early childhood. Their country is large, broad and long and they have countless warriors. The brothers took arms against the mighty heathens, and this is how it began”⁴¹.

It seems worth noting here that the above-mentioned characteristics refer not only to the pagan Lithuanians in general but also to their rulers in particular. Indeed, in the Middle Ages, the ruler was a symbol and the most important representative of a state. He had his own character traits and carried out a certain political activity, which could be very different. As already mentioned, it was the religion of the rulers of Lithuania that determined the perception of the state and its peoples from the perspective of the chroniclers of the Teutonic Order. Therefore, it seems extremely important to study not only the image of these “barbarians” in general, but also the created image of their rulers.

Indeed, the rulers of Lithuania were portrayed as warriors who carried out the constant and persistent struggle against the Teutonic Order and committed many crimes against the Christians in the neighbouring lands. Vytenis was one of the grand dukes of Lithuania whose military policy was the focus of attention of the Teutonic chroniclers. They emphasised his military activities and cruelty that accompanied his campaigns to the Christian lands. For example, Peter of Dusburg describes the campaign to the land of Lenchici and siege of the city in 1294 and shows Vytenis as an unrepentant pagan who

³⁸ K. Markman, *Between Two Worlds...*, p. 45.

³⁹ Wigand von Marburg, *Nova Kronika Pruska*, p. 142.

⁴⁰ “Anno domini MCCLXXXIII eo tempore, quo ab incepto bello contra gentem Pruthenorum fluxerant jam LIII anni, et omnes naciones in dicta terra expugnate essent, et exterminate, ita quod unus non superesset, qui sacrosancte Romane ecclesie non subiceret humiliter collum suum, fratres domus Theutonice predicti contra gentem illam potentem et durissime cervicis exercitatumque in bello, que fuit vicinior terre Prussie, ultra flumen Memele in terra Lethowie habitans, inceperunt bellum un hunc modum”. Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 146.

⁴¹ The translation into English is as in: *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin*, p. 208 (The original text is in: SRP, I, 1861, p. 514).

kills and take prisoner a lot of people, burns cathedrals and commits sacrilegious acts⁴². The similar portrait of a Lithuanian ruler can be found in *Chronica nova Prutenica* by Wigand of Marburg. He also focuses on the campaigns organized by Vytenis, pays attention to the cruelty of the Lithuanian ruler, and lists the cases of looting and devastation which accompanied these events⁴³. Describing him as a cruel and savage pagan ruler, the enemy, the Other, the author, on the other hand, does not deny his political or military abilities, acknowledges his ruling status, and highlights his courage⁴⁴.

At the same time, the grand dukes of Lithuania, when mentioned along with other Christian rulers, could be presented as those who are not equal to the first. This can be illustrated by the fragment from the chronicle of Wigand of Marburg. Describing the events related to the joint campaign of Władysław Łokietek, King of Poland, with the Hungarian King and the Grand Duke of Lithuania, against the Teutonic Order, the author emphasises the otherness of Gediminas by using *regis paganis*, depriving him of the title of *rex*, as was the case in previous paragraphs in a similar context: “Tandem rex Gedemyn in potenti manu intratum paganis terram Osterrodensem et igne vastat eam[...].” vs. “Tres reges erant hostes ordinis, Lokut rex Polonie, Gedemyn Lithwanie paganus et rex Ungariae”⁴⁵. It seems obvious that this was done intentionally by the chronicler and can be seen as another way of demonstrating the otherness of the pagan Lithuanian rulers compared to other Christian peoples.

