

LIBRARY CATALOGUES AND BOOKS NOTATED IN PROBATE INVENTORIES OF THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES AS SOURCES FOR RESEARCH ON PRIVATE LIBRARIES AND READING

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The article treats library catalogues and book lists recorded in probate inventories as sources for studying book ownership and reading history in Estonia. Based on research literature, editions of source materials and practical experience in library work, the information about books in catalogues and probate inventories of the 17th and 18th centuries is analysed and the aspects that must be considered while interpreting the information are demonstrated. The author's point is that data retrieved from archive records and printed sources must be carefully studied and complemented, when possible, with information from surviving books in order to get as authentic picture of intellectual communication in the past centuries as possible.

Key words: history of reading, library history, St. Olaf library, library catalogue, private libraries, probate inventories, book ownership, marks of ownership

INTRODUCTION

During the last decades, all over the world more and more attention has been drawn to studying peoples' everyday life practices, mentality, tastes and customs. Different methods help historians to reconstruct the past: archaeological excavations reveal the remnants of buildings and fragments of household utensils which make it possible to imagine the appearance of old towns, villages, interiors, etc. However, our knowledge of the past would be much poorer, if there

were no documentary heritage that records and pictures the bygone world.

Manuscript and printed books are among the most numerous objects that have survived from the past centuries and, like other material items, constitute important sources for research. Studies of book ownership and reading among different classes of society help to understand the economic and social development of society as a whole, ways of peoples' communication and spread of ideas. The importance of

these studies is emphasized by Cavallo and Chartier: in the introduction to the *History of Reading in the West* they accentuate the need to 'consider the historicity of ways of using, comprehending and appropriating texts', to see reading as 'a world of objects, forms and rituals' that bear meaning, and as 'interpretive communities' of individual readers [19, 3]. Catalogues of libraries, book shops and reading societies, advertisements in newspapers and journals, auction catalogues, books notated in property inventories, marks of ownership in old books all kind of information that allows observing the ownership and use of have become a valuable source for book history studies.

It is difficult to draw a sharp difference between library history and reading history, as both handle the use of books. To get an overview of a reading material of a given place and at a specific time takes a troublesome work. It includes the knowledge of the economic, political and cultural development of a region, local print production, ways and forms of book trade, the content of book market, the structure and origin of population as possible readers, etc.

The study of the social role of a book has traditionally been a popular field of research in Germany, where studies by Engelsing, Göpfert, Schenda and Wittmann [8; 12; 13; 54; 61] have been carried out by Schneider, Adam, Haug a. o. [2; 18; 55]. In Scandinavian countries, the interest of researchers to reading history of the 16th to 18th centuries has resulted since 1990ies in excellent monographs that recreate the reading possibilities

and reading material of the era [3; 4; 10; 20; 21; 22; 30; 31]. In several studies, library and auction catalogues have served as the main sources of research. In Lithuania, Arvydas Pacevičius has published an interesting overview on Lithuanian monastic libraries of the 18th and 19th centuries, based also on archival documents, library catalogues and book lists [40]; the history of cultural communication between Riga and German towns of the Hanseatic League based on the collection of the old Riga City Library has been published by the librarian and book historian Ojars Zanders [62].

Starting from the late 1970s and early 1980s, historians have used property inventories and last wills as sources for studying *modus vivendi*, because the identity of a citizen and his / her rank in society are reflected in his / her lifestyle [9, 210]. Property inventories, as stressed by the Polish historian Maria Bogucka, were usually made under the following circumstances:

- *post mortem* inventories or probate inventories;
- dowry inventories;
- debtors' estate inventories prepared at creditors' request [5, 185].

Probate inventories make up the most numerous forms of inventories of the 17th and 18th centuries. Dowry inventories include also inventories that were made in the case of divorces, but their number as compared with that of probate inventories is small. As regards the composition, inventories of two different approaches were used. In most cases inventories were made

according to thematic groups, starting from precious metal items, household equipment, clothes, and finishing with pictures, books, musical and mechanic instruments. In fewer cases, items were recorded according to the rooms [9, 208].

The study of book ownership, based on books registered in probate inventories, is at present most widespread in Germany and the Czech Republic. A profound overview of the research in both countries, as well as in Poland and Hungary, has been made by the Czech historian Olga Fejtová [14, 45–74]. As a result of her analysis, Fejtová reveals the need to extend the research from case studies of reading culture in particular towns to broader generalisations of the social role of libraries and reading in the mentality and social status of townspeople [14, 73–74]. In Finland, information about books in probate inventories had been during many decades gathered by the librarian and book historian Henrik Grönroos (1908–2007) whose collection is preserved by the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland. His work of the lifetime, *Boken i Finland*, was published in 1996 [16]. The work presents an inventory of books owned by individuals of different social groups during the period 1656–1809 and provides information about the life cycle of books [17, 227]. The study of book ownership has been carried out by the new generation of Finnish book historians who have created the HENRIK database (<http://dbgw.finlit.fi/henrik/index.php>), which at present contains information about books and their owners in Helsinki and Oulu up

to 1809 [41]. In addition, several articles and studies based on information retrieved from estate inventories and auction protocols have been published [6; 28]. One of these studies is also related to Tallinn. The inventory of the confiscated property of the Finnish nobleman Henrik Mattson Huggut (ca 1540–1617) was found in the Tallinn City Archives in the early 1990s. The list of Huggut's books (reproduction of the original list and its typewritten form) was published with commentaries by the Finnish researcher Terhi Kiiskinen [27]. She also tried to identify the titles and, as the later destiny of confiscated books is not known, tried to find similar books in the present collections of Finnish and Swedish libraries [17, 239–240].

