

EAST CENTRAL EUROPE:  
BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC

OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA

VOLUME / BAND 1

ISSUE / HEFT 1



EAST CENTRAL EUROPE:  
BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC  

---

OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA

VOLUME / BAND I  
ISSUE / HEFT I

The University of Debrecen  
Faculty of Humanities  
Institute of History



2025

**EAST CENTRAL EUROPE: BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC**  
**OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA**

**Published by / Herausgegeben von:**

University of Debrecen

**Issued by / Veröffentlicht von:**

The University of Debrecen Faculty of Humanities, Institute of History

**Address / Adresse:**

H-4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1.

**Editors-in-Chief / Herausgeber:**

Attila Bárány, University of Debrecen, Hungary

László Pósán, University of Debrecen, Hungary

**Editorial Board / Redaktionsbeirat:**

Nicholas Coureas, Adelaide (Australia)

Roman Czaja, Toruń, (Poland)

Helmut Flachenecker, Würzburg, (Germany)

Dieter Heckmann, Werder, (Germany)

Jürgen Sarnowsky, Hamburg, (Germany)

Janusz Trupinda, Malbork, (Poland)

Kristjan Toomaspoeg, Lecce, (Italy)

**ISSN:**

Print: 3058-0501

**Available online at / Online verfügbar unter:**

<https://ojs.lib.unideb.hu/eastcentraleurope/index>

(Editorial support by University of Debrecen University and National Library/ unterstützt durch Universitäts- und Nationalbibliothek der Universität Debrecen)

**Contact / Kontakt:**

[lendulet.unideb@gmail.com](mailto:lendulet.unideb@gmail.com)

**Journal Manager / Redaktionsmanager:**

Ádám Novák

**Proofreaders / Korrektorat:**

Bence Cibere, Vivien Erdei, Csete Katona

**Technical Editor / Technische Redaktion:**

Sándor Ónadi

© The University of Debrecen Faculty of Humanities, Memoria Hungariae Research Group

© Authors

2025

Contents / Inhalt

ARTICLES / ARTIKEL

<b>Katharina Kemmer:</b> <i>Machtverhältnisse in Europa an der Wende vom 15. zum 16. Jahrhundert</i> .....	9
<b>László Gálffy:</b> <i>René d'Anjou in the Twilight of an Era: Last Prince or a "Roi Imaginé"</i> .....	21
<b>Suzana Simon:</b> <i>On the Manifold Identities of John Corvinus: The Question of Origins in Political Power Play at the End of the Fifteenth Century</i> .....	31
<b>Zsolt Hunyadi:</b> <i>Distancing or Breaking? The Relation of the Hungarian Hospitaller Priory to the Central Convent of the Order in the late Middle Ages</i> .....	39
<b>Adam Szweda:</b> <i>Diplomacy at the Time of the Breakthrough. Correspondence of King John I Albert (Jan Olbracht) with the Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order</i> .....	57
<b>Alexandru Simon:</b> <i>A Strange Year: 1513 viewed from the East</i> .....	67
<b>Jürgen Sarnowsky:</b> <i>The Last Year of the Hospitallers' Rule on Rhodes</i> .....	83
<b>Zoltán Szolnoki:</b> <i>Under the Shadow of Vendetta: Decision-making Situations in the Story of Anselmo and Angelica</i> .....	101
<b>Tomáš Sterneček:</b> <i>Ein böhmischer Ritter an der Epochenwende: Peter Doudlebský von Doudleby (* vor 1492, † 1550)</i> .....	117

<b>Helmut Flachenecker:</b> <i>Bauernkrieg in Franken 1525.</i> <i>Grundzüge – Begriffe – Ressourcen</i> .....	129
<b>Giampiero Brunelli:</b> <i>The Papal State and the Birth of the Modern Fortress: Innovation in Military Construction between the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period</i> .....	149
<b>Renger E. de Bruin:</b> <i>Balancing between Loyalties. The Teutonic Order Bailiwick of Utrecht and the Formation of the Dutch State, 1528–1648</i> .....	169
<b>Réka Bozzay:</b> <i>Europäische und ungarische Peregrinatio academica im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert</i> .....	193
<b>Aleksandar Uzelac:</b> <i>Some Notes on the Putsch Map (“Europa Regina”) and its Depiction of Southeastern Europe</i> .....	213
<b>László Pósn:</b> <i>Marktstädte in Ungarn an der Grenze zwischen Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit. Die ungarischen Marktstädte</i> .....	229
<b>Attila Tózsá-Rigó:</b> <i>Wirtschaftliche Ungleichheit oder ausgewogene Beziehungen. Das Königreich Ungarn im europäischen Wirtschaftssystem</i> .....	261
<b>Dieter Heckmann:</b> <i>Quellenerschließungsarbeiten am Beispiel des Herzoglich Preussischen Briefarchivs (HBA)</i> .....	277

