

## **History of Lithuanian and Old Prussian Names in the Documents of the German Order**

### **Historia de los Nombres Lituanos y Prusianos Antiguos en los Documentos de la Orden Alemana**

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**Abstract:** This article explores the role of authentic archival legal, administrative, and diplomatic documents from the Middle Ages and later periods in researching Old Prussian and Lithuanian historical names. It aims to highlight the critical role of German Order documents in preserving the old Baltic onomasticon, focusing on examples from the Prussian and Lithuanian naming systems. The article employs critical comparative analysis of historical documents, name reconstruction methods, and graphemic-morphemic analysis, which reveal that authentic archival documents serve as the primary and most reliable sources of empirical material, while historiographic works are essential for verifying the collected data. The topic is crucial for scholars of both linguistics and history research fields, and is broadly discussed in numerous scientific works. A detailed examination of two Old Prussian and Lithuanian historical personal names illustrates not only the depth of specific name studies but also the impact of synchronic and diachronic analysis on research outcomes. This article also underscores the continuity of research into the Old Prussian and Lithuanian historical onomasticon, leveraging peripheral contextual data to support hypotheses in challenging nomenclature cases. It emphasizes the need for further investigation into historical onomastics, particularly of extinct languages, through the discovery of new sources of empirical material. In this way, the knowledge about the Old Prussian nomenclature is refined, especially when trying to identify the formation of Old Prussian personal names, and on the basis of this, to determine the etymology. Precisely determining the etymology of the names of a extinct language is an essential factor in assessing not only the origin of the name, but also the possible impact of the use of foreign languages on it.

**Keywords:** Old Prussians, Historical onomasticon, The German Order, The German Order documents.

**Resumen:** Este artículo explora el papel de los auténticos documentos de archivo legales, administrativos y diplomáticos de la Edad Media y periodos posteriores en la investigación de los antiguos nombres históricos prusianos y lituanos. Su objetivo es poner de relieve el papel fundamental de los documentos de la Orden alemana en la preservación de la onomástica antigua del Báltico, centrándose en ejemplos de los sistemas de nomenclatura prusiano y lituano. El artículo emplea un análisis crítico comparativo de documentos históricos, métodos de reconstrucción de nombres y análisis grafémico-morfémico, que revelan que los documentos de archivo auténticos sirven como fuentes primarias y más fiables de material empírico, mientras que las obras historiográficas son esenciales para verificar los datos recopilados. El tema es crucial para los estudiosos tanto de la lingüística como de la historia, y se discute ampliamente en numerosos trabajos científicos. Un examen detallado de dos nombres personales históricos prusianos y lituanos antiguos ilustra no sólo la profundidad de los estudios de nombres específicos, sino también el impacto del análisis sincrónico y diacrónico en los resultados de la investigación. Este artículo también subraya la continuidad de la investigación sobre la onomástica histórica prusiana antigua y lituana, aprovechando datos contextuales periféricos para apoyar hipótesis en casos de nomenclatura problemática. Subraya la necesidad de seguir investigando la onomástica histórica, en particular de lenguas extinguidas,

mediante el descubrimiento de nuevas fuentes de material empírico. De este modo, se perfeccionan los conocimientos sobre la nomenclatura prusiana antigua, especialmente cuando se intenta identificar la formación de los nombres personales prusianos antiguos y, a partir de ahí, determinar la etimología. Determinar con precisión la etimología de los nombres de una lengua extinguida es un factor esencial para evaluar no sólo el origen del nombre, sino también el posible impacto del uso de lenguas extranjeras en él.

**Palabras clave:** Viejos prusianos, Onomasticón histórico, La Orden Alemana, Documentos de la Orden Alemana.

## Introduction

The history of the Baltic onomasticon likely begins when the first Baltic names were recorded. The earliest references to Baltic ethnonyms, when the Balts were still referred to as *Aestii*<sup>1</sup>, appear in world historiography as early as the 5th century BC. One of the key factors that drew attention to these so-called barbarian peoples and their lands was the amber and its legendary trade route into civilized Europe. This route, often linked to the Silk Road, significantly contributed to the fame and interest in the resources controlled by the Balts (see Jovaiša 2014: 89.; Ivoška 2019: 20.). The German Order, officially known as the Order of the Teutonic Knights of St. Mary's Hospital in Jerusalem (Lat. *Ordo fratrum domus hospitalis Sanctae Mariae Teutonicorum Ierosolimitanorum*; De. *Orden der Brüder vom Deutschen Hospital Sankt Mariens in Jerusalem*), became particularly interested in the unbaptized Baltic peoples. With the Pope's blessing, they began their conquest of the Baltic tribes in the 13th century, starting with the Old Prussians (Ivoška, *ibid.*, 7).

