

Arranging Learned Literary and Book Culture around the Baltic Sea in the Early Seventeenth Century

The Case of the Livonian-Polish Humanist David Hilchen

Kristi Viiding

The writing, reading and collecting of books around the Baltic Sea in the early modern period has been researched from different points of view. Private and public book collections, the probate inventories of libraries and diaries provide evidence of the familial attitude towards books, which was associated with unsocial and even anti-social activities. Yet literary and book culture includes such aspects as the preparation, production, ordering and distribution of books, which were among the most social activities of early modern *literati*, helping to establish and organise social networks and obtain feedback on their work across regions and confessions.¹

In recent decades, there has been intensive research into early modern book production among the other activities of the communication revolution, especially the founding of new universities in northern Germany and Scandinavia, the establishment of printing presses and postal services and routes and growing diplomatic communication across Europe around 1450–1650. Crucial is the connection of this research with the Renaissance discovery of familiar letters as a literary genre, which became an important religious, intellectual, pedagogical and communicative tool. This medium enabled an intense and transnationally entangled exchange of information even to the periphery of Europe (and of the world), where universities, printing presses and official postal services did not exist, and connected it to the universal learned network called *res publica litteraria* ('republic of letters', *Gelehrtenrepublik*).²

1 The Estonian Research Council supported this work under grant PRG 1926 (Connections, transition, change: nobilitas haereditaria ac litteraria in the emergence of early modern literature in Polish and Swedish Livonia). For their useful comments I am grateful to the editors of this volume, and for proofreading to Gregor Dunn.

2 For the newest contribution to this area with some references to the earlier research literature, see Howard Hotson and Thomas Wallnig (ed.), *Reassembling the Republic of Letters in the Digital Age. Standards, Systems, Scholarship* (Göttingen: Göttingen University Press 2019): for definition, see chapter 1 2 by Dirk van Miert, Howard Hotson and Thomas Wallnig 'What

The focus of the following contribution will be the question of how and when the ‘republic of letters’ spread around the Baltic Sea, especially on its eastern shore, and how this development influenced regional book culture. I will make use of the most comprehensive early modern correspondence from Livonia, as known today: that of the Livonian-Polish humanist David Hilchen (with the humanist name Heliconius, 1561–1610) dating from 1577 to 1610.³ Its importance was recognised as early as the nineteenth century by Baltic German researchers.⁴ In recent years Hilchen’s correspondence has been catalogued.⁵ Preparations for editing it with German annotations and commentary are in progress.⁶

It must be borne in mind that Hilchen was an exceptional figure among the learned men in the early modern Baltic, at least in two respects. First, he was the only conscious representative of the principles of civic or political humanism in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Livonia, using as his personal motto, or leading principle of life and activities, the Latin sentence *Non sibi, sed patriae* (‘Not for oneself, but for one’s country’), and devoting himself to the service of his home country in the practical way that the Italian Renaissance humanists had developed since the fourteenth or fifteenth century (see below).⁷ Second,

was the Republic of Letters?, pp. 23–40. For the terminology and functions of early modern letter-writing, see e.g. Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500–1700* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), esp. pp. 22–37. As an exemplary case study can be mentioned the book by April Shelford, *Transforming the Republic of Letters: Pierre-Daniel Huet and European Intellectual Life, 1650–1720* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2007).

- 3 The cataloguing and editing of early modern correspondence or parts thereof only began recently: the first volume of the correspondence of Riga superintendent Hermann Samson was edited by James Dobreff (ed.), *Hermannus Samsonius to Axel Oxenstierna. Latin Correspondence from 1621 to 1630 with Linguistic and Historical Commentaries* (Lund: Lund University, 2006); Martin Klöker prepared the correspondence of love letters between Caspar Meyer and Catharina von der Hoyen from the mid-seventeenth-century Tallinn (c.1637–1653): *Caspar und Catharina. Eine Revaler Liebe in Briefen des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2020).
- 4 See e.g. Theodor Schiemann, ‘Hilchen, David’, in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 12 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1880), pp. 394–395: ‘Von größtem Interesse sind namentlich seine Briefe, von denen 715 erhalten sind’ (‘Highly interesting are his 715 preserved letters’).
- 5 Kristi Viiding, Thomas Hoffmann, Hesi Siimets-Gross, and Patryk Sapala (eds.), ‘The Correspondence of David Hilchen’, in *Early Modern Letters Online [EMLO]*, Cultures of Knowledge, <http://emlo-portal.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/collections/?catalogue=david-hilchen> (hereafter: *EMLO*).
- 6 Being prepared in the Under and Tuglas Literature Centre of the Estonian Academy of Sciences by Kristi Viiding, Thomas Hoffmann and Hesi Siimets-Gross as part of the Estonian Research Council project PUT-1030.
- 7 For an updated approach to these concepts, see e.g. Craig Kallendorf, ‘Civic Humanism’ (26 May 2016), <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195399301/obo-9780195399301-0234.xml>, accessed 15 April 2019; Thomas Maissen, ‘Political Humanism’

he was the first author in the northern Baltic to shape for himself a clear literary profile. He modelled it on European, mainly German, humanists. Hilchen composed during his life about twenty-five political, festive, commemorative and congratulatory speeches in Latin, extending to more than 300 pages. He composed an unfinished historical monograph about the Calendar Riots in Riga, about 700 Latin letters, 34 occasional poems amounting to almost 1000 verses and a verse satire in 140 hexameters.⁸ Nobody in Livonia had cultivated Latin oratory in such a high style nor used the genre of historical monograph before him. Nor had anybody cultivated, collected and systematised Latin correspondence, in accordance with classical and humanist examples found in books, and prepared it for publication. Hilchen did not experiment with epic, comedy or tragedy, probably because of their large size and smaller public resonance, as there was no theatre in Riga during his time.⁹

In the following discussion I analyse the as yet unpublished Latin correspondence, of almost 800 letters by and to Hilchen, from the perspective of



FIGURE 5.1 The seal of David Hilchen in a letter to Johan Jacob Grynäus
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(24 November 2016), in Manfred Landfester, Chad M. Schroeder (eds.), *Brill's New Pauly Supplements, 11:8: The Reception of Antiquity in Renaissance Humanism* (2017), http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-3418_bnp8_SIM_004941, accessed 15 April 2019.

- 8 Hilchen's satire is edited and analysed in Kristi Viiding, 'Gefährliche Bücher, gefährliche Gattungen, gefährliche Vorlagen: Die Geburt der Satire in Livland', *Book in Context, Renaissanceforum* 15 (2019), pp. 73–99 (http://www.renaessenceforum.dk/rf_15_2019.htm); his entire poetry in David Hilchen, *Sub velis poeticis. Lateinische Gedichte*, Kristi Viiding and Martin Klöker (eds.), (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2021).
- 9 See to this topic Kristi Viiding, 'Wandel durch Verflechtung, Wandel durch Konflikt. David Hilchen und die literarische Blüte in Riga 1585–1600', in Martin Klöker (ed.), *Literarischer Wandel in der Geschichte der Baltischen Literaturen* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2023), pp. 49–58.

book history. After a short introduction to Hilchen's life and contextualisation of his contribution to Livonia's Renaissance humanism, I typologise Hilchen's activities in organising literary and book culture and discuss a selection of letters by and to him from this point of view.

1 Biographical and Historical Background

David Hilchen was born into a wealthy merchant family of German origin in Riga in 1561. His lifetime was influenced by the complicated political and religious history of Livonia, as after the dissolution of the Livonian Order the old Livonia lost independence in the year of Hilchen's birth and became the Duchy of Livonia, a vassal state of Lithuania, and later (1582) of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Only Riga became a free imperial city until it was incorporated to Duchy of Livonia in 1581. Yet, as Sweden and Muscovy were interested in the Livonian territories, the development of the southern part of the Livonia was mainly focused on the establishment of military and religious authority by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Thus, after Hilchen had completed his basic education at Riga cathedral school he had to continue his studies abroad, as there was no university in Livonia.¹⁰ He spent six years abroad (1579–85), including visiting the Jesuit College in Vilnius and undertaking the study of rhetoric and law at the universities of Ingolstadt, Tübingen and Heidelberg. After his return to Riga in 1585 he was appointed secretary of the city. He provided good service in solving a serious dispute between Riga city council and the guilds (also known as the Calendar Riots), and in 1589 he was appointed syndic (judicial adviser of the city council) of Riga – which was not only based on his diplomatic capacity, but also his jurisprudential proficiency. Hilchen was also very active as a legal counsellor, as a member of more than twenty legations and as the author of various acts and statutes. In 1591 he was ennobled by the Polish king, and he soon started to represent both the city of Riga and the Livonian nobility in the Polish Sejm (parliament). Additionally, he was appointed secretary to the Polish king and notary of Wenden (today's Cēsis), which resulted in a complex and controversial triangular balancing act for Hilchen as the representative of the city of Riga, of the Livonian nobility, and of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

This plurality of offices, crossing political and sometimes even religious boundaries, soon earned Hilchen a broad range of reactions, from distrust to

¹⁰ The first university in Livonia, the University of Tartu (*Academia Gustaviana*) in southern Estonia, was established only in 1632 by the Swedish king, Gustavus Adolphus.

