

## WAS GRAND PRINCE ALGIRDAS A GREEK ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN?\*

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### A NOTE ON ALGIRDAS: GRAND PRINCE OR GRAND DUKE?

The title "Grand Prince" seems more appropriate than that of "Grand Duke", presently entrenched in Lithuanian historiography, since Algirdas is called "Grand Prince" (*Supremus princeps* or *velikii kniaz*) in the few surviving documents which were actually signed by Lithuanian princes in his reign. Two documents may be cited to show the difference between the titles of "Prince" and "Duke". The first is a treaty with King Casimir of Poland which is made for Algirdas as "Grand Prince" (*za velkogo kniaza*) by his brothers and nephews who have only the title of *kniaz*: *Aktu Otnociaschiesia k istorii zapadnoi rossii* vol. I (St. Petersburg: Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia, 1846), nr. 1. The second is the border agreement of 1358 with Mazovia, made by Algirdas' brother Kęstutis, who calls himself *dux lythwanorum* and mentions the consent of *Helgerdi* (Algirdas) *Suppremi principis lythwanorum* and of *ducis Jawnutonis, ducis Koryati, ducis Georgij, ceterorumque Seniorum ducum edam lythwanie*: *Kodeks dyplomatychny ksiestwa mazowieckiego* (Warsaw: Druk. Gazety Polskiej, 1863), nr. 80, p. 73. In these documents a clear distinction is made between "Grand Prince" Algirdas and his subordinate relatives, who have the Latin title of "dux".

The title of "Grand Duke" (*Magnus Dux*) is properly associated with Vytautas (*Witold*). Interestingly, at the beginning of his reign as the King of Poland, Jogaila (*Jagiello*)/Wladyslaw and Vytautas jointly issued a document which calls Jogaila the "Grand Prince" and Vytautas the "Grand Duke" of Lithuania (*Wladislaus, dei gracia rex Poloniae, Lithuaniae princeps supremu, heres Russie; et nos magnus dux Vytolth Lithuaniae . . .*). See *Vitoldiana: Codex privilegiorum Vitoldi Magni Ducis Lithuaniae 1386-1430*, ed. Jerzy Ochmanski (Warsaw & Poznan: Panstwowe Wyd. Naukowe, 1986), nr. 55, p. 60.

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Grand Prince Algirdas (Olgerd) (1345-77) epitomizes the balance struck by Lithuanian rulers in the fourteenth century between opposing religious forces, since neither contemporaries nor later historians have been able to agree on whether he was an obdurate pagan or a Greek Orthodox Christian. Unfortunately, like so many questions in Eastern European history, this has been obscured by the passions and even the propaganda of later centuries. Writing in a milieu in which the Greek Orthodox faith was seen as prop and symbol of the same Russian Empire which was trying to assimilate Roman Catholic Lithuania, Russian historians in the tsarist period argued that, because he ruled vast Russian territories, Algirdas became Russified and openly or secretly practiced the Greek Orthodox faith.<sup>1</sup> Lithuanian historians have rightly pointed out that such an assumption is shaped by the wish to see both modern and medieval Lithuania as part of the Russian empire.<sup>2</sup> Yet Lithuanians have often neglected to present much evidence for their own assumption that Algirdas was a pagan simply because he ruled pagan Lithuania.<sup>3</sup> Writers of other nationalities have for the most part cited only one or two proofs for their opinions concerning the religion of Algirdas.<sup>4</sup> The only extensive recent study of this question is by Viktoras Gidžiūnas, and he presents by no means all of the available evidence or many of the problems associated with individual sources.<sup>5</sup> It seems worthwhile, therefore, to reassemble and re-examine these sources and evidence.

### WAS ALGIRDAS BAPTIZED IN VITEBSK?

Before becoming Grand Prince of Lithuania in 1345, Algirdas for many years ruled the Russian city of Vitebsk, which had been under Lithuanian influence and ruled by Lithuanian princes since the 13th century.<sup>6</sup> Most scions of Lithuania's ruling family ruled Russian cities which had submitted to the Lithuanian Grand Prince. Usually, Lithuanian rulers were made more acceptable to the local inhabitants by the twin expedients of marriage into the native princely family and baptism into the Orthodox faith. Such was the case with many brothers and sons of Algirdas.<sup>7</sup> It would seem logical to suppose that

Algirdas followed the same route. Yet we know that his brother Kęstutis, whose adherence to paganism has never been questioned, successfully ruled some Slav lands with a Greek Orthodox population,<sup>8</sup> and those Russian towns which were outside the Lithuanian sphere of influence acknowledged the suzerainty of the Mongol Khans, who were pagan or Moslem. Therefore, the mere fact of rule over a Russian city is not sufficient argument to prove acceptance of Orthodox baptism. We have also, however, the evidence of two Russian chronicles which must be analyzed more closely. The "Bychovec chronicle" states:

Then Prince Olgierd took to wife Princess Juliana of Vitebsk, for whom Prince Olgierd was baptized in the Russian faith, while all the Lithuanian nobles remained pagans.<sup>9</sup>

There are good reasons to doubt this account. Even by the standard of other Russian chronicles, the chronicle of Bychovec contains an unusual amount of legendary and fantastic material which has no historical basis,<sup>10</sup> including an account of the founding of the town of Vilnius (which archaeologists now date to prehistoric times)<sup>11</sup> by Grand Prince Gediminas in the 14th century, and the martyrdom of fourteen Franciscan monks in the reign of Algirdas.<sup>12</sup> Many of these tales mention historical or legendary members of the Goštautas (Gasztold) family of Lithuanian nobility: They are identified with one of four Roman patrician families which are said to be ancestors of Lithuanian noble families; a Goštautas is said to be the first "vaivada" (governor) of Vilnius; a Goštautas founds the Franciscan monastery whose monks are supposedly massacred, etc. So prominent are the Goštautai, that some scholars believe the whole of the chronicle of Bychovec was compiled under the patronage of Albert Goštautas, Chancellor of Lithuania (d. 1539), for the express purpose of glorifying not only Lithuania's distant past, but also the Goštautas family.<sup>13</sup>

If this theory is true, it may, in my opinion, provide an explanation of the Bychovec chronicle account of Algirdas' baptism, which turns out to be part of the following passage, unique to this chronicle:<sup>14</sup>

