Rainer Gebhardt (ed.), *Arithmetische und algebraische Schriften der frühen Neuzeit. Tagungsband zum wissenschaftlichen Kolloquium "Arithmetische und algebraische Schriften der frühen Neuzeit", vom 22. – 24 April 2005 in der Berg- und Adam-Ries-Stadt Annaberg-Buchholz. (Schriften des Adam-Ries-Bundes Annaberg-Buchholz, 17). Annaberg-Buchholz: Adam-Ries-Bund, 2005. Pp. x+500. Indexes of subjects, personal names and place names. ISBN 3-930430-68-1.*

The volume under review, like several predecessors in the same series, contains contributions about German *Rechenmeister*, cossists and other Early Modern German mathematicians and their writings. Even though the present title suggests concentration on the writings, presentation of the personal and professional history of the mathematical authors balances the description and analysis of texts. Even though no genuine prosopography can evidently be intended, the collection of articles thus offers an interesting (and sometimes moving) perspective on the German mathematical scene between the outgoing fifteenth and the mid-seventeenth century at the *Rechenmeister*-as well as the (not always more sophisticated) university level, regarding social conditions as well as professional organization; even though many of the texts that are presented are described in rather general terms supplemented by brief sample passages, readers who are familiar with the *Rechenmeister* type of mathematics (and those of us who belong to the older generation should be from our own school time) will still get a fair impression.

The following *Rechenmeister* and/or *Rechenbücher* are dealt with:

- Georg Reychelstayn (fl. 1531); a rather detailed description of his *Kauffmans handbüchlin.* By Stefan Deschauer).
- Goettschalck Muellingshausen (c. 1568–1546 or earlier). By Richard Hergenhahn.
- Lorenz Meder († 1561); about his *Handelbuch,* in the context of Italian commercial handbooks, Fugger notebooks and contemporary trade patterns. By Markus A. Denzel.
- Conrad Pöpping (1588–1657); by Christian Schubert.
- Johann Eisenhut (fl. 1516–1565), in the wider context of the Augsburg *Rechenmeister* scene. By Rudolf Haller & Inge Keil.
- An anonymous Nürnberg booklet from c. 1530, described by Stefan Deschauer.
- Anton Neudorffer (1571–1628); about the various editions of his *Practic,* and about Esajas Weber's partial plagiary (*Arithmetica oder Rechenbuch,* 1601). With an appendix on metrologies and various indexes. By Rudolf Haller.
- Two manuscripts of elementary *Rechenmeister*-type (Paulus Kriechbaum, 1554, Sebastian Newber, 1580). By Jürgel Kühl.
- Adam Ries (1492–1559), about his "bread regulation", and its kin. By Rainer Gebhardt. The next contribution, by Wolfgang Lorenz, deals with the social descent of the Ries family after Adam's death.
- Johan Sekgerwitz (fl. 1535), publication details about his *Rechenbuechlein.* By Richard

Hergenhahn.

Topically related but general in approach are contributions on
– the *Rechenmeister* tradition in Franconia. By Wolfgang Kaunzner.
– *Rechenmeister* mentioned in the city council protocols of Ulm. By Kurt Hawlitschek.
– *Rechenbücher* in the possession of inhabitants of Leipzig until c. 1600, as documented in juridical archive material. By Bernd Rüdiger.
– Identification of the authors of these book. By Menso Folkerts und Rainer Gebhardt.

Two papers describe goldsmiths publishing about perspective theory:
– Heinrich Lautensack (1522–1568). By Andreas Kühne.
– Wenzel Jamnitzer. By Christa Binder.

Other articles deal with university or *Gymnasium* scholars, some of them contributing to the *Rechenbuch* genre, others not:
– Georg Peurbach's mathematical works, and their importance for the development of mathematics. By Wolfgang Kaunzner.
– Johann Adolph Tassius (1585–1654), friend of Jungius and his collaborator at the Hamburg *Gymnasium*; author of mathematical textbooks for the school published by his successor. By Catrin Pieri.
– Johannes Reuchlin (1544–1522) – no mathematical author at all, but a Hebrew scholar and cabbalist. By Karl Röttel, who enlists Reuchlin as an opponent of the new German orthography and other foes.
– Ambrosius Lacher (c. 1470–1540). Published university textbooks, in part on his own printing press; also author of a Latin *Algorithmus mercatorum* (1506, 3 reprints until 1525). By Barbara Schmidt-Thieme.
– Caspar Peucer (1525–1602), author of a (decent but not innovative) algebra (*Logistice regulae arithmeticae*) appended to an astronomical treatise from 1556. By Anne Meißner supervised by Stefan Deschauer.
– Gemma Frisius (1508–1555). The article deals with his concise *Arithmeticae practicae methodus facilis* and the more than 100 re-editions that appeared; the bibliography has unfortunately been left out. By Ulrich Reich.
– Abdias Trew (1597–1669), mathematics professor in Altdorf 1636–1669, author of works on mixed mathematics (in particular surveying and music), creator of an analog computing instrument (the *Ingenieur-Stab*). By Hans Gaab.
– Ehrenfried Walther von Tschirnhaus (1651–1708; no university teacher but working at the best academic level of his time). The article describes the mathematical books in the family library from which he got his education. By Dieter Bauke.
– Heinrich Hoffmann (1576–1652), mathematics professor at Jena University 1613–1652, author of a "German Euclid" (no translation but an inductive introduction to geometry) and a work on a new geodetic instrument, the octant. By Stefan Kratochwil.

- Ludolph van Ceulen (1540–1610), whose determination of π is compared to that of al-Kashī. By Harald Gropp.
- Christiern Thorkildsen Morsing (1485–1560) and Claus Lauridsen Scavenius (c. 1517–1590), both professors of mathematics at Copenhagen university (without any noteworthy merit beyond service for powerful nobles), and both authors of very elementary *Rechenbücher* in Latin respectively Danish. By Jens Ulff-Møller.

Wholly outside the theme falls an article by Eberhard Schröder, "From the monochord to J. S. Bach's *Wohltemperierte Clavier*". It may be characterized by the author's belief that the Pythagoreans needed to know at least the relative frequencies of tones in order to make their theory of harmonics, and that they measured these by means of a primitive phonograph writing on a moving wax tablet!