



Stefan Hartmann, ed. *Herzog Albrecht von Preußen und Livland (1540-1551): Regesten aus dem Herzoglichen Briefarchiv und den Ostpreussischen Folianten.* Vienna: Böhlau, 2002. liv + 569 pp. EUR 69.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-3-412-02902-9.



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Out of the Archives

Stefan Hartmann has thoroughly immersed himself in the Livonian and Warmian sections of the Herzogliches Briefarchiv and in the East Prussian folios of the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz. His efforts, which have resulted in a series of publications, have now made these archives more accessible to scholars working on the complicated histories of East (or Ducal) Prussia, the Warmian bishopric, and the Livonian province.[1]

Hartmann's 2002 publication of the correspondence of Duke Albrecht of Prussia regarding the Livonian question between 1540 and 1551 follows two previous volumes for the years 1525-1534 and 1534-1540 and precedes a fourth volume for the years 1551-1557.[2] The publications bring together the correspondence of Duke Albrecht of Prussia and his advisers with his brother, Archbishop Wilhelm of Riga, the archbishop's advisors, the municipal authorities in Riga, the Livonian Grand Master, Hermann von Brueggenei, and the Livonian bishops.

As with Hartmann's previous contributions to the series, this volume allows the historian who lacks immediate access to the archives entry into the complexities of

the so-called Riga question and the complicated world of Prussian and Livonian history at the end of the rule of the Order of the Teutonic Knights. The correspondence focuses, first and foremost, on Archbishop Wilhelm's efforts to exercise his authority in Riga, which by the 1540s had developed into a center of the Reformation in Livonia. Because Wilhelm turned to Duke Albrecht for advice, the sources provide considerable insight into the difficulties that Wilhelm faced in securing both his authority and church properties vis-a-vis the opposition of the city and the Order.

By the 1540s, Livonia suffered from a power vacuum, which only made it all the more vulnerable to a rising Muscovy in the east. The documents make clear that Archbishop Wilhelm was unable to follow an independent policy in Livonia and, as a result, could never establish and maintain his position. As Hartmann notes in his introduction, Wilhelm lacked the decisiveness and necessary material resources to act against both Riga and the Order (p. xiii). It should come as no surprise that by 1561 Livonia ceased to exist.

Historians will be able to put these documents to

good use. First, the collection provides historians with a local study of the Reformation, in particular of the ways by which the Church tried to maintain its authority, and its property, when confronted with the Protestant challenge.[3] Second, the collection invites the historian into the spider web of competing claims to authority, by the archbishop himself, the Livonian bishops, the Order, and the Riga elites. At a time when Prussia conjures images of Frederick the Great, Otto von Bismarck, and Kaiser Wilhelm II, these sources prompt historians to interrogate more fully the early history of the Teutonic State and the Prussias.[4] Lastly, the collection exposes the historian to the diplomatic maneuvering of the Holy Roman Empire, Poland-Lithuania, Muscovy as well as Duke Albrecht of Prussia, Archbishop Wilhelm of Livonia, and the city of Riga. Disentangling these webs poses a difficult challenge to historians. At the same time, however, these complicated webs also provide an excellent case study in the assertion and exercise of power.

As a collection of sources, the volume boasts a number of advantages. As in the preceding volumes of Duke Albrecht's correspondence, Hartmann provides a thorough index of personal and place names as a means to find relevant documents quickly. A new addition to this third volume is the chronological index that precedes the documents. In the index Hartmann elaborates on the historical context of each document, detailing the events to which the correspondence responds. The addition of the chronological index makes the volume far more accessible than similar collections of published sources, enabling the historian to identify key issues and questions in Livonian history.

Hartmann's introduction ably condenses the issues discussed in the correspondence and provides the historical context for the discussions. It does, however, assume a specialist's knowledge. As a non-specialist, I would have preferred a longer introduction, with greater emphasis on the broader historical context of the Reformation and the geopolitical situation and on the historiographical debates to which these documents pertain. A specialist, however, should be able to use Hartmann's concise introduction as a guided path into the documents and as a means to identify questions for future research.