Then Grand Prince Olgierd gave Kamenets in Podolia to Gasztolt Gasztoltowicz to rule. And he (Algirdas) set up his administrators ('starosy') in all those cities, and he returned to his own. (But) let us return to our earlier account. And then Prince Olgierd took to wife Princess Juliana of Vitebsk, for whom Prince Olgierd was baptized in the Russian faith, while all the Lithuanian nobles remained pagans. And Grand Prince Olgierd did not force them, and did not convert them to his faith. And the Roman faith again was not to be found in Lithuania, only the Russian (faith) was among (the Lithuanians). And then Gasztolt ruled Kamenets in Podolia, and he used to often visit the noble Buczacki, who had a daughter, a very beautiful girl, and Gasztolt . . . asked lord Buczacki, to give his daughter to him in marriage. And Buczacki said: 'I would be happy to give you my daughter, but it is not fitting for me to give my Christian daughter to you, a pagan . . . And Gasztolt the 'starosta' of Kamenets was baptized, and married that daughter of lord Buczacki. And when he was baptized in the Polish faith, they gave him the name of Peter. And a short time later Grand Prince Olgierd gave Vilnius to Peter Gasztolt. And while he was the 'vaivada' (governor) of Vilnius, he for the first time brought from Poland fourteen Franciscan monks and established the monastery of the Mother of God, with the consent of Grand Prince Olgierd . . . And this Peter Gasztolt was the first to accept the Roman faith, and brought it to Lithuania.<sup>15</sup>

Clearly, the main theme of this story is not the Orthodox baptism of the Grand Prince, but rather the Catholic baptism of Peter Goštautas. A possible connection between the two themes has not, so far as I can ascertain, ever been discussed in the historical literature, because the account of Algirdas' conversion is usually quoted out of context. Yet this context suggests a plausible motive for the insertion of a story about the Orthodox baptism of the Grand Prince, as well as the assertion that Catholicism had disappeared in Lithuania: this would magnify the accomplishment of Peter Goštautas, who supposedly "was the first to accept the Roman faith, and brought it to Lithuania." Moreover, the baptism account contains at least one verifiable factual error: the confusion of Juliana of Tver, Algirdas' second wife, with his first wife, princess of Vitebsk, especially noticeable because the same Bychovec chronicle says elsewhere that Algirdas' first wife was named Ona and the second Juliana.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the evidence of the chronicle of Bychovec becomes suspect.

There is one other source, the "Gustinskaia" chronicle, which tells a similar story:

In this year (1340) Olgierd Gediminovich married Juliana, daughter of the prince of Vitebsk, (and) for her sake was baptized with all (his) boyars and people . . . <sup>17</sup>

But this chronicle, which also dates from the 16th century,<sup>18</sup> and also confuses Juliana of Tver with Maria of Vitebsk, was long ago identified as untrustworthy in matters dealing with religion.<sup>19</sup> The context of the above quote provides one example of how its compiler re-arranges his source material. It seems he wished to include both a mention of Algirdas' baptism, and the story of three Orthodox Lithuanians executed by Algirdas but realized the inherent logical contradiction. Therefore he dated the executions to 1328 while retaining the information that this took place when Algirdas ruled Lithuania (*za Olgierd kniazia v Litvie*), and dating his marriage in Vitebsk to 1340.<sup>20</sup> Yet we know that this marriage must have taken place not much later than 1320, because Andrius, the first son of that union, was already a grown man in 1342 when he became ruler of Pskov. Algirdas did not become Grand Prince of Lithuania until circa 1345. The unique chronology for these events adopted by the Gustinskaia chronicler may reflect his willingness to alter source narratives to fit pre-conceived notions. Also completely unwarranted is the assumption that all Lithuanians were baptized with Algirdas, which is directly contradicted by the chronicle of Bychovec, and is probably illustrative of the Gustinskaia tendency to overemphasize the triumph of Orthodoxy in Lithuania. Another example of this must surely be the statement that the first king of Lithuania, Mindaugas, received Orthodox baptism, which is absolutely unsubstantiated by any contemporary source.<sup>21</sup>

We will see that sources which are much earlier and more reliable than the Gustinskaia or Bychovec chronicles show that Grand Prince Algirdas was considered a pagan by his contemporaries at the time he ruled Lithuania. The possibility,

suggested by R. Misiūnas,<sup>22</sup> that Algirdas could have been baptized in Vitebsk and then reverted to paganism when assuming power in pagan Lithuania is intriguing and cannot be disproved, although it must be noted that Algirdas' enemies in Moscow and Constantinople accused him always of paganism, not of apostasy.

But for all of the reasons outlined above, we must question the credibility of both the Gustinskaia and the Bychovec chronicles as evidence for the baptism of Algirdas. It is true that both accounts, although different enough to rule out dependence on one another, have the same confusion of Algirdas' widow Juliana with his first wife. But this may indicate that they are both echoes of another story about the baptism of Grand Prince Algirdas in which Juliana of Tver plays a central role.

#### WAS ALGIRDAS BAPTIZED ON HIS DEATHBED?

Two Russian chronicles, the *Kholmogorskaia letopis* and the *Rodoslovie Velikikh Kniazei Litovskago kniazhestva*, preserve versions of a story that Algirdas was baptized on his deathbed through the efforts of his wife Juliana.<sup>23</sup> Obviously, this contradicts the Gustinskaia and Bychovec statements that the Grand Prince was baptized in Vitebsk.<sup>24</sup> A deathbed conversion cannot be disproven,<sup>25</sup> although there are good reasons to doubt it. Both accounts of the deathbed baptism mention the burial of Algirdas in an Orthodox church in Vilnius, yet his cremation according to pagan custom is described by more contemporary sources.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, both accounts have a different list of Algirdas' sons than other Russian chronicles, and state that Jogaila, the future king of Poland, was of the Orthodox faith, although we have evidence to the contrary.<sup>27</sup> Even G. Vernadsky, who is inclined to believe that Algirdas was pro-Russian and Orthodox, says of the "Rodoslovie" account: "The existence of several versions has led scholars to wonder how much of the graphic detail comes from the chronicler's imagination."<sup>28</sup> Certainly, apocryphal stories about the deathbed conversion of famous unbelievers have always been popular among the pious. If a deathbed baptism did take place, with or without the consent of Algirdas, it had more religious than historical significance, and his pagan funeral seems to indicate that there was no public proclamation of any conversion by the Grand Prince.

