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The Reaction of the Teutonic Knights towards the Muslims — „Saracens” in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and in the Baltic Region

During the 12th century the Crusaders competed with the local Muslim population which survived the first period of fighting in the Latin East and had remained within the Kingdom's territories since 1099. The Crusaders' acceptance of the Muslim population and their success in building economic, agricultural and trade relations with the Muslims had changed with the rise of the Muslim resistance in the second half of the 12th century in the Eastern parts of the Mediterranean basin — Egypt and Syria¹. With the rise of Saladin and the growth in strength of the Muslim army, the Crusaders experienced a decade of persistent attacks, beginning in 1177 in Montgisard near Rama (Ramla) and ending with the great defeat in the battle of Hattin in July 1187². This battle marked the final stage of the first kingdom; after this defeat the Crusader cities quickly fell into Muslim hands³. Only the Third Crusade in 1191, followed by the alliance of the warriors in Europe led by King Richard I (Lionheart), managed to bring about the Latin Kingdom's recovery, creating a new Crusader entity in the coastal area, away from Jerusalem which remained under Muslim rule with the exception of short periods during the mid-13th century⁴.

¹ S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades. The Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Frankish East 1100–1187*, vol II, Cambridge 1952, p. 403–435; C. Tyerman, *God's War. A New History of the Crusades*, Cambridge (Mass.), 2006, p. 341–336.

² *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fi'l-tārīkh. The Years 541–589/1146–1193. The Age of Nur al-Din and Saladin*, Part 2, translated by D.S. Richards, Aldershot: 2007, p. 253–324.

³ *Chronique d'Ernoult et de Bernard le Trésorier*, ed. L. Mas Latrie, Paris 1871, p. 167–171; P. Herde, *Die Kämpfe bei den Hörnern von Hittin der Untergang des Kreuzritterheeres (3. and 4. Juli 1187). Eine historisch-topographische Studie*, „Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte”, vol. LXI, 1966, p. 1–50.

⁴ J. Prawer, *Histoire du Royaume Latin de Jérusalem*, tome 2, traduit par G. Nahun, Paris

In this reality, characterized by a continuous war with the Muslims (Ayyubids) as well as mutual distrust among different Christian groups, the Teutonic Military Order was eventually established in Acre in 1198⁵. This was followed by another attempt to re-conquer the Latin Kingdom in 1197, in the wake of the „German Crusade”. The warriors fought in the siege of Toron (Tibnin) and contributed to the occupation of the coastal cities of Sidon and Beirut⁶. In addition, the warriors who remained in the Kingdom went on to establish the Teutonic Military Order. This new Military Order joined the well-known military organizations — the Hospitallers and the Templars, who had been fighting the Muslims from their beginning in the 12th century⁷.

Had this fragile political situation and military activity any influence on the later history and tradition of the Teutonic Military Order? This question and other assumptions are at the base of this article. In the article I define and characterize the history of the Teutonic Order in the Latin East, focusing on its battles against the Muslims, as well as attempting to explain how these military campaigns contributed to its later military attitude toward the Teutonic enemies in Northern Europe, specifically Prussia and Livonia.

In the Frankish East, in the 13th century, the Teutonic Order had participated in all the major campaigns against Muslims in the territories of the Latin Kingdom and its surroundings, together with the other military orders and the Crusader nobility, beginning with the Fifth Crusade on Egypt in 1218–1221⁸. The fighting in the Nile delta in Egypt ended in defeat. In the battle of Damietta the Teutonic knights suffered the loss of thirty brethren killed in the battlefield⁹. Despite the defeat in Egypt, the Teutonic Knights won recognition by and the admiration of the German nobility who participated in the siege of Damietta. Due to their contribution to the battle in Egypt, they received grants and donations of property in

1975, p. 69–99; J. Richard, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, vol. XIA, translated by J. Shirley, Amsterdam 1979, p. 185–199.

⁵ *Annales Colonienses maximi*, MGH, SS, vol. XVII, ed. G.H. Pertz, Hannover 1861, p. 805; M.-L. Favreau, *Studien zur Frühgeschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, Stuttgart 1974, p. 64–66.

⁶ *L'Estoire de Eracles Empereur et la Conqueste de la Terre d'Outremer*, [in:] *Recueil des historiens des Croisades. Historiens occidentaux* [RHC Occ.], vol. II, Paris 1859, p. 227–228.

⁷ J. Riley-Smith, *The Knights of St. John in Jerusalem and Cyprus 1050–1310*, London 1967, p. 32–59; M. Barber, *The New Knighthood. A History of the Order of the Temple*, Cambridge 1994, p. 6–37.

⁸ J. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade 1213–1221*, Philadelphia 1986, p. 160–161; K. Miltzer, *Von Akkon zur Marienburg, Verfassung, Verwaltung und Sozialstruktur des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1309*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, vol. LVI, Marburg 1999, p. 33–36.

⁹ *Iohannes Codagnelli Gesta obsidionis Damiatae 1217–1219*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH, *Scriptorum*, vol. XXXI, Hannover 1903, p. 490: *...ita decapitate sunt sine numero de Christianis: de Templariis L milites, de Alamannis XXX, de Hospitalariis XXXII.*

northern Europe, France and northern parts of the Holy Roman Empire¹⁰. They also received assistance in purchasing land in the western Galilee — in Mialiya and its surroundings¹¹.

