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FEATURES OF ROYALTY IN THE COURT OF MINDAUGAS AND HIS SUCCESSORS

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Features of Royalty in the Court of Mindaugas and His Successors

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BK	*Bychovco kronika*
Coronations	*Coronations: Medieval and Early Monarchic Ritual*
Cristianizzazione	*La Cristianizzazione della Lituania*
GL	*Gedimino laiškai*
Istorija	*Lietuvos TSR Aukštuju Mokyklu Mokslo darbai: Istorija*
LIŠ	*Lietuvos TSR istorijos šaltiniai*
LIBI	*Latinski izvori za Balgarskata istorija*
LRCh	*The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*
LUB	*Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch*
MADA	*Lietuvos TSR Mokslu Akademijos darbai: Serija A*
MPH	*Monumenta Poloniae Historica*
MPV	*Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana*
MUH	*Monumenta Ucrainicae historica*
PLDR	*Pamiatniki literatury drevnej Rusi*
PSRL	*Polnoje sobranije Russkikh letopisej*
PUB	*Preussisches Urkundenbuch*
VMPL	*Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lituaniae*

INTRODUCTION

The motives for writing this thesis can be explained not only by a personal interest in or a need for internationally available scholarship on the history of Lithuania but also by the aim to reflect the cultural context of a ruler's court as revealed through incomplete and fragmentary sources but based on the extensive scholarship on royal culture in general.

The thirteenth century attracts scholarly interest predominantly because of certain political changes: the decline of importance of the New Rome, Constantinople, and the revival of the Old, leading to the growth of the role of the papacy, which, while proclaiming the governing ideas of universal Christendom, was successful in the crusades and sought to establish a Latin commonwealth of kingdoms founded as St Peter's patrimonies. These changes were reshaped by various responses and movements, such as the missionary activity manifested by the mendicant orders, the Tartar invasions and their threat to the whole continent, the growth of economic potential followed by the "land famine." All together, these events resulted in an expansion causing colonisation of the peripheral areas of Europe.

The Baltic region became one of the main foci of this expansion, and because of the presence of heathens, colonisation flourished in the form of the crusade. Rediscovered by Europe at the very end of the twelfth century, the heathens began to be Christianised during the following two hundred years. In the context of the Baltic Crusade, Lithuania acquires a distinctive role: the country, being relatively distant, was not affected in the early days of the crusade although pressured by the knightly orders in Livonia and Prussia. Thus, it consolidated into a state which later became both a principal goal and an obstacle in the colonisation of the entire Baltic region.

In the sense of statehood, mid-thirteenth-century Lithuania emerges as a exceptional formation. Although later periods of fragmentation can be observed, the Kingdom of Lithuania, as actualised on the "national" level, became an internationally

recognised political and economic structure and remained a *de facto* concept in European political consciousness.

This is why the personality of the first consolidator of the Lithuanian lands, King Mindaugas (ca 1200 - 1263), attracts scholarly interest. During his rule for the first time Lithuania started developing according to the patterns of Western European government, albeit in primitive forms. Unfortunately, the fragmentary sources that survive from the period do not provide enough information for a probable construction of these issues; therefore, a comparative method will be used to present complementary evidence in order to illustrate as vividly as possible the functioning of the early Lithuanian state.

Based on primary sources and commonly accepted scholarship, the parallels for comparison were selected according to the following criteria: the time period, thirteenth century (however, not consistently used because certain social and political processes that occurred in Lithuania were not contemporaneous with the parallel events in Europe); the political context, an unsecure kingdom on a European frontier; the agent, a strong papacy; and the means, crusade. However, when using the comparative material, the following reservations are to be noted: Lithuania, in contrast to the states it will be compared with, had no earlier expression of statehood and was not a Christian country.

Because of the limitation of the sources, there is no possibility to derive completely valid suppositions about the functioning of the Lithuanian Kingdom; however, there remains the possibility of applying an inverse method: defining firstly the most general characteristics and then extracting the corresponding source evidence. Despite the obvious "constructedness" of such an approach, it can be justified in the case of this thesis, considering that its goal is not to create a panorama of Mindaugas' reign but is reserved to indicating those aspects which reveal or bear an allusion to traditional medieval kingship.

Of the different characteristics that may reflect statehood, this thesis will concentrate on the supreme authority of the ruler. Since the Lithuanian state was

established as a kingdom with a king as the highest authority, the term "features of royalty," encompassing the principal manifestations of state government will be used. Henceforth, features of royalty are defined as those elements of authority, which have been most frequently manifested in traditional medieval kingship. Among others, the following features are considered to be the most characteristic for royalty: the direct dynastic inheritance of the throne through the paternal line, the reception of the power through coronation, the establishment of the court, and a consistent pattern of political action. In addition, these features are considered narrowly, not implying any wider cultural context.

This thesis is comprised of four chapters; however, the second, on the coronation as the most royal event, will be the principle one. The other chapters are informed by existing scholarship, but will accentuate that evidence which is considered as illustrative of the way to the throne and the consequences of crown possession.

PRIMARY SOURCES[1]

The thirteenth century being essential for Lithuanian statehood, unfortunately, have

not left any contemporaneous narrative sources sources originating from the country;

moreover, this period was neglected by later records on the Lithuanian rulers and for

the first time appeared in *Bychovec Chronicle*[2] compiled in the mid-sixteenth century.

However, that part of this *Chronicle* which refers to Mindaugas is an extract from the

Galician-Volhynian Chronicle,[3] thus, establishing a link between the legendary[4] and

historical events. Therefore, sholarchip on the thirteenth-century Lithuania is based on

the narratives originating from the neighbouring countries.

Two groups of narratives sources, Ruthenian[5] and those of Teutonic Order[6]

are essential for this thesis. However, as they were created in the countries with which

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[1] For a recent detailed presentation of the narrative sources concerning Lithuania in the thirteenth century, see Edvardas Gudavičius, "Mindaugo epochos šaltiniai" [The sources on the epoque of Mindaugas], *Naujasis židinys* 6 and 7/8 (1993): 34-40 and 62-67.

[2] "Khronika Bykhovca" [The Bykhovec Chronicle], ed. N. N. Ulashchik, in *Polnoje sobranije russkikh letopisej* [The full collection of Russian annals], vol. 32, ed. B. A. Rybakov (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), 128-73, henceforth *PSRL*. The later critical translation into Lithuanian: *Lietuvos metraštis. Bychovco kronika* [The Lithuanian annal: the Bychovec Chronicle], ed. Rimantas Jasas (Vilnius: Vaga, 1971), henceforth *BK*.

[3] "Galitsko-Volynskaja letopis'" [The *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*], ed. O.P. Likhacheva, in *Pamiatniki literatury drevnej Rusi, XIII vek* [The monuments of literature of the ancient Rus': the thirteenth century], ed. L.A. Dmitrijev and D.S. Likhachev (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaja literatura, 1981), 236-426, henceforth *PLDR*.

[4] The legendary part introduces Mindaugas as a descendant of the tenth generation of the Roman ancestor Palemonas, and names as his father Ringaudas (*Ryngolt* in the *Bychovec Chronicle*), Me-č islovas Jučas, *Lietuvos metraščiai* [The Lithuanian chronicles] (Vilnius: Vaga, 1968), 119.

[5] Ruthenia is a general name in the medieval Latin of the local sources for the lands of northwestern Orthodox Slavs or the territories of western part of modern Ukraine (Red Ruthenia), Belarus' (Black Ruthenia), and the western part of Russia, excluding the Novgorod area, for the period from the collapse of the Kievan Rus' to the rise of the Duchy of Moscow and the formation of tsarist Russia.

[6] The Livonian Swordbrothers, *Fratres militiae Christi de Livonia*, were formally incorporated into the Teutonic Order, *Fratres hospitalis sanctae Mariae Theutonicorum Ierosolimitani*, by the bull of Pope Gregory IX on May 12, 1237, *Liv-, Esth- and Curländishes Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten*, ed. Friedrich Georg von Bunge, vol 1, *1093-1300* (Reval, 1853), no.149, 191-94, henceforh *LUB*. However, due to the fact that they were separated by Samogithia (*Žemaitija* in Lithuanian, literary: Lowland) and usually acted separately, hereafter they will be referred to as the Livonian Order and the state of the Teutonic Knights, and the title "the Teutonic Order" refers to them both.

Lithuania had almost a permanent conflict, the initially reserved attitude toward these records is required.

Among quite numerous Teutonic records, the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*[7] written by an anonymous Livonian knight around 1290 is the most valuable source. The *Rhymed Chronicle* encompasses the period from 1180 to 1290 and approximately one third of its text records Lithuanian events[8] It was originally written partly in Latin and partly in Middle High German; however, only the German version had survived. Leonid Arbusow had divided the *Chronicle* into three main parts according to its source evidence 1) to 1238, based on local legend and unknown written sources; 2) 1240 - 1278, based on the primary sources, eyewitness accounts, and the documents of the Livonian Order; and 3) 1279-1290, reflecting author's personal knowledge.

As for the Ruthenian sources, the principle is the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, written throughout the thirteenth century, and later incorporated into the compilation of narratives known as the *Hypathian Codex*. The *Chronicle* consists of several parts, arranged chronologically according to the reign of the Galician-Volhynian dukes.[9] The value of this source is that, in contrast to the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* reflecting a kind of panorama, it presents a lot of minor details which seem to be based on the first-hand knowledge of the authors.[10] The fact that Galician-Volhynian chroniclers were so well informed about Lithuanian domestic affairs of 1250s and 1260s induced Vladimir T. Pashuto's hypothesis that it could be partly based on the sources that originated in Lithuania.[11]

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[7] *Livländische Reimschronik*, hereafter the chronicle is referred according to the English translation: *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, translated by Jerry C. Smith and William Urban (Bloomington: Indiana University Publications, 1977), henceforth *LRCh*. The following presentation of the *Chronicle* is compiled based on "Some Comments on the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*," *LRCh*, xx-xxvii, unless otherwise indicated.

[8] Zenonas Ivinskis, *Lietuvos istorija. Iki Vytauto Didžiojo mirties* [The history of Lithuania until the death of Vytautas the Great] (Rome: Lietuviu kataliku mokslo akademija, 1976; reprint with commentaries by Edvardas Gudavičius; Vilnius: Mokslas, 1991), 153.

[9] *PLDR*, 565.

[10] Gudavičius, "Mindaugo epochos," 62.

[11] *PLDR*, 567.

The next group of the sources consists of documents issued by Mindaugas or concerning his affairs. This is the correspondence between Mindaugas, the papacy, the Teutonic Order, and ecclesiastics of the Baltic region on the ruler's coronation,[12] the foundation of Lithuanian bishopric, [13] Church matters in the country,[14] and others.[15]

The documents issued by Mindaugas or on his name should be indicated separately, as they have formed an autonomous issue in the scholarship on their authenticity. There are ten of these documents: one privilege for the Teutonic merchants and nine land grants. Concerning these documents, this thesis is based on Karol Maleczyński's research ,[16] according to which the privilege[17] and grants dating from July 1253,[18] 12 March 1254, [19] October 1255,[20] and 7 August 1259,[21] are considered authentic, and the ones from 1257,[22] June 1260,[23] 7 August 1261[24] are proved to be forgeries. However, since they were forgeries were created in the mid-thirteenth century, they do provide valuable information.

Besides the written sources, the thirteenth-century archaeological finds from the excavations under the present-day Achcathedral[25] and partly from the whole

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[12] *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lituaniae..*, ed. Augustin Theiner, vol. 1, *1217-1409* (Rome, 1860), no. 104, 50, henceforth *VMPL*.

[13] Ibid., no. 101, 49; no. 105, 50; no. 111, 53;

[14] Ibid., no. 103, 49; no. 120, 58

[15] E. g., a permission to crown Mindaugas' son, Ibid., no. 123, 60-61; Mindaugas letter to the pope informing about the land grant, *LUB* 1, no. 287, 372-73.

[16] Karol Maleczyński, "W sprawie autentyczności dokumentów Mendoga z lat 1253-1261" [About the issue of the authenticity of Mindaugas' documents from the years 1253-1261], *Ateneum Wileńskie* 11 (1936): 1-60.

[17] *LUB* 1, no. 243, 312-13.

[18] Ibid., no. 252, 333-34

[19] Ibid., no. 263, 345.

[20] Ibid., no. 286, 371-72.

[21] Ibid., no. 343, 436-37.

[22] Maleczyński, Tables I-II, no. 6, 58-60.

[23] *PUB* 1.2, no. 106, 91-93.

[24] *LUB* 1, no. 363, .461-64.

[25] The finds are described in Napalys Kitkauskas and Elvyra Telksniene, "Pirmosios Vilniaus katedros liekanu medžiagos ir murijimo technika" [Materials and masonry techniques of the first cathedral of Vilnius], *Architekturos paminklai* 10 (1987): 30-46, Napoleonas Kitkauskas, "Kvadratinio pastato liekanos" [The remains of the square-shaped building] in *Vilniaus pilys.*

territory of the Lower Castle of Vilnius, provide significant evidence on the Church matters during Mindaugas reign and, because of their partial contradiction to the written records and some traditional scholarly theories, create a need of a much thorough investigations.

SECONDARY LITERATURE

However episodic, Mindaugas reign received a lot of attention. Starting with the late medieval, *Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae* by Jan Długosz (1415-1480) it had begun to be included into later historical writtings. One of the most important authors was Maciej Stryjkowski (1547 - ca 1582), in his *Kronika polska, litewska i żmódzka* [The Polish, Lithuanian, and Samogithian Chronicle] having added personal interpretations of the sources, created first historiographical myths concerning Mindaugas' times which sometimes influence even modern scholarship. As for the later period Albertus Wiivk Koialowicz[26] (1609 -1677) and his *Historia Lituaniae*[27] should be noted. Although, compiled on the basis of Stryjkowski's *Kronika* and continued to the end of the Jagiellonian period (1572), *Historia Lituaniae* essentially differs from the previous opus as it is no more chronicle-like collection of events and extracts from the sources, but an analysis and interpretation of the historical process. Koialowicz, Jesuit professor at Vilnius Academy, wrote his history in Latin as a manual for the students, following the examples of Classical Roman literature. Though practically

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Statyba ir architektūra [Castles of Vilnius: building and architecture] (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1989), 91-114 and *Vilniaus arkikatedros požemiai* [The undergrounds of Vilnius Archcathedral] (Vilnius: Kultura, 1994), 9-14. A partly overview of some of these publications is presented in English: Algimantas Kajackas, "History and Recent Investigations of Vilnius Cathedral," in *La Cristianizzazione della Lituania: Atti del Colloquio Internazionale di Storia Ecclesiastica in occasione del VI centenario della Lituania Cristiana (1387-1987). Roma 24-26 Giugno 1987*, ed. Paulius Rabikauskas (Vatican City: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 1989), 263-84, henceforth *Cristianizzazione*.

[26] The following presentation is based on Juozas Jurginis, "A. Kojelavičiaus 'Lietuvos istorija' ir jos reikšme" [Koialowicz's *History of Lithuania* and its significance], an itroductory article to the Lithuanian translation of the work: Albertas Vijukas Kojelavičius [Koialowicz], *Lietuvos istorija* [The history of Lithuania] (Vilnius: Vaga, 1989), 5-33.

[27] Albertus Wivk Koialowicz, *Historiae Litvaniae...*, pars prior (Dantisci, 1650), pars altera (Antverpiae, 1669).

neglected by his contemporaries, Koialowicz's work was rediscovered in the late eighteenth century[28] and later by the nineteenth century Romanticists.

During the nineteenth century, Theodor Narbutt[29] (1784 - 1864) is the major figure among the historians dealing with Lithuania. Frequently considered as a romantic amateur in history writing, value of his *Dzieje starożytne narodu Litewskiego* [The ancient deeds of the Lithuanian people], recently, is beginning to be rehabilitated, particularly because of the archaeological finds from the Archcathedral of Vilnius. The newly discovered data do coincide with the stories of Narbutt's publication, thus increasing the possibility that later some other parts of the *Dzieje* could be proven or at least considered as a more or less probable possibility for modern scholarly interpretations.

The most significant scholarly research in the field of early Lithuanian history had started in the late nineteenth century in Poland. Besides the patriotic aspirations which most of the history writing of the period had, it also gave valuable studies among which the first monograph of Mindaugas by Juliusz Latkowski,[30] is one of fundamental works for the history of the thirteenth-century in spite of more than a hundred years that passed since its first edition. This period should also be distinguished for the first source publications and source criticism Henryk Paszkiewicz and Antoni Prochaska being the major figures in the field. To summarise, during the last decades of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century Polish historiography developed into a scholarly school of historical research, forming the

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[28] The following works were essentially based on Koialowicz: P. Paprocki, *Domowe wiadomości o Wielkiem Xięstwie Litewskim z przyłączniem historyi tegoż narodu przedrukowane* [The domestic evidence about the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with attachement of reprinted history of the same poeple] (Vilnius, 1763); August Ludvig Schlözer, *Geschichte von Littauen, als einem eigenen Grossfürstentume, bis zum J. 1569* (Göttingen, 1776).

[29] Teodoras Narbutas in Lithuanian.

[30] Juliusz Latkowski, *Mendog król Litewski* [Mindaugas the Lithuanian king] (Cracow, 1892).

background for the whole pre-Second World War historiography,[31] in general, and particularly for the research carried out at Vilnius Stefan Batory University.[32]

Parallelly with Polish scholarship, at the beginning of the century, the first studies of Lithuanian authors appeared. Most of them were originally written as dissertations at various foreign universities,[33] thus, contributing to the international scholarly research on the issue.

After the Second World War, the history of medieval Lithuania became a issue of international scholarship; however, it also reflected political tendencies of the period. Among the scholars working in the West Zenonas Ivinskis and his *History of Lithuania*[34] should be noted. As for the Soviet scholarship, essential is Vladimir T. Pashuto's study on the beginnings of the Lithuanian state,[35] which despite Marxist schemes is based on the elaborately scrutinised primary sources. Modern Lithuanian scholarship is quite extensive in publications concerning Mindaugas and his time; however the most significant are works by Edvardas Gudavičius,[36] The author is distinguished for his attentive and consistent examination of the sources, and constant

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[31] E.g., Witold Kamieniecki, *Geneza państwa Litewskiego* [The development of the Lithuanian state] (Warsaw, 1915) and *Rozwój własności na Litwie w dobie przed I Statutem* [The development of estates in Lithuania during the period before the First Statute] (Cracow, 1914).