## REVIEWS AND REPORTS / REZENSIONEN UND BERICHTE

<b>Zsolt Hunyadi:</b> <i>Tünde, Árvai – Katona, Cséte (eds.), Medieviztikai Vándorkonferencia. Tanulmányok 2. (Studia Mediaevalia Itinerantia). Debrecen, Debreceni Egyetem Történelmi és Néprajzi Doktori Iskola, 2025. ISBN: 9789634907244</i> .....	293
--	-----

**Gergő Németh:** *Báthori family and Mohács and the History of Nyírbátor from 1279 to 1847 (Nyírbátor, 25 September 2025)*..... 297

**Nicholas Paul Tayler:** *Political, Cultural, Religious and Economic Transformations in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries (Debrecen, 27–28 February 2025)*..... 301






**ADAM SZWEDA**, PhD, Nicolaus Copernicus University

PL-87-100 Toruń, Władysława Bojarskiego 1.

aszweda@umk.pl

 ORCID: 0000-0003-0138-9575

---

## Diplomacy at the Time of the Breakthrough. Correspondence of King John I Albert (Jan Olbracht) with the Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order<sup>\*</sup>

### ABSTRACT

This article discusses letters written by King John I Albert to the Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order and other recipients, preserved in the archives of the Teutonic Order. The first of these was sent by the prince, who sought the support of Grand Master Johann von Tiefen during the election of 1492. Most of the correspondence concerns the king's relations with Tiefen's successor, Duke Frederick of Saxony. The first problem was Frederick's refusal to swear an oath of allegiance, which he consistently refused to do. The second important issue was the fight against the Turks, with the king demanding help from the Teutonic Order. The Grand Master's brother, Duke Georg of Saxony, whose wife was the Polish king's sister Barbara, was also involved in Polish diplomatic activities. Thirteen letters from the short reign of John Albrecht (1492–1501) were discussed, including their subject matter, form, and accompanying seals.

**Keywords:** diplomacy, letter, John Albrecht, Teutonic Order, Turks, Saxony

This brief article examines the letters of King John I Albrecht to the Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order, preserved in the archives of the Teutonic Order. More specifically, among these letters, there are also letters to other addressees which, as originals or copies, found their way to Königsberg (Królewiec). They are taken as illustrations of the problems and issues present in the relationship between the King and the Order's subordinate superiors. It should be borne in mind that not all letters to the Grand Master sent from the King have survived in their original form. For example, three letters Johann Albrecht sent to Grand Master Johann von Tiefen during the 1497 Moldavian expedi-

---

<sup>\*</sup> The article was written as part of the project “Korespondencja Jagiellonów. Europejskie kontakty dynastii w późnym średniowieczu” [Correspondence of the Jagiellonian Dynasty. European contacts in the late Middle Ages], Narodowy Program Rozwoju Humanistyki [National Programme for the Development of Humanities], project no. NPRH8/H11/87/2019.

tion, known only from the diary of this event, written by the secretary Liborius Naker.<sup>1</sup>

Following the Thirteen Years' War of 1454–1466 and the second Peace of Thorn (Toruń) in 1466, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order became a ruler dependent on the King of Poland. He was obliged to swear allegiance, offer counsel and provide military aid. Apart from the king, the Order recognised its dependence on the papacy. This circumstance alone made the exact determination of the legal status between Poland and the Teutonic Order in Prussia very difficult, even for those of the time. The Order sought to revise this arrangement, particularly during its alliance with King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary, in opposition to Casimir IV Jagiellon. However, peace between Corvinus and Casimir ended those ambitions. Grand Master Martin Truchseß was eventually forced to swear allegiance to Casimir, and his successor Johann von Tiefen followed suit.<sup>2</sup>

On 7 June 1492 Casimir Jagiellon died, Alexander became his successor in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, while to the Polish throne the king “recommended” another son, Johann Albrecht, before his death.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Polish kings assumed power not by succession, but by election.<sup>4</sup> The Grand Master was also called upon to participate in the election of the new ruler. The Grand Master was also summoned to participate in the royal election. Queen Dowager Elisabeth and Prince John I Albrecht himself sought to secure the Grand Master's support, sending court physician Johann Lieberhandt to Prussia with this goal.

