

# PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES OF GRADUATE (1916) OF RIGA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE JĀNIS RUPAIS (1889–1974) IN LATVIA

ALĪDA ZIGMUNDE\*

ILZE GUDRO

Riga Technical University

ILZE ŪSELE

INETA BAUERE

Gulbene Municipality Museum of History and Art

**Summary.** The research on *Jānis Rupais* (1889–1974), engineer, pedagogue, and graduate of the Department of Chemistry (1916) of Riga Polytechnic Institute (RPI), was conducted using the documents of the National Archives of Latvia, the Latvian State Historical Archive and the Latvian State Archives, as well as *Gulbene* Municipality Museum of History and Art. The article about the well-known pedagogue in Latvia in the 20th century – the long-term and only Principal of *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School (1926–1944) *J. Rupais* also reflects on his activities after World War II at Riga Industrial Polytechnicum. It describes both the educational institutions, the principal and pedagogue *J. Rupais* and his work methods, and the contribution he made to *Gulbene* and Latvia.

**Keywords:** *Jānis Rupais*, Riga Polytechnic Institute, *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School, Riga Polytechnicum.

## Family of *Jānis Rupais*

*Jānis Rupais* was born on 5 May 1889 in *Vecpiebalga* Parish to the family of farmer *Jānis Rupais* (1839–1923) and his wife *Maja Rupais* (b. *Gūta*; 1856–1944). The father came from the house of *Jēkuļi*, but later moved with his family to *Svīkulti*. It is known that his mother – *M. Rupais* – lived

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail: [alida.zigmunde@rtu.lv](mailto:alida.zigmunde@rtu.lv)

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there until the end of her life in 1944 [1]. *Jānis* was the second child in the family. He had sisters *Marta Rupā* (1888–1958) and *Olga Zālīte* (b. *Rupā*; 1897–1957), and brother *Osvalds Rupais* (1896–1975) [2]. In the autumn of 1918, *Osvalds* entered the Department of Engineering of the Baltic Technical Higher School, which continued the work of RPI (1918–1919). Due to a change in power, this higher school was closed in January 1919, and the Latvian Higher School (LHS) was established in its place in February. *O. Rupais* continued his studies there from February to May 1919 [3]. After that, *Osvalds* intermittently studied (1920–1931) at the University of Latvia (UL; until 1923 – Latvian Higher School) at the Department of Cultural Engineering of the Faculty of Engineering, the Department of Forestry at the Faculty of Agriculture, and the Department of National Economy at the Faculty of National Economics and Law, but he did not obtain a university diploma [4]. Parents wanted their sons to get a good education, it was considered a great value in the family. The *Rupais* family developed the desire to learn thanks to the contribution made by the Moravian Church in *Vidzeme* to the education and upbringing of the people since the 18th century.

The wives of both sons were also educated and received higher education. *Osvalds'* wife *Marta Rupā* (b. *Krieviņa*; 1900–1989) also graduated from the UL (1940) and worked as a Latvian language teacher in Riga schools [5]. The wife of *Jānis Rupais*, *Elizabete Rupā* (b. *Grunte*; 1893–1987), graduated from the Faculty of Chemistry of the UL (1923) [6] and worked there as an assistant (1923–1925) [7]. She later worked as a teacher of physics and chemistry at *Valmiera* Commercial School, after World War II – at Riga Industrial Polytechnicum (since 1991 – Riga State Technical School), as well as a senior research associate at the Institute of Forestry Problems of the Academy of Sciences of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1950, she obtained the degree of a candidate of technical sciences, defending her dissertation «*Eglu kolofonija derivati un to raksturojums*» (Spruce Rosin Derivatives and their Characteristics) [8]. One of the opponents of the thesis was Professor, Academician *Arvīds Kalniņš* (1894–1981) – a graduate (1916) of the Department of Chemistry of RPI and a fellow student of *J. Rupais*.

