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COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CENTRE AND PERIPHERY: THE EXAMPLE OF THE ITALIAN BRANCH OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER (13TH–16TH CENTURIES)

KEYWORDS

history; the Middle Ages; military orders; periphery; administration; visitations; communication; networks

ABSTRACT

The paper takes as points of departure two major topics: the relations between the center and the periphery in the medieval world and the administrative history of the religious military orders. The specific case of the possessions of the Teutonic Order in Italy, so the bailiwicks of Sicily, Apulia, “Lombardy” and Bozen and the seat of the Order’s “general procurator” in the papal curia, will be examined with help of the existing primary sources. A particular interest will be given to the methods or instruments used by the headquarters of the Order to control and rule its Italian possessions. All those instruments are based on intensiv communication between the center and the periphery. They consist mainly in: 1. voyages and stays of the Order’s highest officials in Italy; 2. integration of the superiors of the local bailiwicks in the Order’s general chapter; 3. regular documented visitations of the Italian bailiwicks and other missions of control; 4. choice of the commanders in Italy among the trusted men of the great master or, later, master of Germany of the Teutonic Order; 5. limited terms of office to the brothers, kept in Italy only a short time; 6. permanent and intensiv written and oral communication. Some relevant differences between the administrative practice of Templars and Hospitallers in Italy can be noted: so were the visitations of the local possessions much more regular in the Teutonic Order but, at the same time, the financing system of the central convent through the *responsiones* present in the Hospital was practically unknown for the Teutonic brethren. The communications between the center and the periphery took place, in our case, not only

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on the East-West, but also on the North-South axis. It can be concluded, that the Italian branch of the Teutonic Order was a periphery under the attention of the center. Like all the peripheries of the world, the peninsula was a transit area, between north and south, west and east. If we add here the religious and political importance of Italy and the economic prosperity of the local bailiwicks, it becomes clear why the Order, at least the better informed masters of Germany, did fight with all possible forces against the expropriation of this patrimony.

Historiography has frequently examined the relationship between “centre” and “periphery”.¹ The sociological approach, which aims to rethink and relativise both concepts, is currently the prevailing trend. The idea of a distant, backwards periphery subject to a developed centre has been abandoned. This applies to the study of religious orders in particular: most of the orders featured the *caput* along with varying numbers of *membra* or *filiae*. The scholars from the Dresden research team on the comparative history of the regular communities have brought a lot of new information to this field.²

In Dresden, the research has focused on the Cistercian, Premonstratensian and Mendicant orders,³ but the case of the religious military orders has not been taken into account.⁴ The military orders followed the general developments, as

¹ See, for example, Flocel Sabaté Curull and Luis Adão da Fonseca, “The Spain that never was: the Iberian Peninsula from its Peripheries,” in *Catalonia and Portugal. The Iberian Peninsula from the Periphery*, ed. Flocel Sabaté Curull and Luis Adão da Fonseca (Bern a.o.: Peter Lang, 2015), 9–42; Kurt Villads Jensen, “Conclusion: Is it Good to be Peripheral?,” in *Livland – eine Region am Ende der Welt? Forschungen zum Verhältnis zwischen Zentrum und Peripherie im späten Mittelalter*, ed. Anti Selart and Matthias Thumser (Cologne etc.: Böhlau, 2017), 483–494.

² The scholars of the Forschungsstelle für Vergleichende Ordensgeschichte at the University of Dresden, directed by Gert Melville, have examined this topic in particular in the volume *Die Ordnung der Kommunikation und die Kommunikation der Ordnungen*, vol. I, *Netzwerke: Klöster und Orden im Europa des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Cristina Andenna, Klaus Herbers, and Gert Melville (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2012).

³ Maria Pia Alberzoni, “I sistemi di controllo,” in *Die Ordnung der Kommunikation und die Kommunikation der Ordnungen*, vol. I, *Netzwerke: Klöster und Orden im Europa des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Cristina Andenna, Klaus Herbers, and Gert Melville (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2012), 93–117, here 93–95, 105, 109–111; Cristina Andenna, “Le forme della comunicazione negli ordini religiosi del XII e XIII secolo: periferia e sottocentri,” in *Die Ordnung der Kommunikation*, ed. Andenna, Herbers, and Melville, 261–289, here 271, 275, 280. See also the basic work by Jörg Oberste, *Visitation und Ordensorganisation. Formen sozialer Normierung, Kontrolle und Kommunikation bei Cisterzienser, Prämonstratensern und Cluniakensern (12. – frühes 14. Jahrhundert)* (Münster: LIT, 1996).

⁴ See the opening passages of Kaspar Elm, “Gli ordini militari. Un ceto di vita religiosa tra universalismo e particolarismo,” in *Militia sacra: gli ordini militari tra Europa e Terrasanta*, ed. Enzo Coli, Maria De Marco, and Francesco Tommasi (Perugia: S. Beviniate, 1994), 9–29.

they essentially adopted the Cistercian model of control of the periphery.⁵ However, they also had important particularities. The concept of “backward colonialism”, coined by Anthony Luttrell, is particularly significant for this study. What this means is that the three major military orders were initially centred on the East, using their possessions in the West to supply men, money and food.⁶ Over time, this western periphery displaced the lost or weakened centre.

The military orders had to embed their western possessions into a potentially effective administrative system,⁷ and various strategies were used to do so. However, the primary instrument used to control the periphery was communication.⁸ In recent years, the subject of military orders has undergone in-depth examination, for example, in light of their networks,⁹ travel routes, and international mobility.¹⁰ For Hartmut Boockmann, the Teutonic Order was a particular case in this regard. Whereas in Temple and Hospitals, communication was mostly carried out between the East and West, the Teutonic knights also communicated between North and South.¹¹ North-South communication can, of course, also be found to have been

⁵ Klaus Militzer, *Von Akkon zur Marienburg. Verfassung, Verwaltung und Sozialstruktur des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1309* (Marburg: Elwert, 1999), 144; Alberzoni, “I sistemi,” 93; *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden im Mittelalter*, ed. Marian Biskup and Irena Janosz-Biskupova, with Udo Arnold, part I, 1236–1449, (Marburg: Elwert Verlag, 2002), XIV.

⁶ Anthony T. Luttrell, “Templari e Ospitalieri in Italia,” in *La chiesa di S. Bevignate a Perugia*, ed. Mario Roncetti, Pietro Scarpellini, and Francesco Tommasi (Milan: Electa, 1987), 19–26 (here quoted from reprint in Anthony T. Luttrell, *The Hospitallers of Rhodes and their Mediterranean World* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), no. I, 1–11), 6.

⁷ See first of all Jochen Burgdorf, *The Central Convent of Hospitalers and Templars: history, organization, and personnel (1099/1120–1310)* (Leiden a.o.: Brill, 2008).

⁸ Communication in the Middle Ages is a deeply studied field, with many different aspects, so I will limit myself to citing only two generic texts with bibliographical references: Albrecht Classen, “Communication,” in *Handbook of medieval studies. Terms – methods – trends*, vol. I, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin etc.: De Gruyter, 2010), 330–342; and Lia B. Ross, “Communication in the Middle Ages,” in *Handbook of medieval culture*, vol. I, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin a.o.: De Gruyter, 2015), 203–231. Specific study on Military Orders: Sophia Menache, “Communication,” in *Prier et combattre. Dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Âge*, ed. Nicole Bériou and Philippe Josserand (Paris: Fayard, 2009), 250.