The Sixth Crusade of 1228–1229, led by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, caused a change in the basic concept of the Crusader movement. Emperor Frederick II managed to regain many parts of the Holy Land by means of political negotiations, without use of military power or confrontation with Muslim troops¹². The Emperor's achievements, including control over Jerusalem by the Crusaders (albeit without the Temple Mount), as well as many areas in the Galilee including Nazareth, Toron and Hunin, viewed as a failure by the Church authorities and as a contradiction to the Crusade mission¹³. The Teutonic Knights were among the few who supported Frederick II and accompanied him on his journey to Jerusalem. They also participated in his coronation ceremony as the king of Jerusalem in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre¹⁴. Pope Gregory IX attacked the Teutonic Order, attempting to remove them from positions of power and status, but due to resistance by the order's Magister Hermann von Salza as well as the order's prominent role in the defense of the Latin Kingdom, the Knights survived this crisis¹⁵. Hermann von Salza also sent a letter to Gregory IX, describing the crusade's achievements, among them construction of the Montfort Castle in the Galilee and contribution to

¹⁰ K. Van Eickels, *Knightly Hospitallers or Crusading Knights? Decisive Factors for the Spread of the Teutonic Knights in the Rhineland and the Low Countries, 1216–1300*, [in:] *The Military orders, Welfare and Warfare*, vol. II, ed. H. Nicholson, Aldershot 1998, p. 77–78; T. Krämer, *Der Deutsche Orden im heutigen Frankreich*, [in:] *L'Ordine Teutonico nel Mediterraneo. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studio Torre Alemanna, (Cerignola) — Mesagne — Lecce 16–18 ottobre 2003 (Acta Theutonica I)*, ed. H. Houben, Galatina 2004, p. 246–247.

¹¹ H.E. Mayer, *Die Seigneurie de Joscelin und der Deutsche Orden*, [in:] *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas*, eds. J. Fleckenstein, M. Hellmann, Sigmaringen 1980, p. 210–213; N.E. Morton, *The Teutonic Knights in the Holy Land 1190–1291*, Woodbridge 2009, p. 53, 154.

¹² J.M. Powell, *Frederick II and the Muslims: The Making of an Historiographical Tradition, Iberia and the Mediterranean World of the Middle Ages*, ed. L.J. Simon, Leiden 1995, p. 263–264; T. Mastnak, *Crusading Peace, Christendom, the Muslim World and Western Political Order*, Berkeley 2002, p. 148–152; Y. Friedman, *Peacemaking: Perceptions and Practices in the Medieval Latin East*, [in:] *The Crusades in the Near East*, ed. C. Kostick, London 2011, p. 229–232, 238–239.

¹³ J.L.A. Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica Frederici Secundi*, vol. III, Torino 1963, p. 92; J. Powell, *Patriarch Gerold and Frederick II: The Matthew Paris Letter*, „Journal of Medieval History”, vol. XXV, 1999, No. 1, p. 19–26.

¹⁴ *Coronatio Hierosolimitana 1229*, MGH, *Constitutiones et Acta Publica Imperatorum et Regum*, Band II, ed. L. Weiland, Hannover 1896, nr 121; E. Kantorowicz, *Frederick the Second 1194–1250*, New York 1957, p. 183–211; B. Hechelhammer, *Kreuzzug und Herrschaft unter Friedrich II. Handlungsräume von Kreuzzugspolitik (1215–1230)*, *Mittelalter-Forschungen*, vol. XIII, Ostfildern 2004, p. 296–306.

¹⁵ H. Kluger, *Hochmeister Hermann von Salza und Kaiser Friedrich II*, *Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, XXXVII, Marburg 1987, p. 78–82.

the protection of the Frankish Kingdom¹⁶. In response, the Pope sent a call to all Christians in 1230, ordering them to strengthen the Teutonic resistance and contribute to the establishment of the castle in the Galilee, serving as a boundary between Christianity and the infidels, thus a stronghold defending Christianity from attacks of the „Saracens”¹⁷. The Pope also praised the Teutonic Knights as the „new Maccabees” of that period, chasing away the „Saracens” from Holy Land soil¹⁸.

This was one of the first times that Teutonic charters used the term „Saracens”, an expression which had become prevalent amongst the Crusaders with regard to their Muslim enemies. The expression was based on the term for the Middle Eastern wind — *Sharkya*, which swept across the eastern lands bringing with it nomadic Arab tribes from the Arabian desert to settle close to the Mediterranean shores in the region of the Byzantine Empire¹⁹. This unique term also indicated the strength of the Muslims and their power, but was mainly used to describe the resentment felt by the Crusaders in the Latin East and in Europe towards their enemies, whether Muslims or pagan tribes, or even Christians who opposed the Pope and his emissaries²⁰.