But the different terms and titles used in relation to the Lithuanians or metaphorical description of the pagans' traits were not enough to demonstrate the contrast between the Self and the Other. In this respect, the detailed description of the difference in habits and traditions between the Christians and pagans was of great importance. Thus, one should point out the great attention to the pagan traditions and cults which were predominant in the entourage of the Lithuanian grand dukes and their military nobility paid by the chroniclers. Among them, one can point out the rituals, actions aimed at receiving the favour of deities in upcoming activities, gratitude to the deities for help. The human sacrifice was not accepted and even condemned by the Christian church. That is why the chronicles paid special attention to the human sacrifices made by the Lithuanians. They tell that it was the usual practice for the Lithuanians to sacrifice the enemies after the successful campaigns. Returning from enemy lands with a victory, the Lithuanians built a fire, and each soldier threw a log into it. After that, the most noble and beautiful prisoner was burned in this fire. The Lithuanians believed that they could thank their deities for help in the battle and please them in such a way. Describing the events of 1365, Wigand of Marburg noted that the Lithuanians, on their way back from

⁴² “Eodem anno Vithenus filius regis Lethowie cum octingentis viris intravit terram Polonie, et in die pentecostes, dum in ecclesia Lunczensi canonici et ministri altaris et alii clerici cum solempni ornatu essent in processione, irruit hostiliter in eos, et in ecclesia cccc homines cristianos trucidavit, clericos et prelates, quos voluit, captivos secum duxit, omnem ornatum, calices et alia vasa ecclesie ad illicitum usum pertrahebat in contemptum dei, ecclesiam cum sacramentis redegit in favillam, depopulataque terra circum adjacent factaque maxima strage in populo dei, tantam multitudinem deduxit captivam, quod cuilibet Lethowino in divisione cesserunt xx homines cristiani”. Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 156. See also: Wigand von Marburg, *Nova Kronika Pruska*, p. 130.

⁴³ Wigand von Marburg, *Nova Kronika Pruska*, pp. 128, 130, 142.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 156.

a successful campaign in Prussia, stayed not far from Ragaine and celebrated the victory by sacrificing the blood of a bull and a man, namely Hensel Neuwenstein (Hensel Neuwensteyn), to the deities, throwing them into the fire⁴⁶. What is more, not only the enemy could be sacrificed by the Lithuanians, but the ordinary people too. Thus, the Lithuanians captured a young merchant who was heading to Riga. They tied him up, cut open his belly, led him around a tree, waiting until his insides came out, and rejoiced at the irrigation of the earth with his blood, thereby offering a sacrifice to their deities⁴⁷. Without any doubt, it was extremely important for the chronicler of the Order to emphasise the difference between the traditions of the Christians and the pagans and demonstrate the otherness and negative nature of the Lithuanians in such a way. Probably, that is why they described such occasions, namely the human sacrifices, in great detail.

At the same time, the rituals themselves, even the human sacrifices mentioned above, were not enough to explain the need for the Crusade. There should have been something more important or dangerous for the Christians to make it possible to explain and justify the need for the struggle against the Lithuanians. As the war was the catalyst for the differentiation between the Self and the Other in this study, it is possible to assume that the crimes committed by the pagans in the Christian lands in the course of the campaigns are of a high importance in terms of the categorisation under study.

There are numerous crimes committed by the pagans that have been mentioned by the chroniclers. One of the most informative sources in this respect is *Chronicon terrae Prussiae* by Peter of Dusburg. He pays great attention to the crimes committed by the Lithuanians in the Christian lands and describes them in great detail. Some of them seem to be quite typical for the wars at the medieval times. For instance, one can point out sudden attacks accompanied by damages and plunder, killing and capturing of people. The same crimes were committed by the knights of the Order too. But two quite specific types of crimes can be distinguished in terms of this study. First, this is the assassination not of the inhabitants of the attacked lands in general, but of the Christians. The damage caused to the Christians and their murder are the crimes highlighted by the creators of the Order chronicles as one of the serious consequences of the Lithuanian attacks⁴⁸.

But even this was not the most serious crime committed by the pagans against the Christians. There was something more outrageous that shocked and aroused indignation of the chroniclers as clergymen. This is sacrilege – desecration of the cathedrals and the holy relics as well as the affront to God and his name. The most picturesque descriptions of such cases can be found in *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*. Peter of Dusburg methodically and in great detail describes the damage caused by the Lithuanians to the Christian objects of worship. One of the most striking examples is the case of 1298 when

⁴⁶ "... Caustriten etc., captivos educentes viros et mulieres festinantque ad stagnum vulgariter Kurisch-Hab, in quo piscatores captivaverunt, XIV. etiam equos commendatoris deduxerunt, festini redeunt ad regem prope Ragnitam leti, sacrificantes Diis sanguinem thauri, et quendam vocabulo Hensel Neuwensteyn in ignem proiciunt et sacrificant" (Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 330).

