

deutschen wie estnischen Arbeitern der Fabrik herrschend geworden ist.“

Zehn Jahre später hat Friedrich Amelung (1842–1909), der auch als Polyhistor und baltischer Kulturforscher bekannt wurde, als der letzte männliche Vertreter dieses Namens an der Spitze des Unternehmens die Spiegelfabrik verkauft,¹⁹³ die danach in den Wirren des 20. Jahrhunderts einem wechselhaften Schicksal entgegen steuerte,¹⁹⁴ ohne jemals wieder das produktive und qualitative Niveau früherer Zeiten zu erreichen.

SUMMARY

*Portrait of a Well Travelled Man:
Anton C. F. Amelung (1735–1798),
Entrepreneur and Economic Pioneer
between Times and Worlds*

The focus of this article is Anton C. F. Amelung as an individual and entrepreneur. For the first time, German and Estonian archival materials have been systematically analysed as well as the “Family News” (*Familiennachrichten*) published by his great-grandson Friedrich Amelung in the last quarter of the 19th century which are available today only in archives. During his lifetime, Amelung headed two enterprises in their early stages that later became quite important and prosperous: the mirror glass factory Grünenplan in the Dukedom Brunswick since 1773 and the mirror factory “Cahtarina/Lisette” near Dorpat in Livonia since 1794. Here, he carried the title of “Oberdirector”. The conflict between traditional perceptions of order and new ideas, which was characteristic for his era is mirrored quite exemplarily in his character and personality. The rational and social impetus of the Enlightenment was of utmost importance for his management of human resources and his economic understanding and action. Amelung’s close contacts to prominent protagonists of the Enlightenment and his affiliation with freemasonry only support this thesis.

¹⁹³ Er starb am 7. März 1909 in Riga. Ausführlicher Nekrolog von ERNST SERAPHIM, in: Kalender der deutschen Vereine in Liv-, Est- und Kurland auf das Jahr 1911, S. 68ff.

¹⁹⁴ Über Meleski (ehemals „Lisette“) jetzt der Heimatforscher VILLE DREVING: Meleski. Klaasivabriku kolm sajandit [Meleski. Drei Jahrhunderte der Glasfabrik], Tartu 2013.

Nonetheless, it has recently been argued that Amelung, as alleged wire-puller of the Livonian project, simply renewed the traditional alliance with the old powers against the fourth estate untroubled in the Russian empire in order to continue the exploitation that had been shattered in Grünenplan after the French Revolution. To the author of this article, however, this thesis seems to be an indefensible simplification. To his mind Amelung has been a “failed triumphant” – *contradictio in adiecto!* – whose enduring activity for later generations was in obvious conflict with his partial failure as entrepreneur and his extremely fragile personal and financial situation at the end of his life.