⁹ *Herrschaft, Netzwerke, Brüder des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter und Neuzeit. Vorträge der Tagung der Internationalen Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Deutschen Ordens in Marburg 2010*, ed. Klaus Militzer (Weimar: VDG, 2012).

¹⁰ *International Mobility in the Military Orders (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries): Travelling on Christ’s Business*, ed. Jochen Burgdorf and Helen Nicholson (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006).

¹¹ Hartmut Boockmann, “Der Deutsche Orden in der Kommunikation zwischen Nord und Süd,” in *Kommunikation und Mobilität im Mittelalter. Begegnungen zwischen dem Süden und der Mitte Europas (11.–14. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Siegfried de Rachewitz and Josef Riedmann (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1995), 179–189, here 179.

carried out by the Hospitallers and Templars – both orders had provinces, commanderies and houses in Germany and Central Europe – but Boockmann’s theory is convincing, especially for the era following the transfer of the Teutonic grand master’s seat in Prussia. Indeed, transporting men between Prussia, Germany, and the Mediterranean was a prevalent practice that is relatively well-documented.¹²

The Teutonic Order’s possessions in the Italian Peninsula and Sicily are significant in this sense because they were placed at the crossroads between North and South, East and West.¹³ My task will be to examine communications between the centres of the Teutonic Order and its Italian branch, using the primary sources available and in light of their administrative history.

Max Weber listed a series of administrative procedures that were intended to enable control over the periphery from the centre in his *Economy and Society*,¹⁴ a schema that Alois Hahn used recently in research conducted on religious

¹² Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Die Brüder des Deutschen Ordens in Italien,” *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica. Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders* 19 (2014): 87–113, here 96–101.

¹³ With regard to the the role of the Apennine peninsula as a bridgehead between Europe and the Levant, see Hubert Houben, “Auf dem Weg ins Heilige Land: deutsche Pilger, Kreuzfahrer und Ordensritter in Italien,” in *Die Kreuzzugsbewegung im römisch-deutschen Reich (11.–13. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Nikolas Jaspert and Stefan Tebruck (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2016), 103–118. About the possessions of the Teutonic Order in Italy see, among many other works, Jan-Erik Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator des Deutschen Ordens an der römische Kurie. Amt, Funktionen, personelles Umfeld und Finanzierung* (Marburg: Elwert, 1999); Hubert Houben, “Between Sicily and Jerusalem. The Teutonic Knights in the Mediterranean (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries),” in *Islands and Military Orders, c. 1291 – c. 1798*, ed. Emanuel Buttigieg and Simon Philipps (Farnham: Routledge, 2013), 155–163; Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “The Teutonic Order in Italy: An Example of the Diplomatic Ability of the Military Orders,” in *The Military Orders*, vol. 5, *Politics and Power*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Burlington–Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 273–282; *L’Ordine Teutonico tra Mediterraneo e Baltico: incontri e scontri tra religioni, popoli e culture / Der Deutsche Orden zwischen Mittelmeerraum und Baltikum. Begegnungen und Konfrontationen zwischen Religionen, Völkern und Kulturen. Atti del Convegno internazionale, Bari–Lecce–Brindisi, 14–16 settembre 2006*, ed. Hubert Houben and Kristjan Toomaspoeg (Galatina: Congedo, 2008). About the possessions of the order in Veneto see the recent works of Marie-Luise Favreau-Lilie, “Der Deutsche Orden in Norditalien (13. Jh.). Über die Grenzen der Netzwerkforschung,” *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica. Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders* 20 (2015): 39–64; and ead., “Reformbedarf und Reformen an der norditalienische Peripherie. Der Deutsche Orden in Venedig und in Venetien,” *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica. Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders* 21 (2016): 61–85.

¹⁴ Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriss der verstehende Soziologie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1956, 4th edition), 613–614.

communities.¹⁵ One of those procedures, perhaps the most important, was the “regelmäßige Bereisung der Peripherie durch das Zentrum,” meaning the regular personal journeys of the superiors to the periphery. In fact, the founder of the Templar order, Hugues de Payns, and some of his most trusted brethren, personally made this journey to the West themselves.¹⁶ For the Templars, and also the Hospitallers, it was not uncommon for the master and other dignitaries to travel or reside in Europe.¹⁷ The presence of the superiors was one of the best ways to check on the local possessions and to retrieve information about the condition in which they could be found. Some relevant testimonials concerning the presence of the higher officers of the Teutonic Order have been found, relating to the Italian Peninsula. Most of all, Hermann von Salza spent a substantial amount of time in the court of Frederick II in Apulia and was probably even buried there.¹⁸ The fact that the master himself was in southern Italy could explain the belated apparition of the local, provincial commanders, between 1225 and 1235.¹⁹ However, no document signed by Hermann von Salza himself has been found in the archives of the former Italian provinces of the Teutonic Order. In any case, the main house of the Teutonic bailiwick of Apulia, Barletta, had a visibly unique position within the Order’s structures at that time, and some of the most critical Teutonic documents were preserved there.²⁰

¹⁵ Alois Hahn, “Zentrum und Peripherie,” in *Die Ordnung der Kommunikation und die Kommunikation der Ordnungen*, vol. I, *Netzwerke: Klöster und Orden im Europa des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Cristina Andenna, Klaus Herbers, and Gert Melville (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2012), 17–36, here 17.

¹⁶ Alain Demurger, *Vie et mort de l'ordre du Temple* (Paris: Seuil, 1989, 2nd edition), 40–41, 55–57; id., *Chevaliers du Christ. Les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge (XI^e–XV^e siècles)* (Paris: Seuil, 2002), 40.

¹⁷ See for example id., “Between Barcelona and Cyprus: the Travels of Berenguer of Cardona, Templar Master of Aragon and Catalonia (1300–01),” in *International Mobility in the Military Orders (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries): Travelling on Christ’s Business*, ed. Jochen Burgtorf and Helen Nicholson (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006), 65–74; Ludwig Vones, “Fernández de Heredia, Juan, Großmeister der Johanniter (um 1310–1396),” in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. IV (München–Zürich: Artemis, 1989), col. 373–374.

¹⁸ Helmuth Kluger, *Hochmeister Hermann von Salza und Kaiser Friedrich II.: ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte des Deutschen Ordens* (Marburg: Elwert, 1987); Hubert Houben, “Alla ricerca del luogo di sepoltura di Ermanno di Salza a Barletta,” *Sacra Militia. Rivista di storia degli ordini militari* 1 (2000): 165–177.

¹⁹ Hubert Houben, “Die Landkomturre der Deutschordensballei Apulien (1225–1474),” *Sacra Militia. Rivista di storia degli ordini militari* 2 (2001): 116–154, here 119–120, 133; Kristjan Toomaspoeg, *Les Teutoniques en Sicile (1197–1492)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2003), 460.