#### THE CITIZENS OF PSKOV ASK ALGIRDAS TO ACCEPT BAPTISM

There is only one more source which is used to argue for the conversion of Algirdas to Orthodoxy.<sup>29</sup> It is this account in the chronicle of Nikon:

(Pskov is under attack by the Teutonic Order) . . . then the Pskovians . . . sent their envoys to Vitebsk to Olgerd Gediminovich, the Lithuanian Grand Prince, to ask for help against the Germans. . . . (Olgerd) came himself with his brother Kestut and with the Lithuanians and with his son Andrew. . . . (the Teutonic Knights retreat) . . . Then the Pskovians greatly entreated Grand Prince Olgerd Gediminovich, wishing to baptize him and to set him up as Prince in Pskov. He said to them, I am already baptized and am a Christian, and do not wish to be baptized a second time, nor to sit as Prince over you.' The Pskovians then baptized his son Andrew in the cathedral church, and enthroned him in Pskov to rule over them.<sup>30</sup>

When cited without comparison to other versions of the same account, this quote might seem sure proof that Algirdas was an Orthodox Christian.<sup>31</sup> But it turns out that the compiler of the Nikon chronicle is known for the interpolation of apocryphal speeches reflecting his own beliefs into source narratives.<sup>32</sup> When we turn to the chronicles of Pskov and Novgorod, as well as the Voskresenskaia chronicle, we find this episode described quite similarly, but without any words put into the mouth of Algirdas. We are simply told, "he refused to be baptized,"<sup>33</sup> or "he didn't want it."<sup>34</sup> Hence the incident becomes proof of Algirdas' paganism, since it is hard to imagine why the citizens of Pskov would want to baptize a known Christian.<sup>35</sup> The baptism of Andrew in Pskov, which makes no sense in the Nikonovskaia account (why would Algirdas have an unbaptized son if he had been a Christian from the time of his first marriage?) now becomes logical. Very interesting also is the implication that Andrew, born when Algirdas ruled Vitebsk, had not been baptized in infancy.<sup>36</sup> This shows that even sons of Algirdas' first wife, who all are known in history only by their Orthodox Christian names, were not necessarily baptized at birth, but rather only when it became politically expedient. Religion was being used as a diplomatic tool by Algirdas even before he became Lithuanian Grand Prince.

#### EVIDENCE THAT ALGIRDAS REMAINED PAGAN

As we have seen, there are serious reasons to doubt those sources which describe the Orthodox baptism of Algirdas. But the case against the existence of such a baptism does not rest here. There is good evidence to suggest that Algirdas was a pagan until his death. Russian chronicles, which provide the only evidence for Algirdas' baptism, also contain material which leads to the opposite conclusion. Eleven Russian chronicles include the following panegyric, listing the virtues and acknowledging the great power of Algirdas:

Olgerd surpassed all his brothers in power and dignity, because he did not drink beer nor mead nor wine nor sour kvass, and he acquired great intellect and self-restraint, possessing strong intelligence and much prudence. And by such cleverness he conquered many lands and countries, and subordinated many towns and princedoms, and retained for himself great power. By this his princedom grew ever more powerful, in such a way as not one of his brothers achieved; neither his father nor his grandfather was so famous.<sup>37</sup>

Yet seven chronicles add to this very favorable characterization the remark that Algirdas was "evil in his faith, godless and unclean" (*zlovernyi i bezbozhnyi i nechestivyi*).<sup>38</sup> This must refer to Algirdas' paganism,<sup>39</sup> and is all the more believable for being preserved in sources favorable to the Lithuanian ruler.

Another, hitherto unnoticed, indication that Algirdas was considered a pagan is in the Rogozhskaia and Nikonovskaia chronicles, which report that in 1364 the mother of Juliana of Tver "went out of Lithuania with her grand-daughter, with the unbaptized one, with the daughter of Algirdas; and they baptized her in Tver; and, performing this baptism, the Metropolitan Alexis came to Tver."[40](#) We do not know which daughter of Algirdas is referred to here, but there is the clear implication that she has to leave Lithuania for baptism, indicating that the children of Algirdas were not being brought up as Christians.

We have so far only mentioned Russian chronicle sources on the question of Algirdas' religion. There is, however, other evidence. Even the Russified and Orthodox descendants of this Grand Prince remembered him as a pagan, as is clear from the entry made in the Annals of Ingolstadt University when Alexander Olekavich arrived to study there in 1580:

There was a Lithuanian prince or Grand Duke . . . named Olgierd. He had many sons all confounded by darkness and the dire errors of the Pagans, just as Olgierd himself and with him the whole land of Lithuania.[41](#)

Algirdas is also portrayed as fiercely pagan in near-contemporary Greek and Slavonic biographies of three Lithuanian converts to the Orthodox faith who were executed by Algirdas and later proclaimed martyrs in Constantinople.[42](#) I have discussed this episode more thoroughly elsewhere.[43](#) Here we need only note that the story of the Lithuanian martyrs was already circulating, at the latest, less than a generation after Algirdas' death, and it would not have gained credence if he were not famous as a pagan ruler.

Even more impressive is the evidence from the centre of Greek Orthodox civilization, from the beleaguered city of Constantinople. In 1370 the Byzantine Patriarch Philotheos issued a writ of excommunication against those Russian princes who were allying with the "impious" Algirdas against Moscow, and refusing to fight "the enemies of the Cross, who do not believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, but practice the evil and blasphemous worship of fire."[44](#) Here is clear evidence that contemporaries who had close diplomatic ties with Algirdas considered him a pagan and attributed to him practices known to have played a role in Lithuanian paganism.[45](#) That the allusion to worship of fire is aimed at Algirdas is made clear by another Patriarchal act, issued in 1380 by Patriarch Neilos, which calls Algirdas "the fire-worshipping prince of the Lithuanians".[46](#)

The Byzantine historian Nicephoras Gregoras (d. 1360) also includes in his famous *History of the Romans* a description of a pagan, sun-worshipping prince who is obviously Algirdas, since the entire story of his efforts to obtain a separate Metropolitan for the Greek Orthodox under Lithuanian rule is outlined in detail.[47](#) Gregoras, whose *History* is peppered with bitter invective against Byzantine Patriarch Philotheos,[48](#) asserts that Algirdas was ready to accept Orthodox baptism if his petition for a Lithuanian Metropolitan had been granted by Philotheos more fully.[49](#) Given the absence of other evidence, and Gregoras' known desire to defame Philotheos,[50](#) this assertion arouses skepticism, especially since it is followed by a long speech on the evils of avarice and simony which is put in the mouth of Algirdas but obviously is simply a literary device to express Gregoras' own views in a rather florid and classicizing style which a Byzantine reader would recognize as the voice of the educated Greek author rather than an untutored pagan.[51](#) What is important for our purposes is that Algirdas was so well-known as a pagan ruler that an author in far-away Constantinople could use him as an example of a pagan by whose example Christians could profit.

\* This essay is taken, with only minor changes, from the first chapter of the author's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, "The Role of Pagan Lithuania in Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Religious Diplomacy in East-Central Europe (1345-1377)" (Fordham University, 1987). Some of the material in this chapter was first presented by the author at the 13th conference of the Lietuvių Katalikų Mokslo Akademija in 1985, in a paper titled "LDK Algirdo laikysena krikščionybės atžvilgiu", which will be published in Lietuvių Katalikų Mokslo Akademijos Suvažiavimo Darbai XIII/ Actes du treizieme Congres de l'Academie Lituanienne Catholique des Sciences (Rome, 1988).

