



Udo Arnold. *Zakon Niemiecki. Podstawy, regiony, osoby* [The Teutonic Order: Foundations, Regions, Persons]. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu, 2023. 603 pp. ISBN 978-83-231-4023-6.

The book under review is a collection of various studies authored by Udo Arnold, one of the most esteemed scholars working on the history of the Teutonic Order. It contains a plethora of shorter texts, originally published in German between 1976 and 2007, which have been translated into Polish. The studies presented here cover many different aspects of the Order's activities throughout its existence and up to the modern day. The book is the second such compilation available in Polish from the publisher, following *Zakon krzyżacki: Z Ziemi Świętej nad Bałtyk* [The Teutonic Order: From the Holy Land to the Baltic Sea], published in 1996. The new work is larger in content than its predecessor, as it includes more than twice as many individual articles. It is also more far-reaching, chronologically speaking. It sheds light on some of the lesser-known aspects of the Teutonic Order's early modern history and further reception of the Order's traditions.

The book begins with an introduction (pp. 7–10). Its main body (pp. 11–521) is divided into titled chapters without numeration, each of them representing an individual text by Udo Arnold. The work features a reference note (pp. 549–554), where the reader can find the original titles and other information for publications compiled here. Toward the end, there are also bibliographical recommendations (pp. 555–556), a list of illustrations and maps (pp. 557–560), an index of authors (pp. 561–568), an index of historical figures (pp. 569–586), a geographical index (pp. 587–602), and the actual maps and illustrations (p. 603).

The book's introduction was penned by its scientific editor, Roman Czaja, professor at the University of Nicolaus Copernicus (UMK) in Toruń. It offers a rather comprehensive view of Udo Arnold's professional biography and achievements, paying particular attention to Arnold's many connections to Polish historical studies and dedication to international cooperation. The introduction also summarizes the book's main contents.



The titled chapters are not tightly grouped into sections. Instead, they follow a mixed chronological-thematic pattern. The book's main body begins with an article (pp. 11–26) that deals with the Teutonic Order's holdings in the Holy Land from its beginnings in 1190 up until the fall of Acre in 1291 and its consequences. It focuses on the Order's functions as an organization and how those functions changed due to various political events and foreign influences. Chapters 2–4 (pp. 27–86) are dedicated to the Order's identity, especially its forms of religiosity and worship (such as the veneration of St. George and St. Jacob). The author uses the Order's official seals to show how the members may have expressed an emerging group identity in the Order's ranks. Chapters 5 and 6 (pp. 87–122) deal with the Order's significant connections to the Hohenstaufen dynasty. Udo Arnold explains how the Teutonic Order flourished as a corporation, especially during the reign of Frederick II, when the emperor and the grandmaster enjoyed mutual benefits while being allied to each other. The author also tackles a rather famous historical question, namely, whether the Order was the dynasty's subordinate organization, but he is skeptical of such a thesis. Chapter 7 (pp. 123–140) looks at the evolution of the Teutonic Order's core normative text (its rule) and its inner structure throughout history, as well as the direction it took as a result of its involvement in the wars against the Ottoman Turks. Chapter 8 (pp. 141–158) addresses the important but still under-researched issue of women's role in the Order.

Chapters 9–10 (pp. 159–208) concentrate on the Order's Baltic branch and its influential figures, focusing on individual biographies. Here, the reader finds a prosopographical study on the bishop of Courland, Edmund von Werth, as well as a comparative analysis pertaining to the grandmaster Albrecht von Brandenburg-Ansbach and the Livonian master Gotthard Kettler. Chapters 11–12 (pp. 209–270) are dedicated to the question of whether the Order could have regained the secularized territory of Prussia during the early modern period. The author shares his insights concerning agency regarding reconciling the Order's lost holdings as an active imperial policy of the House of Habsburg up until the Napoleonic era. Chapters 13–14 (pp. 271–348) examine the Order's activities and its characteristics on the Italian peninsula. Arnold touches upon the Order's notorious presence in the city of Venice and presents an extensive overview of the Order's administrative structures with regard to the corporation's influence on medieval Italy within the bailiwick of Bolzano.

In chapters 15–18 (pp. 349–432), the focus shifts to the Teutonic Order inside the Reich as a whole and in the so-called *partes inferiores* ('the lesser parts') of the Order's territorial holdings, especially along the Rhine River, where the knights' presence bolstered the development and growth of commerce and trade. The author describes the networks that involved the Teutonic Order and the local power structures in various places throughout the Holy Roman Empire, presenting the intricacies of the Reich's social composition after the Reformation and the subsequent political struggle between Protestants and Catholics. Chapters 19 and 20 (pp. 433–452) show the evolution of the Order's identity from its medieval roots to a corporation of nobles within the religiously diverse early modern Reich. The author explains the role that the Order's core Catholic part played during the Counter-Reformation. Here, Arnold points out that the Teutonic Order was *de facto* fragmented as a result of some of the members (especially nobles, who were then the most crucial component) embracing the Protestant faith as either Lutherans or Calvinists. Chapters 21–23 (pp. 453–500) elaborate on the Order's involvement in European politics during the tumultuous times of the Thirty Years War and the dawning eighteenth century. Arnold takes a closer look at the biographies of the grandmasters Leopold Wilhelm von Habsburg and Klemens August von Wittelsbach, two prominent politicians of their times. He also considers the Order's participation in the talks leading to the Peace of Westphalia (1648).

The penultimate chapter (pp. 501–520) offers interesting insights into the Teutonic Order's sponsorship and promotion of a young Ludwig van Beethoven. The author writes about the role of the grandmaster Maximilian Francis von Habsburg and a knight of the Order, Count Ferdinand von Waldstein, as fervent patrons of the remarkable composer. The final chapter (pp. 521–548) is dedicated to a controversial issue regarding the appropriation of the Teutonic Order's traditions and symbolism by nineteenth and twentieth-century nationalist ideologies. The author reflects on the role of tradition in shaping national identity, pointing out the dangers that arise from modern states tampering with historical phenomena, the most unfortunate example being the Nazis' reception of the Order during the Third Reich.

The reviewed book presents itself as a skillfully crafted compilation of the author's works. It holds great relevance for broadening the knowledge on the Teutonic Order's history as well as its impact on the world, making it more accessible to Polish audience. What is so great about this compilation is that

it encompasses those aspects of the Order's history that are often overlooked. A more extensive view of the matter might turn out to be useful when trying to improve the overall attitude of Polish readers toward a still delicate topic (at least in popular perception), namely, the Teutonic Order's activities throughout the ages and their ideological implications. The publication as a whole represents yet another milestone in the joint German and Polish studies on the history of the Teutonic Order.

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