open animosity, especially among the members of Riga city council. This conflict escalated in 1600 when Hilchen was officially accused of treason against the city of Riga, forcing him to flee and spend the next ten years until his death in exile in Zamość, Poland. Proceedings against Hilchen continued through various stages for nine years, only being terminated in 1609 by a decree of the Polish King Sigismund III (Pl. Zygmunt III Waza). Hilchen never returned to Livonia.¹¹

In the Livonian humanism of the last few decades of the sixteenth century and the first decade of the seventeenth century, Hilchen was in many ways a key figure.¹² The earliest signs of Renaissance humanism only appeared in Estonian and Livonian cities very shortly before the Lutheran Reformation of the 1520s and developed slowly during the sixteenth century.¹³ The first peak of Renaissance humanism came as late as the 1580s in Riga, as an adjunct to Polish rule, with the appearance of the first printing house in the entire region, a humanist gymnasium and a city library. In fact, this first peak was the result of Hilchen's activities. It was he who invited the first printer, Claes Mollyn, from Antwerpen to Riga.¹⁴ He also invited the first inspectors of the humanist gym-

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- 11 The key bibliographic sources for Hilchen's life and activity are listed in Viiding etc. (eds.) 'The Correspondence of David Hilchen'. For Hilchen's activity as lawyer and his proceedings see Kristi Viiding, Hesi Siimets-Gross, Thomas Hoffmann (eds.), *Briefe, Recht und Gericht im polnischen Livland am Beispiel von David Hilchen / Letters, Law and Court in Polish Livonia. The Case of David Hilchen* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2022).
- 12 Hilchen's position among his educated and humanistically orientated contemporaries is underlined by researchers from different generations, countries and disciplines, independently of their opinion regarding the details of humanism: Arnold Spekke, *Alt-Riga im Lichte eines humanistischen Lobgedichtes vom Jahre 1595 (Basilii Plinii Encomion Rigae)* (Riga: W. F. Häcker, 1927), pp. 5–8; Gero von Wilpert, *Deutschbaltische Literaturgeschichte* (München: Beck, 2005); Ojars Läms, 'Who are the humanists of Riga: a general introduction to the phenomenon', *Letonica. Humanitāro Zinātņu Žurnāls*, 30 (2015), pp. 9–20; Jost Eickmeyer, 'Sodalitas litteraria Rigensis? Umriss eines Netzwerkes deutscher und livländischer Humanisten im sechzehnten Jahrhundert', in Raivis Bičevskis etc. (eds.), *Baltisch-deutsche Kulturbeziehungen vom 16. bis 19. Jahrhundert. Medien – Institutionen – Akteure, 1: Zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2017), pp. 237–267.
- 13 See Kristi Viiding, 'Das Verhältnis der Reformation und des Humanismus in Est- und Livland im 16. Jahrhundert', in Heinrich Assel, Johann Anselm Steiger, and Axel E. Walter (eds.), *Kulturwirkungen der Reformation in den Metropolen des Ostseeraums* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2017), pp. 843–854.
- 14 Arend Buchholtz, *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst in Riga 1588–1888: Festschrift der Buchdrucker Rigas zur Erinnerung an die vor 399 Jahren erfolgte Einführung der Buchdruckerkunst in Riga* (Riga: Müller, 1890), pp. 15–74; Ojars Zanders, 'Nicolaus Mollyn, der erste Rigaer Drucker. Sein Schaffen in Riga von 1588 bis 1625', in Klaus Garber (ed.), *Stadt und Literatur im deutschen Sprachraum der frühen Neuzeit, II* (Tübingen: Niermeyer, 1998), pp. 786–800.

nasium, Johannes Rivius and Salomon Frenzel von Friedenthal, to the city.¹⁵ In addition, he organised a small group of humanists around him (Daniel Hermann from Prussia, Georg Ciegler from Tallinn and Salomon Frenzel from Helmstedt).¹⁶ These fields of Hilchen's activity are well documented in his printed works and contemporary public documents.

2 The General Characteristics of Hilchen's Correspondence

As Hilchen was a highly versatile man who travelled a great deal, he had many contacts across the regions of Europe, from France in the west to Livonia in the east. The social spectrum of his addressees stretched from noble circles to the representatives of the academic world, various confessions and high military leaders, and from his friends and acquaintances to patrons, forming a substantial epistolary community of almost two hundred individuals over thirty-three years (1577–1610).¹⁷ As his epistolary community was relatively open, four epistolary circles can be distinguished in it:

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- 15 About David Hilchen and Salomon Frenzel: Kristi Viiding, 'Salomon Frenzel von Friedenthal – Endstation eines Humanistenschicksals', in Ludwig Braun (ed.), *Album alumnorum. Gualthero Ludwig: Septimum decimum lustrum emenso, dedicatum* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2014), pp. 209–227; Kristi Viiding, 'Salomon Frenzels schwere Mission in Riga', *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch. Journal of Neo-Latin Language and Literature* 21 (2019), pp. 329–346.
- 16 Briefly mentioned in Herta von Ramm-Helmsing, *David Hilchen 1561–1610. Syndikus der Stadt Riga* (Poznań: Historische Gesellschaft für Posen, 1936), p. 51; qualified by Eickmeyer, 'Sodalitas litteraria', pp. 237–267. For Daniel Hermann's poetry in Riga, see Magnus Frisch, 'Daniel Hermann – a well-travelled Prussian humanist and his poetic work in Riga', *Letonica. Humanitāro Zinātņu Žurnāls*, 30 (2015), pp. 44–57 with an overview of older research literature.
- 17 There are many other relevant ways of cataloguing the letters written by, to or on Hilchen's behalf. In comparison to the only previous division from the early modern period, my division into four circles is slightly altered. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, in the earliest collected manuscript in Riga (see below), his letters from 1600–10 were systematised in six books according to their author and/or addressee: books 1–2 contained Hilchen's letters to the Polish-Lithuanian officials, humanists and clergymen, books 3–4 letters written by Hilchen on behalf of other persons, and books 5–6 Hilchen's letters to Western and Central European addressees. For different reasons, this early modern division is somewhat complicated nowadays. First of all, letters to Hilchen, well known today from the other sources, are not represented at all. Secondly, the letters by Hilchen and on behalf of the other persons written by Hilchen are scattered over various books. Thirdly, Hilchen's Livonian addressees are divided into six books in accordance with their current position as students in the Western European universities or in the service of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or in the military service of various political powers.

1. German (including Prussian) humanists, academics and officials. Particularly prolific was Hilchen's contact with the *Caseliani*, the network of scholars associated with Professor Johannes Caselius (1533–1613) in Helmstedt.¹⁸ This group is responsible for a total of 53 letters, among them 41 to or by Caselius himself.¹⁹
2. Eminent Western European humanists, *literati*, diplomats and politicians from the Low Countries (Justus Lipsius, Jan Wowerius, Janus Dousa Senior and Joseph Justus Scaliger), France (Isaac Casaubon, Theodor Marcilius and Frédéric Morel Junior), Denmark (Heinrich Ramel and Predbjørn Gyldenstjerne) and Sweden (Lindorm Nilsson or Bonde (Lilliehöök), till Gälaled). It was the smallest epistolary circle, which Hilchen reached only thanks to the mediation of Johannes Caselius.
3. Polish-Lithuanian humanists, scholars, high officials and representatives of various religions and orders. Here, on the one side the eminent politicians and patrons of Hilchen like Jan Zamoyski (20 letters, 1589–1602), Bishop Eustachy Wołłowicz (Valavičius) of Vilnius (27 letters, 1605–9) and the Lithuanian chancellor Leo Sapieha (Sapiega; 10 letters, 1599–1608) can be highlighted. On the other side, the circle of scholars from the Academia Samosciana is represented by 46 letters (1603–9), and representatives of the Jesuit Order by 45 letters (1602–9).
4. Livonian nobility and their sons, officers in cities and the countryside and his own relatives. At most, 14 letters are preserved addressed to the bishop of Wenden, Otto von Schenking (1601–8); 13 to Hilchen's sons David and Franz; and letters on behalf of the Livonian nobleman General Georg (Jürgen) von Fahrensbach to different people. In addition, Hilchen wrote letters to local women in Riga and Livonia, as shown by the list of correspondents in her court acts (Fig. 5.2). Unfortunately, no letters have survived from his correspondence with women.

There existed many overlapping epistolary circles between the first and third as well as second and third circle, as Hilchen engaged in oral sharing of his

With my current grouping I would like to underline the main trends in geographical extent of the places of origin of Hilchen's addressees, not to follow the present-day linguistic, political or national divisions. Many other options of division can be tried quickly in David Hilchen's letter catalogue, in *Early Modern Letters Online* (see note 4).

- 18 On the *Caseliani*, see Richard Kirwan, 'It's Who You Know: Scholarly Networks in Liddel's Helmstedt', in Pietro Daniel Omodeo (ed.), *Duncan Liddel (1561–1613): Networks of Polymathy and the Northern European Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 154–159.
- 19 Hilchen's correspondence with Caselius is analysed from the perspective of rhetorical strategies in Kristi Viiding, 'Rhetorical strategies in the correspondence of Johannes Caselius to the Livonian humanist David Hilchen', *Acta Comeniana. International Review of Comenius Studies and Early Modern Intellectual History*, 33 (2019), pp. 27–45.