²⁰ *Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie*, vol. I, *Die Geschichte der Generalprokuratoren von den Anfängen bis 1403*, ed. Kurt Forstreuter and Hans Koeppen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961), 36, 38 and 247–248, no. 108; Kristjan Toomaspoeg,

Until the fall of Acre, the houses of the Teutonic Order in southern Italy (such as Brindisi, Barletta and Messina) were also the starting points for the Teutonic knights and priests, including the Order's masters, when on their way to the Holy Land.²¹ We know that from 1289–1291 important knights like Heinrich von Bolanden were active in Italy and Acre at the same time.²² Then, after 1291 and until 1309, Italy suddenly – and theoretically, at least – became the centre of the Teutonic Order, whose grand master resided in Venice.²³ At that time, the Order's provincial commanders in Italy were usually also high-ranking officers of its central administration.²⁴ After 1309, with the definitive transfer of the grand master to Prussia, the situation changed: the grand masters never went back to Italy again, and around 1366 the Italian bailiwicks, with the exception of Bozen in southern Tyrol (the grand master's "chamber bailiwick"),²⁵ were handed over to the officer known as *Deutschmeister*, later titled "Master in the German and Guelf lands" (*Welschland*, i.e., Italy), the person responsible for the third branch of the Teutonic Order after Prussia and Livonia.²⁶ One of the *Deutschmeister*, Eberhard von Seinsheim, went to southern Italy himself in the summer of 1433. It is also

"Die Urkunden des Deutschen Ordens in Italien," in *Das "virtuelle Archiv des Deutschen Ordens." Beiträge einer internationalen Tagung im Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg am 11. und 12. April 2013*, ed. Maria Magdalena Rückert (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2014), 113–128, 114.

- ²¹ See: Kristjan Toomaspoeg, "L'Ordine Teutonico in Italia e le vie di pellegrinaggio nella penisola (secoli XIII–XV)," in *La Via Teutonica. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Venezia, 29 giugno 2012, Palazzo Cavalli Franchetti*, ed. Renato Stopani and Fabrizio Vanni (Florence: Centro Studi Romei, 2013), 47–66.
- ²² Militzer, *Von Akkon zur Marienburg*, 403; Maciej Dorna, *Die Brüder des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen 1228–1309. Eine prosopographische Studie* (Köln a.o.: Böhlau, 2012), 105; Toomaspoeg, *Les Teutoniques en Sicile*, 463.
- ²³ See: Udo Arnold, "Der Deutsche Orden und Venedig," in *Militia Sacra. Gli ordini militari tra Europa e Terrasanta*, ed. Enzo Coli, Maria De Marco and Francesco Tommasi (Perugia: San Bevignate, 1994), 145–165.
- ²⁴ See the case of Guido de Amendola, commander in Apulia, in Hubert Houben, "Guido von Amigdala/Amendolea. Ein Italo-Palästinenser als Landkomtur des Deutschen Orden im Mittelmeerraum (1289–1311)," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 88 (2008): 148–160.
- ²⁵ On the history of the bailiwick of Bozen or An der Etsch, see *Der Deutsche Orden in Tirol. Die Ballei an der Etsch und im Gebirge*, ed. Heinz Noflatscher (Marburg: Elwert, 1991); and Francesco Filotico, *Le origini del Baliato di Bolzano nel quadro del primo sviluppo dell'Ordine Teutonico (1200–1270)* (Galatina: Congedo, 2015).
- ²⁶ The only existing monograph on the history of the *Deutschmeister* is Hans Hubert Hofmann, *Der Staat des Deutschmeisters. Studien zu einer Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens im Heiligen Römischen Reich Deutscher Nation* (München: Kommission für bayerische Landesgeschichte, 1964), that has to be completed by more recent research, specially by Militzer, *Von Akkon zur Marienburg*, 213–223, 307–332.

quite probable that others had visited the bailiwick of Lombardy in the north of the peninsula.

However, the personal presence of the superiors of the Teutonic Order in Italy was limited to a reasonably short timeframe. The Order's local possessions did not form a single administrative unit. Attempts in this regard were made at the beginning of the 13th century,²⁷ and in the 14th and 15th centuries, on behalf of both the grand master and the *Deutschmeister*.²⁸ Despite this, all of the bailiwicks would remain autonomous. The situation was very similar to those of the orders of the Temple and of St John. The Hospitallers had a representative of the master of the Order sent to the Italian Peninsula periodically, who by no means was at the head of the local priories. As for the Templar order, the "master in Italy,"²⁹ known from the sources, was none other than the Order's commander in northern Italy.³⁰

The local structures of all three major military orders were based on a network of provinces, such as the priories of the Order of St John, the grand commanderies of the Templars, and the bailiwicks of the Teutonic Order.³¹ There was a particular hierarchy here, so it can be said that the Hospitaller priory of Barletta and the grand commandery of the Templar Order in Apulia had a more important position than their other provinces, in southern Italy. Meanwhile, in northern Italy,

²⁷ Militzer, *Von Akkon zur Marienburg*, 220.

²⁸ Kristjan Toomaspoeg, "La fondazione della provincia di 'Lombardia' dell'Ordine dei Cavalieri Teutonici (secoli XIII–XIV)," *Sacra Militia. Rivista di storia degli ordini militari* 3 (2003): 111–159, here 133.

²⁹ Francesco Tommasi, "L'ordinamento geografico-amministrativo dell'Ospedale in Italia (secc. XII–XIV)," in *Religiones Militares. Contributi alla storia degli Ordini religioso-militari nel Medioevo*, ed. Anthony Luttrell and Francesco Tommasi (Città di Castello: Selecta, 2008), 61–130, here 69–77.

³⁰ Elena Bellomo, *The Templar Order in North-west Italy (1142–c.1330)* (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2008), 90–108.

³¹ For Templars' general history in Italy see Fulvio Bramato, *Storia dell'Ordine dei Templari in Italia*, vol. I, *Le fondazioni* (Rome: Atanòr: 1991); that has to be completed by more recent works such as Bellomo, *The Templar Order*; Kristjan Toomaspoeg, *Templari e Ospitalieri nella Sicilia Medievale* (Bari: Centro Studi Melitensi, 2003); or *L'Ordine templare nel Lazio meridionale. Atti del Convegno, Sabaudia, 21 ottobre 2000*, ed. Clemente Ciammaruconi (Casamari: Edizioni Casamari, 2003). About the Hospital, see the works of Anthony T. Luttrell, many of them reedited in id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West. 1291–1440* (London: Variorum, 1978) and id., *The Hospitallers of Rhodes; Mariarosaria Salerno, Gli ospedalieri di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia (secc. XII–XV)* (Taranto: Centro Studi Melitensi, 2001); ead., "The Hospitallers in Southern Italy: Families and Powers," in *The Military Orders*, vol. 5, *Politics and Power*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Burlington–Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 263–272; *Riviera di Levante tra Emilia e Toscana. Un crocevia per l'Ordine di San Giovanni. Atti del Convegno. Genova–Chiavari–Rapallo, 9–12 settembre 1999*, ed. Josepha Costa Restagno (Bordighera: Istituto Internazionale di Studi Liguri, 2001).

the leading role belonged to their priory and grand commandery of “Lombardy” or “Italy”. The Teutonic Order also created a hierarchy of provinces within the peninsula: in the beginning, the bailiwick of Bozen played the role of intermediary between the Order’s possessions in German- and Italian-speaking territories,³² but later, under the rule of the *Deutschmeister*, the bailiwick of Lombardy played a central role in the Order’s administration in Italy.³³

A control measure frequently used in religious orders was to integrate provincial superiors into the Order’s chapter. In theory, this would mean that all the abbots of the Cistercian Order would have to participate in its general chapters.³⁴ While the statutes of the Teutonic Order provided for the presence of the commander of the bailiwick of Apulia in the Order’s general chapter,³⁵ it is probable that he was never there. The problem here, just as elsewhere, is that the sources available do not provide much clarification. A situation can often be witnessed in the Italian bailiwicks where the provincial commander was not present, having been replaced by a deputy (lieutenant), though no information has been found about where the provincial commander would have travelled on to. As has been said previously, only in the case of the provincial commanders from between 1290 and 1309, such as Heinrich von Bolanden or Guido de Amendola, has more precise information been found.