The tragic colonialist policies of the German Order not only led to the destruction of the Old Prussian nation, its culture, and language but also resulted in meticulous documentation of the conquered territories. The German Order's chancellery, which operated until the Order's dissolution, accumulated an extensive archive of documents that recorded numerous Old Prussian place names and personal names. Following this, the Latvian tribes were conquered, and the Livonian Order was established in their territories. The Lithuanian tribes, however, managed to unite and resist the German Order's attacks, remaining unenslaved. Despite this resistance, the German Order's documents provide substantial evidence of Old Lithuanian names, as the dynamic relations between the Duchy of Lithuania and the German Order are well-documented. A notable example is the war

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<sup>1</sup> The origin of the Balts was thoroughly examined by Eugenijus Jovaiša in his monograph *Aisčiai. Kilmė* (2012: 7, 57).

route descriptions<sup>2</sup> compiled between 1384 and 1402, which serve as significant early sources of historical data.

This article aims to highlight the critical role of German Order documents in preserving the old Baltic onomasticon, focusing on examples from the Prussian and Lithuanian naming systems. The research employs critical comparative analysis of historical documents, name reconstruction methods, and graphemic-morphemic analysis.

### **Historical Onomasticon of Old Prussians and Lithuanians**

Understanding the history of the Baltic onomasticon requires a dual approach: first, assessing the commonalities across all Baltic languages – both those that survive and those that have left written remnants – and second, identifying their differences. Interestingly, while commonalities do exist, they are significantly fewer than the differences, which primarily manifest at the linguistic level, including grammar, lexicon, and onomasticon. The differences can either aid or complicate onomastic research, depending on the context. One key distinction influencing the study of proper names is whether the language has survived to the present day. This article explores the nuances of proper name research influenced by this factor. The two living Baltic languages (Lithuanian and Latvian) that have survived to this day, as well as the sparse written legacy of the extinct Prussian language, largely contained in the Prussian onomasticon, and the remnants of the Curonian onomasticon, are what the world's most archaic Baltic linguistics has inherited from the vast Indo-European language family. Modern Baltic linguistics inherits two living languages, Lithuanian and Latvian, and remnants of extinct ones, such as Old Prussian and Curonian. The surviving written records of the extinct languages, particularly in the Old Prussian and Curonian onomasticon, provide valuable insight into the broader Indo-European linguistic family. While it may seem easier to research the onomasticon of living languages, given their ongoing development, this process is still complex. One critical factor is tracing the historical development of the onomasticon to ensure the completeness, validity, and reliability of findings.

For example, consider the historical Lithuanian name *Mindaugas*, which remains popular today. Its morphology and etymology highlight the challenges of relying solely on modern Lithuanian data. The name is of appellative origin, meaning its stems are linked to common word roots with specific semantics. However, identifying these roots can be ambiguous. The first stem, *min-*, could derive from various Lithuanian verbs: *minti* 'to tread, step on'; *minti* 'to remember, keep in mind'; or *minti* 'to process flax or hemp' (LKŽe). The second stem, *-daug-*, is relatively clearer, likely related

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<sup>2</sup> They are kept in the Königsberg State Archives. Theodor Hirsch collected and published them in the second volume of *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*, 662-714, in 1863.

to *daũg* ‘a large quantity, abundance’ (ibid.). This ambiguity is further contextualized by examining modern Lithuanian surnames: for *min-*, there are single-stem surnames such as *Mineĩkis* and *Mineikà*, and double-stem surnames such as *Mingáila* and *Mìntautas*. For *-daug-*, examples include single-stem surnames such as *Dáugėla* and *Daugėlāvičius*, and double-stem surnames such as *Daugnóras* and *Daugvilà* (LPDB). These examples illustrate that onomastic research should not rely only on synchronic data from the living language but also consider diachronic development and the broader historical linguistic context.