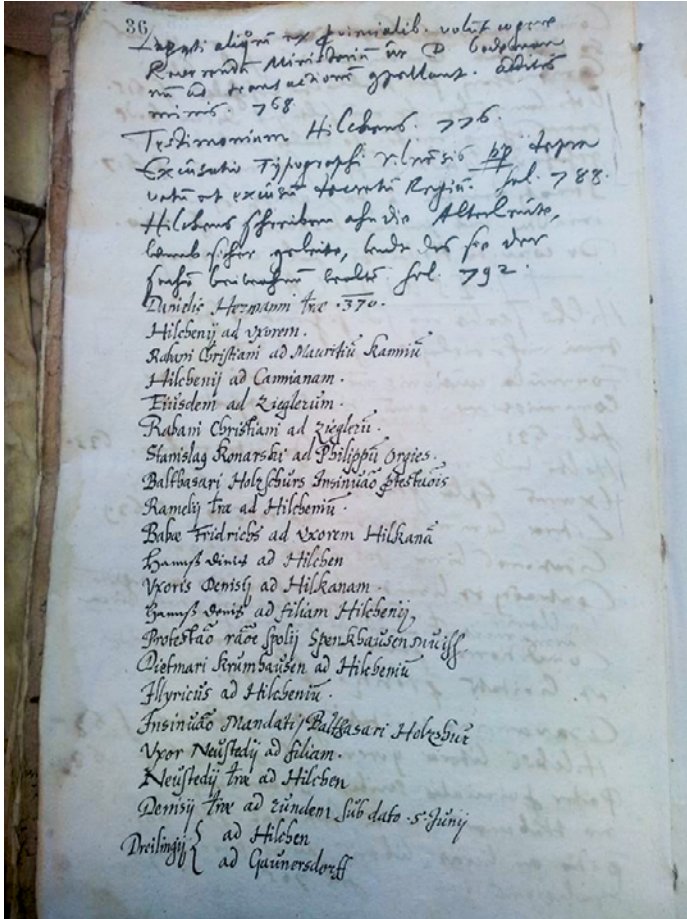


FIGURE 5.2 Additional list of lost letters by and to Hilchen in his court acts
RIGA LATVIAN STATE HISTORICAL ARCHIVES (LVVA)
673-1-344B FOL. 36. PHOTO: THOMAS HOFFMANN

letters, reading aloud letters sent to him, giving rise to new correspondence between the members of his epistolary community.

As can be seen from the two main and almost identical manuscripts of Hilchen's letters – one in the Latvian State Historical Archives (Latvijas valsts vēstures arhīvs; hereafter: LVVA) in Riga and the other in Stiftsbiblioteket in Linköping (presently part of Linköpings stadsbibliotek) – Hilchen began consciously collecting his letters only after he left Riga in 1600.²⁰ However, he only

20 David Hilchen, 'Epistolarum libri VI', LVVA, Riga, 4038–2-297; Stadsbibliotek Linköping, Stiftsbiblioteket, Br 43.

collected his own letters and letters he wrote on behalf of others, not those he received from his correspondents. The letters from 1600–10 were systematised in six books according to groups of addressees after his death. As the Baltic German researcher Herta von Ramm-Helmsing assumed, this was done on the initiative of the later Riga syndic, Caspar von Ceumern.²¹ The extant main manuscripts were probably planned for Hilchen's older son David, and for his second son Franz.

Besides these two sizeable collections there are around sixty further letters by and to Hilchen in other collections of the Latvian State Historical Archives, in the Warsaw Historical Archives from the fonds of Jan Zamoyski (Warszawa Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, Archiv Ord. Zamoiskich), in the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, in Basel University Library, in Leiden University Library, in Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, in Berlin State Library, in the Library of the *Christianeum* in Hamburg and in the British Library. These individual letters give us at least some idea of Hilchen's letter-writing practices during the earlier decades of his life.

Although we have only 45 extant letters from the period 1577–99 and 71 letters without a date, the remaining batch of letters from 1600–10 demonstrates that Hilchen's interest and confidence in letter-writing grew constantly. The number of extant letters is still rather small (54) from the years 1600–2, when Hilchen was involved in the Livonian war.²² The number increases, however, as soon as he found a more stable residence in Orissowo near Zamość in the summer of 1603.²³ During 1604–6 he wrote or received almost 80 letters each year.²⁴ In his most prolific years (1607–9) he composed more than 100 letters per year.²⁵ The falling-off in the half-year before his death after 6 June 1610 (just seven letters) shows that Hilchen was occupied with practicalities or simply ill during the last months of his life.

The rhythm of his letter-writing meant sometimes 4–6 letters a day, not only from the war camp or diplomatic missions, but also from his residence in Orissowo.²⁶ As the spatial distance between Hilchen and his recipients was almost always long, Hilchen depended on the logistical possibility of sending the letters: from Riga and Livonia, Hilchen used the sea route to Rostock and Danzig and the land route via Courland and Lithuania. From Zamość, the land route via Cracow prevailed. In both periods, Frankfurt (an der Oder)

21 Von Ramm-Helmsing, *David Hilchen*, p. 71.

22 1600: 14 letters, 1601: 7 letters, 1602: 33 letters.

23 Thus we have 41 extant letters from 1603.

24 1604: 73 letters, 1605: 76 letters, 1606: 79 letters.

25 1607: 105 letters, 1608: 134 letters, 1609: 94 letters.

26 30 April 1602: 6 letters; 20 August and 11 October 1604: 5 letters, etc.

and Helmstedt were the main distribution points from where his letters were despatched onwards: in Frankfurt, Hilchen's friend, the theologian Christoph Storch (with the humanist name Pelargus) (1565–1633), and in Helmstedt, Hilchen's mentor, Professor Johannes Caselius, were responsible for this. In the logistics of sending letters from Riga and Livonia before the years of exile, the increasing tendency to circulate letters via Lithuania and Poland instead via Rostock and Danzig is remarkable. The deeper political and religious integration of Livonia within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth came into effect in Hilchen's personal case – the increasing number of his correspondents in Lithuania and Poland indicated a growing use of their logistical possibilities and greater confidence in this region.

The main topics Hilchen discussed with his correspondents changed over time in accordance with new events and circumstances in Hilchen's life. During the years of his political activity in Riga the main topic of his letters was the prosperity and rights of the city and of Livonia. His involvement in the Swedish–Polish war in Livonia (1600–2) saw the details of military life, battles and plans for future contests come into focus. From 1603 the exchange of institutional and official news was more and more replaced by the defence of Hilchen's own reputation, and the details of his proceedings against the city of Riga and Jacob Goedemann came under consideration. In the five years prior to his death, his life in Zamość – especially the advancement of his sons and his relationship with the Jesuits – came to the fore. Untypical for Hilchen's correspondence of all periods are the letters that say 'nothing', impart little or no explicit information, and communicate only fidelity and alliance.

Against this backdrop it is remarkable that Hilchen discussed literary topics with correspondents from all four groups of addressees and throughout his adult life – starting from the 1580s at the latest. More than a hundred remarks on books and literature can be found in his correspondence. There are, however, no clear characteristic trends between the topics and the four circles of his addressees.

The typology of Hilchen's literary activities, described in his letters, includes three basic domains: 1) ordering, reading and reception of published books; 2) distributing and mediating: (a) books and manuscripts; (b) dedications and remuneration for them; (c) factual material about famous people and contemporary events to humanists in other regions for their works; (d) advice about appropriate literary genres and forms and so on; and 3) producing his own books and books in the name of others. In what follows I characterise all of these groups using examples to map the relationship of one eminent Eastern European humanist with books and literature.

3 The Ordering, Reading and Reception of Published Books

The ordering and reading of books, which is regarded as basic and most traditional field in book history is, in fact, the least reflected and discussed in Hilchen's letters, while it did, in fact, constitute the grounds for all his other literary activities. First, we can see from his example how professional the ordering of books was, not only on the German or Scandinavian sides of the Baltic Sea but also in the eastern Baltic and Poland as early as the seventeenth century, in the first few decades after the emergence of the printed catalogues of book fairs. Significant evidence of this is Hilchen's letter to the German diplomat, philosopher and poet Johannes von Werdenhagen (1581–1652), who was active in many northern German towns. Hilchen wrote to him on 4 January 1608 from Zamość:

I saw the title of your collection of poems in the catalogue of the [Frankfurt and Leipzig] book fair. I should like to order your book. Please take care to ensure that my wish is fulfilled as soon as possible.²⁷

The catalogue Hilchen used was very new, from autumn 1607, as was Werdenhagen's book in which Hilchen was interested.²⁸ The cause of interest was, in fact, that in the third part of the book an elegy to Hilchen's daughter Leonora (who had died in 1598) was published.²⁹ It may seem remarkable that Hilchen ordered the book directly from the author rather than from the publisher, Stephan Mylius, or from the printer, but in the sixteenth-century view, the book was at its best when given and should not be sold above a justifiable price.³⁰ In addition, Hilchen had a long history of personal contact with the Helmstedt humanist and obviously placed greater trust in the direct mail connection.

27 'Titulum tuorum poematum in Catalogo nundiali vidi. Rem ipsam desidero. Ne vel frustra aut diutius tu vide.' David Hilchen to Johannes von Werdenhagen, 4 January 1608.