1 P.N. Batiushkov, *Belorussija i Litva* (St. Petersburg: Tovarischestvo Obschestvennaia Polza, 1890), p. 70. Similarly, P.D. Briancev, *Istoriia litovskago gosudarstva s drevneishich vremen* (Vilnius: n.p., 1889), p. 140. M. K. Liubavskii, *Ocherk istorii Litovsko-Russkago gosudarstva* (Moscow: Sinodalnaia Tip., 1910), p. 20 states, without citing a source, that Algirdas was baptized into the Orthodox faith in the 1320's.

These old opinions have become enshrined in some currently-used textbooks of Russian history: George Vernadski, *The Mongols and Russia* (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1953), p. 238; Nicholas Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 149, citing S. F. Platonov, who in fact states in *Uchebnik Russkoi istorii* vol. 1 (Prague: Plamja, 1924), p. 95 that no one knows what religion Algirdas professed.

2 Viktoras Gidžiūnas, "Algirdo ryšiai su Rytų ir Vakarų bažnyčiomis" *Lietuvių Tautos Praeitis* vol. 4, bk. 2(14) (1978): 28; Algirdas Budreckis, *Algirdas* (New York: Simo Kudirkos šaulių kuopa, 1981) p. 183.

3 Zenonas Ivinskis, *Rinktiniai raštai*, vol. 1: *Lietuvos istorija* (Rome: Lietuvių Katalikų Mokslo Akademija, 1978) p. 258 as well as Constantine Jurgela, *A History of the Lithuanian Nation* (New York: Lithuanian Cultural Institute, 1948), p. 102 and V. Daugirdaitė-Sruogienė, *Lietuvos istorija* (Chicago: Tėvynės mylėtojų draugija, 1956), p. 117 state that Algirdas was a pagan, but do not cite any sources as evidence. Joseph Koncevičius, *Russia's Attitude towards Union with Rome* (Washington: n.p., 1927), p. 134 cites only the execution by Algirdas of three Lithuanian converts, whom Koncevičius mistakenly identifies as Roman Catholic, but who were in fact Greek Orthodox. (See references in footnotes 42 and 43 below). Avižonis, *Die Entstehung und Entwicklung des litauischen Adels* (Berlin, 1932; reprinted in *Rinktiniai Raštai* vol. 3 (Rome: Lietuvių Katalikų Mokslo Akademija, 1982), p. 103, and Romualdas Misiūnas, "Algirdo tikėjimas". *LKMA Suvažiavimo Darbai 8* (1974): 248-249 and "The Orthodox Church in the Lithuanian State" *Lituanus* 14 no. 3 (1968): 24-26 believed that Algirdas may have been baptized into the Greek Orthodox faith.

4 The most detailed of these is Kazimierz Chodyniecki, "Proby zaprowadzenia Chrzescianstwa na Litwie" *Przegląd Historyczny* 18 (1914):311-315, presenting fairly extensive criticism of sources used to prove Algirdas' baptism as well three pieces of evidence that he remained pagan: i) a statement in the chronicle of Novgorod that Algirdas refused to be baptized when asked to rule Pskov (see discussion below of this episode) ii) the fact that at least some of Algirdas' children were baptized only as adults, and iii) the pagan rites at Algirdas' funeral pyre. John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), presents evidence (discussed below) of Byzantine sources and of Russian chronicles for



Algirdas' paganism, but seems to assume (p. 224) that Algirdas was baptized on his deathbed (see below). Henryk Paszkiewicz believes Algirdas remained a pagan, in *The Origin of Russia* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954; reprint ed. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969), p. 229, citing Byzantine historian Nicephoras Gregoras (see below) and in *Jagiellonowie a Moskwa* vol. 1 (Warsaw: Fundusz Kultury Narodowej, 1933), p. 358 citing the episode in Pskov mentioned above. Stanislaw Smolka, "Kiejstut i Jagiello" *Pamiętnik Akademii Umiejetnosci, Wydział Filologiczny 7* (Cracow: Akad. Umiej., 1889), p. 83 maintains that Algirdas was baptized on his deathbed. Kazimierz Stadnicki, *Olgiard i Kiejstut* (Lvov: Gubrynovicz i Schmidt, 1870), p. 117, accepts the Bychovec chronicle account of Algirdas' baptism (see below), believes that the Grand Prince was a secret Christian throughout his reign, (p. 123, 125) and only openly professed his faith on his deathbed (p. 124). Antoni Prochaska, "Od Mendoga do Jagielly" *Litwa i Rus* vol 4 zeszyt 1 (1912), p. 57, quoted by J. Ochmanski, "Lietuvos Didysis Kunigaikštis Algirdas lenkų istorijografijoje" *Lietuvių Tautos Praeitis* vol. 4, bk. 2(14):62, mentions the evidence of Patriarchal acts condemning Algirdas (see below). Gotthold Rhode, *Die Ostgrenze Polens*, vol. 1 (Koln-Graz: Bohlau Verl. 1955) p. 328, fn. 156 cites independently the same two acts, and also Algirdas' pagan funeral. Jerzy Ochmanski, "Lietuvos Didysis Kunigaikštis Algirdas lenkų istorijografijoje" *Lietuvių Tautos Praeitis* vol. 4, bk. 2(14):68 believes Polish historiography to have proven that Algirdas was a pagan.

5 Viktoras Gidžiūnas, "Algirdo ryšiai su Rytų ir Vakarų bažnyčiomis" *Lietuvių Tautos Praeitis* vol. 4, bk. 2(14) (1978): p. 28-31 gives a critique of the evidence for presumption of Algirdas' Orthodoxy, and also presents (Ibid., p. 33) some evidence for a belief that Algirdas intended a pagan: a quote from Byzantine historian Nicephoras Gregoras, Algirdas' failure to establish permanent Metropolitane of Lithuania, and his pagan funeral. These will all be discussed below.