The current article aims to analyse the use of library catalogues and books notated in probate inventories as sources of reading history research in Estonia. The objectives are to characterize the research results up till now and to draw attention to the aspects that must be considered while interpreting a source of information. The analysis is based on the research literature, source material editions and practical experience in library work.

LIBRARY CATALOGUES AS SOURCES FOR STUDYING BOOK OWNERSHIP AND READING HISTORY

Catalogues of libraries and reading societies have been used as sources for studying book ownership and private libraries in Estonia since 1980s. The librarian and book histo-

rian Kyra Robert took the lead working at the book heritage of the clergyman Reinhold Grist (died 1551), which made up the oldest part of St. Olaf library established in Tallinn in the middle of the 16th century. The list of Grist's book heritage is registered in the account book of the poor relief institution for schoolboys established in Tallinn in 1552 (the so-called 'book of the poor schoolboys') and consists of 137 lines. The entries are very short, and the identification of only 106 lines was successful [51].¹ The analysis of the document showed that every binding had a separate entry: a work in several volumes could have many entries, but a convolute consisting of several works only one entry. Robert compared the results retrieved from the book list with the records in the 17th century manuscript catalogue of Tallinn St. Olaf library and found descriptions of only 36 books that belonged to Grist's bequest in the catalogue. In addition, Robert identified eight volumes in the survived book collection of St. Olaf library, which were identified on the basis of Grist's property mark [51, 42]. The survival of books made it possible to describe the content of convolute bindings, to characterize the binding art of the time and the repairs of the later period. Robert called attention to the fact that the marks of ownership could have been destroyed

¹ The article on Grist's book bequest was first published as a conference thesis in 1986: Reinhold Gristi raamatupärandist ENSV TA Teaduslikus Raamatukogus in *Eesti NSV Teadusliku Raamatukogu VII teaduskonverentsi ettekannete teesid*.

when books had been repaired. The origin of Grist's book collection is still not clear and has aroused discussions. For example, the library historian Kaljo-Olev Veskimägi argues that the books that were registered as Grist's possession could actually belong to the former library of the Dominican Monastery [58, 48–49].

Two 17th century manuscript catalogues of St. Olaf library – *Bibliotheca Revaliensis* – in Tallinn constitute important sources on North Estonian book heritage. The first inventory was compiled by the *librarius* Heinrich Bröcker nominated to this post by the City Council in 1658, and the second by Jacobus Felssberg, his successor in the post of the librarian, in 1668 [53, 29–30].

The catalogue compiled by Bröcker resembles an inventory [7]. Books are registered according to the provenance principle and following the format. All entries start with descriptions of folio format books; the entry comprises, in most cases, the name of the author, the short title of a book, the number of volumes, and the imprint data. The catalogue begins with the registration of the oldest collections – books from the 'Old Tallinn library' (*alte Revalsche Bibliothec*) founded in 1552, and books from St. Nicholas church, which were brought over to the library in 1660. The collection of the 'Old Tallinn Library' was studied by Tiiu Reimo. Bröcker registered 117 works in 163 bindings, mainly theological books, as books from the 16th century library. The analysis of places of publication confirmed good contacts of the former book owners

with the German language area. Analysis of publication years revealed that two thirds of the described books were printed before the Reformation. Analysis of the structure of the catalogue provided a basis for the supposition that Bröcker had obviously not registered all books that were in the library before the time he was appointed the librarian, and the inventory remained unfinished for some reasons [46, 46–47]. The supposition was confirmed by finding several books in the survived book collection with inscriptions of donation to the library from the second half of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century. The study evidenced that Bröcker's catalogue, although containing manifold and interesting information on book ownership and library history, does not give complete information about the volume of St. Olaf library.

The collection of books that earlier belonged to St. Nicholas church was studied by Endel Valk-Falk. He used the list of St. Nicholas Church books in Bröcker's catalogue as the main source and identified the books by marks of ownership in the historical collection. His results proved the importance of connecting the documentary information from catalogue records with marks of ownership in surviving books [57, 92–100].

The description of the oldest collections in the catalogue is followed by the list of books of new accessions starting from 1658. Up to now, two small donations have been studied and the books identified in the historical collection of St. Olaf's Library. In 1990, Robert published an article

on the book heritage of the German poet Paul Fleming, notated in the catalogue as a donation by Elisabeth Niehusen in 1660 and consisting of 20 entries [50, 56–60].² Robert described also the identified bindings and inscriptions that had been added by the librarian during the registration of books. A small, but in its content interesting donation (consisting of 21 books) by Gebhard Himsel (1603–1676), the professor of mathematics of the Tallinn Grammar School, in 1659 was studied by Reimo [47].