Since the beginning of the 14th century, control of the local bailiwicks and their commanders was exercised through visitations: the first evidence of this relates to July 1311, when Guido Amendola, commander of Apulia, visited the neighbouring bailiwick of Sicily.³⁶ The visitation was an administrative measure dating back to antiquity that had been in use since the high middle ages in the secular world – the Carolingian *missi dominici* – as much as in the dioceses.³⁷ Today’s research links the spread of this practice in the monastic sphere in the late middle ages to the Cistercian movement in particular, though these visitations already

³² Boockmann, “Der Deutsche Orden in der Kommunikation,” 182.

³³ Toomaspoeg, “Die Brüder,” 97.

³⁴ Uwe Israel, “Personale Kommunikation zwischen Klöstern im Hochmittelalter,” in *Die Ordnung der Kommunikation und die Kommunikation der Ordnungen*, vol. I, *Netzwerke: Klöster und Orden im Europa des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Cristina Andenna, Klaus Herbers, and Gert Melville (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2012), 149–164, here 163.

³⁵ *Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens nach den ältesten Handschriften*, ed. Max Perlbach (Halle: Niemeyer, 1890), 59–60 (Laws II).

³⁶ *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, I, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 6–7 no. 5.

³⁷ Among numerous works, see for example Ian J. Forrest and Christopher Whittick, “The Thirteenth-Century Visitation Records of the Diocese of Hereford,” *English Historical Review* 131 (2016): 737–762.

took place with the Cluniacs.³⁸ All three major military religious orders organised visitations in their provinces. However, these were incompletely documented. According to Jürgen Sarnowsky, the Order of St John possessed a complex system of visitations, both on central and provincial levels.³⁹ As for the Teutonic Order, range of information exists about visitations to the Order since 1236, thanks to works by Udo Arnold, Marian Biskup, and Irena Janosz-Biskupowa.⁴⁰

A total of fifteen visitations ordered by the grand master and the *Deutschmeister* are known to have taken place in Italy, of which at least ten have indisputably been ascertained to have been carried out.⁴¹ However, the total number of visitations could have been higher, as other sources (such as a list of the possessions of the bailiwick of Sicily from c. 1460)⁴² have been found, which must have been redacted on the occasion of visitations. All visitations were carried out by two members of the Order – a knight and a priest – with the exception of the visitations of 1311 (when Guido Amendola acted alone) and 1462 in Lombardy, when Andreas von Grumbach, then commander in Regensburg, was accompanied by a knight brother, Johann von Vinsterlohe, commander in Kapfenburg, and a priest, Jodokus Leyniger. The Italian bailiwicks were never all visited at once, with the exception of the visitation of 1451, which was carried out by bailiff of Leipe Georg

³⁸ Oberste, *Visitation und Ordensorganisation*, specially 375–410; Alberzoni, “I sistemi,” 94; Israel, “Personale Kommunikation,” 161–162.

³⁹ Jürgen Sarnowsky, “The Convent and the West: Visitations in the Order of the Hospital of St. John in the Fifteenth Century,” in *The Hospitallers, the Mediterranean and Europe: festschrift for Anthony Luttrell*, ed. Karl Borchardt, Nikolas Jaspert, and Helen J. Nicholson (Aldershot a.o.: Ashgate, 2007), 151–162 (reprint in Jürgen Sarnowsky, *On the Military Orders in Medieval Europe: Structures and Perceptions* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), n. IX), 152–153.

⁴⁰ Udo Arnold, „Die Schriftlichkeit des Deutschen Ordens am Beispiel der Visitationen,” in *Die Rolle der Schriftlichkeit in den geistlichen Ritterorden des Mittelalters: Innere Organisation, Sozialstruktur, Politik*, ed. Roman Czaja and Jürgen Sarnowsky (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2009), 7–38; id., “Die Visitation als Mittel traditioneller Ordensstruktur nach 1466,” *Zapiski Historyczne* 82, no. 1 (2017): 21–36; *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, I, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, and also two further volumes: part II, 1450–1519, ed. Marian Biskup and Irena Janosz-Biskupowa, with Udo Arnold (Marburg: Elwert, 2004) and part III, 1528–1541 sowie Nachträge, Korrekturen und Ergänzungen, Orts- und Personenverzeichnis, ed. Marian Biskup and Irena Janosz-Biskupowa, with Udo Arnold (Marburg: Elwert, 2008).

⁴¹ *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, I, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 6–7 no. 5 (1311), 9 no. 8 (1326), 10 no. 9 (1327), 15–17 no. 13 (1339), 32–33 no. 29 (1374), 36–38 no. 31 (1380), 59–60 no. 58 (1409), 64 no. 62 (1410–11), 99 no. 85 (1430), 129–160 no. 99 (1440), 327–485 no. 136 (1448), II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 96–97 no. 163, 98 no. 164 (1451), 168 no. 183 (1463), 169–170 no. 184 (1463), 179–181 no. 192 (1481), 201–216 no. 210 (1491).

⁴² Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Terra, uomini e denaro. Un inedito censuale siciliano del Quattrocento,” *Annali dell’Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici* 27 (2012–2013): 379–456.

von Egloffstein and priest Jost Kropp, canon of Marienburg, as part of an ambitious visitation ordered by the grand master “in German and Guelf lands”.⁴³ In 1462–1463, Lombardy, Apulia and Sicily were all visited, but on two separate occasions – Lombardy was visited first, in 1462, and Apulia and Sicily followed, in the spring and summer of 1463. Andreas von Grumbach visited Lombardy but did not reach southern Italy. As the bailiwicks in the north and south of the peninsula were visited separately, it was possible to use the local brethren as visitors. Guido Amendola therefore went from Apulia to Sicily in 1311, the provincial commander in Rome Johann von Sachsen, also went to Sicily in 1327, and Erwin Ortenberg from Lombardy to Apulia and Sicily in 1339.

The visitors had all the means necessary to control the situation of the bailiwicks at their disposal. In fact, the visitations in the Teutonic Order – which might have been organised by the grand master or by the regional masters (such as the *Deutschmeister*), but never by the provincial commanders (unlike in the Order of St John), as regulated by the Order’s statutes and their later additions⁴⁴ – did not consist of a simple “check-up” of the bailiwicks. At the beginning of the visitation, all local officers, including the provincial commander, were provisionally dismissed, and the visitors would have taken over governing the bailiwick.⁴⁵ For that reason, some cases can be observed in Italy of visitors acting in the name of the bailiwicks, such as in Sicily, in May 1463.⁴⁶ In many instances, the local provincial commander was substituted as a result of the visitation, and at least once, in 1327 Sicily, the visitor himself, Otto von Bissingen, became the new commander of the bailiwick.⁴⁷ Sometimes, visitations would take place under exceptional, difficult circumstances where the autonomy of the bailiwicks was menaced by the local lay powers or by internal divisions, like in the 1430s and 1440s or in 1491.⁴⁸ In general, however, it seems the visitations were frequent, if not regular.

⁴³ See *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 41–58 no. 148; and Erich Joachim, “Reisebericht der von dem Deutschen Orden im Jahre 1451 ausgesandten Visitatoren,” *Sitzungsberichte des Vereins für die Geschichte Ost- und Westpreußens* (1917–1919): 42–43.

⁴⁴ *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, I, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, XXII–XXIII; Arnold, “Die Visitation als Mittel,” 24.