[32] Henryk Łowmianski, *Studja nad początkami spolczeństwa i państwa Litewskiego* [A study on the beginnings of the Lithuanian society and state], vol. 1-2 (Vilnius: Towarzystwo Przyjaciól Nauk w Wilnie, 1931-1932); S. Zajączkowski, *Dzieje Litwy pogańskiej do 1386 r.* [The history of pagan Lithuania, to the year 1386] (L'viv, 1930), and *Studya nad dziejami Żmudzi wieku XIII* [A study on the activities of Samogithia in the thirteenth century] (L'viv, 1925).

[33] A. Juška, "Le ralazzioni del re Mindaugas con la Chiesa Cattolica" (Diss. ad Lauream in Facultate Historiae Eccl. Pontificia Universitatis Gregoriana, Rome, 1948); Jonas Totoraitis, *Die Litauer unter dem König Mindowe bis zum Jahre 1263* (Fribourg/ Switzerland, 1905).

[34] Ivinskis, "Karalius Mindaugas ir jo palikimas" [King Mindaugas and his heritage], in *Lietuvos istorija*, 154-210.

[35] Vladimir T. Pashuto, *Obrazovanije Litovskogo gosudarstva* [The formation of the Lithuanian state] (Moscow: Nauka, 1959), henceforth this study is referred to an updated Lithuanian translation: V. Pašuta, *Lietuvos valstybes susidarymas* [The formation of the Lithuanian state] (Vilnius: Mintis, 1971).

[36] The following studies are considered essential for the inquiry of the thesis: Edvardas Gudavičius, "1219 metu sutarties dalyviai ir ju vaidmuo suvienijant Lietuvą" [The participants of the 1219 Peace Treaty and their role in consolidation of Lithuania], *Lietuvos TSR Aukštuju mokyklu mokslo darbai: Istorija* 22 (1982): 33-46, henceforth *Istorija*; "Ar Treniota žemaičiu kunigaikštis?" [Was Treniota a Samogithian duke?], *Lietuvos TSR Mokslu Akademijos darbai: Serija A* 4 (1982): 63-70, henceforth *MADA*; *Kryžiaus karai Pabaltijyje ir Lietuva XIII amžiuje* [The Baltic Crusade and Lithuania during the thirteenth century] (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1989).

questioning of accepted scholarly concepts, thus providing new light on single historical facts and their context. However, in spite of the high scholarly value of Gudavičius' studies they are not widely used by the foreign reader because of the language barrier.

English language scholarship is not extensive; however, several works should be noted. The book by James Muldoon,[37] placed thirteenth-century Lithuanian events into the broader context of Church activities and legislation. The studies by Stephen C. Rowell[38] predominantly concerning the history of the fourteenth-century Lithuania and Michał Giedroyć[39] dealing with the heathen period of the Lithuanian history, contributed to the English language scholarship introducing and defining the specific terminology and scrutinising earlier neglected issues. William L. Urban, the author who consistently investigates Baltic Crusade, has recently published a summary work[40] encompassing results of his earlier studies.[41]

Despite relatively abundant scholarship on early Lithuanian history in general, only several recent articles are relevant to the theme of this thesis: on the crown of Mindaugas by Mychajlo Hocij, on the ceremony of coronation by Zenonas Ivinskis,[42] and on the relations between the Livonian Order and the coronation by Manfred

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[37] James Muldoon, *Popes Lawyers and Infidels: The Church and the Non-Christian World, 1250-1550* (Philadelphia: University of Pensilvania Press, 1979).

[38] Stephen C. Rowell, "A pagan's word: Lithuanian diplomatic procedure 1200-1385," *Journal of Medieval History* 18 (1992): 145-60; "Between Lithuania and Rus': Dovmont-Timofey of Pskov, his Life and Cult," *Oxford Slavonic Papers* (1992): 1-33; *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295 - 1345* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[39] Michał Giedroyć, "The Arrival of Christianity in Lithuania: Early Contacts (Thirteenth Century)," *Oxford Slavonic Papers* 18 (1985): 1-30; and "The Rulers of the Thirteenth-Century Lithuania: a Search for the Origin of Traidenis and his Kin," *Oxford Slavonic Papers* 17 (1984): 1-22.

[40] William L. Urban, *The Baltic Crusade*. 2d ed., revised and enlarged (Chicago: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1994)

[41] Urban, *The Samogitian Crusade* (Chicago: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 1989); and "The Teutonic Order and the Christianisation of Lithuania," in *Cristianizzazione*, 105-35.

[42] This article was also pubished in Lithuanian "Mindaugas ir jo karuna. Kritiškos pastabos septyniu šimtmečiu (1253-1953) perspektyvoje" [Mindaugas and his crown: critical remarks from the perspective of seven hundred years (1253-1953)], *Aidai* 1, 2 (1954): 1-8, 55-59.

10

Hellmann,[43] all published in *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 3 (1954). Although these publications were written by prominent scholars, they are influenced by the realities of post-war politics and by their dedication to the 700th anniversary of the coronation. Edvardas Gudavičius' conference paper, concerning the political problems connected with the Lithuanian Kingdom[44] should be indicating as enlightening dating and factography of the period. In addition, Antoni Prochaska's study on the coronations of Mindaugas and Danylo Romanovych,[45] although published in 1905, still remains the only comparative and contextual work on the theme.

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[43] Zenonas Ivinskis, "Mindaugas und seine Krone"; Manfred Hellmann, "Der Deutshen Orden und die Köningskrönung des Mindaugas"; Mychajlo Hocij, "Die Krone des Mindaugas," *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 3 (1954): 360-86; 387-96; 397-415.

[44] Gudavičius, "Polityczny problem królewstwa litewskiego w połowie XIII w." [The political problem of the Lithuanian Kingdom in the middle of the thirteenth century], in *Ekspansja niemieckich zakon ów rycerskich w strefie Bałtyku od XIII do polowy XIV wieku. Materialy konferencji historyków radzieckich i polskich w Toruniu z r. 1988* [The expansion of German military orders in the Baltics from the thirteenth to the mid fourteenth century. Materials of the conference of Soviet and Polish historians, Toruń, 1988], ed. Marian Biskup (Toruń: Instytut Historii PAN, Zakład Historii Pomorza, 1990), 61-84.

[45] Antoni Prochaska, "Dwie koronacye" [The two coronations], *Przegląd Historyczny* 1 (1905): 184-208, 372-93.

11

CHAPTER I. MINDAUGAS: ESTABLISHING THE MONARCHIC RULE[46]

SITUATION BEFORE 1219

The foundation of the Lithuanian state dates back, formally, to the middle of the thirteenth century with the emergence of the Lithuanian Kingdom under the rule of Mindaugas,[47] the first and the only king of the country,[48] although the intensive shift towards statehood can be observed from the end of the twelfth century. These years are marked by the growth of Lithuanian military capacity or, more precisely, by the change from political passivity to an activeness that created the image of Lithuania as a powerful military force.[49] Scholars usually name this period the confederation of the lands. The first persons named in the sources are the leaders of this kind of actions, and presumably they also were sovereigns over some territories.

Edvardas Gudavičius noticed that because of the frequency and success of Lithuanian military actions early thirteenth-century sources record an increase in size and strength of Lithuania.[50] This image of a huge Lithuania was first mentioned in the Ruthenian narratives, since their lands were the targets for Lithuanian attacks,[51] and it spread as far as to the mid-thirteenth-century English geographical treatises.[52] Due to

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[46] The following chapter is predominantly based on the following studies: Pašuta and Gudavičius, "1219 metu," 33-46; id., "Del lietuviu žemiu konfederacijos susidarymo laiko" [About the time of formation of the confederation of Lithuanian lands], *Istorija* 24 (1984): 12-28; "Del Lietuvos valstybes kurimosi centro ir laiko" [About the center and the time of formation of the Lithuanian state], *MADA* 2 (1983): 61-69.

[47] Mindaugas is the Lithuanian name commonly used in Lithuanian scholarship and in modern English language publications, e.g., see studies published by the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, Chicago. *Midog* as he was first mentioned in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*; *Mindowe, Mindot* in Latin and German (in the latter, also *Mindowgs*), *Mendog* in Polish. On a lead seal attributed to him, the name in Cyrillic is spelled as *Mingdov*, see Pašuta, 224.

[48] The king's title was used by the Lithuanian rulers and attributed to them, e.g., Grand Duke Gediminas calls himself *letwinorum et multorum ruthenorum rex* (*Gedimino laiškai* [Gediminas' letters], ed. V. Pašuta [Pashuto] and I. Štal [Shtal'] (Vilnius: Mintis, 1966), no. 2, 23, henceforth, *GL*), *dei gratia letphinorum ruthenorumque rex, princeps et dux Semigallie* (ibid., no. 3, 29), and is adressed *Gedimine, letwinorum et multorum ruthenorum regi illustri* (ibid., no. 12, 91); however, Mindaugas was the only formally crowned king of the country, thus, the title "king of Lithuania" henceforth referres exclusively to Mindaugas.

[49] Gudavičius, "Del lietuviu," 15.

[50] Id., "1219 metu," 34.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

the lack of contemporaneous Lithuanian sources, there is no direct evidence about the system of governance in these territories, although it could be assumed that such a terrorising of the neighbours could only be carried out by well organised structures. Two directions of Lithuanian incursions can be observed: south-eastern, to the Slavic territories of Black and Red Ruthenia, and a northern, reaching as far as Saaremaa[53] Island.[54] Ruthenian sources record the Lithuanian raids and their temporary alliances with local authorities; the Baltic neighbours, except the Semgallians, experienced a kind of Lithuanian hegemony, which was manifested in constant minor pillaging attacks, and wider military incursions.[55]

The general focus of this thesis requires an inquiry into the heathen sovereign military leadership. Henry's *Livonian Chronicle*[56] record that military and political actions under the leadership of Dangerutis and Stekse[57] were quite intensive, and after the death of these leaders a kind of "interregnum" appeared.[58] Dangerutis' story is relevant to the theme: he initiated peace with Mstislav the Bold of Novgorod and on the way back was taken prisoner by the Livonian Knights. He was released later but his former Lithuanian subjects did not recognise his leadership thus causing his suicide.[59] Apparently, Dangerutis was one of the leaders of the land confederation although his primacy was not based on inheritance and tradition but on his enactment of power: as soon as became ineffectual, he was abandoned. The lack of single-person leadership is

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[53] Saaremaa is original Estonian name, *Osilia* in Latin, *Oesil, Ösil* in German. Henceforth Saaremaa is used as a geographical term and Oesil refers to a bishopric established there.

[54] Gudavičius, "Del lietuviu," 17, 19.

[55] Ibid., 19.

[56]*Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*, parallel translation into German by Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer (Würzburg: Holzner, 1959); see also English translation: *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, translated by James A. Brundage (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961).

[57] *Dangeruthe* and *Stecse* in Latin.

[58] Gudavičius, "Del lietuviu," 24-27.

[59] *Eo tempore Dangeruthe, pater uxoris regis Vissewalde, cum muneribus multis ibat ad regem magnum Nogardie, pacis cum eo federa componens. Qui in reversione sua captus est a fratribus milicie et ductus est in Wenden et proiectus in vincula. Et tenebatur ibidem diebus multis, donec venirent quidam de Letonia de amicis eus ad eum. Post haec gladio se ipsum perforavit, Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*, 168.

well reflected in the 1219 Peace Treaty,[60] signed not only by five senior dukes but also by the representatives of the clans.

To summarise: at the beginning of the thirteenth century, there were successful attempts at sovereign rule in the Lithuanian minor duchies, and there are instances of political coalescence among the rulers; however, such a leadership could not yet be called dynastic because there is no evidence that after the death of Dangerutis and Stekse either of their positions was occupied by an heir.

The Rise of Mindaugas

The establishment of the Lithuanian Kingdom, as was mentioned earlier, was preceded by the consolidation of the lands. For the inquiry of this study, Mindaugas' way to the position of the king is decisive. Further, the chronologically arranged extracts from the primary sources bearing evidence about Mindaugas are presented in order to illustrate his path to the throne.

First time Mindaugas was mentioned in the *Galician Volhynian Chronicle* in 1219,[61] together with other dukes, representatives of Lithuanian lands, participants of the peace treaty with the Duchy of Galicia and Volhynia. Five of the dukes, and Mindaugas among them, were introduced as senior.[62] The way Mindaugas is presented in the treaty can be considered as reflecting his position among the other representatives of the Lithuanian lands: he appears the fourth in the list of the senior dukes and is introduced as the brother of Dausprungas.[63] This second place of Mindaugas, suggests that Dausprungas was more important and probably older,

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[60] *PLDR*, 252-53. The chronicle ascribes the event to the year 1215, although Juliusz Latkowski proved that the agreement had been signed in 1219. See Latkowski, 13.

[61] *PLDR*, 252-53.

[62] Actually it is not absolutely clear from the text whether the word literary translated as senior (*starejshej* in Old Slavonic), meaning "of higher status," is in plural or in singular. In the latter case this word does not apply to Mindaugas. See *Lietuvos TSR istorijos šaltiniai* [The sources of the history of Lithuanian SSR], ed. K. Jablonskis, et al., vol. 1, *Feodalinis laikotarpis* [The feudal period] (Vilnius: Valstybine politines ir mokslines literaturos leidykla, 1955), 34, henceforth *LIŠ*. However, it is commonly accepted in the scholarship that the term applies to all of the five dukes.

[63] *Dovsprunk, brat ego Midog, PLDR*, 252.

meaning an actual or potential heir, of the patrimony, if the general pattern of heredity rights is assumed to be valid in Lithuanian society of the period.[64] On the other hand, there is no contemporary evidence about the father of Mindaugas,[65] except the note in the speech of the Samogithian envoys at the court of Mindaugas: "Your father was a great king, and / during his lifetime he had no equal."[66]

Two pairs of brothers, Dausprungas and Mindaugas, Daujotas and Vilikaila,[67] as they appear in the list of the senior dukes demonstrate that there were young and fatherless sons more or less equal among themselves, and the note about the deceased Lithuanian leaders Dangerutis (d. 1213) and Stekse (d. 1214)[68] in Henry's *Livonian Chronicle*, seem to have a possibility of a relation, nevertheless, there is no evidence in the sources to prove the link between them.[69]

The next record dated to 1235 in the sources referring to Mindaugas is also from the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*.[70] Although episodic, this information received a lot of scholarly attention: in the description of the alliance between Duke of Galicia Danylo Romanovych and Mindaugas against Konrad of Mazovia, there is a phrase "Lithuania of Mindaugas."[71] This phrase, in contrast to earlier scholarship,[72] cannot be interpreted as signifying the state under the rule of Mindaugas. Nevertheless, it is worth attention because, as Edvardas Gudavičius had pointed, that if there was a

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[64] There is no evidence in the contemporary sources that the patrimonial land was divided among the sons, although the story about Grand Duke Gediminas dividing the Grand Duchy of Lithuania among his sons, dating from 1341 (*LIŠ* 1, 69) does not deny such a possibility. However, analysing the land property of pre-Christian Lithuania Edvardas Gudavičius conludes that at the beginning of the thirteenth century, there was no feudal lordship, see Gudavičius, "Aukščiausia žemes nuosavybe 'barbarineje' Lietuvoje" [The highest form of land possession in the 'barbaric' Lithuania], *Istorija* 23 (1983): 11.

[65] The note about Ringaudas in the *Bykhovec Chronicle* is not under consideration here.

[66] *LRCh*, 79.

[67] *Davjat, [...],brat Dovjalov Vilikail*, PLDR, 252.

[68] The dates of the leaders' death are indicated as established in Gudavičius, "Del lietuviu," 26-27.

[69] Gudavičius, "Del lietuviu," 27.

[70] *PLDR*, 288-89.

[71] *Po tom zhe lete Danil zhe vozvede na Kondrata litvu Mindoga*, PLDR, 288. The parallel Russian translation reads "Mindaugas' lithuanians," ibid., 289. And this interpretation is very probable; however, it also indicates Mindaugas' authority over some part of Lithuanians.

[72] Ivinskis, *Lietuvos istorija*, 155.

need to note the Lithuania of Mindaugas, there must have existed the non-Mindaugas' Lithuania.[73] This record is significant as demonstrating Mindaugas' "steps" towards the power: as it was discussed in connection with the 1219 Treaty, Mindaugas appears in the political scene as a brother of Dausprungas, consequently, it could be assumed that Dausprungas was to inherit the principal part of the patrimony. However, the phrase "Lithuania of Mindaugas" and disappearance of Dausprungas from the sources suggest that around 1235 Mindaugas became a sovereign over his father's lands, the minor duchy of Lithuania,[74] and had military units under his control.

In the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* Mindaugas, introduced as the king of Lithuania, appears for the first time in the description of the siege of Embute at the end of 1244,[75] which he had lost, paying "a heavy price in friends / and relatives."[76] Soon after this passage, probably in the mid-1245, there is a story of Lengvenis[77] told in great detail. Lengvenis was one of the minor dukes, a son of Mindaugas' sister.[78] He was at war with the neighbouring Lithuanian lands which belonged to the brothers Tučius, Milgrynas, and Gineika,[79] and "he was held in great honour by [...] King Mindaugas" and "eventually Lengewin won [...] his / support."[80] Aware that Mindaugas plans an attack, the brothers fled to the Livonian master, were baptised and

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[73] Gudavičius, "1219 metu," 35-36.

[74] There could be a confusion bout the term "Lithuania," because being a general name for both principal part of the country, Aukštaitija [Upland] and Žemaitija-Samogithia [Lowland], it also refers to the Lithuanian minor duchy, or Lithuania in the strict sense, Mindaugas' patrimony. However, used in a sense of the state, it also reffers to the Black Ruthenia, under Mindaugas rule. The term Grand Duchy of Lithuania is used to denote the state after Mindaugas' death in 1263.

[75] *Amboten* in German. Hereafter, the dating of battles and other military events is based on "Chronologine lentele" [The chronological table], appended to E. Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 177-82, 179. The palcenames having no commonly accepted English version, henceforth are used in the Lithuanian transcription, indicating the other versions in a footnote.

[76] *LRCh*, 36.

[77] *Lengewin* in German; *Languinus* in Latin, *Lonkogveni* in Old Slavonic.

[78] *Languinus sororius noster*, *PUB* 1.2, no. 106, 93.