⁴⁷ "Festinans ad transitum occurrit ei juvenis mercator, sarcinam mercandorum ferens, volens intrare opidum Rigense, nihil sciens de guerris, quem apprehenderunt, ligaverunt pagani, ventrem eius sciderunt et circumducunt eum arbori, donec intestina eius omnia extraheret, deposueruntque eum de trunco, sanguinem eius sic sacrificando, in quo delectabantur exultantes." (Ibidem, p. 228).

⁴⁸ "et in ecclesia cccc homines cristianos trucidavit" (Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 156).

140 pagans came to Strausberg, killed all the people and the priest, captured women and children and profaned the church property. Moreover, one of the assailants desecrated the baptistery⁴⁹. Similar crimes are described in other chronicles of the Teutonic Order. While describing such actions of the pagan troops and their leaders, the chroniclers invariably represent the pagan Lithuanians as evil and dangerous enemies who make sudden attacks, bring destruction and devastation and demonstrate their negative attitude to the offenders against the Christian religion and true Christians.

But any evil and crime should be punished in the worldview of a mediaeval man. Therefore, the inevitable consequence of the Lithuanians' blasphemy is the heavenly punishment that follows their crimes against the Christians. And this is not only the Order knights who revenge the Lithuanians for their attacks but God himself. Here one can speak of one of the most interesting and noteworthy methods of the representation of the otherness of the Lithuanians by the chroniclers of the Order. This is the „God's punishment” (divine retribution) that befalls the pagans for their attacks in the lands of the Teutonic Order⁵⁰. The analysis of the chronicles shows two types of such punishment. The first one is the penalty by a real man who acts on behalf of God's will, for instance, the revenge of the Christian knights that catch the pagans after their attacks and defeat them⁵¹. Here one can consider the Order detachments to be God's hands that help justice to prevail. Moreover, during such actions the knight troops are secured by God and stay unhurt, or at least have much fewer victims in comparison with their enemies⁵². According to *Die ätere Chronik von Oliva*, it was thanks to the intercession of the Virgin Mary that the campaign of the Teutonic Order in the Lithuanian land in 1348 was accomplished successfully for the Christian knights while the pagans suffered a well-deserved heavenly punishment – plunged into the cold waters of the river⁵³. A similar description can be found also in *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*. The author connects the salvation of a small detachment at the castle of Junigeda and their victory over a huge army of the pagans with the help of God who blessed them during the fight. What is more, God helped the Christians not only to punish or to kill the pagans but to predict danger and evade it⁵⁴.

⁴⁹ „Hoc anno scilicet domini MCCXCVIII de Lethowia CXL viri tam improvide irruerunt in die beati Michaelis in oppidum Straisbergk, quod totum populum et unum sacerdotem occiderunt, mulieribus et parvulis captis et preter verecundiam, quam aliis sacramentis fecerunt, unus purgando alvum baptisterium defedavit” (Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 164).

⁵⁰ In more detail, the divine retribution that befalls the pagan Lithuanian for their crimes in the Christian lands was analysed in: Y. Ryier, *To the issue of the phenomenon of “God's punishment” of pagans of Lithuania for their attacks on the Christian lands of the Teutonic Order in the Order chronicles of the 14th century*, „Rocznik Przemyski”, nr 1 (25), 2020, pp. 13–23.

⁵¹ Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 130.

⁵² Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 157.

⁵³ „Et in conflict beata Maria protegit visibiliter Christianos [...] Et in hoc potissime auxilium beatae Virginis potuit perpendi, quod glacies in quodam fluvio Strawa profundo rupta fuit sub Paganis, et submerse fuerunt tot inimici crucis, quod Christiani supra eorum cadaver sicco pede transierunt et per glaciem aliquovis cum impetu transiverunt, eiusdem tamen fluvii glacie integra permanente” (*Die ältere Chronik von Oliva*, p. 724).

