

HUNGARIAN MERCENARIES IN THE SERVICE OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER

In late medieval European warfare, mercenaries were the dominant force and therefore this period, together with the early modern period, is often referred to as the “age of mercenaries”.¹ There was no region or corner of Europe from which men-at-arms would not have volunteered in greater or lesser numbers to become mercenaries,² and although almost all social classes were represented among them, it was primarily the nobility to whom it offered a new source of income and career opportunities.³ Climate change, economic and demographic decline

¹ Blastenbrei, Peter, *Die Sforza und ihr Heer. Studien zur Struktur, Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte des Söldnerwesens in der italienischen Frührenaissance*. (Heidelberger Abhandlungen zur mittleren und neueren Geschichte, NF. I.) Heidelberg, 1987.; Flower, Kenneth, *Medieval Mercenaries I: The Great Companies*. Oxford, 2001.; Janin, Hunt – Carlson, Ursula, *Mercenaries in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*. North Carolina–London, 2014.; Leeson, Peter T. – Piano, Ennio E., “The golden age of mercenaries”, = *European Review of Economic History* 25, 2021, 429–446.; Querengässer, Alexander, “Kriegswesen und Herrschaftsbildung der Wettiner im späten Mittelalter”, = *Neues Archiv für Sächsische Geschichte* 88, 2017, 55–82. 65.; Urban, William, *Medieval Mercenaries. The Business of War*. Rossendale, 2006.

² Baumann, Reinhard, “Süddeutschland als Söldnermarkt”, In. Rogger, Philippe – Hitz, Benjamin (Hrsg.), *Söldnerlandschaften, Frühneuzeitliche Gewaltmärkte im Vergleich*. Berlin, 2014. 67–84.; Fuhrer, Hans Rudolf – Eyer, Robert-Peter, “‘Söldner’. Ein europäisches Phänomen”, In. Fuhrer, Hans Rudolf – Eyer, Robert-Peter (Hrsg.), *Schweizer in „Fremden Diensten“. Verherrlicht und verurteilt*. Zürich, 2006. 27–48.; Jucker, Michael, “Erfolgreiche Söldnerlandschaft Eidgenossenschaft? Die Innenperspektive um 1476”, In. Rogger, Philippe – Hitz, Benjamin (Hrsg.), *Söldnerlandschaften, Frühneuzeitliche Gewaltmärkte im Vergleich*. Berlin, 2014. 85–106.; Miltzer, Klaus, “Kölner Söldner im Mittelalter”, = *Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae* 27, 2014, 73–78.; Selzer, Stephan, *Deutsche Söldner im Italien des Trecento*. (Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom, 98.). Tübingen, 2001.; Sikora, Michael, “Söldner: historische Annäherung an einen Kriegertypus”, = *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 29, 2003, 210–238.; Tresp, Uwe, *Söldner aus Böhmen im Dienst deutscher Fürsten. Kriegsgeschäft und Heeresorganisation im 15. Jahrhundert*. Paderborn, 2004.; Tresp, Uwe, “Böhmen als Söldnermarkt / ‘Böhmen’ als Söldnertypus im späten Mittelalter”, In. Rogger, Philippe – Hitz, Benjamin (Hrsg.), *Söldnerlandschaften, Frühneuzeitliche Gewaltmärkte im Vergleich*. Berlin, 2014. 119–141.

³ Baumann, Reinhard, *Landsknechte. Ihre Geschichte und Kultur von späten Mittelalter bis zum Dreißigjährigen Krieg*. München, 1994.; Bursehel, Peter, *Söldner im Nordwestdeutschland des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts: Sozialgeschichtliche Studien*. (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, 113.). Göttingen, 1995.; Hunterbrinker, Jan Willem, *“Fromme Knechte” und “Garteteufel”. Söldner als soziale Gruppe im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*. Konstanz, 2010.; Rázsó, Gyula, “A zsoldosság gazdasági és társadalmi előfeltételei és típusai Magyarországon a XIV–XV. században”

in the late Middle Ages led – albeit to varying degrees – to a decrease in the incomes of landowners everywhere. The population, diminished by the pandemics of plague, could not provide the previous level of annuities for the landlords, and the cooler weather in Europe reduced crop yields and the extent of arable lands, so that the lower classes of the nobility in the western and central parts of Europe were essentially abolished. These noble strata were no longer able to finance their military obligations from the income of their estates, hence they offered their weapons skills and combat experience to the market,⁴ and even the nobles with larger estates and more tax-paying peasants made up for their missing income in this way. For example, Jan Žižka, a Bohemian nobleman and the famous general of the Hussite wars, fought as a mercenary in 1410 in the army of the Polish King Władysław II Jagiełło at the Battle of Grunwald.⁵ The nobles became the dominant, almost exclusive players in the so-called “mercenary market”, not only as soldiers, but also as military contractors who set up mercenary troops and organised the orders and the “jobs”.⁶ As changes in military technology in the late Middle Ages led to a significant increase in the number of armed men required to wage war, and consequently the need for forces that could be kept in arms for longer periods, the demand for mercenaries from rulers, popes or wealthy cities also increased. The fact that more soldiers were needed than before was also indicated by a new practice that spread through Europe from the 14th century onwards: before a battle, a large number of young men were knighted en masse. This resulted in a radical change from the chivalric culture of two centuries earlier.⁷ The first such mass knighting took place in the second third of the 13th century, and it became a widespread practice already in the 14th century.⁸ For instance, before the Battle of Gruenwald in 1410, nearly a thou-

[The Economic and Social Preconditions and Types of Mercenarism in Hungary in the 14th and 15th centuries], = *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 9, 1962, 160–217. 176–210.

⁴ Pósán, László, “Klímaváltozások és következményei a középkori és kora újkori Európában” [Climate Changes and their Consequences in Medieval and Early Modern Europe], = *Föld és ember, új folyam* 3, 2011, 59–69. 64.; Schneider, Joachim, *Spätmittelalterlicher deutscher Niederadel. Ein landschaftlicher Vergleich*. Stuttgart, 2003.

⁵ Tresp, Söldner aus Böhmen, 2004. 24.

⁶ Tresp, Böhmen als Söldnermarkt, 2014.; Mallett, Michael, “*Der Condottiere*”, In: Garin, Eugenio (Hrsg.), *Der Mensch der Renaissance*. Frankfurt am Main, 1990. 49–78.

⁷ Prietzel, Malte, *Kriegsführung im Mittelalter. Handlungen, Erinnerungen, Bedeutungen*. Paderborn, 2006. 247–258.; Ehler, Joachim, *Die Ritter. Geschichte und Kultur*. München, 2006. 92–105.; Cardini, Franco, “Der Krieger und der Ritter”, In: Le Goff, Jacques (Hrsg.), *Der Mensch des Mittelalters*. Frankfurt am Main, 1996. 87–129.; Prohanka, Reinhard, *Das Rittertum*. Wiesbaden, 2011. 196–210.; Kulcsár, Zsuzsanna, *Így éltek a lovagkorban* [How They Lived in the Age of Chivalry]. Budapest, 1967. 11–13.

⁸ Keen, Maurice, *Chivalry*. New Haven, 1984. 6–8, 64–82.

sand new knights were initiated on the Polish side.⁹ Five years later, before the Battle of Agincourt, half a thousand young Frenchmen were knighted.¹⁰

The Kingdom of Hungary was not one of those areas that produced mercenaries in significant numbers, still, mercenaries from here served in many places in late medieval Europe. The Italian states,¹¹ in particular, which were almost constantly at war with each other, offered favourable conditions and long-lasting employment to mercenaries, including Hungarians. The overwhelming majority of Hungarian mercenaries serving abroad were primarily serving there.¹² On the other hand, far fewer mercenaries from Hungary were to be found in the western European theatres of war or those north of the Alpine-Carpathian line. In this short paper, we shall attempt to give an account of the men-at-arms who served in the wars between the Teutonic Order and the Polish–Lithuanian state during the 15th century, and whom the sources mention.

