

Marian Tumler, *Der Deutsche Orden im Werden, Wachsen und Wirken bis 1400 mit einem Abriss der Geschichte des Ordens von 1400 bis zur neuesten Zeit*, Wien 1955, 746 p. with 58 tables.

The extensive work of Dr. Marian Tumler, present Grand Master of the Teutonic Order who resides in Vienna, will have excited lively interest. For several years the Teutonic problem has attracted the attention of Polish historiography which dealt with the Teutonic Order for the very reason of its having played an important part in the history of mediaeval Poland. As a result, Polish research was limited to the history of the religious state in Prussia. Likewise, most of the work of German historians is concerned with the history of the Teutonic Order's state in Prussia and Livonia.

The assumption accepted by Tumler in his work is of quite a different character, he intends to introduce the history of the Teutonic Order during the period of its greatest development, particularly its history as a religious corporation, with large property holdings not only in Prussia and Livonia, but also in the German Empire and in the Mediterranean countries. This assumption which far exceeded those already accepted by many authors implied thorough research in original and other available sources concerning the history of the Centres in Baltic and other European areas. It must be said that the author has carried out this task in a serious and painstaking manner. Tumler made use not only of the rich sources already published but also of some unpublished material from the Central Archives of the Order in Vienna, and several monographic works. Thus his many years of research created a strong basis for his book. The main weakness of the book stems from the fact that it does not take into sufficient account Polish literature on the subject. The author hardly seems to know some older Polish works (mostly by W. Kętrzyński and apparently from summaries only), and neglects numerous more recent works, especially those concerning the bringing of the Teutonic Knights to Prussia (e.g. by G. Labuda and K. Górski). Having such an extensive source basis the author was thus

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able to analyze the most important problems in the history of the whole Order. In chapter I he introduces the beginning and the development of the Teutonic Order in Palestine up to the year 1291, with a background of the existence and development of the Knight Orders in mediaeval Europe. In chapter II in discussing the extension of the Order's activity in Europe he takes into special consideration the topography of several Mediterranean and German bailiages. In chapter III the main events of the seizure of Prussia, Pommerania and Livonia in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries are sketched. Chapter IV deals with the internal life of the Order and its organizational structure, while in the next chapter the Order's external activities in organizing state institutions in Prussia and Livonia are introduced. He also includes cultural problems (literature, art). The short chapter VI tells about the history of the Order from the beginning of the XVth century up to the present day. The body of the book is supplemented by a few annexes, concerning mainly the controversial problem of the beginning of the Order in Palestine, and extensive lists of the donations for the Order, its commanderies, hospitals and churches which were under the Order's spiritual guidance, a listing of the villages and towns belonging to the Order as well as the lists of the Grand Masters, dignitaries, provincial Masters, and Commanders — from the XIIth century up to about the year 1400. The book also contains 120 illustrations and several maps. Thanks to the high graphic quality of the text and illustrations the book makes a very good impression.

Though the aim of the author was to present the history of the Order as that of a religious corporation the sheer amount of already existing work and previous sources as well as the importance of the Order's Baltic estates — the source of its power and prestige in contemporary Europe — compelled the author to concentrate on the Order in Prussia and Livonia. Thus, Tumler's work in the main, is only a résumé of his predecessors attainments, especially with regard to political history. Yet in chapter II, one of the most originals, the author is successful in presenting a broad picture of the territorial domain of the Order in Palestine, Italy and the German Empire. He based himself on little known and little used sources from the Central Archives in Vienna. In chapter V there is much new information on the Order's internal structure. And finally, chapter VI introduces some interesting and little known facts about the history and the fall of the Order after the year 1525.

Summing up, the work of Dr. Tumler is an extensive compendium of knowledge about the Teutonic Order. It is quite obvious that the author not only intends to project information about the interesting past of the Teutonic Order, but also to influence the reader's opinions by introducing the Order's history in an almost exclusively positive light. The consequences of this standpoint — easily understood in the light of the author's present position — are his efforts to justify the actions of the Order's authorities, actions which, as is generally known, were not always in conformity with the spirit of mediaeval religious morality. This concerns especially the question of such primary importance as the plan of setting up the Order's own State in Hungary and Prussia (p. 181 and the following). The author even seems to approve with some reservations the Order's right to convert the pagans by the sword as a consequence of the necessity of defence of Christianity (p. 361). The attitude of the Order's authorities towards the conquered people is presented in a rather optimistic vein, and the importance of the Dzierzgoń Agreement of 1249 is exaggerated since the agreement was in fact

cancelled by the Order after the failure of the second insurrection. The author even tries to justify the brutal method of displacing all Prussian tribes at the end of the XIIIth century (p. 300). In addition he rejects all the Polish complaints of the years 1320—1339 (i. e. the period of the Pope's trials) and he even rejects the complaints of the Order's own serfs during the middle of the XVth century, which were witness to the low morality of the Teutonic Knights. He claims them to be essentially prejudiced and unjustified. The author also ignores the well known unfavourable opinion of the Swedish mystic St. Bridget about the Order as a whole. When estimating the economic and cultural attainments in Prussia the author completely confirms the theses of earlier German historiography, obviously idealizing the solidarity of co-existence of all the social groups under the patriarchal rule of the Teutonic Order and emphasizing the advantage of the gradual process of Germanization of the Prussian population. Since he does not take into sufficient consideration Polish work on this subject and does not seem to understand the importance of the state of Poland in the Baltic region, the author clearly underestimates the meaning of the Polish-Teutonic conflict and the danger of the Order's state for Poland and Lithuania at the end of the XIVth and the beginning of the XVth centuries. Yet he considers that the historic significance of the Order (p. 363) depends not only upon its fight to win the people of the Baltic region for Christianity and to raise their cultural level but above all, upon creating a defence wall in north-eastern Europe against the Russian danger. According to the author there already existed in the XIIIth century the danger of conquest by the Russian nation (*Russentum*) of all the Baltic countries from Esthonia to Prussia. It is quite obvious that such an assertion is an anachronism, by means of which the author tries to prove in an exaggerated and artificial manner not so much the importance of the Teutonic Order for mediaeval Europe as for the Western Europe of today. Certain tendencious views of the author, as indicated by the above remarks, weaken the value of Tumler's work, which above all ought to be considered as an encyclopaedic history of the Teutonic Order during the period of its highest development.

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