## Studies and Fellow Students at Riga Polytechnic Institute and the First Working Years

In 1909, *J. Rupais* graduated from the supplementary class of Riga City Real School and then studied for a year at the Imperial Moscow Technical School in Russia. In September 1910, *J. Rupais* started studying at the Department of Chemistry of RPI. Studies had to be paid for, and

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on 31 August 1912, *J. Rupais* was expelled from the institute for non-payment of study fees. It must be assumed that the parents had no money and the young man worked for a year to continue his studies in September 1913 [9; p. 126]. During World War I, in the summer of 1915, in connection with the approach of the front line, RPI was evacuated to Moscow. A large number of lecturers and students were also evacuated, including *J. Rupais*. In May 1916, he graduated from RPI with honours, obtaining a diploma of an engineering technologist. Several Latvians started their studies at the Department of Chemistry at the same time with him, for example, *Gustavs Vanags* (1891–1965) [9; p. 96], who graduated from LHS (1921) and became a well-known organic chemist, professor at UL and RPI, academician. *G. Vanags* shared a close friendship with his fellow student *Jānis Dāvis* (1891–1965), who completed his studies at the UL (1926) and worked as a sub-assistant (1922–1927) at the Faculty of Chemistry of the UL [10]. Although *J. Dāvis* lived in Canada at the end of his life, whereas *G. Vanags* lived in Latvia, they corresponded and maintained friendly relations. The passing away of *G. Vanags* is said to have affected the health of *J. Dāvis*, his life also ended after a few months [11]. Both passed away in 1965. In 1965, another Latvian fellow student passed away – *Ernests Kreišmanis* (1890–1965), who received a diploma of engineer-technologist in 1915 and entered Alexander Military School in Moscow. He took part in World War I, joined the Latvian army in 1918, took part in the Latvian War of Independence, and was awarded the Order of *Lāčplēsis* (1921) [12]. *Visvaldis Dūms* (1892–1940), who studied chemistry at both RPI and UL, also had a similar life course – he served in both the Russian and Latvian armies and was awarded the Order of *Lāčplēsis* (1920) [13]. Fellow student, a graduate (1915) of RPI *Aleksandrs Plūme* (1890–1986) connected his life with railways. Citizen of *Tukums* City *Roberts Zēbergs* (1889–1938) [14] became a customs official and graduated from RPI a year later than *J. Rupais* – in 1917. In 1915, *Eduards Dundurs* (1891–1935), who worked in factories in Russia for several years, stopped his studies. However, he did not finish his studies when he returned to Latvia. He was Vice-Director (1921–1923) and Director (1923–1935) of the Department of Customs [15]. *Viktors Liniņš* (1891–1968) also started studying chemistry in 1910, after a year he transferred to the Department of Agriculture and graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture of the UL (1925). *V. Liniņš*, like *J. Rupais*, was a well-known pedagogue during the interwar period. He was awarded the Order of the Three Stars of Class IV in 1933, and worked as a teacher in *Smiltene*, *Priekule*, and *Mežotne* [16].

Among *J. Rupais'* fellow students, there were also foreigners. Lev Sitin (*Лев Сытин*; 1891–1973) was one of them, he studied at RPI for only one year and gained recognition as a participant in shooting at V Games

of the Olympiad in Stockholm (1912). His life was mainly related to Moscow, where he worked as a photographer [17]. Mikhail Reshetnikov (*Михаил Решетников*; 1878–1937) was born in Perm Governorate of Russia and studied in Riga until World War I. In the 1930s, he was the Technical Director and Chief Engineer of the factory «Altmetalzavod» (*Алтметаллзавод*). He became a victim of the Great Terror in Russia – in 1937, he was executed as an «enemy of the people» [18]. Other fellow students should also be mentioned: a Jew – *Leibs Vulfsons* (1891–?), who completed his studies at the UL (1923), a Polish, a graduate (1917) of RPI *Eduard Jelowicki* (1889–after 1929), Baltic Germans Richard Raasche (1889–?), a graduate (1917) of RPI, and Max Ostwald (1891–?), who as a German citizen was conscripted into military service for a year in 1911. He was the son of Gottfried Ostwald (1855–1918), brother of Willhelm Ostwald (1853–1932), former Professor (1881–1887) of Riga Polytechnicum (RP) and Nobel Prize laureate (1909). His father, G. Ostwald, had entered RP in 1875 to study commercial sciences, but he was drafted into the German military service after a few months and did not resume his studies after a year. The two aforementioned students of the Department of Chemistry – Baltic Germans M. Ostwald and R. Raasche – moved to Germany in 1939.