In the 14th century, mercenaries were not present in great numbers neither in the army of the Teutonic Order, nor in that of Poland.¹³ Throughout the 14th century, a large number of knights from across Christian Europe came to the Crusades against the heathen Lithuanians in support of the Teutonic Order.¹⁴ Königsberg, the starting point of the Lithuanian campaigns in Prussia, was considered the meeting point of European nobility.¹⁵ After the Lithuanian Grand Duke Władysław converted to Catholicism, and married the Polish

⁹ *Cronica conflictus Wladislai regis Poloniae cum cruciferis anno 1410*. Ed. Celiehowski, Zygmunt, Poznań, 1911. 22. [Hereinafter *Cronica conflictus*]; Dlugossii, Joannes, *Annales seu Cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*. Tom. X–XI.: 1404–1412. Ed. Plezia, Marian, Warszawa, 1997. 99.

¹⁰ Gouguenheim, Sylvain, “Die Perspektive der Erforschung der Ritterorden im Lichte der “neuen Militärgeschichte”, = *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica* 18, 2013, 7–25. 12.

¹¹ For the political relations in 14th–15th century Italy, see e.g. Romano, Ruggiero – Tenenti, Alberto, *Die Grundlegung der modernen Welt. Spätmittelalter, Renaissance, Reformation*. Frankfurt am Main, 1967. 59–63.

¹² Lukcsics, Pál, “Magyar zsoldosok a pápaság szolgálatában a XIV. században” [Hungarian Mercenaries in the Service of the Papacy in the 14th Century], = *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 33, 1932, 125–157.; Lukcsics, Pál “Magyar zsoldosok Itáliában a XIV. században” [Hungarian Mercenaries in Italy in the 14th Century], = *Turul* 42, 1928, 128–129.; E. Kovács, Péter, “Magyar zsoldosok Sienában” [Hungarian Mercenaries in Siena], In. Bárány, Attila – Dreska, Gábor – Szovák, Kornél (eds.), *Arcana tabularii. Tanulmányok Solymosi László tiszteletére*. Vol. II., Budapest–Debrecen, 2014. 521–542.

¹³ Grodecki, Roman – Zachorowski, Stanislaw – Dąbrowski, Jan, *Dzieja Polski średniowiecznej*. Kraków, 2011. 546–549.; Mühle, Eduard, *Die Piasten. Polen im Mittelalter*. München, 2011. 106–108.; Biskup, Marian, “Das Problem der Söldner in den Streitkräften des Deutschordensstaates Preußen vom Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts bis 1525”, = *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica* 6, 1991, 49–74. 50.

¹⁴ Paravieini, Werner, *Die Preussenreisen des europäischen Adels*. Teil 1. (Beihefte der Francia, 17/1.). Sigmaringen, 1989.

¹⁵ Miltizer, Klaus, *Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*. Stuttgart, 2005. 117.

Queen Hedwig, thus obtaining the Polish crown,¹⁶ the number of western knights fighting for Christianity under the banner of the Teutonic Order fell dramatically, as the justification for the Lithuanian wars – that it was against the pagans – was no longer valid. At the same time, with the establishment of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, a very unfavourable change of power occurred for the monastic knights along the Prussian borders.¹⁷ From the last quarter of the 14th century, the Order sought to compensate for the armed forces of European nobles who had volunteered to fight for the Teutonic Knights for longer or shorter periods with mercenaries. From the end of the 1380s, they concluded mercenary contracts for 10–15 years with Pomeranian princes and nobles, who, in return for an annual payment, undertook to go to war against Poland with a defined number of soldiers, armed with specified weapons, if necessary, and participate in the campaigns of the Order under the command of the Teutonic officers. In the event of the death of the contracting Pomeranian party, the agreement also applied to his successor until the end of the relevant timeframe.¹⁸ Although the Treaty of Kalisz signed in 1343, which ended the political and military conflict between the Teutonic Order and Poland during the first third of the 14th century, created a decades long peace,¹⁹ not all territorial issues were settled, and during the long period of peace, a number of new political ambitions, commercial and economic problems overshadowed the bilateral relationship on both sides.²⁰ Thus, both sides anticipated a possible war and prepared for a confrontation. From the summer of 1407, the Teutonic Order reduced the silver content of its money and sought to raise additional funds for war preparations by increasing the number of Schillings (solidus) minted. While leaving the face value unchanged, the previous silver content of the Schilling of 1.26 grams was reduced to 1.17 grams.²¹

¹⁶ Hellmann, Manfred, “Die polnische-litauische Union von 1385/86” = *Jahrbücher für Geschichte von Osteuropa* NF 34, 1986, 19–34.

¹⁷ Militzer, Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, 2005. 116–117.; Končius, Joseph, *Vytautas the Great, Grand Duke of Lithuania*. Miami, 1964. 24–29.; Hoenseh, Jörg K., *Geschichte Polens*. Stuttgart, 1998. 72.

¹⁸ Biskup, Problem der Söldner, 1991. 50.; Simiński, Rafael, “Kontakte der Familie von Kameke mit dem Deutschen Orden in Preussen um die Wende vom 14. bis zum 15. Jahrhundert. Ein Beitrag zur Funktionierung der Ritterelite des Herzogtums Pommern-Stolp im Grenzraum von Pommern und dem Deutschordensstaat”, = *Studia Maritima* 26, 2013, 5–28. 11–12.

¹⁹ *Regesta historico-diplomatica Ordinis S. Mariae Theutonicorum 1198–1525*. Pars II: *Regesta privilegiorum Ordinis S. Mariae Theutonicorum. Mit einem Anhang: Papst- und Konzilsurkunden*. Eds. Joachim, Erich – Hubatsch, Walter, Göttingen, 1948. nr. 738. [Hereinafter *Regesta* II.]

²⁰ Pósán, László, “A Német Lovagrend és a lengyel-litván állam közötti „nagy háború” (1409–1411)” [The “Great War” between the Teutonic Order and the Polish-Lithuanian State], = *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 124, 2011, 3–30. 4–15.

²¹ Volckart, Oliver, *Die Münzpolitik im Ordensland und Herzogtum Preußen von 1370 bis 1550*. (Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau. Quellen und Studien 4.). Wiesbaden,

Following the peace treaty between the Grand Dukes Vytautas of Lithuania and Vasily Dmitrievich of Moscow on 14 September 1408,²² the Polish–Lithuanian Union was able to relocate Lithuanian forces from the east to the west if necessary, should a war break out with the Teutonic Order. Certainly considering this possibility, at the end of 1408 Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen visited the castles along the border to examine the state of the military and defensive preparations of the Order.²³ Due to the growing antagonism between the Teutonic Order and the Polish-Lithuanian Union, and the threat of war, the Knights spent more and more money on weapons, horses and military equipment. Between 1405 and 1409, 6 112 marks were spent on such purchases, an average of 1 528 marks per year.²⁴ With the possibility of an imminent war in mind, the leadership of the Teutonic Order decided in the spring of 1409 to hire a larger number of mercenaries, and during the summer they sent out commissioners to recruit mercenaries.²⁵ An internal servant of the Grand Master, a certain Nammyr, and Kunze, a servant of the Master of the Hospital and the Commander of Elblag, were given the task of conducting consultations and negotiations in Stettin, Meissen, Thuringia, Braunschweig and Lüneburg to enable recruitment.²⁶ The other recruiting delegation, consisting of Gottschalk Hitfeld and Martin Kropp, citizens of Thorn, set off for Silesia.²⁷ In the Pomeranian and German territories, a “pike” was hired for 24 gold florins per month, and in Silesia for 20 gold florins per month.²⁸ In late medieval mercenary warfare, a “pike” (Spieß) was the smallest military unit, usually consisting of an armoured cavalryman, a crossbowman and a lightly armoured footman. Several (8–12) pikes formed a company or *rota* (24–36 people), and 8–10 rotas formed a larger team, which was usually led by a captain.²⁹ The monthly wages of the armed men hired by the Teutonic Order show that wars that involved the employment of mercenaries were very costly, therefore such troops were hired for short periods, usually for a few weeks or months, depending on the needs of the moment. When mercenaries were contracted, it was necessary to agree not only on the amount of the salary, but also on the amount of money that could be spent on equipment and on transportation to the assembly point, what

1996. 62.; Waschinski, Emil, *Die Münz- und Währungspolitik des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen, ihre historischen Probleme und seltenen Gepräge*. Göttingen, 1952. 94, 235.

