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of Change and Crisis



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fines the system of factors determining the appearance of the Order in East-Central Europe, including Poland, around the mid-12<sup>th</sup> c., and showed the changes in the form of management of the hospitals within the constantly changing structures of the Order in East-Central Europe in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> c. The second part presents the issues referring to the contribution of the Polish and Pomeranian Knights of St. John to the policies of Czech priors and German preceptors in the 13<sup>th</sup> c., including a valuable analysis of the Knights' attitude (and participation) in the infighting among the Piast dukes and similar political conflicts in the House of Griffins. Equally important are prosopographical speculations devoted to members of the Order of St. John taking part in the formation of the policies of various East-Central European rulers as courtiers, advisors and secretaries in the 13<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. It shows the considerable scope observed in southern and western Europe and beyond which consisted in their involvement in local policy through individual actions of their members. The work constitutes a valuable research contribution to the extensive literature devoted to the history of the Order of St. John.

*Krzysztof Kwiatkowski (Toruń)*

Adam Szweda, *Organizacja i technika dyplomacji polskiej w stosunkach z zakonem krzyżackim w Prusach w latach 1386–1454* [*The organization and technique of the Polish diplomacy in relations with the Teutonic Order in Prussia in the years 1386–1454*], Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2009, 465 pp., ISBN 978-83-231-2379-8.

The work discussed here is the habilitation thesis of the author. It starts with the beginning of the reign of King Władysław II Jagiełło (Jogaila), when the Teutonic problem became of prime importance in Polish politics. It finishes with the outbreak of the Thirteen Years' War, the effect of which was a new phase in Polish-Teutonic relations when the Grand Master became a vassal of the Polish king. The book consists of three chapters clearly divided thematically (pp. 26–310), preceded by an introduction (*Wstęp*, pp. 11–25) discussing the subject and scope of the work (pp. 11–19), the condition of the research (*Stan badań*, pp. 19–21) and an extensive overview of the sources (*Bazę źródłową*, pp. 21–25). They are based mainly on official records (documents, correspondence, accounts), but also on narrative sources including *Rocznik franciszkanów toruńskich*, the chronicle of Johann von Redden (von Posilge), and the work of Jan Długosz. At the end of the book there is a conclusion (pp. 311–314), appendices including a catalogue of formal Polish-Teutonic assemblies and Polish diplomatic missions to the heads of the Teu-

tonic Order together with the relevant literature (pp. 315–416), and an extensive list of sources and literature (pp. 417–441). The author included a name index (pp. 442–465). Chapter 1 (pp. 26–65) is devoted to the most important centres of Polish diplomacy, and it refers to the king, the council, *starosts*, district representatives, and envoys. Chapter 2 discusses the following documents: accreditation, letters of authority, instructions, safe conducts, envoys' reports, „articles” belonging to envoys, correspondence (royal letters, letters of *starosts*, and their routes from sender to addressee). Chapter 3 (pp. 168–310) concerns direct diplomatic contacts. In nine subchapters the author examines: the linguistic issues of negotiations; the terminology and organization of diplomatic missions; diplomatic missions and their financing; audiences with the Grand Master; venues of assemblies of leaders and plenipotentiaries; the organization and financing of assemblies; resolving border issues, particularly the activity of the joint conciliation courts after the Peace of Brześć Kujawski; the written declaration of the Thirteen Years' War; the execution and ratification of peace treaties. The author points out that Polish diplomacy in the late medieval period did not differ from models developed elsewhere in Europe at that time with its strong point its base in the royal service. The basic diplomatic documents were the accreditations presented by all diplomatic missions at that time. Royal envoys until the mid-15<sup>th</sup> c. did not have written letters of authority as these were more common at meetings of equal negotiators. It was not until the outbreak of the Thirteen Years' War in 1454 that written instructions and final reports of diplomatic missions became more common, earlier they appeared only in negotiations at great distance when it was necessary to maintain correspondence between the monarch and his envoys. It was the norm to get safe conducts for envoys and to issue them in an appropriate form for the negotiators on the opposite side. Envoys were provided with lists of duties during the whole period under discussion but written answers were given only to questions presented in written form. The author thinks that the Roman Curia and ecumenical councils contributed to the more general use of such documents in diplomatic circulation. The Teutonic Order had a better organized network of messengers whereas the Polish side used local couriers. During negotiations commonly accepted European customs were used – assemblies took place in border zones with the location of a meeting depending on the current political situation. National languages were used, so the presence of interpreters next to the Polish king was the norm. The results of the author's research confirm the thesis that ‘international relations at that time were based on a repertoire of commonly accepted resources and methods which offered different solutions depending on the demands of the current political situation’.

*Julia Możdżeń (Toruń)*