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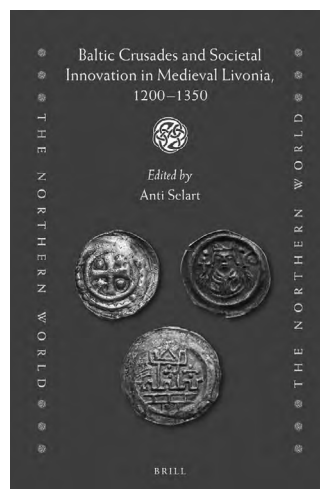
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Anti Selart (ed.). *Baltic Crusades and Societal Innovation in Medieval Livonia, 1200–1350*.

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Tartu Universitātes profesora Anti Selarta sastādītā grāmata drīzāk ir nevis par krusta kariem Baltijā, kā varētu likt domāt tās nosaukums, bet gan aplūko būtiskākās pārmaiņas sabiedrībā, kas norisinājās to ietekmē. Par atslēgas vārdu šim izdevumam var uzskatīt “sabiedrības inovācijas”, kuras krusta kari ieviesa dažādos dzīves aspektos – amatniecībā, tiesībās, ekonomikā, vietējā politikā un, protams, reliģijā. Aplūkojot tematus ar inovācijām kā galveno pavedienu starp nodaļām, autori sniedz ieskatu par dažādiem procesiem sabiedrībā un tajā ieviestajiem jauninājumiem šo pārmaiņu gadsimtu laikā. Liela nozīme vairāku atziņu pamatošanā ir ne tikai rakstītajiem vēstures avotiem, bet arī arheoloģiskajiem materiāliem, kuru analīze ļauj atklāt svarīgus aspektus par sabiedrību Livonijas mazajās pilsētās un lauku teritorijās. Grāmatai nav hronoloģiskas vai tematiskas struktūras – autori nodaļās aptver aptuveni 200 gadu ilgu periodu no 12. gadsimta beigām vai 13. gadsimta sākuma līdz 1300. vai 1400. gadam. Šāds laika

ietvars novērš pieturēšanos pie hronoloģiska apraksta un aicina koncentrēties uz padziļinātu šī perioda problēmu izklāstu. Grāmata ir vairāku Baltijas vēsturnieku kopdarbs un apkopo vērtīgas un mūsdienīgas atziņas par dzīvi viduslaiku Livonijā līdz 14. gadsimta beigām.

Medieval history of Livonia has long been a source of discussions, especially regarding the change in the lives of the local inhabitants – Baltic and Finno-Ugric people – since the 13th century when the lands of Livonia began to claim a certain structure. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the two very diverse historiographical traditions of Baltic Germans, and Latvians and Estonians often focused accordingly on the innovations brought in by the crusaders, and the conflicts with the natives.¹ This outdated perception is one of the main problems looked at in the volume and is also stated in **Anti Selarts'** persuasive and compelling introduction (pp. 15–16).

The volume consists of nine chapters by individual authors, each an expert in their field of the medieval history of Livonia, and covers the topics of economy, urbanisation, laws, networks, and others in the context of external influences and local innovations, mainly since the 12th century, but even before. A good example of connections between the Eastern Baltic with other territories in the Late Iron Age is displayed in the chapter by **Tõnno Jonuks**. His analysis of cultural influences is based on the archaeological material and focuses on two groups of artefacts – Christianity-related objects (e.g., cross-pendants) and animal figurines depicting animals or beasts that were popular in the medieval European culture. The analysis of archaeological material gives an insight impossible to achieve from written sources and once more proves that the Eastern Baltic was not an isolated region during the Late Iron Age and the Baltic people kept various kinds of connections with neighbouring lands in almost all directions. Still, the topic is looked at through a relatively narrow prism – two groups of objects – and in the future it might benefit from a larger amount of material analysed, if possible.

While Jonuks has analysed his topic in the context of whole Livonia and even the neighbouring lands, **Kristjan Kaljusaar** in his chapter on socio-political strategies analyses Estonian elites focusing only on two northern Estonian provinces – Harria and Revala. This choice is made because of the availability of certain historical sources, so the chapter introduces the events from the point of view of the mentioned provinces in northern Estonian territories. Despite this

1 Misāns, Ilgvars (2012). Pretrunīgais mantojums: Hanzas vēsture Latvijā starp eiropisko identitāti un nacionālo pašapziņu. No: *Klio Latvijā: Raksti par historiogrāfijas problēmām*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 77.–78. lpp.

focus, a short analysis on whether the described situation might be referable to the wider territory of Livonia feels necessary.

In his chapter on Livonian economic resources, **Anti Selart** successfully and briefly discusses the possible economic situation in Livonia, focusing on agricultural regions, the goods produced and exported. Selart continues to the book's topic on innovations, both those brought in during the 13th century and those implemented even before as a result of regional connections. Various examples of administration of agriculture and its produces are provided, and the author draws a logic scene on the topic. The conclusions should be taken into consideration especially because, as Selart mentions himself, in the previous centuries research has focused on the clash and conflict between the locals and the new inhabitants, and today the topic of economy of Livonia should be looked at again without the national agenda (p. 91).

