

METHODOLOGY OF HISTORY AT *ACADEMIA GUSTAVIANA*

Janet Laidla

In the twenty-first century, society views the university as one of the birth-places of new and innovative scientific ideas. This was not necessarily true 300 years ago. Thus, in a small provincial university, *Academia Gustaviana*,¹ in Tartu, the professors and students were not thinking about history innovatively, but compared to the chronicles of the early modern period they introduced a more diverse variety of topics.

The article was prompted by two observations. Firstly, in 2001 professor Sulev Vahtre pointed to medieval and early modern Baltic² historiography within a European context as one of many important future research topics. He wrote that the subject matter of the Baltic chronicles was local, but the way they wrote and understood history was influenced by foreign sources.³ This topic has not yet been fully explored by scholars of historiography in Estonia. Secondly, when discussing early modern historiography, there is a common tendency to turn more attention to chronicles than smaller works that were printed at the University of Tartu.⁴ The reason may lie in the state of the study of early Baltic historiography. The early modern chronicles have been studied mostly for their source-worthiness. The works of history have been catalogued, their contents summarized and assessed for their trustworthiness as a historical source. Those parts or whole works that are not reliable historical sources have been discarded as irrelevant. The dissertations meditating on the nature and methodology

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¹ During the first opening period of the University of Tartu (1632–65) it was known as *Academia Gustaviana*.

² “Baltic” in this article refers to the whole of present day Estonia, northern and eastern Latvia, at the time known as Estland, Livland, and Courland.

³ Sulev Vahtre, “Meie vanema historiograafia uurimisseisust ja ülesannetest”, *Ajalooline Ajakiri*, 3 (2001), 5–26 (22–23).

⁴ Examples: several articles by Sulev Vahtre; Lemmit Mark, *Eesti vanema historiograafia ajalugu I*. Tartu University Library, Department of the Manuscripts and Rare Books [henceforth TÜR KHO], f. 75, s. 10; Gottfried Etzold, “Die Geschichtsschreibung der polnisch-schwedischen Zeit”, *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. by Georg von Rauch (Köln u.a: Böhlau, 1986), 43–62.

of history have not been considered important for those interested in the history of events rather than the history of ideas.

This article introduces four dissertations printed at the university as sources for studying the methodology of history in the early modern Baltic area and uses them to characterize the reception of two different concepts of history: the Lutheran concept, represented by Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560) and Johann Sleidan (ca. 1506–56), and methodology of history written by the French lawyer Jean Bodin (1529 or 1530–96).⁵

The dissertations are the most comprehensive sources discussing ideas on history in the seventeenth century because the contemporary Baltic chroniclers did not spend much time contemplating on the nature and methodology of history. The few remaining prefaces provide some remarks on the authors' ideas on historiography. However, the chroniclers usually wrote their chronicles to the best of their abilities, that is, they gathered manuscripts and printed chronicles, sometimes also documents and other kinds of sources to compile a chronological narrative of events from the beginning of time to the author's present (if time allowed).

To illustrate, let us look more closely at the dedication and preface to Christian Kelch's chronicle. Christian Kelch is considered one of the most important Baltic chroniclers of the seventeenth century.⁶ He was born in 1657 in Greifenhagen, Pomerania and educated in the Stettin City Council School, Berlin Joachimsthal Gymnasium, and at the universities of Frankfurt (Oder) and Rostock. He came to Estonia and worked as a tutor and then became a pastor of Järva-Jaani (St. Johannis) and toward the end of his life at Niguliste (St. Nicholas) church in Tallinn.⁷

The chronicler Christian Kelch does not question at all whether history should be written. He mentions in his dedication that he wrote the chronicle to express his humble duty and devotion towards the Swedish monarch. Kelch states that the writing of chronicles has become a custom and he considers history writing a way to serve his country. It is self-evident that history should be written. According to Kelch, history is either political or ecclesiastical, written diligently and truthfully on the basis of

⁵ There are a few articles on the reception of other prominent western scholars at the University of Tartu. See for example Arvo Tering, "René Descartes'i ideede jõudmisest Eesti- ja Liivimaale XVII sajandil ja XVIII sajandi algul", *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 3 (1996), 179–188, or Ülo Lumiste, Helmut Piirimäe, "Sven Dimberg – Newtoni õpetuse varane propageerija Tartu ülikoolis", *Tartu Ülikooli ajaloo küsimusi*, 11 (1981), 26–53.

⁶ Etzold, "Die Geschichtsschreibung", 56 and others.

⁷ Rudolf von Winkler, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss des Chronisten Kelch und seiner Zeit", *Beiträge zur Kunde Liv-, Est- und Kurlands*, V (Reval, 1900), 111–130.

reliable sources. He also implies that history is a teacher of life, teaching with examples of good and bad.⁸ Kelch also mentions his predecessors who wrote about Livonian history, but does not say whether he follows the Protestant tradition of history writing or some other methodological tradition of his time. It is probable that he did not consider it important to follow or even think about methodology.

Teaching history at Academia Gustaviana

In the early modern world, reading history was considered a way to acquire a moral and a political education. Thorough knowledge in universal history was an obligation for an educated man.⁹ In the early European universities, history was not taught as a separate subject. The first to establish chairs in history were the Protestant German universities: for example Marburg (1529), Tübingen (1530), Strasburg (1544), and later Greifswald, Königsberg, Heidelberg, Rostock, and Jena.¹⁰ Universities in other countries followed later. Donald R. Kelley sees the founding of university chairs in history as the beginning of the modern profession of history,¹¹ although the universities did not at that time aspire to educate numerous professional historians. The main task of the early modern universities was to train clergymen, priests, physicians, lawyers, judges, and civil servants.¹²

The seventeenth century marked the rise of Sweden as a considerable political power in the Baltic Sea region. The Swedish king Gustav II Adolf founded the first institution of higher education in the Estonian area *Academia Gustaviana* in 1632. The task of the new university was to provide clerics and administrators for the state of Sweden and its provinces. The university was founded over a hundred years after the first chairs in history were founded and the chair of history was written into the university statutes. Historical studies had to emphasize past experiences in management of the affairs of state, church, and economy.¹³

⁸ Christian Kelch, *Liivimaa ajalugu*, trans. by Ivar Leimus (Tartu: Ajalooarhiiv, 2004), 3–7.