The name *Mindaugas* requires a broader interpretation, incorporating historical knowledge. Mindaugas was the only Lithuanian king who united the Lithuanian tribes and established the foundations of Lithuanian statehood (VLE). By the 13th century, he was well-known across Europe, and his name originated and existed long before it appeared in written records. Both stems of the name, *Min-* and *-daug-*, are found in both Lithuanian and Prussian names, which Zinkevičius (2008: 83, 116) considers to be inherited. Early records of the king’s name in foreign clerical languages, such as 1257 *Myndowe dei gracia rex Littowie* (De. *Mindowe, König von Littauen*) (PUB I 25, 39), do not suggest alternative equivalents in other languages. Instead, these records reflect an adaptation of his name to the spelling conventions of the respective clerical language. For further discussion on *Mindaugas*, see Būga (1911/1958: 233–235). Comparable single-stem Old Prussian names include *Mine*, *Mineko*, and *Mynito* (Trautmann 1925: 60). Two-stem Old Prussian names that feature *min-* as either the first or second component include *Mynnegayle*, *Minnegaude*, *Gaylemynne*, and *Cantemynne* (ibid. 28, 42). Similarly, for the stem *daug-*, examples include names such as *Daugil*, *Daugin*, *Daugis*, and two-stem names such as *Daukant* and *Daukinte*<sup>3</sup> (ibid. 23).

The treatment and interpretation of names differ significantly when they belong to a dead language with limited linguistic heritage and data. For example, the Old Prussian personal name *Surtheyken* provides an intriguing case for analysis. According to privileges recorded in the German Order Chancellery, preserved in one of the most critical sources for Baltic onomastic research, German Order Folio No. 105 (henceforth, OF 105), the Prussian relatives *Nirwex* and *Surteyken* were granted land in Sambia, in the village Girdewithingen, in 1339: *Item dedim[us] fidelib[us] n[ost]ris nirwex [e]t filio fr[at]ris sui furtheyken none vncos in campo Girdewithigen* (OF 105 240<sup>r</sup>). Reinhold Trautmann, the author of the most comprehensive work on Old Prussian personal names, included this name in his study but did not explain its formation or origin (cf. Trautmann 1925: 101). The author of this article paid his attention to the anthroponym *Surtheyken* in his doctoral thesis (Ivoška

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<sup>3</sup> Trautmann (1925: 135) considers the stem *dau-* [daw-] to be a reduced variant of *daug-*.

2018: 79) and treated it as a two-stem personal name, possibly derived as *\*Sur-taik-(?)* or *\*Sur-teik-(?)*. For the first stem, *Sur-*, we can compare Old Prussian personal names such as *Surtewe* (Sambian) (Pierson 1873: 723), *Surdote*, *Surglande*, *Surgaude*, *Surteike* (Lewy 1904: 61), *Surwabuno*, *Surwange*, and *Marcus Surwille* (Trautmann 1925: 101, 151). Similarly, Lithuanian personal names such as *Sùr-gantas*, *Sùr-gautas*, and *Sùr-vilas* provide parallels, with their first stem linked to the Old Prussian term *sur-gi*, meaning 'around, about' (Zinkevičius 2008: 141; LPDB). Old Prussian place names also offer context, including *Surweisten* (a village in Sambia), *Surweyte* (an estate near Elbing) (Pierson 1873: 723), *Surninos*, *Sursieynis*, and *Surteynen* (Gerullis 1922: 177). Additionally, the extinct Prussian place name †*Surkurn* is notable; its component *Sur-* has been linked by Blažienė (2005: 202–203) to the Old Prussian *\*sur-gi* or *\*zur-gi*, both meaning 'around, about'. This analysis demonstrates how combining even sparse remnants of a dead language with contextual linguistic and historical data can shed light on the origins and structure of personal names.