⁵⁴ „sicque fratres salvi dei gracia sunt reversi. Ecce quomodo angustie fratribus errant undique, sed dues, qui in se sperantes non derelinquit, ipsos de hujusmodi interneconibus misericorditer liberavit” (Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 157).

The second and more important type of punishment in context of the representation of the Lithuanians' otherness is intercession of the Lord which could be performed in a way of natural justice or miracle in the battle. For example, Wigand of Marburg explains the death of Vytenis (later it is found out that just an attempt to kill him) as God's punishment for his disrespect to the true faith and the religious people⁵⁵. The same fragment can be found in the chronicle by Peter of Dusburg. According to it, Vytenis came to the Barten land, captured the Christians and asked them where their God was, why he had not helped them and suggested them to refuse their faith. The next day something strange happened. When Heinrich von Plotzke came to help the Order troops, the pagans felt strange fear, their hearts were so weak that the Lithuanians were not able to fight anymore and ran away. Some of them were caught and killed, the rest – were drowned, hanged or died because of hunger in a virgin forest. The pagan king hardly escaped but was also punished soon⁵⁶. In such a way God protected the knights of the Teutonic Order and punished the pagans for their disrespect and the crimes against the Christians. This type of divine retribution was of great importance in the context of representation of antagonism between the Self and the Other, or Christians and pagans as it involved sacral and miraculous components and was explained by the intercession of the Lord, thus led to the sacralisation of the events and warfare against the pagans in general. In fact, the miraculous played an important role in the worldview of clergymen and Christians in general. That is why it would not be a surprise that miracles appearing on behalf of God as the symbols of his approval of the activity of the Order's knights in their battles against the pagan Lithuanians are the crucial element of the chronicles of the Teutonic Order.

At the same time, one should take into account that the otherness of the Lithuanians presented in the chronicles as well as the perception of the pagans by a medieval clergyman and chronicler was quite ambiguous and could change depending on particular circumstances. In some cases, The Other could become the Self or at least a friend – the third category, an intermediate between the Self and the Other. It could happen as a result of their baptism⁵⁷ or helping the brothers⁵⁸. The chroniclers paid great attention

⁵⁵ Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, pp. 130–131.

⁵⁶ „Et ecce rex iste blasphemus nominis Jesu Christi, dum venire in solitudinem ad terram Barthensem in campum dictum Woyploc, mente effrenatus gloriabatur, quasi potens in potencia exercitus sui, nunquam recogitans potestatem dei, et sit ad Cristianos captos, qui ligati astiterunt ibi: ubi est deus vester? Quare non adjuvat vos, sicut dii nostril auxiliati sunt nobis nunc et altera vice? Cristiani ingemiscientes tacuerunt. Sequenti die i.e. VIII idus Aprilis frater Henricus de Ploczke magnus commendator et CL fratres cum multo populo advenerunt et invenerunt regem et suum exercitum undique indagibus vallatum, et in primo congressu Lethowini LX viros cristianos interfecerunt; sed dum viderent fratres cum suo vexillo et multitudinem copiosam armatorum sequentem, irruit super eos pavor et adeo emarcuit cor eorum, quod non habebant ultra virtutem resistendi; unde quasi in ictu oculi rejectis armis omnes terga verterunt. Extunc fratres cum suis insequentes, percusserunt eos plaga magna, sic quod rex cum paucis vix evasit, alii gladio trucidati sunt, quidam submerse, ceteri in solitudine consumpti inedia vel pre dolore se suspendentes perierunt. Mulieres eciam cristiane, que capte ibi fuerant, dum vidissent sibi de cello victoriam venisse, immemores fragilitatis sexus sui irruentes repente in Lethowinos, qui eas custodiebant modo, quo poterant, occiderunt. In memoriam hujus gloriose victoriae et ad laudem et gloriam Jesu Christi fratres claustrum sanctimonialium in civitate Thorun fundantes donis magnificis dotaverunt” (Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, pp. 156–157).

⁵⁷ Ibidem, pp. 146–147.

