



Francesco Filotico, *Le origini del Baliato di Bolzano nel Quadro del primo sviluppo dell'Ordine Teutonico (1200–1270)* (Acta Theutonica 9), Mario Congedo Editore, Galatina 2015, 234 pp. + 3 maps, ISBN: 9-788867-661220.

The reviewed publication constitutes an extended version of a doctoral thesis defended at Università del Salento in Lecce in 2011. The book starts with a short introduction written by Hubert Houben, the doctorate's supervisor and the publisher of the "Acta Theutonica" series, where he presents a description of the internal structure of the work and the circumstances of its creation. Francesco Filotico reveals the findings of his research in three chapters. The first two chapters are introductory, while the third chapter was created on the basis of the doctoral thesis. The reader may be surprised by the lack of any introduction including information about research questions, the research method, the existing research and the source base. However, these important elements were included at the beginning of chapter 3. In the first chapter (*Origini dell'Ordine Teutonico e suo sviluppo nel secolo XIII*), the author shows the outline of the history of the Teutonic Order from its foundation in 1190 until the 1290s. The essay is not connected directly with the main subject matter of the book, but it provides a broader historical perspective for the presentation of the origin and development of the bailiwick of Bolzano (Germ. Bozen). Filotico is familiar with the current state of research on the origin of the Teutonic Order. He supports his research mainly by drawing from the works of German historians; he also uses the findings of Polish historians published in German and Italian. The author avoids presenting an academic discussion on controversial topics. He only signals in the footnotes the various opinions of the scholars. The internal structure of chapter 1 seems disproportionate in comparison to the dynamics of the development of the Teutonic Order. In the first two parts he shows the beginnings of the Hospitallers' community in Palestine and the development of the Order of the Knights during the reign of the first three grand masters – the years 1190–1209. Sub-chapter 3 is devoted to the period from 1209 (Hermann von Salza becoming grand master) until 1291 (the collapse of Acre). The author takes into account all the territories where the Teutonic Order was active: the Holy Land, Italy, the Holy Roman Empire, the Kingdom of Hungary and Prussia. In chapter 2, Filotico deals with the development of the administrative structure and offices in the Teutonic Order. The starting point for his deliberations are the findings of Klaus Militzer, which he attempts to complete with the analysis of the terms *preceptor* and *commendator* in

the normative sources and the documents. The author reaches the conclusion that until the mid-13th century both terms were often used interchangeably although the term *preceptor* normally meant the head of the bailiwick. In reference to the origin of the administrative units in the southern part of the Tyrol, the author adopted the methodology adopted by Klaus Miltzer, who distinguishes the foundations of castles, hospitals and the rights of patronage over parish churches as the starting point to set up commandries. The most comprehensive and important part of the book constitutes chapter 3 devoted to the creation of the bailiwick of Bolzano. The chronological frameworks of the presented findings embrace the period from the year of the foundation (1202) of the hospital in Bolzano by Teutonic Knights until the first source record *Landkomtur* of 1270 about the head of the bailiwick. For Filotico it is of utmost importance to examine the history of the four commandries which constituted the bailiwick of Bolzano, also referred to as “an der Etsch und im Gebirge”: Bolzano, Longomoso (Germ. Lengmoos), Vipiteno (Germ. Sterzing) and Silandro (Germ. Schlanders). The work is based mainly on the documents stored in the Deutschordenszentralarchiv, Wien (Central Archive of the Teutonic Order in Vienna). The sub-chapters focusing on the above-mentioned four commandries have a similar internal structure. There the author discusses the circumstances of setting up the foundation for the Teutonic Order; he analyzes the social and political status of the founders and the attitude of local bishops Trento (Germ. Trient) and Bressanone (Germ. Brixen) towards transferring the hospitals and the parish church to the Teutonic Order. The author devotes much space to the location of the hospitals and churches of the Teutonic Order in the system of roads in the South Tyrol – the region which played a major role in the communication between the German countries and Italy. Chapter 3 follows a brief conclusion in which the most important findings are included. The author attached an extensive summary in the German language. The reviewed book includes many interesting conclusions, which rectify, correct and enrich the current state of knowledge. Francesco Filotico starts to argue with the negative attitude of the bishops towards the foundation of the Teutonic Order. According to him, the attitude of the bishops was not homogeneous. Some bishops even supported the transfer of hospitals and parish churches to the Teutonic Order in order to stop the aspirations of knightly families to hold power over church institutions. What most affected the development of the Teutonic Order in the South Tyrol was the overbearing role of charity and hospitals along with the geographic situation of the hospitals and churches in the network of roads leading up to the mountain passes of the Alps. The value of the research made by Francesco Filotico undoubtedly goes beyond the local history of the South Tyrol in the 13th century. The development of the bailiwick of Bolzano is an interesting example of a phenomenon well-known in the history of other orders of knights. The

involvement in the struggle against the Muslims in the Middle East influenced the increasing interest of people in the Orders and the development of the foundations of the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights.

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