⁴⁵ The reports of the visitations in Italian bailiwicks have been published separately and translated in *La contabilità delle Case dell’Ordine Teutonico in Puglia e in Sicilia nel Quattrocento*, ed. Kristjan Toomaspoeg (Galatina: Congedo, 2005), with an exhaustive introduction, IX–CXLI.

⁴⁶ *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 168 no. 183.

⁴⁷ 17 March 1327, *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, I, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa; 20 April 1328, Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Tabulario della Magione 604, 606.

⁴⁸ For some of the circumstances, see Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Der Verlust der Besitzungen des Deutschen Ordens in Italien am Ende des 15. und am Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts,” *Ordines*

From the 15th century onwards, records have been found both from visitations ordered by the *Deutschmeister* and those by the grand master, which detail what the superiors actually knew about the Italian bailiwicks. The difference in the level of information is striking: the *Deutschmeister* possessed the annual accounts and lists of possessions of the bailiwicks as well as detailed information about local brethren, whereas the grand master obtained only very general descriptions of the provinces, with a short list of the local brethren and very imprecise information on the state of the Order's possessions.⁴⁹

Similar visitation records are not available for the Templars in Italy, though this can be explained by the scarcity of sources. In the former Hospitaller central archive in Malta, however, directories, lists and economic estimates have been found of Italian possessions from the 15th century, relating to visitations carried out to the peninsula (that, in theory, should have taken place every three years).⁵⁰ The most detailed description of the Hospitallers' local property is an inquiry carried out by the prior of Rome in his own province in 1333.⁵¹ Still, other information can be obtained from the great papal inquiry on the property and brethren of the Order of St John from 1373.⁵² The latter is also an important example of the influence external powers exerted on internal administration and communication within the military orders ("papal oversight"),⁵³ which has not been found where the Teutonic Order in Italy is concerned.

Another known, significant difference between the Teutonic Knights and the Hospitallers is that the former provided more information about the visitations, while the latter supplied information about the system of *responsiones*, according to which all priories and "chamber commanderies" should pay the central convent

Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica. Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders 21 (2016): 129–154.

⁴⁹ So in *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 96–97; *La contabilità*, ed. Toomaspoeg, 392–397.

⁵⁰ Sarnowsky, "The Convent and the West," 152, 154–156.

⁵¹ *Le Liber Prioratus Urbis de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean-de-Jérusalem: édition critique du Vat. Lat. 10372*, ed. Dominique Moullot (Taranto–Bari: Centro Studi Melitensi, 2004).

⁵² *L'inchiesta pontificia del 1373 sugli Ospedalieri di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia*, ed. Mariarosaria Salerno and Kristjan Toomaspoeg (Bari: Adda, 2008); Anthony T. Luttrell, "I Giovanniti nel sud del Priorato di Pisa (sec. XII–XV)," *Studi Melitensi* 27 (2019): 41–78.

⁵³ Theresa M. Vann, "The Exchange of Information and Money between the Hospitallers of Rhodes and their European Priors in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," in *International Mobility in the Military Orders (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries): Travelling on Christ's Business*, ed. Jochen Burgtorf and Helen Nicholson (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006), 34–47, here 35.

as well as, more generally, about the financing of the convent in Rhodes.⁵⁴ There is no direct equivalent for *responsiones* in the Teutonic Order. Though payments were made, they were not regular, systematic or established by statutes. In terms of Italy, the only information available relates to the tribute paid by the bailiwick of Bozen to the grand master.⁵⁵ From the other bailiwicks, only sporadic information was found about irregular shipments of money to the *Deutschmeister*,⁵⁶ while the seat of the Order's general procurator itself, which was in Rome, needed money to carry out its basic operations.⁵⁷

This situation was certainly not incidental and reflected the differences between the two administrative systems. The Teutonic Order, and probably the Templars, exercised greater control over their peripheral possessions than the Hospitallers. The latter often ran their houses like church benefits and sometimes even rented them out to private individuals.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, however, money resources from Italy were absolutely essential for the Hospitallers, especially in the 15th century,⁵⁹ circumstances which did not apply to the Teutonic Order.

Day-to-day administration of the Italian branch of the Teutonic Order was based on written communications. This correspondence with Italy has, however, unfortunately largely been lost, partly as a consequence of the destruction of the archives of *Deutschmeister* in the castle of Horneck in 1525,⁶⁰ partly because local Italian archives only conserved privileges and notarial deeds, and no letters.⁶¹ There are some exceptions, the most relevant being reports from the Teutonic Order's general procurators at the Roman Curia to the grand masters: a collection of some 30,000 documents, many of which are unpublished, from 1198 (from the

⁵⁴ Vann, "The Exchange of Information;" Judith Bronstein, "Responsions," in *Prier et combattre. Dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Âge*, ed. Nicole Bériou and Philippe Josserand (Paris: Fayard, 2009), 785–786.

⁵⁵ Boockmann, "Der Deutsche Orden in der Kommunikation," 188.

⁵⁶ *La contabilità*, ed. Toomaspoeg, LXVIII, XCV.

⁵⁷ The seat of the general procurator was financed with the resources of the bailiwick of Bozen in Southern Tirol: see *Berichte*, I, ed. Forstreuter and Koeppen, 365, no. 254; and Boockmann, "Der Deutsche Orden in der Kommunikation," 188.

⁵⁸ Luttrell, "Templari e Ospitalieri in Italia," 7; Anthony T. Luttrell, "Gli Ospedalieri nell'Italia settentrionale dopo il 1312," in *Riviera di Levante tra Emilia e Toscana. Un crocevia per l'Ordine di San Giovanni. Atti del Convegno. Genova–Chiavari–Rapallo, 9–12 settembre 1999*, ed. Josepha Costa Restagno (Bordighera: Istituto Internazionale di Studi Liguri, 2001), 171–188, here 183.

⁵⁹ Vann, "The Exchange of Information," 34, 36–37, 39.

⁶⁰ Boockmann, "Der Deutsche Orden in der Kommunikation," 182.

⁶¹ Toomaspoeg, "Die Urkunden," 119–123.

mid 13th century, in large part) to 1525.⁶² Those writings report mainly on diplomatic and political issues, on the relations with the papal curia, on supplications for provisions and other activities carried out by the procurators, also serving to provide the grand master with information about the political situation in Rome and Italy. Let us take the example of a letter from 21 October 1404: the general procurator Peter von Wormditt makes a precise and well-documented description of the situation in Rome after the death of Pope Boniface IX and the election of Innocent VII, of fights on the streets between the Colonna and the Orsini families, and the occupation of the city by Ladislaus, king of Naples.⁶³

Many letters were written concerning the administration of the general procurators' seat in Rome and Latium, also regarding issues taking place on the peninsula, like that of May 1403, which related to the bailiwicks of southern Italy and relations with Raimondo del Balzo Orsini, Prince of Taranto, in Apulia.⁶⁴ What followed, however, was a series of letters from the second half of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century, the time at which Italian possessions were lost, which have been examined in a different context.⁶⁵ In this last group, copies of letters written by the visitor, Adolf von Geroldseck, in Palermo, have been conserved in the former archives of the *Deutschmeister*, forming a separate unit.⁶⁶

What has been almost completely lost is the correspondence reporting on the administration of the Italian bailiwicks by the *Deutschmeister*, which was probably very intensive from the very beginning. Only two, unedited, examples of such everyday communications can be found. The first is a letter of safe conduct written in 1517 by the *Deutschmeister* Dietrich von Cleen permitting Gregor of Brixenei to bring a horse to the commander of Brixenei (today, Precenico), the most east-

⁶² See the introduction of *Berichte*, I, ed. Forstreuter and Koeppen; to be completed with Christiane Schuchard, "Rom und die päpstliche Kurie in den Berichten des Deutschordens – Generalprokurators Jodocus Hogenstein (1448–1468)," *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 72 (1992): 54–122, here 55–56. The letters are located in Berlin, Geheimnisches Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, XX Hauptabteilung (Historisches Staatsarchiv Königsberg), Ordensbriefarchiv. Partial edition in *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie*, vol. 1–4, ed. Kurt Forstreuter and Hans Koeppen, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960–1976.

