

und Vergessen“, weil es sowohl in der Republik Lettland schon seit den 1920er Jahren und dann in der Lettischen SSR seit den 1940er Jahren *cum grano salis* für unterschiedliche Identitätskonzepte vereinnahmt und für die Erschaffung von Feind- und Freundbildern sowie historischen Mythen instrumentalisiert wurde (S. 292ff.).

Beigefügt sind sieben Anhänge, die den Haupttext des Buches wesentlich ergänzen und für die Forschung wichtige Orientierungshilfen bieten: die Edition des „Register[s] der privilegien unde rechticheyde“ von 1507 (Anh. 1), eine Konkordanz zum „Register der privilegien und rechticheyde“ (Anh. 2), ein Schema zur Bestandsgeschichte des Ratsschriftgutes (Anh. 3), eine Liste der Bestände, die heute das mittelalterliche Schriftgut des Rigaer Rats enthalten (Anh. 4), eine Liste der Archivare des Rigaer Rats und des Rigaer Stadtarchivs vom ausgehenden 16. bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts (Anh. 5), die Regesten verlorengegangener Briefe und Urkunden aus den Repertorien des 17. Jahrhunderts (Anh. 6) sowie die Edition bisher nicht gedruckter Briefe und Urkunden des 14./15. Jahrhunderts (Anh. 7).

Zu Mahlings umfassender Darstellung kann man sich eigentlich nur lobend äußern. Sie schließt eine Forschungslücke in der Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Schriftüberlieferung und des Kanzleiwesens des Rigaer Rats. Eine derartige vergleichende Untersuchung hat es bislang noch nicht gegeben. Es besteht kein Zweifel daran, dass dieses Buch in der Zukunft vielen Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftlern als detailreiche Wissensquelle und als profunder Wegführer durch das mittelalterliche Ratsschriftgut von Riga dienen wird. Denjenigen, die sich für dieses Thema interessieren, und die Mahlings Werk noch nicht in den Händen gehalten haben, ist es dringend zu empfehlen.

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MANFRED KLEIN: *Preußens Litauer: Studien zu einer (fast) vergessenen Minderheit*. Verlag Dr. Kovač. Hamburg 2017. 276 S., Abb. ISBN 9783830097327.

As the role of statisticians in determining whose rights to a particular territory were more justified grew in the mid-19th century, the Lithuanian-speaking population of Prussia was increasingly referred to as a minority. This ‘status’ was especially clearly branded in Germany after the First World War. Now, as the title of Manfred Klein’s book suggests, they have already become an ‘(almost) forgotten minority’.

The book published by the *Dr. Kovač* publishing house in Hamburg refers to an area that for many still remains a hardly imaginable part of the Baltic region. Outside the milieu of the *Ostforscher* in Germany after the Second World War, the exploration of East Prussian history was rather unpopular, and a large number of researchers have so far focused their attention on contemporary Latvia and Estonia. It is perhaps this framework of the German academic context that has determined why Lithuania, and much more the Lithuania that once existed in East Prussia, is a largely neglected topic, despite the intensification of research on the subject, which became particularly evident after 1990. The fact that the founders of the *Deutsche Fortschrittspartei*, originating from this region, were once nicknamed *Jung-lithbauer* somehow sank into oblivion. This is even more true of the Lithuanian-speaking cultural milieu in East Prussia, which is worth studying, not only because it gave Kristijonas Donelaitis to the world, but merely for the reason that, at the beginning of the 20th century, it remained extremely conservative, changing slowly, and meeting the challenges of modernisation rather carefully. Manfred Klein's book is devoted to this cultural milieu of Prussian Lithuanians.

The work of the author is well known to a few scholars who research the Lithuanian-speaking milieu in Prussia, and are mostly concentrated in Lithuania and Germany. Klein arrived in Vilnius, the capital of the Lithuanian SSR, for the first time in 1979, together with his colleague Gerhard Bauer (1940–2013) from Bielefeld. After a few years, they both started exploring the Lithuanian rural environment and everyday life in the late 19th and early 20th century. To many researchers accustomed to the 'traditional boundaries' between disciplines, their studies stood out by the unexpected combination of ethnological, linguistic, sociological and historical approaches. The research was summed up in a book that was finished around 1989, but published only in 1998,¹ apparently due to the narrow interest in Germany in their topic. The book analysed the social structure, political organisation, and everyday life in the Lithuanian countryside in Imperial Russia after the abolition of serfdom in 1861.