Robert also started working at the private library of Nicolaus Specht (ca 1605–1657), the minister of St. Nicholas church, but the study remained unfinished because of her death [52].³ According to Specht's will, the library had to be donated to the *Bibliotheca Revaliensis*, but the magistrate came to an agreement with heirs only two years later [52, 68]. His books are recorded in the catalogue with 836 entries [52, 70]. Specht's library included books from the 16th and 17th centuries with an overwhelming majority of 17th century books. A big number of books belonged to the print production of German printing offices; books from Tallinn, Tartu and Riga made up only 30 titles [52, 71].

Another bigger collection, besides Specht's, was donated to the library by Catharina Koch, the widow of the country

² The article was published in German in the journal *Daphnis*, 1993, no.1, p. 27–39.

³ The article on Specht's library was first published in Estonian in the journal *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 1997, no. 9.

minister Martin Zarenius (1608–1657) in Haljala, North Estonia. His collection consisted of 250 books, mainly in theology and philosophy [7, 10, 30–35]. The study of this collection is at present in progress by Reimo.

The catalogue compiled by Jacobus Felssberg records the books he found in the library when started his work as a librarian in 1668, and the acquisitions up to 1684 [15]. He described the books according to their location in the shelves or cupboards following the format and without provenance. The new acquisitions were recorded by their provenance, separately the purchases and the donations. Felssberg's catalogue has not yet been thoroughly studied nor compared with records in Bröcker's catalogue.

The two catalogues not only give the picture of the books and their owners in Tallinn and North Estonia, but also illustrate the state of librarianship and the position of the library in the town. The survival of St. Olaf library collection, although books are scattered among the books of the later period, enables to identify the books listed in the catalogues, to evidence their use and thus raise the value of the existent book heritage. Kaido Orula, who has studied book ownership in Tallinn in the 16th and 17th centuries, argues that 'the content of an institutional library in itself cannot be considered a reflection of the mentality of a certain moment or a short period of time if there is no information on the circumstances that brought the books into that collection' [39, 63–64]. In the case of the history of

St. Olaf library, this information, at least partly, can be obtained by combining the study of the magistrate's archive, surviving library catalogues and ownership marks in books of the historical collection.

The information that can be retrieved from the catalogue entries is scarce, but in most cases sufficient for the identification of titles, which can be done with the help of online databases like the Heritage of the Printed Book (HPB; <http://www.cerl.org/web/en/resources/hpb/main>), the German Imprints of the 16th and 17th Centuries (VD16; VD17; <http://www.vd16.de/>, <http://www.vd17.de/>), Swedish national bibliography database LIBRIS (<http://libris.kb.se/>) and others. Imprint data make it possible to analyse the geographical and temporal dimensions of the collection and draw some conclusions about the period and the way of its formation. The thematic analysis gives ideas about the intellectual interests of donators and private library owners. However, on the basis of the donated collections it is impossible to establish the actual size and content of private libraries or to reconstruct their formation. In practice, the attribution of the surviving books is a difficult, in many cases even an impossible task. The mere fact that a book occurs in the historical library collection is not enough to connect it to an entry in the library catalogue.

The manuscript catalogue of the Pahlen family library in Palmse, North Estonia, and the information retrieved from the different marks of ownership (inscriptions, stamps, super ex libris) in the books that are

at present preserved in the Academic Library of Tallinn University, enabled the librarian Mare Luuk to study the development of the Pahlen library during six generations, to reconstruct different phases of its formation and the personal influence of the family members on its content [29]. The study of the big manor library established in the 17th century is not yet completed. The research methods demonstrate once again the importance of studying, in addition to archival documents, the surviving books as sources in research on private libraries. The same methodological approach was applied by Larissa Petina who has succeeded in identifying, on the basis of stamps, more than 200 books which belonged to a private library established in the Põltsamaa Castle by count Aleksey Bobrinsky (1762–1813), the illegitimate son of Catherine II and Grigory Orlov, and which are at present preserved in different library collections [42].

The catalogues of book shops, circulating libraries and reading societies of the 18th century offer additional material for the study of book market and reading possibilities of the inhabitants of Estonia. The survived book shop catalogues in Tallinn (manuscript catalogues from 1746 and 1748, printed catalogues from 1789, 1880, 1803, 1804) have been used as sources for studying the 18th century book trade by Indrek Jürjo and Tiiu Reimo [25; 48, 209–233]. The manuscript catalogues are alphabetical lists; the printed catalogues are arranged thematically, thus facilitating the buyers to find the books in the area they were interested in.

The description of a book usually contains the author's name, the short title, the place and year of publication, the number of volumes and the price of a book. The format and the description of the binding (in most cases books were stitched / unbound, but some books had pasteboard bindings) are indicated only in one catalogue. The lack of binding description complicates the evaluation of the given price, as unbound books were generally cheaper. The imprint data facilitate identification of book titles; the problem is that a lot of books, especially of trivial content, have not survived and therefore are not found in online databases. However, the information retrieved from the catalogues enables a manifold analysis of the assortment on sale.

The only printed auction catalogue is known from 1781. It records 499 books from the property of the book binder Johann Quirinus Rabe. The catalogue resembles a book list in property inventories of the time, presenting the short name of the author and the short title without imprint information and the price of books [48, 220–221].