⁶³ *Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie*, vol. II, *Peter von Wormditt (1403–1419)*, ed. Kurt Forstreuter and Hans Koeppen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960), 57–62 no. 7.

⁶⁴ *Berichte*, I, ed. Forstreuter and Koeppen, 378–379 no. 269.

⁶⁵ Toomaspoeg, "Der Verlust".

⁶⁶ Some of the letters, located in Vienna, Deutschordens-Zentralarchiv, Abteilung Handschriften, 164, are published in *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 230–232 no. 219, 232–238 no. 220, 238–240 no. 221.

ern commandery of the bailiwick of Lombardy, in Friuli.⁶⁷ The second, a letter from Ulrich Haller the Elder and Paul Holzschucher, who were both in Nuremberg, written in 1448 to an unknown (but undoubtedly high ranking) person. It describes the journey of the Teutonic knight Wilhelm Behaim – who was the provincial commander in Sicily at the time⁶⁸ – to Padua “in Guelf land.” He was transmitting important news from the former to the latter, though his communications also concerned “business,” making it necessary for the city council of Nuremberg be informed.⁶⁹ These are two very different types of documents, but both certainly very common.

The known letters of the Teutonic Order to or from Italy allow for some conclusions to be drawn. Firstly, though quite rarely, messengers were sent by brethren of the Order: visitor Adolf von Geroldseck used Antonio de Raynaldo, an Italian from Nuremberg, a “faithful servant of our order”.⁷⁰ Some of the general procurator’s messengers were well-known Teutonic priests, such as Laurentius von Blumenau and Johannes Wargel,⁷¹ though most were clerics of the Roman curia, diplomats, merchants, pilgrims and others, who were not always reliable and trustworthy.⁷² These letters are interesting from a linguistic point of view: most of them were written by priests, who often mixed Middle High German with church Latin (which they spoke better), and a letter from the provincial commander in Sicily, Heinrich Hoemeister, was even written in Sicilian.⁷³

It is not possible to make a clear distinction between written and oral communications as the “messengers often appeared as speaking letters”:⁷⁴ an important part of the information was conveyed to the recipient orally.⁷⁵ This trend can also be seen in Italian correspondence: in 1260 in Venice, the general procurator, Gio-

⁶⁷ 13 May 1517, Ludwigsburg, Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg, B 247 I, Bü. 40.

⁶⁸ Documented as such from November 1442 to January 1453 in Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Commenda della Magione, 2, fol. 38r–41r, 125, fol. 79r–86r; *ibid.*, Notai Defunti, Giovanni Traversa, 787, 788; *ibid.*, Tabulario della Magione 768; *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 97.

⁶⁹ 27 December 1487, Nürnberg, Stadtarchiv Nürnberg, E 11/II, Behaim/Akten und Bände, Nr. 552.

⁷⁰ *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 238.

⁷¹ Boockmann, “Der Deutsche Orden in der Kommunikation,” 186.

⁷² Schuchard, “Rom und die päpstliche Kurie,” 66–70.

⁷³ 22 February 1492, *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 222–223 no. 214.

⁷⁴ Israel, “Personale Kommunikation,” 154.

⁷⁵ Giles Constable, “Communications between religious houses in the Middle Ages,” in *Die Ordnung der Kommunikation und die Kommunikation der Ordnungen*, vol. I, *Netzwerke: Klöster und Orden im Europa des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Cristina Andenna, Klaus Herbers, and Gert Melville (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2012), 165–180, here 168–169.

vanni da Capua, sent around a brother of the Order, Markward, with a letter and oral instructions,⁷⁶ and the Sicilian commander Heinrich Hoemeister emphasised, in his letter to the *Deutschmeister* from August 1476, that the messenger should report some details personally.⁷⁷

Italy was not Prussia or Livonia, where the Order had its postal service,⁷⁸ which meant there was no network of houses or convents where the messengers could rest and switch horses. Limited to only using one horse, they would move relatively slowly, which meant outside courier services were often the best way to transport letters quickly. Even in the local, peninsular bailiwicks the distances between individual houses were often very significant. Let's take Sicily as an example: three days of travel were required between the houses in Palermo and Messina and at least two days between Palermo and Agrigento; in 1440, the visitators required four months to examine the bailiwick of Sicily.⁷⁹ The situation was very similar in Apulia and in the bailiwick of Lombardy, where it took three days to travel from Bologna to Padua and two to three days to cover the itinerary between Padua and Brixeney. In the 15th century, all houses would have contained a notable number of horses.⁸⁰

A trip from Italy to Germany, or even Prussia, took weeks. The excessively "optimistic" calculations of couriers' travel times by Kurt Forstreuter⁸¹ have been corrected by Christiane Schuchard. From Rome to Marienburg, the journey lasted six to eight weeks in summer and more than ten in winter, though there were cases in which half a year would go by with no news. One singular case stands out as an exception, in which a swift journey took only four weeks, though no less than three horses died doing in the process.⁸² The same observation applies to trips taken by sea to the Holy Land. There is a long series of studies on this topic that does not need repeating.⁸³ Still, it can be stressed that the Teutonic Order did not have

⁷⁶ *Berichte*, I, ed. Forstreuter and Koeppen, 182.

⁷⁷ Toomaspoeg, "Der Verlust," 149.

⁷⁸ Hartmut Boockmann, "Die Briefe des Deutschordensmeisters," in *Kommunikationspraxis und Korrespondenzwesen im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance*, ed. Heinz-Dieter Heimann and Ivan Hlaváček (Paderborn a.o.: Schöningh, 1998), 103–112, here 104–105.

⁷⁹ *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, I, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 129–160 no. 99.

⁸⁰ See for example Kristjan Toomaspoeg, "Alltagsleben in den Ordenshäusern Siziliens am Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts," in *Das Leben im Ordenshaus. Vorträge der Tagung der Internationalen Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Deutschen Ordens in Tallinn 2014*, ed. Juhan Kreem (Weimar: VDG, 2019), 117–143, here 136.

⁸¹ *Berichte*, I, ed. Forstreuter and Koeppen, 138, 150.

⁸² Schuchard, "Rom und die päpstliche Kurie," 71.