28 *Indicis generalis continuatio, In quo continetur designatio omnium librorum, qui nundinis autumnalibus Francofurtensibus et Lipsiensibus Anni 1607, vel novi, vel emendatiores, aut auctiores prodierunt* (Leipzig: Abraham Lamberg, 1607), USTC 2066202; Johannes Werdenhagen, *Varia Poëmata Iuvenilia* (Vlissea: Stephan Mylius, 1607).

29 The 1607 edition of Werdenhagen's poems is a rarity; the poem was included in a collection of poems by Johannes Werdenhagen, *Poëmatum Iuvenilium Pars prima Lyrica Continens, ab Ethnicismo vindicata, et pietati Christianae restituta* (Leiden: Abraham Commelinus, 1629), pp. Nn8–Nn8^v (book 3, ode 10), USTC 1011762.

30 Cf. Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 73–109, esp. p. 76.

Hilchen not only ordered books as commemorative objects connected with his family and reputation, but also read and expressed his opinions about them, whether positive or sceptical. As there were no magazines of literary criticism in the early seventeenth century, Hilchen expressed his opinion directly to the authors in his letters, even if they were little known to him previously. The first of the following three examples concerns his positive reception of a book. In a letter dated 13 August 1603 Hilchen sent his views to the physician, professor of mathematics and poet David Herlitz (1557–1636) in Stargard in Western Pomerania, praising the extraordinary quality of the prognostications in Herlitz's book *Groß Prognosticon oder Practica, auff's 1600. Jahr* by giving his own example: 'Earlier I merely glorified your professional skills, but now I am prompted to do so much more fervently because of your extraordinary competence in my case'.³¹ According to Herlitz's prognostication for 12 January 1600, certain people would need to be attentive around that time as traps for foxes would be prepared, but without doubt it would be a wolf that was caught. Secret snakes, he said, would whet their tongues against a candid person, but the poison would harm the snakes themselves. In this period many strange things would be revealed, but the honest of heart would face no troubles.³²

Hilchen was convinced that Herlitz had foretold exactly the events that befell him on 14 January 1600 in Riga: he was himself the fox for whom the traps had been prepared. Hilchen was innocent, but nevertheless imprisoned, condemned and sent into exile. However, the wolves, that is, the hostile members of Riga city council, were now in the traps themselves. The conspirators and slanderers would be poisoned.³³ This direct eulogising feedback to a

31 'Ita factum fuit, ut cum ante ob insignem artis tuae scientiam te magnificerem, pluris ab eo tempore faciendum putaverim ob experientiam tuam evidentem in me prae aliis comprobata, quam re ipsa saepius declaras pluribus.' (David Hilchen to David Herlitz, 13 August 1603).

32 'Mögen umb diese Zeit etliche ihre Sachen wol in acht haben / sintemahl ein netz aufgestellt Füchse zu fangen / wird aber sonder zweiffel ein Wolff drinnen behangen bleiben. Heimliche Nattern wetzen ihre zungen wieder einen Simplificisten / darf aber der stich in sie selbst gehen. Wird gewisslich viel seltsames vmb diese zeit an den tag kommen. Wer recht handelt, ist ohne Sorge.' (David Herlicius, *Groß Prognosticon Oder Practica, auff's 1600. Jahr, nach der Gnadenreichen vnnnd heilsamen Geburt Jesu Christi. Gerechnet durch Davidem Herlitzium von Zeitz, Philosophiae & Medicinae Doctorem, vnd der löblichen Stadt Newen Stargard in Pommern an der Jhna bestalten Phylicum* (Stettin: Joachim Rhete, 1599), p. B'), USTC 2215892.)

33 'Rem tangere, confirmavit prognosticum tuum anno 1600 editum. In eo die Januarii 12 veteris Calendarii diserte demonstrasti, qua vulpina quaedam ingenia laqueos suos exterura essent in exilium hominis innocentissimi. Sed ea suis propriis laqueis involuta et saepta iri. Turpem certe ignominiam coniurati quidam Rigensi, q[ui] exitio meo laqueo tendebant, eo retulerunt et adhuc laqueis irretiti suis haerent. Antevertit DEUS sicariorum

book's author was interpreted by humanists as a gift, which ensured further mutual obligation.³⁴ In addition, this case demonstrates that apart from book catalogues, Eastern European humanists also enjoyed reading calendar books with astrological prophecies.

The same thoroughness was used by Hilchen to give feedback to authors who wrote books about his homeland of Livonia. In the early seventeenth century the librarian at the Royal Library in Paris, Jacques-Auguste de Thou (Thuanus, 1553–1617), published the first volume of his world history *Historiarum sui temporis* (1604–14). In its twenty-first book he described in six chapters the history of Livonia and Courland up to 1560.³⁵ Hilchen, totally unsatisfied with this description, sought to communicate his opinions to Paris. Yet he did not write directly to de Thou, but to his correspondent in Paris, the humanist Isaac Casaubon (1559–1614). In a letter dated 24 February 1606 (see Fig. 5.3) Hilchen mentioned some of his own publications – the speech *Livoniae supplicantis* and *Prosphonesis ad Nobiles* – as gifts to his French colleagues,³⁶ and added for Casaubon's benefit:

Please make known my books to the very learned man de Thou. I should like to whisper in his ear further details about Livonia, if he is prepared

istorum conatus, nec sivit ut me vi opprimerent coram manus, sed sua forti manu me ab iis liberavit, ut nunc eos pravi pudeat consilii.' (Hilchen to Herlitz, 13 August 1603).

- 34 Cf. e.g. Guillaume Budé's interpretation of Erasmus' eulogising notes as gift in Erasmus' translation of the New Testament in 1516 (Zemon Davis, *Gift*, pp. 110–14, esp. p. 119).
- 35 Jacques-August de Thou, *Historiarum sui temporis tomus primus*, ed. Samuel Buckley (London: Samuel Buckley, 1733), pp. 709–725.
- 36 For the speeches, see David Hilchen, *Livoniae Supplicantis Ad S[acram] Regiam Maiestatem Illustrissimosque Ordines Regni Poloniae et Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae, Oratio A nunciis nobilitatis Livonicae Generosis et Nobilibus, Reinhold Brakel, Ermessensi Capitano, S[acrae] R[egiae] M[aiestatis] Camerario: Ottone Dönhoff, Haerede in Idwen: Davide Hilchen, S[acrae] R[egiae] M[aiestatis] per Livoniam Secretario, et Notario terrestri Livon[ensi]. In Comitii Varsaviens[ibus]. Anno M.D. xcviij. die vii. Mensis Martij publice habita* (Cracow: Officina Lazari, 1597), USTC 268956, (Riga: Nicolaus Mollyn, 1597), USTC 6910890; David Hilchen, *Προσφωνησις ad Nobiles atque incolas Livoniae, qui sese cum Carolo Sudermanniae Duce conjunxerunt. Davidis Hilchen, Secretarii Regii et Notarii terrestris Wenden[sis]* (S.L., 1601), USTC 268957. Based on the wording of this letter ('Adjeci supplicantem meam Livoniam et Anticarolinam (anonymam) orationem'), 19th century bibliographers Estreicher, Recke and Napierski have hypothesized that in 1606 Hilchen published a work entitled *Oratio Anticarolina*. The existence of a book with this title is not attested. The other reasons to exclude the existence of a special *Oratio Anticarolina* are as following: First, Hilchen used in this letter for his other speech *Livonia supplicans* the same kind of periphrasis, not the exact title of the published book. Second, he emphasizes in this letter that the book was published anonymously, but both of the rare copies of *Prosphonesis ad Nobiles* have survived as evidence in the Hilchen court acts in Riga and Krakow.

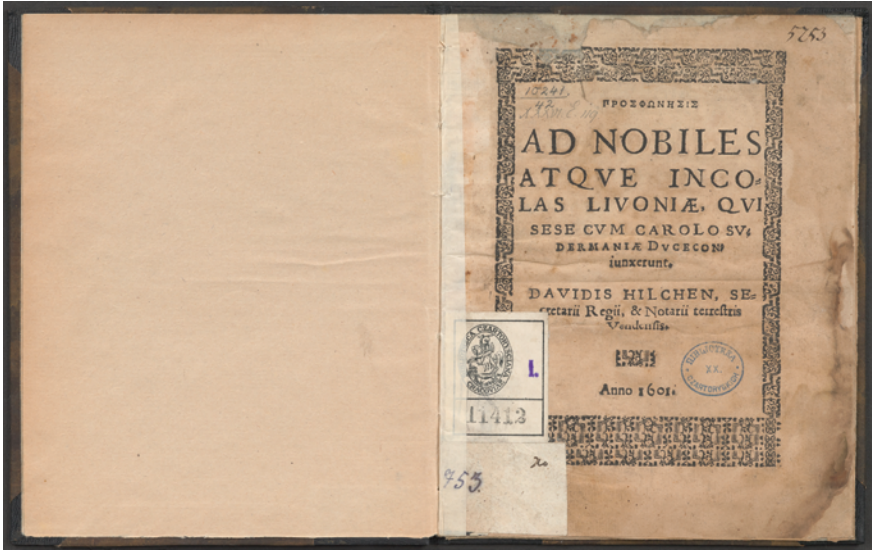


FIGURE 5.3 Title page of the one of extant copies Προσφωνησις ad Nobiles atque incolas Livoniae, qui sese cum Carolo Sudermanniae Duce conjunxerunt. Davidis Hilchen, Secretarii Regii et Notarii terrestris Wenden[is] (S.L., 1601), referred in Hilchen's letter 1606 also as Oratio Anticarlina, in National Museum Krakow Biblioteka Czartoryskich sygn. MNK XVI-11412 I