The first reading society in Estonia is known to be established in 1771 in Põltsamaa by the minister August Wilhelm Hupel. Its activity has been studied by Jürjo and constitutes part of his excellent monograph about Hupel, the well-known Livonian enlightener [24, 120–141]. According to Jürjo, the reading material was carefully selected and the number of trivial books was considerably small. Also, popular German journals like *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, *Journal*

des Luxus und der Moden, *Deutscher Merkur*, etc. and several newspapers were subscribed [24, 134–135].

Circulating libraries were established in general by book shops; unfortunately, their catalogues did not survive. The only known printed catalogue is that of the circulating library of the German merchant Johann Christian Allee from the year 1777 [48, 269–270]. The catalogue gives a list of 384 books that were published during the earlier ten years, by content mainly novels, history and travel books, modern journals and almanacs. These types of books were typical of circulating libraries. For example, the circulating library of the Tallinn book seller and binder Johann Georg Dienes, taken on commission by the pharmacist Karl Georg Raupach in Haapsalu, consisting of 471 works, offered the readers books like *Abdalah, eine Morgenländische Geschichte* (Abdalah, a story from the Orient), *Oliver Cromwell, Protector of England* (Oliver Cromwell, the lord protector of England), *Die Gewalt der Liebe* (The Power of Love) by August Heinrich Julius Lafontaine, *Robinson der Jüngere* (The Younger Robinson) by Johann Heinrich Campe, *Das Kind der Liebe* (The Love Child) by August von Kotzebue, *Der Bürgergeneral* (Bourgeois General) by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, etc. [49, 119–128].

Interesting material on the content of commercial circulating libraries can be found in the collection of archive records on the inspection of book shops and libraries, performed by censors in 1799–1800 ac-

cording to the order of the Russian general public prosecutor [11]. The libraries were first closed and sealed; subsequently the lists of books were made in order to eliminate the ‘prohibited books’. These materials do not only demonstrate the content of reading material, but also enable to see the reasons for eliminating the books from the use.

The titles registered in the catalogues of circulating libraries and reading societies are much the same as those presented in book shop catalogues but give quite a different picture of the reading material compared to the books in private collections that are recorded in probate inventories of the 18th century. The circulating library books unlikely occur in probate inventories, but at the same time it is obvious that they were read by people. Could the possible explanation lie in the generally valid conception of libraries of the time? Martin Luther had already in the middle of the 16th century expressed the importance of the educational function of a library, and this idea was also valid in the following centuries. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, the librarian of duke August’s library in Wolfenbüttel and an authority in librarianship of the end of the 17th century, also laid emphasis to the intellectual and scientific value of books in a library [59, 89–90, 109–110]. Books that were not considered of great value were probably not preserved. That could explain why very few of primary textbooks and trivial literature of the 18th century have survived up to the present day.

To summarize, library catalogues are important sources for reading history research

when combined with documentary research and study of survived historical collections. The catalogues offer valuable information to get an overview of the thematic and typological content of the book market as well as of the geographical dimensions of book trade contacts. In Estonia, the most productive has been the research of the enlightenment period (the second half of the 18th century), and the best results have been achieved by combining studies of documentary sources with studying ownership marks in books.

BOOKS NOTATED IN PROBATE INVENTORIES AS SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF BOOK OWNERSHIP

The first attempts to use information about books registered in probate inventories as sources for research on reading history were made in the 1980s. The book historian Kaja Noodla published articles based on the probate inventories of Tartu citizens and on marks of ownership in Estonian books that were preserved in the Archive Library of the Estonian Literary Museum [36; 37; 38]. Noodla examined 218 inventories from the period 1785–1825 and found books registered in 77 (35,3%) inventories. She noted that the registered information about books was defective and in many cases the inventories testified just the existence of ‘some old books’, ‘a box with books’, ‘some books’ or ‘many books’ [38, 548].

In Tallinn, the historian Raimo Pullat was the first to pay attention to probate inventories as sources for studying everyday

life and mentality, including books and the reading of townspeople. To characterise the book collections of the 18th century citizens, Pullat used 167 probate inventories of the Tallinn City Archives; part of them during World War II were transported to Germany and at the time of the study were located in the State Archive Koblenz (the archive was returned to Tallinn in 1990) [44]. Pullat has arrived to the conclusion that the book ownership does not give information about the economic or social situation of citizens: people who had a lot of money and few books might have been not interested in buying books but in other kind of investments, for example, in real estate. He also noted that on the basis of book lists in probate inventories it is impossible to follow on what circumstances and when the books were acquired.

Since the end of the 1990s, Pullat has published a selection of the 18th century probate inventories of merchants, artisans and literati of Tallinn (47 inventories of artisans, 92 of merchants and 23 of literati) and Pärnu (53 inventories) [32; 33; 34; 35]. He has taken the sphere of activity of a person as the main criterion for the selection of inventories, trying to present as many areas of the town life as possible. In 2009, a special volume on private book collections, extracted from the published probate inventories of Tallinn and Pärnu citizens, was published [43]. At the beginning of the 2000s, Pullat organised in Tallinn two international conferences titled *Modus vivendi: everyday life, mentality and culture of townspeople* (2003, 2005), which brought together well known

researchers from Germany, Poland, Hungary and Scandinavian countries. Several conference papers were also dedicated to books and reading.⁴

The archive material on institutional and private book holdings of the 16th and 17th centuries in Tallinn has been studied by Kaido Orula. He has brought forth the general features that characterise inventories and must be considered while interpreting the sources: the goal of town officials was to record property items of a deceased as quickly as possible. Books were regarded as ordinary items of everyday life; thus, they were recorded by the characteristics that were considered important for their value: size (format), language, sometimes physical condition, and appearance if it was unusual. Orula argues that 'in terms of material value, the central piece of information is the mere quantity of books' and 'the contents of books and their symbolic value did not appear to be of primary importance' [39, 67–68].

