

History:

Sovietization in Läänemaa County, 1940-1956, *Olaf Mertelsmann*

In my research project “The Sovietization of Estonian Society, 1940-1956” I take a closer look on two regions, Läänemaa and Ida Virumaa, to analyze changes on a local level. The project is my habilitation at the University of Hamburg and will be finished approximately in 2006. One chapter in the forthcoming book will be dedicated to Läänemaa.

Beside of the classical archival material of party, government and administration I am connected to oral history projects in both regions and working with the collection of Estonian life stories and the KV-archiv (reports of correspondents) of Estonian National Museum. The study should unite the view from above and the perspective of the ruled.

Apart from the local level, Soviet nationalities policy regarding minorities is represented in the research program as well. In the case of the Coastal Swedes we have an example for what Terry Martin called “an affirmative action Empire”.

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