<sup>1</sup> Liborius Naker's *Tagebuch über den Kriegszug des Hochmeisters Johann von Tiefen gegen die Türken im Jahre 1497* (Scriptores rerum Prussicarum 5). Ed. Toeppen, Max. Leipzig, 1875. 296, 300, 306.

<sup>2</sup> The issue has a rich literature, most recently see Szweda, Adam, “How did the Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order interpret their Dependency on the Polish Crown (1466–1497)”, In: Ed. Srodecky, Paul – Kersken, Norbert – Petrauskas, Rimvydas (eds.), *Unions and Divisions. New Forms of Rule in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*. Abingdon–New York, 2023. 158–171.; Szweda, Adam, “Das Verhältnis zwischen den Königen von Polen und abhängigen Herrschern. Auf der Suche nach einem Modell”, In: Skowrońska, Renata (ed.), *Zwischen der Geschichte von Ereignissen, Phänomenen und Prozessen. Länder, Regionen und Städte und ihre weltlichen und geistlichen Einwohner: innen*. Göttingen, 2023. 283–300. 293–295.

<sup>3</sup> Tęgowski, Jan, *Pierwsze pokolenia Giedyminowiczów*. Poznań–Wrocław, 1999. 143.; Wdowiszewski, Zygmunt, *Genealogia Jagiellonów i Dom Wazów w Polsce*. Vol. 2. Kraków, 2005. 104–106.; Papée, Frederick, *Jan Olbracht*. Kraków<sup>2</sup>, 2006. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Baczkowski, Krzysztof, “Panowie przyrodzeni a elekcyjność tronu w Polsce średniowiecznej” = *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne* z. 35, 2008, 53–63.; (reprint: Baczkowski, Krzysztof, *Polska i jej sąsiedzi za Jagiellonów*. Kraków, 2012. 27–41).



In Kraków on 21 July 1492, the prince issued a letter of credence for Lieberhandt, addressed to Johann von Tiefen. It contained a standard content, the actual subject of the mission is informed by a note of the Teutonic chancellery made in Holland (today Pasłęk) on 8 August: “petivit [i.e. Johann Lieberhandt] vocem pro suo domino Johanne Alberto”.<sup>5</sup> This is the first manifestation of the future king’s correspondence with the Grand Master. In the end, the superior of the Order evaded it, not wanting to get involved in disputes within the Jagiellonian dynasty.<sup>6</sup> After John I Albrecht took the throne, the new king demanded that Tiefen take the oath stipulated in the treaty of 1466. The head of the Order and his entourage resisted, pointing out that the master had performed this act against Casimir Jagiellon. They also demanded that the oath to keep the peace be taken by the king himself. In the end, the grand master yielded, and the king confirmed the peace orally, without issuing a separate document.<sup>7</sup> Relations between John Albrecht and Johann von Tiefen remained rather cool after these two events. In 1495, the head of the Order was summoned by the king to provide assistance against the Mazovian prince Konrad III the Red. Tiefen and his advisors did not directly evade this, but offered to mediate a peaceful settlement of the dispute in the first place. The Order’s involvement in this conflict soon became obsolete, as the king forced the disobedient fief to yield on his own.<sup>8</sup> A major episode in their relations was Tiefen’s participation in the King’s 1497 Moldavian campaign against the Turks. The Polish crown viewed this as the fulfillment of a vassal’s duty, while the Order preferred to emphasize its religious motivations. The campaign ended tragically: the Grand Master fell ill and died in Lwów (Lviv), and the Prussian contingent suffered heavy losses.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, XX. HA (hereinafter: GStAPK), OBA, Nr. 17715. Johann Lieberhandt also represented Johann Albrecht in his discussions with Gdańsk: *Katalog dokumentów i listów królów polskich w Archiwum Państwowym w Gdańsku (John I Albrecht i Aleksander Jagiellończyk)*. Ed. Szybkowski, Sobiesław. Gdańsk, 2016. 37–38, n. 10.

<sup>6</sup> I will discuss the Grand Master’s failure to participate in the election of the King of Poland in 1492 in a separate publication.

<sup>7</sup> Szweda, How did the Grand Masters, 2023. 165–167.