⁵⁸ “Ecce mirabilis conversio et mutatio dextere excelsi, iste Scumandus, qui ultra modum ante

to such events – the transformation of the enemies, their baptism and help to the brothers – and described them in detail⁵⁹.

On the other hand, the Self could also become the Other. It was possible, among other things, as a result of their betrayal or apostasy⁶⁰. In fact, the latter was even worse for a true Christian that the crimes committed by the pagans as well as their attacks⁶¹. Peter of Dusburg tells a highly symbolic story of a man who ran away after his apostasy, but was captured, killed, and torn to pieces by a dog who ate his heart that was known for its betrayal and insidiousness⁶². So, despite the fact that the man in the chronicle was a Christian, he committed the most horrible crime from a perspective of a clergyman, he betrayed the true faith, that is why he became the enemy, or the Other⁶³.

To summarise, it can be claimed that the chronicles of the Teutonic Order from the 14th century not only contain the data on the most important events from the history of the Order's formation and development, but also the clerics assessment of the processes that took place during their lifetime and which reflected the world view of a medieval man. This could only be done according to the norms and traditions that prevailed in their environment. God was one of the most influential and powerful beings who could interfere in people's lives, give his approval or disapproval to the inhabitants and even their rulers, and punish them in case of disrespect or violation of order and rules. Such an ideological construct led to the emergence of the categories of the Self and the Other. The most important criterion for such a distinction was not only the political, military or religious activity of the rulers and their subjects, but their respect for faith, God and the relics.

The pagans are the most negative figures in this regard. They are out of the Christian circle, they bring the destruction and death to the Christian people, they disturb the peace that has been created and kept for a long time. That is why the Lithuanians are shown as completely different, cruel and aggressive people, who fight against the true faith and God. Since religion was the main regulating force of a society in the medieval era, it is logical that it was God who was supposed to correct the lifestyle of the pagans or punish them for their crimes, if not with his own hands, then with the help of real

persequatur ecclesiam dei, modo zelator fidei factus est, dux gloriosus populi cristiani." Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 147.

⁵⁹ *Die ältere Chronik von Oliva*, p. 684.

⁶⁰ Nicolaus von Jeroshin, for instance, points out that during the battles in Gesovia and Pastovia, there was a man among the Lithuanians "who had formerly been an ally of the brothers but had now turned against them." *The Chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin*, p. 221. The cases of betrayal of the Christian knights and their further transformation from the Self into the Other was also described by other German chroniclers. For example, see: Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 311.

⁶¹ K. Kļaviņš, *The Ideology of Christianity and Pagan Practice among the Teutonic Knights: The Case of the Baltic Crusades*, "Journal of Baltic Studies", nr 37 (3), 2006, pp. 260–276.

⁶² „Quem sic interfectum canis ejus diris morsibus est aggressus, et aperiens latus ejus sinistrum, core jus, quod tot prodicionum et fraudum conscium fuit, de corpora extraxit, et in presencia Cristiano-rum plurium devoravit." Petri de Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, p. 147.

⁶³ The apostasy of the Lithuanians after their baptism is also criticised by the chronicles, but not to the extend it works with the Christians. Wigand of Marburg, for instance, gives his own evaluation of such an act and compares the nobles of Semigalia who became apostasies with a dog: "et abierunt pagani et revertuntur in pristinum errorem, sicut canis rediens ad vomitum". Wigand von Marburg, *Nowa Kronika Pruska*, p. 146.

people acting on his behalf. Therefore, the depiction of divine retribution or God's punishment was one of the most effective methods to represent the otherness of the pagan Lithuanians in comparison with the Christian knights of the Teutonic Order.

Other methods used by the chroniclers to achieve this goal include the use of specific terms to distinguish the pagans, the application of metaphorical features in relation to them, the emphasis on their negative characteristics, the description of horrifying rituals that could hardly be accepted by the Christian church, and the listing of all the destructive acts and crimes committed in the Christian lands during their attacks. All this helped the chroniclers to demonstrate the otherness of the pagans of Lithuania, to emphasise the difference between the Self and the Other, and explain and justify the Crusade in this region.

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