The entirely different Lithuanian world in Prussia, however, also attracted the attention of the authors from the very beginning. These Lithuanians differed from their counterparts in the Russian Empire by their confession, bilingualism, level of political engagement, and in many other respects. After the collapse of the socialist bloc, the Lithuanian declaration of independence and the unification of Germany in 1990, the Lithuanian-German contact zone in Prussia became an especially relevant research topic. A new language to speak about and a new way to think about Lithuanian-German relations in Prussia that would not be constrained by long-lasting stereotypes and nationalist attitudes, looked rather desirable and

¹ GERHARD BAUER, MANFRED KLEIN: Das alte Litauen. Dörfliches Leben zwischen 1861 und 1914, Köln etc. 1998.

quite promising at that time, when societies counted on the creation of a new basis for mutual communication. Manfred Klein was one of the first to suggest this way of thinking. Today, his paper, published in Lithuania (1991) and subsequently in Germany (1992), looks like a manifesto, calling for a different quality of discussion.² Back then, Klein argued that the two topics which dominated the discussion on (Prussian) Lithuania for almost a century, one about how the Lithuanian culture and language were doomed to extinction, the other about the ‘nationality’ of the ‘original’ population of East Prussia, are not relevant any more. They have to make way for new reflections on the everyday communication of two nations that lived next to each other, successful examples of cultural contact between Germans and Lithuanians, interaction between their ways of life, and the process of acculturation.

From approximately 30 research articles on Lithuania and the Lithuanians that Klein has published in German and Lithuanian since 1986, the majority have been dedicated to the area of German-Lithuanian contact that once existed in East Prussia. Although some of them are now freely available on the Internet, 11 articles published by the author from 1995 to 2014 can now be found assembled in one place: in fact, that is precisely the main function of this book. The Introduction says that the articles are published with only minor corrections. However, it seems that references to recent literature that appeared after the publication of the original articles were not seen as necessary. Basically, the only really new item in this collection is one article that is published in German for the first time (the Lithuanian translation appeared in 2011).

The milieu where Prussian Lithuanians lived is described in this volume using a variety of relatively scarce sources on the region and include memoirs, descriptions by witnesses and researchers, travel notes, amateur works on regional history and geography (*Heimatkunde*), old dictionaries, which still included dialect words, etc. Although the period focussed on in most articles is from the second half of the 19th century to early 20th century, the earliest sources used in the book date back to the early 18th century, and the latest to the 1930s.

It seems that there has been an attempt to arrange all the articles in a certain order so that they could be read consistently. A brief introduction to the way of life of the Prussian Lithuanians is followed by a kind of (unnamed) chapter on linguistic contacts. In four of the articles, Klein questions what motivated the bilingual Lithuanians to choose a specific language in particular situations of communication with ‘others’; and how this interaction produced specific borrowings and compound neologisms that emerged by adopting words, or at least parts of them, from one language

² Cf. MANFRED KLEIN: Preußisch-Litauen. Neue Aufgaben für die kulturanthropologische Forschung, in: *Die Grenze als Ort der Annäherung: 750 Jahre deutsch-litauische Beziehungen*, ed. by ARTHUR HERMANN, Köln 1992, pp. 13-25.

to another. In fact, these four articles appear to be the most consistent part of the book. Here, Klein presents a number of original remarks about the contacts between Prussian Lithuanians and Germans, which (since the articles were originally published in 1995–2002) have already affected subsequent historical research (including that by the reviewer). Further, the reader is invited to discover that Jodocus Temme was not merely a pioneer of the German crime story, but also the author of ‘forgotten’ or simply ignored novels about Lithuania, who also provided some unique information on this region in his memoirs. Kristijonas Donelaitis and Martynas Jankus, two figures that every Lithuanian who has heard about ‘Lithuania Minor’ would definitely name, are the main characters in two of Klein’s other articles. True, both are discussed in a way that might seem rather unusual to Lithuanians: Donelaitis is shown as an ecclesiastical shepherd, not as the ‘founder of Lithuanian fiction’ (this cliché represents the view that prevailed in the 20th century), while Martynas Jankus is not merely a tireless and often marginal fighter for the separation of the Lithuanians from the Germans in Klein’s article, but a man who began and ended his life in Germany. Here, the relationship between Jankus and the German Reich becomes the object of Klein’s enquiry. The last article at first sight seems out of context because it is a study of the circulation of books and libraries in the 18th century, communication through books and Lithuania-related material that often changed hands. In particular, the article discusses several Lithuanian Bibles printed in Königsberg in the first half of the 18th century, which, after their inclusion in the prominent collection of Josias Lorck, ended up in the State Library of Württemberg.

The main cause that led to the re-publication of 11 articles about the Prussian Lithuanians in one book can be found in the Introduction:

“In Deutschland (...) sind es nur wenige Historiker, Baltisten und Kulturwissenschaftler, die ihre Aufmerksamkeit der Geschichte, Kultur und Sprache der preußischen Litauer zuwenden. Man kann Studien über Minderheiten in Deutschland oder der preußischen Gesellschaft lesen, in denen Ostpreußens Litauer nicht einmal erwähnt werden” (S. 8).

I want to believe that, in spite of the rather challenging price of the book, it will be useful for further research. Everyone who is interested in East Prussia and Prussian Lithuanians, cultural contacts and contact zones, the rural culture in the transitional period from an agrarian to industrial society, and the history of communication, will find a concentrated collection of works by Manfred Klein on these topics in this collection.

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