The fragile military situation in the Latin Kingdom caused by continuous fighting against the Muslim was sustained for a further decade. In 1244, after a series of conquests and attempts to strengthen the Latin kingdom, a period of military deterioration begun, marked by losses of territory. The Egyptians, feeling threatened by the Crusaders who joined the Muslim forces from Damascus and northern Syria, sought help from the Hawarismians (Khoresmians) — tribes, who came from Central Asia and stormed the Mediterranean area²¹. The collision between the

¹⁶ *MGH Constitutiones, et acta publica imperatorum et regum inde ab anno 1198 usque ad annum 1272*; *MGH Leges*, ed. L. Weiland, Hanover 1896, nr 121, p. 162: *Verisimile enim videtur, quod si dominus imperator in gratia et concordia ecclesie Romane transivisset, longe efficacius et utilius prosperatum fuisset negotium Terre Sancte [...] Et dum de restitutione Terre Sancte tractaretur, dominus Iesus Christus sua solita providential ita ordinavit, quod soldanus restituit domino imperatori et christianis civitatem sanctam Ierusalem cum suis tenementis...*

¹⁷ *Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici ex tabularii regii Berolinensis codice potissimum*, ed. E. Strehlke, Berlin 1869; repr. Toronto and Jerusalem 1975, nr 72 (1230), p. 56–57: *castrum Montfort iuxta territorium Acconense edificare ceperunt, positum in confinio paganorum, per quod christianis in partibus illis immense dinoscitur utilitas provenire, cum quasi quoddam frenum Sarracenos compescens ab insultibus consuets fidelibus circumquaque securam tribuat libertatem...*

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, nr 72 (1230), p. 56: *Dilecti filii fratres hospitalis sancta Marie Theutonicorum in Ierusalem, novi sub tempore gracie Machabei.*

¹⁹ A.G.C. Savvides, *Some Notes on the Terms Agarenoi, Ismaelitai and Sarakenoi in Byzantine Sources*, „Byzantion”, vol. LXVII, 1997, p. 90–94.

²⁰ N. Housley, *Fighting for the Cross, Crusading to the Holy Land*, New Haven 2008, p. 210–223; A. Forey, *The Military Orders and the Holy War against Christians in the thirteenth centuries*, „English Historical Review”, vol. CIV, 1989, p. 4–5, 12–15.

²¹ C. Cahen, *The Turks in Iran and Anatolia before the Mongol Invasions*, [in:] *A History of the Crusades, The Later Crusades, 1189–1311*, vol. II, ed. R.L. Wolff, H.W. Hazard, Madison 1962,

rival forces took place in the fields of the village Hirbiya or in French — La Forbie, in the area between Ascalon and Gaza, in the southern part of the Latin Kingdom²².

The battle of La Forbie, which took place on October 17th 1244, resulted in the collapse of the Crusader army. The Egyptians attacked the Syrian Muslim forces dispersed throughout the area, and the Crusaders were now on their own against Egyptian forces and their collaborators. The Crusaders fought vigorously against the superior Muslim forces, but were finally defeated²³. According to Crusader sources 325 Hospitallers were killed, leaving only 26 survivors, along with 312 Templars with merely 33 survivors and 397 (of some 400) Teutonic warriors²⁴. Many tried to escape from the battle, heading north toward Ascalon, including the Patriarch of Jerusalem — Robert of Nantes, who described his escape wounded from the battlefield as resulting from the defeat and terrible slaughter²⁵. It seems that the Muslim way of fighting differed notably from that of the Crusaders' and they were better adapted to the environment, climate and terrain in the Latin East. The Muslims used light archers and moved quickly from site to site, unlike the Crusaders who used heavy armor and equipment. One Medieval source described the Muslims' use of bows and arrows as „rain from Hell”²⁶.

It is well known that the Crusader forces, including the military orders, included in their troops groups of foreign soldiers, such as the Turcoples who were Christians Turks, also serving in the Byzantine army. These were trained soldiers familiar with the reality of the struggle in the Frankish East, as well as the Muslim fighting methods and equipment. Their experience assisted the Crusaders in military confrontations with the Saracens²⁷. The Turcoples are mentioned in Crusader

p. 670–674; S. Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols, The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193–1260*, Albany 1977, p. 273–275.

²² S. Lotan, *The Battle of La Forbie (1244) and its Aftermath — Re-examination of the Military Orders Involvement the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Mid-Thirteenth Century*, „Ordines Militares. Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders”, vol. XVII, 2012, p. 57–58.

²³ *Eracles*, s. 427–432; *Letter to the Prelates of France and England*, Matthew Paris, *Chronica majora*, 57.4, 1872–1883, London, p. 337–344.

²⁴ *Continuation de Guillaume de Tyr de 1229 à 1261, dite du manuscrit de Rothelin*, RHC Occ., vol. II, s. 564: *la fin li nostre ne porent soffrir cele grant planté de mescreanz, ainz furent desconfist en tel maniere que des frerez del Temple n'en eschapa, que xxxvi Templierz, et des Hospitalierz jusqu'à xxvi et iii frerez de l'Ospital Nostre Dame des Alemanz.*

²⁵ *Letter to the Prelates of France and England*, Matthew Paris, *Chronica majora*, 57.4, s. 342: *Nos vero patriarcha, in quos, nostris peccatis exigentibus, omnis calamitas supervenit, indigni a Domino martyrio deputati, evasimus semivivi, apud Ascalonam cum nobilibus viris, constabulario Acconensi, Phillippo de Monteforti, militibus et peditibus, qui evaserunt de bello, receptaculum capientes.*