[79] *Tusche, Milgerin, Gineike* in German. A remark concerning the "nationality" of the brothers should be made: in the *Rhymed Chronicle* they are named Lithuanians (*LRCh*, 39); however, William Urban name them Semgallians (Urban, *The Samogitian Crusade*, 182) and this error is spread in the English language scholarship, e.g., William Sayers, "Scapulimancy in the Medieval Baltic," *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 23.1 (Spring, 1992): 57.

[80] *LRCh*, 38.

16

joint the service of the Livonian Order. The story told to the master is worth attention: the brothers said that "a king seeks with all his might to drive us from our land" and the author mentions that "they had broken / honourably with their king, and he was furious. They were / determined to drive out Mindaugas and Lengewin, and so, there being no other way to save themselves, they turned to the Christians."[81] This episode, can be interpreted as the first evidence on Mindaugas' attemts to subordinate Lithuanian lands under his rule. Already having power over the Lithuanian duchy in 1235, Mindaugas started occupying and subjecting the neighbouring territories. The story, told in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, indicates that the subjecting in this case was carried out with the help of Lengvenis, to whom Mindaugas was a maternal uncle. Moreover, as an ally of Mindaugas, Lengvenis became an important person as it is seen from the description of his imprisonment in Riga[82]: he was considered one of the "best men of the heathen,"[83] "The Master accepted the prisoner Lengewin, as was proper,"[84] and he was not kept in prison, as he "sat at the table eating with the Brothers."[85] Moreover, Lengvenis is highly valued by his friends (Mindaugas ?) who had ransomed him by "paying five hundred coins."[86] Ransomed Lengvenis is again an ally of Mindaugas: he renews wars against the order and avenges his brother's murder,[87] later he is mentioned at war in Black Ruthenia,[88] and is included in the list of witnesses of a forgery issued in the name of Mindaugas.[89]

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[81] Ibid., 39.

[82] For the full story about the war against Lengvenis and his capture, see *LRCh*, 40.

[83] *LRCh*, 40.

[84] Ibid., 41.

[85] Ibid., 42. The record of scapulimancy is scrutinesed in Sayers, 57-62.

[86] *LRCh*, 43.

[87] On the murdered brother, see ibid., 42. Lengvenis avenged his brother by sacrifice of a captive Livonian Brother, ibid., 43.

[88] *PLDR*, 306-07.

[89] *PUB* 1.2, no.106, 93.

However, several years later, Mindaugas rule over the Lithuanian duchy was endangered by the claims of his nephews, Tautvila and Eidivydas.[90] According to the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, Mindaugas expelled Tautvila and Eidivydas sending them together with their uncle Vykintas[91] to war in the area of Smolensk and ordering to possess those lands that they were to conquer. Moreover, Mindaugas sent his warriors after the nephews, aiming to kill them. As the latter realised this manoeuvre, they ran to the Romanovych Dukes of Galicia-Volhynia, Danylo and Vasyl'ko. Mindaugas also sent his envoys to Danylo asking not to show mercy towards them, however, due to the fact that the sister of Tautvila and Eidivydas was married to Danylo, the Galician-Volhynian Dukes rejected Mindaugas' request.[92] This extremely important story provides a possible explanation to the earlier notion of "Lithuania of Mindaugas." There is no evidence to prove that Tautvila and Eidivydas were the sons of Dausprungas, however, it is a scholarly accepted guess[93]: Dausprungas disappeared from the sources after the 1219 Treaty; if this disappearance is equated with death, probably Mindaugas started ruling also over his brother's lands, thus, became the ruler of the whole Lithuanian duchy; the conflicts between Tautvila, Eidivydas and Mindaugas suggest that they were no longer minors, therefore claimed their father's lands. Their sister's marriage with Danylo Romanovych, indicates the high status of the nephews and Mindaugas' brother. Besides that, one more detail from the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* requires attention: it is said that after the expulsion of the nephews Mindaugas seized the whole Lithuanian land, his nephews' estates and their wealth.[94] This passage demonstrates that the ruler of Lithuania of 1235, actually, did not possess the wealth and estates of the whole Lithuania. As for the other person,

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[90] *Tevtevil* (also *Tautvilas* in Lithuanian)and *Edivid* in Old Slavonic.

[91] *Vykint* in Old Slavonic, first appeared in the list of the Samogithian dukes in 1219 Treaty.

[92] *PLDR*, 320-21.

[93] The first to interpret so was Zenonas Ivinskis, Gudavičius, "1219 metu," 37.

[94] *Vrazhboju bo za vorozh'stvo s nimi litvu zaja, pojmana bie vsia zemlia Litovskaja i beshchislenoje imenije ikh pritrano bogatstvo ikh, PLDR*, 320.

18

uncle Vykintas, mentioned in the context of the expulsion, was most probably is the brother of Tautvila and Eidivydas' mother, meaning their maternal uncle and an ally.[95]

Concluding the paragraph, it can be stated that the aforedescribed events show that Mindaugas was only a temporary "ruler of Lithuania" in 1235 was urged to pass the lands to his nephews as they became adults. Only then did Mindaugas become a possessor of the Lithuanian duchy when the nephews were physically expelled from their lands.

The conflict between Mindaugas and Tautvila, Eidivydas, Vykintas, with the support of the Galician-Volhynian Dukes Danylo and Vasyl'ko, developed into a inner war of 1248-1252.[96] Vykintas became an envoy of the anti-Mindaugas alliance, he bribed the Yatvigians[97] and half of Samogithia and made the agreement on Danylo's behalf with the German Knights of Riga to support Tautvila.[98] The alliance with the help of the Germans started long wars against Mindaugas.[99] Finally, Tautvila arrived to Riga with Danylo's captives, was received there with great honour and baptised.[100] When Mindaugas realised that the bishop and the Lord's Knights[101] and all warriors of Riga, were on the side of Tautvila, he sent costly presents to Master Andreas,[102] asking either to kill or to expel Tautvila. The master suggested that the only way to defeat the

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[95] Assuming that Tautvila and Eidivydas most probably were Dausprungas' sons, the facts that Dausprungas married sister of one of the most powerfull Samogithian Dukes Vykintas, and that his daughter was married to Danylo of Galicia, once more demonstrate Dausprungas' superior position in comparison to that of Mindaugas, Gudavičius, "1219 metu," 35.

[96] For a camps of the both sides and principle military activities, see table "Lietuva per 1248 - 1252 m. vidaus karą" [Lithuania during the inner war of 1242-1252] in Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 98-99.

[97] Yatvigians, sometimes Jatvigians or Yatvygians in English, *Jotvingiai* in Lithuanian, *Jaćwięgi* in Polish, *Jatviaz'* in Old Slavonic. The extinct south-eastern Baltic tribe.

[98] *PLDR*, 320.

[99] *i mnogoe voevanie byst' mezhi imi*, *PLDR*, 322.

[100] Ibid.

[101] *Bozhii dvorianie*, ibid.

[102] Andreas von Stierland is sometimes also referred as von Felben.

enemy is to send envoys to the pope and to be baptised, adding that he is friendly to Mindaugas.[103] Mindaugas acted according to the master's advice and was baptised.[104]

Tautvila was supported by the Bishop of Riga, Albert Suarbeer.[105] Later he fled to Samogithia to his uncle Vykintas and together with Yatvigians, Samogitians and Danylo's help raided against Mindaugas.[106] They besieged Mindaugas' castle of Voruta, Mindaugas with the help of his unidentified brother in law attempted to ruin their plans, but failed; there was an open-field battle during which Mindaugas was supported by the Germans, obviously the Livonian Knights. After this battle Tautvila returned to Samogithia to Vykintas' castle in Tverai[107] and there was another open-field battle in which Mindaugas was wounded and had to leave for his own land.[108]

The records about Lengvenis in the *Rhymed Chronicle* and inner wars in the Galician-Volhynian, are the only facts illustrating Mindaugas' necrology presented in the latter. According to the Galician chronicler/s, Mindaugas started killing and expelling his brothers and their sons in order to rule alone.[109] Though, it remains unclear who exactly were these "brothers and their sons,"[110] both examples and the description of Mindaugas' way towards the power, indicating its technical means,

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[103] *Nie mozheshi izbavlen byti ashche ne posleshi k papie priimeshi kreshchenija, ne odoleshi vragu. Druzhbu imju k tebe, PLDR, 322.*

[104] Ibid.

[105] Albert Suerbeer (end of 12th c., Cologne - November, 1272/March, 1273, Riga). According to the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, the bishop supported Tautvila because he knew that if Tautvila had not been expelled the Lithuanian land would have been theirs and would have been forced to accept Christianity, *PLDR*, 322.

[106] Ibid.

[107] *Tvirement* in Old Slavonic.

[108] *zastrieli koch polovchin Mindogova v stegno* (*PLDR*, 322) in the parallel Russian translation: *polovchin popal streloj v bedro Mindovgova konia* (ibid., 323), although it is hard to believe that because of a wounded horse Mindaugas left the battle.

[109] *Byst' kniaziashchy emu v zemli Litovskoj, u nacha izbivati brat'ju i synovtsie svoi, a drugija vygna i zemlie, i nacha kniazhiti odin vo vcej zemlie Litov'skoj, PLDR,* 356.

[110] Edvardas Gudavičius, concluding that Mindaugas did not murder Dausprungas (Gudavičius, "1219 metu," 37), proposed that Mindaugas' characterisation as a fratricide was the result of the the 1290-1293 editing of the *Chronicle*, i.e., inserted by the people who were not the contemporaries of the events of the past and recorded a commonly known characteristic of Mindaugas (ibid., 45); however, it should be noted that the word "brother" can also mean kinsman, according to Gudavičius, "Ar Treniota," 63.

expulsion and assassination, does not refer to a hereditary right of such a rule, moreover these means demonstrate the shortcoming of this right.[111]

The way Mindaugas comes into the power could prove that he reaches the state of a sovereign from the position of a powerful, but the outsider among those to rule. However, relying on his kinsmen, the closest known of whom is his sister's son, Lengvenis, and probably other further relatives as wellas on Livonian military resources establishes a sovereign rule over Lithuania.

THE BAPTISM

Most probably at the beginning of the year 1251 Mindaugas was baptised a Catholic.[112] As already mentioned, the main stimulus for this was his rivary with Tautvila, and the fact that the latter was supported by the Archbishop of Riga, Albert Suerbeer. Both *Chronicles* suggest that initiator of this baptism was Master Andreas von Stierland.[113] As it appears from the subsequent events, the baptism was the precondition of the negotiations between Mindaugas and the Livonian Order. Interpreting the records of the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*,[114] Edvardas Gudavičius argued that Mindaugas was baptised in order to be recognised as the ruler of Lithuania and thus, officially start negotiations.[115]

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[111] Although, the later sources mention his father Ringaudas, despite that the father is not mentioned or referred to in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, Michał Giedroyć tries to prove him to have been a Grand Duke, M.Giedroyć, "The Rulers," 5-6, the author's argmentation is not convincing exactly because it neglects the way that Mindaugas gained the power.

[112] Ivinskis, *Lietuvos istorija*, 170.

[113] *LRCh*, 47-48; *PLDR*, 322-23.

[114] *PLDR*, 322-23.

[115] At that time, Lithuania was quite a big and powerful territory in comparison to those inhabited by the other Baltic tribes, and rather distant from Livonia, to maintain constant wars with. Even a secondary Lithuanian leader such as Lengvenis, and a political outsider such as Tautvila, were treated with respect in Riga, meaning that generally Lithuania was an enemy deserving of respect. That is why Mindaugas' initiatives for the alliance were taken seriously, Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 100.

Mindaugas' step was successful: he received Livonian military help in the battle of Voruta; his embassy,[116] under the leadership of Parbus[117] was received by Pope Innocent IV. The papal letter issued on 17 July, 1251 reads that Mindaugas was baptised *cum numerosa multitudine paganorum* and through *speciales nuncios* was asking to be admitted *in filium specialem sancte Romane ecclesie*.[118] The pope satisfied the request and subordinated Lithuania together with all the lands Mindaugas was to acquire in the future *in ius et proprietatem beati Petri*,[119] meaning that the country became a juridically recognised European state with a Christian ruler.

Although papal documents refer to a high number of heathens who received baptism together with Mindaugas,[120] the protections of the papacy concerned only Mindaugas and his family.[121] Thus, in contrast to eraly medieval practice when a baptism of a ruler meant Christianisation of the country, the baptism of Mindaugas meant an "international" legalisation of Lithuania as a heathen country under Christian rule.[122]

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[116] The papal letter reads: *per solemnes ac speciales nuncios nobis humiliter supplicasti*, *VMPL* 1, no. 102, 49.

[117] In the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* the envoy's name is spelled Parnus: "Parnus, a man who was a wise counsellor" (*LRCh*, 48); however, he probably is the same person mentioned as a witness in a Mindaugas land grant as *Parbs: Parbsen, fideli nostro* (*LUB* 1, no. 263, 345); and later as *Parbusse* together with *Parbusse iunior* (*PUB* 1.2, no. 106, 93). The two characterisations seem similar, therefore it is assumed that the *Chronicle* and the documents mention the same person. As Parbus should be an original Lithuanian name, so it is used in modern Lithuanian scholarship.

[118] *VMPL* 1, no. 102, 49.

[119] Ibid.

[120] E.g., *numerosa paganorum multitudo sibi subdita christiane professionis titulo decoretur* (*VMPL* 1, no. 101); *cum numerosa multitudine paganorum ad gloriam divini nominis regenerari se fecit per unde gratiam baptismalis* (ibid., no. 105, 50); *cum numerosa infidelium multitudine* (ibid., no. 106, 50).

[121] *ea [Mindaugas] cum ... uxore, filiis et familia tuis sub protectione ac devotione sedis apostolice permanere sancimus*, ibid., no. 102, 49.

[122] Actually, Innocent IV did not deny that a Christian ruler could possess a *dominium* inhabited by heathens, Muldoon, 45-47.

The most important function of this baptism was that it directly lead to Mindaugas' coronation. The papal bull addressed to Bishop Heidenreich[123] of Culm, entitling him to be Mindaugas' coronator is dated with the same day 17 July, 1251.

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[123] Dominincan friar, Bishop Heidenreich (d. 29 June 1263, Culm, Chełmno in Poland). In the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* he is referred to as Henry of Prussia, *LRCh*, 48

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CHAPTER II. THE CORONATION OF KING MINDAUGAS, JULY 6, 1253[124]

THE CONTEXT

The coronation of King Mindaugas was the *de iure* foundation of a Lithuanian state and the certification of its international recognition. Implicitly, together with the crown, Lithuania received the framework of a Western-Christian-type state. The political aspects of the coronation are widely scrutinised in the Lithuanian sholars, but the act of coronation, the first recorded Western royal ceremony held in Lithuania, has not received sufficient attention.

For the study of such a ritual, the following aspects are relevant: 1) the *coronatus/a*, the future king and/or queen; 2) the *coronator*, a traditionally authorised high ecclesiastic, a representative of the pope or the emperor; 3) royal insignia, the signs of the coronation; all three bound together by 4) the ordines, the script for the ceremony, being held at 5) the sacred space, usually a cathedral. During a coronation, as Jacques LeGoff noted, a king passes from one state of already being a king to another.[125] The ceremony is meant to transform the *electus* or *haeres* into the *Dei gratia rex*. Regarding the case of King Mindaugas, the primary sources do not supply evidence for several of these aspects. Moreover, his coronation is only an episode inhistory which neither stemmed from, nor resulted in tradition. Nevertheless, an attempt to make a scholarly construction based on a comparative study of what this coronation might have been like, is possible and perhaps useful.

First of all, both Mindaugas' baptism and coronation were political events aimed above all at foreign policy, combined with the reception of Western models of

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[124] July 6 (less probable July 13) as the date of the coronation was established by Edvardas Gudavič-ius. See Gudavičius, "Polityczny," 69. Therefore, the dating of the coronation to 1252, as proposed in Jan Powierski, "Świętopełk gdański i Kazimierz kujawsko-łęczycki w rywalizacji z Zakonem Krzy żackim o ziemie bałtyjskie w latach 1250 - połowa 1252" [Świętopełk of Gdansk and Kazimierz of Kujawy-Łęczyca in their antagonism with the Teutonic Order concerning the lands of the Balts, 1250-1252], *Rocznik Gdański* 41/1 (1981): 80-81, and repeated in Krzysztof Stopka, "Próby christianizacji Litwy w latach 1248-1263" [The attempts to Christianise Lithuania during the years 1248-1263], *Analecta Cracoviensia* 19 (1987): 23 et passim, is misleading.

[125] Jacques LeGoff, "A Coronation Program to the Age of Saint Louis: The Ordo of 1250," in *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual*, ed János M. Bak (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 48; henceforth *Coronations*.

royal ceremony and insignia. It was a response to different interests: on the one hand, Innocent IV sought to expand the Catholic commonwealth and strengthen it in the face of the Tartar threat[126]; on the other hand, Mindaugas attempted to secure his lands from the Teutonic Order taking root in Livonia and Prussia. At the same time, the papal legate Opizo[127] crowned Danylo Romanovych, an originally Orthodox[128] duke, king of Galicia for rather similar reasons. This coronation took place between 1253 and 1255[129] and is the closest parallel to that of Mindaugas. Unfortunately, there is even less evidence on Danylo's royal inauguration to allow a meaningful comparative analysis of the two events.

The primary sources contain no evidence about the details of the ceremony. Formally, a coronation is a part of the liturgy, usually a Mass, during which a person is crowned. It consists of verbal actions and gestures. The records about Mindaugas' coronation do not include any information about the verbal, that means the longer,

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[126] The Tartar cause of the coronations is widely discussed by Antoni Prochaska, "Dwie koronacye," 185-193, passim.

[127] Opizo [Oppiso], the abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St Paul in Mezzano, was nominated a papal legate for Prussia ca. 1245 (first mention in papal letter dating from 7 October, 1245, August Potthast, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum inde ab a. post Christum natum MCXCVIII ad a. MCCCIV,* vol. 2 (Berlin, 1875), no. 11925, 1012. He was active in the state of the Teutonic Knights during the first Prussian uprising. Opizo's mission was finished in autumn 1246, *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana,* ed. Joan Ptaśnik, vol. 3, *Analecta Vaticana 1202-1366* (Cracow, 1914), no. 48, 28, henceforth *MPV.* However, the pope nominated him legate in the bull *Contra tartartos et alios Paganos* dating from 17 May, 1253 (Potthast, no. 14975, 1233) and addressed to all Christians of Poland and also of Bohemia, Moravia, *Sarbia* [sic], Pomerania, and the Prussian lands; the same bull was repeated on 9 June, 1253, *VMPL* 1, no. 107, 51-52). He appears to be in Poland in November 1253 (*MPV* 3, no. 70, 38) and in 1254 during the cannonisation of St Stanislas in Cracow, *Monumenta Poloniae Historica,* ed. Augustin Bielowski, vol. 3 (L'viv, 1878), 22, henceforth *MPH.*

[128] Danylo was probably baptised a Catholic in 1246 as is seen from the letter of Pope Innocent IV, dating from 7 September, 1247, *LUB* 1, no. 145, 254.

