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city, date

Full name of doctoral student: Benedikt Weigand

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Scientific discipline: History

Title of the doctoral dissertation: Die Deutschordensballei Elsass-Burgund im Mittelalter –

Zwischen Ritterorden, Reich und Region

Doctoral dissertation abstract:

The study investigates how the bailiwick of Alsace-Burgundy can be situated within the tension between its institutional affiliation with the Teutonic Order and its entanglement in regional power structures. It examines, on the one hand, the relationship of the bailiwick to the Grand Master and the Deutschmeister, and, on the other, its network of relations with surrounding authorities: the emperor and the Reich, the papacy, the Habsburg and Swiss territories, as well as smaller ecclesiastical and secular lordships. Methodologically, the study employs a comparative analysis of regional sources (notably charters and letters), dispersed across more than a dozen archives, together with the records of the central Grand Master's archive, today preserved in the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin. By linking southwestern German regional history with the Central European history of the Order, the study contributes to an ongoing scholarly debate concerning how the Teutonic Order was constituted through regional structures.

The first of two main sections systematically addresses this question at the level of the commanderies, examining each of the fifteen individual houses. In doing so, it reveals not only the diversity of their institutional forms and their integration into various southwestern German territorial lordships, but also their increasing regionalisation into more autonomous units within the bailiwick. The second section focuses on the office of the "Landkomtur". As heads of their province, the Landkomture operated not only within the bailiwick. They also travelled frequently to Prussia to the Grand Master,



to Franconia to the Deutschmeister, and to Imperial Diets as provincial representatives of the province of the Order. Neither the older thesis of a bailiwick initially subordinate to the Deutschmeister that became a Grand Master's chamber bailiwick through a process of pledging, nor the notion of a fully autonomous status of the bailiwick in the late Middle Ages, can be supported by the sources.

The study demonstrates that the complex constellation formed by imperial immediacy, Habsburg (Vorderösterreich), and the Swiss Confederation, together with a deliberately maintained ambiguity of obedience toward both the Deutschmeister and the Grand Master, created new room for *maneuver* for the Landkomture, as evidenced in their correspondence. Depending on their specific needs, they were able to navigate successfully between territorial lords and their superiors in order to pursue their own objectives. It was in this way that the bailiwick secured its right to elect its own Landkomture (1522), a privilege that continued to confer a distinctive status upon it among the twelve bailiwicks even after the end of the Middle Ages and the secularization of the Order's Prussian territories (1525).

.....Benedikt Weygand

doctoral student's signature