²⁶ *Rothelin*, p. 544: *a traire saietes et quarriaux que pluie ne gresil ne peust pas faire greigneur oscurté.*

²⁷ Y. Harari, *The Ministry Role of the Frankish Turcoples: A Reassessment*, „Mediterranean History Review”, vol. XII, 1997, No. 1, p. 76–79.

sources as an important force which helped the Teutonic knights in organizing their forces during the fight. The Teutonic Grand Master included several Turcopoles in his entourage²⁸, which demonstrated the Teutonic Knights and their leadership's regard for the Turcopoles and their military experience in fighting against the Muslims in the Latin East. The Crusaders appear to have used mainly Christian forces, attempting to avoid combining their forces with Muslim troops. The unique experience of fighting together with the Muslim forces from Syria was rare, and did not persist after the defeat in the battle of La Forbie in 1244.

In 1260 the Mongols invaded Syria, also threatening the Latin kingdom. The Kingdom's leaders assembled in Acre to discuss the Muslim call to join them in their attack on the Mongols. The Crusader leaders wanted to aid the Muslims, but the Teutonic Grand Master Anno von Sangerhausen insisted on avoiding military involvement, advocating remaining in the Crusader positions. His argument was based on a long standing experience of the Saracens not keeping their promises to the Christians. The Crusaders feared that the Muslims will invade the Kingdom, and after ending the battle against the Mongols attack the Christians. The Teutonic Grand Master's opinion prevailed and eventually contributed to the Kingdom's survival after the Mongols' defeat in Ayn Jalut and the Mamluks' victory in 1260²⁹.

During that period the Teutonic Order developed a relationship with the local Muslim inhabitants in the Galilee villages and around Acre and Tyre. The Teutonic knights and several Christian institutions, such as the other military orders who acquired lands and villages in parts of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, needed the local population, which was mostly Muslim, for agricultural supports and the provision of goods. They also needed local assistance for negotiations and communication with the local population³⁰. The Teutonic brethren also used interpreters, some of them Muslim and others eastern Christians (Syrians), who spoke Arabic

²⁸ I. Sterns, *The Statutes of the Teutonic Knights. A Study of Religious Chivalry*, Philadelphia 1969, p. 291–294.

²⁹ *Rothelin*, p. 637: *et li mestrez de l'Ospital de Nostre Dame des Alemeinz dist que ce ne seroit mie bon, car il avoient esprouvé assez de foiees, et n'avoit mie grammant, que li Sarrazin ne tenoient mie ne trives ne convenances aus Crestienz si bien comme il devoient, ainz I mesprenoient assez de foiz; et se il se combatoient avecques les Sarrazins encontre les Tartarinz et li Tartarin estoient desconfist et vaincu, et li Crestien, qui ne seroient mie mort en la bataille, seroient tuit las et il et leur chevaux, se cele tres grant planté de Sarrazins leur coroit sus legierement, seroient tuit les Crestien, qui demouré estoient en la bataille, ou mort ou priz. En ceste maniere seroit toute la terre que li Crestien tiennent toute pardue; Crusader Syria in the Thirteenth Century, *The Rothelin Continuation of the History of William of Tyre with part of the Eracles or Acre text*, translated by J. Shirley, Aldershot 1999, p. 118–119; P. Jackson, *The Crisis in the Holy Land in 1260*, „English Historical Review”, vol. XLV, 1980, p. 502–503.*

³⁰ J. Riley-Smith, *Some Lesser officials in Latin Syria*, „English Historical Review”, vol. LXXXVII, 1972, p. 9–19; H. M. Attiya, *Knowledge of Arabic in the Crusader States in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries*, „Journal of Medieval History”, vol. XXV, 1999, No. 3, p. 206–209.

and were familiar with the local culture of the Latin East. Some charters from that period note the use of local interpreters in the Teutonic headquarters for purchasing land and signing contracts with the local Crusader nobility and other parts of the local population³¹.

From the aftermath of the Battle of La Forbie in 1244 up to the fall of the Latin Kingdom in 1291, the Crusaders did not enjoy much peace and stability. The Muslims had become stronger and the Crusaders could not repeat their 12th century success. The Mamluks, led by Baybars, managed to undermine the military balance in the region, conquering most of the Crusader fortifications in the 1260s — Nazareth, Arsor, Caesarea, Safed, Jaffa, Antioch and finally, in 1271, the strongholds of the Hospitallers in Crac des Chevaliers and the Teutonic Order in the Montfort Castle³². The Frankish Kingdom remained a small entity, located close to the Muslim territories. The kingdom survived only due to the peace agreements (*hūdna* in Arabic) signed with the Muslims and with the help of Christians in Europe and in the Mediterranean basin³³.

This was not sufficient for the Kingdom's survival, and it fell after the Battle of Acre, the major city of the Latin Kingdom, in May 1291³⁴. The Mamluk attack on Acre came as a response to the Christians' attitude towards a group of Muslims visiting the city. A number of Italian merchants attacked foreign Muslims on the streets of Acre and killed them. This was in violation of the agreements signed with the Mamluks and was considered a serious provocation by the Muslim world. The Crusaders then sought peace with the Mamluks but failed³⁵. This negative at-

³¹ *Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani 1097–1291*, ed. R. R ö h r i c h t, Innsbruck 1893, nr 1399 (1274), nr 1435 (1280).