²² Spuler, Bertold, “Die Aussenpolitik der Goldenen Horde. Die Horde als Großmacht in Osteuropa und Vorderasien”, = *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 5, 1940, 315–316.

²³ Plehn, Hans, *Geschichte des Kreises Strassburg in Westpreußen*. Leipzig, 1900. 74.

²⁴ Sarnowsky, Jürgen, *Die Wirtschaftsführung des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen (1382–1454)*. Köln, 1993. 400.

²⁵ Biskup, Problem der Söldner, 1991. 51.

²⁶ Ekdahl, Sven, “Soldtruppen des Deutschen Ordens im Krieg gegen Polen 1409”, = *Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae* 15, 2002, 47–64. 52.

²⁷ Kwiatkowski, Krzysztof, “Neue Quellen aus dem Kreis des Deutschen Ordens zum Krieg von 1409–1411”, = *Zapiski Historyczne* 75, 2010, 67–112. 80.

²⁸ Ekdahl, Soldtruppen, 2002. 52.; Kwiatkowski, Neue Quellen, 2010. 80.

²⁹ Ekdahl, Soldtruppen, 2002. 52.

kind of provisions they would receive, and it was usually also stipulated in the contract that in case the mercenary was captured, the contractor would either buy him out or exchange him.³⁰ Since the cost of a mercenary army was very high, in 1409 the Teutonic Order tried to recruit soldiers mainly from Silesia, where the monthly cost of a pike was 4 gold florins less than in the German or Pomeranian principalities. However, in order to get this price, the Grand Master had to promise to keep the mercenaries in service for six months. This was a surprisingly long time in those days (and, from the mercenaries' point of view, several months of steady earnings).³¹ This was probably the reason why the majority of the mercenaries fighting under the banner of the Teutonic Order in 1409 came from Silesia, and only a much smaller proportion of them came from Lusatia, Saxony, Neumark or the Pomeranian dukedoms. In August 1409, 800 paid pikes (2 400 soldiers) were in the service of the Teutonic Order.³²

The prerequisite for mercenary recruitment was always set by the provincial governor of the territory concerned, because only he could authorise or prohibit it. His consent was needed to enable the local nobles and armed men to serve under a foreign banner.³³ Despite the fact that King Sigismund of Luxembourg, the King of Hungary, in the escalating situation between the Teutonic Order and the Polish–Lithuanian state, did not simply side with the Knights – in line with his plans to win the imperial crown – but acted as their clear defender,³⁴ since the support of the Teutonic Order was widespread among the lords and ecclesiastical dignitaries in the Empire (the Teutonic Order offered many second-, or third-born sons of noble families career opportunities in the Order),³⁵ it appears that he did not give permission to recruit mercenaries in his own country. Indeed, there is no trace in the sources that armed men from Hungary joined the Order under its banner, nor that he let anyone from his court or his entourage go to Prussia to fight there. By the spring of 1409, there were increasing reports of the parties preparing for war.³⁶ During the first two months of the summer, there were some last-ditch attempts to avoid war and reach a diplomatic settlement, but all of these have failed. In these weeks, however, the first mercenary troops hired by the Teutonic Order arrived in Prussia.³⁷ Having

³⁰ Ibid. 49.

³¹ Ibid. 52.

³² Ekdahl, Sven, *Das Soldbuch des Deutschen Ordens 1410/1411*. Teil II: Indices mit personengeschichtlichen Kommentaren. Köln–Weimar–Wien, 2010. 5. [Hereinafter Soldbuch II.]

³³ Ekdahl, Soldtruppen, 2002. 50.

³⁴ *Regesta Historico-diplomatica Ordinis S. Mariae Theutonicorum 1198–1525*. Pars I.: *Index Tabularii Ordinis S. Mariae Theutonicorum*. Regesten zum Ordensbriefarchiv. Vols I–III. Eds. Joachim, Erich – Hubatsch, Walther, Göttingen, 1948–1973. nr. 1233. [Hereinafter Regesta I.]

³⁵ Hoensch, Jörg K., “König/Kaiser Sigismund, der Deutsche Orden und Polen-Litauen”, = *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 46, 1977, 1–44. 11.

³⁶ Regesta I., nr. 1048, 1056, 1073.

³⁷ Długossii, *Annales*, 1997. Tom. X., 27–46.; Biskup, Marian, “Z badań nad ‘Wielką

considered the situation, the Grand Master finally decided to go to war, and on 6 August 1409 he declared war on Poland.³⁸ Ten days later, the army of the Order crossed the Prussian–Polish border in several places and broke into Poland. The main army, led by Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen, crossed the river Drwęca at Brodnica, entered the province of Dobrzyń, where in two weeks they captured several towns and castles and plundered a large part of the territory. On the same day, mercenaries from Neumark also attacked the northern part of Greater Poland, in the area of Wałcz. A third army of the Teutonic Order entered the Polish province of Kujawy from Pomerelia and on 28 August captured the town of Bydgoszcz, which was of strategic importance. The Fourth Army, led by Friedrich von Zollern, Commander of Ostróda, and Marquard von Salzburg, Commander of Brandenburg – (Usakovo, attacked Mazovia, where they ravaged for three days before returning to Prussia.³⁹ The Polish high command may have been taken by surprise by the multi-directional, rapid offensive of the Teutonic Order, and for a time there was uncertainty as to the main direction of the attack. It was not until the autumn of 1409 that King Władysław II Jagiełło was able to raise an army capable of a counterattack. At the end of September, he laid siege to the city Bydgoszcz in the province of Kujawy, which had been occupied by the mercenaries of the Order, and he recaptured it on 6 October.⁴⁰ When Władysław began the siege of Bydgoszcz, the Grand Master also marched his army into Kujawy. Although he could not prevent the capture of the city, he was able to hinder the advancement of the Polish army. The two armies faced each other for a while, and then, presumably in order to prepare more thoroughly for war, the parties concluded a truce on 8 October for three quarters of a year, ending at sundown on 24 June 1410. They agreed that any disputes between them during the armistice would be arbitrated by the brother of Sigismund of Luxemburg, Wenceslaus IV, King of Bohemia.⁴¹ After the ceasefire came into effect, the Teutonic Order dismissed its mercenaries, who therefore served for an average of two and a half months. To ensure that the King of Bohemia would rule in favour of the knights, a later record from Janu-

Wojną z Zakonem Krzyżackim”, = *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 66, 1959, 671–715.

³⁸ Nowak, Zenon Hubert, “Akt rozpoczynający ‘Wielką Wojnę’. List wypowiedni w mistrza Ulryka von Jingenen z 6 sierpnia 1409 roku”, = *Kommunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie* 20, 1976, 79–85.

³⁹ Johann von Posilge, *Chronik des Landes Preußen*. Hrsg. Hirsch, Theodor – Toeppen, Max – Strehlke, Ernst, In. *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*. Bd. III., Leipzig, 1866. 79–388. 301–303. [Hereinafter Posilge, SRP III.]; Kutowski, Ernst, “Zur Geschichte der Söldner in den Heeren des Deutschordensstaates in Preußen bis zum ersten Thorner Frieden 1.2.1411.”, = *Oberländische Geschichtsblätter* 14, 1912, 407–522. 435.; Ekdahl, Soldtruppen, 2002. 47–49.