6 Vladimir T. Pašuta, *Lietuvos valstybės susidarymas* (Vilnius: "Mintis", 1971) p. 64, 281, 287, 295, 297, 302. The date and circumstances of the beginning of Algirdas' rule in Vitebsk are uncertain, since the only source for them is the chronicle of Bychovec, and the "Chronicle of the Lithuanian Grand Princes" *Polnoje Sobranieje Russkich Letopise* (henceforth designated as PSRL), vol. 17 (St. Petersburg: Imp. Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia, 1907), p. 494, 71. Algirdas is described as ruler of Vitebsk by his son Vytautas, in Theodor Hirsch et. al., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum* vol. 2 (Leipzig: n.p., 1863; reprint ed., Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1965), p. 712, and in the chronicles of Pskov, Novgorod, and Nikon: PSRL vol. 4 pt. 4 & 5 (St. Petersburg, 1848) p. 187; PSRL vol. 4 pt. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1915) p. 272; PSRL, vol. 9-10 p. 214. Note that Algirdas is nevertheless referred to in these passages as a "Lithuanian prince" who marches to war with Vitebskian and Lithuanian forces — i.e. he remains within the Lithuanian sphere while he rules Vitebsk. Cf. Herman de Wartberg's account of the augmentation of the Lithuanian army by troops from Vitebsk and other Russian cities subject to Lithuania: *Scrip. Rerum Prus.*, vol. 2 p. 75.

7 Zygmunt Wdowiszewski, *Genealogia Jagiellonow* (Warsaw: Pax, 1968) p. 9-18; Jozef Wolff *Rod Gedimina* (Cracow: n.p., 1886), p. 70-118; Zenonas Ivinskis, *Rinkiniai raštai*, vol. 1: *Lietuvos istorija* (Rome: Lietuvių Katalikų Mokslo Akademija, 1978), p. 259; Z. Ivinskis, "Liubartas", *Lietuvių Enciklopedija* vol. 16, (Boston: Lietuvių Enciklopedijos Leidykla, 1958) p. 318; V. Sruogiene, "Norimantas", *Lietuvių Enciklopedija* vol. 20, Boston 1960, p. 412; Jozef Puzyna, "Korjat i Korjatowicze" *Ateneum Wilenski 7* zeszyt 3-4 (1930): 425-28.

8 Privilege granted by Kęstutis and his brother Liubartas to merchants of Turon, listing lands under control of both princes: *Preussisches Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5 bk. 1, ed. Klaus Conrad (Marburg: N. C. Elwert, 1969), no. 379, p. 214. Cf. Henryk Paszkiewicz *Jagiellonowie a Moskwa* vol. 1 (Warsaw: Fundusz Kultury Narodowej, 1933), p. 398 fn. 4.

9 "Y koli kniaz Olgiard ponial za sebe žonu kniažu Ulianu Witebskuiui dla kotoriež kniaz Olgird ochrystylsia w Ruskuii wiru, a panowie Litowskije, wsi byli, u swoich wierach pohanskich". *Polnoje Sobranieje Russkich Letopise* (PSRL) St. Petersburg: Imp. Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia 1907), vol. 17, col. 498. Note that this chronicle is now extant only in a transcription made by the nineteenth century historian Narbutt, using Polish orthography.

10 *Khronika Bykhovsta* (Moscow: Nauk, 1966), p. 5-6; Jasas, *Lietuvos metraštis*, p. 9 states that all the material covering events prior to 1345 is considered legendary. Because of the many historical errors in this chronicle and the lack of an extant original manuscript some scholars even believed that it was a 19th-century forgery: K. Chodyniecki, "Ze studjow nad dziejopisarstwem rusko-litewskiem" *Ateneum Wilenskie 3* (1925-26):400-401; Konstantinas Jablonskis, *Istorija ir jos šaltiniai* (a collection of lectures written in the 1930's) (Vilnius: Mokslo, 1979) p. 232. Now accusations of forgery by Narbutt have been disproven: R. Saluga, "Bychovco kronika" *Lietuvos TSR Mokslų Akademijos darbai* Series A. vol. 1(6) (1959): 149-153; Jerzy Ochmanski, "Nad Kronika Bychowca" *Studia Źrodloznawcze 12* (1967): 155-163; and the chronicle is generally dated to the 16th century: Jasas, *Lietuvos metraštis*, p. 26-30.

11 Jonas Puzinas, "Vilniaus 650 m. sukaktis — miesto ar Gedimino sostinės?", *Lituanistikos Instituto 1973 m. Suvažiavimo Darbai* (Chicago: Lituanistikos Inst., 1975), p. 16-18; A. Tautavičius et. al. *Vilniaus miesto istorija* (Vilnius: Liet. Mokslu Akad., Istorijos Institutas, 1968), p. 25-27. The latter specifically labels the Bychovec chronicle account of the founding of Vilnius a "fabrication".

12 PSRL vol. 17, col. 474-475, 494, 498; Jasas, *Lietuvos metraštis* p. 42-43, 71, 80. For legend of 14 martyrs, which may have its basis in two Franciscans actually martyred in the reign of Gediminas, see K. Chodyniecki, "Legenda o mecenstwie czternastu Franciszkanow w Wilnie", *Ateneum Wilenskie 4* (1927): 53-76 and V. Gidžiūnas, "Legendariškieji Pranciškonų kankiniai Vilniuje", *Aidai* no. 3-4 (1954), p. 105-110, 175-180.

13 Jasas, *Lietuvos metraštis* p. 35; Jerzy Ochmanski, "Nad Kronika Bychowca", *Studia Źrodloznawcze 12* (1967):158.

14 PSRL vol. 17 col. 497-98, fn. 4 and 6; Jasas, *Lietuvos metraštis* p. 226, fn. 25; p. 228, fn. 10.

15 PSRL vol. 17 col. 497-498 (original orthography); cf. Lithuanian and Russian translation in Jasas, *Lietuvos metraštis* p. 76-77; *Khronika Bykhovsta* (Moscow: Nauk, 1966), p. 57-58:

"Y dal tohdy kniaz wielki Olgiard ot sebe deržaty Kamenec Podolski Gasztoltu Gasztoltowiczu. Y na wsich onych horodech swoi starosty posażal, y otide wo swoia si. My že napredneie wozwratymsia.

Y koli kniaz Olgiard ponial za sebe žonu kniažnu Ulianu Witebskuiui dla kotoriež kniaz Olgird ochrystylsia w Ruskuii wiru, a panowie Litowskije wsi byli, u swoich wierach pohanskich, y kniaz wielki Olgiard ne czynil im sily, y w weru swoiu ne wernul, a Rymskoie wiry w Litwe paki uže ne bylo, tolko Ruskaja zmeszalasia. Y koli Gasztolt deržal Kamenec Podolskij i ieždywał czasto do pana Buczackoho, w kotoroho byla doczka, dewka welmi krasna, y starosta kamenecki Gasztolt, prosit pana Buczackoho aby tuii doczku swoiu za neho dal w małžonku; y Buczacki rēk: Ja bych za tebe rad dat doczku swoiu, lecz mi sa ne hodyt doczki swoieja chrystyianki za tebe pohanina daty ( . . . ). Y starosta kamenecki Gasztolt ochrystylsia, y tuii doczku pana Buczackoho sobi.za małžonku wzial. Y kolisia ochrystyl w Ladskuii wiru, y dali imia iemu Petr. Y po malom czasu dal Petru Gasztoltowiczu kniaz wielki Olgiard Wilniu. Y buduczy iemu woiewodoiu u Wilni, i napred prywede on z Lachow 14 Mnichow Franciszkan y zalozy klaszor Matki Božoy, z dozwozeniem welikoho kniazia Olgiarda . . . Y tot Petr Gasztolt nayperwey prynial wiru Rymskuiui, y do Litwy prynes."