The turn of the 16th and 17th centuries has been also of interest to the historian Liivi Aarma who has studied the content of Tallinn book market and the existence of books on sale in private libraries. She used as sources the probate inventories of the book sellers David Grund (died 1597) and Christoph Elbing (died 1603) and clericals Bartholomeus Bärner (died 1603) and Georg Müller (ca 1570–1608) [1, 50]. Aarma

came to the conclusion that Tallinn was well provided with printed books from the German language region and that educated people had many of these books in their private libraries [1, 61].

Working as a consultant while editing the book *Privatbibliotheken in Tallinn und Pärnu im 18. Jahrhundert* gave her an opportunity to get a good overview of the reading material of the 18th century town community and to observe problematic aspects of using book lists in probate inventories as sources for research.

The Tallinn City Archives are rich in probate inventories; according to the electronic archive catalogue, there are more than 370 inventories from the 16th century and more than 500 from the 17th century. Lauri Suurmaa, who is studying the household utensils recorded in property inventories, has estimated the existence of about 500 probate inventories from the 18th century [56, 257]. In many inventories, books are not recorded, and most probably books were also not owned. This fact is also illustrated by the editions of source materials by Pullat, which cover approximately one third (32.4%) of the Tallinn 18th century inventories and more than half (58%) of selected inventories. In the selection of Pärnu inventories, books occur in only one third (33.9%) of inventories. Of course, the editions of source materials published so far do not reflect the whole information about the book ownership, and the researcher wishing to concentrate on the book culture of a particular class of society is strongly re-

⁴ Conference papers were published in *Vana Tallinn* XIII (XVII) and XVI (XX).

commended to consult a complete collection of inventory records in the archives.

Also, probate inventories do not give a picture of the town community as a whole, but reflect only the property of its citizens. Researchers must be aware of the laws in accordance with which these records were compiled. Tallinn was since 1248 governed by the municipal law of Lübeck. The City Council had the highest legal, executive and judicial power in the downtown (in the upper town, Toompea, the Lübeck Law was not valid). The law foresaw different models of succession. According to the codified and amended law of 1586, inhabitants who were not the citizens of Tallinn were not obliged to devise their property according to the Lübeck law [45, 142].⁵ On the other hand, when a person died without heirs-at-law, the City Council was responsible for the heritage during one year and one day after which the property went to the hands of the City Council [45, 145]⁶, and an appropriate inventory was to be made.

In the majority of cases, probate inventories were made because of the need of

custodians for widows and minor children. The Decree of the City Council of Tallinn from 1560 prescribed that if the will had not been made, the widow had to get guardians in the course of four weeks [45, 240]. In the second half of the 17th century, the guardianship was treated according to the Decree of Guardianship of the Swedish king 1669. The decree was translated into German and published also in Tallinn (*Vormünder Ordnung*) [60]. The improved Decree of the Orphans' Court and Guardianship (*Waisen-Gerichts und Vormünder-Ordnung*) was published by the Tallinn City Council in 1697 and reprinted in 1722 and 1744 [26]. The law foresaw that the guardians had to be appointed and registered by the Orphans' Court within a month after a person's death to boys up to 14 and to girls up to 12 years. The secretary of the court was obliged to make the inventory of the estate in the presence of guardians within eight days after their registration by the court. Inventories were signed by the secretary; one copy of the inventory remained in the court and the other was presented to the guardians.

Probate inventories published by Pullat record items by thematic groups. Books are usually registered in groups titled '*An Bücher*' [Books], '*An Büchern und Schrifften*' [Books and writings], '*An gedruckten Büchern*' [Printed Books]. In some cases book lists were made separately and added to the inventory, usually if a book collection included dozens or hundreds of books. Usually books are notated according to the format, starting from the folios. The entry consists of the name

⁵ Lübisches Stadtrecht nach der Revision v.J.1586.Lib.II, Tit. I, §15: *Ausheimische frembde Leute, welche dieser Stadt Bürger nicht seyn, können zu Testamentarien nicht verordnet werden, zu den Testamenten, welchen dieser Stadt Jurisdiction gemacht seynd.*

⁶ Lübisches Stadtrecht nach der Revision v.J.1586.Lib.II, Tit. II, §14: *Stirbet jemand ohne kündige Erben, sein nachgelassen Gut sol man dem Rathe überantworten zu bewahren, Jahr und Tag. Würde sich aber binnen Jahr und Tag niemand angeben, noch, wie Recht dazu Eügen lassen, so ist das Erbgut dem Rathe heimgefallen.*