PHOTO: PHOTO LABORATORY STOCK NATIONAL MUSEUM IN KRAKOW

for friendly admonition. I have found in his chronicle more than 600 mistakes about persons, dates and events. They likely arose from the chronicle of Chytraeus. ... But I do not wish to overload you with this ... Pass on my greetings to de Thou and recommend me to him.³⁷

Casaubon did indeed inform de Thou of Hilchen's proposal, and some years later de Thou sought out Hilchen's comments and corrections on his history, as a letter from de Thou to the Polish diplomat Andreas Rey (Andrzej Rej de Naglowice, 1584–1641) in 1613 demonstrates.³⁸ Rey was prepared to make

37 'Quae omnia Thuano incomparabilis eruditionis viro ostendi velim: cui et insurrerem aliquid de Livonicis, si se amice admoneri pateretur. Errores [e]n[im] fere sescentos video (pace illius dixerim) quos Chytra[e]um fortassis sequutus in personis, temporibus et rebus ipsis commisit. Occasio et calamus me invitant ad scribendum, sed ne molestus sim tibi occupato, cui vel brevis epistola solet esse longa abrumpo et ut Thuano salutem ex me dicas eidemque me commendes, studiose oro.' (David Hilchen to Isaac Casaubon, 24 February 1606.)

38 'Recueil de Lettres latines adressées au président J.-A. De Thou par plusieurs érudits flamands, anglais, allemands et polonais (1588–1617)', Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale

excerpts of or transcribe Hilchen's comments if they were relevant. Hilchen himself had already died by this time.³⁹ Obviously de Thou did not receive from Rey any of the corrections proposed by Hilchen: the description of the events between 1585 and 1610, including of the Calendar Riots in Riga, were published only in 1620, after the death of de Thou, by his friends Pierre Dupuy (1582–1651) and Nicolas Rigault (1577–1654), but following the example of the *Chronicon Saxoniae* by David Chytraeus with the approach antagonistic to Hilchen.

Hilchen's reaction to the books he read was not always positive or even polite, and he occasionally broke off his friendships with authors because of their publications. This happened, for example, in 1607, when Professor Matthias Dresser (1536–1607) published in Leipzig a letter to the young Thomas Zamoyski (1594–1638), son of Jan Zamoyski, *Epistola ad generosum Dominum Thomam Zamoscium*.⁴⁰ In this letter, he described Jan Zamoyski's presumably critical attitude towards the Jesuits, adding that his information came from an 'unidentified source' and 'confident gossips'.⁴¹ As it was Hilchen who had introduced Dresser to Zamoyski in 1594, Dresser's source of information did not remain secret for long. Because of this, Hilchen reacted to Dresser's booklet with disappointment and anger on 19 July 1607:

de France (hereafter: BNF), Département des manuscrits, Dupuy 836, Andreas Rey de Naglowice to Jacques de Thou, Danzig, 9 March 1613, ff. 158–160 (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10033911w/>). For systematic search among the early modern letters in BNF, I am indebted to Dr Hesi Siimets-Gross (Tartu).

- 39 'Ille qui ad Casaubonum de rebus Livonicis scripsit, David Hilchenius [*pro* Hilckenius *manu correctum*] est ad quem nonnulla Lipsij epistolae extant. Vir eruditus fuit atque in nostris rebus versatissimus, sed qui non ita pridem vivere desijt. Sciam tamen, quis eius commentarios atque notata possideat nihilque intentati relinquam, ut ex ijs aliquid decerpam – aut si tanti momenti erunt, transcripta tecum communicem.' (BNF, 'Recueil de lettres', Rey de Naglowice 9 March 1613, f. 158^v, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10033911w/f159.image>). The connecting person between Hilchen and Rey was probably Jan Zurecki (1582–1643), who has been the *famulus* of brothers Rey during their studies in the University of Altdorf (Elias von Steinmeyer (ed.), *Die Matrikel der Universität Altdorf* (Würzburg: Stürtz, 1912; repr. Nendeln: Kraus 1980), p. 67), and who corresponded with Hilchen (seven letters from 1608 are preserved).
- 40 Matthaeus Dresser, *Epistola ad generosum Dominum Thomam Zamoscium, Generosi Domini Joannis Zamoscii, Cancellarii magni & ducis militaris supremi & generalis Poloniae filium* (Leipzig: Michael Lantzenberger, 1607), USTC 2092677.
- 41 'Fateor me deceptum esse opinione, quam nescio unde conceperam, fore scilicet Academiam illam Zamoscianam Iesuitarum sedem. Itaque cum a me flagitaretur, ut scripto quopiam meo illam ornarem, vel certe parenti tuo de tanto bono gratularer, repressi me ne Iesuitarum felici progressu in Polonia laetari forte viderer. Verum non ita multo post, rumoribus certis ad me delatum est, Zamoscium id genus hominum minime probare, sed procul ab alveolis suis arcere nec pati, ut vestigium pedis in sua ditione ponat' (Dresser, *Epistola ad generosum Dominum Thomam Zamoscium*, f. B–B^v).

From your [published] letter to Thomas Zamoyski I see that you are alive. I am happy for that. But I am sorry for your public attack against the Jesuits. As you should be sorry, for naming me and my recommendation as the source of your attack. ... You should speak plainly: who influenced and supported you in this opinion?⁴²

No further letters between Hilchen and Dresser are known. It is likely that their correspondence came to an end following this offensive criticism.

4 Distributing and Mediating Books and Manuscripts

Distribution and mediation seem to have been a favourite part of Hilchen's literary activities. First of all, as was usual among the humanists, many books were distributed in the form of gifts.⁴³ To make a name for himself Hilchen gave his own books as presents. When contacting famous Western European humanists for the first time, he would always include some of his published works with his letter. Such was the case, for example, with Hilchen's first letter to Justus Lipsius in 1598 and to Isaac Casaubon in 1606.⁴⁴ To his closest humanist friends he sent his new works as soon as they were published. An example is his political pamphlet against Duke Karl of Södermanland (1550–1604, later King Karl IX of Sweden 1604–11), *Prosphonesis ad Nobiles atque incolas Livoniae, qui sese cum Carolo Sudermanniae Duce conjunxerunt*.⁴⁵ He published this pamphlet in hopes of convincing the Livonian nobility to move

42 'Nunc te vivere audio, imo ex litteris, quas ad Thomam Samoscium misisti, video. Laetor quidem te adhuc superstitem esse, sed certe doleo, ut est meus in te amor, quod publice de Fratribus Jesuiticis contendas. Sed aliquid amplius tibi dicam, quod et tu doleas. Quia in litteris tuis me nominasti, et utrum hic adhuc sim quaeris, in suspicionem me das juxta clare, ac si meo suasu id scripisses. Et sic iterum afflicte afflictio additur. Purgavi me ex conscientia. Sed nisi tu quamprimum auctorem indicaveris, quo hortante scripseris, me praecipitem dabis. Dic igitur mi Dressere, aperte absque omni dissimulatione: Quis te movit? Quis ma[liti]am ad istud aedificium tibi suppeditavit? Egone? Ne neges si factum: si non factum, indica, ne suspicio in me haereat.' (David Hilchen to Matthias Dresser, 19 July 1607).

43 Cf. Zemon Davis, *Gift*, pp. 56–72, esp. pp. 60–61; Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods. A New History of the Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 420.

44 As seen from Lipsius' answer (Justus Lipsius to David Hilchen, 20 December 1598, *EMLO*, <http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/w/981802>): 'Praeter epistolam etiam scripta tua adiuncta mihi dicunt: scripta, quibus astipulari debeo elegantiae et doctrinae'; David Hilchen to Isaac Casaubon, 24 February 1606; Hilchen to Casaubon, 24 February 1606: 'Adjeci supplicantem meam Livoniam et Anticarinam (anonymam) orationem.'

45 Hilchen, *Προσφωνησις ad Nobiles*.

away from supporting Sweden and towards Poland.⁴⁶ During his later years in Poland Hilchen even gifted the books of a dead friend – Salomon Frenzel von Friedenthal's *Sacrificium agni caelestis*, published much earlier, in 1592 – to the Polish humanist, Bishop Jan Dymitr Solikowski.⁴⁷

In some cases Hilchen lent friends books from his private library. This emerges in a small number of remarks made by Hilchen expressing his disappointment at not getting his books back. In 1609 he invited to his residence in Orissowo many professors from Academia Samosciana, adding in his invitation to the rector Jan Sechinus (1570–1632) that he could use his authority to force a colleague called Węgrzynowski to return Hilchen's folio edition of the work of Joachim Mynsinger (1514–88).⁴⁸ The unreturned book seems to have been the cause of a conflict between Hilchen and Węgrzynowski, whose contemptible attitude towards the man who had lent it to him and to Hilchen's books generally meant that Hilchen did not even address the borrower personally.