16 PSRL vol. 17 col. 501. For the marriage of Algirdas and Juliana see PSRL vol. 15, p. 59; PSRL vol. 10, p. 221. Chodyniecki, "Proby", p. 312, and Gidžiūnas, "Algirdo ryšiai", p. 28 cite the confusion of Maria with Juliana as an argument against the credibility of the Bychovec account. The same error appears in the "Kronika Litovskaia i Zhmoitskaia", PSRL vol. 32, p.63; "Gustinskaia let." PSRL vol. 2, p.350. But all sources agree that Algirdas had two wives, and we know that Juliana was the second, since she appears as his widow in treaties made with the Teutonic Order in 1382: Friedrich Bunge, *Liv-, Est- and Curlandisches Urkundenbuch* (LUB) Abt. 1 vol. 3 (Reval: Kluge & Strohm, 1857; reprinted Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1970) col. 395-396.

17 PSRL vol. 2 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia, 1843), p. 349:

"V sie leto Olgerd Gediminovich poiat sebe zhenu Julianu, dscher Vitepskogo kniazia, eia zie radi krestisa so vsemi boiary i liudmi."

18 Ibid., p. 232.

19 Kazimierz Chodyniecki wrote, "it can serve as an important source for the investigation of the atmosphere of the Orthodox cloister (in Russia) and of its attitude towards Union of the Churches, but not for the history of pagan Lithuania." "Proby", p. 222.

20 PSRL vol. 2 p. 349.

21 Ibid. p. 341; Michal Giedroyc, "The arrival of Christianity in Lithuania: Early Contacts (Thirteenth Century)" *Oxford Slavonic Papers* XVII, 1985, p. 25.

22 R. Misiūnas, "Algirdo tikėjimas", *Lietuvių Katalikų Mokslo Akad. Suvažiavimo Darbai 8* (1974): 249.

23 PSRL vol. 33 (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), p. 87; cf. PSRL vol. 17, p. 416: "Blagovernaia zhe velikaia kniagini Uliianeia, vide svoego muzha Olgerda poslednee zdushuscha i zelo pechashesia o ego spasenii, i sozva svoia syny i ottsa svoego dukhovnago prizva Davyda ... I bozhieiu milostiiu spodobi ego sviatogo krescheniia.

24 T. Narbutt, cited by the influential K. Stadnicki, *Olgiard i Kiejstut* (Lvov: Gubrynovicz i Schmidt, 1870), p. 125, suggested that Algirdas only became a catechumen in Vitebsk, and was finally baptized only on his deathbed. Such practices were common in the early centuries of Christianity, but would be most peculiar in 1377. Stadnicki himself, *Olgiard i Kiejstut* p. 124 explains the contradictory Bychovec and "Rodoslovie" accounts by the premise that Algirdas kept his baptism in Vitebsk a secret from the Lithuanians, but wished to die with Christian rites, and so spread the rumour that had only been

baptized on his deathbed. This explanation takes no account of the close tie between Vitebsk and Lithuania (see note 6 above) or of the attribution of the initiative to Juliana in the "Rodoslovie" account.

25 Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, p. 224 seems to believe that Algirdas was baptized in 1377. Stanislaw Smolka, "Kiejstut i Jagiello" *Pamiętnik Akademii Umiejetnosci. Wydział Filologiczny 7* (Cracow: Akad. Umiejetnosci, 1889), p. 83 postulates that Algirdas was long favorable to Orthodox Christianity because of the influence of his wives, but was only finally baptized on his deathbed.

26 PSRL vol. 33, p. 87; vol. 17, p. 416: ... I prestavisia, polozhisha telo ego v tserkvi Prechistya Bogoroditsy v Vilne, iu zhe sam sozda." Algirdas' cremation is mentioned by his contemporary, Herman de Wartberg, *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum* vol. 2, p. 113. See Henryk Lowmianski, *Studia nad dziejami Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego* (Poznan: Uniwersytet im. Adama Michiewicza w Poznaniu, 1983), p. 257 for observations and bibliography on such funeral pyres in pagan Lithuania.

27 See L. V. Cherepnin, "Dogovornye i Duchovnyie gramoti Dmitriia Donskogo" *Istoricheskie Zapiski* 24 (1947): 249 for an agreement in 1384 between Muscovite Grand Prince Dimitri (Donskoi) and Algirdas' widow Juliana that Jogaila is to marry Dimitri's daughter, provided that he accept baptism in the Orthodox faith. This is preserved only in a late register which Cherepnin nevertheless considers reliable (p. 247-48). Moreover, the baptism of Jogaila as a Catholic in 1386 is described by three Russian chronicles in very unfavorable terms, with mention of two Orthodox Lithuanians whom Jogaila is supposed to have executed for refusing to abandon their faith; but even these hostile sources contain no hint that Jogaila was committing the supreme sin of apostasy: PSRL vol. 4, p. 94-95; vol. 5, p. 242; vol. 8, p. 51.

28 George Vernadsky et al., eds. *A Source Book for Russian History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972) vol. 1, p. 92. See note 1 above for his belief that Algirdas may have been an Orthodox Christian.

29 I will not deal with hearsay evidence, such as the story told by T. Narbutt, a 19th century amateur historian known for his embellished and romanticized versions of Lithuanian history, of a note in the inventory lists of a monastery in Trakai that one of its bells enclosed another bell with an inscription saying it was the gift of "Jakov Andrejevich (identified as the ruler of Lithuania) with his mother Juliana Aleksandrova", which is cited as evidence by P. D. Briancev, *Istoriia litovskago gosudarstva s drevneisich vremen*, p. 168, despite the fact that no source mentions "Andrew" as a Christian name of Algirdas (perhaps there is confusion here with Algirdas' son Andrew, who is known to have accepted Orthodox baptism?). Another example is the assertion by Macej Strykowski, author of a 16th-century epic poem on the history of Lithuania, that Algirdas founded two churches in Vitebsk, and "I myself saw there (Algirdas) painted clad, in Greek fashion, in a long mantle":

"Tamzem i jego obraz widzial malowany  
Greckim ksztaltem, na nim plaszczy dlugi,  
awtowany."

