

Die geistlichen Ritterorden in Mitteleuropa. Mittelalter, hrsg. v. Karol Borchart, Libor Jan (Edice Země a Kulturave Strědñi Evropě, Sv. 20), Matice moravská, Brno 2011, 361 pp., ISBN 978-80-86488-84-4.

This publication is the result of the academic conference *Die geistlichen Ritterorden in Mitteleuropa. Mittelalter* organized in Čejkovice on 8–10 April by the Historical Institute of the Faculty of Philosophy at Masaryk University in Brno, the Templar Wine Cellars in Čejkovice, the Moravian Museum in Brno, and the Centre for the Research of the History of Central Europe: Sources, Countries, Culture at Masaryk University. Sixteen researchers from the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, Hungary and Italy presented their critical studies on the Orders of the Teutonic Knights, the Hospitallers and the Templars in the Middle Ages. The publication consists of three parts preceded by the list of authors (p. 8) and the index of illustrations, maps and appendixes (pp. 9–18). The book includes a preface by the editors, Karl Borchart and Libor Jan (pp. 19–23), and an introductory article written by Kristjan Tommaspoeg (pp. 25–48). The latter's preliminary remarks are a survey of the last twenty-five years of research on the medieval military orders ('Die Geschichtsschreibung zu den mittelalterlichen geistlichen Ritterorden: Status quaestionis'. Special attention is devoted to the formation of the so-called "black legend" of the orders up to the 1980s, critical research carried out in the 1980s and 1990s, and contemporary trends in the historiography of the subject matter. Among suggestions for future research Tommaspoeg proposes a more vigorous sharing of experience and academic achievements among research centres in Europe. According to him, the most important topic for new research is the social history of the orders in the context of medieval society as a whole.

The first part of the volume concerns the administrative structures of the Orders of St. John and the Knights Templar (pp. 51–197). It includes an article by Karl Borchart describing the administrative structures of the German Order of St. John in the 12th–14th centuries (pp. 51–78). Libor Jan discusses the development of the Czech priory of the Order of St. John in political, territorial and economic terms (pp. 79–98). Jiří Mitáček focuses on the question of the development of the Province of the Order of St. John during the reign of the House of Luxembourg in the Czech Lands (1310–1437) (pp. 99–114), demonstrating an increase in the significance and prestige of the order in the consciousness of the local nobility in the 1330s. This is shown by the combining of monastic offices with important ecclesiastical positions in Bohemia, the ruling court's interest in making appointments to monastic offices and offices of the Czech priory, and choosing deputies from among the local nobility or Silesian ducal families. Miroslav Svoboda addresses the development of the estates belonging to the Czech priory of the

Order of St. John from the 12th to the 16th century (pp. 115–138). He shows that at the beginning of the 14th century the expansion of the Order's territorial property ended (with the exception of Strakonitz) and drawing on inspection documents, analyses the budget of individual monasteries. He also demonstrates the damaging effects of the Hussite Wars on the Order's estates in the period 1420–1437. Marek Smoliński discusses the question of the political-economic relations between the Order of St. John and princes in East and West Pomerania, examining in particular the ethnic structure of the Order in this area where a German element had started to prevail from the 14th century (pp. 139–156).

Christian Vogel compares the organizational structures of the Order of the Temple in Western and Central Europe (pp. 157–170), underlining the poor availability of sources which would allow us to become more familiar with the formation of the Order's hierarchy in Central Europe. He puts forward a hypothesis that the Order's estates in the area were subordinated to the French commander until the 1220s, and that the division of Templar territory among their provincial masters began in the second half of the 13th century. Libor Jan discusses the political activity and the development of the territorial estates of the Templars in Bohemia and in Moravia during the reign of the Přemyslid dynasty (pp. 171–182), while the article by Zsolt Hunyadi is devoted to the problem that the Order of St. John and the Order of the Temple faced in forming territorial structures in the medieval kingdom of Hungary (pp. 183–197). Hunyadi is critical of the opinion that the knights of both orders settled in the area as a result of the passage of troops through Hungary during the Second Crusade. He demonstrates how administrative structures of the Templars gradually grew from the coast to the central part of the country, while the administrative structures of the Order of St. John developed from the centre towards the south. In the case of the Knights Templar, private donations prevailed whereas in the Hospitallers benefices granted by members of the Árpád dynasty had more significance.

The second part of the book is devoted to the activity of the Teutonic Order. Klaus Militzer discusses the problem connected with the diversified formation of the administrative and territorial system of bailiwicks in the Holy Roman Empire (pp. 201–214). Martin Čapský concentrates on the economic development of the Czech bailiwick in the Middle Ages (pp. 215–232), questioning the claim of an economic stagnation of the Bohemian province prior to the secularization of the Order by Wenceslas IV before 1411. He shows that despite debts, some commanderies (i. e. Dobruvice), thanks to their convenient location near trade routes, facilitated the development of an active and specialized economy. The actions of the Land Commander Ulrich von Ausk were particularly effective as he established control over the Order's fishponds. Karol Polejowski addresses the question of the

war propaganda of the Teutonic Order in France during the conflict with Poland and Lithuania in the 15th century (pp. 233–242). His analysis shows that the kingdom of France trusted the information from the Teutonic Knights concerning the struggles with Saracens in Prussia in the 15th century despite the Christianization of Poland and Lithuania. Originally, the Teutonic Order relied on the military help of the king of France in its fights with “pagans”, but the Teutonic Knights’ expectations of the French monarchy and church changed in the 1430s, when they expected some financial support for their actions in Prussia.

The third part of the book contains texts connected with various aspects of the activity of clergymen within the military orders. Martin Wihoda discusses the problem of monastic architecture in Bohemia (pp. 245–264). Robert Heś examines the timing of and reasons for the liquidation and translocation of the Silesian commanderies in Lossen, Beilau and Warmbrunn (pp. 265–272), maintaining that the reasons for the phenomenon were financial. Maria Starnawska discusses some documents of Siemowit von Teschen, the commander of Klein-Oels and grand prior in Bohemia, whose chancery practices were affected by his princely origin. As a commander he signed documents himself and employed a notary. As a prior he had two scribes, but their task was not the development of the chancery – they were to prove the status and ambitions of Siemowit (pp. 273–286). Stanislav Petr analyses some medieval manuscripts from the library of the Prague Grand Priory of the Military Order of Malta. From among thirteen preserved manuscripts, mostly dealing with liturgical-biblical themes, special attention is drawn to the oldest manuscript, from 1283–1290, which includes economic and official notes. It contains, for instance, the prices of food and costs of services which, according to Petr, provide valuable information about the everyday life and activities of the Order of St. John in the priory of Saint-Gilles (pp. 287–294). The last article by Miroslav Plaček from the collection deals with the architectural shape of religious commanderies of the military orders in the Bohemian province – Strakonice/Strakonitz, Mailberg, Staré Brno/Alt-Brünn, Horní Kounice/Oberkaunitz, Kadaň/Kaaden. The author also discusses the commanderies of the Teutonic Order: Komotau, Drobovice/Dobrovitz, Slavkov/Austerlitz, Hostěradice/Hosterlitz and Čejkovice/Czeikowitz (pp. 295–306). The publication includes a bibliography (pp. 307–350), an index of places (pp. 351–357) and the programme of the conference (pp. 358–361).

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