⁸³ See for example Pierre-Vincent Claverie, "Les ordres militaires et la mer (XII^e–XV^e siècles)," in *The Sea in History*, vol. 2, *The Medieval World*, ed. Michel Balard (Woodbridge: The Boydell

its own ships in the Mediterranean, even when the founders of the Order came to Messina and Acre with their own vessels. The brothers used Venetian ships to supply food to the East, but nothing is known about personal travel.⁸⁴

The geographical distance between Italy and the centre of the Order only became a problem after the grand master's seat in Prussia was transferred. From the first half of the 14th century onwards, problems with discipline had arisen in both northern and southern Italy and in the procurator's seat, showing that any control exerted on the centre from the periphery was now felt to a lesser extent on the one hand.⁸⁵ On the other hand, similar cases, such as the circumstances observed in June 1339, when two Prussian brothers, the commander of Mewe, Hermann von Kudorf, and the priest of Marienburg, Johann von Böhmen, who were ordered to visit Apulia, Sicily and Romania (Greece), declared that they could not carry out the visitation and entrusted the task to the commander in Lombardy, Erwin von Ortenberg, and priest of the bailiwick of Bozen, Eberhard, chaplain in Lengmoos.⁸⁶ Later examples have also been found, of brethren who did not want to, or were unable to travel to Italy. The reverse of the history of the Order of St John can be cited for comparison: in 1411 none of the Hospitallers in Treviso in Veneto wanted to leave their home for the central convent in Rhodes.⁸⁷

From the time of Philipp von Bickenbach (1365–1371) onwards, the *Deutschmeister* strove to find solutions to improve communications with the Italian bailiwicks. Two visible administrative measures were used that would have been approved by Max Weber: the sending of their most trusted and loyal brethren to Italy, and having them stay there for short-term periods of office. The provincial commander in Lombardy would have always been someone within the *Deutschmeister's* circle of trust by then; someone who often also played a particular role in administering the southern Italian bailiwicks: men like Leopold von Kirch-

Press, 2017), 332–345; Jürgen Sarnowsky, “The Ships of the Knights of St. John,” in *The Sea in History*, ed. Balard, 357–368.

⁸⁴ Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Carrefour de la Méditerranée et arrière-pays de la croisade: les ordres religieux militaires et la mer au royaume de Sicile,” in *Les Ordres militaires et la mer. 130^e Congrès national des sociétés historiques et scientifiques, La Rochelle 2005*, ed. Michel Balard (Paris: CTHS, 2009), 103–110, here 105, 107–108.

⁸⁵ Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Manquements et dérèglements dans l’Ordre Teutonique (XII^e–XV^e siècle),” in *Enfermements II. Règles et dérèglements en milieu clos (IV^e–XIX^e siècle)*, ed. Isabelle Heullant-Donat, Julie Claustre, Élisabet Lusset, and Falk Bretschneider (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2015), 353–373, here 367–371.

⁸⁶ 25 June 1339, *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, I, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 15–17 no. 13.

⁸⁷ Luttrell, “Templari e Ospitalieri in Italia,” 8, 11.

berg (1366–1389),⁸⁸ Götz von Berlichingen (1409–1418),⁸⁹ Vinzenz Leubint (1464–1478),⁹⁰ Wilhelm von Wayblingen (1480–1497),⁹¹ or Philipp von Hohenstein (1498–1525) for example.⁹² As has already been shown elsewhere, a network of brothers also expanded within the peninsula and in Sicily, most of whom came from Mergentheim, Nuremberg and Frankfurt.⁹³ Concurrently, the Teutonic brethren in Italy had previously served in areas controlled by the *Deutschmeister* (the *Deutschmeistertum*) and only stayed in their offices on the peninsula for a limited amount of time.⁹⁴

This demonstrates that there had always been an exchange of people and information between the *Deutschmeistertum*, i.e. the territories mostly in Franconia and Hesse, and Italy. The general procurator's seat in Rome, on the other hand, was closely linked to Prussia, as the procurators were mostly clergymen born in Prussian cities. Several of them studied in Italy – in Bologna or Padua – and also served in the papal curia.⁹⁵ At this point, a pertinent question becomes that of the distance between the two branches of the Teutonic Order on the peninsula; that is, whether there was any form of communication between the brethren who served in the bailiwicks of the *Deutschmeister*, and the staff of the procurator's seat and the members of the Order who studied at local universities, mostly under the obedience of the grand master.

In theory, the Teutonic Order as a whole should have been represented in the papal curia by its general procurator. The procurator was considered the “right arm” of the grand master and the masters of Livonia and the *Deutschmeister* finally sent their own representatives to the papal court. At first, in the 14th century, these men were simple envoys who acted by means of the general procurator's seat: for example, during the Avignon era, in April 1314 Teutonic priest Johannes of Riga

⁸⁸ Kurt Forstreuter, *Der Deutsche Orden am Mittelmeer* (Bonn: Verlag Wissenschaftliches Archiv, 1967), 156; Toomaspoeg, “La fondazione,” 148.

⁸⁹ Toomaspoeg, “Die Brüder des Deutschen Ordens,” 104–105.

⁹⁰ Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 89; Houben, “Die Landkomture,” 152.

⁹¹ Toomaspoeg, *Les Teutoniques en Sicile*, 483.

⁹² Toomaspoeg, “Die Brüder des Deutschen Ordens,” 101.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁹⁴ About the office terms, see *ibid.*, 95–97.

⁹⁵ On this issue, see the exhaustive Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, to be completed with Barbara Bombi, “L'Ordine Teutonico nell'Italia centrale. La casa romana dell'Ordine e l'ufficio del procuratore generale,” in *L'Ordine Teutonico nel Mediterraneo. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studio. Torre Alemanna (Cerignola)–Mesagne–Lecce 16–18 ottobre 2003*, ed. Hubert Houben (Galatina: Congedo, 2004), 197–216; and *ead.*, “The Teutonic Order and the Papacy,” in *As Ordens Militares. Freires, Guerreiros, Cavaleiros. Actas do VI Encontro sobre Ordens Militares. Palmela, 10 a 14 de março de 2010*, vol. I, ed. Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes (Palmela: Município de Palmela, 2012), 455–464.

handed a significant sum of money over to the procurator Konrad Bruel, sent by the master of Livonia to defend his own interests.⁹⁶ During the following century, after the decisive deterioration of relations between the grand master and the *Deutschmeister* and the relative emancipation of the Livonian branch, these men became the plenipotentiary representatives of their masters. The best known procurators of the *Deutschmeister* are Johann Hofheim (1429–1430),⁹⁷ Philipp von Scharfenstein (1519),⁹⁸ and Dietrich von Hasslach (1525).⁹⁹ The representatives of the master of Livonia are less well known, but appear much earlier, alongside the previously mentioned priest, Johannes of Riga, who was in Avignon from 1314 to 1317, and Frank Spee, who was in Rome in 1392,¹⁰⁰ Woldemar von Havesforden in 1394,¹⁰¹ and Bertold Rückershausen from 1428 to 1430.¹⁰²

However, on a local level, collaboration can be witnessed between members of the different branches of the Teutonic Order. If the case of university cities, such as Padua and Bologna, is considered, a coexistence between the brethren of the Order's local commanderies and the numerous students from Prussia can be observed. In one case, dating from 1461, it ended on the street with the Teutonic commander, Ludwig Schenk von Schenkenstein, insulting student Georgius de Alamania.¹⁰³ For the most part, however, relations were excellent. Students were housed in the Teutonic commanderies, and on the 5 July 1464, when the future general procurator at the Curia and bishop of Samland Dietrich von Kaub received his doctorate in canon law from the University of Padua, a number of brethren of the bailiwick of Lombardy participated in the ceremony.¹⁰⁴

In the last phase of the Italian branch, between 1470 and 1530, communications between the various centres of the Teutonic Order and Italy intensified. The

⁹⁶ *Berichte*, I, ed. Forstreuter and Koeppen, 209–210, no. 51.

⁹⁷ *Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie*, vol. IV, 1429–1436. 1: (1429–1432), ed. Kurt Forstreuter and Hans Koeppen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 15, 43; Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 230.