Barthelemy Broussin
 Daniel Broussin, eigentlich Act. 9. Evangelist
 Goswin Smidij Annundationis in Novi Testamenti
 Martini Beccani Opera omnia
 Hieronymi Baptistae de Lanza Humilia Quadragesimali
 Hevelij De lenocographia
 Jacob Tilius in 3. Scriptura
 Caspari Titius in 3. Scriptura
 Flacy in Novi Testamenti
 Flacy, Lepke, in 3. Scriptura
 Mathias Hee in Apocalypsin
 Mart. Channij Loci Theologici
 Stephan Fabrij Coniector in Valmor
 Jean Curcio in Epistolas Pauli
 Laurentij Gressi Decachiles
 Mach. d. Contributory
 Gombardi Loci Theologici in 31. Tabellari
 Antonij Renamati
 Sealy Architectura
 Aufenbuchs Marob. in 3. Scriptura
 Heftmann Traktat d. praefation
 Engel Smidij Tafeln d. Annundationis Novi Testamenti

A fragment of a page from the inventory of the Lübeck book seller August Johann Becker. The inventory was made on the 5th of January 1673 in Tallinn. It consists of 34 pages and registers altogether 1289 titles [23]

of the author (often in the shortened form) and of the short title. The place and year of publication are not given. Inventories are hastily made – the handwriting is careless, texts have several corrections, words are often shortened and descriptions give very little information about books as artefacts. These characteristic features have been referred to by Kiiskinen and Orula [27, 62; 39, 66–67]. Kiiskinen has also drawn the attention to the fact that the inventory titles often differ from the form of the text on the title page; she explains that supposedly the clerks did not make book lists by copying the printed text, but wrote down the spoken text; as

a result, ‘the pronunciation of the person dictating and the personal orthographic style of the person writing affected the actual orthography of the inventory’ [27, 62]. She also expresses the opinion that the clerks most likely grouped books not according to their actual bibliographical format, but according to the size.

The identification of books registered in probate inventories requires patience and accuracy. Similarly to books described in the library catalogues, online databases enable to identify most of the titles, but in the absence of the imprint data it is hardly possible to identify the edition; only in the case when a book was published but once, the place and year of publication can be determined.

For example, the title ‘*Scriverers Seelen Satz Schwedisch*’ in the inventory of the Swedish captain lieutenant Christopher Hafström (died 1747) from Pärnu [43, 125] can be identified with the help of the Swedish National bibliography. The LIBRIS database registers three editions of the six-volume-work *M. Christian Scriver ... Siäle-skatt, i hwilken upbyggeligen och trösteligen handlas om then menniskliga siälens höga werdighet, ...* by Christian Scriver (1629–1693) in Swedish, which had been published before Hafström died: the work was first published in Stockholm in 1723–1727, followed by the second and third editions in Norrköping 1724–1731 and 1728–1731.

In addition, the LIBRIS database gives three other titles that can be also considered possible for this entry:

Magister Christian Scrivers historiska samling, af thesz Siäle-skatts alla delar, ... (Stockholm, 1742 and 1746); *Herr M. Christian Scrivers... Siäle-skatts kerne och stierna, ...* by Christoph Koch (Norrköping, 1730) and *Tolf lefwernets reglor, hwilka, såsom helsosamma medel til gudachtighetens befremjande, vtur then sal. Mag. Scrivers siäleskatt sammandragna äro* (Norrköping, 1731).

As a result, there are several ‘candidates’ for the registered book, and it is impossible to identify the exact title of the book registered in the inventory, its edition or volume.

In Tallinn, the inventories were made in German, as it was the official language in the management of public business. Books in Latin were recorded in Latin. In case of books in other languages, the language was often added in the record, for example: ‘*1 Finnisches Gesangbuch*’ [43, 55 no. 248],⁷ ‘*Französischer Kempis*’ [43, 21],⁸ ‘*Ein Un-teutscher Catechismus*’, [43, 27 no. 125]⁹ ‘*ein Englische Grammatica*’ [43, 131].¹⁰ However, it is not always clear what was the language of a book. It might be that if the language was not recorded, it handled a German book.

Many books in the inventories are signified only by the general content, which makes their identification impossible, for

⁷ Inventory of the minister Johann Roos (died 1790).

⁸ Inventory of the teacher Christoph Erdmann Bieck (died 1750).

⁹ Inventory of the teacher Johann Friedrich Herlin (died 1756).

¹⁰ Inventory of the goldsmith Augustin Rittling (Rückling) died 1740.

example: ‘*1 Biebell in quarto; 1 Haußpostill in ditto; 1 Revalsch Gesang Buch*’ [43, 60].¹¹

Sometimes the topic of the book was given as ‘*ein alt Chirurgisches Buch*’ [43, 125 no. 16]¹² ‘*Haußhaltungs-Lexicon*’ [43, 38 no. 12],¹³ ‘*eine alte zerissene Cosmographie*’ [43, 132].¹⁴ In several cases, as already Noodla argued, only the number of books was registered, for example: ‘*200 alte Bücher*’ [43, 59],¹⁵ ‘*5 St. gedruckte Bücher in Folio, 70 St. alte dito in 4to, 8vo und 12mo*’ [43,76].¹⁶

The description of the binding is added only in a few cases, mainly if it includes precious metals like silver or gold or if it is of an extraordinary material. For example, among the books registered in the inventory of the burgomaster of Pärnu Erasmus Landenberg (died 1720), there is a binding of the Riga hymnal with brass clasps and a golden cutting (*1 neu Rīgisches Gesangbuch mit Messing Klammern und verguldt aufm Schnitt*) [32, 127]. The furrier Christopher Schirmer (died 1713) had Johann Arndt’s devotional book ‘Paradise Garden’ bound in green velvet and decorated with silver (*Arnds Paradies Gärtlein in grün Sammet mit Silber*)

¹¹ Inventory of the tanner Johann Hahn (died in 1711).

