



ARNVED NEDKVITNE

**THE GERMAN HANSA AND BERGEN  
1100-1600**

(QUELLEN UND DARSTELLUNGEN ZUR HANSISCHEN GESCHICHTE, BAND 70)

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From the 13th to the 15th century German Hansa merchants dominated North European maritime trade. The Kontor in Bergen was their largest trade settlement abroad and had ca. 1000 residents in winter, increasing to ca. 2000 in summer. Its counterpart was a Norwegian state whose authority declined in the Late Middle Ages, and an urban community of ca. 6000 Norwegian inhabitants. The book describes the resulting economic, political, judicial and military relations which were unique in Northern Europe. English customs accounts and Pfundzollbücher from Lübeck are used to argue that the great expansion in the Bergen stockfish trade took place 1250-1320, and that it declined after the Black Death. Norwegian merchants and state officials found the Kontor presence problematic, but stockfish producing households between Bergen and the Barents Sea saw the trade as a source of economic welfare and better food security. The study is an important contribution to the history of the relations between Norway and the German Hanse during the Middle Ages and it is free from national controversies that dominated former research.

Arved Nedkvitne is professor emeritus of Medieval history from the universities of Trondheim and Oslo. His fields of study have included Norwegian urban history, foreign trade, the economy of coastal communities and pre-modern social organisation.

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