M. Strykowski, *O początkach, wywodach, dzielnościach, . . . narodu litewskiego* (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1978), p. 263. This is also cited as evidence for Algirdas' conversion by Briancev, although it proves nothing more than the application of a prevalent artistic style — if indeed the painting did depict Algirdas and not some other prince mistaken for him by the eager tourist Strykowski. Neither of the above-mentioned artifacts survive to the present day.

30 PSRL vol. 10 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia, 1862 and Moscow, 1965) p. 215: "potom Pskovichi . . . poslasha posly svoia v Vitepsk k velikomu kniazju Litovskomu Olgerdu Gedimanovichiu pomoschi prosiasche ot Nemetsi . . . Togda Pskovichi mnogo molisha velikogo Kniazia Olgerda, krestiti ego khotiasche i na kniazhenii posaditi vo Pskove. On zhe glagola im: 'Uzhe krescheni esm, i khristianin esm, i vtoroe krestitisia ne khoschu, i na kniazhenii u vas sest'i ne khoshu.' Pskovichi zhe krestisha syna ego Andreia v sobornoj tserkvi, i posadisha ego vo Pskove u seb'ia na kniazhenii."

31 P. N. Batiushkov, *Belorussia i Litva* (St. Petersburg: Tovarischestvo Obschestvennaia Polza", 1890), p. 76 and following him Misiūnas, "Algirdo tikėjimas" p. 244, accept this evidence.

32 B.M. Kloss, *Nikonovskij Svod i russkije letopisi XVI-XVII vekov* (Moscow: Nauka, 1980), p. 100. Cf. Serge Zenkovsky, *The Nikonian Chronicle* vol. 1 (Princeton: Kingdon Press, 1984), p. xix. Another supposed speech by Algirdas within the description of the same episode in Pskov is found in PSRL vol. 10, p. 214. It is interesting that one phrase of this speech, in which Algirdas refers to "the grace of God" is absent from two manuscripts of even the Nikon chronicle (see PSRL vol. 10 p. 214 fn. 4).

33 "On zhe otrechesia krestiti": "Pskovskaia pervaia let.", PSRL vol. 4 pt. 4 & 5 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia, 1848), p. 188 and *Pskovskie Letopisi, Vypusk 1*, (Moscow: Akad. Nauk, 1941 and The Hague: Europe Printing, 1967) p. 19; Voskresenskaia let., PSRL vol. 7, p. 208; "Novgorodskaja 4-ia let.", PSRL vol. 4 pt. 1 bk. 1 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia 1915, p. 274 and PSRL vol. IV (St. Petersburg, 1848), p. 56; "Novgorodskaja 5 let.", PSRL vol. 4 pt. 2 (Petrograd: Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia, 1917), p. 258.

34 "On zhe ne v'skhotē": "Pskovskaia 4-ia let.", PSRL vol. 5 (St. Petersburg: Imp. Arkheograf. Kommissiia, 1851), p. 13.

35 H. Paszkiewicz, *Jagiellonowie a Moskwa* vol. 1 (Warsaw: Fundusz Kultury Narodowej, 1933), p. 358 quotes this episode in the first chronicle of Pskov (PSRL 4, p. 186) as proof of Algirdas' paganism.

36 The fourth and fifth chronicles of Novgorod explicitly state, "(Algirdas) went to the aid of the Pskovians and he led with him his son Andrew, (such was his Christian name), and he was not yet baptized": "priekha v pomosch Pskovitsam i privedē syna svoego s soboiu Andrea, tako beshe imia emu molitvenoe, a esche be ne kreschen." PSRL vol. 4, pt. 1 bk. 1 p. 273; vol. 4 pt. 2 p. 257.

37 Simeonovskaa letopis, PSRL vol. 18 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia, 1913), p. 118:

"V vsej zhe bratii svoei Olgerd prevzyde vlastiui i sanom, pone piva i medu ne piashē, ni vina, ni kvasa kislā, i velikoustvo i vzderzhanie priobrete sebe, krepku durmu ot sego i mnog promysl pritzhav, i takovym kovarstvom mnogo strany i zemli povoeva i mnogy grady i kniazhenia poimal za sebe, i uderzha sebe vlast veliku: tem i umnozhsia kniazhenia ego, iakozhe ni edin zhe ot bratia ego stvori, ni otets ego, ni ded ego tako proslyl." Passages with similar wording are in the Novgorodskaja 4-ia let., PSRL vol. 4 pt. 4 & 5, p. 72; Rogozskii let., PSRL vol. 15 (St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvennaia Arkheograficheskaja Kommissiia, 1922), col. 117; Avraamki let., PSRL vol. 16 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograf. Kommissiia, 1889), p. 103; Sofijskaja pervaia let., PSRL vol. 5 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograf. Komm., 1851), p. 236; Lvovskaia let., PSRL vol. 20 pt. 1 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograf. Komm., 1910), p. 181 (under the entry for 1342); Nikanorovskaia let., PSRL vol. 28 (Moscow: Akademiia Nauk, 1963), p. 70; Vologodsko-Permskaia let., PSRL vol. 26 (Moscow: Akademiia Nauk, 1959), p. 123; Voskresenskaia let., PSRL vol. 7, p. 207 (under the entry for 1342). The corresponding entry in the chronicle of Nikon, PSRL vol. 11 (St. Petersburg, 1897; Moscow: Nauka, 1965), p. 26 once again demonstrates how its compiler interpolates his own comments into a source narrative, (see note 32 above) since his version makes Algirdas' sobriety seem like a Christian ascetic virtue rather than simply clever prudence.

38 The Simeonskaia (PSRL vol. 18, p. 118), Novgorod 4th (PSRL vol. 4 pt. 4 & 5 p. 72), Rogozhskii (PSRL vol. 15 col. 117), and Avraamki (PSRL vol. 16, p. 103) chronicles precede the panegyric on Algirdas with this phrase, as does the Troitskaia chronicle according to Priselkov's reconstruction: M. D. Priselkov, *Troitskaia letopis: Rekonstruktsiia teksta* (Moscow and Leningrad: Akad. Nauk, 1950) p. 402. The Voskresenskaia chronicle (PSRL vol. 8, p. 25 and the "Moskovskii svod" (Uvarovskii ms.), PSRL vol. 25 (Moscow: Akad. Nauk, 1949), p. 193 has "zloviernii" phrase alone under 1377, while the panegyric is under 1341-42, in PSRL vol. 7, p. 207 and PSRL vol. 25 p. 173.