Hartmann's editorial talents extend to the documents themselves. While a collection of published documents might give historians access to the archives, the physical experiences of archival research are lost. The benefits of a typeset transcription, at the same time, erase the physical uniqueness of the documents. Hartmann attempts

to rectify this loss by including after each document a detailed description of its physical condition, indicating, for example, whether there were seals affixed or an envelope attached and whether the document was clean or marked. He also, much to the benefit of readers, includes the archival citation. In the documents themselves, he has indicated appropriate names and dates where the referents might be unclear.

This volume is clearly oriented for the specialist. For the historian already well versed in the history of the Reformation in northern East-Central Europe and the complex, intertwined histories of the Order of the Teutonic Knights, Prussia, Livonia and Poland-Lithuania, Stefan Hartmann's meticulous work provides useful and easy access to the correspondence of Duke Albrecht of Prussia and Archbishop Wilhelm of Livonia about the Livonian question. It will no doubt serve to frame future scholarship.

Stefan Hartmann has done historians a great service by bringing the archives out of the archives. Historians must now rise to Hartmann's challenge by delving into this rich resource. At EUR 69.00, moreover, the volume is far cheaper than a flight from the United States to Germany.

Notes

[1]. See, for the Warmian bishopric, Stefan Hartmann, ed., *Herzog Albrecht von Preußen und das Bistum Ermland (1525-1550): Regesten aus dem Herzoglichen Briefarchiv und den Ostpreußischen Folianten* (Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1992); idem, *Herzog Albrecht von Preußen und das Bistum Ermland (1550-1568): Regesten aus dem Herzoglichen Briefarchiv und den Ostpreußischen Folianten* (Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1993); and idem, *Die Herzöge Albrecht Friedrich und Georg Friedrich von Preußen und das Bistum Ermland (1568-1618): Regesten aus dem Herzoglichen Briefarchiv und den Ostpreußischen Folianten mit ergänzenden Schriftstücken bis 1699* (Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1994).

[2]. See Ulrich Mueller, ed., *Herzog Albrecht von Preußen und Livland (1525-1534): Regesten aus dem Herzoglichen Briefarchiv und den Ostpreußischen Folianten* (Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1996); Stefan Hartmann, ed., *Herzog Albrecht von Preußen und Livland (1534-1540): Regesten aus dem Herzoglichen Briefarchiv und den Ostpreußischen Folianten* (Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 1999); and idem, *Herzog Albrecht von Preußen und Livland (1551-1557): Regesten aus dem Herzoglichen*

Briefarchiv und den OstpreuÄischen Folianten (Cologne and Weimar: BÄ¶hlau, 2005).

[3]. While there is considerable literature available on the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, only a handful of historians have examined the Reformation in northern East-Central Europe. See, for example, Walther Hubatsch, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche OstpreuÄens* (GÄ¶ttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1968); Bernhart Jaehnig, ed., *Kirchengeschichtliche Probleme des PreuÄenlandes aus Mittelalter und FrÄher Neuzeit* (Marburg: Elwert, 2001); and Janusz Mallek, "Reformation in Poland and Prussia in the Sixteenth Century: Similarities and Differences," in *The Reformation in Eastern and Central Europe*, ed. Karin Maag (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997). For an excellent study of the Reformation in Royal Prussia, see Michael G. Mueller, *Zweite*

Reformation und stÄdtische Autonomie im KÄ¶niglichen PreuÄen. Danzig, Elbing und Thorn in der Epoche der Konfessionalisierung (1557-1660) (Berlin: Colloquium, 1998).

[4]. According to the second Treaty of Thorn (1466), the Teutonic State was partitioned into Royal (or West) Prussia, under the rule of the Polish kingdom, and Ducal (or East) Prussia, which remained under the control of the Order as a vassal of Poland. The Livonian province remained independent. See Janusz Mallek, *Dwie czesci Prus: Studia z dziejow Prus Ksiazeczych i Prus Krolewskich w XVI i XVII wieku* (Olsztyn: Wydawn. Pojezierze, 1987); and idem, *Prusy Ksiazecze a Prusy Krolewskie w latach 1525-1548: Studium z dziejow polskiej polityki księcia Albrechta Hohenzollerna* (Warsaw: Panst. Wydaw. Naukowe, 1976).

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