⁴⁰ Posilge, SRP III., 312.; Kutowski, *Geschichte der Söldner*, 1912. 458–459.

⁴¹ *Die Staatsverträge des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen im 15. Jahrhundert*. Bd. I.: 1398–1437. Hrsg. Weise, Erich, Königsberg, 1939. nr. 74. [Hereinafter Staatsverträge I.]

ary 1411 states that the Grand Master promised 60 000 gold florins.⁴² This was approximately two thirds of what he paid the mercenaries, which amounted to a total of 45 996 marks, and 1 Prussian mark was equivalent to 2 gold florins at the time.⁴³ The Grand Master's offer to Wenceslaus showed that the Teutonic Order considered a possible political settlement of the conflict to be easier and more rewarding, especially after having demonstrated its military power during the military actions of August, September and early October. Regardless of this, however, he sought to further strengthen the position of the Order and with it the pressure on Władysław, and on 20 December 1409 he concluded a clearly military alliance with Sigismund of Luxemburg in Buda. The King of Hungary undertook to take armed Hungarian action against Poland only in the case that King Władysław would have pagans and schismatics (i.e. Tatars and Lithuanians who had not yet converted to Christianity, as well as Orthodox Russians and Ruthenians) in his army.⁴⁴ This alliance threatened Poland with a two-front war, with an attack by the Teutonic Order in the north and Hungary in the south. After the conclusion of the contract, the Teutonic Order paid 40 000 gold florins to Sigismund. The payment was formally linked to Neumark, which the knights held as a pledge,⁴⁵ but in reality, it had nothing to do with the contract of bailment concluded in 1402. At the time the Teutonic Order paid 63 200 Hungarian gold florins for the pledge of the province, which in turn could be redeemed at any time by the pledger Sigismund of Luxemburg for the same price.⁴⁶ Thus, the Neumark pledge had no expiration date nor any other provision for the extension of the pledge, so from this point of view, nothing justified the payment of 40 000 gold florins, which was by all means a rather substantial amount. Two months later, on 2 March 1410, the Treasury of the Grand Master again paid the 40 000 gold florins to the King of Hungary, referring to the Neumark pledge once more.⁴⁷ Apparently, that – 80 000 gold florins – was the price of the military treaty against Poland. For this, the Teutonic Order paid almost as much as it spent on mercenaries in 1409. At the same time, Sigismund also demonstrated his commitment to the monastic knights by inviting the ambassadors of the Order who arrived in Hungary, Werner von Tettingen, Master of the Hospital and Commander of Elbląg, and Albrecht von Schwarzburg, Commander of Toruń, to the christening of his daughter.⁴⁸

Naturally, the negotiations and embassies between the Order and the King of Hungary were not kept secret from the King of Poland, therefore, at the

⁴² *Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz*, XX. Hauptabteilung, Historisches Staatsarchiv, Deutschordensbriefarchiv. nr. 1629. [Hereinafter OBA]

⁴³ *Das Marienburger Treßlerbuch der Jahre 1399–1409*. Hrsg. Joachim, Erich, Königsberg, 1896. 599. [Hereinafter MTB]; Ekdahl, *Soldtruppen*, 2002. 63.

⁴⁴ *Staatsverträge* I., nr. 77, 78.

⁴⁵ MTB, 598.

⁴⁶ *Staatsverträge* I., nr. 15.

⁴⁷ *Regesta* II., nr. 1647.

⁴⁸ *Regesta* I., nr. 1175.

same time as the talks took place in Buda, he met his cousin, the Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas, in Brest-Litovsk, and discussed the campaign against Prussia after the expiration of the armistice.⁴⁹ Thus the threat of a possible war on two fronts – contrary to the expectation of the Teutonic Order – did not make Władysław cautious and seek an agreement, but rather enhanced his determination. As expected, in February 1410, King Wenceslaus of Bohemia ruled in favour of the Teutonic Knights,⁵⁰ further inflaming the tension on both sides. Information about the Polish and Lithuanian military preparations was coming almost constantly to the headquarters of the Grand Master in Malbork from various officials of the Order.⁵¹ In the more distant courts of Europe, the outbreak of a war between the Teutonic Order and Poland was taken for granted, and many noblemen travelled to Prussia to support the Order as Christian knights. On 10 February 1410, for example, the French heir to the throne wrote a letter to Ulrich von Jungingen, in which he commended to the attention of the Grand Master the French nobles Laurentius de Jardo, Karolus de Escoutevilla and Albertus de Vallequiervilla, who were going to Prussia to fight the pagans and heathens.⁵² According to an earlier report in January, the nobility of France, the German Low Lands and the Rhineland also supported the Teutonic Order against King Władysław.⁵³ Sigismund, in the hope of being elected as Holy Roman Emperor, this time did not forbid his nobles to take up arms and, if they wished, go to Prussia and fight for the Teutonic Order. He gave another sign of his support to the Knights: he sent envoys to Malbork, who signed an agreement on 31 March 1410 that the parties would not conclude a separate peace with Poland without the knowledge and consent of the other.⁵⁴

With the armistice deadline of 24 June in mind, Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen began recruiting mercenaries in the early spring of 1410 and planned to launch a surprise attack on Poland well before then, on 1 June.⁵⁵ He was thinking of a rapid, multipronged offensive similar to the one that brought success the previous year. By the beginning of May, 600 pikes (1 800 mercenaries) had secretly arrived in Prussia, and by the end of the month, a much larger number was expected than the planned number for the start of the attack. The military plan of the Grand Master was that the Teutonic Order would attack Poland from the north and the troops of Sigismund of Luxemburg from the south at the same time, and quickly bring Władysław to his knees, but the King

⁴⁹ Dlugossii, *Annales*, 1997. Tom. X., 43–44.

⁵⁰ *Staatsverträge I.*, nr. 80.

⁵¹ *Regesta I.*, 1251, 1258, 1271.

⁵² *Regesta I.*, nr. 1253.

⁵³ *Regesta I.*, nr. 1242, 1243.

⁵⁴ *Staatsverträge I.*, nr. 81.

⁵⁵ Ekdahl, Sven, “Diplomatie und Söldnerwerbung vor der Schlacht bei Žalgiris”, = *Lietuvos Istorijos Stidijos* 25, 2010, 48–61. 53.; Ekdahl, Sven, “Der 1. Thorner Frieden (1411) im Spiegel der Söldnerfrage”, = *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica* 18, 2013, 67–79. 70.

of Hungary did not envisage a large-scale war with Poland.⁵⁶ In order to avoid armed confrontation, Sigismund tried to bring the situation to the negotiating table, and in mid-April he met with the Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas at Kežmarok, to whom – as the possible candidate for the title of Holy Roman emperor – he offered a crown, thus attempting to break up the Polish–Lithuanian union before the hostilities began.⁵⁷ However, the only actual result of the meeting in Kežmarok was that the King of Hungary and the Grand Duke agreed to meet again before the end of the armistice on 17 June and negotiate in Toruń, Prussia.⁵⁸ The fact that in mid-June, a few days before the armistice was due to expire, the parties were still negotiating with each other was clearly the incentive of Sigismund of Luxemburg. On 11 May, the envoy of the sovereign, Christoph von Gersdorff, a member of a noble family from Upper Lusatia who was in the service of the King of Hungary, informed the Grand Master and asked him to stop the deployment of the troops of the Teutonic Order and the preparations for the attack planned for 1 June.⁵⁹ In view of the planned negotiations in Toruń, and in order to preserve the goodwill of Sigismund, Ulrich von Jungingen cancelled the surprise attack on Poland and even suspended the hiring of mercenaries. There were no such steps on the Polish side, that is, mercenaries were enlisted in full force. Thus, those from Bohemia and Moravia who wanted to enlist under the banner of the Teutonic Order in the hope of earning a decent sum now went to King Władysław in order to earn any money at all.⁶⁰ In addition, a considerable number of the mercenary troops, which were already committed to the Teutonic Order, arrived in Prussia a few weeks late due to the decree of the Grand Master and were unable to participate in the great battle of Gruenwald on 15 July. Their absence played a major role in the outcome of the battle.⁶¹

Following the meeting in Kežmarok, the King of Poland issued a letter of passage for Sigismund and his 1 500-strong entourage to travel through Poland to the planned meeting in Thorn on 17 June.⁶² In doing so, he wanted to signal that the Polish side is preparing for the talks and will do its utmost to ensure their success. In Prussia, serious preparations were made to welcome and cater

⁵⁶ Ekdahl, *Diplomatie*, 2010. 53.