<sup>8</sup> Szweda, Adam, “Starania króla Jana Olbrachta o krzyżacką pomoc przeciwko księciu mazowieckiemu Konradowi III Rudemu w 1495 r”, = *Roczniki Historyczne* 82, 2016, 187–195.

<sup>9</sup> Szweda, Adam, “Fighting Pagans and Relations between Poland and the Teutonic Order after 1466”, In. Srodecki, Paul – Kersken, Norbert (eds.), *The Defence of the Faith. Crusading in the Frontiers of Latin Christendom in the Late Middle Ages*. Turnhout, 2024. 277–279.

John I Albrecht's next letter to Prussia follows this event and was addressed to the members of the Order ("Reverendi in Christo patres spectabilesque, magnifici, strennui, generosi et nobiles") on 24 April 1498. The king recalled that Johann von Tiefen had given him "subsidium debitum contra infidels" and had died in the course of fulfilling this duty. Faced with the necessity of electing a new Grand Master, the King supports those voices which point to the person of the Saxon Prince Frederick. For he came from a distinguished house, a member of which John I Albrecht had just married his native sister (this was Barbara, from 1496 the wife of George the Bearded, brother of the future Grand Master).<sup>10</sup> In John I Albrecht's opinion, Frederick is a suitable candidate, the King, through his election, will be obliged to the Order, and Frederick himself, as 'princeps consiliarius noster et affinis', will have an 'adjutor paratissimum' in the person of the Polish sovereign.<sup>11</sup> This letter is notable because, according to the 1466 Peace of Toruń, the Order retained the right to freely elect its Grand Master, who was only obligated to swear an oath post-election. There is no evidence that Casimir IV ever tried to interfere with the Order's internal decisions. Olbracht's support for Frederick thus marked a significant innovation, an attempt to preemptively shape the Order's leadership in favor of royal interests.

The young Prince Frederick, aged 25, had the support not only of his brother, Prince Georg of Saxony, but also of King Maximilian I of Habsburg of Rome and Archbishop Berthold von Henneberg of Mainz.<sup>12</sup> The election as Grand Master of a member of the ruling house of one of the principalities of the Reich was intended to enable, or facilitate, the revision of the Peace of Toruń and the end of the Order's state of subjection in Prussia to Poland. The King's letter was an attempt to take the initiative in this aspect. Already on 20 May 1498, in a letter to his brother-in-law, Georg, Duke of Saxony, Olbracht informed about the above-mentioned letter and even enclosed a copy of the reply of the governor of the Order. He also mentioned the Turkish threat, which was extremely important for Poland, indicating another priority of Polish policy at this time.<sup>13</sup> Frederick Wettin was elected Grand Master on 29 September 1498 and soon refused to take the oath to

---

<sup>10</sup> Wdowiszewski, *Genealogia Jagiellonów*, 2005. 131–132.

<sup>11</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18027.

<sup>12</sup> Biskup, Marian, „Friedrich von Sachsen (29. IX. 1498–14. XII. 1510)”, In: Arnold, Udo (ed.), *Die Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens 1190–2012*. 2. Auflage. Weimar, 2014. 160.

<sup>13</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18032. A copy of this letter, sent under the Saxon seal, arrived in Königsberg.

the King of Poland, which became the cause of a long conflict.<sup>14</sup> Interestingly, we have evidence that the king actively wanted to influence the situation in Prussia. For as early as 17 September 1498 (so 12 days before the formal election of the master), a letter of credence was drawn up for the king's secretary, Wojciech Górski, at the same time scholastic of Włocławek and chancellor of the Poznań chapter. This letter was written according to the usual form, albeit very courteously. Characteristically, however, and rather unusually, its inscription anticipated Frederick's election, since it already included his new office, as well as the dignity of prince and councillor of the Kingdom. Again, this is evidence of the orientation of the Polish court in the developments,<sup>15</sup> nevertheless the use of titles still out of date was a virtually unheard of move. It was more common to use outdated titles, used when the chancellery did not yet have information about the changed situation. The inscription of the letter in question read as follows: "Illustri ac venerabili domino Fredrico duci Saxonie, magistro generali Ordinis Sancte Marie in Prussia, principi et consiliario nostro Regnique nostri, affini charissimo", while it ends with a salutation reserved for subjects ("salutem et favorem regium").<sup>16</sup> The king thus pursued his policy. On the one hand, he declared his support for Frederick from the outset; on the other, he emphasised from the outset his dependence on the Crown and veiledly declared its extortion. Górski set off for Prussia undoubtedly to welcome the Saxon prince on behalf of the sovereign. He probably ended up at the side of Bishop Lukas Watzenrode, who welcomed Frederick to Ermland (Warmia).<sup>17</sup>

The matter of armed assistance against the Turks was addressed in the King's letter to the Duke of Georg of 12 November 1498. This time, a copy of this letter was sent to the archives in Königsberg, while the original is preserved in the archives in Dresden. The king referred to the would-be meeting with the Duke of Saxony. He also expressed the hope that the addressee's native brother, Grand Master Frederick, would prove a faithful ally against the en-

<sup>14</sup> Biskup, Friedrich, 2012. 161.

