

ON THE THIRD COPY OF OLD LATVIAN *UNDEUSCHE PSALMEN* AND *EVANGELIA UND EPISTELN* (1587)¹

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Abstract. The purpose of this article is to announce the existence of a third copy of two Old Latvian monuments: *Undeutsche Psalmen und geistlicher Lieder* and *Evangelia und Episteln* (both 1587). They are bound together with the third copy of Rivius's Catechism (1586). The volume is now preserved in Berlin at the Secret State Archive of Prussian Cultural Heritage.

Keywords: Old Latvian philology; *Undeutsche Psalmen* (1587); *Evangelia und Episteln* (1587).

Already in a previous note, I announced to the community of scholars that a previously unknown copy of Rivius's Catechism from 1586 has been found in the Secret State Archive of Prussian Cultural Heritage (*Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz*) in Berlin-Dahlem.² Thus, the present short note should be seen as a corollary to that one.

It bears stressing that the third copy of Rivius's Catechism is bound, in one volume, together with two other Old Latvian linguistic monuments: *Undeutsche Psalmen und geistliche Lieder* (1587, hereafter UP; see Figure 1) and *Evangelia und Episteln* (1587, hereafter EE I; see Figure 2).³ This fact deserves more attention and some further consideration.

¹ Funded by the European Union Next Generation EU, Mission 4 Component 1 CUP B53D23014130006.

² Cf. Dini (2024).

³ For further information, cf. Augstkalns (1930), Ozols (1965), Vanags (2000).

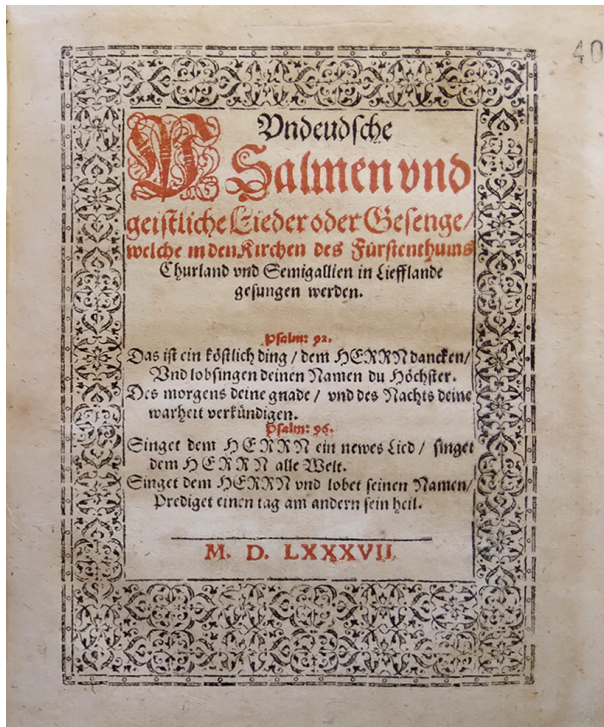


Figure 1. Title page of UP, page 40 of the volume.

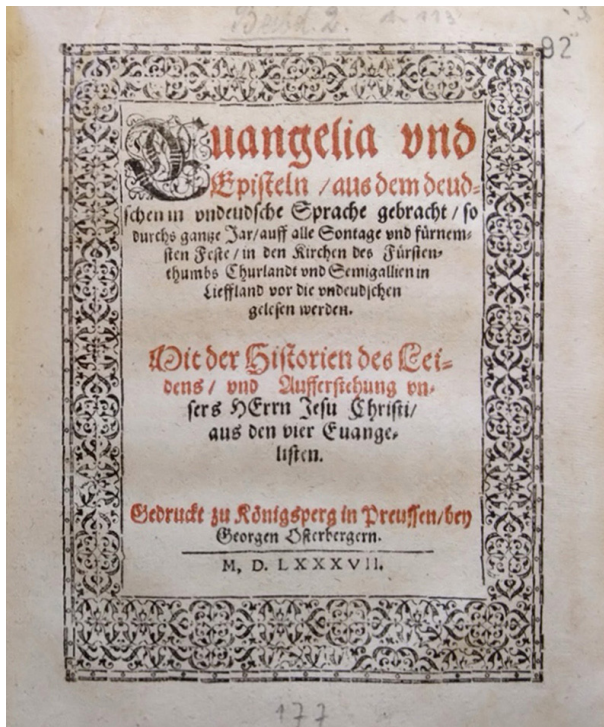


Figure 2. Title page of EE I, page 92 of the volume.