Although the personal student file of *J. Rupais* has not been preserved in the Latvian State Historical Archive of the National Archives of Latvia, the study book of his fellow student *E. Dundurs* has been preserved [19]. It is signed by a graduate (1889) of RP, Dean of the Department of Chemistry of RPI (1906–1917), Professor (1894), multiple Nobel Prize candidate *Pauls Valdens* (1863–1957), who taught chemistry, as well as Adjunct Professor Hermann Pflaum (1862–1912), who taught physics, graduate (1903) of RPI, Assistant Professor, architect Hermann Seuberlich (1878–1938), lecturer of architectural forms, Professor Bruno Karl Doss (1861–1919), lecturer of geology, mineralogy, etc. Knowledge was assessed on a five-grade scale, allowing for such grades as 3 ½ and 4 ½.

After graduating from RPI, *J. Rupais* lived and worked in Russia. From 1 February 1916 to 30 September 1917, he worked at a factory of asphyxiating and explosive substances in Moscow. Then he moved to Petersburg (at present – St. Petersburg), where from 1 October 1917 to 15 September 1919, he worked at an oil refining factory, from 16 September 1919 to 7 September 1921 – at the company «Neftegaz» (*Нефтьгаз*), the oil, gas, and oxygen factory. After returning to Latvia, from 1 October 1921 to 30 November 1924, *J. Rupais* worked in the industrial enterprises of the trading and industrial joint-stock company «Nafta» in Riga and *Daugavpils*. This was followed by work in the salt processing company of the trading and industrial joint-stock company

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«*Baltujūra*» in *Liepāja* from 1 December 1924 to 14 March 1925. Later, he worked as a teacher for more than a quarter of a century – first from 15 March 1925 to 31 August 1926 at *Cēsis* State Vocational School, then in *Gulbene* and Riga [20].

## Operation of *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School (1926–1944)

*Gulbene* developed rapidly in the first half of the 20th century. The narrow-gauge railway line *Pļaviņas–Gulbene–Alūksne–Valka* was built here; in 1916, it was converted to broad-gauge, and a new line was built: *Gulbene–Ieriķi*. The population also increased, and in 1928, *Gulbene*, which until then was a densely populated place with small village rights called *Vecgulbene*, got city rights.

As the population grew, it became necessary to build new public buildings, including various educational institutions. In the summer of 1925, the Director of the Board of Schools *R. Liepiņš*, in consultation with representatives of the local and county municipalities, agreed to open a vocational school in *Vecgulbene*, which would be in the interests of the workers of the *Vecgulbene* railway junction [21]. In 1926, *Vecgulbene* Vocational School was opened, but it did not have suitable premises and it operated on the premises of the old pub. In the beginning, it was a three-year vocational school with the Departments of Commerce and Mechanics. In the following school year, the Department of Commerce was transformed into a Commercial School, which was combined with the Department of Mechanics of the vocational school. Thus, in 1928, *Vecgulbene* (after acquiring city rights – *Gulbene*) State Commercial School and Vocational School with the status of a secondary school began its work. At the end of 1926, the government decided to allocate 160 000 lats for the construction of a special building [22]. In 1926, *J. Rupais* became the Principal of the newly founded *Gulbene (Vecgulbene (1926–1928))* vocational school. On 10 September 1927, the foundation stone was laid for the new school building. The Minister of Education *Jānis Pliekšāns (Rainis; 1865–1929)*, the Director of the Board of Schools of the Ministry of Education *Reinis Liepiņš (1885–1949)*, the Director of Vocational Schools *Indriķis Zubāns (1884–1961)* and the designer of the new construction of the vocational school *Indriķis Blankenburgs (1887–1944)* came to the celebration. [23]. Two of the guests were RPI graduates – *Indriķis Zubāns*, a graduate (1915) of the Department of Engineering, and *Indriķis Blankenburgs*, a graduate (1913) of the Department of Architecture. Designed by *I. Blankenburgs*, the building of *Gulbene* State Commercial

School and Vocational School at 10 *Skolas* Street (at present – *Gulbene* County State Gymnasium) was built in 1928 [24].

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**Figure 1.** *Gulbene* State  
Commercial School  
and Vocational School  
(1920s).



*Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School had a good reputation because it trained good specialists in their profession. The Commercial School trained accounting and office workers, trade and cooperation workers, and its graduates had the right to study at the UL and other universities. The Department of Mechanics of the Vocational School educated and trained «agricultural machine and general machine building mechanics, locksmiths, turners, blacksmiths and horse farriers who can operate and repair various agricultural machines and work tools, as well as make simple agricultural machines and work tools, set up forges and saddle horses» [25]. Studies at the Commercial School lasted for five years, at a Vocational School – four years in the field of mechanics, locksmith, blacksmith; foundry – three years.