³² D. M o r g a n, *The Mongols in Syria, 1260–1300*, [in:] *Crusade and Settlement. Papers Read at the First Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East and presented to R. C. Smail*, ed. P. E d b u r y, Cardiff 1985, p. 231–235; C. M a r s h a l, *Warfare in the Latin East, 1192–1291*, Cambridge 1992, p. 25–26, 32.

³³ P. T h o r a u, *The Lion of Egypt, Sultan Baybars I and the Near East in the Thirteenth Century*, London 1987, p. 69–88; P. M. H o l t, *Early Mamluk Diplomacy (1260–1290)*, Leiden 1995, p. 69–88.

³⁴ *Excidii Aconis Gestorum Collectio. Magister Thadeus Civis Neapolitanus, Ystoria de Desolatione et Conclvacione Civitatis Aconensis et Tocivs Terre Sancte. Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 202, ed. R.B.C. H u y g e n s, with contributions by A. F o r e y and D.C. N i c o l l e, Turnhout 2004; D.P. L i t t l e, *The Fall of 'Akkā in 690/1291: The Muslim Version*, [in:] *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization, in Honor of Professor David Ayalon*, ed. M. S h a r o n, Leiden 1986, p. 159–181.

³⁵ *Cronaca del Templare di Tiro (1243–1314), la caduta degli stati crociati nel racconto di un testimone ocular*, ed. L. M i n e r v i n i, Napoli 2000, nr 244 (480), s. 199: *Si avint .i. jour, par l'euvre de l'ennemy d'infer, que volentiers porchasse males heuvres entre bones gens, [et] fist enssy que ses cruysés, qui estoient venus pour bien faire et pour l'arme d'yaus au secours de la sité d'Acre, si vindrent a ssa destrussion, car il coururent .i. jor par la terre d'Acre et mirent a l'espee tous les povres vilains qui porteent les biens a Acre a vendre et forment et autres choses, guy estoient sarazins des cazaus dou pourpris d'Acre, et ausi meimes tuerent pluissors suriens qui porteent barbes et estoient de*

titude towards Muslims, and the Christians' hostility towards them, finally brought about the fall of the Latin Kingdom, ending some 200 years of Christian rule in the Levant.

While strengthening its position in the Holy Land in the 13th century, the Teutonic Order was at a crossroads in northern Europe. In 1230 the Teutonic Knights invaded Prussia in the Baltic region, north of Poland. This was in response to a call by the duke Konrad of Masovia³⁶. The Teutonic Order also received approval from Emperor Fredrick II, who accepted their mission in Prussia and gave them a charter in 1226, known by the name of the Golden Bull of Rimini³⁷. The Teutonic Order now had a new battleground in Prussia, starting a new chapter in its history.

While being one of several military factions in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, in Prussia the Teutonic Order was the main faction, leading the battles against heathen tribes who opposed the advance of Christianity into the Baltic region. The Teutonic Knights fought a ruthless war against the infidel enemies. This fighting lasted until 1283, when the conquest of Prussia was completed and the Teutonic *Ordensstaat* was established³⁸.

While the Muslims adhered to the concept of holy war (*Jihad* in Arabic), there is no evidence of the brutality and cruelty as it appeared in Prussia or Livonia³⁹. The description of the warfare in the Baltic region is based mainly on Teutonic medieval chronicles. One of the most important medieval sources written at the time is the „Chronicon terrae Prussiae”, written in 1326 by a priest member of the Order — Peter von Dusburg⁴⁰. The heathen tribes in Prussia were known for their brutal

la ley de Gresse, que pour lor barbes les tuerent en change de sarazins, la quele chose fu trop mau faite, et ce fu la chose pour coy Acre fu frise de sarazins, con vos entenderés.

³⁶ E.N. Johnson, *The German Crusade on the Baltic*, [in:] *A History of the Crusades*, vol. III, ed. H.W. Hazard, Madison 1975, p. 569–571, 576–577; G. Labuda, *Die Urkunden, Über die Anfänge des Deutschen Ordens in Kulmerland und in Preußen in den Jahren 1226–1243*, [in:] *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas*, eds. J. Fleckenstein, M. Hellmann, Sigmaringen 1980, p. 299–316.

³⁷ W. Hubatsch, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, „Quellensammlung zur Kulturgeschichte”, vol. V, 1954, p. 46–53; U. Arnold, *Der Deutsche Orden und die Goldbulle von Rimini, „Preußenland”*, vol. XIV, 1976, p. 46.

³⁸ F. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge 1975, p. 5–22; N. Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades, 1305–1378*, Oxford 1986, s. 266–280.

³⁹ E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades. The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier 1100–1525*, London p. 134–139; M.–L. Favreau–Lilie, *Mission to the Heathen in Prussia and Livonia: The Attitudes of the Religious Military Orders toward Christianization*, [in:] *Christianizing Peoples and Converting Individuals*, eds. G. Armstrong and I.N. Wood, Turnhout 2000, p. 151–154.