<sup>15</sup> John Albrecht wrote to Lukas Watzenrode, bishop of Warmia, about Frederick's already decided election to the office of grand master as early as May 1498. *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*. Vol. 3. Ed. Lewicki, Anatol. Kraków, 1894. 448–449, n. 429. Cf. Flemmig, Stephan, *Zwischen dem Reich und Ostmitteleuropa. Die Beziehungen von Jagiellonen, Wettinern und Deutschem Orden (1386–1526)*. Stuttgart, 2019. 368.

<sup>16</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18049.

<sup>17</sup> Biskup, Marian, *Polska a Zakon Krzyżacki w Prusach w początkach XVI wieku. U źródeł sekularyzacji Prus Krzyżackich*. Olsztyn, 1983. 74.; Flemmig, Zwischen, 2019. 373.

emies of the faith (“quod generoso animo adversus nostre Sacre Religionis hostes ipsum fidelem adiutorem nos habituros speramus”). This was because he had passed on information from intelligence officers that a combined force of Turks and Tartars was to attack his lands in the winter and move on to Germany in the spring.<sup>18</sup> Shortly after sending this letter, on 15 November 1498, the king sent another letter to Grand Master Frederick. It was a credit to his secretary Jan Satkowski. It is safe to assume that the subject of this message was the Turkish threat and the oath required of the Order’s superior.<sup>19</sup> However, it is possible that other issues were also raised, as Satkowski was also to travel to Gdańsk, as he was carrying a credenza addressed to the authorities of that city.<sup>20</sup>

On 15 December 1498, the king addressed the grand master on a matter known to him from the account of Wojciech Górski, who had recently (“nuper”) been with a deputation in Prussia, but no doubt the king had in mind a deputation by Górski as late as December. The point was that Frederick had granted a security glibness to Gregor Materna, an outlaw nobleman who was guilty of many acts of violence and robbery against the burghers of Gdańsk, and had offered his mediation in his dispute with Gdańsk. The issue of the glibness in particular agitated the king, he forbade it and demanded that the officials of the Order and the subjects of the Grand Master should not give Materna hospitality or any other support.<sup>21</sup> The case of Gregor Materna and his brother Simon, despite its local nature, is highly significant, for it shows that Frederick did not overlook any opportunity to emphasise his independence and his ability to make political decisions that would not gain the king’s approval. The support given to Materna was not, after all, a matter of chance or the result of a mistake. It was known in Prussia that there was

---

<sup>18</sup> Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Dresden, Loc. 9944/11, fol. 1 (original); GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18063 (copy); Codex epistolaris, 456, n. 437 (regest). Cf. Biskup, *Polska a Zakon Krzyżacki*, 1983. 77.; Flemmig, *Zwischen*, 2019. 376.

<sup>19</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18064. The literature emphasises the anti-Turkish aspect of Satkowski’s mission, but without clear source clues. Biskup, *Polska a Zakon Krzyżacki*, 1983. 77.; Flemmig, *Zwischen*, 2019. 376.

<sup>20</sup> Katalog dokumentów i listów, 2016. 115–116, n. 111.

<sup>21</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18068. The dispute (Fehde) between the brothers Gregor und Simon Mattern and Danzig dragged on for many years and was an important element in public life in both parts of Prussia, see more closely: Zdrenka, Joachim, “Die Gebrüder Mattern und ihr Streit mit Danzig”, In: Jähnig, Bernhart – Michels, Georg (eds.), *Das Preußenland als Forschungsaufgabe. Eine europäische Region in ihren geschichtlichen Bezügen*. Lüneburg, 2000. 549–561.

a conflict involving a nobleman and that the king supported his Danzig subjects. So the Grand Master's action was even calculated to demonstrate his independence from John I Albrecht.