39 As noted by John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p. 146 citing only the Troitskaia let.; A. Budreckis, *Algirdas* (New York: LSST Simo Kudirkos šaulių kuopa New Yorke, 1981), p. 184, cites only the Novgorod, Sofiskaia and Voskresenskaia chronicles, and not as proof of Algirdas' paganism, but as abusive "Political propaganda." R. Batūra, *Lietuva tautų kovoje prieš Aukso Ordą*, (Vilnius: "Mintis", 1975), p. 41 cites these passages in another context, and translates "zloviernii" as "faithful to evil" — a phrase which could be applied to a sinful Christian as well as a pagan. However, the scholarly *Slovar Russkovo Jazyka XI-XVIIvv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1979) p. 19 defines this word as meaning "belonging to a wrong (from the point of view of Christianity) religion; profane; fallen into heresy", and uses the above-quoted description of Algirdas as an example of this meaning, as well as citing a description of the Mongol Khan Batu, a non-Christian, as "zloviernii".

40 "Togdy zhe kniagini Nastasia priekhala iz Litvy so vnukoiu s nekreschenoiu s Olgerdovoiu dscheriui i krestili ee v Tveri." PSRL vol. 15, col. 76; vol. 11 p. 3.

41 "Fuit Lithuanis princeps, seu Dux magnus, . . . nomine Olgerdus . . . Habebat in complures filios diris Ethnicorum erroribus, tenebrisque implicitos omnes, velut et ipse Olgerdus, totaque cum eo terra Lithuania". I.N. Mederer, ed. *Annales Ingolstadiensis Academiae* Pars 2 (Ingolstadt, 1782), quoted by A. Šapoka, "Kur senovėje lietuviai mokslo ieškojo?". *Židiny* 10-11 (1935): 317, fn. 4.

42 The authenticity of these martyrs has been convincingly argued by John Meyendorff, "The Three Lithuanian Martyrs: Byzantium and Lithuania in the

Fourteenth Century", *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 26 (1982): 29-44.

43 Rasa Mažeika, "The Relations of Grand Prince Algirdas with Eastern and Western Christians", *Atti del Colloquio Internazionale di Storia Ecclesiastica, Roma, 1987: La Cristianizzazione della Lituania* (Rome: Pontificio Comitato di Scienze Storiche, 1988).

44 F. Miklosich ir I. Müller, *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani*, vol. 1 (Vienna: n.p. 1862; reprint ed., Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1968), no. 268, p. 523-24; discussed in John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, p. 189-190; translation by Meyendorff, *Ibid.* p. 285. First mentioned as a proof of Algirdas' paganism by Antoni Prochaska, "Od Mendoga do Jagielly" *Litwa i Rus* vol. 4 zeszyt 1 (1912), p. 57, quoted by J. Ochmanski, "Lietuvos Didysis Kunigaikštis Algirdas lenkų istorijografijoje" *Lietuvių Tautos Praeitis* vol. 4 bk. 2(14):62; also by Gotthold Rhode, *Die Ostgrenze Polens* vol. 1 (Köln-Graz: Bohlau Veri., 1955) p. 328.

45 Haralds Biezais, *Die Religionsquellen der baltischen Völker und die Ergebnisse der bisherigen Forschungen* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1954) p. 106; Marija Gimbutas, "Senoji lietuvių religija" *Aidai* no. 1 (1953):11; W. Jaskiewicz "A Study in Lithuanian Mythology: Jan Lasicki's Samogitian Gods" *Studi Baltici* 1(9) (1952): 81-82. On survival of the tradition of fire as sacred in Lithuania, see Jonas Balys, *Lietuvių liaudies pasaulėjauta tikėjimų ir papročių šviesoje* (Chicago: Lithuanian Institute of Education, 1966), p. 25-30.

46 Miklosich & Müller (MM) vol. 2, p. 12; Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, p. 303, 219-220. Cited as proof of Algirdas' paganism *Ibid.* p. 146 and Rhode, *Ostgrenze*, p. 328 fn. 156.

47 Nicephorus Gregoras, book 37: I. Bekker, ed., *Nicephori Gregorae Historiae Byzantinae* vol. 3, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* pars XIX (Bonn: Weber, 1829), 517-520; J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 149 (Paris: n. p., 1865) p. 458-459; V. Parisot, "Notice sur le livre XXXVII de Nicephore Gregoras, *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale* vol. 17 pt. 2 (1851), p. 78-84. Nicephoras also mentions that the Lithuanians as a nation worship fire: Bekker, p. 514; Parisot, p. 70. Cited as evidence for Algirdas' paganism by Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, p. 146; Gidžiūnas, "Algirdo ryšiai", p. 32; J. Fijalek, "Sredniowieczne biskupstwa kościoła wschodniego na Rusi i Litwie" *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 10 (1896):518; Henryk Paszkiewicz, *The Origin of Russia* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), p. 229.

48 In the theological debate over Hesychast mysticism then raging in Constantinople, Gregoras had emerged as a leading opponent of the Hesychasts (also known as "Palamites"): Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, p. 98-99. Therefore, in the words of Dimitri Obolensky, "Byzantium, Kiev and Moscow: A Study in Ecclesiastical Relations", *Byzantium and the Slavs: Collected Studies* studies VI, p. 28 he "entertained a particularly violent dislike of the Palamite Patriarch Philotheos."

49 Bekker, p. 517-18; *Patr. Graeca*, vol. 149, p. 458; Parisot, "Notice", p. 78. I think Dr. Paul Moore of the Greek Index Project at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto for providing me with a translation of these passages.

50 Clearly evident in the description of the competition between Alexis of Moscow and Roman of Lithuania for the title of "Metropolitan of Russia", where Philotheos is accused of taking bribes, and specifically blamed for the loss of the chance to convert the Lithuanians: Parisot, "Notice", p. 82, 84; Bekker, *Historiae Byzantinae*, p. 519-520. Cf. Obolensky, "Byzantium, Kiev, and Moscow", p. 28-29, and comments by R. Guiland, *Essai sur Nicephore Gregoras* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1926), p. 255 on Gregoras' general lack of objectivity.

51 Bekker, p. 520 ff. ; *Patr. Graeca* vol. 149 p. 459-463; Parisot, "Notice", p. 84-94. The speech contrasts the sun, worshipped by the pagan prince and presented as a symbol of the Creator, to the "demon of avarice" worshipped by the Byzantines, whose "infamies" are then detailed. Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, p. 146 accepts Gregoras' assertion of Algirdas' willingness to be baptized, and uses it repeatedly as proof that the Grand Prince was ready to convert to Greek Orthodox Christianity, (p. 162, 170, 195).