According to the catalogue *Seniespiedumi latviešu valodā* ('Old Latvian printings'; SLV 1999: 41), two copies of *Undeudsche Psalmen und geistliche Lieder* and two copies of *Evangelien und Episteln* are accounted for today: one copy of each is preserved in Riga and a second one in Tartu. With respect to UP, P. Vanags (2009) also records two copies extant today in Riga and in Tartu;⁴ no information is given about the location of EE I.⁵

Famously, on the occasion of the third centenary of the publication of UP, a new edition of the text was prepared by Adalbert Bezzenberger and August Bielenstein (1886) and published at Behre's Verlag in Mitau (Jelgava) and Hamburg. By contrast, EE I was republished once by Nicolaus Mollin in 1615 (known as EE II), but not in modern times.

At present, one copy each of UP and EE I is preserved at the Latvian National Library in Riga (UP, call number: L2S 623; EE I, call number: L2S 128). Initially the works belonged to the private library of the famous 19th-century Baltologist Georg Heinrich Ferdinand Nesselmann (1811–1881); after his death, they were bought by the antiquarian E. Heinrich in 1881 and in 1882 came into the possession of the Riga City Library. When the State (now National) Library was founded in 1919, it was transferred to it. The copy of UP is defective, with a damaged cover and stains from dampness. The copy of EE I also bears similar stains.

Another copy of both UP and EE I is kept today at the University of Tartu Library (UP and EE I, call number: konvoluut R III. V. 1). This copy of UP contains some words written by hand, while the copy of EE I is mutilated and lacks several pages at the beginning.

It is interesting to note that, in the same *Seniespiedumi latviešu valodā* (SLV 199: 40–41), one can read the following annotation regarding UP: *1938 viens eks. bija Kēnigsbergas Pils. bkā* (i.e. "In 1938 a copy was at the City Library of Königsberg"). An equivalent annotation is lacking, however, for EE I. This is to say that, according to this catalogue, a third copy of UP was known about but considered lost, while the existence of a third copy of EE I was not at all indicated. It is now possible to extend these affirmations by revealing that a third copy does actually exist still today, and not only of UP (as was supposed) but also of EE I. In fact, both UP and EE I are bound together in one volume with the third copy of Rivius's Catechism (1586) and preserved in the Secret State Archive of Prussian Cultural Heritage in Berlin-Dahlem.

The order of the three monuments within the codex is as follows:

- 1) Rivius's Catechism (1586), 38 pages;
- 2) *Undeudsche Psalmen und geistliche Lieder* (1587), 51 pages;
- 3) *Evangelia und Episteln* (1587), 50 pages.

⁴ Vanags (2009: 292): "Exemplare gibt es in der Lettischen Nationalbibliothek in Riga und in der Universitätsbibliothek in Dorpat/Tartu".

⁵ Cf. Vanags (2009: 290).



Figure 3. Library accession stamps

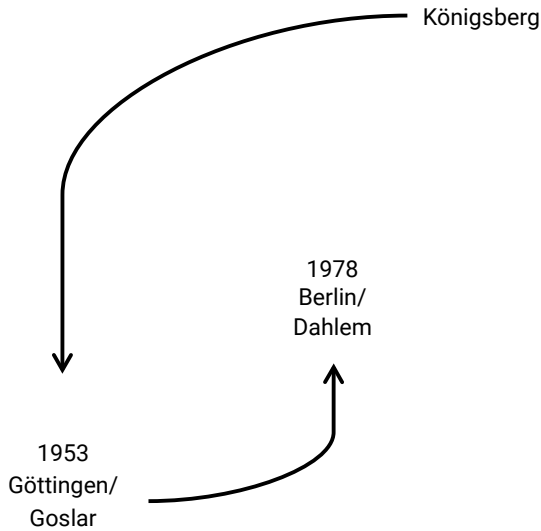
The provenience of the volume is clearly attested by the accession stamp pertaining to the entire codex: “BIBLIOTHECA REGIOMONTANA”, which implies that all three monuments were previously kept in Königsberg, where they were most likely already bound together (see Figure 3).

