

Bequeathing a Private Library to the University
as an Act of Noble Virtue: Laurentius Ludenius's
Eulogy to Ludwig Hintelmann and the 1647
Long-Term Plan for the Academia Gustaviana
Library

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In 1647, Laurentius Ludenius (1592–1654), Professor of Law, Rhetoric and Poetics at *Academia Gustaviana*, held a Latin verse eulogy and vote of thanks in memory of Ludwig Hintelmann (1578–1643), a councillor of the city of Riga and assessor of the Livonian Court of Appeal, to celebrate the donation of Hintelmann's book collection to the university (*Nobilissimi, Amplissimi et Consultissimi Viri, Dn. Ludovici Hintelmanni, J.V.D. eximij, ...Instructissimam suam Bibliothecam Regiae huic Academiae munifice Legantis ...Elogium*. Tartu, 1647). Hintelmann's voluminous collection is a key source for understanding the early modern period in the history of books, the history of higher education, and the mindset of noblemen and scholars in Estonia and Livonia. Yet, the collection's existence has only been mentioned in a few studies on the history of books, and even then, its lengthy title has been distorted.

In this article, I analyse the ideas and structure of Ludenius's 987-hexametre-long speech. The article considers Ludenius' narrative of the library's establishment in relation to the history of the development of noble culture and several famous European academic libraries of the same period. I also refute the (re)emerging opinion that the 17th-century library is not a part of the history of the Tartu University Library, which was established only in 1802.

Despite numerous catalogue-like descriptions, baroque comparisons with ancient mythology and quotations from Latin literature of various periods, the message of Ludenius's speech to his contemporaries is clearly presented and can be summarised in four points:

1. Hintelmann's donation is a result of his true nobility and aristocratic spirit, demonstrating above all the care for society befitting a true nobleman, and the books included in that donation will enrich

many people spiritually, and even after his death, many students will continue to learn from them.

2. Hintelmann's well-balanced library, as a representation of social aristocracy, is an ideal resource for training the new elite of society. Therefore, it is particularly suitable for a university library. Since the elite was expected to contribute to the secular governance of society, and this required a legal and political education, Hintelmann's library, which is focused on both of these, was particularly suitable for the young nobility.

3. Ludenius not only praised the deceased and the books he donated but also proposed a strategy for further expanding the university library. According to Ludenius's plan, Hintelmann's book donation was to serve as an example to other Estonian and Livonian nobles and ennobled, who would help the university library grow in the future through similar private donations.

4. The Swedish state should only have a supporting role in building the university library, providing a well-thought-out policy for ennobling Estonian and Livonian officials and intellectuals by granting them land and high state, diplomatic and judicial offices. These figures would then build impressive private libraries during their lifetimes, which they would bequeath to the university in the event of their death in their wills.