For the second stem, *-taik-*, we find parallels in Old Prussian personal names such as *Thayke*, *Thoyke*, *Teykote*, and *Teykune*. Trautmann (1925: 103, 104, 152) associates the component *Tayk-* or *Teik-* with the stem *Tikr-*, while linking names such as *Tayko* and *Teykote* to the Old Prussian verb *teickut* 'create, make'. Additionally, the Curonian personal name *Taykeme* is connected by Kiparsky (1939: 354) to the Old Prussian name *Tayko*. Parallels are also found in Old Prussian place names, such as *Teiken* (a location in Sambia) (Pierson 1873: 725), *Teykeyn* (Gerullis 1922: 182), and the extinct place name †*Teyken*. These place names are linked to personal names such as *Tayko* and *Thayke* (Blažienė 2000: 160). Moreover, the Old Prussian verb *teickut* (*\*teik-*) 'create, make' (cf. PKPDB) serves as an etymological base for these names. On the other hand, it is possible that *Surteyken* may be a derivative of the suffix *-eik-* – *\*Surt-eik-*. For the stem *Surt-*, cf. the Old Prussian one-stem personal names *Surtel* and *Surtix* (Pierson 1873: 723, Trautmann 1925: 101).

For a detailed analysis of the name, which is essential to determine its formation, basis, and origin, two types of data are indispensable: linguistic and contextual. The latter is particularly critical because linguistic data alone often proves insufficient for a reliable interpretation of a name's origin. The remnants of the Prussian language survive primarily in three catechisms published between 1545 and 1561 and in the Elbing and Grunau dictionaries<sup>4</sup>. However, these linguistic resources frequently fall short when interpreting Prussian names, as the necessary roots or lexical elements are often non-recorded. In such cases, historical-contextual data become invaluable. They enable researchers to

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<sup>4</sup> For more information about these sources, see Vytautas Mažiulis' two-volume work „Prūsų kalbos paminklai“ ("Monuments of the Prussian Language") (1966-1981) and the Prussian Language Heritage Database (<http://www.prusistika.flf.vu.lt/zodynas/paieska>).

ascertain details such as the nationality of the person mentioned in the documents, the localization of their residence, the circumstances of their settlement or arrival in that area, and sometimes the identification of kinship ties or family members. While such information may seem outside the scope of linguistic or onomastic research, it often represents the only viable approach to determining the origin of a person's name or supporting hypotheses about it. The administrative and legal documents of the German Order provide a wealth of contextual data, which serve as the foundation for such analyses, supplementing the otherwise limited linguistic evidence.

Returning to the commonalities and differences between living and dead languages, it is important to note that the history of their names is intertwined and often concentrated within the same sources. A detailed morphological and etymological analysis of both Lithuanian and Prussian names reveals that both are dichotomous, with each name consisting of two stems. Moreover, both stems are attested in other known Lithuanian and Prussian personal names. The key difference lies in the ability to associate the stems with specific appellatives. While several Lithuanian stems can be traced back to concrete appellatives, this is not always possible for Prussian names due to the limited number of surviving linguistic resources.

The historical Baltic onomasticon is a rich, multifaceted research object, encompassing the proper names of both living and extinct Baltic languages – toponyms and anthroponyms – as well as their sources. The complexity of this research often depends on whether the analyzed names belong to a living or extinct language. Among the dead Baltic languages, Prussian stands out as the only one whose onomasticon continues to be extensively studied. Research into the Prussian onomasticon, unlike that of Lithuanian, faces several significant challenges. First, the Prussian language no longer exists as a functioning system, with only a small corpus of texts from the 14th–15th centuries surviving in written form. The language's grammar and phonetics are only partially reconstructed, adding uncertainty to linguistic analyses. Second, while the onomasticon forms an integral part of the language, it was heavily Germanized during the period of its documentation. Finally, the reconstruction of authentic Prussian forms is complicated by the high degree of variation in recorded inscriptions, making it challenging to establish consistent interpretations.

The research into the historical onomasticon of Lithuanian, one of the most archaic living Indo-European languages, differs in several ways from studies of extinct languages such as Prussian, primarily because Lithuanian remains a fully functioning, living language. However, challenges arise when examining newly discovered names, especially anthroponyms, in historical documents from the 14th–15th centuries. These names are often recorded in foreign languages, such as Latin or Old

German varieties, and adapted to their respective orthographic and grammatical systems. Interestingly, the qualitative nature of Prussian and Lithuanian proper names in historical documents does not differ significantly. In both cases, reconstruction is required to determine the authentic forms. This involves identifying and accounting for orthographic and morphological alterations introduced by the foreign languages in which the names were recorded. Researchers must strip away these adaptations, identify original Prussian or Lithuanian morphological elements, and reconstruct the names based on possible semantics, etymology, and historical phonology. For Prussian names, this process often relies on finding analogies in other Prussian or Baltic names, given the limited linguistic resources. In contrast, the study of Lithuanian historical names benefits from the existence of the living language. This allows researchers to draw analogies from already known Lithuanian names and to refer to the broader linguistic system, including its grammar, phonetics, and functional principles, which significantly simplifies the analysis and reconstruction process.