⁵⁷ Długossii, *Annales*, 1997. Tom. XI., 55.; *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi Magni Ducis Lithuaniae*. Tom. I.: 1376–1430. Ed. Prochaska, Anton, Cracoviae, 1882. nr. 1358.; Giedré, Mickūnaitė, *Making a Great Ruler: Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania*. Budapest, 2006. 66–72.

⁵⁸ Ekdahl, *Der 1. Thorner Frieden*, 2013. 70.

⁵⁹ OBA, nr. 1276.

⁶⁰ Ekdahl, Sven, “Polnische Söldnerwerbungen vor der Schlacht bei Tannenberg (Grunwald)”, In: Ławrynowicz, Olgierd – Maik, Jerzy – Nowakowski, Piotr A. (eds.), *Non sensitis gladios. Studia ofiarowane Marianowi Głaskowi w 70 rocznicę urodzin*. Łódź, 2011. 121–134.

⁶¹ Ekdahl, *Der 1. Thorner Frieden*, 2013. 70.

⁶² *Codex diplomaticus regni Poloniae et magni ducatus Litvaniae in quo pacta, foedera, tractatus pacis*. Tom. I. Ed. Dogiel, Matthias, Vilnae, 1758. nr. 6.

for the expected distinguished guests. For example, the city council of Thorn reported to the Grand Master already on 18 May what sorts and how much food and drink would be stored in the warehouses during the stay of the Hungarian king and his entourage.⁶³ On 17 June, however, only the Grand Master, his entourage and the envoys of the King of Hungary appeared in the rich merchant town near the Prussian–Polish border. Neither the King of Poland nor the Grand Duke of Lithuania came, and despite his earlier promise, neither did Sigismund of Luxemburg. The death of Emperor Ruprecht on 8 May 1410 must have played a major role in this, and therefore the attention of Sigismund was turned to the question of his election as King of Germany. The death of King Rupert on 8 May 1410 must have played a significant role in this, and therefore the attention of Sigismund was turned to the question of his election as King of the Romans.⁶⁴ Consequently, the peace negotiations in Thorn immediately came to a standstill, causing a serious diplomatic setback for the Teutonic Order and completely disrupting the war plans and military preparations of the Grand Master. The case of the negotiations in Toruń, scheduled for the last minute before the armistice expired, was used by the Polish–Lithuanian side to mislead and deceive the Teutonic Order. Therefore, the last chance for a peaceful conflict resolution was lost.⁶⁵ Sigismund, who was an excellent diplomat, probably foresaw that his absence as a possible mediator between the parties at the planned final peace talks would not help the agreement, so the Hungarian delegation to Thorn essentially carried a message to the King of Poland, thereby also making a serious gesture to his ally, the Teutonic Order. The King of Hungary addressed a kind of ultimatum to King Władysław II Jagiełło,⁶⁶ but it was not a Hungarian declaration of war (as Jan Długosz stated in his chronicle),⁶⁷ because Sigismund intervened in the conflict between the Teutonic Order and the Polish–Lithuanian state – based on the ideal of universal imperial supremacy – as the governor of the Empire, and not as the ruler of Hungary. Like the previous emperors, he adopted the view that the Teutonic Order belonged to the Empire, that it was part of it, and that two centuries earlier it had been sent by the Emperor and the Pope to the land of the pagan Prussians to defend Christianity.⁶⁸ In a letter dated 17 June, Sigismund called

⁶³ Regesta I., nr. 1280.

⁶⁴ Pószán, László, *Magyarország és a Német Lovagrend a középkorban* [Hungary and the Teutonic Order in the Middle Ages]. Debrecen, 2019. 214–215.

⁶⁵ Ekdahl, *Diplomatie*, 2010. 55.

⁶⁶ *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár II. (1400–1410)* [Royal Archives of the Age of Sigismund]. Ed. Mályusz, Elemér, Budapest, 1958. nr. 7709. [Hereinafter ZsO II.]

⁶⁷ Długossii, *Annales*, 1997. Tom. XI., 78–80.

⁶⁸ Pószán, László, “... quod terra ipsa sub monarchia imperii est.’ *Az Imperium Romanum és a Német Lovagrend állama a középkorban*” [The Imperium Romanum and the State of the Teutonic Order in the Middle Ages], In: Frank, Tibor (ed.), *Németföldről Németországba. Magyar kutatók tanulmányai a német történelemről* [From the Low Lands to Germany. Studies of Hungarian Researchers on German History]. (Magyar kutatók az

on Władysław to respect the arbitrations of King Wenceslaus, otherwise he, as the *vicarius* and future ruler of the Empire, would provide assistance to the Teutonic Order.⁶⁹ So far, as the ally of the Knights he only acted as the King of Hungary, but with this letter, he spoke of them as imperial subjects threatened by Poland and Lithuania, and whose help was a fundamental duty of the ruler of the Empire. He was essentially trying to prevent any actual military confrontation by an even more powerful means of political pressure, but his words about helping the Order could of course be interpreted as a declaration of war.⁷⁰ Despite the fact that he issued the letter as the governor of the Empire, Sigismund's letter (which was obviously written earlier, but dated 17 June) was not brought to the King of Poland by German envoys, but by the two most powerful lords of Hungary at the time, Miklós Garai, Palatine of Hungary, and Stiborici Stibor, Voivode of Transylvania, accompanied by 200 armed horsemen. He also entrusted them with the task of convincing the parties to extend the ceasefire. Christoph von Gersdorff, who had already visited Prussia in the service of Sigismund, was also a member of the delegation.⁷¹ Following the failure of the meeting at Toruń, and King Władysław's refusal to accept a peaceful settlement and an extension of the armistice, the 200 cavalymen who formed the Hungarian delegation joined the army of the Teutonic Order, which was allied with Sigismund, and went to war on their side, after Władysław II Jagiełło announced the outbreak of the war in Wolbórz on the day the armistice expired (24 June). On 15 July 1410, the main forces of the Teutonic Order led by the Grand Master clashed with the Polish–Lithuanian army in the triangle formed by the villages of Grunwald, Tannenberg and Ludwigsdorf. The day-long battle ended with the crushing defeat of the Teutonic Order.⁷²

The fact that 200 Hungarian cavalymen marched with the army of the Teutonic Order had no military significance, but its symbolic message may have been important. Palatine Garai and Voivode Stibor, as Hungarian barons, rode towards the Polish–Lithuanian army under the banner of their sovereign, depicting a black eagle against a gold background, while the court knight of Sigismund, Christoph von Gersdorff and his horsemen joined the troops of the

egyetemes történelemről, 3.). Budapest, 2012. 17–38. 32.

⁶⁹ ZsO II., nr. 7709.

⁷⁰ Ekdahl, Sven, "Das Ultimatum Sigismunds von Luxemburg an Władysław Jagiełło vom 17. Juni 1410. Eine Inhaltsanalyse", = *Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae* 27, 2014, 49–55. 52.

⁷¹ *Cronica conflictus*, 16.; Dlugossii, *Annales*, 1997. Tom. XI., 59.