[129] *The Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* ascribes the event to 1255 (*PLDR,* 330-31), though it is proved that the dating in the chronicle is not accurate and some dates are indicated with an error up to five years (ibid., 567). Moreover, the year 1255 is already the pontificate of Alexander IV. The Polish *Rocznik Krasińskich* [The Krasiński source] dates the event to the year 1253 (*MPH* 3, 132) and the period between the end of 1253 to sometime in 1254 is the limit of Danylo's coronation. Mychajlo Hrushevs'kij, basing his conclusions on the document of the partition of the lands of the Yatvigians dating from 24 November, 1254, where Danylo is named *Primus Rex Ruthenorum (Codex diplomaticus Poloniae..,* vol. 3, ed. Julian Bartoszewicz (Warsaw, 1858), no. 30, 63) assumes that the coronation must have been performed before the issuing of this document. It is probable that Danylo was crowned at the end of the year 1253, as there were no wars with the Tartars, Danylo could have started war against Yatvigians and Opizo's itinerary does not contradict such possibility, M. Hrushevs'kij, *Istorija Ukrainy - Rusi* [The history of Ukraine - Rus'], vol. 3, *Do roku 1340* [To the year 1340] (L'viv, 1905), 72-73.

part of the ceremony. One may add that *verba volant, gestus manent* style of records also holds true in Danylo's case. The only evidence of *verba* is in a bull of Alexander IV blaming the Galician ruler of breaking his oath to the Church. It is assumed that this refers to his coronation oath, a typical part of every *ordo*.[130] The direct records on the coronations provide the information only on the royal insignia (in Mindaugas' case the crown), the anointing with sacred oil, and the oath. Of the persons involved, the records for Lithuania name only the crowned and the coronators: Heidenreich,[131] Bishop of Culm, and Andreas von Stierland, Master of the Livonian Order.[132] As for the other participants of the ceremony there is no direct evidence,[133] although, there is one document of Mindaugas[134] which might provide some information. In July 1253 Mindaugas donated land to the Livonian Order. At the beginning of the document he names himself Mindowe, *Dei gratia rex Lettowiae*, thus indicating that the document, most probably, was issued after the coronation. Bishop Heidenreich and Master Andreas are named among the witnesses of the donation. As they were the coronators and there is no other evidence except the coronation for them both to be present in Lithuania at Mindaugas' court,[135] there is basis to relate the two events. The author of the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* also confirms the fact saying that after the coronation

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[130] Nicolas D. Chubaty attributes this oath to the period before the coronation, i.e., to 1247, the year of the union between the Churches in Galicia-Volhynia, Chubaty, *The History of Christianity in Rus'-Ukraine*, vol. 1, *The Ancient Period - to 1353* (Rome, New York: Ukrainian Catholic University Press, 1965), 626. However, it is more probable that the passage *prestiti iuramenti religione contempta, id quod circa obidientiam eiusdem Ecclesie ac predicte observationem fidei promisse dinosceris* (*Monumenta Ucrainae historica*, ed. Andreas Šeptyckyj, vol. 9-10, *(1075-1632)* (Rome: Editiones Universitatis Catolicae Ucrainorum S. Clementis Papae, 1971) no. 2, 3, henceforth *MUH*) refers to the oath during the coronation, as also does the whole paragraph of the bull.

[131] Bishop Heidenreich was nominated the coronator by the pope, *auctoritate nostra corones in Regem*, in a letter dating from 17 July, 1251, *VMPL* 1, no. 104, 50.

[132] The only evidence that Andreas von Stierland crowned Mindaugas is recorded in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, *LRCh*, 48, 81, 88.

[133] Zenonas Ivinskis assumed that the bishops of Curland (*Kurzeme* in Latvian, *Kuršas* in Lithuanian) and Oesil, who were to protect papal privileges of Mindaugas (*LUB* 1, no. 225, 284-85), might have assisted Bishop Heidenreich at the coronation, Ivinskis, "Mindaugas," 56.

[134] *LUB* 1, no. 152, 333-34.

[135] Both cocronators appear as witnesses of Mindaugas' document dating from July 1260 (*PUB* 1.2, no. 106, 91-93); however it is a proved forgery, Maleczyński, 33.

"the king rejoiced and gave / the Master documents, generously conferring upon him rich and / fertile lands in his kingdom."[136] On the basis of this background it might be argued that all the witnesses enumerated in the land grant, namely *dominus Culmensis episcopus, magister Andreas fratrum praedictorum et fratres sui Andreas, Iohannes pincerna, Sittherus dapifer et Theodoricus de Hassendorp, de fratribus praedicatoribus Sinderamus, de fratribus minoribus frater Adolfus et sui socii et alii quam plures*,[137] were guests and possibly the assistants of the coronation.

This hypothetical list of the witnesses/coronators/guests may offer an explanation for one obscure aspect of the event: Mindaugas' coronation is recorded in Lithuanian, Teutonic, and papal sources, whereas Ruthenian ones, despite their relatively informative story concerning Mindaugas' baptism,[138] are silent about the coronation. Rather accurate when dealing with Lithuanian events, author/s of the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* never named Mindaugas king, only duke, grand duke, and sovereign[139] of Lithuania. The aforementioned facts suggest that Mindaugas' coronation was arranged between Lithuania, the papacy, and the Teutonic Order, presumably in order to secure the country from the strengthening crusade.

An enlightening parallel for a coronation oriented towards foreign policy and aiming at security for the state, can be found in the case of Serbian ruler Stefan Prvovenchany who received the crown under similar circumstancies. Pressured by Hungary and crusaders and influenced by Venicians, Stefan was crowned king of Serbia by Pope Honorius III in 1217, thus gaining international recognition for his country and securing it from Latin interference.[140]

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[136] *LRCh*, 48.

[137] *LUB* 1, no. 152, 334.

[138] *PLDR*, 322-23.

[139] *Samoderzhec* in Old Slavonic.

[140] On Stefan's coronation, see Božidar Ferjančić, "Odbrana Neman'inog nasledja - Srbja postraje kral'evina" [Taking of the Neman'in heritage: Serbia becomes a kingdom], in *Istorija srpskog naroda* [The history of the Serbian people], vol. 1, *Od najstarijikh vremnna do Marichke bitke (1371)* [From tthe earliest times to the Marichka Battle (1371)], ed. Sima Čirković (Belgrade: Srpska Knizheva Zadruga, 1981), 127-314.

The Galician example points into a related, though slightly different example: Duke Danylo had been inaugurated three times before he received the crown from the pope. The *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* tells how he was recognised duke of Galicia being seated on his father's throne in the Orthodox church of Our Lady in Halych,[141] later became a vassal of the Golden Horde by drinking *kumis* with the Khan,[142] and then confirmed the alliance with the Hungarian king being dressed with the latter's clothes.[143] In this sense, receiving a papal crown was for Danylo and, probably, for Mindaugas a certification of an alliance with foreign powers achieved by the participation in an appropriate ritual of inauguration/confirmation.[144]

The question is, how this ritual was performed in the Lithuanian case. The coronation came from the side of the papacy and was authorised by the pope in 1251, after having been informed by Parbus that Mindaugas was baptised. In the letter written on 17 July, 1251, Innocent IV nominated Bishop Heidenreich to be the coronator saying *auctoritate nostra corones in Regem.*[145] This phrase and the sentence *in die igitur, qua per ministerium venerabilis patris domini H., Culmensi episcopi, auctoritate sanctissimi patris nostri et domini Innocentii, summi pontificis, in regem Lettowie oleo sacrato peruncti, regni suscepimus diadema,* from Mindaugas' privilege to the merchants of Riga and Livonia dating from July 1253,[146] are the only direct references to the ceremony. It is unknown if any *ordo* or instructions of crowning were sent to the executors of the ceremony. On the other hand, the story in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* tells that there were papal bulls sent to Master Andreas out of which it was read that the master had to crown the Lithuanian ruler.[147] The reliability

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[141] *Prinial stol svoego otca, PLDR,* 288.

[142] *Kumis,* fermented mare's milk, ibid., 314-15.

[143] *On zhe ja i za ruku i vede ego v polatu svoju, i sam sovolochashet' ego, i oblachashet' i vo porty svoie, i taku chest' tvoriashet' emu,* ibid., 320.

[144] Heathens used to perform also a ritual of the other party when confirming agreements with the Christians, Rowel, "A pagan's word," 147.

[145] Ibid., no. 104, 50.

[146] *LUB* 1, no. 243, 312-13.

[147] *LRCh,* 48.

of the *Rhymed Chronicle* could be questioned here because the story of crowning is joined into one event with the baptism,[148] but the land donation document[149] proves that Master Andreas was present in the/se ceremony/ies. The only place concerning doubts is that the *Chronicle* introduces the master to be the principal coronator nominated by the pope who invites Bishop Henry from Prussia to join him,[150] while the papal letter authorises the bishop of Culm to crown the ruler.[151]

To conclude: the circumstancies in which Mindaugas' coronation occured suggest that it was caused by the political realities, among which the coincidence of Mindaugas claim for sovereignity and security in Lithuania with papal and Teutonic aspirations for Christian commonwealth were decisive.

THE CEREMONY

Mindaugas' coronation belongs to the whole range of papal coronations which started in the early thirteenth century with the pontificate of Pope Innocent III.[152] One of the best documented case is the crowning of the Bulgarian Tsar Kaloyan[153] king of Bulgaria and Wallachia in 1204.[154] On 23 February, 1203 Innocent IV sent a letter to the Bulgarian ruler with the instructions of crowning.[155] He nominated Leo, cardinal

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[148] The baptism and the corornation are joint into one also in the *Rocznik Krasinskich* [The Krasinski source] which dates the both to 1252, *MPH* 3, 132.

[149] *LUB* 1, no. 152, 334.

[150] *LRCh*, 48.

[151] *VMPL* 1, no. 104, 50.

[152] Ivinskis, "Mindaugas," 54. In general, Innocent IV regarded himself as a new Melchizedek and claimed the Christian commonwealth to be a successor and an heir of the Roman Empire, thus considering himself as an authority 'less than God but greater than man.' Consequently such papal *plentitudo potestas* was assumed to give them power over the secular rulers, Robert Folz, *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century* (London: Edvard Arnold, 1969), 82-83.

[153] The English version of Bulgarian name and placenames henceforth is used as in *Documents and Materials on the History of Bulgarian People*, ed. V.Voynov and L. Panayotov (Sofia: Publishing house of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1969), 55-56.

[154] The negotiations started in 1200 with the pope's letter and resulted in the coronation four years later. The correspondence is published in "Innocentius III papa - Caloiohannes rex," in *Latinski izvori za Balgarskata istorija / Fontes Latini historiae Bulgaricae*, vol. 3, ed. Ivan Dujčev, et al., (Sofia: Izdanie na Balgarskata Akademija na naukite, 1965), 307-78, henceforth *LIBI*.

[155] Ibid., 323-27.

presbyter, to be papal legate and to award Kaloyan the sceptre and the crown on behalf of the pope[156]; the archbishop of Turnovo[157] was authorized to receive the royal oath and to crown, thus becoming a *primus* in the realm and gaining the right for him and his succesors to crown the heir to the throne.[158] At the end the pope proposes that in such a way, the realm of Kaloyan becomes subordinated to the papacy.[159]

Even in this well documented case there is no evidence on the *ordo*. It seems that the *ordo* of crowning was well known to the high clergy and it was no need to send it. On the other hand, the new papal coronations of the thirteenth century were the result of the conflict between the papacy and the Holy Roman emperors. The popes were assumed to be the coronators of the emperors and the emperors crowned the kings; that was a kind of theorethical hieararchy despite the fact that few kings were crowned by emperor. As the emperors ceased to be reliable partners of the Roman Curia, the popes sought to expand their influence through subordination of the kingdoms to the Apostolic Throne. Unfortunately, there are not enough records about the papal coronations of the new kings in the thirteenth century and it is not clear what *ordo* the papacy used. Michael Andrieu, after surveying the Roman pontificals, concluded that throughout the thirteenth century different churches in Western Europe possessed different pontificals which appeared to be a mixture of local Liturgical books and pontificals of the Roman Curia.[160] Moreover, according to Andrieu the pontifical of the Curia had no ordo for royal coronation; to prove the statement the author quotes words of Cardinal Jacques Stefanesci dating from the coronation of Robert of Anjou on 3 August, 1309: *nihil inveniebatur litteris traditum, qualiter reges et*

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[156] *sceptrum regni ac regium tibi mittimus diadema*, ibid., 326.

[157] *Trinovitanus* in Latin.

[158] *arciepiscopo Trinovitano in terris, quibus imperas, universis privilegium concedimus primatie, qui et succesores ipsius tuos in posterum succesores, simili ab eis iuramento recepto, apostolice sedis auctoritate coronet et in terra primatus obtineat dignitatem*, ibid., 326.

[159] *sic regnum tuum in apostolice sedis subiectione ac devotione confirmes*, ibid.

[160] Michael Andrieu, *Le Pontifical Romain du Moyen-Age*, vol. 2, *Le Pontifical de la Curie Romaine au XIIIe siècle* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1940), 315.

*reginae debent inungi et coronari, eo quod in Pontificali Romano non habetur nisi de unctione et coronatione imperatoris et imperatric*is.[161]

Zenonas Ivinskis presumed that Mindaugas' coronation was performed according to the imperial minor *ordo*[162] and as a possible parallel proposed the coronation of Rudolph of Habsburg in 1273.[163] The main argument for the imperial minor *ordo* was the Teutonic origin of Mindaugas' coronators.[164] On the other hand, the pope was the authority that gave the crown and empowered the coronators to act on behalf of the Roman Curia. These two assumptions of the ordo seem to be of equal probability, although, due to the active role the German Knights had played in the Baltic Crusade, the assumption in favour to the imperial minor *ordo* dominates in the scholarship.[165]

Papal and imperial *ordines* predominantly differ in verbal part, though, coincide in the sequence of phases and in the roles of the performers, both clergy and laity. The central events of a royal sacring are the anointment and the crowning. According to the papal *ordo* the anointer is a bishop[166] and the coronator is a metropolitan,[167] as in the imperial ritual both actions are executed by a metropolitan.[168]

The records of Mindaugas' and Kaloyan's coronations bear evidence to the two coronators in each case: Legate Leo, who awarded the insignia, and the archbishop of Turnovo, who crowned; and Master Andreas, who had the crown, and Bishop Heidenreich who crowned. Both pieces of evidence record a kind of double crowning, which could be interpreted as a result of Innocent III's activities to establish

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[161] Ibid., 288.

[162] I.e., *ordo* for kings and queens.

[163] Ivinskis, "Mindaugas," 55.

[164] Ibid.

[165] E.g., A. Juška, "Karaliaus Mindaugo krikštas" [The baptism of King Mindaugas], *Aidai* 9 (1951):388.

[166] Text "R" of the texts "R" and "D" as published parallely in Eduard Eichmann, "Die sog. Römische Köningskrönungformel," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 45 (1925): 531. The text is used according to the reference in Andrieu, vol. 2, 69.

[167] Eichmann, t. "R," 535.

[168] Ibid., t. "D," 531, 535.

a difference between episcopal anointment and royal unction in order to lower the status of a ruler in the liturgy.[169] The same hypothesis was suggested by Johannes Voigt and corroborated by Zenonas Ivinskis, although he concluded that the divided roles of anointer and coronator meant papal corrections to the imperial *ordo*.[170] Considering that firstly, the Teutonic Order was under the rule of the papacy; secondly, the years 1250 - 1268 is the period of interregnum and rather a chaotic situation in the Holy Roman Empire[171]; and thirdly, the pontificate of Innocent IV is predominantly distinguished for the activities to establish the supreme papal authority over secular monarchs,[172] this rather inertial conclusion should be corrected in favour of the papal *ordo* as there is no basis to relate Mindaugas' coronation with imperial politics.

Though executed as a liturgical event, a coronation actually is a legal act of enpowerment legislation of a future ruler. The crowned must correspond to several conditions of an *ordo*, and one of the principles is to be a legitimate heir of the throne. This inheritance is confirmed during the last phase of the ceremony, the enthronement,[173] after the words *Sta et retine*.[174] The importance of the succession of the crowned person was stressed in Kaloyan's case, even becoming a kind of guarantee for this coronation.[175] On the other hand, there were rulers awarded the crown for the

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[169] The pope made this distinction in the decretal *On Holy Unction*. The interpretation is based on Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), 319.

[170] Ivinskis, "Mindaugas," 56.

[171] On the interregnum, see Folz, 121-22, passim.

[172] For a concise summary on the Innocent IV's doctrine of authority, see Marcel David, *La souveraineté et les limites juridiques du pouvoir monarchique du IXe au XVe siècle* (Paris: Librairie Dalloz, 1954), 198-99. For a more explicit presentation, see Muldoon, "Innocent IV Theorist as Practioner," 29-48.

[173] The phases of coronation are defined as in Janet L. Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London and Ronceverte: The Hambledon Press, 1986), 362.

[174] *Sta et retine locum amodo, quem hucusque paterna successione tenuisti, haereditario iure tibi delegatum per auctoritatem Dei omnipotentis et praesentem traditionem nostram,* Eichmann, t. "R," 536.

[175] *regestra nostra perlegi fecimus diligenter, ex quibus evidenter comperimus, quod in terra tibi subiecta multi reges fuerant coronati. Pretera continebatur in eis, quod tempore bone memoria Nicolai pape predecessoris nostri rex Bulgarorum, [...], cum toto regno sibi commisso ad predicationem eius fuerat baptizatus, et rex ipse ab eo archiepiscopum postularat. Legatus quoque*

first time, and the Church did solve the case of kings of non-royal origin. Reinhard Elze presents an example of an *ordo* abbreviated in order to crown Roger, the person of non royal descent, king of Sicily in 1130. During his consecration, the words concerning inheritance of the throne after *Sta et retine* and being a potentate of the country prior the coronation were cut out of the *ordo*.[176]

From the former examples it is possible to assume that the first-time crowned kings did not have be inaugurated according to both *hereditario iure* and *auctoritate Dei*: only the latter was enough. Logically, the heir of the first king should have no abbreviations to his *ordo*. Although, there is no direct statement about the succession in the text, it is evident from the passage referred to earlier that coronation assumes the inheritance of the royal throne by the newly-crowned ruler.