⁹ Julian H. Franklin, *Jean Bodin and the sixteenth-century revolution in the methodology of law and history* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977), 3.

¹⁰ Donald R. Kelley, "Johann Sleidan and the origins of history as a profession", *The Journal of Modern History*, 52:4 (1980), 573–598 (581).

¹¹ Kelley, "Johann Sleidan", 579.

¹² Walter Rüegg, "Themes", *A history of the university in Europe, II: universities in early modern Europe (1500–1800)*, ed. by Walter Rüegg (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 30.

¹³ Märt Tänäva, "Ajaloõ õpetamisest ja uurimisest Academia Gustaviana's", *Tartu Ülikooli ajaloo küsimusi*, 10 (1981), 15–25 (15–16).

According to Matti Sainio, the mission of the universities was to transmit already approved knowledge, not to foster new ideas. The main goal was to educate clergy and state officials who would be loyal to the state and the state religion. In the teaching of history at *Academia Gustaviana*, this meant that world history was taught according to the Protestant theory of history.¹⁴ The close connection between history and politics in *Academia Gustaviana* was represented in the fact that the professor of history was at the same time professor of politics.¹⁵

The study of history was divided into universal and particular (history of a certain period or place). Under the latter heading usually the history of Sweden or of antiquity was taught. Universal history was taught following the concept of four great world monarchies. The textbooks used by the professors were the chronicle of Philippus (Philipp Melancthon's revised edition of Johann Carion's chronicle) or Sleidan's *De quatuor summis imperiis, Babylonico, Persico, Graeco et Romano, libri tres* and classical authors, for example the history of Rome by Publius Annii Florus.¹⁶ The following authors were also considered adequate: J. S. Laurenberg and D. Hartnaccius (universal history); Severus Sulpicius (ecclesiastical history); Justinus, Cornelius Nepos and Curtius Rufus (history of the Ancient Near-East and Greece); Vellerius Paterculus, Eutropius, and Aurelius Victor (Roman history).¹⁷

Between 1632 and 1656 there were five professors appointed to the chair of history (there were years in which the position was empty). The most famous of them is Friedrich Menius, who held the chair between 1632 and 1637 (approximately). The other four were Michael Wollin (he never actually took in the position), Andreas Sandhagen (1643–45), Joachim Crellius (1647–52), and Olaus Wexonius (1652–56).

¹⁴ Matti Sainio, "Das Studium der Geschichte an der Universität Tartu", *Die schwedischen Ostseeprovinzen Estland und Livland im 16.–18. Jahrhundert*, Studia Baltica Stockholmiensia, 11 (1993), 269–275 (269).

¹⁵ Sainio, "Das Studium", 270.

¹⁶ Tånava, "Ajaloo õpetamisest", 16–19; The use of Sleidan: *Catalogus Lectionum Publicarum In Regia Academia Gustaviana Adolphina pro Anno sequente publicatus Dorpati Livon. Die 20 Nov: A° 1653, Tartu Ülikooli ajaloo allikaid I: Academia Gustaviana*, ed. by Juhan Vasar (Tartu: Postimees, 1932); The use of Florus: *Catalogus lectionum publicarum in Regia Academia Gustaviana Adolphina pro anno sequenti publicatus Dorpati Livonorum die 23. Novemb. Anni 655, Tartu Ülikooli ajaloo allikaid I*.

¹⁷ Jüri Kuum, Helmut Piirimäe, Märt Tånava, Endel Jaanus, "Ajalugu, majandusteadused ja põllumajanduse alged", *Tartu Ülikooli ajalugu 1632–1982, I*, ed. by Helmut Piirimäe (Tallinn: Valgus, 1982), 191–196 (192).

While Märt Tänäva concludes that the study of history at the University of Tartu was in both form and content at the level of other protestant universities of Europe,¹⁸ Matti Sainio finds that the overall picture concerning the study of history was quite hopeless. In his view, the reasons for this situation were, among others, the constant changes in the staff and the conflicts between the professors.¹⁹

Besides the four dissertations analyzed in this article, there are some contemplations on methodology in Friedrich Menius's *Intrada*.²⁰ Menius came from Germany where he had studied at the University of Rostock and perhaps at Greifswald.²¹ In 1621, he moved to Poland and worked as pastor. It is possible he became interested in history there and began to collect manuscripts concerning history. In 1630 he became professor of history at the Tartu Gymnasium and two years later at the newly founded university. At the end of the 1630s he ran into problems and had to escape from Tartu. He went to Sweden and worked for some time in the copper mines of Falun.²²

The purpose of Menius' *Intrada* was to introduce his forthcoming great work of Livonian history. In addition, he also introduces his way of thinking about history. He begins with the statement that everyone knows how important it is to have a thorough description of a country's astronomy, cosmography, geography, and also history. Then he discusses the problem of chronology, divides history into topics and subtopics, and also emphasizes the need to differentiate between public and private, general and specific, noteworthy and unimportant, certain and uncertain, right and wrong in history. Menius' work was no longer a chronological description of events. He encourages historians to analyze events and then choose what and how to write. What's more, Menius criticizes the works of his predecessors: for example, he claims that Balthasar Russow, Salomon Henning, and Laurentius Müller only describe their own experiences, and their works are therefore imperfect. He brings examples of excellent historical writing from the authors of ancient Greek and Rome and the Italian Renaissance.

¹⁸ Tänäva, "Ajaloo õpetamisest", 23.

¹⁹ Sainio, "Das Studium", 272.

²⁰ *Intrada und Vortrag der grossen vniversal Lieffländischen Historischer Geschichten Beschreibung worinnen kürztlich einem jeden für augen gestellet wird was er in folgender Lieffländischen Chronic zu erwarten. Item, womit ein jeder mit allerhand nohtwendigen Nachrichten zu statten kommen möge* (Riga, 1630).