In exceptional cases (primarily from the perspective of publishing) Hilchen entrusted even his manuscripts to his closest humanist friends for reading. For example, in 1603 he sent his commemorative speech about Salomon Frenzel to Johannes Caselius in Helmstedt, hoping Caselius could arrange for additional funeral poems and publish the speech in Helmstedt.⁴⁹ Yet Hilchen's manuscript remained unpublished and the reason for this is unknown. Hilchen had more luck with his mourning poem to Jan Zamoyski, which he sent to Helmstedt two years later: Caselius first shared it among his friends in handwritten form before publishing it for further distribution in Germany and Poland.⁵⁰

46 E.g. David Hilchen to Jan Dymitr Solikowski, 10 December 1601, *EMLO*, <http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/w/981821>: 'Meam etiam Προσφώνησιν mitto, in quibus fui aridior, quam esse debebam.'

47 Salomon Frenzel von Friedenthal, *Sacrificium agni caelestis* (Neiße: Reinheckel, 1592), USTC 691916; David Hilchen to Jan Dymitr Solikowski, 10 May 1600, *EMLO*, <http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/w/981811>: 'Cum nihil praeterea sit, quod scribam, mitto Sacrificium Frencelii nostri.'

48 David Hilchen to Jan Sechinus, 11 July 1609: 'Dederam Węgrzinovio ad tempus Mynsingerum ut eo uteretur. Indignus a[utem] mea salutatione. Tu quaeso omnem adhibe diligentiam, et si opus sit, dextram admove, ut iste liber (folii formam habet) ad me redeat.' It is not clear which book by Joachim Mynsinger von Frundeck is under discussion.

49 David Hilchen to Johannes Caselius, 1 July 1603: 'Mitto orationem meam optimo meo Frencelio inscriptam. Legat eam, et si videbitur, edat, carminib[us] tamen amicorum auctam.'

50 'Tuos autem versos dedi familiaribus legendos: ut plures legerent in Germania vos iterum in Polonia, dedi recudendum typographo: addidi, ut vides ipse eulogiam breve.' (David Hilchen to Johannes Caselius, 30 September 1605.) In the same year (1605), Hilchen's poems were printed both in Poland, *Luctus in obitum Illustrissimi Herois, Domini Ioannis Zamoyski de Zamoscie, Regni Poloniae Supremi Cancellarii, et exercituum Ducis Generalis:*

The second aspect of sharing pertains to the mediation of literary contacts and establishing patronage through them. Particularly in his Polish period Hilchen arranged for dedicatory poems by other authors to his patron Jan Zamoyski and vice versa, placing 'orders' for dedications with the *literati*. For example, in summer 1603 Hilchen ordered dedicatory poems for a large volume of stoic philosophy entitled *Dialectica Ciceronis, ... maxime ex Stoicorum sententia*, which was published a year later in Zamość.⁵¹ The book was compiled by Adam Bursius (1560–1611), a professor at the local academy, but was praised by contemporaries, including Hilchen, as a piece from the youth of Zamoyski himself under the guidance of his teacher in Padua, Carolus Sigonius (1524–84).⁵² In his letters Hilchen sought dedicatory poems from Prussian humanists, from the lawyer Jakob Monau (1546–1603) in Wrocław and from the theologian Christoph Storch (Pelargus) in Frankfurt.⁵³ The poems arranged by Hilchen did not in fact appear in the volume.

For the authors – even for the most honourable university professors – it was not easy belonging to Hilchen's network: they had to take into account that for the remuneration they were paid they had to accept the criticisms and recommendations of his patron Jan Zamoyski and amend their writings even in terms of content. In 1604, Hilchen sent Professor Johannes Caselius in Helmstedt information about remuneration of 100 florins for his educational programme *Ad nobilem adolescentem Davidem Hilchenivm ... Protrephtikos*.⁵⁴ It

Die tertia Iunii Anno 1605 pie placideque defuncti (Zamość: Marcin Łęski, 1605), USTC 268958, and in Helmstedt, *Honori Herois Zamoscii David Hilchen Regiae Maiestati in Polonia a secretis faciebat. Ex editione Zamosciana* (Helmstedt: Academia Iulia, 1605), USTC 2118222.

51 Adam Bursius (ed.), *Dialectica Ciceronis, quae disperse in scriptis reliquit, maxime ex Stoicorum sententia cum commentariis, quibus ea partim supplentur, partim illustrantur* (Zamość: Marcin Łęski, 1604), USTC 257858.

52 Danilo Facca, Valentina Lepri, 'In the shadow of Cicero: an early modern think-tank at the Academy of Zamość', in Katarzyna Marciniak and Elżbieta Olechowska (eds.), *De Amicitia. Transdisciplinary Studies in Friendship* (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2016), pp. 79–89.

53 Both letters are dated 12 July 1603. To Jakob Monau Hilchen wrote: 'Fac periculum si q[ui]d possim apud Ill[ustrissim]u[m] D[omi]n[um] Cancell[ariu]m meum, cui adhaereo, usque dum Justitiam desierit, te in gratiam ponam, si voles et modum ostendes. Brevi ille juventutis suae tyrocinium Dialecticam Stoicam et peripateticam in lucem mittet, cui si carmen aliquod praemiseris, ipse te insinuabis'; and to Christoph Pelargus: 'apud illum [Jan Zamoyski] te in interiorem gratiam ponam, si voles et illi ingenii tui excellentissimi foetum aliquem dedicabis. Brevi in publicum emittet dialecticam stoicam et peripateticam Juventutis suae tyrocinium hoc castigante aliquo carmine si ornaveris, primam glanciem franges.'

54 Johannes Caselius, *Ad nobilem adolescentem Davidem Hilchenivm vt insistat vestigijs maiorum ΠΡΟΤΡΕΠΤΙΚΟΣ* (Helmstedt: Jakob Lucius, 1604), USTC 2026846.

was published by Caselius for Hilchen's oldest son David. Hilchen, however, also had to mediate Zamoyski's recommendations for changes to the programme: 'His Excellence [Jan Zamoyski] wishes certain details to be changed in *Protreptikos*. As soon as I receive his remarks, I shall pass them on to you.'⁵⁵ Yet comparing the first version of *Protreptikos* in 1604 with the second one in the posthumous edition of collected letters of Caselius (1619) reveals no discernible changes.⁵⁶

One of Hilchen's favourite activities in regard to book production was sending factual material about famous people and contemporary events to humanists in other regions for their works, along with his advice about appropriate literary genres. Western European and German humanists particularly appreciated Hilchen as an eyewitness to events in Zamość. Following the death of Jan Zamoyski in June 1605, Johannes Caselius, in his letters of 8 September 1605, sought information for a commemorative book about Zamoyski specifically from Hilchen.⁵⁷ Just two months later, on 13 November 1605, Caselius described how his colleagues, the German humanists, had made use of the material:

I have advised many authors to find the time and commitment to write about such an important event. When you read my letter to Rhodoman, you will note my care and curiosity in this case. When I gave your letter to my familiars [i.e. to the Caseliani in Helmstedt] to read, they were all convinced that it was written with gratitude and great dedication. Although many of them were interested in composing contributions, in the end only Rudolph Diephold wrote a poem.⁵⁸

55 'Protrepticos Caselii non mihi solum, sed Ill[ustrissim]o et Sam[o]scio ita gratus et acceptus fuit, ut pro labore centum illi florenos rependat. Mitto eos per meum famulum ad Constantinum Gise Gedanium, qui eos ad vos diriget. /.../ In protreptico Ill[ustrissim]us nonnulla mutata vellet. Quae illa sint, ubi cognovero, indicabo' (David Hilchen to Mauritius Cannius, 11 October 1604).

56 Ioanni Caselii, *Epistolarum Centuria una ad viros principes* (Helmstedt: heirs of Jakob Lucius, 1619), pp. 234–283. USTC 2135510.

57 'Scripsi pro consolatione ad Thomam Zamoscium. Volo enim isti nationi ostendere nequaquam me esse ingratum hominem, nec frustra fuisse benevolentia et beneficij magni Zamoscij provocatum: Si vivam, dabo aliquid accuratius, et alias quoque summi viri virtutes persequar: in quo tu me iuvabis. Namque et de alijs me ipse monebis, et mittes, quae istic a doctiss[im]is viris monumentis litterarum consignata sunt: nec enim id factum dubito: unde depromam in usus meos, quae videbuntur' (Johannes Caselius to David Hilchen, 8 September 1605, apograph: 'Commercii litterarii Ioannis Caselii', III, Herzog August Bibliothek (hereafter: HAB), Wolfenbüttel, Cod. Guelf. 89 Helmst., 137^v–138).

58 'Namque unum atque alterum, qui scribendo valerent, monui, ut in tantis rebus orandis temporis aliquid et studii ponerent. Hanc meam sollicitudinem sive curiositatem, non

As is widely known, the collection *Laurentii Rhodmani Epos manibus Magni Zamoscii. Alia praeterea multa adiecimus eodem pertinentia* was first published in 1606 in Helmstedt. It contained a long Greek encomiastic poem by the German humanist Laurentius Rhodomanus (Lorenz Rhodoman, 1546–1606) with a translation into Latin, a poem by Rudolph Diephold, two poems by David Hilchen and many letters written by Johannes Caselius and David Hilchen to different addressees that document the preparation process of the book in detail.⁵⁹ In addition, in the same year the poem by Rudolph Diephold was published separately in Helmstedt.⁶⁰

5 Producing Books

Hilchen's third main activity in the world of books was their production. As mentioned before, Hilchen was a prolific humanist author and poet himself. All of his works were written in Latin.