In the school year 1936/1937, for example, 262 pupils studied at *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School: 153 in a Commercial School and 109 in a Vocational School. By the spring of 1937, 308 young people had graduated from it: 153 from the Commercial School and 155 from the Vocational School. The majority worked in their profession, while some studied at the UL [26]. After graduating from *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School, young people got a job. Successful and low-income pupils were exempted from tuition fees, which was very relevant and important for many families. The school had a brass band and a choir, plays were staged, sports events and balls were held. In the 1930s, gliding developed in Latvia, and under the guidance of the teacher, engineer *Edgars Riekstiņš* (1904–?), pupils of the Vocational School built gliders, and several of them became fond of

this sport. The pupils of *Gulbene State Commercial School and Vocational School* were members of *Gulbene Branch of the Latvian Aero Club* and were also involved in the construction of a sailplane [27]. Teachers also were members of the Aero Club – Principal *J. Rupais* and *E. Riekstiņš* [28].



**Figure 2.** A group of pupils of *Gulbene State Commercial School and Vocational School* (standing from the left, the Acting Chairman of the Board of the *Gulbene Branch of the Latvian Aero Club Ernest Stambergs* (1884–1943) and Chief Engineer, Teacher *Jānis Turaidis* (1902–1980)), at the glider (1930s).

The flag celebration ceremony of *Gulbene State Commercial School and Vocational School* took place on 7 May 1939 [29]. The flag was consecrated and presented to Principal *K. Rupais*. It was made according to the drawing of *Vecgulbene-born artist Jūlijs Madernieks* (1870–1955), and the motto «Clear heart, good work» was written on it. The flag was donated by the municipality and school graduates of *Gulbene City* and surrounding parishes [30].



**Figure 3.** Principal *J. Rupais* presents the school flag to one of the pupils (1939).

Graduations were a festive and joyful event for both pupils and teachers, and there was always a photo shoot. On 15 June 1940, the last graduation of Latvia's first independent state was attended by a graduate (1910) of the Department of Chemistry of RPI, Professor *Pēteris Nomals* (1876–1949) [31], representing the government. The graduates of the school were presented with a gift from the government – the novel «*Kvēlošā lokā*» (In a Glowing Arch) by the Latvian writer *Anna Brigadere*. In a sense, this novel had become a chronicle of the creation of Latvia in the 20th century, and soon after the 1940 graduation from the Commercial School and Vocational School, the Soviet Government included it in the list of prohibited literature for a long time. The period of Soviet occupation had begun, and in the school year 1940/1941, the school, like other commercial schools, was renamed the economic technical school. During World War II, it regained its historical name and, for example, in June 1942, 32 pupils graduated from *Gulbene* Commercial School, 20 – from the Vocational School [32]. During World War II, the school had difficulties with a boarding school, but the city authorities found other premises, and studies continued. In the school year 1943/1944, there were 195 pupils in the Commercial School and 155 – in the Vocational School [33]. It was the last school year – *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School existed until the summer of 1944. It should be noted that some graduates continued to study at universities.

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## **Pedagogical Activity of *J. Rupais* in *Gulbene* and his Colleagues**

*J. Rupais* was the first and only Principal of *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School and worked in this position for 18 years. In *Gulbene*, he was known and respected not only by his own pupils but also by the residents of the city and its surroundings. The pupils considered the stately, always calm, sparing words and careful in his speech Principal *J. Rupais* to be the soul of the school. There was order in the school, there was harmony among the teachers and pupils. No one was expelled from the school or severely punished, although sometimes pupils committed misdeeds [34; p. 34]. *J. Rupais* organized question-and-answer evenings and participated in them himself, discussing various topics. He was not able to say a harsher word and did not show anger. However, once «his eyes lit up, and in a raised voice he said, «Do not lie!» There was a deep silence in the classroom, but he had caught one of us in a lie. He did not tolerate lies, and he tried to erase this negative characteristic of human nature from our souls. The Principal was not our



judge, but the most understanding and helpful person in the true sense of the word» [34; pp. 105–106]. It was an exceptional case because *J. Rupais* was balanced, kind, calm, and humane – that is how his former pupils described him.