²¹ Kristi Sak, "Frederich Menius ja tema *Relatio*", Friedrich Menius, *Jutustus Tartu Ülikooli inauguratsoonist, mis toimus 15. oktoobril 1632. aastal* (Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 1997), 71–72.

²² Sak, "Frederich Menius", 72–76.

He mostly discusses, though, why his planned work would be useful most probably in order to gather support (financial and otherwise) for his work.

There are two noteworthy thoughts we can learn from Menius' work. Firstly, that the study of history can be greatly improved when others sciences are studied with it. Secondly, that not anyone can and should write history. Besides his warning – that he believes that to give a glory seeker a feather is the same as to put a sword in the hand of a fool – he also discusses how people in different professions can write history differently. He warns that priests may bring the authority of theology into history. He mentions history as a profession (*historicus ex professio*) and thinks that a lawyer or a politician may write history better (but a doctor worse) than a priest. Although the chroniclers also mention they are not the best persons to write history, it is usually in the context of the common modesty of the period.

The dissertations

Disputations or dissertations were held foremost in order to improve the students' presentation and argumentation skills. These were prepared by both professors and students and printed at the expense of the author.²³ There are five dissertations from the period at hand that are devoted to history: four discuss the nature of history and one discusses Swedish history.²⁴ Matti Sainio thinks that two dissertations (defended by Megalinus and Dryander) were written by professor Joachim Crellius.²⁵ Ku-Ming (Kevin) Chang also supposes that in general it was the professor who wrote the dissertations.²⁶ Ene-Lille Jaanson claims that if the defender was also the author, then it was clearly noted on the title page of the dissertation.²⁷

²³ Helmut Piirimäe, "Ülikool Tartus, Tallinnas ja Pärnus", *Universitas Tartuensis 1632–2007*, ed. by Toomas Hiio, Helmut Piirimäe (Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2007), 30–105 (72–73).

²⁴ Sainio, "Das Studium", 273.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 272.

²⁶ Ku-ming (Kevin) Chang, "From oral disputation to written text: the transformation of the dissertation in early modern Europe", *History of Universities*, XIX:2 (2004), 129–187 (151).

²⁷ Ene-Lille Jaanson, *Tartu Ülikooli trükikoda 1632–1710: ajalugu ja trükiste bibliograafia = Druckerei der Universität Dorpat 1632–1710: Geschichte und Bibliographie der Druckschriften* (Tartu Ülikooli Raamatukogu, 2000), 43.

The first dissertation, *De historiarum cognitione* (1642),²⁸ was presided by professor of law, rhetoric, and poetry Laurentius Ludenius. Christophorus Kühn is marked only as a respondent. Kühn (Künius, Kuen) came from Riga and matriculated at the *Academia* on 24 February 1640. He defended several disputations and made one speech. After the university, he became pastor in Hageri (Haggers) in 1642 and died in 1652.²⁹

Two dissertations that can be seen as parts of a whole, *Dissertationis de natura historicae & de modo recte tractandi studium historicum* (1650)³⁰ were defended by Johannes Megalinus and Johannes Dryander and completed by the professor of history Joachim Crellius. Both Megalinus and Dryander were matriculated on the 9 October 1648 and came from Småland, Sweden. Megalinus defended two dissertations, both discussed in this article, and made one speech. In 1653, he became teacher at the house of Georg Stiernhielm.³¹ Dryander wrote several dissertations in addition to the one under discussion. He returned to Sweden and served as pastor in Tävelsås from 1657 and in Södra Ljunga from 1664. He died in 1670.³² The fourth dissertation *Disputatio historica de quatuor monarchiis* (1651)³³ was submitted both by professor Crellius and Johannes Megalinus, which may suggest that it was written in cooperation.

The dissertations are quite similar in their choice of topics and the nature of their arguments. All of them define and divide history; discuss geography, chronology, and politics in relation to history. The dissertations emphasize the importance of truth and the utility of history as a collection of useful examples for life. Each dissertation stresses different elements and defines history somewhat differently, so each has something unique in their work.

For example, *De historiarum cognitione* refers to Luther's statements about history and describes how Luther divides church history. *De natura*

²⁸ Laurentius Ludenius, Christophorus Kühnius (Künius, Künius, Kuhnus), *Disputatio de historiarum cognitione ...* (Dorpat: Lit. Acad., 1642).

²⁹ *Album Academicum der Universität Dorpat (Tartu) 1632–1710* (Tallinn: Valgus, 1984), nr 384.

³⁰ Joachimus Crellius, Johannes Megalinus, *Dissertationis de natura historicae de modo recte tractandi studium historicum disputatio prior ...* (Dorpat, Vogel, 1650); Joachimus Crellius, Johannes Dryander, *Dissertationis de natura historicae de modo recte tractandi studium historicum disputatio posterior ...* (Dorpat: Vogel, 1650).

³¹ *Album Academicum*, nr 739.

³² *Ibid.*, nr 740.

³³ Joachimus Crellius, Johannes Megalinus, *Disputatio historica de quatuor monarchiis seu imperiis mundi summis, Assyrio-Babylonico, Medeo-Persico, Graeco-Macedonico, Romano-Germanico ...* (Dorpat: Vogel, 1651).

historicae, vol 1 has a list of authors that should be read in order to understand history. These authors are arranged according to states and nations and include mostly classical authors, a few medieval authors, and some Renaissance authors. The dissertation cautions that there are many authors available to study history in diverse quality and quantity. History should be truthful, but historians may err for several reasons – for example, if the events took place so long ago that there are no reliable sources or the historian is not aware of the context of the event.

De natura historicae vol 2 reminds readers that beside the great countries, there are also small peoples in the world, like the Livonians and the Letts, and there are also different religions and many different cultures. To manage all of this, one must create a systematic approach to the topic. The author concentrates also on the evolution of particular countries, describing all the things that are necessary to really understand a country's history: its names, location, rule, important persons, laws, and customs, and follows by stating the books in which one could find this information. The dissertation demonstrates how to apply historical information to everyday life, for example which men and actions or virtues to follow.