At the beginning of the following year (8 January 1499), the chancellery drew up another letter of credit addressed to the Grand Master. This time it was the Bishop of Kulm (Chełmno), Mikolaj Krapitz, and again Jan Satkowski, this time described as a royal courtier ("aulicus"), who were going on a mission to Königsberg.<sup>22</sup> The standard wording of the letter of credence does not provide a basis for determining the object of the mission. It is, however, well illuminated by other sources, mainly by the grand master's reply. The king summoned Frederick to the Sejm at Piotrków, so that there he could take the oath to the Treaty of Toruń and take part in the deliberations on the affairs of the Kingdom (here it was mainly the Turkish question). The deputies were also to take the oath from the Teutonic commanders. In his refusal, the Grand Master pointed to the poor financial state of the country, which had not yet recovered from the 1497 expedition. He also announced that he would send his own envoys with explanations.<sup>23</sup> In mid-1499 (15 June), another loan was taken to Prussia by Jan Gromadzki, notary of the royal chancellery.<sup>24</sup> His mission may have been related to his plans to tighten his policy towards Prussia, which can be seen in the king's moves at the time.<sup>25</sup>

On 13 September 1500, the king notified the grand master that the papal envoy Kaspar (Golfi) was going to Prussia, both Royal and Teutonic ("in nostras Prussie etiam ditionis illustritatis tue terras") to collect tithes and tributes on the occasion of the Jubilee year. He also added that the legate would be accompanied by Marian Lulias, the suffragan of Cracow, whom he authorised to talk to the Grand Master.<sup>26</sup> Both clergymen made their way to Teutonic Prussia, where they were received with dignity, but without any tangible financial results, as the Grand Master set his own additional conditions.<sup>27</sup> John I Albrecht, on 14 November 1500, insisted in polite terms that Friedrich

<sup>22</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18085.

<sup>23</sup> Codex epistolaris, 464, n. 445.; Biskup, Polska a Zakon Krzyżacki, 1983. 78; Flemmig, Zwischen, 2019. 377.

<sup>24</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18148.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Biskup, Polska a Zakon Krzyżacki, 1983. 84–85.

<sup>26</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18313.

<sup>27</sup> For more on the mission of the papal envoy, see Biskup, Polska a Zakon Krzyżacki, 1983. 97–99.; Smolucha, Janusz, *Papiestwo a Polska w latach 1484–1526. Kontakty dyplomatyczne na tle zagrożenia tureckiego*. Kraków, 1999. 85–87; Flemmig, Zwischen, 2019. 384–385.

fulfil his obligations. In the same letter, the king offered his condolences to the master over the death of his father, the Saxon prince Albrecht. The Polish monarch learned of this from a letter from Friedrich's brother, Duke Georg.<sup>28</sup>

Another letter from the reign of John I Albrecht found in the archives in Königsberg was sent from Łęczyca on 1 May 1501 to Georg, Duke of Saxony. As a copy it went to Frederick together with a letter from Georg himself. The king informed the prince that he was on his way to Toruń, where he would await the grand master's arrival. John I Albrecht appealed to the addressee to persuade the grand master to come to the place assigned to him and fulfil his duty, i.e. to swear an oath to the king 'in the custom of his predecessors' ("more suorum antecessorum"). He went on to assure the King that if diplomats of the Duke of Saxony came to Toruń, they would be received with kindness.<sup>29</sup> This was yet another installment of Johann Albrecht's fierce anti-Crossbreeding policy to force the Grand Master to fulfil his obligations under the Second Peace of Toruń.<sup>30</sup>

Already during his stay in Toruń on 15 May 1501, the king issued a letter of credence for his secretary Jan Konopacki. However, the recipient of the letter and the addressee of the message was not the Grand Master; the letter was addressed "venerabilibus prelatibus et canonicis totique capitulo ecclesie cathedralis Pomezaniensis".<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, the original of this letter was found in Königsberg. After the Second Peace of Toruń, the Pomezanian chapter continued to be incorporated into the Order, which explains the close relationship with the headquarters in Königsberg. The Polish mission, on the other hand, was undoubtedly connected with the death of Bishop Johann IV von Lassen and the matter of electing his successor.<sup>32</sup>

John I Albert died in Toruń on 17 June 1501, and his successor was another of Casimir Jagiellon's sons, Alexander.<sup>33</sup>

The letters of John Olbracht from the archives of the Teutonic Order discussed in this article do not constitute a large set. They reflect the key problems of the relationship between the king and the Grand Master at this

<sup>28</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18337.

<sup>29</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18471.