Heredity was indirectly confirmed in Kaloyan's coronation: *archiepiscopo Trinovitano [...] concedimus primatie, qui et successores ipsius tuos in posterum successores, simili ab eis iuramento recepto, apostolice sedis auctoritate coronet*.[177] Papal authorisation to crown Mindaugas mentions his successors, bu does not highlight their relation to an inheritable throne: *Epo Culmensi [...] auctoritate nostra corones in Regem, [...], ita tamen, quod ipse ac successores sui Regnum predictum, ac prefatas terras, que ad suarum precum instantiam in ius et proprietatem beati Petri suscepimus, se ab apostolice sede. tenere perpetuo recognoscant.*[178]

This feature of a royal inauguration must have been obvious for Mindaugas, as he indicated so in the earlier introduced land grant issued with *auxilio et consilio nobis ac regni nostri legitimis successoribus*,[179] and for the contemporaries, as an

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Michaelis regis bulgarici cum donis regalibus Adriano pape predecessori nostro regias litteras presentarat et postularant ab eo, [...], quem post approbationem eorum ad sedem apostolicam remeantem ipse postmodum consecraret, LIBI, 312.

[176] In Roger's case the text was *Sta et retine amodo locum tibi delegatum per auctoritate dei*, and *ut sis benedictus et constitutus rex in regno tuo* were changed into *sis benedictus et consistutut rex*, Reinhard Elze, "The Ordo for the Coronation of King Roger II of Sicily: An Example of Dating from Internal Evidence, " in *Coronations*, 167.

[177] *LIBI*, 326.

[178] *VMPL* 1, no. 104, 50.

[179] *LUB* 1, no. 252, 333.

anonymous Irish witness of the Lithuanian coronation who had recorded that the first king of Lithuania Mindaugas[180] received the royal power from the Roman pope, leaving it to his descendants so that they carefully could preserve it.[181]

In conclusion, it is credible that Mindaugas was crowned according to an abbreviated version of the papal *ordo* and thus only by *auctoritate Dei*, which corresponded in its main points of anointing and crowning and provided the usual authority of sovereign kingship.

POST SCRIPTUM

In such a context, it seems strange that two years after the coronation Mindaugas asked papal permission to crown his male heir. This demand was satisfied in the bull of Alexander IV, dating from 6 March, 1255.[182]

Its text states: *dilectum filium Nobilem virum...natum tuum ad honorem dei et sancte Romane ecclesie in Regem Lectovie auctoritate nostra coronet.*[183] This issue demands an explanation, or more precisely, an interpretation. A possible answer to the question why Mindaugas asked for the right to crown his son as king of Lithuania while he himself was king and knew that the throne is inheritable.

It should be remembered here that the case of *rex iuvenis* is not without precedence in the Middle Ages: best known example being the coronation of Louis the Pious by Charlemagne.

The similar events occurred later: the *Hungarian Chronicle* compiled in the fourteenth century records the coronation of Solomon during his father Andrew's life-

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[180] *Mendogus* in original Latin text. The name written in such a way is used in the Western Slavonic languages; because of this aspect Edvardas Gudavičius hypothesised that if the anonymous author used such a name, and there were possibly participants of Western Slavic origin at the coronation, Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 108.

[181] [11] *Hec habet [...] terram Lectauie. Cuius rex primus Mendogus baptizatus est et in coronacione sua me ibidem existente regnum suum a sede Romana recipiens hoc idem reliquid suis posteris faciendum dummodo eandem ad huismodi factum curam adibeant diligentem, "Incipiunt Descripciones Terrarum,"* appended to Marvin L. Colker, "America Rediscovered in the Thirteenth Century," *Speculum* 54.4 (1979):722.

[182] *VMPL* 1, no. 123, 60-61.

[183] Ibid.

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time.[184] The reason for this could have been derived from the record about reaction of Salomon's brothers;[185] probably, by choosing and crowning one heir, King Andrew, aimed to avoiding succession conflicts in the future. According to Z. J. Kosztolnyik, the practice was that the crowned heir became empowered in a certain part of the kingdom.[186] Moreover, this instance seems to become of increasing importance for the internal policy of the country in the thirteenth century.[187]

Erich Hoffmann had demonstrated that in Medieval Scandinavia in the case of unclear succession or in absence of evident paramount claimant, the successor was chosen and had to pass through a kind of concecration during the predecessors reign.[188] So, for example: in Norway Magnus, the successor through the female line, was inaugurated and swore an oath in 1163/64[189]; King Haakon's son Haakon, "already chosen as coregent," carried the crown during his father's coronation ceremony on 28 July, 1247[190]; Haakon's son Magnus Lagaböter was "elected as a coregent and also crowned" on 14 September, 1261.[191] In Denmark King Waldemar I (1154/57-1182) "designated his son Knut as coregent in order to avoid future

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[184] See, sections 91-92. *De coronatione Salomonis patre suo Andrea rege adhuc vivente* of "*Chronici hungarici compositio saeculi XIV*," ed. Alexander Domanovszky, in *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum...*, vol. 1, ed. Emericus Szentpétery (Budapest: Academia Litter. Hungarica..., 1937), 351-55.

[185] *Dicunt alii, quod Bela duce et filiis eius, Geycha scilicet et Ladizlao cunctisque regni optimatibus consentientibus Salomon unctus esset in regem postmodum seminatorium discordie instigantibus ortum est inter eos*, ibid., 353.

[186] Z.J. Kosztolnyik, *From Colomon the Learned to Béla III (1095-1196): Hungarian Domestic Policies and Their Impact upon Foreign Affairs* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1987), 248.

[187] Id., *Hungary in the Thirteenth Century* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1996), 49-50, passim; 207-10.

[188] See Erich Hofmann, "Coronations and Coronation Ordines in Medieval Scandinavia," in *Coronations*, 125-5.

[189] Ibid., 125-26.

[190] Ibid., 127.

[191] Ibid., 128.

succession struggles."[192] In Sweden Birger Jarl placed "his son Waldemar on the throne as an heir."[193]

To conclude the comparisons, it can be stated that, in the cases when royal succession was not is not clearly settled by a custom or law, and that was the reality in Lithuania, it was logical that an heir was chosen and his rights to the throne were publically manifested. However, to establish a more thoroughly elaborated parallel leading to a possible interpretation, Mindaugas' family must be introduced.

Four of Mindaugas' sons are named in the sources: Vaišelga,[194] Ruklys, Rupeikis, and Gerstukas.[195] Besides them, there is mention of one daughter married to Shvarno Danylovych[196] and children who were still minors in 1263.[197] Probably, any of the four enumerated sons could have been inaugurated king. However, there is practically no information about the last three sons; and the only possible explanation of the crowning permission could be searched for in Vaišelga's activities although bearing in mind the reservation that his example does not imply Vaišelga to be meant in this permission, since by that time he was already a monk. Edvardas Gudavičius proposed an assumption derived from toponymical evidence, that some territories in Lithuania might have been under the rule of Ruklys.[198]

Duke Vaišelga seems to be the oldest son who was at an early age involved in politics. At the beginning of the 1250s, he started to rule (as a coregent ? of Mindaugas) in Black Ruthenia with a residence in Novogorudek and was baptised an

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[192] Ibid., 131.

[193] Ibid., 137.

[194] Vaišelga, *Vaišvilkas* is also used in Lithuanian, *Voishelk* in Old Slavonic, *Voyselk, Woysalk* in Polish, *Woischleg* in German.

[195] Ruklys (*Rukl'* in Old Slavonic); Repeikis (*Repek* in Old Slavonic, *Replen* in Latin); Gerstukas (*Girstutis* is also used in Lithuanian, *Gerstuchen, Gertstutten* in Latin).

[196] Shvarno Danylovych (*Švarnas* in Lithuanian), the son of Danylo Romanovych, and his wife Mindaugas' daughter, *PLDR*, 334-35.

[197] Ibid., 358-59. The cause of Mindaugas' murder was that he, after the death of his wife Martha, abducted her sister, the wife of Daumantas, claiming that such was Martha's wish that a stranger should not look after her children; Edvardas Gudavičius convincingly argued that the fact of the minor children could be true, Gudavičius, "1219 metu," 41.

[198] Id., *Kryžiaus karai*, 107.

Orthodox.[199] Vaišelga closely collaborated with the Galician-Volhynian rulers: he arranged his sister's marriage with Shvarno, authorised Roman Danylovych to rule over Slonim and Volkovyjsk in his behalf and over Novgorudek on behalf of Mindaugas as he became a monk and decided to visit Mount Athos.[200] This information leads to the assumption that Mindaugas established some kind of a rule over the Ruthenian lands, and his son was in charge there. The speculation that Mindaugas intented to found a kind of sub-Lithuanian Kingdom in the Slavonic territories is hardly provable; however, it is not totally without a basis. The aforementioned bull of Alexander IV has an attachment encouraging Mindaugas to start war *contra Regnum Russie* and promising that the Apostolic Throne would confirm Lithuanian rule over the occupied lands.[201]

In comparison with Hungarian and Scandinavian examples, the Lithuanian instance could be interpreted as efforts to establish a new royal authority in the part of the lands under Lithuanian rule empowering there one of king's sons, and probably, thus strengthening the newly established royal dynasty.

One more obscure fact concerning the heredity of the Lithuanian throne is document issued by Mindaugas in June 1261 designating the Livonian Order to inherit the Lithuanian Kingdom if Mindaugas dies heirless.[202] However, on the basis of Karol Maleczyński's research this document is proved to be a forgery.[203]

Concluding this fragmentary evidence the hypothesis that Mindaugas attemped to nominate one of his sons the *rex iuvenis*, thus ensuring his direct succession, can be proposed.

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[199] *PLDR*, 356-57.

[200] Ibid., 334-335.

[201] *VMPL* 1, no. 123, 61.

[202] *LUB* 1, no. 636, 461-464.

[203] Maleczyński, 33.

To complete the hypothetical construction of Mindaugas' coronation the examination of its possible place is necessary. However, none of the sources mentions a place more concrete than Lithuania. The search for Voruta, a word used in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*[204] as a name of Mindaugas' castle and identified by Kazys Buga as a general name for a stronghold,[205] is still a matter of scholarly concern,[206] nevertheless even if the castle-place could be identified there would still be no basis to relate this castle to the coronation. Therefore, the principal possible places are to be discussed.

Zenonas Ivinskis, basing on Danylo's parallel, argued for Maciej Stryjkowski's statement, assuming that Mindaugas could be crowned in Novogrudok, the principle town of the recently seized Ruthenian lands, as Danylo was crowned in Dorohychyn[207] in the lands of Yatvigians that he sought to possess. The place of Danylo's coronation was interpreted as indication of authority demonstrated to new vassals and seemed relating to the situation of Mindaugas.[208] However, the absence of information about the Lithuanian coronation in the Ruthenian sources, makes such a hypothesis doubtful.

Although a coronation as a liturgical event can be performed in the open air,[209] it is less probable to have happened so,[210] thus logically, one should search for a

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[204] *PLDR*, 322-23.

[205] Ivinskis, *Lietuvos istorija*, 177.

[206] Recently several theories about the place of Voruta or *Varuta*, as it was probably pronounced in Lithuanian, were presented: Romas Batura identified it with Vilnius, Batura, "Lietuvos sostines klausimu" [To the question about the capital of Lithuania], *MADA* 1 (1966): 141-63; Gintautas Zabiela tried to locate it in the place of Šeimyniškeliai mound (3 km east from Anykščiai), Zabiela, "Kur stovejo Vorutos pilis?" [Where was the Voruta castle standing?], *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis* (1991): 5-21; Edvardas Gudavičius does not mention a concrete place though supports opinion that this rather important castle must have been built in Mindaugas' patrimonial domaine in the southern part of modern Lithuania, Gudavičius, "Del Lietuvos valstybes kurimosi centro ir laiko" [About the center and the time of formation of the Lithuanian state], *MADA* 3 (1984): 61-69.

[207] Drohyczyn in Poland.

[208] Ivinskis, "Mindaugas," 57.

[209] This is how Albert Wiivk-Koialowicz explained Mindaugas' coronation, arguing that there were no enough spacious churches in Novgorudok, Kojelavičius, 103.

[210] Though not contradicting the Liturgy an outdoor coronation would have been an extraodinary event, and as extraordinatity it has greater probability to be recorded in the sources.

cathedral. This idea was expanded by A. Juška, who presumed that the delay in the coronation was due to the building of a cathedral.[211] There are several letters of Innocent IV certifying Mindaugas' initiatives to erect a cathedral: the letter dating from 17 July, 1251 addressed to the bishop of Culm records the inceptions,[212] and that from 24 June, 1253 sent to the archbishop of Livonia and Prussia bears evidence of the cathedral which Mindaugas is going to build at his own expense,[213] the same phrase is repeated later in the letters from 3 and 20 September, 1254.[214] This means that contemporaneus written sources[215] do not prove that any cathedral was erected even after the coronation. Nevertheless, the foundations from the thirteenth century of the church-shaped building found beneath the present cathedral[216] of Vilnius are worth mentioning. These foundations cannot be related to any other building than a church,[217] and Vilnius did belong to the territory of the Lithuanian Kingdom.[218] The

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[211] Juška, 388.

[212] *sibi munus consecrationis impendas, prius tamen a predicto Rege optimo terre solo pro fundata cathedrali ecclesia*, VMPL 1, no. 105, 50.

[213] *Illustris Rex Lethovie [...] cathedralem ecclesiam in expensa suis de novo erigere sit paratus*, ibid., no. 111, 53.

[214] Ibid., nos. 120 and 121, 58-59.

[215] The fourteenth and fifteenth century Teutonic sources bear evidence that Mindaugas had built a cathedral in his capital, Vilnius, and had founded a bishopric there. E.g., at the Council of Constance the Procurator-General of the Teutonic Order, Petrus von Wormditt, stated that a cathedral in Vilnius was built by King Mindaugas and thus Vilnius became the official seat of a bishop, *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi, magni ducis Lithuaniae (1376 - 1430)*, ed. Antoni Prochaska (Cracow, 1882), 996-99; however, considering the Teutonic claims for Christianisation of Lithuania, scholars up till now did not relied on these arguments, Napoleonas Kitkauskas, *Vilniaus pilys. Statyba ir architektura* [The castles of Vilnius: building and architecture] (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1989), 13.

[216] For a more explicit description, see ibid., 91-114. A survey of the investigations carried out until 1987 is presented in English in Kajackas, 263-84.

[217] The phases of building of the cathedral can be derived from the chemical analysis of the mortar: there are two kinds of the contemporaneous mortar, the brown and the white, the first was used for the principle part of the building and the second only for the *chevet*. The analysis showed that these are not the changes of colour but originally different colours of the mortar, Kitkauskas and Telksniene, "Pirmosios Vilniaus katedros," 36, 39. Moreover, from the plan of the foundations of the building, two closed segments are clearly discernible. The latter facts inspired a speculation that the church was erected in two phases: first the square-shaped building and later the *chevet* added; this leads to a speculative interpretation, that possibly the builders first constructed a usual edifice, and only later (after someone's guidance) made a church out of it, meaning a new and alien building, adding the *chevet*; thus, there were two preparations of the mortar, resulting in its colour difference.

[218] On the territory of Lithuania during Mindaugas' reign, see Gudavičius, "Litva Mindovga" [Lithuania of Mindaugas], in *Problemy etnogeneza i etnicheskoj istorii baltov. Sbornik statej* [The

aforestated facts increase the probability that it could be a church in the territory of the Lithuanian Kingdom in which Mindaugas was crowned. However, there is one strange aspect about the place of coronation. The land donation document was probably prepared in the chancellery of the Livonian Order,[219] that is why there is no exact date on it but only the month. The possible explanations can be proposed that either the scribes did not know when it was going to be sealed, the place of sealing is *in Lettowia in curia nostra,* what means that it was not initially known to which castle the participants are going to move after the coronation, or then there was the only one castle of Mindaugas and the term *curia nostra* was absolutely clear for the contemporaries and did not require explication.

The evidence on the possible royal insignia is doubtful. No more explicit description of the insignia is known than that of the "two crowns, rich in / ornament and artistry," as mentioned in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*[220]. Marian Gumowski presents a picture[221] of a seal attached to Mindaugas' document dating from 1255 and certifying the donation of Sellonia.[222] Although it is argued that the land grants issued by Mindaugas were forged by the Teutonic Order, this particular document has been assumed authentic,[223] thus increasing the probability that the seal is also authentic.[224] Unfortunately, the inscription of the seal is known only from the *transumpta* of 1392 and 1393, first of which is *MYNDOWE DEI GRA REX LETTOWIE* and the second

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problems of the ethnogenesis and ethnical culture of the Balts: collected articles] (Vilnius: Mintis, 1985): 219-27. According to the toponymical analysis Vilnius seems not to belong to Mindaugas' patrimonial domain but to the lands of his father inherited by other sons, Mindaugas must have taken over the region of Vilnius around the year 1250 after at end of the inner wars, Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai,* 107.

[219] Id., "Mindaugo karunavimas," 2.

[220] *LRCh,* 48.

[221] See Marian Gumowski, "Pieczęcie Książąt Litewskich" [The seals of Lithuanian dukes], *Ateneum Wileńskie* 8.3/4 (1930): 684-726, picture no. 28 of Table IV.

[222] *Selonia* in Latin.

[223] Maleczyński, 10.

[224] The descriptions of the cords as white and yellow in the transumpta and the ones that survived with the parchment and the seal, white and blue, are different. Nevetheless Maleczyński assumes that the seal is authentic and the cords could have been changed, id., 8.

MYNDOUWE DEI GRA REX LITOWIE.[225] The *en face* picture of an enthroned ruler with crown on his head, sceptre in the right hand and orb in the left depicted on the seal is unique example from that period in the region, however popular in the seals of German princes..[226] Though, the description of the possible crown cannot be derived from the picture of insignia on the seal, the existance of the seal proves that together with the insignia and royal ceremonies a Western-type royal seal of majesty was also introduced in Lithuania.