⁴⁰ *Peter von Dusburg Chronik des Preussenlandes*, translated by K. Scholz, D. Wojtecki, Darmstadt 1984; *Petrus de Dusburg, ‘Chronicon terrae Prussiae’. Scriptorum Rerum Prussicarum*, vol. I, ed. M. Töppe, Leipzig 1861, repr. Frankfurt am Main 1965, p. 1–219.

behavior, pillage and destruction of the Teutonic positions⁴¹. Peter von Dusburg describes the heathen tribes with great distaste, depicting them as immoral⁴². They were also accused of being led by Satan, who forced them to fight against the Christians⁴³. Peter Von Dusburg also describes their pagan manners and sacrifice of human victims as well as their custom of hurting the wounded and burning prisoners of war. The Teutonic Knights seem to have followed the heathen tribes' brutal behavior. They murdered infidel warriors captured in battle, exiled women and children, and looted villages following the battle⁴⁴.

Another chronicle, from the first half of the 13th century, describes the Christianization of Livonia (Latvia and Estonia) by a priest, a representative of the Church — Heinrich von Livland⁴⁵. The chronicler describes the cruel way in which infidels fought the new Christian population settled in Livonia. He writes that these Christians went outside the fort of Uexküll to cultivate their lands, where they were attacked by a group of heathen warriors. Several Christians were killed on the spot and others suffered a cruel death through sacrifice⁴⁶.

Another Christian source called „Livländische Reimchronik” from the end of the 13th century also describes the pagan tribes' cruelty⁴⁷. This source emphasizes the heathens tortured and sacrificed German prisoners to their gods before burning the bodies⁴⁸. The Germans' cruelty during battle was thus considered a response to the heathen warriors' behavior in the battlefields of Prussia and Livonia⁴⁹.

The Teutonic Order and German rulers used the terminology learnt in the Latin East, from the wars against the Muslims, namely the term „Saracens”. This

⁴¹ *Peter von Dusburg Chronik*, s. 88; V. I. Matuzova, *Mental Frontiers: Prussians as Seen by Peter von Dusburg*, [in:] *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500*, ed. A. V. Murray, Aldershot 2001, p. 254–255; R. Mažeika, *Violent Victims? Surprising Aspects of the Just War Theory in the Chronicle of Peter von Dusburg*, [in:] *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier*, ed. A. V. Murray, Aldershot 2009, p. 124–134.

⁴² *Peter von Dusburg Chronik*, p. 104: *Hospitibus suis omnem humanitatem, quam possunt, ostendunt nec sunt in domo sua esculenta vel potulenta, que non communicent eis illa vice. Non videtur ipses, quod hospites bene procuraverunt, si non usque ad ebrietatem sumpserint potum suum uxor cum marito, filius cum filia omnes inebriantur.*

⁴³ *Peter von Dusburg Chronik*, p. 344: *datus ei fuit stimulus carnis angelus Satane, qui ipsum colaphizavit.*

⁴⁴ *Peter von Dusburg Chronik*, s. 86; W. Urban, *The Livonian Crusade*, Washington 1981, p. 59.

⁴⁵ *Henricus, Chronicon Livonie*, MGH, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, vol. XXXI, eds. L. Arbusow and A. Bauer, Hannover 1955.

⁴⁶ J. A. Bradbury, *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, Madison 1961, p. 52.

⁴⁷ *Livländische Reimchronik*, ed. L. Meyer, Paderborn 1876.

⁴⁸ *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, trans. J. C. Smith, W. L. Urban, Bloomington 1977, nr 759, 12; nr 1416, 21; nr 1665, 24.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, nr 1519, 22; nr 1799, 25–26; nr 2363, 33–34; nr 3351, 46; S. Ghosh, *Conquest, Conversion, and Heathen Customs in Henry of Livonia's Chronicon Livoniae and the Livländische Reimchronik*, „Crusades” vol. XI, 2012, p. 94–98.

word had become a description of the heathen tribes fighting the Teutonic Order in Prussia or the German population in Livonia. The Roman Emperor Otto IV called in 1211 the pagan warriors fighting the Christians in Livonia Saracens, describing them as enemies of Christianity. This leader glorified the members of the Military order in Livonia known as the *Schwertbrüder*, claiming that they fought a ruthless war against the Saracens from the north⁵⁰.

The Chronicle of Peter von Dusburg includes further evidence of the unusual use of the name „Saracen”. The Chronicler describes a Teutonic warrior named Hermann called Sarracenus. He was a member of the Teutonic Order defending the fortress of Königsberg⁵¹. Why was Hermann Sarracenus, brethren of the Order, called by this name? Was it a symbol of his courage in the battlefield? Did he serve in the Latin Kingdom before moving to Prussia? There is no answer to these questions in this Teutonic chronicle. In any case, it is unlikely that this warrior was a Muslim who joined the Teutonic Order and continued his military service in Prussia. Teutonic sources have no other examples of such unique cases.