De quatuor monarchiis discusses the theory of the four world monarchies in detail. The author defines monarchy and states that the monarchies are Assyrio-Babylonica, Medeo-Persica, Graeco-Macedonica, and Romano-Germanica, and describes each monarchy briefly. Most interesting is the second part of the dissertation where the author tries to refute Jean Bodin's arguments against the four world monarchies.

If one follows the division of historical-method literature introduced by Astrid Witschi-Bernz, all of the dissertations fall into the category of educational or didactic history, which emphasizes the utilitarian role of the history in private and public spheres. Witschi-Bernz distinguishes it from the category of critical methodology, which is represented by Jean Bodin's work.³⁴ There are many elements that the dissertations share with the *ars historica* genre, such as the efforts to define, divide, and utilize history.³⁵ Anthony Grafton and Witschi-Bernz argue that from the end of the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth century there was less emphasis on

³⁴ Astrid Witschi-Bernz, "Main trends in historical-method literature: sixteenth to eighteenth centuries", *History and Theory, Beiheft 12: Bibliography of works in the philosophy of history 1500–1800* (1972), 51–90 (51).

³⁵ The *artes historicae* genre has its roots in classical historiography and it flourished until the eighteenth century. The works representing the genre discuss how to read and write history. See Anthony Grafton's recent study on the topic, *What was history? The art of history in early modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

how to write history and more on how to read history.³⁶ The Tartu dissertations were naturally more akin to German *artes*, which can be seen, for example, in their religious element that characterized the German methods.³⁷ The problems of chronology and geography were also significant for German history methodologies.³⁸

The didactic and the critical methodology

In the dissertation on the four world monarchies, we see the clash of two views of history – the German Reformation historiography and the critical methodology of history. It can be said that Reformation was the most powerful force in forming the German idea of history during the early modern period.³⁹ Donald R. Kelley argues that although during the Reformation the partisanship distorted historical perspective and protected certain legends, it also directed and motivated historical studies and helped to draw attention to errors.⁴⁰ Lutheranism promoted history institutionally and emotionally, and it became the primary tool for explanation, justification, criticism, and partisan debate between the Reformation and Counter-Reformation.⁴¹ Irena Backus adds that there was also a strong interest in history as such, not only in its use in religious debate.⁴² It should also be noted, as Bruce Gordon points out, that there was no single Protestant view of history, but many local views.⁴³

In Martin Luther's view, history is the work of God.⁴⁴ When history is divided into political and ecclesiastical, these two represent the two-fold

³⁶ Witschi-Bernz, "Main trends", 58; Grafton, *What was history?*, 26.

³⁷ Witschi-Bernz, "Main trends", 58.

³⁸ John L. Brown, *The methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem of Jean Bodin* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 1939), 75.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁴⁰ Donald R. Kelley, *The foundations of modern historical scholarship: language, law and history in the French Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 11.

⁴¹ Kelley, "Johann Sleidan", 580–581.

⁴² Irena Backus, *Historical method and confessional identity in the era of the Reformation (1378–1615)* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003), 3.

⁴³ Bruce Gordon, "The changing face of Protestant history and identity in the sixteenth century", *Protestant history and identity in sixteenth-century Europe, 1: the medieval inheritance*, ed. by Bruce Gordon (Aldershot, Brookfield: Ashgate, 1996), 1–22 (6–7). See also for example Alec Ryrie, "The problems of legitimacy and precedent in English Protestantism 1539–47", 76–92, and Geoffrey Dipple, "Yet, from time to time there were men who protested against these evils: anabaptism and medieval history", 123–137, in the same volume.

⁴⁴ John M. Headley, *Luther's view of church history* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1963), 1. Markus Wriedt, "Luther's concept of history and the formation of an

activity of God.⁴⁵ The first acts as *magistra vitae*, the second as the history of salvation.⁴⁶ In addition, since the worldly regiment has nothing to do with the salvation of souls, the wisdom of pagan classical authors should be used in the fields of law and order.⁴⁷ Actions of men are directed and determined by God, and yet God does not act without man. God's plan can be seen though world history. Those who at the first glance succeed or are victorious are not necessarily good,⁴⁸ and God's actions may not at first seem prudent but contrary to his real goal.⁴⁹ The purpose of history as a description of past events was to enlighten people about God through his work. History also acted as moral philosophy. With these statements, Luther gave historical knowledge authority and utility.⁵⁰ Historical facts were supposed to be objective and true without doubt.⁵¹

The first Protestant histories were written as early as the 1530s. One of the first was Sebastian Franck's *Chronica, Zeitbuch und Geschichtsbibel von Anbeginn bis 1531*.⁵² The Lutheran chronicle that became very popular was Johann Carion's *Chronica*. It was printed several times and translated into many languages.⁵³ In the preface, Carion discusses the utility of history and sees its use in numerous examples for rulers. Carion also writes about how to read history and says that those who have divided world history into seven periods obscure the matter. He divides history into three ages, 2000 years each. In addition to three ages, he sees world history as being ruled by four monarchies. His four monarchies are the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans (followed by Germans).⁵⁴

The theory of three ages had been used already by Luther,⁵⁵ as well as in medieval historiography. For example, Ranulf Higden, who wrote in the fourteenth century, divided history into three ages (*tempora*): before the law of Moses, during the law of Moses, and the time of Christ, as well as

Evangelical identity." *Protestant history and identity in sixteenth-century Europe*, 31–45; 33.

⁴⁵ Headley, *Luther's view*, 4–5.

⁴⁶ Wriedt, "Luther's concept", 33.

⁴⁷ Headley, *Luther's view*, 4–5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 10–11.

⁴⁹ Wriedt, "Luther's concept", 36.

⁵⁰ Headley, *Luther's view*, 42.

⁵¹ Wriedt, "Luther's concept", 39.