Nevertheless, there are several opinions about the origin of the Lithuanian coronational insignia proposed: Vladimir Pashuto, on the basis of the *Rhymed Chronicle's* record that Master Andreas had the crowns, concluded that the crowns were executed in Riga.[227] Mihajlo Hocij tried to reconstruct the crown that might have been Mindaugas', and assumed that it could have been probably taken to Riga from Cologne and suggested that the diadem of the reliquary of St Sigismund in the cathedral of Plotsk[228] may be the closest parallel to it.[229] Comparing Mindaugas' case with the contemporaneus papal cornations, some evidence could be derived. According to the documents, in 1204 Kaloyan received the crown from Innocent III. The pope sent royal insignia through the papal legate Leo, who was nominated the coronator[230]; before crowning Colomon king of Galicia, King Andrew II of Hungary addressed Pope Innocent III asking him to send a crown for this coronation[231]; in 1217 Pope Honorius III's legate brought the crown to the Serbian ruler Stefan Prvovenchany and Serbian sources bear evidence of the Western, Roman, shape of

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[225] Gumowski, 706.

[226] Maleczyński, 8.

[227] Pašuta, 276

[228] Płock in Poland.

[229] The diadem dating from the middle of the thirteenth century was donated to the cathedral by the Polish King Casimir the Great, Hocij, "Die Krone," 413-14. With the same article M. Hocij published a reconstruction of Danylo's crown (ibid., Table 1 after p. 416), which later was erroneously republished as the reconstruction of the one of Mindaugas in Hieronym Grala, "Między wiarą łacińskąi obrządkiem greckim" [Between the Latin faith and the Greek ritual], *Kultura* 12 (March 23, 1988): 7.

[230] *LIBI*, 326.

[231] Hrushevskij, 512.

that crown[232]; Legate Opizo also had the crown for Danylo's royal inauguration.[233] Hence, Andreas von Stierland is recorded only in the position of the Master of the Livonian Order, the fact that he promised to "win the crown" and got it,[234] is in favour of Zenonas Ivinskis' guess that he was the papal legate nominated especially for Mindaugas' coronation[235] thus increasing the probability that the crown to Riga was sent by the pope, who during the years 1251 - 1253 predominantly resided in Milano and Perugia,[236] consequently the insignia for the Lithuanian ruler could have been executed in Northen Italy.

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[232] Ferjančić, 300.

[233] *PLDR*, 330-31.

[234] *LRCh*, 48.

[235] Ivinskis, "Mindaugas," 56. However, the author was not precise in formulating the hypothesis he says that Master Andreas became legate by having the crown. Most probably he was nominated the legate, and the story of the papal letter (*LRCh*, 48) is true, although the document did not survive.

[236] According to the place of sending letters in the period between July 17, 1251, the authorisation of Bishop Heidenreich for the coronation, and July 6, 1253, date of coronation, as indicated in Potthast, 1185-1237. From May 1253 the letters were sent from Assisi; however as these are the last months before the coronations they can be hardly related with the manufacturing of the royal insignia.

THE STATE

Formally, a kingdom can be defined as a territory with a population within certain boundaries, legitimately governed and administered by a monarch, a king or a queen, and recognised internationally as a unit of a certain integrity.

Concerning the territory in which early Lithuanian statehood was expressed, it is possible to state that the source evidence and its scholarly interpretations do testify to the territorial criterium despite the fact that modern scholarship finds exact localisation of the borders difficult.[237] Nevertheless, it can be concluded from Mindaugas' land grants[238] describing donated territories that the Lithuanian Kingdom consisted of internal administrative units with more or less defined boundaries.[239]

In the sense of statehood, the territorial concept is meaningless without any indication of the authority in power there. The implementation of the rule is related to its legitimacy and, consequently, its recognition; the legitimation of authority implies the claim of a ruler of having an established consent with the ruled. In the context of medieval monarchy, such a consent is expressed by the elective or hereditary succession of the rulers, executed according to commonly accepted law or custom and also recognised internationally. As demonstrated in Chapter I, Mindaugas gained the position of sovereign by force, and afterwards he did succeed in expelling and later subjugating Tautvila.[240] Moreover, throughout this process a significant role was played by the Livonian Order. As for the legitimacy, or more precisely, the domestic recognition of his rule, which occurred gradually, it must be noted that Mindaugas'

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[237] For an approximate localisation of the Lithuanian state.

[238] Maleczyński, Tables I - II, 58-60.

[239] E.g., Mindaugas grants Bishop Christian half of the land of Raseiniai, half of Betygala, and half of Laukuva: *Rassegene mediatem, Bettegallen mediatem, Lokowe mediatem*, LUB 1, no. 263, 345.

[240] The principal rival of Mindaugas for the supreme authority recognised Mindaugas' superiority after 1255, and was entitled to rule over Polotsk as it appears from the invitation he received from Treniota after Mindaugas' murder, *PLDR*, 348-49, 358-59.

43

authority did not stem from his recognition on the "national"[241] level, but from the approval and support of international powers. In short, it can be concluded that the first Lithuanian monarchy was established by means of a power of domestic origin in alliance with Teutonic military and diplomatic resources and with the protection of the papacy.

State authority is above all manifested in its governing activities which are revealed in the established order of the country. One type of these activities, economic functioning is decisive for the survival of a state, but there is practically no direct evidence to demonstrate the functioning of a tax and tribute system in the Lithuanian Kingdom. However, as the collection of tribute did occur earlier among the Baltic and Ruthenian population[242]; thus it can be assumed that this system survived until Mindaugas' state since no consistent alternative source of income can be found in the sources. The consequent assumption that Mindaugas' administration relied upon representatives collecting taxes in the form of tribute seems resonable, as it is unlikely that his state could have been financed exclusively from the estates of Mindaugas or his kinsmen.[243]

Despite the speculative character of the assumptions on the economic functioning of the Lithuanian Kingdom, one more feature demonstrating its internal structure and testifying to certain fiscal resources is the state's military capacity. In spite of the strong and multi-faceted influence of the Livonian Order, those of Mindaugas' troops that raided Ruthenian territories were generally local warriors. This conclusion is derived from the fact that the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, when mentioning Lithuanian warfare in Black Ruthenia, uses the specific word "Lithuanians" but when describing any of the military activities in which the Teutonic Knights participated as

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[241] The term "national" as used here does not imply that the thirteenth-century Lithuania was or developed from the nation in its modern understanding. Nontheless, it is used as a technical concept of a larger polity.

[242] E.g., Semgallians paying taxes for the Livonian Order, *LRCh*, 47.

[243] The *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* bears evidence that boyars granted maintenance for the governing duke, *PLDR*, 288-89.

44

allies, the chronicler/s indicate them as "Germans."[244] Moreover, from the records about the Lithuanian army leaders, it can be deduced that there was a certain military system featuring an established organisation and hierarchy.

The international political orientation of Mindaugas' state was expressed in the following activities: alliance and subsequent peace with the Livonian Order, warfare in order to control Black Ruthenia, and changing contacts with Galicia-Volhynia. The internal policy was predominantly manifested in the increasing strength of the king's suzerain rights over the minor duchies of Nalšia, Deltuva, Neris, and the land of Š iauliai, and the neglect of Samogithian affairs.[245]

Besides these constructive characteristics of the state, a more or less abstract notion as a binding quality must be discussed. Internationally, Lithuania emerged as a state under Christian rule.[246] A close alliance between secular and sacred powers is believed to have been essential for medieval statehood. Although it remains unclear to what extent this was understood by Mindaugas; it is obvious that he knew it to be some sort of formal requirement for Western-European-type kingship. The creation of the Lithuanian bishopric and Mindaugas' role in its foundation is the best documented case which illustrates his perception of the requirements of statehood.

Briefly, just after Mindaugas' baptism, most probably in connection with the Lithuanian embassy to the pope, Innocent IV became concerned with the establishment of the Church structures in Lithuania. Between the 15th and 17th of

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[244] E.g., Order's military help to Tautvila. *PLDR*, 320-21.

[245] Some scholars suppose that Mindaugas was playing a douplificious game in Samogithia: he donated practically the whole land to the Livonian Order; however, secretly supported Samogithian resistance against the Teutonic rule, Ivinskis, *Lietuvos istorija*, 186.

[246] The Christianity of Mindaugas is a separate scholarly issue characterised by the descriptions of Mindaugas as a cunning heathen using Catholic baptism as a political mean, to the opinion that he was a true Christian and his apostasy was only Livonian interpretation. However, modern scholars tend to show the Lithuanian king as a syncretic person, who as a medieval person was essentially religious and united principles of local beliefs with Christian ones, Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 109. Actually, in Lithuania, heathen beliefs and rites were used jointly with Christian ones till the late sixteennth century and later, Marceli Kosman, "Pogaństwo, Chrześcijanstwo i synkretyzm na Litwie w dobie przedreformacyjnej" [Paganism, Christianity, and syncretism in Lithuania before the Reformation], *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmieńskie* (1972): 132-35.

March, 1251, there were five letters issued in relation to Mindaugas' affairs,[247] four of them concerned ecclesiastical matters in Lithuania. The person chosen to be in charge of these affairs was Bishop Heidenreich: he was authorised to assist in establishing the Lithuanian bishopric, consecrate a bishop for it, and send priests and prelates[248] to convert the heathens. Moreover, Innocent IV indicated that the newly-consecrated bishop should swear an oath of direct dependence on the papacy.[249] The bishops of Oesil and Curonia were nominated to guard the papal privileges which the Lithuanian Church province had received.[250]

However, during the following two years no Lithuanian bishop was consecrated. Zenonas Ivinskis assumed that the delay was due to the ambitions of Albert Suerbeer, who had recently become the archbishop of Livonia and Prussia and wanted to subject the Lithuanian province to his archbishopric.[251] The case of the Lithuanian bishop was renewed after Mindaugas' coronation: on 24 July, 1253, on the basing of Mindaugas' request, Innocent IV wrote to Archbishop Albert asking him to consecrate a bishop for Lithuania, chosen according to the ruler's preference.[252] In the subsequent authorisation, dating from 21 August, 1253, the pope referred to Brother

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[247] Potthast, nos. 14350-54, 1185.

[248] *Nos paterno volentes affectu, ut ipsa, [...], mandamus quatinus ... Episcopo et prelatis ac Rectoribus ecclesiarum, qui fuerint in Lithovia constituti, VMPL* 1, no. 101, 49; *tibi auctoritate committimus, quatinus virum honestum et providum, ac in spiritualibus et temporalibus circumspectum, qui pontificali conveniat oneri et honori, predicte Lithowie auctoritate nostra preficias in episcopum et pastorem, ac duobus vel tribus accersitis episcopis, sibi munus consecrationis impendas,* ibid., no. 105, 50.

[249] *postquam de prefato episcopo, quem soli Romano pontifici volumus subiacere, provisum fuerit iuxta mandati nostri tenorem, tu ab ipso fidelitatis iuramentum nostre et ecclesie Romane nomine recipias iuxta formam, quam sub bulla nostra tibi mittimus interclusam,* ibid.

[250] *Quocirca mandamus, quantinus dictum Regem non permittatis super hiis contra protectionis, constitutionis et inhibitionis nostre tenorem ab aliquibus indebite molestari,* ibid., 103, 49.

[251] Ivinskis, *Lietuvos istorija,* 174.

[252] *personam providam et honestam, ac in spiritualibus et temporalibus circumspectam, que sit accepta dicto Regi, cum super hoc ab ipso requisitus extiteris, eidem ecclesie auctoritate nostra preficias in Episcopum et Pastorem, et associatis duobus vel tribus convicinis episcopus, ei munus consecrationis impendas, faciens sibi a subditis obedientiam et reverentiam debitam exhiberi, contra recepturus ab eo postmodum pro nobis et ecclesia Romana fidelitatis solite iuramentum iuxta formam, quam tibi sub bulla nostra mittibus inclusam, VMPL* 1, no. 111, 53.

Presbyter Christian as candidate proposed by Mindaugas.[253] Christian was consecrated bishop of Lithuania in the late summer, 1253; however, it became clear from Mindaugas' complaints[254] that the procedure neglected the papal order of an independent bishopric. Therefore, an impartial party in the person of the bishop of Nuremberg was chosen to receive the new oath of Christian.[255]

Mindaugas' successful efforts to establish a Lithuanian bishopric independent of the archbishop of Riga could be interpreted in two ways: either as a manifestation of his political acumen or as the outcome of the territorial disputes between the Livonian Order and the Archbishop of Riga.[256] From a survey of documents and the circumstantial evidence, the second alternative seems more probable; moreover, since it is known that the Lithuanian bishop was a brother presbyter in the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order.

From this description Mindaugas' endeavours concerning the Church organisation it can be deduced that the Lithuanian king, did indeed formally correspond to the requirements of a Christian monarch: he succeeded in the establishment a Lithuanian province of the Roman Church responsible only to the pope and received a bishop according to his own preference (using a right ? of a monarch to influence Church affaires), providing him with land and tribute.[257] Despite the fact that Mindaugas officially supported the Church, it is hard to trace any practical actions on his part for its benefit. From the land grant for Bishop Christian which reads that the

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[253] *Postmodum autem idem rex per literas, affectione plenas, petivit a nobis, ut de fratre Christiano de domo Theutonicorum in Livonia, viro utique litterato, provido et honesto, quem secum tempore suae conversionis habuit, et iuxta se in futurum habere desiderat, praedictae provideri ecclesie faceremus, LUB* 1, no. 254, 337.

[254] That it was Mindaugas who informed the pope about the inacceptable consecration is clear from the pope's answer informing him about the reconsecration of Bishop Christian, *LUB* 1, no. 272, 354.

[255] *Volumus tamen, quod ille venerabili fratri nostro, episcopo Nuenburgensi, cui super hoc scripta nostra dirigimus, exhibeat pro nobis et ecclesia Romana fidelitatis solitae iuramentum, iuxta formam litterarum, quam super hoc transmissimus archiepiscopo memeorato,* ibid., 354-55.

[256] On the conflict between the Livonian Order and the Archbishop of Riga, see Urban, *The Baltic Crusade,* 237-39, 291-93.

[257] Mindaugas granted lands to Bishop Christian on 12 March, 1254, *LUB* 1, no. 263, 345.

bishop himself must take land assigned into his possession,[258] it can be seen that no royal assistance was provided. Moreover, by the next year the Lithuanian bishop had already transferred his possession to the Livonian Order[259] probably because he coud not practically reside on the property. In conclusion, King Mindaugas officially proved himself as a Christian ruler although he did not endeavour to strengthen the position of the Catholic Church in his realm.[260]

On the other hand, there is a possibility to trace Church assistance in Mindaugas administration. Generally, the medieval Latin Church was that particular institution which provided literate people. In the Lithuanian case one can assume that those brothers and priests that the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* mentions as being left in Lithuania to preach and teach the people[261] stayed at the ruler's court and also provided help in establishment of Western contacts of the young kingdom. On the basis of Karol Maleczyński's research[262] it is even possible to trace certain connections of Lithuanian administration with the Chuch institutions from the neighbourhood. Having proved authenticity of five of Mindaugas' documents, Maleczyński analysed their paleography, diplomatics, and dictation style. Genaral paleographic characteristics demonstarte an advanced[263] Western-European type of script and on the basis of

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[258] *mittentes ipsum [Christianum] in corporalem possessionem*, ibid.

[259] on April 6, 1254, *LUB* 1, 266, 348-49.

[260] Conserning the issue of the Lithuanian bishopric it should be remembered that in 1253 a Dominincan friar Witus was cosecrated Bishop of Lithuania by the Archbishop of Gniezno. However, there is no reliable evidence that he ever visited the country, and such a possibility that could be derived from the lost letter *De christianorum in Lithovia conditione deplorabili ad S. et B.P.D. Innocentium pp. IV* that was attributed to him in M. Wiszniewski, *Historia literatury polskiej* [The history of Polish literature], vol. 2 (Cracow, 1840), 158, is believed to have been forged by Polish Dominicans claiming for old missionary activities in Lithuania, Kosman, "Poganstwo," 110. However, modern Polish Catholic scholars argue for its authenticity, Stopka, "Próby chrystianizacji Litwy w latach 1248 - 1263" [The attempts to Christianise Lithuania during the years 1248 - 1263], *Analecta Cracoviensia* 19 (1987): 52. In 1255 Pope Alexander IV officially permitted him to refuse the bishopric, however, he could still have a title of a bishop of Lithuania, *MPV* 3, no. 73, 39.

[261] After the coronation Master Andreas "left priests and Brothers in Lithuania and ordered them to teach / the people, so that they would eventually be blest," *LRCh*, 48.

[262] Maleczyński, 1-60.

[263] Gothic minuscula was not yet used in other parts of the region in the mid-thirteenth century, id., 11.

several examples[264] can be related to the script as used in contemporaneous Teutonic documents.[265] An examination of the dictation style revealed the influences of the chancellery of Bishop Heinrich of Curonia.[266] As for diplomatics, all the documents but one[267] follow the most popular contemporaneous formular, starting with the *intitulatio* and omitting the *invocatio*.[268]

Despite evident influence of the Teutonic Order on Mindaugas' chancellery, the consistent copying of the documents can indicate that the chancellery was functioning at the Lithuanian court,[269] in contrast to Edvardas Gudavičius opinion that the documents were written in Livonia.[270] Such an assumption can be supported by the following arguments: there were priests and Teutonic Brothers in Lithuania[271] and at the ruler's court[272] and it was a practice in early medieval monarchies that priests also served as royal scribes[273]; the cosistent copying of formulatory structure of the documents[274] indicates the existence of a primitive chancellery unlike that of the Teutonic Order.[275].

When analysing various aspects in which the Lithuanian Kingdom was manifested, the crucial role of the Livonian Order becomes evident. Although internationally recognised, Mindaugas' monarchy was quite weak and seems to have been incapable of functioning without Livonian help. In some aspects the Lithuanian Kingdom can be discussed as a kind of a crusader state, as the one manifested in

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[264] E.g., the land grant of 1257, *LUB* 1, no. 294, 382.

[265] Maleczyński, 10.

[266] Id., 10, 12, 40.

[267] *LUB* 1, no. 287, 372-73.

[268] Maleczyński, 12-13.

[269] Id., 39.

[270] Gudavičius, "Mindaugo karunavimas," 2.

[271] *LRCh*, 48.

[272] E.g., Siebert of Thuringia, ibid., 80.

[273] E.g., in the tenth-century England, Rowell, "A pagan's word," 150.

[274] Cf., documents as presented in Tables I - II in Maleczyński, 58-60.