⁷² Ekdahl, Sven, *Die Schlacht bei Tannenberg 1410*. (Berliner Historische Studien, 8/1.). Berlin, 1982.; Ekdahl, Sven, "Tannenberg / Grünwald – ein politisches Symbol in Deutschland und Polen", = *Journal of Baltic Studies* 22, 1991, 271–324.; Evans, Geoffrey, *Tannenberg 1410–1414*. London, 1970.; Krollmann, Christian, *Die Schlacht bei Tannenberg. Ihre Ursachen und ihre Folgen*. Königsberg, 1910.; Kuczyński, Stefan Maria, *Wielka wojna z Zakonem Krzyżackim w latach 1409–1411*. Warszawa, 1966.; Kuczyński, Stefan Maria, *Bitwa pod Grunwaldem*. Katowice, 1985.

Teutonic Order under the imperial triangular banner depicting a white cross on a red background.⁷³ Although the Hungarian cavalymen led by Garai and Stibor went with the army of the Order to Tannenberg, the site of the great clash between the two armies, they apparently did not take part in the battle. Neither of the barons was killed in action (where many high-ranking officials of the Teutonic Order, including the Grand Master himself, were slain), nor were they taken captive, in fact, they were able to return to Hungary unharmed. It is probably safe to assume that the Hungarian contingent left the battlefield without a fight. The vast majority of the contemporaries believed that they abandoned the Order of the Knights and fled.⁷⁴ Knight Christoph von Gersdorff, however, participated in the battle with his 40 men and was taken prisoner by the Polish forces.⁷⁵ According to the list of the Knights of the Order of the Knights captured in battle, *Christoferum de Hungar*, who was considered “Hungarian”, fell into captivity along with Konrad, the Duke of Oels, and Prince Kazimir of Pomerania.⁷⁶ The treasury of the Grand Master later paid him 50 gold florins for the inconvenience of his captivity.⁷⁷ The participation of Christoph von Gersdorff in the Battle of Tannenberg proves that Sigismund allowed his knights in his personal service who belonged to his court to fight on the side of the Teutonic Order, at their own will. This personal freedom of choice, however, was not at all given to the barons – Palatine Garai and Voivode Stibor – who held national offices. Their behaviour at Grunwald was not a matter of courage or cowardice, but of following the orders and expectations of Sigismund. This was perhaps also indicated by the fact that the Hungarian dignitaries and the horsemen of Christoph von Gersdorff carried different banners when the army of the Teutonic Order marched. The soldiers of Palatine Garai were under the banner of Sigismund, and Christoph von Gersdorff was clearly carrying one of the most important symbols of the Empire of which the Teutonic Order was a part. Apart from Christoph von Gersdorff and his 40 men-at-arms, we know of only one mercenary from Hungary in July and August 1410. There was a soldier named *Kasscha* in the rota of Nickel von Schrank of Silesia, who was leading a pike, and he must have come from north-eastern Hungary, from the city of Košice or its surroundings. The company to which he belonged was part of a larger mercenary force led by the brothers Wenzel von Dohna and Benes von Dohna, and he was contracted to the Teutonic Order for five weeks from 25 June 1410.⁷⁸ This group, including this soldier named *Kasscha*, took part in the

⁷³ Dlugossii, *Annales*, 1997. Tom. XI., 101.

⁷⁴ Ekdahl, Sven, *Die „Banderia Prutenorum“ des Jan Długosz – eine Quelle zur Schlacht bei Tannenberg 1410. Untersuchungen zu Aufbau, Entstehung und Quellenwert der Handschrift. Mit einem Anhang: Farbige Abbildungen der 56 Banner, Transkription und Erläuterungen des Textes*. Göttingen, 1976. 176–177.

⁷⁵ Dlugossii, *Annales*, 1997. Tom. XI., 113.

⁷⁶ OBA, nr. 1616.

⁷⁷ *Soldbuch II.*, 82, 128–130.

⁷⁸ *Soldbuch II.*, 37

battle of Grunwald. The Hungarian-born mercenary did not perish, nor was he taken prisoner by the Polish, but he apparently went with the units that retreated from the battlefield to Malbork and defended the headquarters of the Teutonic Order against the besieging Polish army.⁷⁹ Given that Kasscha fought alongside Silesian mercenaries, it is likely that he was also German-speaking or at least he spoke the language. According to a letter dated 4 January 1411, the magistrate or castellan (*advocatus, Voigt*) of the province of Neumark under the pledge of the Teutonic Order was called Engelhard Kassow or Cassaw.⁸⁰ Judging by the name, it is conceivable that this official of the Order was also from the northeast of Hungary, perhaps from the area around Košice, like the aforementioned mercenary.

In addition to the large number of Prussian secular landowners, townspeople and mercenaries, a third of the members of the Teutonic Order also lost their lives in the great battle of 15 July 1410. The number of those who were captured was also considerable.⁸¹ The remainder of the army of the Teutonic Order fled towards Malbork. The commander of Świecie, Heinrich von Paluen, who was leading a reinforcement to the main army, learned of the defeat from the retreating soldiers. He immediately turned his troops around and rushed to the defence of the seat of the Teutonic state. On 18 July, he was already in Malbork, which means that his troops travelled a distance of around 110–120 kilometres with remarkable speed.⁸² Heinrich von Plauen, who took over the military affairs of the Teutonic state from the fallen Grand Master and the main officers of the Order, put the defence of Malbork above all else. It was more than just a symbolic act; the outcome of the war depended on the fate of Malbork, as the King of Poland was planning (and the knights had already received news of this long before)⁸³ to take Malbork, acquire the legendary treasury of the knights and use it to remunerate the large number of mercenaries he took into his service.⁸⁴ If the Teutonic Order wanted to continue the war after the defeat at Gruenwald, the treasury at Malbork was also a key element in their strategy. The siege of the castle began on 25 July. Its walls were defended by some 3 000 mercenaries, part of them escaped from Gruenwald and others came from East Pomerania. In addition to the soldiers, the western side of the castle, facing the Nogat River, was guarded by 400 crossbowmen, who provided a link between Malbork and the outside world with their barges

⁷⁹ Soldbuch II., 128.

⁸⁰ Regesta I., nr. 1474.; Heckmann, Dieter, *Amtsträger des Deutschen Ordens*. Toruń, 2020. 396.

⁸¹ Miltzer, *Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, 2005. 144.

⁸² Pelech, Markian, "Heinrich von Plauen", In: Arnold, Udo (Hrsg.), *Die Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1994*. (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, 40.). Marburg, 1998. 114–118.; Font, Márta, *A Német Lovagrend alkonya* [The Twilight of the Teutonic Order]. Pécs, 1997. 135.

⁸³ Regesta I., nr. 1073, 1251, 1291.

⁸⁴ Ekdahl, Der 1. Thorner Frieden, 2013. 71–73.

and boats. These river sailors, the so-called “ship’s children” (*Schiffskinder*), received a very high salary of 1 mark (2 gold florins) a week.⁸⁵ On 2 August 1410, Sigismund of Luxemburg, as the Vicar of the Empire and claimant to the imperial crown, allowed the Teutonic Order to mint Hungarian-style gold coins to help finance war expenses and recruit mercenaries.⁸⁶ The approval was necessary because in the Holy Roman Empire, a prince could only mint gold coins with the permission of the emperor.⁸⁷ The siege of Marienburg was still in progress when, in August 1410, the Teutonic Order’s Chief Steward (*magnus procurator, Großschäffer*) in Königsberg travelled to Bohemia to recruit 4 000 pikes (i.e. 12 000 mercenaries).⁸⁸ These numbers demonstrate that in possession of the treasury, the Teutonic Order had the financial resources to continue the war, and also explains why it was so important for Władysław to acquire it. After nine weeks of unsuccessful siege, the Polish army, facing increasing supply problems, was finally forced to abandon the castle and withdraw from Prussia. News of a possible Hungarian attack on southern Poland may also have played a part in this move. As a matter of fact, at the end of September 1410, on the orders of Sigismund, Voivode Stibor broke into southern Poland with 12 banderia, raided the countryside as far as the area around Stary Sącz, and then returned to Hungary. In response, Polish troops also made incursions into Upper Hungary.⁸⁹ At the end of September 1410, at the same time as the Hungarian attack on southern Poland, the Teutonic Order launched a counter-attack with the newly recruited mercenary troops and broke into Kuyavia. However, in the battle of Koronowo (10 October 1410) it was defeated once again, and many knights and mercenaries were captured by Poland.⁹⁰ Some of these captured mercenaries had previously served as knights of the court or as men-at-arms in the service of Sigismund of Luxembourg, that is, they came to Prussia from Hungary to fight alongside the Teutonic Order. Most of them were of Silesian origin, but there were also Bohemians, Moravians and even Hungarians.