Since the late 20th century, the scope of historical onomasticon research has broadened significantly. Researchers striving for reliable results in historical onomastics can no longer confine themselves solely to onomastics as an isolated research focus. This shift has been driven not only by the ambitions of scholars but also by the scarcity of information and dependable data required to support various hypotheses. As researchers began to adopt a more interdisciplinary approach, a wealth of new information has come to light. The understanding that proper names, as an ethnic marker of a specific nation, transcend their locally confined role and significantly contribute to cross-cultural historical research has become widely recognized. Proper names serve as valuable resources in the fields of cultural studies, history, and linguistics, offering insights into the interactions between nations, their development, the distribution of ethnic groups during specific periods, and other phenomena. One key area of scholarly discussion is the delineation of the Balt-Slavic-Germanic habitat boundaries during prehistoric times and the Middle Ages – a topic that remains pertinent to date.

### **The Role of Documents of the German Order and the Duchy of Prussia in Onomastic Research**

The Lithuanian historical onomasticon is documented not only in the records of the German Order but also extensively in the archives of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). These archives contain numerous documents prepared in Latin, Old Slavonic, and other languages, offering a rich source of material for onomastic studies. Additionally, valuable evidence has been found in documents from Kievan Rus' and later periods, reflecting the close cooperation and alliances between

the GDL and Russian princes during that era. There is also significant untapped material in the Vatican archives, which could provide further insights. However, the records of prolonged conflicts and wars between the GDL and the German Order often yield more valuable insights into the Lithuanian onomasticon than the very evidence from Lithuanian-Slavic cooperation does. The ties between the historical lands of Lithuania and the German Order extended beyond warfare to encompass cultural, social, and trade connections. From the 13th century onwards, the fraternal Prussian people lived within the territory of the Order, with the Lithuanian Minor region forming part of this shared space. Documents such as interstate treaties, border descriptions, diplomatic correspondence, property records (e.g., privileges, deeds, inheritance acts), and military intelligence reports are particularly significant. These materials highlight the dynamic relationship between the GDL and the German Order State. Another crucial aspect of this relationship is the emergence and development of Prussian and Lithuanian writing systems within Prussia and their subsequent influence on the GDL.

The value of German Order clerical documents for onomastic studies is undeniably significant. These records, particularly descriptions of state borders and administrative boundaries, provide a wealth of empirical material for toponymic research. Such documents frequently mention various geographical features, including localities, cities, villages, water bodies, meadows, fields, hills, forests, and swamps, offering a rich repository for analyzing place names. Conversely, documents related to property rights, especially privileges, are replete with personal names, making them invaluable for anthroponymic research. These records often contain contextual data and secondary information, which should not be underestimated. Unlike simple registers, these textual documents followed a strict clerical template and featured a unique structure. They required detailed information about individuals, localities, the objects of privilege, and the relationships between owners or heirs. Additionally, they often documented the origin of individuals and other relevant data, creating a comprehensive context for understanding both the personal and the geographical names they contain (see Armgard 1995: 71-115).

### **The German Order Chancellery Documents vs. Historiography**

All historical sources, including chronicles, metrics, and treatises, hold significance for the study of the Baltic onomasticon, but their value can vary greatly. Contemporary historians' works are primarily useful as references for documenting specific instances of Baltic onymy. However, one must approach chronicles, annals, and historical treatises with caution, as these works often reflect subjective interpretations of historical events. They may rely on accounts from other historical writers



of questionable reputation, reinterpret them, or introduce inaccuracies – whether intentionally or unintentionally. The two well-known chronicles, by Petrus de Duisburg (*Chronicon terræ Prussiæ*<sup>5</sup>) and by Simon Grunau (*Preussische Chronik*<sup>6</sup>) illustrate those inaccuracies very well. The treatment of some historical events also represents the authors' attitude to the facts, which is based on their professional background. Petrus de Duisburg, a chronicler of the German Order and possibly the Master's chaplain, lived until 1326. Simon Grunau, a Dominican monk who lived in 1470–1537, worked in the Dominican monasteries of Elbing and Gdańsk and is believed to have had some knowledge of Prussian and Polish.

