

Professor Luigi G de Anna, Professor University of Turku, Finland, published in Traditio Melitensis no 8, 2006.

Bo J Theutenberg , FOLKUNGAR OCH KORSRIDDARE, Skara Stiftshistoriska sällskap, Skara 2006, 281 pages, 123 pictures, 12 Genealogical tables. (ISBN 91-975873-1-1)

Bo J Theutenberg is a member of the Scandinavian Association of the SMOM. Professor of international law, has served as an ambassador both in the Swedish Foreign Ministry and, after his retirement, as the first Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. There is no need to underline the importance of what prof. Theutenberg has done in this field, at the light of the recent, dramatic events in the Middle-East. It was in fact thanks to him that the diplomatic relations between Jordan and the SMOM were established. He is also a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. Both these orders, inspired by their medieval roots, are still performing services in the Holy land, where the crusaders conquered Jerusalem in 1099. As we know, the presence of the Christian states in the area ended in 1291. As a consequence, chivalric orders were compelled to abandon the Holy land to the the Mamaluks of Egypt.

The author describes the historical development of the main orders of chivalry, the Templars, the Hospitallers, the German Order, the Order of St Lazarus and dedicates a chapter to the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. This chapter on the OESSJ is very useful, because it will help to better know the history of this congregation which has been considered for a long time as an order of chivalry borne in Palestine at the end of the 11th century, while there is no evidence that such an order really existed. Rightly, Theutenberg refers to it as a congregation of Canonics. Still knights of the Holy Sepulchre existed, but not as an organised entity, but as individuals who were created knights not OF the Holy Sepulchre, but ON the Holy Sepulchre. Because I have had personally this argument with members of the modern Order of the Holy Sepulchre, I have to add that the demonstration that a chivalric order of this name did not exist in Palestine is that we have no record whatsoever of its grand masters, nor its name occurs in the contemporary chronicles when speaking of military activities in the Holy land. Therefore the Order of the Holy Sepulchre is mentioned in the semi-official Register of Orders of Chivalry issued by the International Commission for Orders of Chivalry among the *Semi-independent orders* with the year of foundation 1847/1868. Theutenberg is rich in details about the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and the caritative activity in which it is involved today. The OESSJ is submitted to the direct authority of the Holy See and therefore enjoys the special attention of the bishops in the dioceses around the world. Today it has about 22 000 knights and dames, and has excellent relations with the SMOM. Often one can see the white mantle of the Holy Sepulchre at the Maltese ceremonies. The Order concentrates its caritative activity to Palestine, where it helps the Catholic community, which suffers under the pressure of the Israelis and of the Arabs. Often the voice of Michel Sabbah, the Grand Prior of the Order, has been heard in defence of this community and against the violations of the Israeli's government to its rights. The OESSJ contributes with millions of dollars to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and his patriarchate, comprising the Holy land. These funds are raised thanks to the donations of the members.

Theutenberg also dedicates a chapter to the Hospitallers, giving interesting informations on the present activities of the Sovereign Order of Malta, with its effective medical support to the sick.

The book concentrates on the direct links that existed between medieval Sweden and the crusades to the Holy land. As well known, Pope Urban II on the 7th of November 1095 at the Concilium in Clermont Ferrand proclaimed the First Crusade to the Holy land. According to the author, this proclamation reached also the Swedish king Inge the Old (1079 – 1110) – not to be confused with his nephew, king Inge the Young (approx. 1110-1120). These two Christian kings belonged to the royal dynasty of king Stenkil. This dynasty in 1060 had succeeded the “Old Dynasty”, with its roots back to the “ancient Asa-Gods” (as the tales tell us).

The royal dynasty of Stenkil was a cognatic branch of the “Old Dynasty”, since king Stenkil was married to a daughter of king Emund (approx 1050 – 1060), whose father was king Olof Skötkonung (approx 980 – 1022). Olof, at the church of Husaby, around the year 1000, was the first Swedish king to receive a Christian baptism. Here the author points to some very interesting links to the French Capetian kings, namely that the granddaughter of the Swedish king Olof Skötkonung, by the name of Anna of Kiev and Russia, was married to the French king Henry I (1031-1060). Their son, the French king Philip I reigned France 1060-1108, at the time of pope Urban II:s summoning to the First Crusade.

The Swedish king Inge the Old and the French king Philip I were reigning in France and Sweden, respectively, at the time of the conquest of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre in 1099. They were also close relatives through their common ancestor king Olof Skötkonung.

It is a fact that the French kings of the dynasty of Capet became a kind of “primus motor” in the crusades to the Holy land, as also the French dukes of Anjou served in leading roles in the Holy land. Duke Folque V of Anjou acceded even to the throne of Jerusalem in 1031 (he succeeded his father-in-law king Baldwin II) and when he died in 1143 he was buried in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The author points to the very interesting fact that at about the same time king Folque of Anjou reigned over the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem (1131-1143), lived in Sweden a man by the name of Folque Grossus (Folque the Fat), who apparently – this is the theory of the author - founded the unique Church of the Holy Sepulchre at a place called Forshem, at the foot of the mountain Kinnekulle (at the southern shores of the lake Vänern), situated some kilometres away from the church of Husaby, where king Olof Skötkonung was baptised around the year 1000. Folke the Fat is the ancestor of the royal Folkunga-Dynasty which reigned in Sweden 1250 – 1364 and was married to the Danish princess Ingegerd Knutsdotter, daughter of king Knut Svenssson *the Saint* (1080-1086) and his consort Adèle of Flanders, who was a granddaughter of the French Capetian princess Adèle of France (1009-1079). She was the sister of the above mentioned French king Henry I, who was married to king Olof Skötkonung’s granddaughter Anna of Russia. As we can see, it is not easy to follow all these dynastic changes and ties, but Theutenberg has the gift of explaining in a simple way even complicate events, though the reader who is not well acquainted with Swedish history will not find easy to orientate among all these genealogies.

The author is indeed performing a *deep-diving* genealogical and heraldic analysis. In order to do this, he bases his research on the ancient coat of arms of the respective dynasties and families. It is an extremely interesting “finding” – says the author – that the ancestor of the royal Swedish Folkunga-Dynasty - Folque the Fat - may have carried the same coat of arms “fleur de lys” as was carried by the French Capetian dynasty as well as he – in the helmet – may have carried the same “escarbuncle” that was the most ancient coat of arms of the French

Dukes of Anjou. Duke Folque V of Anjou also was king of Jerusalem in 1131-1143. The ancient heraldry proves – according to the result of the research of the author – that the ancient Swedish royal dynasties had closer connections to the European reigning dynasties – in particular to the French dynasties of Capet and Anjou – than one has until now believed, and that it was the crusades to the Holy land that brought the Swedish and the French families together.

The author has dedicated his book to his five grandchildren; under the dedication one discovers the authors family coat-of-arms, a gul “fleur de lys”. The book is written in Swedish, which of course limits the possibilities for this interesting book to be read by a wider circle of readers. We hope that in the future will be possible to have an English or French edition.

At the end, I would like to stress the importance for the Scandinavian Association of the SMOM to have among its members so clever historians as Bo J Theutenberg and Karl Wand are. While Theutenberg is concentrating on medieval subjects, Karl Wand with his book on Gustaf Adolf II och Jesuitdolken (see the review by Märta Aminoff in *Traditio Melitensis*, 6, p. 34) is enlarging our knowledge on a more recent period. Because of the almost one thousand years of the Order’s history, these historical contributions are very important, and we are very proud that they are made by some of our members.

The book can be ordered directly from : Skara Stiftshistoriska sällskap (telephone +46-510-91016).