⁸⁵ Ekdahl, Sven, “‘Schiffskinder’ im Kriegsdienst des Deutschen Ordens. Ein Überblick über die Werbungen von Seeleuten durch den Deutschen Orden von der Schlacht bei Tannenberg bis zum Brester Frieden (1410–1435)”, = *Acta Visbiensia* 4, 1973, 239–274. 250–251.

⁸⁶ Regesta II., nr. 1672.

⁸⁷ Nau, Elisabeth, *Epochen der Geldgeschichte*. Stuttgart, 1972. 49.

⁸⁸ Biskup, Problem der Söldner, 1991. 54.

⁸⁹ Sroka, A, Stanisław, “Wojska węgierskie u granic Polski w 1410 roku”, = *Studia Historyczne* 53, 2010, 335–345.; Dvořáková, Daniela, *A lovag és királya. Stiborici Stibor és Luxemburgi Zsigmond* [The Knight and his King. Stibor Stiborici and Sigismund of Luxembourg]. [Bratislava] Pozsony, 2009. 287.

⁹⁰ Kutowski, Geschichte der Söldner, 1912. 486–487.; Spieralski, Zdzisław, “Bitwa pod Koronowem 10. 10. 1410”, In: Tomczak, Andrzej (ed.), *Bitwa pod Koronowem 10. X. 1410*. Bydgoszcz, 1961. 47–67. 66–67.

Mercenaries from Hungary, who fought alongside the Teutonic Order and were captured near Koronowo:

Hannus Behme / Behem joined the Order in September 1410, but not alone, he led a pike. Prior to that, he was part of the mercenary team led by Captain Nickel von Loeben, who served Sigismund. According to the mercenary payroll, he received payment from the knights from 22 September to 20 October 1410. He was captured at the battle of Koronowo on 10 October 1410, from which he was released relatively quickly, presumably through a prisoner exchange, since by the end of the year he was again on the mercenary list of the Teutonic Order.⁹¹ His service in Prussia came to an end on 5 February 1411 with the conclusion of the war between the Teutonic Order and Poland. In addition to his pay, he received 5 marks as compensation from the Grand Master for his grievances and the time he spent in captivity.⁹²

The Moravian *Hans Boskowitz* was also a member of the troop of Nickel von Loeben, serving Sigismund, and with the approval of the king, he joined the army of the Teutonic Order in September 1410. He did not go alone either, he was accompanied to Prussia by his four cavalymen. He was also taken prisoner in the battle of Koronowo and also received 5 marks in compensation.⁹³

Hannus Schaw belonged to the court of Sigismund as well, and within it to the mercenary troop of Captain Nickel von Loeben. He left Hungary in September 1410 and went to Prussia to serve as a mercenary of the Teutonic Order. He too was captured in the battle of 10 October 1410, and was also paid 5 marks in compensation by the treasury of the Grand Master.⁹⁴

Similarly, a Bohemian nobleman, *Hronko Tluxa*, served at the court of Sigismund before becoming a mercenary of the Teutonic Order, and was also taken as a Polish prisoner at the Battle of Koronowo.⁹⁵

Another Bohemian nobleman, *Raczko Bubna*, was also a knight at the court of Sigismund, but he had more armed men than the mercenaries mentioned above, for after his capture at Koronowo, the Teutonic Order paid him 25 marks and 190 gold florins in compensation.⁹⁶

Jan Tannenberg was in a similar situation, who also commanded more than one or two pikes. He became a Prussian mercenary from a knight of the court of Sigismund, and like others, he was captured at the battle of Koronowo, for which the Grand Master paid him 25 marks in reparations, and then 62 English Nobels to compensate for the cost of arms and horses.⁹⁷ This amounts to nearly 41.5 Prussian marks.⁹⁸

⁹¹ Soldbuch II., 106–107., 115.

⁹² Ibid. 24–25.

⁹³ Ibid. 43.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 269.

⁹⁵ Ibid. 326.

⁹⁶ Ibid. 47.

⁹⁷ Ibid. 322.

⁹⁸ Pósán, László, *A Német Lovagrend pénzügypolitikája* [The Financial Policy of the

The soldier listed as *Hans Ruzska / Ruske* in the mercenary register of the Teutonic Order was most probably the same as a lesser nobleman named János (János Ruzska) from the village of Ruzska in Abaúj County in north-eastern Hungary, who also went to Prussia as a mercenary in the autumn of 1410. He was a member of a mercenary unit led by one Hans Stolzenberg. He himself was not, but his brother William was a knight at the court of the King of Hungary.⁹⁹

Since each of them joined forces with several other soldiers under the banner of the Teutonic Knights (some with at least a dozen), around 3–4 dozen – or even more – mercenaries went from Hungary to Prussia in September 1410. Given the similarities in the timing and circumstances of their service, we cannot rule out the possibility that, in addition to the permission of Sigismund, this may have required his effective cooperation as well.

Georg von Czettritz, also of Silesian origin, came into contact with Sigismund of Luxemburg more than a decade before the Polish–Teutonic war. He participated in his Crusade and the Battle of Nicopolis, but he was not admitted to the court of the King of Hungary instead he returned to Silesia after the Crusade. From there he entered the mercenary service of the Teutonic Order, where he served for many years until 1417. He did not take part in the battle of Gruenwald, but he did participate in the defence of Malbork. He was the commander of a fairly substantial mercenary force of 93 pikes. His brothers, Heinrich and Hermann, also earned their living as mercenary captains of the Teutonic Order. Thus, apart from his participation in the Nicopolitan campaign, Georg von Czettritz had no connection with Hungary.¹⁰⁰

In terms of its connection to Hungary, the career of the captain of another Silesian mercenary company, on the other hand, was the opposite of what has been outlined above. *Heinz von Stosch* lived his life as a mercenary of the Teutonic Order between 1410 and 1413, and only then did he enter the service of the King of Hungary.¹⁰¹ According to a letter written by Sigismund to the Grand Master on 20 July 1418, the emperor made use of his services mainly for diplomatic missions. (*Also senden wir zu dir den strengen Henrich Stoschen, ritter, unsern diener und lieben getruen, entwerter diß brifes*).¹⁰²

In the late autumn of 1410, more mercenaries arrived from Bohemia, Silesia and the German principalities, so by mid-December Heintich von Plauen (who was elected Grand Master on 9 November after the successful defence of Malbork)¹⁰³ had a nearly 8 000-strong mercenary army.¹⁰⁴ The military balance of power was thus restored, which resulted in an armistice between Poland and the

Teutonic Order]. Debrecen, 2000. 98.

⁹⁹ Soldbuch II., 261.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 55.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 316–317.

¹⁰² OBA, nr. 2763.

¹⁰³ Heckmann, Amtsträger, 2020. 151.

¹⁰⁴ Biskup, Problem der Söldner, 1991. 54–55.