In the Middle Ages, when Christianity dominated Europe, pagan lands were often perceived as undeveloped. This perspective is evident in medieval chronicles, where the German Order is glorified while pagan rites, lifestyles, and cultures are belittled. As a result, historical data derived from such treatises must be critically examined and cross-checked with primary historical documents to ensure accuracy and reliability. The precision of data is particularly crucial in research on naming systems. Accurate localization of places mentioned in historical sources not only helps connect historical locations with contemporary geographical realities but also provides critical information for drawing reliable, well-substantiated conclusions. Specifically: 1) localizing historical place names in ethnically diverse areas enables more precise conclusions about the presence and life of specific ethnic groups in foreign territories; 2) exact localization of places and place names helps delineate new boundaries for the distribution of particular ethnic groups; 3) using additional data from the known onomasticon of the area can aid in interpreting problematic cases, which may include unique onyms with unclear origins, limited mentions, or ambiguous morphological variants.

### **Between the Known and the Unknown**

The Baltic onomasticon has been the subject of scholarly investigation for centuries, studied not only by representatives of Baltic nations such as Latvians and Lithuanians but also by researchers worldwide. This raises the question: is there anything new or undiscovered in this field? The answer largely depends on how we interpret existing data and facts, distinguishing genuine discoveries from additional contextual information or fresh interpretations of known data. For instance, Georg Gerullis (1922: 1-2), in reference to the late medieval documents of the German Order, remarked that documents from the late 15th century “should be considered of the same value for a name list as a

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<sup>5</sup> Petrus de Dusburg: *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, issued by Max Toeppen, in: *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum* 1, Leipzig 1861, 3-219.

<sup>6</sup> Simon Grunau: *Preussische Chronik im Auftrage des Vereins für die Geschichte der Provinz Preussen* 1, issued by Max Perlach, Leipzig 1875.

postal address book from the first half of the 20th century.” In his view, such records offer little potential for discovering anything new or valuable for the study of Baltic names. Contrary to this perspective, Grasilda Blažienė’s (2001: 57, 2003: 275, 2010: 178) detailed examination of documents from the Duchy of Prussia demonstrated that new place-name evidence continued to emerge even in the 16th and 17th centuries. These findings include records of newly established villages and their naming in Prussian, or at the very least, their earliest documented mentions during this period – despite these villages having likely existed earlier.

The extinct Prussian language has long attracted the attention of scholars worldwide, whereas research into the Lithuanian historical onomasticon has primarily been the domain of Lithuanian researchers. The greatest contribution to the research of the historical Lithuanian anthroponyms was made by Kazimieras Būga, especially by standardizing old Lithuanian personal names (1911/1958). He also focused on the historical Lithuanian proper names and their parallels with the old Prussian proper names in his work "On the Ancient Prussian and Lithuanian Proper Names" (1913 / 1958). While the works of Zigmas Zinkevičius (1977, 2008) and Vitalija Maciejauskienė (1991) offer detailed accounts and encompass much of our body of knowledge about Lithuanian personal names and their development, there has been room for further discovery. For example, Darius Ivoška (2015), in his study of the late 14th-century privileges (1350-1390) bound in the Marshal's section of OF 105, uncovered 13 Lithuanian personal names that had not previously entered scholarly circulation. These names include *Pomyne*, *Apus*, *Ructa*, *Narunden*, *Slaps*, *Elsche*, *Dinguttis*, *Util*, *Wilant*, *Wicullen*, *Triskullen*, *Schurdeiken*, and *Noadab*.