¹² Inventory of the scrivener Andreas Harrien (died 1759).

¹³ Inventory of thr the teacher George Salomo (died 1768).

¹⁴ Inventory of the cabinetmaker Daniel Severin (died 1740).

¹⁵ Inventory of the physician Peter Friedrich Körber (died 1799).

¹⁶ Inventory of the Merchant Bendix Witte (died 1711).

[32, 62]; the merchant widow Christina Katharina Hoffmeister (died 1789) owned two old Tallinn hymnals with silver clasps (*zwey alte revalsche Gesangbüchern mit silbernen Hacken*) [43, 110]. Fine bindings are generally characteristic of Bibles, prayer books and hymnals and confirm the fact that these types of books belonged to the category of valuable presents already in the 18th century.

A researcher should also be careful in making final conclusions about the reading material of a person or a family. The overview of the book lists reveals the absence or a small number of certain types of books in the inventories. Textbooks like short catechisms and ABC books, publications like calendars, journals and newspapers hardly occur among the recorded books in the inventories of the 17th and 18th centuries. The same is valid for popular love and adventure novels – trivial literature of the 18th century, which constitutes the majority of titles in the catalogues of circulating commercial libraries of the time.

Let us take as an example the inventory list of the library of Georg Salomo, the Tallinn Grammar School professor of rhetoric and history. When he died in December 1767, he had five minor children from two marriages. The estate inventory was made by the secretary of the Orphan's Court in the presence of the widow and four guardians. The inventory of his library records altogether 473 titles in 554 bindings [43, 35–47]; it was decided not to sell the library but to keep it for the benefit of his three sons (Salomo had also two daughters, but they

were obviously not considered the future users of the library) [48, 277]. The thematic analysis of the book list gives a picture of the many-sided interests of the owner: there are books on theology, philosophy, history, nature, geometry, music, household, classical philology, etc., but contemporary novels, textbooks, calendars and journals do not occur in the list. It is hard to believe that a person who had such a large private library had no such publications at home. Supposedly, for some reasons, these publications were not registered in the inventory.

A researcher must also be careful when finding several copies of a book in an inventory of a person who is not a book binder or book seller. Books could also be distributed by people of other professions, for example, by country ministers and school teachers, educated men such as pharmacists and lawyers. Collecting of subscriptions and later the distribution of books were often organised through friends or fellow clerks as proved by the 18th century subscription advertisements. For example, Carl Ludwig Carpov, professor of the Tallinn chivalry and cathedral school, collected orders for *Don Quijote*, the classical work by Cervantes published in Weimar in 1775; later he distributed the catalogues of Johann Friedrich Hartknoch's book shop in Riga, in 1794 collected subscriptions to Martin Christoph Wieland's works [48, 140].

Thus, book lists in probate inventories give interesting information about private libraries and book ownership, but they must be carefully and critically analyzed. It is

impossible to identify all the titles recorded in the book lists, but these lists often give valuable information about the intellectual interests of their owners.

CONCLUSIONS

Retrospective research of reading has always been one of the most difficult areas of book history studies. During the last decades, the interest of researchers in the social role of the book in society has remarkably increased. Book ownership, the distribution and use of books form the areas of studies that have drawn attention to the sources such as catalogues of libraries, book shops and auctions as well as to the books recorded in property inventories. These sources offer opportunities for both statistical and case studies. Results of statistical studies allow drawing some general conclusions as regards the life standards and mentality of society; case studies focusing on one person help to elaborate the psychological portrait of an individual reflected by his / her books.

In Estonia, the number of researchers who are engaged in book history studies is not big, but an arising interest to the different aspects of reading history can be observed. While interpreting information about books in probate inventories and library catalogues, different aspects should be considered. It is obvious that book donations in library catalogues and lists of

books in probate inventories do not give a complete picture of a person's or a family library, but record the books that were considered of value according to the notions of the time. Private libraries as they are notated in probate inventories and the catalogues of circulating libraries differ greatly in content, but there are no reasons to assume that journals, newspapers or trivial literature that are hardly found in property inventories' book lists were not owned or read. These types of publications were most probably not recorded. Descriptions of books in the catalogues and book lists are usually short and give no information on how book collections were formed and books acquired. With the help of the contemporary online databases it has become possible to identify the majority of titles, but the edition and imprint data can be determined only in a few cases. The appearance (binding) and physical condition of books are documented only in rare cases. Private libraries can also be reconstructed by using, in addition to archival documents, ownership marks in books as sources. The named sources and book lists in probate inventories prove the existence of a number of books or bigger book collections at people's homes, but still it will be very difficult, almost impossible, to find out which books made up the preferred reading material, i. e. were read for pleasure.