⁵² E. Menke-Glückert, *Die Geschichtschreibung [sic!] der Reformation und Gegenreformation. Bodin und die Begründung der Geschichtsmethodologie durch Bartholomäus Keckermann* (Osterwieck Harz, 1912), 18.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁵⁴ *Chronica durch M Johan Carion vlessig zusammen gezogen meniglich nützlich zulesen* (Wittemberg, 1546), 3–9.

⁵⁵ Wriedt, "Luther's concept", 39–40.

four world monarchies (Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome) and six ages (*aetates*) of the world simultaneously.⁵⁶

The theory of four world monarchies is associated with the Book of Daniel in which a passage describes Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which Daniel interpreted as referring to four world monarchies, which would be followed by a fifth that would destroy the previous monarchies and last forever. Modern scholars agree that the author probably referred to the Chaldean, Median, Persian, and Greek monarchies.⁵⁷ However, pagan writers also knew a similar pattern of four monarchies followed by the fifth, for example, in the text of Velleius Paterculus.⁵⁸ Some Roman writers claimed that Rome was the successor of Assyria, Media, Persia, and Macedonia.⁵⁹ This tradition may have come from Asia Minor, but lost its appeal in the second century BC.⁶⁰ It was probably Jerome who introduced the theory of four empires and the fifth into Christian historiography.⁶¹ Joseph Swain claims that the philosophy of history based on the four world monarchies set forth by Jerome and Orosius was not derived from the Book of Daniel but from the pagan authors.⁶²

Connected to the concept of the four world monarchies was the tradition of *translatio imperii*. This tradition was created in the Middle Ages and indicates the transfer from one empire or monarchy to another, for example from the Romans to the Franks.⁶³ The problem with the prophecy of the four world monarchies was that the fourth should be the last and since the world did not end with the demise of the Roman Empire, one had to replace or take over the Roman Empire, thus the Romano-Germanica as the fourth monarchy.⁶⁴

There is a slight variation noticeable in both dissertations and other early modern works that discuss the four world monarchies referring to the name of the monarchies. Carion's chronicle features Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman monarchies but Sleidanus's Babylonian, Persian,

⁵⁶ Karl Heinrich Krüger, *Die Universalchroniken*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Age occidental, fasc. 16 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976), 23.

⁵⁷ Joseph Ward Swain, "The theory of the four world monarchies: opposition history under the Roman Empire", *Classical Philology*, 35:1 (1940), 1–21 (1).

⁵⁸ Swain, "The theory", 2.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶³ H. Thomas, "Translatio imperii", *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, VIII (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler, 1999).

⁶⁴ Krüger, *Die Universalchroniken*, 25.

Greek, and Roman. Of the dissertations, the one defended by Kühn follows Carion, but the two of Megalinus use the middle ground and name the monarchies as follows: Assyrio-Babylonica, Medeo-Persica, Graeco-Macedonica, and Romano-Germanica.

Melanchthon's version of Carion's chronicle is longer and more detailed. Melanchthon added his own preface in which he expresses his views on history. In general, history is subordinated to theological and educational needs.⁶⁵ Melanchthon divides history into ages of two thousand years. The first age lasts from the creation until Abraham, the second from Abraham to Christ, the third from Christ onwards.⁶⁶ Protestant historians generally follow Melanchthon's example.⁶⁷

Martin Luther proclaimed in 1541 in the preface of his *Supputatio annorum mundi* that Melanchthon's work is the best of its kind. Among the more prominent followers of Melanchthon were Johannes Sleidan and Matthias Flacius Illyricus. Sleidan's work on the restored religion was for a period of time the main work of German Protestant history.⁶⁸ Menke-Glückert considers the obsession with facts and extensive use of document sources as Sleidan's assets.⁶⁹ Donald R. Kelley thinks that Sleidan could be an early example of a professional historian.⁷⁰ Before his death, Sleidan wrote a small work, *De quatuor summis imperiis* (1556), in which Melanchthon's influence can be seen. Sleidan divides his work into three parts, which are different from Carion's and Melanchthon's chronicles. The first covers history until Caesar, the second until Charlemagne, and the third from that time on.⁷¹ The definition of monarchy, division into four monarchies, and the overall apocalyptic sentiment of the work follow Melanchthon's example quite closely.⁷²

⁶⁵ *Chronicon Carionis latine expositum et auctum multis et veteribus et recentibus historiis, in narrationibus rerum Graecarum, Germanicarum et Ecclesiasticarum a Philippo Melanchthone*, (Wittenberg, 1559). See also Brown, *The methodus*, 72.

⁶⁶ Menke-Glückert, *Die Geschichtschreibung*, 44–45. James William Johnson seems to think that Melanchthon did not support the idea of four world monarchies, James William Johnson, "Chronological writing: its concepts and development", *History and Theory*, 2:2 (1962), 124–145 (139).

⁶⁷ Menke-Glückert, *Die Geschichtschreibung*, 46, and Kelley, "Johann Sleidan", 581, among others.

⁶⁸ Menke-Glückert, *Die Geschichtschreibung*, 65–66.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 77–78.

⁷⁰ Kelley, "Johann Sleidan", 574, 596–598.

⁷¹ *Io Sleidani De quatuor summis imperiis, Babylonico, Persico, Graeco ja Romano, libri tres* (1559).

⁷² Menke-Glückert, *Die Geschichtschreibung*, 85.

As we have seen, the most prominent examples of Lutheran historiography were used as textbooks at the *Academia Gustaviana*, and the four dissertations defended are in accordance with Protestant historical views. There is, of course, nothing surprising in this, as Sweden was a strictly Lutheran state and the university's main objective, as noted earlier, was to educate clergy and officials loyal to the state. And it is equally natural that they defended the Lutheran view of four world monarchies against the attacks of French lawyer Jean Bodin.