The topic of economy and money is continued by **Ivar Leimus**, looking at money in Livonia in the 13th century. The chapter is a laconic overview of the change of practices regarding money in the 13th century and especially analyses continuous and regional adaption of counting coins according to currency and the lasting of the practise of weighting. This insight fits well in the edition and comes with a comprehensive addition of tables on coins in Estonian and Latvian hoards from around the 12th to 14th century.

A wide variety of topics regarding the legal status of women in Livonia is presented in the chapter by **Vija Stikāne**. The description provided is mainly based on the information derived from the available historical sources, and due to that, some newer research on the legal status of urban women and their participation in crafts in Livonian cities (p. 219) has been left out. While Stikāne seems to stick to a canon thought of "women's crafts" and their main role in housekeeping, in her fairly recent dissertation, historian **Maija Ojala** shows that craft trade culture in the Baltic region was much more flexible regarding women.² Of course, these conclusions could have been made only after a comprehensive research of the topic, because, as Ojala mentions, the work of women often is invisible when looking at normative regulations only.³ Therefore, the topic is much more complicated than shown and if the part of the chapter dedicated to the status of urban women aims to be a part of a modern overview of the history of Livonia, such research thesis should be taken into consideration, too.

2 Ojala, Maija (2014). *Protection, Continuity and Gender: Craft Trade Culture in the Baltic Sea Region (14th-16th Centuries)*. Tampere: Tampereen Yliopisto, p. 274.

3 Ibid., p. 157.

In the next chapter, **Arvi Haak** contributes to the discussion of innovation in the Baltic area and the merging of traditions by implementing “local” or Baltic characteristics in the otherwise “Western” type of medieval towns, constructed in Livonia. The archaeological material described in the chapter shows that, in some way, innovation in Livonian cities did not only come from other lands and with the new inhabitants. The local traditions of building methods, clothing, and food were significant for the emergence of towns in Livonia and contributed to the classic medieval traditions with the local ones, allowing the new inhabitants to adapt to life in the territory of Livonia. The discussion on the topic could be continued by analysing other types of the “local” characteristics and expanding the analysed archaeological and source material.

Andres Tvauri provides a good overview of the existence and practices of craft in cities, their suburban areas, and rural areas of Livonia. The chapter is mainly based on archaeological material and complemented by written sources and previous literature on the topic. Since not all crafts or occupations in the medieval town produced goods, but provided services and therefore did not leave any specific material remains, not all crafts of the medieval town can be analysed using such methods. While the archaeological analysis deeply examines a wide variety of topics, almost no medieval sources are cited in the chapter and most of the writing cited is from secondary literature by historians. Cooperating with historians proficient in the history of crafts and their sources could provide a more comprehensive analysis of the setting. At the same time, due to inexistence of historical sources from medieval Tartu, knowledge of the situation in crafts in Tartu benefits extremely from analysis of the archaeological material. Overall, the chapter compiles and analyses previous ideas and new archaeological materials regarding crafts in Livonian towns.

The chapters written by various contributors are each of an individual structure, size, count of sections, selected aims and broadness of the conclusions. Despite the individual differences that are common in collective editions, the chapters create a comprehensive summary of important aspects of the history of medieval Livonia. What might lack in this edition, though, is a more thoughtful structure of the book. The reader is introduced with topics regarding culture, politics, economics, church, then economics again, rights and town life, then church again. As the chapters have a similar chronological framework, a chronological structure would not be a logical solution, but two or three topic-related sections of the book would make for the reader orienting oneself in the edition a lot easier.

As mentioned before, many of the authors in their chapters look at innovations in Livonia in the first centuries since the Crusades – in these chapters it is

the joining element of the book. The innovations that were applied, introduced, and merged with local traditions during these centuries, await a common conclusion that can hardly be traced in the summary of the book. The conclusion of the book, contributed by **Christian Lübke**, briefly reflects on the chapters by highlighting the conclusions of the authors and retelling some of the main ideas expounded.

The book is a result of a research project of the University of Tartu, and hence, most of the authors of the edition represent the University and reside in Estonia. The slight focus on Estonian territory is noticeable in some of the chapters, especially where archaeological sources are of importance, and most of the literature is available only in Estonian or Latvian, but not in other more widespread languages. A different outlook can be noticed in the chapters that use original documents as their main sources – they aim to cover the topic regarding the whole geographical scope of medieval Livonia. This, though, is a well-known problem among medieval historians of Latvia and Estonia – the modern border and the language barrier in scientific literature often deters from common research of medieval Livonia, and a closer collaboration of authors and research institutions could provide a more comprehensive research on the topic.

Written from a Baltic point of view, the book does not induce any national dogmas or socio-popular concepts on the very complicated topic of Crusades and the life in Livonia since them, which can often be a very sensitive issue for modern Latvians and Estonians. Although the name of the edition suggests Crusades and Innovation as the two main pillars of it, the contents provide a lot more than awaited and draw a comprehensive scenario of the life in Livonia around the 13th–14th centuries. Joining authors that are experienced or emerging experts of their field, this aims to be one of the most comprehensive modern volumes on medieval Livonia and will be a great addition to the bookshelves of libraries, historians, and others interested in the medieval history of Livonia.

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