On this matter, we also have the testimony of Bezenberger (1875, p. v), as follows: *Er findet sich, mit den undeutschen Psalmen, Evangelien und Episteln von 1587 zu einem Bande vereinigt, in der Königl. Univ.-Bibl. zu Königsberg (Cb. 178. 4°)* (i.e. “It [= Rivius’s Catechism] is found, united in a single volume together with the *Undeutsche Psalmen, Evangelia* and *Episteln* from 1587, at the Royal University Library in Königsberg (Cb. 178. 4°)”.⁶ In this regard, it should be noted that Bezenberger and Bielenstein (1886) very probably reproduced precisely this copy while it was still preserved at the Royal University Library in Königsberg, although they did not mention this circumstance in their edition.

Finally, one can attempt to reconstruct the external history of these copies of UP and EE I. This entails essentially the same route already outlined for the third copy of Rivius’s Catechism.⁷ Schematically:

⁶ The current call number in Berlin-Dahlem is: 60, 18.

⁷ For her kind assistance on this matter, I very much thank Dr. Gudrun Hoinkis, library director (*Bibliothekslitung*) in Berlin-Dahlem. For more details on the various transfers of the former Königsberg archival holdings, cf. Kruppe (2015).



Thanks to the care and to the initiative of Dr. Stefan Hans Götz von Selle,⁸ this volume, along with many other manuscripts and old prints, was brought from Königsberg to Göttingen, where it was looked after by the rectorate of Georg August University. In 1945, the whole volume was moved to the newly founded Goslar archives repository (about 80 km from Göttingen), and in 1953 it was transferred to Göttingen together with the further stocks of the former Prussian State Archive. In 1978 the archival holdings were taken over by the Secret State Archive of Prussian Cultural Heritage, where the volume was initially housed in the archival holdings of the 20th main section. Since 2015 it has been incorporated into the regular library holdings of the Secret State Archive of Prussian Cultural Heritage.

To conclude, I can confirm that the described volume with three Old Latvian monuments is at the disposal of researchers in Berlin-Dahlem, and, finally, that three copies each of UP and EE I remain extant today: the first is preserved at the Riga National Library; the second at the University of Tartu Library; and the newly rediscovered third copy is preserved in Berlin-Dahlem.

Sources

EE I = Euangelia vnd | Episteln / aus dem deud= | fchen in vndeudfche Sprache gebracht / so | durchs gantzze Jar / auff alle Sontage vnd fürnem= | ften Fefte / in den Kirchen des Fürsten= | thumbs Churlandt vnd Semigallien in | Lieffland vor die vndeutschen | gelesen werden. | Mit der Historien des Lei= | dens / vnd Aufferstehung vn= | fers HErrn Jefu Chriffti / | aus den vier Euange= | liften. | Gedruckt zu Königsberg in Preuffen / bey | Georgen Ofterbergern. M, D. L X X X V II. ||

⁸ Dr. Stefan Hans Götz von Selle (1893–1956) was the deputy director of the Königsberg State and University Library, cf. Böttcher (2012: 95).

Rivius, Johann. 1586. ENCHIRIDION | Der kleine Ca= | techifmus: Oder Chrif= | liche zucht für die gemeinen Pfar= | herr vnd Prediger auch Hausueter etc. | Durch | D. Martin. Luther. | Nun aber aus dem Deud= | fchen ins vndeudfche gebracht / vnd von | wort zu wort / wie es von D. | M. Luthero gefetzet / gefaf= | fet worden. | Gedruckt zu Königsberg bey George Ofterbergern | Anno M.D. LXXXVI. ||

UP = Vndeudfche | PSalmen vnd | geiftliche Lieder oder Gefenge / | welche in den Kirchen des Fürfenthums | Churland vnd Semigallien in Liefflande | gefungen werden. | *Pfalms: 92 ... Pfalm: 96 ...* | M. D. LXXXVII. ||

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KOPSAVILKUMS

PAR 1587. GADA LATVIEŠU UNDEUSCHE PSALMEN UN EVANGELIA UND EPISTELN TREŠO EKSEMPLĀRU

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Raksta mērķis ir informēt par divu latviešu rakstu pieminekļu trešā eksemplāra esamību: *Undeutsche Psalmen und geistlicher Lieder* un *Evangelia und Episteln* (abi 1587), kas iesieti kopā ar t. s. Rīvija katehisma *Enchiridion* (1586) trešo eksemplāru. Šis sējums tagad glabājas Berlīnē Prūsijas kultūras mantojuma fonda Slepajā valsts arhīvā.

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