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XVII–XVIII AMŽIAUS BIBLIOTEKŲ KATALOGAI
IR TURTO INVENTORIAI KAIP ASMENINIŲ BIBLIOTEKŲ
IR SKAITYMO TYRIMŲ ŠALTINIS

TIIU REIMO

Santrauka

Pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais ypač išaugo tyrėjų susidomėjimas knygos socialiniu vaidmeniu visuomenėje. Knygos nuosavybė, knygų platinimas ir panauda – tai tos tyrimų sritys, kurios atkreipė dėmesį į tokius šaltinius kaip bibliotekų, knygynų ir aukcionų katalogai, taip pat knygų įrašai nuosavybės inventoriuose.

Straipsnio tikslas – išanalizuoti bibliotekų katalogų ir knygų, įrašytų turto nuosavybės inventoriuose, kaip Estijos skaitymo istorijos šaltinių panaudojimą. Keliami uždaviniai – apibūdinti ligi dabar pasiektus tyrimo rezultatus ir atkreipti dėmesį į aspektus, kurie būtini interpretuojant informacijos šaltinius. Analizė grindžiama mokslinė literatūra, šaltinių medžiagos leidiniais ir praktine bibliotekų darbo patirtimi.

Bibliotekų ir skaitymo draugijų katalogai Estijoje naudojami kaip knygų nuosavybės ir privačių bibliotekų studijų šaltiniai nuo XX a. 9 dešimtmečio. Talino Šv. Olofo bibliotekos du XVII a. rankraštiniai katalogai yra svarbus knygų paveldo studijų šaltinis. Kaip šaltinius, juos naudojo Robert, Reimo ir Valk-Falk. Informacija, kurią galima rasti katalogų įrašuose, yra skurdi, bet daugeliu atveju jos pakanka identifikuoti knygas pasitelkus tokias interaktyvias duomenų bazes kaip HPB, Vokietijos XVI ir XVII amžių leidinių bibliografija (VD16; VD17), Švedijos nacionalinės bibliografijos duomenų bazė LIBRIS ir kitas. Metrikų duomenys leidžia analizuoti rinkinio geografinius ir chronologinius bruožus ir daryti išvadas apie jo formavimosi laikotarpį ir būdus. Teminė analizė atskleidžia

dovanotojų ir privačių bibliotekų savininkų intelektualinius interesus. Tačiau donanoto rinkinio pagrindu neįmanoma nustatyti tikrosios privačių bibliotekų apimtys ir dydžio, rekonstruoti jų formavimosi proceso.

Antraštės, užregistruotos XVIII a. knygynų, bibliotekų ir skaitymo draugijų kataloguose, pateikia visai kitą skaitymo medžiagos vaizdą, palyginti su privačių rinkinių knygomis, registruotomis XVIII a. palikimo inventoriuose. Katalogai pateikia vertingos informacijos apžvalgai apie knygų rinkos teminį ir tipologinį turinį, taip pat knygų prekybos geografinių kontaktų aprėptį.

Nuo XX a. 8 deš. pabaigos ir 9 deš. pradžios istorikai naudojo nuosavybės inventorius ir testamentus kaip *Modus Vivendi* studijų šaltinius. Pullat inicijavo nuosavybės inventorių studijas Taline. Talino miesto archyvas turi turtingą inventorių rinkinį: daugiau kaip 370 – XVI a. inventorių, 500 – XVII a. ir 500 XVIII a. inventorių. Knygos nėra įtrauktos į visus inventorius, o jie patys nerodo viso miesto bendruomenės vaizdo, tiktai atspindi piliečių nuosavybę. Inventoriai registruoja objektus pagal temines grupes. Knygos dažniausiai įrašomos su grupine antrašte *An Bücher* (Knygos), *An Büchern und Schriften* (Knygos ir raštai), *An gedruckten Büchern* (Spausdintos knygos). Paprastai knygos įrašomos pagal formatus, pradedant nuo *folio*. Įrašas apima autoriaus vardą ir trumpą antraštę. Leidimo vieta ir metai nenurodomi. Estijoje inventoriai buvo sudaromi vokiečių kalba, nes tai buvo oficiali viešųjų reikalų tvarkymo kalba. Knygos lotynų

kalba aprašomos lotyniškai, o jei pasitaikydavo knygų kitomis kalbomis, tai kalbos dažnai nurodomos įrašuose. Daugelis knygų pažymimos inventoriuose tik bendru turinio apibūdinimu, kartais nurodomas tik knygų skaičius. Įrišimo apibūdinimas pasitaiko tik keliais atvejais, jei juose panaudoti brangieji metalai, kaip auksas ir sidabras, ar kokia nors ypatinga medžiaga. Knygų sąrašų apžvalga atskleidžia, kad XVII ir XVIII a. inventoriuose trūksta ar įrašyta tik nedaug tam

tikrų leidinių tipų, kaip antai katekizmų, elementorių, kalendorių ar žurnalų. Tą patį galima pasakyti apie kasdienę XVIII a. literatūrą, kurią sudaro dauguma antraščių iš to laiko komercinių bibliotekų katalogų. Tokio tipo leidiniai nebuvo registruojami. Minėti bibliotekų katalogai ir knygų sąrašai inventoriuose įrodo, kad namuose turėta nemaža knygų ir netgi didesnių jų rinkinių, bet neatskleidžia, kokios knygos sudarė skaitymo pagrindą.

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