As an author, Hilchen was not as confident as he was in the role of reader and organiser of books, but heeded the advice of prominent literary advisors from different countries and sought to adapt himself to different literary standards depending on the genre and purpose of his books. The earliest example comes from his activities as an orator. During the election of the Polish King Sigismund III Hilchen prepared a long festive speech of more than 10,000 words, which is extant only as a manuscript in Riga.⁶¹ Obviously, Hilchen was interested in publishing it, despite there being no printing house in Riga before 1588. To improve the quality of his speech, Hilchen commissioned thorough

admodum, ut opinor, reprehendendam ex mea ad Rhodomannum epistola perspexeris, aut videbis, quando haec leges. Eam cum legendam his quoque familiaribus darem, non fuit nemo, qui illam grate, et erga summam virtutem studiose scriptam diceret. Forte et apud nos erant alii, qui mihi morem gerent, voluntatem autem meam secutus est modo Rudolphus Diepholdius, vir et doctrina multiplici praeditus et humanae vitae intelligens' (Johannes Caselius to David Hilchen, 13 November 1605, *EMLO*; editio princeps: Laurentius Rhodomanus, *Laurentii Rhodmani Epos manibus Magni Zamoscii. Alia praeterea multa adiecimus eodem pertinentia* (Helmstedt: Jakob Lucius (II), 1606), fol. E3^v, USTC 2027254).

59 Regarding the background of the Greek poem by Laurentius Rhodomanus cf. Walther Ludwig, 'Der Humanist Laurentius Rhodomanus als griechischer Dichter Laurentios Rodoman und seine Autobiographie von 1582', *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch, Journal of Neo-Latin Language and Literature*, 16 (2014), pp. 137–171.

60 Rudolph Diephold, *Inclvtae memoriae Magni Zamoscii. Carmen Rudolphi Diepholdi* (Helmstedt: Jakob Lucius, 1606), USTC 2040292.

61 David Hilchen, 'De amabili Civium christianorum concordia paraenetica Oratio Varsoviae in Conventu Electionis Generali mense Julii anno 1587', *LVVA*, Riga, 673–3 (K-11)-4, ff. 1–30^v.

proofreading of it from the Italian humanist Gian Michele Bruto (Johannes Michael Brutus, 1517–92), who from 1576 to 1586 served as the court historiographer to the Polish king Stephan Bathory in Cracow. In more than two hundred remarks in the margins and in footnotes Bruto corrected Hilchen's word choice (synonyms, the influence of German in his word formation, semantics and phraseology) and occasionally also verbal forms and syntactical constructions, such as accusative with infinitive instead of subordinate clauses. Even though it remains an example of an unfinished book, it proves how high were the linguistic standards Hilchen established for his works.

In early 1596 Professor Johannes Caselius of Helmstedt sent literary advice to Hilchen.⁶² Hilchen seems to have sent him his manuscript about the history of Riga – a text mentioned in other sources as Hilchen's only historiographical monograph: *Brevis narratio earum rerum quae An[no] 1585 a 12 die Jan[uarii] juxta Calend[arium] Gregor[ium] Rigae mota in ibidem seditione contra Maiest[at]em reg[iam] nec non consulatum civitatis sine causis legitimis ac probabilibus temere, petulanter et hostiliter attentata ac commissa sunt.*⁶³ It clearly remained unfinished and unpublished, and even the manuscript has never been found in the archives. In his letter, Caselius encourages Hilchen to continue writing his historical opus, underscoring two important aspects of good historians. Firstly, history must be written by contemporaries who witnessed the events as well as participating in them.⁶⁴ Secondly, it is not enough to live in the midst of historical events and observe them. According to Caselius, true history could only be written by a person who had investigated

62 This letter (Johannes Caselius to David Hilchen, 1 February *1596, *EMLO*, <http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/w/981788>) is extant in three contemporary copies: firstly, as a manuscript concept, defective at the end and containing many corrections, in 'Johannis Caselii epistolae ad amicos de anno 1596', HAB, Wolfenbüttel, Cod. Guelf. 86o Helmst., ff. 77r–78v; secondly, as a manuscript fair copy in *ibid.*, ff. 129r–130v; and thirdly, printed in Johannes Peparinus, *Ad Magnificvm et Nobilem Dn. Davidem Hilchen I[uris]C[onsult]um et Oratorem Cl[arissim]um Amplissimae Reip[ublicae] Rigensis Syndicum, Serenissimi Regis Poloniae per Liuoniam Secretarium, et nunc Legatum in Germaniam Ode Ioan[nis] Peparini, qua transeunti Helmaestadium gratulatur* (Helmstedt: Jakob Lucius (1), 1595), pp. A2–A2v, USTC 6o8764.

63 Benjamin von Bergmann, *Die Kalenderunruhen in Riga in den Jahren 1585 bis 1590* (Bergmanns Historische Studien, vol. 2) (Leipzig: J. F. Hartknoch, 1806), p. 9.

64 Caselius to Hilchen, 1 February 1596: 'Nunc et eam ad te mitto: et remitto, quae rogatus mihi legenda relinqueres: legi diligenter omnia: multa didici, quae uel ante non accepissemus, uel secus narrata fuissent. Qui omnium spectator fuerit, qui pleraque ipse administravit; ab eo historiam conscribi operae pretium est.'

the sources. Not only should all events be described in the right order, but the causes of the events should also be described.⁶⁵

Caselius was not entirely uncritical: he recommended that Hilchen improve his writing to achieve the best result for society as a whole. Nevertheless, he was afraid that Hilchen, as a politician, would not have the time to do so. Yet for Hilchen to write the history himself was the only way to save his name from oblivion and provide a correct history of his fatherland for future generations.⁶⁶

The subject of the true history of Riga was of personal importance to Hilchen, as in the 1590–3 editions of the influential and widely disseminated chronicle of David Chytraeus entitled *Chronicon Saxoniae et vicinarum aliquot gentium ab anno 1500 usque ad 1593*, Hilchen's role in the Calendar Riots in Riga was depicted subjectively, from the point of view of rebellious citizens. Just before receiving Caselius' letter, at the end of 1595 Hilchen met with Chytraeus in Rostock and discussed the topic with him. The result of this meeting was that in the German translation of the chronicle in 1596, as well as in subsequent Latin editions from 1600 onwards, a new take on the Calendar Riots was presented and the thirtieth book in the chronicles was dedicated to Hilchen and the burgrave of Riga, Nicolaus Eccius. As a result, Hilchen obviously had no interest in publishing his own monograph about recent history, which Caselius had recommended that Hilchen do in his letter.

In his exile in Zamość Hilchen sought literary advice from many leading local humanists. Prior to printing mourning poems after the death of his patron Jan Zamoyski, Hilchen asked Szymon Szymonowic (Simon Simonides, 1558–1629) for his opinion.⁶⁷ After a trivial Horatian verse about the power of poetry to eternalise great deeds (*Odes* 4.8.28), Hilchen asks for benevolent advice from Szymonowic, as only benign feedback could help Hilchen in his emotionally difficult situation. The poems – the first in epodic metre (hexameter + iambic

65 Caselius to Hilchen, 1 February 1596: 'Qui enim explorata scribit, hic solus uera scribat: idem nihil omittit omnium, quae narrari oporteat: nec solum, quae gesta sint, narret ordine, sed consilia quoque, in quibus rerum causae reconditae sunt, exponat.'

66 Caselius to Hilchen, 1 February 1596: 'Non relinque hoc opus; censeo, vbi perpolieris, publici iuris facias. At quam ueeor, vt possis per negotia! Quin decerpe ex ijs aliquid temporis: quae agis alia ad salutem quidam publicam pertinent: sed hoc pacto nomen etiam tuum ab obliuione vindicabis: etsi fieri non potest, ut quicumque istas res consignet, non tua simul erga patriam merita praedicet. Quare etiamsi te minus respicias, historiam patriae certam posteris inuidere noli.'

67 'Ecce funera. Sed nollem ea excudi, priusquam censionem tuam exercueris. Dignos laude viros, Musa vetat mori. Nihil quaero nisi benevolentiam, qua nunc maxime opus mihi est. Velim igitur mea causa tantum laboris subeas, et novam hisce tenebris lucem adferas' (David Hilchen to Szymon Szymonowic, 13 June 1605).

trimeter), the second in Asclepiadean verse and the third in elegiac distichs – were published that same year.⁶⁸ As Hilchen stressed at the end of the longest poem, he was hesitant after all about his metric skills: ‘Meanwhile, what I could not cover metrically, I will soon take up in more voluminous speech.’⁶⁹ As such, it was most likely advice on metric questions which Hilchen awaited from Szymonowic above all else.⁷⁰

In addition to help with the language, content and metrical problems of his books, Hilchen sometimes sought advice on stylistic matters. Preparing a currently unidentified poem in 1609, Hilchen consulted Professor Adam Bursius about its style. Clearly Hilchen did not like the answer Bursius gave him, which recommended a more temperate style, as he did not amend his poem.⁷¹

Hilchen’s book production comprised not only the preparation of original works, but (the commissioning of) translations as well. In early 1607, Professor Albert (Wojciech) Siemkowski (died 1610) of the Academy of Zamość was engaged in translating into Polish some of Hilchen’s writings about the political situation in Riga in the 1580s, most likely about the Calendar Riots. Siemkowski evidently sought Hilchen’s advice on how to translate into Polish a word that marked this historical event, as there was no established term for such a rebellion in the language. Hilchen recommended using the Latin word *secessio*:

Your efforts in translating [my writings] into Polish are a gift to me. I shall repay it to the utmost. I do hope there is no term in Polish for the phenomenon you asked me about, since we will therefore have much less trouble with the words. As we had such an event, we must find a term to signify it. The first authors who wrote about it referred to it as *secessio*, and the use of this word has taken root. Why then have we to find another word for it? I recommend that you do not concern yourself with the words so much, as it may slow the completion of the translation.⁷²

68 Hilchen, *Luctus In obitum*.

69 ‘Interea quod non potui comprehendere metro, / Mox pleniori oratione persequar’ (Hilchen, *Luctus In obitum*, Verse 145–146).