When examining only the privileges of the 13th and 14th centuries, such as those found in OF 105 and OF 107, it is difficult to draw specific conclusions about how women were named. Women are most often mentioned concerning their kinship with male recipients of the privileges, without their names being recorded. However, there are some isolated exceptions. For example, a woman named *Getrud* is mentioned in a 1392 document (OF 105 29v). Further instances of women’s names can be found in later documents, such as OF 131 (En. *The Great Interest Book of the German Order [1414–1438]*, De. *Das große Zinsbuch des Deutschen Ritterordens [1414–1438]*), OF 140 (En. *The Year Book of the Marienburg Treasurer [1399–1409]*, De. *Das Marienburger Treßlerbuch der Jahre [1399–1409]*), which covers the last decades of the 14th century and the early 15th century and especially OF 89 (En. *The Account Book of the Poor Brotherhood of Königsberg-Löbenicht*, De. *Das Kontenführungsbuch der Elenden Bruderschaft von Königsberg-Löbenicht [1477–1523]*). The author of this article was able to locate OF 89 after the critical edition of the folio had been published by Dieter Heckmann in 2000. Upon studying these various sources, it became clear that both the

chronology of the documents and their specific purpose play a crucial role in whether women's names are mentioned and how they are recorded.

1400 Kyne witwe (OF 107, 3<sup>v</sup>)

1408 item ½ m. den Kuwerkynnen zur Memel (MTB 487)

1409 item 1 fird. Den Kuwekynnen, dy den meyster mit fischen und mit eygern ereten (MB 548)

1437/1438 Krußekyne czinset 1 m. (OF 13, 211)

1499 Katerina Taterkynne (OF 89, 18r)

1499 Marthe Rewszkynne (OF 89, 21r)

1499 Margaritte Lessenerrynne (OF 89, 21v)

1503 Katherina Lyttawekynne (OF 89, 18r)

1511 Kristyne Gerekynne (OF 89, 18r),

1513 Gryttthe Prewszkynne (OF 89, 13r)

These examples demonstrate that the mention of women's names in documents is closely tied to their status as individuals. Both men's and women's names are typically recorded when they are the primary subjects or parties involved in the matter at hand, akin to the concept of being 'main interested parties' or 'defendants' in modern terms. A particularly noteworthy case is the use of the Prussian appellative *kynne* in the chancery language of the German Order documents. This term raises numerous questions and requires further investigation. One such question is whether all the women's names mentioned in the source contain the appellative *kynne*, or whether some of them are merely a shortened form of *\*-in-ē*, adapted to German usage, gradually becoming a suffix? Given its significance, a detailed study of *kynne* is expected to be conducted soon, shedding more light on its role and implications in the context of the historical documents.

## Summary and Conclusions

Historical circumstances led to the recording of both Lithuanian and Prussian onomasticons not in their native languages, but in foreign ones, primarily by the conquerors' historians, scribes in administrative and diplomatic chanceries, and representatives of the local elite. As a result, the attestations of Old Prussian names, some common words, and certain realia have survived to this day, albeit heavily Latinized, Germanized, and Polonized. For Lithuanian onomasticon researchers, the earliest attestations of Lithuanian names hold different values compared to the older Prussian onomasticon. While the Lithuanian language and its onomasticon have endured several historical

challenges, they have maintained their core elements. The surviving data on Lithuanian anthroponyms and toponyms, found in historical documents, are crucial in expanding our understanding of the onomasticon's origins. The primary sources of this knowledge are the documents of the German Order, which continue to provide valuable empirical material. These documents offer new onomasticon facts, providing researchers with important data that enrich our understanding of both the Lithuanian and the Prussian naming systems.

In summary, it follows that:

- German Order documents are the primary and most essential sources for studying the Old Prussian and Lithuanian historical onomasticon,
- Other documents, not originating from the German Order Chancellery (i.e., manuscript archival heritage), should be regarded as secondary and auxiliary due to concerns over objectivity, reliability, authenticity, and other criteria,
- The role of historical documents and annals prepared in the chancelleries of various European countries that had diplomatic, political, or economic relations with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the Middle Ages can be considered on par with that of the German Order Chancellery in Baltic onomastic research.

Research into the historical onomasticon of the Old Prussians and Lithuanians must be grounded on the most thorough analysis of authentic sources, incorporating all available secondary sources, including historiographical works and critical editions of authentic document collections. Only through this comprehensive approach can important facts and insights be effectively tapped into and contribute to a deeper understanding of the onomasticon.

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