[275] The best collections of the contemporaneus writs of the Teutonic Order are published in *LUB* 1 and *PUB* 1.

Jerusalem and later in Prussia. Especially, considering Bernard Ulrich Hucker's assumptions about the plans of foundation of a kingdom that the Lippe family cherished during the 1220s,[276] a kind of shift in the idea of a crusader state could be observed: if in the case of the Near East the occupied territories were consolidated into kingdom through the coronation of a representative of a European royal family,[277] the attempts of the bishop of Semgallia, Bernard of Lippe, were directed at the land actually governed, intending to establish a state on the basis of the lands assigned to his bishopric, and authorising his son Hermann to govern there.[278] The persistant and finally succesful efforts of the Teutonic Order to found a state in Prussia should also be remembered[279]; and in such a context the coronation of Mindaugas and the Lithuanian Kingdom could be seen as manifesting Livonian intentions leading to a new type of a crusader state, embodied by the shift from the state as a camp of conquerors, to the one established through alliance with and support of the actual local potentate.

Though highly speculative this idea can be advocated by the interpretation of documentary evidence. Karol Maleczyński had proved o be a forgery the document issued in the name of Mindaugas entitling the Livonian Order to inherit the Lithuanian Kingdom in the case ok king's heiress death,[280] and considering the circumstantial evidence suggested that it could have been forged around 1270 in connection with the death of Shvarno Danylovych.[281] In such a context the interpretation that the Livonian Swordbrothers utilised a possibility to legitimate their ambitions to the Lithuania state which was created by means of their resources yet not actualised as their possession seems reasonable.

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[276] Bernard Ulrich Hucker, "Liv- und estlädische Königspläne?" in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, ed. Manfred Hellmann, *Vorträge und Forschungen. Sonderband* 37 (1989): 63-106.

[277] For various aspects of Latin monarchy in Jerusalem, see a collection of articles by Hans E. Mayer, as published in Section 1 "The Monarchy," Mayer, *Kings and Lords in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Hampshire: Variorum, 1994).

[278] Hucker, 74-75.

[279] On foundation of the state of the Teutonic Knights, see Urban, *The Baltic Crusade*, 157-58.

[280] *PUB* 1.2, no. 106, 91-93.

[281] Maleczyński, 33.

By the same token, it should be noted that the role of having been the initiator of Lithuanian monarchy has been justly attributed to Mindaugas. And the supposition that Mindaugas "commissioned" the Livonian Order to assist in his claimants for the supreme power is not without basis. If interpreted formally, a simple commercial pattern in the Lithuanian-Livonian relations can be observed: on the one hand, the Swordbrothers provided Mindaugas military and diplomatic help and, on the other, he granted them the lands. Thus, longer silence of the sources about such payments, as it appear between the years 1255 and 1259, could partially prove a certain independent development of the monarchy, although the renewed "contracts" stand for its failures. The assumption follows that Mindaugas sought a sovereign monarchy, though probably he could not realise these ambitions without Livonian help. This could be well illustrated by the situation after which the land donation followed: the renewed donation of Sellonia in 1259 occurred after the Tartar incursion under the leadership of Burundaj in 1258 - 1259 which devastated not only southern, meaning peripheric, parts of Lithuania but also reached Mindaugas' patrimionial domain, or Lithuania in the narrow sense.[282]

From the aforerepresented instances it can be deduced that after 1255 Mindaugas' rule developed towards a successful establishment of the monarchy, although the state was still incapable to cope with major problems by its own resources, or, to be more precise, by the resources allied to the Lithuanian ruler.

On the other hand besides the already mentioned actions that the Livonian Order performed, it is hard to specify any other aspects of these Livonian-Lithuanian relations: during the period discussed no major military conflicts occurred, Lithuanian foreign policy was quite inactive, thus, there are no particular records illustrating the functioning of this alliance.

In conlusion, despite the initial weakness of Mindaugas' rule over Lithuania, it later developed towards the traditional "national" state and Mindaugas became a kind

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[282] On Burundaj's incursion, see *PLDR*, 348-49; Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 124.

51

of prefered authority on the domestic level and was recognised by the Slavic population in the territories under Lithuanian rule. Becoming a king of Lithuania, actually being empowered only over a part of the country (his partimony and the lands allied with it from the period of the land confederation ?) while using military and political support of the Livonian Order and papal protections, Mindaugas, by the end of his rule managed to establish an essentially primitive, yet formally traditional monarchy.

MINDAUGAS' COURT

In the discussions of the Lithuanian monarchy, the immediate surroundings of Mindaugas have been left aside. Therefore, the evidence for the "courtly"[283] life of the Lithuanian king will now be defined and examined.

For the persons in the proximity of Mindaugas, those who appear in the documents and narrative sources, their position, relationship with the ruler, and their characterisation should be analysed. The first hint of these persons is the reference to the "royal council" which can be assumed from the following land grants of: July 1253 made with *auxilio et consilio nobis ac regni nostri legitimis successoribus*[284]; October 1255 made *de consensu heredum nostrorum*[285]; and the one for Bishop Christian issued *praesentibus et consentientibus filiis nostris Replen et Gerstuchen* on 12 March 1254.[286] It can be suggested that in the first two grants, Mindaugas' sons were meant as heirs and successors, a highly probable assumption with no evidence to contradict it. Thus, the activities of Mindaugas' four sons should be once more summarised: it is known that Vaišelga was Mindaugas' "coregent" in Black Ruthenia and on the basis of toponymical evidence it is possible to assume that Ruklys also had possessions in

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[283] Henceforth, the word "court" and all the other words initially indroduced with quotation marks, including the derivatives of these words, will function as "working terms" denoting the context in which Mindaugas' royal personality was expressed; they do not necesserally imply those cultural characteristics as commonly understood in medieval scholarship.

[284] *LUB* 1, no. 252, 333.

[285] Ibid., no. 286, 371.

[286] *LUB* 1, no. 263, 345.

52

Lithuania[287]; apparently, Repeikis and Gerstukas were at the court in 1254 and agreed with these royal donations. Therefore, it can be concluded that the most significant matters of state and rule were decided among the male representatives of Mindaugas' family.

In the previous inquiry into the Lithuanian royal family also the role of Mindaugas' spouse, Queen Martha,[288] was ignored. Although the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* quite frequently refers to the queen, her one-sided portrayal suggests that Martha, as she appears in the *Chronicle*, is more a poetic construction than a real person. Still, her image as a truly Christian queen could be real since she is the only person at the Lithuanian court bearing a Christian name. Zenonas Ivinskis' hypothesis that she received it when she was baptised together with Mindaugas[289] cannot be proved by the source evidence; hence, Edvardas Gudavičius' assumption that Mindaugas' wife at the baptism in 1251 and the one at the coronation in 1253 were not the same person.[290] This view leads to the presupposition that Queen Martha was not a convert but possibly originally a Christian. Moreover, the fact mentioned by the anonymous Irish missionary that Lithuanians, Nalsens, and Yatvigians were raised by Christian nurses[291] testifies to the possibility that Christians were not rare among the *familiae* of local potentates. Queen Martha's influence on Mindaugas' political decisions is most probably a reality and should thus be considered. When describing Mindaugas' apostasy, the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* recounts the story about the queen's confessor, Siebert of Thuringia, who, upon Martha's request, was allowed to leave freely for Riga before the king "had all the Christians / in his lands seized and

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[287] Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 107.

[288] *Morta* in Lithuanian.

[289] Ivinskis, *Lietuvos istorija*, 171.

[290] Gudavičius, "1219 metu," 41.

[291] [12] *Dicti Lectaui Ietuesi et Nalsani de facili baptizantur eo quod a Christianis nutricibus ab ipsis cunabulis sunt enutrici*, Colker, 723.

53

some slain."[292] In the description of the following events, the Lithuanian queen embodies the Christian wife reproaching her ungrateful husband.[293]

It can be concluded that Mindaugas' family members formed the closest circle around the Lithuanian ruler: his adult sons were perfoming political roles having a kind of official status, and the queen had a certain influence on the king's decisions.

However, a specific investigation of the family members does not provide a full picture about the people at Mindaugas' court. Therefore, the lists of witnesses that appear in Mindaugas' documents need to be examined. The principal problem occurring in connection to this inquiry is that the only list of non-Teutonic[294] witnesses is included in the forged document of 1260.[295] Yet, as the forged grants were created from the originals,[296] the persons named as witnesses most probably were real. Among the witnesses listed which are important for this inquiry are the following persons: Mindaugas' brother-in-law Lengvenis and his *barones et consanguinei* Lygeikis, Štabe, Biksebune (probably Bikšys and Bunius), the dukes Gerdenis of Nalšia and Parbus of Neris, together with Parbus junior, and Vege and Vesegele.[297] Unfortunately, only three of these witnesses, namely Lengvenis, Gerdenis, and Parbus, are better documented persons. Lengvenis[298] is also known to be the valued ally of Mindaugas

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[292] *LRCh*, 80.

[293] "I tell you, if you had followed me, you / would be happier now. The Master honoured you and your people / and also myself in all manner of ways. He had ornaments / befitting a king made for you, and he instructed his priests to / teach you true justice. Now you follow that ape, Traniate, who / has betrayed you. Change your mind and follow me, for your / own good," *LRCh*, 81.

[294] The Teutonic witnesses are not under cosideretaion here, because they are enumerated only in the land grant made after the coronation (*LUB* 1, no. 252, 334) and their role at the court was episodic. For the second time the Teutonic witnesses appear in the forgery of 1260 (*PUB* 1.2, no.106, 92-93) and it is just a repetition of the names mentioned in June 1253, Maleczyński, 31.

[295] *PUB* 1.2, no.106, 91-93.

[296] Maleczynski, 26-28.

[297] The full list of witnesses is as follows:*venerabilis dominus Culmensis episcopus et magister Andreas fratrum predicatorum ac fratres sui, Languinus sororius noster, Lygeyke, Sthabbe, Bixebune nostri barones et consanguinei, Parbusse de Nere, Gerdine de Naals, Vege, Vesegele ibidem et Parbusse iunior; de fratribus predicatoribus frater Sindaramus, de fratribus minoribus frater Adolphus et sui socii et alii quam plures, PUB 1.2, no. 106, 92-93.*

[298] The indication of Lengvenis in the forgery is a valuable argument for the reality of the persons of other witnesses because, when starting his story dating ca. 1248, the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* written in 1290s introduces him saying:"his / name is well-known to many of you from old" (*LRCh*,

and Gerdenis, duke of Nalšia and Polotsk, who was a vassal of Vaišelga.[299] Parbus seems to have made his "career" at Mindaugas' court: from a faithful servant[300] to a wise chancellor,[301] becoming the duke of Neris who in later years appeared together with his son, Parbus junior. Based on the examples of Lengvenis and Parbus, it can be assumed that at Mindaugas' court there were persons not of high origin, probably relatives (*consanguinei*) and kismen or other allies (*barones*).

However, from the narrative sources a portrait of Treniota as the person closest to the king, a kind of "favorite," can be constructed. Treniota, a son of Mindaugas' sister,[302] is first recorded in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*.[303] From his characterisation it can be derived that Treniota appears in the environment of Mindaugas in the late 1250s, beginning his career as a military leader,[304] and in the early 1260s he is noted as the person closest to the king in political affairs. The *Rhymed Chronicle*, when describing the Samogithian address to Mindaugas, reads: "the Samogithians / sent messengers into Lithuania to King Mindaugas and to / Traniate. They took the latter aside and asked him to lend his / support to their cause and insure its success. Traniate said to / them, 'Tell me your business.'"[305] This passage reveals that Treniota was already known to be an influential person at the court and the one known to risk influencing the king. However, it is hard to find an exact reason for such behaviour: one example is not enough to demonstrate that addressing the king through a mediator was the usual procedure at the Lithuanian court; moreover, it

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38) since Lengvenis was remembered later, it is probable that the enumeration of other persons was based on actual knowledge of the forgers.

[299] Pašuta, 284, Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 156

[300] *LUB* 1, no. 263, 345.

[301] *LRCh*, 48.

[302] Treniota (*Traniate* in German, *Treniata* in Old Slavonic, *Trojnat/Strojnat* in Polish); *i znaide sobie Treniatu, sestrichicha Mindovgova*, PLDR, 358.

[303] *LRCh*, 79, passim.

[304] On Treniota as military leader, see *LRCh*, 80, 84-6.

[305] *LRCh*, 79.

could simply be the case that the Samogithians looked for the influential person who was personally interested in the hostile relations with the Livonian Order.[306]

Sources mention the following military leaders of Mindaugas: his unidentified son,[307] nephew Treniota,[308] Khval, Sirvydas Ruškaitis,[309] and an ally Ostafij Konstantinovich, a refugee from Riazan'.[310] Concerning the persons who are not Mindaugas' kinsmen, the latter three are worth attention. Nothing else except the fact that Khval is a Slavic name[311] and that he was killed in the area of Lutsk by the Galician-Volhynian troops can be derived from the sources.[312] However, Sirvydas, mentioned only once, is an important figure because he belongs to the Ruškaitis family. The Ruškaitis appear in the 1219 Peace Treaty in the list of the Samogithian dukes[313]; thus, the participation of Sirvydas in the events of 1259 prove that Mindaugas had allies of Samogithian origin. As far as Ostafij Konsatntinovich, is concerned, an interpretation that "noble" refugees from the neighbouring lands could make political careers at the Lithuanian court is possible.

To conclude, Mindaugas was surrounded by persons who formed his circle, among which his sons had the highest official positions although there were also other relatives and probably unrelated people, from both Lithuanian and Ruthenian lands.

Concerning the diplomatic procedure at the Lithuanian court, little can be said based on the sources, despite the fact that there are records mentioning Lithuanian-

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[306] Edvardas Gudavičius has demonstrated that in the record in the "Book of Depts of Riga" telling about a relative of Mindaugas whose wealth was seized by the Livonian Brothers and thus the conflict between them later developed into a war, most probably Treniota is meant, Gudavičius, "Ar Treniota," 64-65.

[307] *PLDR*, 324-25.

[308] *LRCh*, 80, 85-86

[309] *Khval i Sirvid Rjushkovich, PLDR*, 342.

[310] *PLDR*, 354-55.

[311] Gudavičius, "Del lietuviu," 27.

[312] Ibid. Edvardas Gudavičius proposed a hypothesis that Khval could have been a son of Duke Vsevolod being a son-in-law of Dangerutis was a constant ally and supporter of the Lithuanian army, ibid., 27-28.

[313] *A zhemot'skyi kniazi: Erdivil, Vykynt, a Rush'kovichev - Kintibut', Vonibut, Vizhek, i syn ego Vishlij, PLDR*, 252.

56

Ruthenian[314] or Lithuanian-Livonian agreements.[315] Scholars note that Baltic heathen agreements were usually reinforced through oath-taking[316]; moreover, when making treaties with the Christians, they also performed the customary ritual of the other party.[317] However, the records "are largely chronographical descriptions of treaty making rather than the original diplomatic acta."[318] As far as Mindaugas is concerned, the evidence of political gestures made by him or on his behalf records that the first step was sending messengers, frequently with gifts, to make a proposal[319]; the final ratification, in addition to the oath and, most probably, a writ, then included various consolidating gestures such as the following: the political marriage of Mindaugas' daughter to Shvarno Danylovych[320]; a gift-exchange between Mindaugas and the Livonian master[321]; the escorting as described in Mindaugas' farewell to Master Andreas[322]

The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* is the only source testifying to the reception of guests at the Lithuanian court; it is the description of the reception of the Livonian master at Mindaugas' residence.[323] The author of the *Chronicle* stresses the great honour showed by the Lithuanian ruler and his wife to their guests. Of course, this

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[314] *PLDR*, 324-25, 334-35; *LRCh*, 80.

[315] Ibid., 47-48; the Livonian-Samogithian alliance, ibid., 59-60.

[316] Rowell, "A pagan's word," 148.

[317] Ibid., 147-48.

[318] Ibid., 148.

[319] *PLDR*, 320-21, 322-23, 324-25; *LRCh*, 47, 80, 88.

[320] *PLDR*, 334-35.

[321] Master Burckhart von Hornhausen "sent a gift to King Mindaugas of Lithuania, and this / pleased him greately.

Nor did Mindaugas forget the Master. In return he gave him a / fine gift and greeted him in writting, and there was a great / friendship between the two," *LRCh*, 58.

[322] "Brother Andreas took / leave of his Brothers and rode to Lithuania to his friend / Mindaugas and the Queen. [...]. / The king rode with Brother Andreas for a part of his journey and / then the Master took leave of Mindaugas in a worthy manner and / continued to Germany," *LRCh*, 49.

[323] Master "was received by him [Mindaugas] as / befitting a lord. The Queen also went up to him and lovingly / welcomed him and all the Brothers who had come with / him. Afterward when it was time to eat, nothing proper to such / an occasion was omitted. They treated their guests well. After / they had eaten the meal and had been sitting around the table a / short time, the King thanked the Master of Livonia for coming / there to him," *LRCh*, 47.

record, as the whole *Rhymed Chronicle* in general, is intended to demonstrate the hounour shown to the Livonian Order; however, the fact that there is a favourable description of the reception, increases the probability that the heathen court of Lithuania followed a kind of commonly accepted etiquette.

The first evidence of Mindaugas' friendly contact with the Livonian Order is the record of Livonian military help at the battle of Voruta. The *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* describes the course of the battle saying that Germans, on the one side, and Galicians, Polovtsians, and Yatviginas, on the other, were chasing each other as if in a game.[324] The interesting fact is that the same description was included into the *Bykhovec Chronicle*,[325] and translators of the *Chronicle* into Lithuanian, most probably following the interpretation of Vladimir T. Pashuto,[326] reflected this "game" as a tournament.[327] Though it is hard to prove his interpretation, the fact is that the battle of Voruta must have been a peculiar military event and thus caused such an unusual description. Moreover, the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* attests a game/tournament held by Duke Rostislav in front of the town Jaroslavl',[328] and hence a tournament could in fact have been a reality among the knightly orders. In conclusion, the description of the battle of Voruta proves that the Livonian troops not only supported Mindaugas but also introduced a new type of fight, possibly a tournament.

A complete picture of courtly life cannot be created without a description of a royal residence. That Mindaugas possessed castles is evident from the sources: his land grants were issued *in curia*,[329] and he hid in castles from the sieges.[330] Unfortunately, the only place-name more concrete than Lithuania which is mentioned in the sources is

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[324] *gonishasia na poli podobnoj igrie*, PLDR, 322.