There were many schools of thought that influenced Jean Bodin's *Methodus*, neither was it the first of its kind. Although the popular classical authors devoted very little space to the theoretical study of the discipline of history, these works were often quoted (mainly Lucian, Aristotle, and Cicero).⁷³ Bodin, however, was more interested in Polybius' views.⁷⁴ When he wrote his *Methodus*, there were many modern books available on the subject. There were the Italian *artes historicae*,⁷⁵ for example the books by Giovanni Gioviano Pontano, Francisco Robortello, and Francesco Patrizzi. These promoted a more rhetorical ideal of history than Bodin would appreciate. John L. Brown even expresses the thought that Bodin wrote his *Methodus* in protest against them.⁷⁶

German protestant historiography and geography also left their mark on Bodin's work. There are some similarities between Bodin's and Melancthon's treatment of history. To name a few, there were the topics Bodin considered as important, for example the system of chronology, the question of four world monarchies, and the origin of nations.⁷⁷ Bodin also divides history into three ages of two thousand years.⁷⁸ Bodin recommends Johann Funck's and Carion's chronicles as the best short universal histories.⁷⁹

German treatises on history came later and were often influenced by the Lutheran view of history. The first extensive treatise was compiled by David Kochhaffe (Chytraeus).⁸⁰ Brown claims that the German treatises were religious and political propaganda. However, there were few constant

⁷³ Brown, *The methodus*, 55–56.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 56–57.

⁷⁵ See Grafton, *What was history?*

⁷⁶ Brown, *The methodus*, 58–59.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 85–87.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 96–97.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁸⁰ For an extensive treatment of Chytraeus as historian, see Detloff Klatt, *David Chytraeus als Geschichtslehrer und Geschichtsschreiber* (Rostock, 1908).

themes: the four world monarchies, Germans as the heirs of Rome, and moral aspects of history.⁸¹

The third source of influence were the developments taking place among the French lawyers. Julian H. Franklin sees the sixteenth century as revolutionary in the methodology of law and history. In writing history and the *artes historicae*, the authors faced the problem of their sources' credibility.⁸² Although source criticism had been treated before by a number of Classical and Renaissance authors, what made Bodin and others stand out was the fact that there had not been a methodology of criticism, a system of procedures and techniques tackling the problems of credible sources of history.⁸³

Development of historical methodology among the French lawyers was associated with the Pyrronic movement, which blossomed from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, putting the basic premises of most sciences in doubt.⁸⁴ Donald R. Kelley goes as far as to say that in the seventeenth century Baconian distrust and Cartesian doubt created an unsuitable atmosphere for developments in historical science.⁸⁵ As history began to develop as a separate discipline, it also became a target for the skeptics. One of the critics of history was Cornelius Agrippa (1486–1535), who claimed that almost all historians lie or simply do not know the truth,⁸⁶ and concluded that there is nothing certain in history.⁸⁷

Decades later, the first constructive propositions were made that came closer to solving the problem. The Dominican theologian Melchor Cano (1509–60) thought that history requires some belief in the integrity of historians, as “some belief in human nature is essential to human existence.”⁸⁸ One of the main contributions of François Baudouin was the distinction between primary and secondary sources.⁸⁹

Jean Bodin's *Methodus* was a comprehensive work. It named a number of historical works both from the classical and the modern period, often

⁸¹ Brown, *The methodus*, 69.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁸⁴ Franklin, *Jean Bodin*, 89. See also Richard Popkin, *The history of scepticism: from Savonarola to Bayle* (Oxford University Press, 2003). Astrid Witschi-Bernz places the Pyrronic movement against history and the rise of critical historiography at the end of the 17th century (Witschi-Bernz, “Main trends”, 62–65). I agree with Franklin and others who see first signs already in 16th century.

⁸⁵ Kelley, *The foundations*, 6.

⁸⁶ Franklin, *Jean Bodin*, 89–90.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 107–108.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 130; Grafton, *What was history?*, 94.

mentioning their strengths and weaknesses. Bodin discusses the question of the best possible historian: a person partaking in the events or writing some time after the events in question, a local or a foreigner. Remarkable is Bodin's belief that climate has a strong effect on personality and history.

Bodin's *Methodus* did not make many friends on either side.⁹⁰ It seems that German writers especially were critical of Bodin's work.⁹¹ For example, Matthias (Matthäus) Dresser (1536–1607) wrote an oration in defence of the idea of four world monarchies, and another on the Romano-German monarchy.⁹² Dresser writes that Bodin misunderstood the meaning of monarchy and argues that Daniel's prophecy sees Germany as the fourth monarchy.⁹³

In chapter VII of *Methodus*, entitled "Refutation of those who postulate four monarchies and the golden age",⁹⁴ Bodin says that the theory had been supported by several respected men. He then introduces prophesy of Daniel and says it can be interpreted in many ways. He defines *monarchy* and names the four monarchies Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome. On the claim that the Germans have taken over the Roman monarchy, he notes that since it is the Germans who claimed this, their goal is to glorify the German nation.

Firstly, Bodin has a problem with prophecy of Daniel. He points out that several authors have interpreted it differently. Secondly, Melanchthon's definition of monarchy is closer to empire; Germany, however, cannot be an empire. Bodin also wonders why Germany follows the Roman Empire and not any other country. He claims that the way Melanchthon defines monarchy is absurd and so is the claim that Germany follows the Roman Empire. Bodin thinks that, for example, the Turks could be considered better candidates. Furthermore, there have been more than four empires, and Charlemagne, who created the Holy Roman Empire, was in fact French.

The dissertation *De quatuor monarchiis* tries to refute some of Bodin's arguments against the four world monarchies. It defends the interpretation

⁹⁰ Brown, *The methodus*, 84–85.

⁹¹ Grafton, *What was history?*, 172–175. In addition to the Germans, English historian Diggory Wheare also supported the theory of the four world monarchies (Grafton, *What was history?*, 200).

⁹² Brown, *The methodus*, 71–72.

⁹³ Adalbert Klempt, *Die Säkularisierung der universalhistorischen Auffassung zum Wandel des Geschichtsdenkens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1960), 54–55. He has at least two more treatises on the *translatio imperii*; however, I was not able to acquire the speech against Jean Bodin to compare with the Tartu University dissertation.

