



Das „Virtuelle Archiv des Deutschen Ordens“. Beiträge einer internationalen Tagung im Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg am 11. und 12. April 2013, hrsg. v. Maria Magdalena Rückert, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 2014, 134 S., 19 Abbildungen, ISBN: 978-3-17-024674-4.

The digitisation of archives and publication on the internet has recently become an activity commonly undertaken by record-keeping institutions. This trend is due to the rapidly advancing technology which constantly offers new possibilities and methods of digital archiving. These methods serve, on the one hand, to maintain and preserve historical heritage, and on the other hand, to optimise the efforts of researchers. The importance of such digital archiving is exemplified by the collapse of the Cologne city archive, one of the largest German communal archives, in 2009. Historians of the Teutonic Order especially have benefited from digital archiving: for several years it has been possible to make use of numerous digital recourses such as the virtual Deutschordens-Zentralarchiv in Wien (holding 12,000 documents) which are of great value to scholars.

The volume under review comprises eleven articles, relating to a conference organised by the Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg in 2012, which marked the publication of the digital archive of the Teutonic Order via the platform ICARUS. As the chairman of the Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Robert Kretzschmar, emphasised, such initiatives help to avoid the fragmentation of archival material concerning the Teutonic Order.

In her introduction, ‘Das „Virtuelle Archiv des Deutschen Ordens“’ (pp. 6–13), Maria Magdalena Rückert introduces the main themes of the conference and describes the processes by which archival material concerning the Teutonic Order was dispersed during the Napoleonic era, as well as the efforts undertaken to stop this, with the aim of making the material concerning the Teutonic Order available on-line. This article also serves as a survey of German undertakings in the realm of digitisation and online access of the Order’s documents (especially from the Hessisches Staatsarchiv Marburg and the Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg) as well as to archival inventories.

The article ‘Die virtuelle Urkundensammlung zum Deutschen Orden im Rahmen von Monasterium.net’ (pp. 15–18) by Karl Heinz is a detailed discussion of a digital platform, www.monasteriu.net, in existence since 2002, which specialises in providing access to medieval and early modern documents online.

Theoretical and technological aspects of the digitisation of the archives concerning the Teutonic Order are considered by Georg Vogeler in his article 'Potentiale und Desiderate einer Digitalen Diplomatik des Deutschen Ordens' (pp. 19–33). He begins with the question what the diplomatic of the Teutonic Order is and how it should be perceived. On the basis of previous research he identifies three basic directions in this area of research: diplomatic study of the documents created by the Order, the history of the chancery and administration of the Order, and finally source editions. In his discussion of the specific nature of the Teutonic Order's diplomatic, he considers the ever changing circumstances faced by the Teutonic Order, its rule in Prussia and its monastic houses scattered over all of Europe. Vogeler regards the work of Martin Armgart (1991), concerning locations of the Teutonic Order's documents, as pioneering and significant. This work was based on the database created by Armgart himself using the technology available at the time. Vogeler recommends the creation of a virtual archive of the Teutonic Order on the basis of the existing body of material available on the www.monasterium.net platform.

Further articles are devoted to archival material concerning the Teutonic Order kept in other European archives. In his article 'Das Mergentheimer Deutschordensarchiv nach seiner Übernahme durch das Königreich Württemberg (1809–1868)' (pp. 36–56), Jörg Seiler discusses in detail the fate of the archive at Mergentheim which was divided among a number of different German archives after the dissolution of the order in the countries of the Confederation of the Rhine during the Napoleonic era. Seiler makes use of documentation compiled by the archivist Paul Anton Breitenbach, but the most useful part of the article is the appendices: the first sets out the geographical dispersion since 1809, while the second gives information concerning the archival material which was originally part of the Hauptarchiv des Deutschen Ordens in Mergentheim, currently held in modern German archives.