[325] *y honiszasia na poli podobno ihre*, PSRL 32, 133.

[326] Pašuta, 277.

[327] *BK*, 56.

[328] Original text: *Gordiashchu zhe sia emu, i sotvori igru pered gradom*, PLDR, 308; cf., Russian translation: *Krasujas', on ustroil turnir pered gorodom*, ibid.,309.

[329] E.g., *datum in Lettowia in curia nostra*, LUB 1, no. 252, 334.

[330] PLDR, 322-23; LRCh, 46.

Voruta Castle.[331] Thus, the concrete localisation of any of Mindaugas' residence is impossible on the basis of present evidence yet some general assumptions can be proposed. Mindaugas' lands inherited from his father were in the south-eastern part of modern Lithuania[332]; consequently, the castles located there can be associated with him. There are several mounds bearing evidence of a residential-type castles excavated in the area. All the buildings were of timber and the living-quarters were located in one of the towers.[333] Consequently, there is a possibility that Mindaugas resided in a similarly constructed castle. Besides this, excavations in the territory of the Lower Castle of Vilnius provided data of timber-houses and the remains of masonry buildings in the place of the later Grand Ducal Palace.[334] Moreover, considering the fact that the cathedral was also erected here, it is possible to relate these data to a probable residence of Mindaugas.

To conclude, during the ten years of existence of the Lithuanian Kingdom, the particular events that are recorded in the sources fit the common practice of a ruling court, albeit in primitive and undeveloped form.

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[331] *PLDR*, 322-23.

[332] Gudavičius, "Litva," 226.

[333] *Lietuvos architekturos istorija* [The history of Lithuanian Architecture], vol. 1, *Nuo seniausiu laiku iki XVII a. vidurio* [From the ancient times to the mid-seventeenth century], ed. Jonas Minkevičius (Vilnius: Mokslas, 1987), 27-32.

[334] Ibid., 31.

CHAPTER IV. THE SUCCESSORS OF MINDAUGAS

TRENIOTA (1263-1264)

The *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* summarising the events following Mindaugas' murder tells that Treniota started to rule over the whole land of Lithuania and Samogithia. Then he is said to have invited Tautvila[335] from Pinsk to share Mindaugas' inheritage and to have killed him. Thereafter, Treniota was killed by Mindaugas' stablemen.[336]

Treniota's episodic rule has become a frequent topic of inquiry of Lithuanian medieval scholarship.[337] However, the one aspect, the legitimacy of his succession, is of principal interest for the inquiry of this thesis. Edvardas Gudavičius pointed out that there is a contradiction between Treniota's participation in the anti-Mindaugas plot and his successful claims to the throne inheritance; hence, concluding that the succession was arranged only among Mindaugas' kinsmen and that the most powerful of them won,[338] since the only direct heir, Vaišelga, fled for Pinsk.[339]

In conclusion, in the immediate succession after Mindaugas' death the actual power of the candidate was decisive; however, the family relation leading to the proximity to the king during his life-time recognised his claim for succession legitimate. this conclusion contributes a possible explanation to the earlier described attemots of Mindaugas to establish the direct hereditary succession in Lithuania,

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[335] In the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* Treniota calls Tautvila "brother," however this does not reflect their relation in reality. Most probably, they were cousins, or just close relatives, Gudavičius, "Ar Treniota," 63.

[336] *PLDR*, 358-59.

[337] The principal focus was the fact that the next Lithuanian ruler was of Samogithian origin. However, Edvardas Gudavičius demonstrated that the Samogithian origin of Treniota is a creation of Maciej Stryjkowski and cannot be proved by the source evidence; moreover, the contemporaneous sources provide a single alternative, that Treniota was either Lithuanian or a person of unspecified origin, Gudavičius, "Ar Treniota," 67.

[338] Ibid., 65-66.

[339] *PLDR*, 359.

apperantly demonstrating that it had to be introduced and was not a custom of the country.

VAIŠELGA (1264-1267)

The *Galician-Volhynian* and the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* present nearly identical accounts of Vaišelga's return to Lithuania after Treniota's murder; however, only the Livonian author, although slightly mixing up the facts,[340] indicated that a messenger was sent to invite him from his place of refuge.[341] The Galician-Volhynian scribes indicate that Vaišelga returned to Lithuania with the troops of Novgorudok, although Lithuanians greeted him happily, as the son of their lord,[342] he had to defeat many the enemies in Lithuania and later with the help of Shvarno Danylovych seized Deltuva and Nalšia.[343] It must have been then the murderer of Mindaugas, Daumantas,[344] fled with his people to Pskov.[345]

To conclude, the way in which Mindaugas' son established his rule indicates that despite the fact that he was a monk, Vaišelga kept an authoritative position in Black Ruthenia, and was almost immediately recognised in Lithuania (meaning Mindaugas' patrimony), even though he had to reestablish the inherited claim to rule over the Lithuanian minor duchies.

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[340] According to the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* Vaišelga was informed immeadiately after Mindaugas' murder (*LRCh*, 88). Edvardas Gudavičius assumed that unprecise records in the *Chronicle* occured because there was no Livonian informant at the Lithuanian court after Mindaugas' had expelled all the Christians from the country, Gudavičius, "Ar Treniota," 66.

[341] "When Mindaugas was murdered, the / best subjects immediately decided to sent a messenger to Russia / to make the news known to Mindaugas' son," *LRCh*, 88.

[342] *Litva zhe vsia prijasha i s radost'ju, svoego gospodichicha, PLDR*, 358.

[343] *PLDR*, 358-61.

[344] Daumantas (d. 1299) left Lithuanuia for Pskov, was elected duke of Pskov, baptised an Orthodox, and recognised the St Timofey of the Russian Orthodox Church. For an elaborated study on Daumantas in English, see S.C. Rowell, "Between Lithuania and Rus': Dovmont-Timofey of Pskov, his Life and Cult," *Oxford Slavonic Papers* (1992): 1-33. See also articles in Lithuanian: Arturas Dubonis, "Daumantas: nuodeme ir šventas gyvenimas" [Daumantas: the sin and the saintly life], *Naujasis židinys* 5 (1994): 50-58; Povilas Vitkevičius, "Daumantas," *Mokslas ir gyvenimas* 12 (1996), 1 (1997): 14-15, 5-7.

[345] *PSRL* 3, 58.

The *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* does not mention any of Vašelga's relations with Livonia, constantly stressing his alliance with Vasyl'ko and Shvarno; however, the *Rhymed Chronicle* records Vaišelga's immediate contacts with Master Conrad of Mandern.[346] Moreover, the manner in which the Lithuanian-Livonian contacts were renewed is worth attention, since the *Chronicle* reads: Vaišelga "sent to the Master and asked / him to bring help, reminding him that he, too, was a Christian."[347] Livonian military support was provided, and Vaišelga released the Christians imprisoned from Mindaugas' reign.[348] Thus, good Lithuanian-Livonian relations were reestablished.

This evidence can be so interpreted that Vaišelga continued the initial Livonian policy of Mindaugas. He demonstrated himself as a Christian ruler, rectifying his father's mistake, and used Swordbrother's military support. Moreover, he gave up Lithuanian interests in Samogithia, since the Livonian Order invaded these lands just after Vaišelga's messengers had been received.[349] However, the usual practice of a successive monarchy would assume the confirmation of donations and privileges of the predecessor,[350] the silence of the sources about this being true during Vaišelga's reign does not imply that the Lithuanian-Livonian relations reached the status they had had it in Mindaugas' time.

The Lithuanian-Galician alliance seems to have been much firmer. According to the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* Vaišelga started ruling together with Shvarno. The former in Lithuania, the latter in Black Ruthenia.[351] Later Vaišelga refused from

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[346] *LRCh*, 88.

[347] Ibid.

[348] Ibid.

[349] Ibid., 89.

[350] Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 149.

[351] Actually the *Chronicle* reads that Vaišelga and Shvarno were coruling Lithuania, *kniazhachu Vojshelkovi vo Litvie i Shvarnovi* (*PLDR*, 362), and the fact that Shvarno was more or less constantly in Novogrudok (ibid.) and Vaišelga returned to his (Mindaugas'?) lands of Lithuania (ibid., 360-61) implies that Vaišelga stayed in Mindaugas' place and Black Ruthenia was under Shvarno's rule.

the position of the ruler and returned to the monastic life leaving Shvarno in his place.[352]

Vaišelga was killed quite soon after his abdication by Lev Danylovych, who envied him leaving Lithuania to Shvarno.[353]

SHVARNO DANYLOVYCH (1267-1269)

Very little is known about Shvarno's rule. Actually, the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* tells both events, Vaišelga's murder and the end of Shvarno's rule, in a sequence ending with Shvarno's death.[354] Although Shvarno's rule was short and did not caused any significant political changes, its precise dating and interpretation of the circumstances of its end are crucial for reaching conclusions also about Mindaugas' reign.

Edvardas Gudavičius, comparing Polish and Novgorodian source evidence and considering the circumstantial evidence, came to the conclusion that Shvarno's death and the end of his rule in Lithuania are not the same event. His arguments are as follows: the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* is extremely hostile towards Traidenis[355]; Lev inherited Kholm from Shvarno later than Traidenis started ruling over Lithuania[356]; in February 1270 a Lithuanian army invaded Livonia,[357] which does not correspond to the tendencies of Shvarno's rule.[358] From this evidence it can be concluded that Vaišelga kept to his oath to rule in Lithuania for three years,[359] then turned over power to Shvarno, returned to monastic life and was soon killed by Lev

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[352] *PLDR*, 364-65.

[353] Ibid., 364-67.

[354] *Kniazhashchju she po Voishelkovi Shvarnovi v Litovskoj zemli, kniazhiv zhe liet nemnogo i tako priestavisia*, ibid., 366-67.

[355] Traidenis (*Trojdej* in Old Slavonic, *Throiden* in German). The *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* introducing the beginning of Traidenis rule reads: *Nacha kniazhiti v Litvie okan'nyj, i bezakon'nyj, prokliaty, nemilostivyj Trojdej, egozhe bezakon'ja ne mogokhom pisati srama rati. Tak bo biashet' bezakon'nik, jako i Antiokh Surskyj, Irod Erusalimskyj i Neron Rimskyj. I ina zliejsha togo bezakon'ja chiniashe, PLDR*, 366.

[356] *A Lev nacha kniazhiti v Galichie i v Kholmie po bratie svoem' po Shvarnie, PLDR*, 366.

[357] *LRCh*, 96-967.

[358] Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 157.

[359] *PSRL* 3, 58.

Danylovych. The date of Shvarno's expulsion from Lithuania more or less coincides with Vaišelga's death. Although unprovable, this coincidence leads to an interpretation that Vaišelga, if alive, could have been a guarantee for Shvarno's rule; and as soon as he perished, Shvarno's legitimate succession to the throne lost its basis. To strengthen the argument that Shvarno could have been considered as an heir of Mindaugas, one more evidence can be adducced of Mindaugas' heiress death.[360] As neither the style nor the script of the forgery is related to any other of Mindaugas' documents, Karol Maleczyński suggested that there is a time gap between the earlier forgeries and this one, hence it can be dated to the 1270s.[361] Apparently, Shvarno as a successor was also recognised by the Livonian Order.

MINDAUGAS' LITHUANIA IN THE LATER RECORDS

The expulsion of Shvarno Danylovych from Lithuania marks the end of the rule of Mindaugas' dynasty.[362] However, once recognised a kingdom, Lithuania retained this concept in medieval political thought. Moreover, it seems that there were attempts to keep Lithuania as it was once established by Mindaugas': a heathen country under Christian rule.

On 20 January, 1268 Pope Clement IV issued a bull in which Lithuania is treated as the heritage of Christian King Mindaugas, thus Přemysl-Ottokar II is

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[360] *PUB* 1.2, no. 106, 91-93.

[361] Maleczyński, 33.

[362] There are two sholarly theories concerning dependance of Traidenis to Mindaugas' kindered: the first proposed by Vladimir T. Pashuto and supported by Lithuanian scholars is based on the record in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* which recontes Lev Danylovych's warrning of his son Jurij to beware of Lithuanian revenge for Vaišelga's murder (*PLDR*, 384-85), Pašuta, 290, 421; Gudavičius, "Traidenis," *Voruta* 12 (1991): 2. However, the first theory do not consider other record from the same *Chronicle* informing about good relations between Traidenis and Lev: *Trojdenevi zhe eshche kniazhachu v Litovskoj zemlie, zhiviashe so L'vom vo velichie ljubvi, shljuchi mnogy dary mezhi soboju, PLDR*, 365. The second theory is suggested by Michał Giedroyć basing on the *Bykhovec Chronicle* and attributes Traidenis to the house of Kentauras, Giedroyć, "The Rulers," 1-22; Rowel, *Lithuania*, 52. Though the first theory is derived from a more reliable yet contradicting source, the records about Treniota's rule, demonstrating a definite change of Mindaugas' political trend and convincing Giedroyć's argumentation, leaves the question open for scholarly investigation. Nevertheless, Traidenis' rule is not considered in this thesis as there is no source evidence that he had claimed to be an heir of Mindaugas' Lithuania.

authorised to reestablish there a Christian Kingdom.[363] Bronisław Włodarski had suggested that Přemysl-Ottokar II intended to found a kingdom in Lithuania under the rule of a Polish duke.[364] These intentions did not result in a new Kingdom of Lithuania; however, Mindaugas' Lithuania survived and was referred to as a state; neither was it forgotten by the Grand Dukes of Lithuania.

In the letter to Pope John XXII, Grand Duke Gediminas calls Mindaugas his predecessor and blames the Teutonic Order to be at fault for his apostasy and dissapearence of the Christian Kingdom of Lithuania.[365] Still it is hard to agree with Vladimir T. Pashuto who interpreted word praedecessor literally as indicating dynastic succession of the Lithuanian rulers.[366] However, this self-perception of the grand duke as a successor of Mindaugas, was probably meant to indicate him in the same position of a ruler of legally the same country. Gediminas uses the same term praedecessor when referring to other Grand Dukes of Lithuania[367] and his actual predeccessor and brother[368] Vytenis.[369] In conclusion: once introduced, a concept of the Lithuanian state survived in both Western European and Lithuanian political thought.

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[363] *Regi Boemie Illustri, [...] tibi auctoritate concedimus, ut si terram Letowie, de qua predicte sedis auctoritate Regnum extitit constitutum, presidente illi clare memorie Mindota, qui post receptum baptismatis sacramentum auctoritate apostaolica coronatus in Regem fuit, tandem a quibusdam perditionis filiis crudeliter interfectus, de manibus inimicorum tuo ministerio eripi, domino presprestante, contigerit, in illa Regni solium, sicut prius, erigere libere valeas, ac illius regimini personam fidelem et ecclesie Romane devotam preficere, prout bono statui fidelium et augmento catholice fidei videris utilius expedire, VMPL* 1, no. 151, 79.

[364] Gudavičius, *Kryžiaus karai*, 153.

[365] *praedeccessor noster, rex Mindowe, cum toto suo regno ad fidem Christi fuit conversus, sed propter atroces iniurias et innumerabiles prodiditiones magistri fratrum de domo Theutonica omnes a fide recesserunt, GL,* no. 2, 23.

[366] Pašuta, 421.

[367] *multociens praedecessores nostri nuntios suos dominis archiepiscopis Rigensibus miserunt pro pace facienda, GL,* no. 2, 23.

[368] Pašuta, 421.

[369] *Item praedecessor noster, rex Viten, misit litteras suas, GL,* no. 2, 25.

SUMMARY

The following events that occurred in Lithuania during the reign of King Mindaugas and his successors are considered to be the most relevant for the inquiry of this thesis and, therefore, should be summarised:

1. Mindaugas succeeded in establishing his supreme power over Lithuanian lands by elimination and subjugation of other claimants, using the support of Livonian military and diplomatic resources.

2. After Mindaugas' baptism, Lithuania became a country under Christian rule and was recognised as a patrimony of St Peter.

3. Mindaugas' coronation performed, most probably, following the papal *ordo*, legally equalised the Lithuanian Kingdom to other Western Christian states ruled by kings as papal vassals.

4. Having been crowned, Mindaugas concerned himself with ecclesiastic matters, succeeded in the establishment of the Lithuanian diocese, and influenced the nomination of the Lithuanian bishop.

5. The king manifested himself as the supreme authority of the country, who could dispose of its lands.

6. Mindaugas introduced a chancellery at his court, which followed the most general patterns of medieval European documentation.

7. During the reign of King Mindaugas, elements of courtly life corresponding to the Western European framework occurred in Lithuania: he was surrounded by a circle of influential persons who acted as his councillors, military leaders, and witnesses.

8. King Mindaugas sought to ensure the direct inheritance of the throne and attempted to nominate an heir during his life-time.

9. Mindaugas' dynastic successors followed his policy in its main aspects.

10. Once founded as a Christian kingdom, the concept of Lithuanian state remained as such in Western European and Lithuanian political thought.

Reviewing all this evidence, it is possible to conclude that there were events that can be interpreted as features of royalty, however limitted.

Clearly Mindaugas' path to the throne was backed by an heir's claim to rule; however, his efforts to crown one of his sons as king of Lithuania testify to an attempts at securing dynastic succession through the paternal line. In addition, having received the crown through the appropriate ecclesiastical ceremony, supposingly the papal *ordo*, Mindaugas fitted himself into the outlines of a Latin Christian monarch. The circle of kinsmen that surrounded Mindaugas, their status and activities, testify to the existence of a royal court, however primitive. The consistency of political activities, under the rule of Mindaugas, while he was Christian, can be traced in the activities of his heirs, as well.

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69

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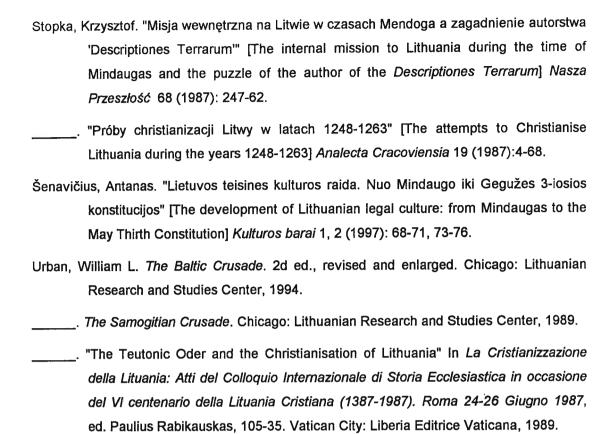
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