⁹⁸ *Die Urkunden des Deutschordens-Zentralarchivs in Wien. Regesten*, vol. III, ed. Udo Arnold (Marburg: Elwert, 2007), 1327, 1372; Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 240.

⁹⁹ *Protokolle der Kapitel und Gespräche des Deutschen Ordens im Reich (1499–1525)*, ed. Marian Biskup and Irena Janosz-Biskupowa (Marburg: Elwert, 1991), 119.

¹⁰⁰ Lutz Fenske and Klaus Militzer, *Ritterbrüder im livländischen Zweig des Deutschen Ordens* (Köln a.o.: Böhlau, 1993), 608 no. 824.

¹⁰¹ Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 209.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 17–218; Bernhart Jähniß, *Verfassung und Verwaltung des Deutschen Ordens und seiner Herrschaft in Livland* (Berlin: LIT, 2011), 174.

¹⁰³ Mario Fantì and Giancarlo Roversi, *S. Maria degli Alemanni in Bologna* (Bologna: L. Parma, 1969), 19–21.

¹⁰⁴ *Acta graduum academicorum Gymnasii Patavini*, vol. II, *Ab anno 1461 ad annum 1470*, ed. Giovanna Pengo (Padua: Antenore, 1992), 2, 133 no. 352.

loss of the bailiwicks of Apulia, Sicily, and Lombardy was a long process, documented by intensive correspondence.¹⁰⁵ Thereafter, the *Deutschmeister*, Walter von Cronberg, started the so-called “recuperation attempts” (*Rekuperationsversuchen*) of the Order’s Italian property: in May 1529 the above-mentioned commander in Lombardy, Dietrich von Hasslach, became Cronberg’s representative in all negotiations for the recuperation of the Order’s possessions in Italy and Castile,¹⁰⁶ and in August of the same year, Hasslach negotiated with Emperor Charles V and wrote a memorandum about the Italian bailiwicks.¹⁰⁷ In actual fact, the history of the Teutonic Order in Italy is primarily known about now thanks to these “recuperation attempts”, as specific archive holdings were collected for the purpose.

Italy, just like Greece, Cyprus and Castile, was undoubtedly in the periphery of the Teutonic Order, once it is agreed that the entire West constituted the periphery or even a “colony” of the military orders. Like all military orders, the Teutonic Order kept its Italian possessions under the strict control of its centre, through the use of a number of administrative measures: the personal presence of its superiors, integration of the local provincial commanders into the Order’s administration, regular visitations of the Italian bailiwicks and the sending of the most trusted men to Italy for limited periods of time. Above all, communication between Italy, the Holy Land, Prussia and the *Deutschmeistertum* was constant and intensive. Such communication was based on correspondence, visitation records and, to a large extent, personal contacts and conversations.

Verbal information is, unfortunately, by no means a historical source and its role cannot, therefore, be accurately estimated. For example, the visitor of the Teutonic Order to Sicily, Adolf von Geroldseck, was received in autumn 1491 by viceroy Fernando de Acuña y de Herrera, and had to tell him “several stories” (*meincherleye istorias*) about Prussia, Livonia, and the Teutonic Order, which the viceroy would otherwise have known only from books such as the *Fasciculus Temporum* of Werner von Rolewinck.¹⁰⁸

Thanks to letters and oral information, the Order’s superiors were relatively well-informed about the state of the Italian bailiwicks. In the 15th century, the *Deutschmeister* had better information about local possessions than the grand master, though the latter had his own network of informants at the seat of the general procurator and universities.

¹⁰⁵ Toomaspoeg, “Der Verlust,” 132–135.

¹⁰⁶ *Protokolle der Kapitel*, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 119.

¹⁰⁷ Vienna, Deutschordens-Zentralarchiv, Urkunden, 1529 VIII 23; *ibid.*, Abteilung Welschland, 124/2, fol. 278r–278v.

¹⁰⁸ *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden*, II, ed. Biskup and Janosz-Biskupowa, 233.

“Teutonic” Italy was a periphery under scrutiny from the centre. Like every periphery in the world, the peninsula was a transit area between north and south, East and West. If the religious and political importance of Italy, as well as its economic prosperity, is considered alongside the local bailiwicks, it becomes clear why the Order’s superiors, at least the more well-informed *Deutschmeister*, fought against the expropriation of this patrimony with all his strength.

APPENDIX

I

27 December 1448. Nuremberg.

Letter from Ulrich Haller the Elder and Paul Holzschucher of Nuremberg to an unknown receiver. They declare to have received a letter from him containing information about the trip of the Teutonic knight Wilhelm Behaim to Padua in “Guelf Land”; about some statements Behaim had made, also in relation to his affairs, it notices that Haller and Holzschubers have communicated to the Nuremberg council. They remain at the disposal of the unknown receiver for every other service.

Provenance: Stadtarchiv Nürnberg, E 11/II, Behaim/Akten und Bände, Nr. 552. Modern copy (17th century?) on paper. Dated in the archive catalogue 27 December 1487, but the date in the letter itself, if written in a particular (though not unusual) way, is evident: AD. Q[ua]tro]CXLVIII.

Erwirdiger lieber herr unnsere willig dinst sein ewer erwirdigkeit mit ulriss bereit, ein ewer brief zu bracht darinn ir uns von herr Wilhelm Beheims deutsch ordens ziehen für Padaw hinnein gen Weltschen Landen und von ettlichen worten die an ewer wirdigkeit gelangt sein, die er von den vergangen sachen geredt sull haben, auch von ewerm geschefft in kurzen treffenlichen worten verschrieben habt, das wir nun also wol vernommen und solichen ewern guten willen ettlichen unnsen gründen dem rate zu Nüremberg nicht verhalten und in gut auch furbracht haben dieselben und wir nemen das von ewre erwirdigkeit zu sunden damle, begerunde solichs williglich zu widder dienen und von ir beuelhauses in unzweifenliche getrawen, ulrissig bittend, ob in denselben oder andern sachen hinfür icht mer an ewer wirdigkeit langen würde, das euch bedeucht unnsere freunden nottürttig seyn zuwissen, ir wöllet in das nach ewer selbes lang herkommen güten gewonheiten auch nicht verhalten, und mit samst ewerm ausstregenlichem rate gutwilliglich

verscheiben, als wir ewer erbergs sunder gutes wol getrawen, das wollen wir. Datum ipsa die beati Johannis apostoli et ewangeliste anno Domini QCXLVIII°

Ulrich Haller der Alter
Pawl Holzschuher zu Nürnberg

Back:

Nachricht von herr Wilhelm Behaim deutschordens ritten

N. 48

2

13 May 1517.

Safe-conduct from the Deutschmeister Dietrich von Cleen to Gregor von Brixenei to permit him to bring a horse, marked on its right side with a cross, to Sebastian von Hausen, commander of the order's house Brixenei (today Precenicco, province of Udine).

Provenance: Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg, B 247 I, Bü. 40. Original on paper with the seal of the Deutschmeister impressed on the back.

Wir Ditherich von Cleen meister theutsches ordens in deutschen und welschen landen urkunden weriglichen das wir gegenwertigen unsern liebem getreuem Gregoriem von Brixeney ein falbem wind an der rechten seiten mit einem kreutz bemerkt denselbem dem er seinem geystlichem unsern liebem und erhligem herrn Sebastian von Hausen unsers ordens hauskomenthur zu Brixeney daselbsthin zuzufuren zugestalt und haben jure zugezeugnis disem glaubebrive mit unserm zu ruck uffgerrichten serrer bewart. Geben am mitvochem nach dem samstag Cantate anno m[d]xvii

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