There are other references to Muslims in the chronicle of Peter von Dusburg related to the fighting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. He describes the Teutonic heroic fighting against the Muslim invaders in Acre in 1291, where many of the Teutonic warriors were killed⁵². After the defeat in Acre and the loss of the Holy Land, Peter von Dusburg wrote a lament (*Klage* in German language) about the fall of the Holy Land and the hard feelings it aroused⁵³. He also described in exaggerated terms a military campaign which occurred in 1300 on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. The Crusaders, encouraged by the Mongols, attempted to re-conquer the Holy Land and recover their positions in the Latin Kingdom, but failed. He suggested that the fighting began in Armenia and continued along the coast of the Mediterranean up to Gaza. He also wrote that the Christians chased the Muslims south to the Egyptian border and killed 200,000 Muslim warriors⁵⁴.

⁵⁰ D. Seward, *The Monks of War*, London 1972, p. 94; R. Mažeika, *Of Cabbages and Knights: Trade and Trade Treaties with the Infidel on the Northern Frontier, 1200–1390*, „Journal of Medieval History”, vol. XX, 1994, p. 64.

⁵¹ *Peter von Dusburg Chronik*, s. 206.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 508.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 516: *Sic ergo tu, o sancta terra promissionis Deo amabilis et angelis sanctis venerabilis et universo mundo admirabilis a Deo electa et preelecta, ut te presencia sua visibiliter illustraret et in te liberacionis nostre sacramenta ministrando genus humanum redimeret, posita es desolata et merore consumpta. Factus est Dominus inimicus, precipitavit omnia menia tua, dissipavit municiones tuas, dissipavit quasi ortum tentorium tuum, demolitus est tabernaculum tuum, oblivioni tradidit festivitates et sabbatum, abiecit in opprobrium in indignacione furoris regem et sacerdotem.*

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, s. 520: *Anno Domini MCCC Tartari exeuntes a sedibus suis invaserunt Sarracenos et primo in Capadocia, deinde in partibus Seleucie sive Antiochie, inde in Armenia maiori et minori, abinde in tota terra promissionis et in Damasco et in Gaza usque ad confinia Egypci, in quibus omni-*

There is also use of the term „Saracen” in the Holy Land in other medieval sources, describing the 1291 Battle of Acre. This source mentions the Teutonic leader in Acre at the time, Konrad von Feuchtwangen. He was presumed to have commanded the retreat of the Teutonic Order from the city and its departure to Europe. Konrad chose to do this when he realized that the city was deteriorating. He decided that he would not allow his men to be killed for no reason. When the Teutonic Knights opposed this act, Konrad von Feuchtwangen promised to avenge the fall of Acre and the deaths of its Christians by killing as many infidels as possible in Prussia. He calls them „Saracens”⁵⁵.

This description of events in Acre was rejected by Udo Arnold, who revealed a number of medieval sources from that period, from the region of *Franken*, which mention Konrad’s involvement in this region⁵⁶. In addition, archaeological evidence discovered in Acre supports this point of view, showing that the Teutonic compound in the northeastern part of Acre had been totally burnt and completely destroyed, making it likely that most of the Teutonic brethren as well as their leader were killed in the battle with the Muslims in 1291⁵⁷.

It is well known that Konrad von Feuchtwangen was familiar with the military reality between Muslims and Crusaders in the Latin East. In 1261 he served as Treasurer of the Military Order in the Latin East, following which he was ap-

bus regionibus plus quam CC milia Sarracenorum occiderunt; S. Schein, *Gesta Dei per Mongolos 1300. The genesis of a non-event*, „English Historical Review”, vol. XCIV, 1979, p. 810–811.

⁵⁵ Ottokars österreichische Reimchronik nach den Abschriften Franz Lichtensteins, MGH, *Historica Deutsche Chroniken (scriptores qui vernacular lingua usi sunt)*, vol. II, parts 1 and 2, ed. J. Seemüller, Dublin and Zurich 1974, lines 51795–51823: *der meister ires ordens: sô getânes mordens gestat ich an iu niht, ob man mich lebentigen siht ir sult des haben dheinen wân daz ich tuch dem soldan âne schuld und âne nôt antwurte in den tôt. daz waer an mir ein missertât unsers ordens regal hât, die wil ein brooder einen tac mit êren geleben mac, sô sol er gerne leben. Ich wil iu des min triwe geben, swaz uns der soldan hie zAkers hât getân, daz leit und die ande ze Priuzen und in Nifenlande wil ich an den heiden rechen mit iu ritten frechen, miner brüederschaft, daz ez mich von der heidenschaft riwet dester min. nû brâchen ouch die heiden in und heten daz hûs gewonnen; die brüeder kûm entrunden an iriu schef mit ile. si fuoren an der wile von dem stad hin ûf die fluot.*

⁵⁶ U. Arnold, *Deutschmeister Konrad von Feuchtwangen und die ‘preußische Partei’ im Deutschen Orden am Ende des 13. und zu Beginn des 14. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Aspekte der Geschichte. Festschrift für Peter Gerrit Thielen zum 65. Geburtstag*, Göttingen–Zürich 1990, p. 22–40.