*J. Rupais* was a teacher in addition to the position of the Principal, he taught organic and inorganic chemistry and supervised the practical work in it, physics, commodity studies, for one year – also algebra, which was not *J. Rupais'* passion in the assessment of the pupil *Jānis Kubulnieks* (1921–2006). However, he is said to have taught the knowledge of commodity studies in an interesting way, making the learning of this subject easy and memorable [34; p. 88]. *J. Kubulnieks* felt the sensitivity and goodness of the teacher in the 3rd grade when he got sick and was only at school for three weeks in the second trimester. The long absence did not contribute to success, and he failed in algebra and accounting. Unsuccessful pupils had to pay for tuition, so for *J. Kubulnieks*, as the son of poor parents, it would have meant quitting his studies. The Principal decided that the pupil should pay only for the time he was at school, that is, for three weeks. The Principal encouraged *J. Kubulnieks*, saying that he would be successful already in the third trimester [34; p. 67]. *J. Rupais* personality and pedagogical activities were a good example for *J. Kubulnieks* – he became a teacher in *Lejasciems*, and was a director and actor in the amateur theatre.



**Figure 4.** Graduation, fourth from the left in the first row – *J. Rupais* (c. 1932).

In 1933, *J. Rupais* was awarded the Order of the Three Stars of Class IV for the organization, successful and energetic management of *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School [20]. *J. Rupais'* colleague, graduate (1915) of the Department of Chemistry of RPI *Pēteris Driķis* (1887–?) also received the state award – Cross of Recognition of Class V – [35]. *P. Driķis* participated in the Latvian War of Independence;

he was involved in the life of *Gulbene* City – he was a candidate for the city council elections in 1931 [36], after World War II he was the Head of Studies of *Gulbene* Secondary School No.1.



Figure 5. Graduation, fourth from the left in the first row – *J. Rupais* (1938).

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Figure 6. Certificate of *Pēteris Driķis* attesting his participation in the Latvian War of Independence (1923).

Many educators worked at *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School. For example, *Edmunds Zirņītis* was a colleague of *J. Rupais* in the second half of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s (1911–1989). He was a teacher of the Latvian language and literature, Baltic philologist, poet and essayist [37]. Physics, geometry, and

mechanics were taught (1934–1941) by *Voldemārs Andersons* (1905–1941), who was also a lecturer at the University of Latvia [38]. Economist *Jānis Labsvīrs* (1907–2002) and the Principal *J. Rupais* developed a friendly relationship, both teachers were swimming enthusiasts. The Principal usually asked *J. Labsvīrs* to address the school family during national holidays or important events, later he was also invited to address *Gulbene* residents [34; pp. 38–39]. He taught political economy, national economics, cooperation, and law at *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School (1929–1936), in the 1960s he became a professor of economics at Indiana University, USA, Honorary Doctor of History of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, awarded with the Order of the Three Stars of Class IV (1995) [39]. Economist *Arvīds Baķis* (1894–1983) also worked in *Gulbene*. He worked as a teacher from 1927 and taught accounting, business arithmetic, and later also the Russian language. Pianist *Kārlis Encis* (1912–1982) taught singing and history. More than one pedagogue worked at *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School for a longer or shorter time. Most of them were held nationalistic views and remained in Latvia after World War II, some emigrated (*J. Labsvīrs*, *Eduards Lejiņš*; 1894–1990 etc.).

## Chemistry Teacher of Riga Industrial Polytechnicum *J. Rupais*

After World War II, *J. Rupais* moved from *Gulbene* to Riga and started working at Riga Industrial Polytechnicum. He finally started his own family, starting it after turning 50. He had known his future spouse *Elizabete* since he was young. They had met during World War I in Moscow. There is no documentary evidence of whether they were connected at that time only by teaching work and educational issues, or by mutual attraction.

Many teachers had emigrated, and in the school year 1944/1945 *E. Rupā* also started working at the Polytechnicum; she was the Head of the Department of Chemistry of Riga Industrial Polytechnicum [40; pp. 1–2]. *J. Rupais* was the Head of the Department of Teaching and at the pedagogical meeting of the Polytechnicum on 2 March 1945, he reprimanded his colleagues that the pupils' violations should be reported to the school first [40; pp. 3–4]. Current work issues at the Polytechnicum were discussed at the pedagogical meetings, including the performance and behaviour of the pupils. Unjustified absenteeism and smoking on school premises were considered violations of school discipline. For violations, the grade in discipline was reduced, but if pupils were caught smoking for the third time, according to the decision

of the Pedagogical Council, they were expelled from the educational institution. Two pupils had once brought bombs and detonated them in the school.

J. Rupais was also an educator, and Pēteris Paukšs (1926–2001) studied under him, who was an honours pupil at Riga Industrial Polytechnicum [40; p. 27] and later continued his education at UL, was the Dean (1965–1971) and lecturer (1961–2001) of the Faculty of Chemistry of RPI.