⁹⁴ Jean Bodin, *Method for the easy comprehension of history*, trans. by Beatrice Reynolds (New York: Octagon Books, 1945), 291–302.

of prophesy and the identification of Germany as the follower of the Roman Empire as the fourth monarchy. Some of the arguments are emotional, for example the argument that Bodin as a Frenchman is just envious of the German glory. Others are based on facts known to the author, such as the fact that Charlemagne was German because he was born near Mainz. Most of the arguments claim that prophecy can (and should) be interpreted in a way that has been done in Protestant historiography – there may be other states and nations but only the chosen ones can be called world monarchies.⁹⁵

Jean Bodin was not an unfamiliar author for Baltic historians. Friedrich Menius had unfortunately not enough time to write and publish his critical thoughts on the subject of four world monarchies based on the writings of Johann Sleidan and Jean Bodin, as he planned.⁹⁶ Outside the university, at the end of the sixteenth century, chronicler Moritz Brandis mentions Jean Bodin in his chronicle.⁹⁷ He refers to the fourth chapter where he found information about the ancient tribe of Nervii. Reiner Brockmann, a teacher of history at the Gymnasium of Tallinn, also mentions Bodin in his speech on the nature of history. He refers to him for further reading on different historians,⁹⁸ as does the author of *De natura historicae, vol 1*. It seems that Livonian readers were most interested in his chapters on the ancient peoples, analysis of different historians, and his refutation of four world monarchies.

Compared to some other European works, Bodin's methodology was not overly popular among Baltic history writers. As mentioned above, the local chroniclers did not concern themselves much with methodology; however, his views on the origins of peoples and list for further reading might have been of interest. Unfortunately, it is difficult to assess the overall influence because seventeenth-century authors did not always reveal their sources.

Most of Baltic sixteenth- and seventeenth-century chroniclers were Lutheran, and in general the Protestant view of history can be noticed in the text of most chronicles, for example in the way God plays a part in the outcome of the events. The names of Carion, Chytraeus, and Melanchthon are often found in the chronicle texts. Kelch even mentions the English

⁹⁵ Megalinus, *De quatuor monarchiis*, §41ff.

⁹⁶ "Catalogus lucubrationum Friederici Menii", *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, II (Riga, Leipzig: Fantzen, 1848), 539.

⁹⁷ Moritz Brandis, *Ehstländischen Ritterschafts-Secretairen, Chronik, oder älteste Livländische Geschichte...*, ed. by C. J. A. Paucker, *Monumenta Livoniae antiquae*, 3 (Riga, Leipzig: Frantzen, 1840), 16.

⁹⁸ Reiner Brockmann, "Lahkumisartutlus", *Reiner Brockmanni teosed*, ed. by Endel Priidel (Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2000), 246–259.

Protestant writer John Bale. That does not, however, mean that Catholic writers were not mentioned or used at all. It seems that when the content of the historical work was relevant to the Baltic chronicler, the religion of the author was not overly important, although the reader is at times made aware that information comes from a Catholic source.⁹⁹ Since the chroniclers wrote mostly local and not universal history, the theory of four world monarchies is not mentioned at all.

It is difficult to assess the influence of the dissertations on the overall historiography of the Baltic region. One of the seventeenth-century chroniclers, Thomas Hiärne (Hiärne), attended the *Academia Gustaviana*.¹⁰⁰ Christian Kelch describes the opening of the university and mentions several professors.

The problem the dissertation *De quatuor monarchiis* was facing, of Melanchthon and Sleidan versus Bodin, is not so much a question of school of history but the background – the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. It was a question of a Catholic theory of history and a Protestant theory of history. However, it was probably not so important for the Baltic authors that Bodin was a Catholic historian, but the theory of four world monarchies that they defended was the basis for the Protestant theory of history. It was not only a religious but also a political question. Should Germany and not, for example, France be considered as a follower of the great Roman Empire? Thirdly, it was a methodological question. Is the theory of the four world monarchies and the *translatio imperii* well founded and proven by reliable sources, or is the authority of the religious leaders sufficient?

At the end of the seventeenth century, universities were faced with many new philosophical movements – Cartesianism and new natural philosophy. Especially problematic was their relationship with theology. In Sweden, the German Samuel Pufendorf solved the problem, claiming that theology and philosophy were two totally separate disciplines. In Tartu, professor Gabriel Sjöberg read on the important ideas of Hugo Grotius, Christian Thomasius, and Samuel Pufendorf. Thomas Hobbes was also discussed in dissertations.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ On the sources of early modern Baltic history writers see: Janet Laidla, *17. sajandi ajalookirjutaja raamaturiiul*, M.A. thesis (University of Tartu, 2006).

¹⁰⁰ There are two recent articles on this chronicler: Piret Lotman, “Thomas Hiärne – nimi Rootsi Lääneprovintside varasest ajalookirjutusest”, *Ajalookirjutaja aeg*, Eesti Rahvusraamatukogu toimetised, 11 (2008), 114–138; Janet Laidla, “Thomas Hiärne ja tema Eesti-, Liivi- ja Lätimaa ajalugu”, *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi aastaraamat 2006* (Tartu, 2008).

¹⁰¹ Georg von Rauch, “Aus dem wissenschaftlichen Leben der schwedischen Universität Dorpat”, *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde zu Riga*

René Descartes separated the matters of mind and God from the material and physical world. His ideas reached the university in Tartu in its second period, the time of *Academia Gustavo-Carolina*, beginning in 1690. In 1689, the Swedish king Karl XI decided to allow the teachings of Descartes to be used in philosophical lectures but not in religious ones. Cartesian ideas were used both by professors and students.¹⁰²

At the *Academia Gustavo-Carolina*, universal history and the theory of four world monarchies, usually taught with the help of Johann Sleidan's book, were still essential. New influences came largely from Sweden. One scholar, who influenced the writing and understanding of history, was Olaus Rudbeck and his glorious history of Sweden. Another influential scholar was Samuel Pufendorf, whose views on history offered new ways of writing history.¹⁰³

In addition to the chronicles, many kinds of shorter works of history and on history were written in the Baltic region during the seventeenth century, among them four dissertations on the methodology of history. Unlike the chronicles, these discussed the definition, division, utility, and nature of history. The dissertations also studied the questions of chronology and geography. They followed the *ars historica* genre known all over Europe, defended the Lutheran Protestant view of history, and were aware of the most common methodologies of history written in the sixteenth century. The dissertations were exercises in rhetoric, perhaps guidelines to the reading of history to other students and educated public outside the university, although their influence is difficult to assess.