⁵⁷ B.Z. Kedâr, *The Outer Walls of Frankish Acre*, „Atiqot”, vol. XXXI, 1997, p. 172; D. Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, A Corpus, The Cities of Acre and Tyre*, vol. IV, Cambridge 2009, s. 134; S. Lotan, *Governing the Teutonic Order from ‘Outremer’ — The Teutonic Headquarters Competing in the Last Era of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, [in:] *Herrschaft, Netzwerke, Brüder des Deutschen Ordens in Mittelalter und Neuzeit. Vorträge der Tagung der Internationalen Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Deutschen Ordens in Marburg 2010*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, vol. LXXII, ed. K. Miltzner, Weimar 2012, p. 33.

pointed the Teutonic Commander of the region⁵⁸. After serving in these positions he joined the Teutonic knights in Prussia, where he learned the reality of the violent struggle in the Baltic region. Konrad von Feuchtwangen remained a strong advocate of the Teutonic settlement and resistance in Prussia, and mostly objected to the persistent fighting in the Latin East. At the end of 1292, he was elected Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, in which role he continued in his efforts to change the focus of the Military Order from the Mediterranean basin to the Baltic region in Prussia and in Livonia⁵⁹.

After moving its headquarters from the Latin Kingdom to Venice and later, in 1309, to Marienburg in Prussia, the Teutonic Military Order concentrated its fighting on the Baltic region. In the 14th century the heathen tribes continued to be treated badly, with anger and a desire for revenge. It was a ruthless war that caused the destruction of these tribes and the exile of the remaining people to Lithuania, far from Prussia⁶⁰. Lithuania kept its infidel population until 1386. It became a favorite destination for the Teutonic knights and other sects of European nobility (mostly from France and England) traveling to demonstrate their knightly values. These journeys to the Baltic area were known by a unique term — *Reisen*. In these campaigns the Christians continued to call their enemies by the name of Saracens, and Lithuania was called the land of the Saracens⁶¹.

The war against the Lithuanians continued after the conversion of the majority of the population in that region. The last of these battles took place in 1410 in the fields of Tannenberg — Grunwald, determining the Teutonic Order's fate in Prussia. The military order fought against the united forces of the Polish army and the Lithuanians, along with many mercenaries and other soldiers from Eastern Europe. The battle was decided with the fall of Teutonic Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen and the military retreat of the remaining Teutonic warriors into their

⁵⁸ *Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici*, nr 121 (1261) 113, nr 126 (1273), s. 117; D. Wojtecki, *Studien zur Personengeschichte des Deutschen Ordens im 13 Jahrhundert*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa III, Wiesbaden 1971, p. 45–48; U. Nieß, *Konrad von Feuchtwangen*, [in:] *Die Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1194*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, vol. XL, ed. U. Arnold, Marburg 1998, p. 41–45.

⁵⁹ K. Militzer, *From the Holy Land to Prussia: The Teutonic Knights between Emperors and Popes and their Policies until 1309*, [in:] *Mendicants, Military Orders and Regionalism in Medieval Europe*, ed. J. Sarnowsky, Aldershot 1999, p. 77–78.

⁶⁰ F.L. Carsten, *The Origins of Prussia*, Oxford 1956, p. 5–88; M. Burleigh, *Prussian Society and the German Order*, Cambridge 1984, p. 1–9.

⁶¹ W. Paravicini, *Die Preußenreisen des europäischen Adels*, vol. I, Sigmaringen 1989, p. 118–130; A.V. Murray, *The Saracens of the Baltic: Pagan and Christian Lithuanians in the Perception of English and French Crusades to Late Medieval Prussia*, „Journal of Baltic Studies”, vol. XLI, 2010, No. 4, p. 416–420.

strongholds in Prussia⁶². According to the Teutonic Order, this harsh defeat was caused by the „Saracens” from Lithuania and other places in Eastern Europe⁶³.

Surprisingly, this term was still in use more than 100 years after the Teutonic Order lost its position in the East, far from the Baltic region. It seems that the Muslims had left an imprint on the Order due to the intensity of fighting and their influence on events even after the Crusades.

It seems that the Teutonic Order had adopted the image of the Muslim warrior — Saracen — during its military activity in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, and continued to use it when the scene for its activity had changed into the Baltic region. The Saracens from the East became a unique name used for all enemies who opposed the Christians in the Baltic region, whether Prussians, Lithuanians, or even Christians opposing the Teutonic Order in the 15th century. This was another effect of the Crusades movement on the European warriors fighting against their enemies in the outlying regions of medieval Europe.

⁶² K. Militzer, *Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, Stuttgart 2005, p. 143–146; H. Bookmann, *Zu den politischen Zielen des Deutschen Ordens in seinen Auseinandersetzungen mit dem preußischen Stände*, „Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschland”, vol. XV, 1966, p. 84–88.

⁶³ *Chronique de religieux de Saint-Denys*, *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*, Bd. III, eds. T. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke, Leipzig 1866, p. 453; *Chronique de religieux de Saint-Denys*, p. 453: *Nuper rex Cracovie christianus, fratris sui regis Sarraceni vallidis victus precibus, bladorum copiam per Prusciam mittere disposuerat et infra loricas et instrumenta bellica abscondi fecerat, unde trecenti viri armari poterant quod armis muniant Sarracenos, illa, servando modum communem, retinuerunt ac distribuerunt ad placitum, et hoc mortalis discordie fomitem ministravit; Enguerran de Monstrelet, Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Band III, eds. T. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke, Leipzig 1866, p. 455: *vint avec ses Poulenois en l'aide des diz Sarrasins, ausquelz il exhorta moult de recommencer la guerre à l'encontre des Pruciens...**