<sup>30</sup> Flemmig, Zwischen, 2019. p. 392–395.

<sup>31</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18476.

<sup>32</sup> On the situation in the Pomezanian diocese at that time see Glauert, Mario, *Das Domkapitel von Pomesanien (1284–1527)*. Toruń, 2003. 157, 162–164.

<sup>33</sup> Wdowiszewski, Genealogia Jagiellonów, 2005, 104–106. Cf. Flemmig, Zwischen, 2019. 399–400.



time, especially the issue of the swearing in of the Second Peace of Toruń, thanks to which Frederick, Duke of Saxony, was to become “princeps et consiliarius Regni Polonie”. A large proportion of these letters are letters of credence, themselves providing only knowledge as to the person of the deputies. The context of their mission is usually known through other sources.

An important element of the correspondence in question is its formal features, especially as research into royal letters of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is still waiting to be undertaken in full. So far, royal letters addressed to the authorities of the Teutonic Order have only been discussed more extensively for the period up to 1454.<sup>34</sup> Separate publications have also been devoted to Casimir Jagiellon's letters to Gdańsk and Toruń during the Thirteen Years' War (1454–1466).<sup>35</sup> A breakthrough in this respect turned out to be the catalogue of documents and letters of Polish kings to Gdańsk from the reign of John Albrecht and Alexander (1492–1506), where seals were described and essential parts of the form (intitulation, concluding formulas) were included.<sup>36</sup> A comprehensive treatment of the Jagiellonian correspondence from 1447–1506 was once only given by I. Sułkowska-Kuraś, doing so, however, on a very modest source basis.<sup>37</sup>

Of the thirteen letters discussed here, the first is of course unique, as John Albrecht was not yet king. The letter is therefore devoid of an intitulation; it only appears below the text and informs of the dynasty's current status: “Johannes Albertus Dei gracia dux etc., natus olim serenissimi domini Polonie etc. regis”. Also different from later letters is the address, where the term ‘amicus’, characteristic rather of equal partners, appears: “Magnifico ac venerabili domino Johanni Tyffen magistro generali Ordinis Beate Marie Virginis ac principi et consiliario Regni Polonie etc. amico carissimo et honorando”. This letter was closed with a small signet seal with an eagle, inherited

<sup>34</sup> Szweda, Adam, *Organizacja i technika dyplomacji polskiej w stosunkach dyplomatycznych z Zakonem Krzyżackim w Prusach w latach 1386–1454*. Toruń, 2009. 121–146.

<sup>35</sup> Możejko, Beata, “Kontakty polskiej kancelarii królewskiej z Gdańskie w okresie wojny trzynastoletniej”, In: Trupinda, Janusz (ed.), *Kancelaria wielkich mistrzów i polska kancelaria królewska w XV wieku*. Malbork, 2006. 191–209.; Szczuczko, Witold, “Korespondencja czasów wojny. Listy króla Kazimierza Jagiellończyka do rady miejskiej Torunia z czasów wojny trzynastoletniej”, In: Trupinda, Janusz (ed.), *Kancelaria wielkich mistrzów i polska kancelaria królewska w XV wieku*. Malbork, 2006. 257–266.

<sup>36</sup> Katalog dokumentów i listów, 2016.

<sup>37</sup> Sułkowska-Kuraszowa, Irena, *Polska kancelaria królewska w latach 1447–1506*. Wrocław, 1967. 82.

from his father.<sup>38</sup> This signet was also used later.<sup>39</sup> Staying with seals, let us note that a larger (chancellor's) seal and a smaller (sub-chancellor's) seal were also used.<sup>40</sup>

The royal titlature is consistently rendered in the form: "Johannes Albertus Dei gracia rex Polonie, supremus dux Lithwanie, Russie Prussieque etc. dominus et heres". This is an abbreviated titlature of this ruler.<sup>41</sup> The recipient is specified by the usual titles, and there is also a salutation. As indicated above, it emphasises the subordinate position of the grand master, e.g. "salutem, amicie incrementum et regium affectum",<sup>42</sup> or "salutem et gratiam nostram regiam cum favour".<sup>43</sup> The concluding formula, on the other hand, is typical of John I Albrecht's documents and letters and usually reads "Commissio propria Regie Maiestatis" in minor variations.<sup>44</sup> The year of the king's reign is also mentioned in the dating, a custom in the Polish chancellery that was initiated under John Olbracht.<sup>45</sup>

The analysis of John Albrecht's letters from the archives of the Teutonic Order recalls the key problems of mutual relations at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and brings new details to the formal analysis of these sources.

