

Paul Johansen and Heinz von zur Mühlen, *Deutsch und Undeutsch im mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Reval* (German and Un-German in Medieval and Early Modern Reval). Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1973. Pp. xxiv, 555. DM. 120.00.

During the 13th — 17th century period covered by this magisterial archival study, and even into the late 19th century, Reval was in essence a German colonial city, even though it was under Danish, Swedish, or Russian sovereignty much of the time. Long-distance commerce, Reval's *raison d'être*, was a German monopoly, as were the professions and several skilled crafts. City government was dominated by a self-perpetuating council (*Rat*), which was exclusively German, although some Swedes and Estonians were citizens of Reval, and many more were permanent residents. The designation "*Undeutsch*" (Un-German) for the local Estonians and such other indigenous peoples of the east Baltic shores as Finns, Vots, Livs, and Latvians was like "native" in English — sometimes a purely descriptive term, but more often than not an expression of contempt.

The refugee Baltic German authors, natives of Reval (Tallinn under independent and Soviet Estonia), are fully conversant with Estonian. As a matter of convenience rather than prejudice they use the traditional term *Undeutsch*, which has the advantage of being collective, thus including Finns, some of whom mixed with the closely related Estonians in Reval. On beginning their joint study more than twenty years ago (Paul Johansen died before the book's completion) the authors pledged themselves "to empathize equally with *Deutsch* and *Undeutsch* alike." Indeed, to compensate for its previous neglect in German historiography of medieval Reval they particularly emphasize the Estonian role, but only to the extent justified by available source evidence, mostly the city council's records which are now preserved in Göttingen, West Germany.

Reval with its suburbs numbered perhaps 5,000 inhabitants in the late 14th century, and about 6,700 in the first half of the 16th century. Germans made up somewhat less than half the total, Estonians about a third, and the rest were mostly Swedes and Finns and a few Russians. Reciprocal cultural influence and economic interdependence was inevitable within such a relatively small community (Reval did rank as a mid-sized European city of the time, however). Indeed, documents reveal some cases of Estonians rising and being absorbed into Germandom, and a few cases of Germans falling in status and becoming culturally Estonian. Germans took up the Estonian institution of the sauna; Estonians learned the use of mortar in stone masonry from Germans, and soon dominated that trade in Reval. However, the buildings they constructed were German in style. On the other hand, Germans developed same appreciation for Estonian styles of jewelry, which they often accepted as security for debts. Estonians were stereotyped as inveterate liars by Germans, and their testimony was often discounted as of doubtful value by Reval's law courts. Nonetheless, the responsible job of collecting taxes from beer brewers (Germans) was in the hands of Estonians. Furthermore, one squad of night watchmen was Estonian, and Reval's burghers entrusted their livestock to a city herdsman who swore his oath of office in Estonian.

Despite centuries of living side by side in symbiotic relationship Reval's German and Estonian communities remained basically separate. Indeed, in the 15th and 16th centuries the German community became more exclusive than previously. In part this was due to the example of the countryside where German landlords were reducing formerly free Estonian peasants to serfdom at this time. Estonians living in Reval remained free men, however, although the city now returned fresh runaways to landlords who could trace them. Throughout Europe generally in the late middle ages class or occupational status was being defined ever more sharply. In Reval this took the form of nationally mixed trades becoming all German or all Estonian, thus emphasizing ethnic as well as social distinctions. Waves of fresh immigrants from the national reservoirs of homeland Germany and the Estonian countryside, replacements for victims of recurring urban epidemics, also helped keep Reval from being an ethnic melting pot.

A brief review can only hint at this book's richness in ideas and documentation. It contains much of inherent interest for any medieval or urban historian in addition to the main theme of German - Estonian relations in the bustling Hanseatic port city of Reval. All Estonian citations and documents are translated into German; those in Hanseatic Low German are not, but they can be more or less deciphered by those who read modern High German. Technical production is excellent

throughout. Despite this book's high price (about \$50.00 US), it should be placed in as many academic libraries in North America as possible.

Earl W. JENNISON, Jr.  
Allentown, Pennsylvania