Udo Arnold, in his article entitled 'Das Zentralarchiv des Deutschen Ordens in Wien. Entstehung, Urkundenbestände, Forschungsgrundlage' (pp. 57–65) discusses the history of the Teutonic Order's archives since its origins in the Holy Land, throughout its lordship in Prussia, until its transfer to Vienna, along with Order's headquarters. Arnold also describes the process of the formation of the Deutschordens-Zentralarchiv in Wien on the basis of the archival material from Mergentheim which concerned the Austrian bailiwick. Arnold argues that access to digital versions of the documents on the [monasterium.net](http://www.monasterium.net) platform should only be given after publication of calendared documents in printed form.

The dispersion of the archival documents of the Teutonic Order, which is emphasised by most of the authors in the volume, is well illustrated well in the

article by Andrzej Radzimiński and Janusz Tandecki, 'Die Urkunden und Briefe des Deutschen Ordens in den polnischen Archiven (Warszawa, Kraków, Gdańsk, Elbląg, Toruń, Olsztyn)' (pp. 82–92) which discusses collections of the Teutonic Order's documents found in Polish archives. For example, 164 documents, mostly concerning the relations between the Order and the Kingdom of Poland, were found in the Archiwum Akt Dawnych in Warsaw. Some of them (74 documents) were removed to Königsberg during the Nazi occupation of Poland and are currently held in Berlin. The most famous of the collections held in Poland is the collection of 385 Teutonic Order's documents found in the Archiwum Państwowe w Toruniu, which was catalogued by the authors of the article in the 1990s.

Kristjan Toomaspoeg's article 'Die Urkunden des Deutschen Ordens in Italien' (pp. 113–128) is a discussion of the collections of the Teutonic Order's documents in Italian archives. These are quite numerous due to the presence of the Order's bailiwicks in Italy and the activities of the Order's representative in Rome. Toomaspoeg discusses the functioning of medieval archives in the Order's house in Barletta (bailiwick of Apulia), the dispersal of the archives of the procurator-general, and the documents located in the Archivio di Stato di Venezia (which boasts one of the oldest collection of the Teutonic Order's documents) as well as the archives in Palermo and Padua. Palermo's collection dates from the establishment of the bailiwick of Sicily, while Padua's dates from the establishment of the bailiwick of Lombardy. Teutonic Order's documents from the bailiwick of Apulia were destroyed in 1943 by Wehrmacht soldiers. What is significant for the proposed 'virtual archive of the Teutonic Order' is information concerning the processes of digitisation in the previously mentioned archives. Toomaspoeg argues that while the digitisation of documents on vellum in Palermo is advanced, in Padua is a lack of even a catalogue of the Teutonic Order's documents made on vellum.

Another noteworthy article in the volume is Jürgen Sarnowsky's 'Das Historische Staatsarchiv Königsberg und die Erschließung seiner Bestände' (pp. 93–101) which deals with the archival material from the former Staatsarchiv Königsberg which currently forms the 20th Department (Ger. Hauptabteilung) of the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin-Dahlem. Without including the vellum documents created by the Teutonic Order's scribes (*Ordensfolianten*) or the Order's correspondence (*Ordensbriefarchiv*) the project to create a unified digital archive of the Teutonic Order cannot be properly realised. For this reason it is regrettable that none of the scholars attached to the Berlin archive took part in the conference.

Radosław Biskup (Toruń)

ORDINES MILITARES
COLLOQUIA TORUNENSIA HISTORICA
Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders

vol. XX (2015)



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Printed in Poland

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Toruń 2015

ISSN 0867-2008

NICOLAUS COPERNICUS UNIVERSITY PRESS

EDITORIAL OFFICE: ul. Gagarina 5, 87-100 Toruń
tel. (0) 56 611 42 95, fax (0) 56 611 47 05
e-mail: wydawnictwo@umk.pl

DISTRIBUTION: ul. Mickiewicza 2/4, 87-100 Toruń
tel./fax (0) 56 611 42 38
e-mail: books@umk.pl
www.wydawnictwoumk.pl

1st. ed. 300 copy

Print: Nicolaus Copernicus University Press
ul. Gagarina 5, 87-100 Toruń

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