

Grāmata un sabiedrība Latvijā līdz 1945. gadam

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# THE ABSTRACT

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# 13 Laura Kreigere-Liepiņa (Riga)

Human Monsters and Omens in the Poem *De monstroso partu* (About the Monstrous Child) by the Riga Humanist Daniel Herrman (1543–1601)

#### Lidija Leikuma (Riga)

Once More About the Book on Bee Keeping by Juzefs Akelevičs (1832)

#### Iveta Leitāne (Bonn, Riga)

The Jewish Book in Latvia Until 1869

# 14 Andris Levāns (Riga)

The World on Pages. The Manuscript of Martin's of Troppau (Opava) Chronicle in Riga and the Reading Experiences in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century

#### Lilija Limane (Riga)

Research Directions and Methods of Aleksejs Apīnis

#### 15 Ilga Mantiniece (Riga)

Historical Book Stocks of Individuals and Institutions at the Library of the University of Latvia **Aile Möldre (Tallinn)** 

The Zeal for Publishing: Publishers in Estonia in 1918-1940

# Sandra Okuņeva (Liepaja)

A Child in the Poetry Book *Puku pušķis* (A Bouquet of Flowers, 1873) by Ernests Dinsbergs

#### 16 Beata Paškevica (Riga)

The Moravian Legacy of the Dean of Cesis Heinrich Baumann in the Cultural History of Latvia **Juris Prikulis (Riga)** 

Contextual Research Aspects of J. A. Maskovs' Book on the Rights of Free Latvians in the 18th century

# 17 Tālis Pumpuriņš (Cesis)

Alexander Hassing – an Outstanding Collector of Graphic Portraits: Insight in the Family History in Cesis and St. Petersburg

#### Tiiu Reimo (Tallinn)

The Retrospective National Bibliography of Foreign Language Books Published up to 1830 in Estonia as an Imprint of the Travelling Res Publica Literatorum

#### 18 Anna Strode (Riga)

Typographer Gerhard Schröder and the Latin Occasional Poetry

#### Astra Šmite (Riga)

Olga Resnevic Signorelli's Correspondence with Rainis and Aspazija

#### 19 Ilga Šuplinska (Rezekne)

Correspondence of the Publishing House of Latgalian Culture Centre in the 1990s

#### Aija Taimina (Riga)

About the Riga City Panorama and its "Inhabitants" in 1612: Transfer of Images and Ideas

#### 20 Kšištof Tolkačevski (Vilnius)

Reading Inscriptions on Tombstones in the 19th Century: Theoretical Perspective

#### Andreis Veisbergs (Riga)

Translated Books 1918–1944 (Source Languages, Quality, Prints and Tendencies)

# Kristīne Zaļuma (Riga)

Historical Portraits of Libraries in Livland Manors from the 18th century to the early 20th century

# 21 Viesturs Zanders (Riga)

The National Archives of Latvia as a Research Base for Studies of Books in the Republic of Latvia (1918-1940)

#### Indulis Zvirgzdiņš (Madona)

The Jailed Author and the Forbidden Book: Jānis Kroders' How the Clouds Covered the Baltic Villages

# Aija Taimiņa (Riga)

About the Riga City Panorama and its "Inhabitants" in 1612: Transfer of Images and Ideas

The activities of the first publishing house in Riga provide extensive opportunities for intercultural studies. An image, similarly to a printed work, serves as an efficient and multiplied means of transfer of ideas.

A good example of the transfer of ideas and symbols is the first *in situ* large-scale panorama of Riga created jointly by printer Nicolaus Mollyn and engraver Heinrich Thum in 1612, where the view of the city was visualized accurately and in fine details in terms of topography. However, the documentation of the authentic Riga in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as portrayed in the engraving is illusory. The inhabitants of Riga that can be seen in the panorama view (staffage figures) are travelling images. They have been appropriated from the repertoire of Amsterdam city views created by Dutch and Flemish engravers between 1599 and 1611. It can be concluded that Thum was inspired and based his work on Pieter Bast's view of Amsterdam in 1599, as well as Hans Rem and Jan Pieterszon Saenredam's panorama of Amsterdam in 1606 and Pieter Bast and Claes Janszoon Visscher II's view of Amsterdam in 1611. Thus the panorama of Riga indirectly fits in the traditions of the Dutch Golden Age of graphic art.

The iconographic and ideological programme of the panorama of Riga revealed that a graphic drawing could serve for representative and political aims, too.