70 For complete analysis of Hilchen’s metrical and prosodical skills cf. Maria-Kristiina Lotman ‘Die Versmaße, Versformen, Prosodie und Rhythmik in der Dichtung von David Hilchen’, in Kristi Viiding and Martin Klöker (eds.), David Hilchen. *Sub velis poeticis Lateinische Gedichte* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2021), pp. 37–45.

71 ‘Inconsiderate autem viderer mihi facturus si in tanta carminis brevitate omitterem ultimum distichon, praesertim cum illud me non omissurum ita rogatus promiserim. Gratissimum igitur scito mihi rem te facturum, si Sophiae Suadelam addi carmini promiseris. Scio dissimilem illum tui, imo sui ipsius esse. Sed ratio habenda est meae constantiae’ (David Hilchen to Adam Bursius, 4 August 1609).

72 ‘Labor iste, quem D[ominati]o V[estra] rogatu meo in translationem Lachicarum lucubrationum impendit, instar muneris mihi est. Eum igitur quacunquē re potero rependam.

It seems the translation was never completed, however, and that no writings by Hilchen were ever published in Polish.

Last but not least, Hilchen organised the publication of many other books. One of the earliest examples of his activities as a publisher is from 1594, when he recommended to Jan Zamoyski the writings of three German *literati*: Johannes Caselius from Helmstedt, the humanist historian Matthias Dresser from Leipzig and the Riga cathedral school inspector Johannes Rivius (1528–96) to Jan Zamoyski. Caselius had drafted a piece eulogising Zamoyski, according to Hilchen's descriptions of the man; Dresser had written a laudatory speech about the office of chancellor using the example of Zamoyski; and Rivius had written in modest praise of Zamoyski and his academy.⁷³ Hilchen's further aim in this mediation was to gain the favour and support of Zamoyski for all four of them, himself included. Ultimately, only one part of the planned collection was issued: the *Oratio de Instituta Illustrissimi Domini, D. Joannis De Zamoyscio, benignissima liberalitate Academia Zamosciana ... elaborate studio et diligentia Joannis Rivii, Inspectoris Scholae, Mense Januarii Anno salutiferi partus MDXCV* by Rivius.⁷⁴

Utinam istius rei, de qua D[ominatio] V[estra] q[uae]rit, nullus in Pol[oni]a usus extisset. Sic minus de verbis laboraremus. Nunc a[utem] ita res, ut sese dat, appellanda est. Seccessione primi istius rei auctores appellarunt, et sic iam usus obtinuit. Cur nos eam aliter appellamus? De vocabulis nolim D[omi]n[ationem] V[estram] adeo sollicitum esse. Metuo [e]n[im] ne ista nimia sollicitudo retardet laborem, quem expeditum cuperem' (David Hilchen to Wojciech Siemkowski, 1 March 1607).

73 'Sunt ig[itu]r, quibus Ill[ustrissim]ae Cels[itati] V[est]rae favorem conciliare studeo, viri omnibus liberalibus disciplinis exculti, Joannes Caselius: Matthaeus Dresserus, et Joannes Rivius, ... Ex his Caselius in Academia Helmstadien[si], imit[at]io[n]e subiectissimae erga Ill[ustrissimam] Cels[itatem] V[est]ram observantiae meae: atque navatae a me opellae, in diuulganda ab Ill[ustrissim]a Cels[itate] V[est]ra instituta Academia. Elogium ipse quoque ex dispositione mea iam meditatur, ad commenda[n]dum immortalitati et posteritati nomen Ill[ustrissim]ae Cels[itatis] V[est]rae. Dresserus autem in Academia Lipsica magnus, vt Ill[ustrissim]a Cels[it]as V[est]ra innotescat, oratiunculam de munere Cancellarii habitam mittit, et in ea non falso Ill[ustrissim]am Cels[itatem] V[est]ram laudat. ... Riuius autem nobiscum est, praefectus nuper admodum Inspectioni scholae n[ost]rae, qui quidem quam sit deditus Ill[ustrissim]ae Cels[itati] V[est]rae, eius [it]rae docebunt: et ipse breui eiusmodi edito scripto declarabit, ut studiosissimum ... nominis Zamosciani esse, et Ill[ustrissim]ae C[elsita]ti V[est]rae et omnibus qui id lecturi sunt, persuasissimum fieri queat. V[est]ra autem Ill[ustrissim]a Cels[it]as, subiectissima petitione mea permota, gratiosissimo fauore universos hosce et singulo[s] comprehendet' (David Hilchen to Jan Zamoyski, 11 September 1594, *EMLO*, <http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/w/981785>).

74 Johannes Rivius, *Oratio de Instituta Illustrissimi Domini, D. Joannis De Zamoyscio, benignissima liberalitate Academia Zamosciana ... elaborate studio et diligentia Joannis Rivii, Inspectoris Scholae, Mense Januarii Anno salutiferi partus MDXCV* (Riga: Nicolaus Mollyn, 1595), *USTC* 6910563.

From these examples it is evident that Hilchen had a great interest in producing books, but that very few of his plans were fully or even partly completed. His activities in this field did not end after he left Riga, whose printing house was answerable to him as the *Druckereiherr*, but continued intensively during his exile, when he made use of the printing possibilities afforded in Vilnius, Cracow and especially in Zamość.

6 Typical and Untypical in Hilchen's Humanist Approach to the Book Culture

The analysis of David Hilchen's letters and especially his remarks and discussions about different practices connected with books demonstrates that in research on early modern book culture and networking, correspondences provide a rich vein of material not only regarding political and private relationships, but also literary practices. Hilchen's correspondence is the earliest evidence for the systematic spread of the learned 'republic of letters' and with it of the humanist book culture to the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, including to Livonia. Since a very young age – in 1577 Hilchen was sixteen – he was occupied with creating his own 'republic of letters'. As a typical citizen on the geographical periphery of Europe, he tried to develop his epistolary community with as many distinguished scholars as possible: among his almost two hundred correspondents he received feedback from most well-known contemporary humanists such as Johannes Caselius, Justus Lipsius, Isaac Casaubon, or Jan Dymitr Solikowski. By learning from their wide-ranging erudition Hilchen started to understand the humanist approach to books. Already at the age of thirty he was engaged in almost all areas of book culture: he ordered books from catalogues, read and criticised them as a literary advisor, lent books to his friends as a private librarian, wrote books as an author, sent news about Livonian and Polish events and individuals to Western European authors as an informant, commissioned, edited and published original books and translations as a literary manager and *Druckereiherr* in Riga, and last but not least, he sent books as gifts. Hilchen organised literary culture not only in Riga, Livonia and later in Zamość, but throughout the Baltic region and Europe. This meant the continuous overriding of confessional limits. As such, he was the last and maybe the only person in Livonia who embodied real humanism, maintaining Lutheran, Calvinist, Catholic, Jesuit and possibly even Eastern Orthodox networks for literary purposes.⁷⁵

75 It is probable because Hilchens's older brother Johannes was appointed personal physician in 1600 to the Russian Tsar Boris Godunov.

Literature and books were for Hilchen never introspective activities, but above all social and creative occupations, through which he demonstrated his devotion to collaborative effort. Yet, trying to put into practice almost all activities from the wide-ranging humanist approach to book culture, Hilchen became overloaded with too many tasks, having insufficient time to realise them all. His letters reveal a clear contrast between many activities, but meagre results in terms of actual publications. Clearly, it was not a great problem to Hilchen. Even as some of his projects remained unfinished, he created in his letters a sympathy among recipients towards books and literary topics, spreading and deepening thereby the idea of the 'republic of letters' on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea.

An exceptional side of Hilchen's humanist model must be stressed, however: All of the discussions and remarks in his letters are about contemporary literary practices and contemporary and prospective works – not about earlier, classical authors and writings or even about the Bible or theological treatises. Of course, Hilchen sometimes quotes or alludes to the Bible or classical authors and uses genres from classical antiquity, but only *ornatus* or *docilitatis causa*, not as a subject *per se*. In the context of Livonian literary practices, with their clear tendency towards Latin school rhetoric on the one side and vernacular (Low) German literature, mainly about the theological topics on the other, Hilchen's attitude may seem unexpected, innovative or sometimes even inappropriate.

In subsequent studies of later (especially seventeenth- and eighteenth-century) book culture on the eastern shore of the Baltic, the impact of this humanist model with its vivid social network and many different practices should be a starting point for further comparison. One of the most inviting prospects is to analyse Hilchen's letters to his sons, considering if and how he passed on his example directly and intentionally in the family.