In conclusion, I have to agree with Märt Tänäva in that the teaching of history at *Academia Gustaviana* was at the overall European level, and the theories and methodologies of history discussed in Europe reached Tartu and were disputed in dissertations, which should not be overlooked in the Baltic historiography of the early modern period.

JANET LAIDLA (b. 1982) is a PhD student and Lecturer of Estonian history at the Institute of History and Archaeology, University of Tartu.

1934 (Riga, 1936), 128–141 (133).

¹⁰² Tering, "René Descartes'i", 184.

¹⁰³ Georg von Rauch, *Die Universität Dorpat und das Eindringen der frühen Aufklärung in Livland, 1690–1710* (Essener Verlagsanstalt, 1943), 355–366.

KOKKUVÕTE: *Ajaloo metodoloogiast Academia Gustaviana's*

Käsitlustes Balti varauusaegsest ajalookirjutusest keskendutakse enamasti kroonikakirjutusele. Kui välja arvata Friedrich Meniust puudutav, on ajalooteaduse arengut *Academia Gustaviana's* käsitletud eraldi kahes lühikeses ülevaateartiklis Märt Tänavalt ja Matti Sainiolt. Rohkem tähelepanu pälvinud 17. sajandi kroonikakirjutajad ei keskendunud paraku oma teostes eriti palju ajaloo olemuse kirjeldamisele, kui mõned sissejuhatustes kirja pandud märkused välja arvata. Ajaloo olemust käsitlesid aga neli *Academia Gustaviana's* kaitstud dissertatsiooni: *De historiarum cognitione* (1642), mille juhendajaks oli professor Laurentius Ludenius ning esitajaks Christophorus Kühn, kaheosaline *Dissertationis de natura historicae & de modo recte tractandi studium historicum* (1650), mille juhendajaks ajaloo professor Joachim Crellius ning kaitsjateks esimesel osal Johannes Megalinus ja teisel Johannes Dryander ning *Disputatio historica de quatuor monarchiis* (1651), mille esitas professor Crelliuse käe all Johannes Megalinus.

Artikli eesmärk on juhtida tähelepanu ülikooli dissertatsioonidele kui varauusaegse ajalooteaduse uurimise allikatele, anda ülevaade ajaloo olemuse kirjeldustest eelpoolmainitud neljas dissertatsioonis ning tutvustada, kuidas võeti Balti 17. sajandi ajalookirjutuses vastu ühelt poolt luterlikku ajalookirjutuse traditsiooni ja teiselt poolt prantsuse juristi Jean Bodini ajalooteoriasid. Oma sisult on dissertatsioonid üsna sarnased, kuid rõhutavad erinevaid aspekte. Esiteks üritati kirjatöodes ajalugu defineerida ja jagada, seejärel rõhutati ajaloo õpetlikkust ja nõuet kirjutada minevikust tõtt, lisaks kirjeldati kronoloogia, geograafia ja poliitika seoseid ajalooga.

Saksa varauusaegset didaktilist ajalookirjutust mõjutas tugevalt luterlik reformatsioon. Martin Luther töötas välja oma ajalookontseptsiooni, mida andis edasi teiste hulgas ülipopulaarne Philipp Melanchthoni poolt täiendatud ja uuesti välja antud Johann Carioni kroonika. Üheks luterlikule ajalookirjutusele omaseks tunnusjooneks võib pidada ideed neljast maailmamonarhiast ning inimkonna arengu regressist, mis pärineb Taanieli raamatust. Lühemalt käsitles nelja monarhia teemat ka teine varauusajal väga populaarne Johannes Sleidanuse kroonika. Neli monarhiat erinesid erinevate autorite kirjeldustes, varauusajaks arenes jaotus välja enamjaolt järgnevak: esimene Assüüria-Babüloonia, teine Pärsia-Meedia, kolmas Kreeka-Makedoonia ning viimane Rooma-Saksa.

Jean Bodini *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* (1566) esindas varauusaegse ajalooteaduse kriitilist traditsiooni. Kuigi mitmetes küsimustes on Bodin saksa ajalooteaduslike töödega sarnasel seisukohal, vaidleb

ta oma teose seitsmendas raamatus vastu nelja maailmamonarhia ideele. Bodin arvab, et Taanieli ettekuulutust on võimalik mitmeti tõlgendada; arutleb monarhia kui mõiste üle; küsib, miks just need neli on valitud maailmamonarhiateks ning arvab, et tehnika ja teadussaavutuste areng ei toeta ideed inimkonna regressist.

Tartu ülikoolis kaitstud dissertatsioonid olid kirjutatud luterliku ajalookirjutuse vaimus ning kaitsesid nelja maailmamonarhia teooriat. Üks dissertatsioonidest, Johannes Megalinuse *De quatuor monarchiis*, üritab Jean Bodinile vastu vaielda toetudes sealjuures pigem autoriteetidele kui vaieldes kriitiliselt vastu Bodini argumentidele. Iseenesest ei ole see kuigi üllatav arvestades, et tegemist oli luterlikus kuningriigis asuva luterliku ülikooliga, mille eesmärk oli koolitada välja vaimulikke ning riigitruid ametnikke. Võimalik, et asi ei olnud niivõrd selles, et Bodin oli katoliikliku ajalookirjutuse esindaja, vaid idee neljast maailmamonarhiast oli üks luterliku ajalookirjutuse alustalasid ning seda toetasid toleaeagsed autoriteetid. Kokkuvõttes võib tõdeda, et mõned Lääne-Euroopa ajalooteaduses arutluse all olevad teooriad olid jõudnud 17. sajandi keskel ka Tartu ülikooli ning vaatamata sellele, et neid ametlikult omaks ei võetud, neid siiski käsitleti.