Teutonic Order on 9 December 1410.¹⁰⁵ However, the war was not over, and one month after the conclusion of the ceasefire, on 13 January 1411, the Grand Master raised the pay from 11 marks (22 gold florins) per pike to 12 marks (24 gold florins) to ensure the continued supply of mercenaries.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, King Władysław was having increasing problems paying his mercenaries. In the late autumn of 1410, mercenary captains fighting under the Polish banner were even considering leaving the Polish army for the absence of their payment.¹⁰⁷ In the early part of November 1410, a mercenary captain from Lusatia, Wolfhart von der Horke, informed the leadership of the Teutonic Order that 4 000 mercenaries in Polish service were at bay in Bohemia because they had not yet received any money.¹⁰⁸ David Rosenfeld, a citizen of Wrocław, informed the Grand Master on 8 January 1411 that the army of the King of Poland had only a few “guests” left in it, i.e. foreign mercenaries.¹⁰⁹ The action taken by Heinrich von Plauen on 13 January threatened to turn the mercenaries in Polish service over to the Teutonic Order. This circumstance must certainly have played an important role in the fact that the belligerent parties finally concluded a peace treaty in Thorn on 1 February 1411.¹¹⁰ The fact that the day before the signing of the peace treaty, the Teutonic Order signed the reparation claim of King Władysław for 100 000 Schocks Bohemian groats, showed that despite the victorious battles of Gruenwald and Koronowo, the Polish–Lithuanian army did not manage to obtain any substantial spoils of war, and the unpaid mercenaries were already beginning to demand land for the lack of payment. The King of Poland was in dire need of money.¹¹¹ According to the law of war and the norms of chivalry of the time, if Christian forces were at war with each other, a valid peace treaty required the release of prisoners of war by both sides without any ransom or other preconditions.¹¹² Hence, the demand of Władysław that the Teutonic Order shall pay reparation for the prisoners and the Prussian castles and towns that had fallen into Polish hands was not included in the Thorn peace treaty, but was included in the promissory note signed the day before the conclusion of the peace.¹¹³ At the time, 60 groats were counted as 1 Schock,¹¹⁴ i.e. the Polish claim was worth 6 000 000 groats. According to the payrolls, the Teutonic Order spent a total of

¹⁰⁵ Regesta I., nr. 1414.

¹⁰⁶ Kwiatkowski, *Neue Quellen*, 2010. nr. 29.

¹⁰⁷ Ekdahl, *Polnische Söldnerwerbungen*, 2011. 164.

¹⁰⁸ Ekdahl, *Polnische Söldnerwerbungen*, 2011. 129–130.

¹⁰⁹ Ekdahl, *Der 1. Thorner Frieden*, 2013. 79.

¹¹⁰ *Staatsverträge I.*, nr. 84.

¹¹¹ Ekdahl, *Der 1. Thorner Frieden*, 2013. 75.

¹¹² Brunner, Otto, *Land und Herrschaft. Grundfragen der territorialen Verfassungsgeschichte Österreichs im Mittelalter*. Wien, 1965. 106.

¹¹³ Pelech, Markian, “Der Verpflichtungsbrief des Hochmeisters Heinrich van Plauen bezüglich der Bezahlung von 100 000 Schock Böhmischer Groschen an den König von Polen vom 31. Januar 1411.” = *Preußenland* 17, 1979, 55–64.

¹¹⁴ Pósán, *A Német Lovagrend pénzügypolitikája*, 2000. 96.

226 000 Prussian marks on its mercenaries in the war between 1409 and 1411 (the actual amount may be higher, since many mercenaries were not mentioned in the payrolls). Generally, 1 Schock Bohemian groat was taken as the equivalent of 1.5 Prussian marks.¹¹⁵ The Polish reparation claim thus amounted to 150 000 marks, which was less than the amount the Order paid for the mercenaries.

The agreement between Sigismund of Luxemburg and the Teutonic Order on 31 March 1410, in which the contracting parties undertook not to conclude a separate peace treaty with King Władysław without the agreement of the other, was seriously damaged by the Treaty of Toruń, because the Grand Master concluded it without the knowledge of the Hungarian monarch. This meant that the state of war between Hungary and Poland continued even after 1 February 1411. Already after the armistice of 9 December 1410, Sigismund foresightedly deployed a considerable military force of 1 100 pikes (3 300 men) on the Hungarian–Polish border. It was unsuitable for a major attack, but adequate for border defence. The mercenary troops sent here were expected to serve for two or three months.¹¹⁶ The Peace of Thorn undoubtedly caused some loss of trust between the King of Hungary and the Teutonic Order, but their previous positions did not change substantially. It soon became apparent that the peace treaty did not resolve the conflicts that led to the war, but essentially preserved them, and thus raised the possibility of a new war from the outset.¹¹⁷ Perhaps this may have contributed to the fact that in early December 1411 Sigismund of Luxemburg, as the ruler of the Empire, forbade anyone from giving any support to Poland from Bohemia, Moravia or Silesia, or recruiting mercenaries for Kraków in these countries and provinces.¹¹⁸ The failure of the Peace of Thorn to bring about real peace was proved more than anything else by the outbreak of another war between Poland and the Teutonic Order two years later, in September 1413, which was followed by further wars.¹¹⁹ Occasionally, there were one or two mercenaries from Hungary under the banner of the Teutonic Order in these battles that took place in the later decades of the 15th century. In 1454, for example, in the 13-years war¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ Staatsverträge I., nr. 15, 17.

¹¹⁶ Mályusz, Elemér, *Zsigmond király uralma Magyarországon* [The Reign of King Sigismund in Hungary]. Budapest, 1984. 84.

¹¹⁷ Pószán, László, “Sigismund von Luxemburg und der erste Frieden von Thorn”, In: Czaja, Roman – Mühle, Eduard – Radzimiński, Andrzej (Hrsg.), *Konfliktbewältigung und Friedensstiftung im Mittelalter*. Toruń, 2012. 123–133. 130.; Sieradzan, Wiesław, “Der Thorner Frieden von 1411 und die Prozesse zwischen dem Deutschen Orden und Polen als Beispiel der Bewältigung zwischenstaatlicher Konflikte im Spätmittelalter”, In: *Ibid.* 135–149. 141.

¹¹⁸ Regesta I., nr. 1592.

¹¹⁹ Boockmann, Hartmut, *Johannes Falkenberg, der Deutsche Orden und die polnische Politik. Untersuchungen zur politische Theorie des späten Mittelalters*. Göttingen, 1975. 101–103.; Militzer, Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, 2005. 146.; Nöbel, Wilhelm, *Michael Kuchmeister. Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens 1414–1422*. (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, 5.). Bad Godesberg, 1969. 79–80.

¹²⁰ On the 13-years war, see Czaja, Roman, “A lengyel-litván állam és a Német Lovagrend

between the Teutonic Order, the Polish–Lithuanian state and the Prussian orders, there was a soldier named *Petr von Lewocza* among the mercenaries of the Order, who, judging by his name, probably came from the town of Levoča (or its surroundings) in north-eastern Hungary.¹²¹ Later sources of the war, from the mid-1460s, mention a mercenary in the service of the Order named *Niclas aus Krompach*, who is also believed to have come to Prussia to join the army of the Teutonic Order from the town of Krompachy in north-eastern Hungary.¹²²

közötti tizenhárom éves háború (1454–1466)” [The Thirteen-year War between the Polish–Lithuanian State and the Teutonic Order], In. Pószán, László – Veszprémy, László (eds.), *Elfeledett háborúk. Középkori csaták és várostromok (6–16. század)*. Budapest, 2016. 113–126.; Pószán, László, “A Német Lovagrend államának széthullása – a 13 éves háború” [The Collapse of the Teutonic Order – the 13-years War], In. Kovács, Zoltán – Püski, Levente (eds.), *Emlékkönyv L. Nagy Zsuzsa 80. születésnapjára*. Debrecen, 2010. 271–286.; Biskup, Marian, *Trzynastoletnia wojna z Zakonem Krzyżackim 1454–1466*. Warszawa, 1967.

¹²¹ Regesta I., nr. 12910.

¹²² Regesta II., nr. 3207.