---

<sup>38</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 17715; on the seal see *Katalog pieczęci Jagiellonów*. Ed. Hlebionek, Marcin. Toruń, 2024. 244–245.

<sup>39</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18148, 18337.

<sup>40</sup> Chancellor's seal: GStAPK, OBA, n. 18049. Cf. *Katalog pieczęci Jagiellonów*, 246–247. Subchancellor's seal: GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18064, 18476. Cf. *Katalog pieczęci Jagiellonów*, 248–249.

<sup>41</sup> Sułkowska-Kurasiowa, *Polska kancelaria królewska*, 1967. 61.

<sup>42</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18085.

<sup>43</sup> GStAPK, OBA, Nr. 18064.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Sułkowska-Kurasiowa, *Polska kancelaria królewska*, 1967. 70.

<sup>45</sup> Sułkowska-Kurasiowa, *Polska kancelaria królewska*, 1967. 65.

# **EAST CENTRAL EUROPE: BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA**

## **Aims and Scope**

The East Central Europe: Between the Baltic and the Adriatic (ECE) is a peer-reviewed academic journal published by the Institute of History at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Debrecen. As its title suggests, the journal focuses on the history of Central Europe, covering the region between the Baltic and Adriatic Seas. This region was for centuries a crossroads and meeting point where diverse ethnic groups, religions, traditions, and political entities interacted in unique ways. In addition to studies directly examining the history of the region, the editors welcome methodologically and/or theoretically relevant contributions for the analysis of historical processes.

The journal seeks to create an interdisciplinary platform to facilitate dialogue and disseminate new research on the region, whose findings are often limited in international scholarship due to language barriers and the influence of national narratives. To support this goal, ECE is an open-access journal, published at least once annually, available in both print and online formats.

## **Zielsetzung**

Ostmitteleuropa: Zwischen Ostsee und Adria (ECE) ist eine begutachtete wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift, die vom Historischen Institut der Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Debrecen herausgegeben wird. Wie der Titel schon andeutet, konzentriert sich die Zeitschrift auf die Geschichte Mitteleuropas, insbesondere auf das Gebiet zwischen Ostsee und Adria. Diese Region war über Jahrhunderte ein Schnittpunkt und Begegnungsraum, in dem unterschiedliche ethnische Gruppen, Religionen, Traditionen und politische Einheiten auf einzigartige Weise interagierten. Neben Studien, die die Geschichte der Region direkt untersuchen, erwarten die Herausgeber methodisch und/oder theoretisch relevante Beiträge zur Analyse historischer Prozesse.

Die Zeitschrift möchte eine interdisziplinäre Plattform schaffen, um den Dialog zu fördern und neue Forschungsergebnisse über die Region zu verbreiten, deren Ergebnisse aufgrund von Sprachbarrieren und der Prägung durch nationale Narrative international nur begrenzt bekannt sind. Zur Unterstützung dieses Ziels ist ECE eine Open-Access-Zeitschrift, die mindestens einmal jährlich erscheint und sowohl in gedruckter als auch in digitaler Form verfügbar ist.

## Impressum

Publisher / Verlag: The University of Debrecen Faculty of Humanities Institute of History

Responsible Publisher / Verantwortlicher Herausgeber: Róbert Keményfi

Responsible Editors / Verantwortliche Redakteurs: Attila Bárány, László Pósán

ISSN 3058-0501

Printed in Hungary by / Gedruckt in Ungarn von Printart Kft.

## Editorial Office / Redaktionsbüro

H-4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1, Magyarország

e-mail: [lendulet.unideb@gmail.com](mailto:lendulet.unideb@gmail.com)

Homepage: <https://ojs.lib.unideb.hu/eastcentraleurope/index>

Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0).

## Front cover / Titelbild:

Hartmann Schedel, Registrum huius operis libri cronicarum cum figuris et ymaginibus ab inicio mundi, Nürnberg, 1493. (Schedelsche Weltchronik/Nürnberg Chronik/Chronicon mundi)

München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Rar. 287. (<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/view/bsb00034024>)

Prussia, fol. 288v. / Dalmatia, fol. 268r.

## Supported by / Gefördert durch:

University of Debrecen Thematic Excellence Programme “The Role and Image of Hungary in Medieval Europe Research Group”

HUN-REN-DE “Research Group Military History of Medieval Hungary and Central Europe”