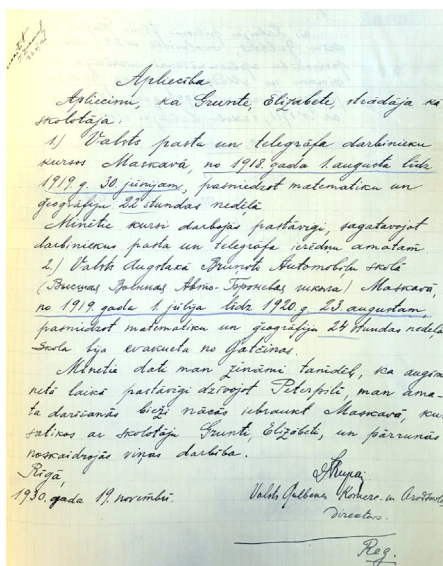


Figure 7. Certificate attesting the work of Elizabete Grunte (m. Rupā) in Russia from 1918 to 1920 (19 November 1930).

In the summer of 1945, all teachers had to help translate books in their subject from Russian into Latvian during the summer vacation. It might be assumed that Jānis and Elizabete also translated textbooks or their parts in chemistry, although their surnames are not featured in the published books. However, the names of translators were mentioned in only a few books in the first years after World War II, so the translators of some books are unknown. The lack of books in the Latvian language hindered the learning process, but during the Soviet period, it was not allowed to use previously published books. They ideologically were not in line with the education requirements of the Soviet man. Educators believed that learning from lesson notes does not provide pupils with extensive and comprehensive knowledge. In addition, a successful learning process was hindered by widespread absenteeism. Thus, on 3 July 1947, the Head of the Department of Chemistry of Riga Industrial Polytechnicum, E. Rupā, reported that statistics show that, on average, each pupil was late for 100 hours. Reasons – illness, family circumstances [40; p. 95, 95. o. p.].

In February 1947, *J. Rupais* read a report on educational work with pupils and their parents at the pedagogical meeting. At the Polytechnicum, some *J. Rupais'* colleagues later worked at his *Alma mater* – RPI. Such was chemist *Fricis Ceplis* (1917–2017), who worked at Riga Industrial Polytechnicum (1945–1948) and later was a lecturer at RPI (1960–1987). Mechanical engineer *Pēteris Saveljevs* (1925–2006), a graduate (1947) of the Department of Electrical Engineering of Riga Industrial Polytechnicum, also worked at Riga Industrial Polytechnicum. The documents show that for some time *J. Rupais* was also the Head of the Department of Chemistry of the Polytechnicum. In 1947, the Department of Peat was added to the Department of Chemistry [41]. *J. Rupais* worked at Riga Industrial Polytechnicum as late as May 1952 [42], after that his name is no longer found in the minutes of pedagogical meetings. He was also a strict and fair pedagogue at the Polytechnicum [43].

Together with his wife, *J. Rupais* took care of his summer house in *Saulkrasti*, later – in *Vecāķi*, because going to work to Riga from *Saulkrasti* was too far. The sand of the seaside was not suitable for growing vegetables, so the owner brought fertile land for the garden. Trees grew around the house in *Vecāķi*, and there were beautiful flower beds [34; pp. 34, 39].

## Conclusion

*J. Rupais* and his fellow students and contemporaries formed the newly founded Republic of Latvia. He was a teacher and promoted vocational education, his fellow students contributed to the development of the Latvian army, customs, chemical industry, and higher education. After World War II, *J. Rupais* continued his teaching activities in Latvia, while some of his fellow students emigrated to America – USA (*E. Kreišmanis*), Canada – *J. Dāvis*, Argentina – *A. Plūme*, Germany – *M. Ostwald*, *R. Raasche*. In 1910, the lives and destinies of those who started studying chemistry at RPI were formed in the conditions of different political powers – they were born in Tsarist Russia, built their careers developed in the Republic of Latvia, the Soviet Union, and other European countries. This generation experienced World War I and World War II and was also a victim of the Holocaust. The authors could not find exact information about the future fate of the Jewish students. *J. Rupais* was lucky because he was not affected by the repressions of the Soviet authorities. He was not active in political parties, was not involved in student corporations, and focused his attention on teaching and educating pupils, laying the foundation for further life.

In 2023, *Gulbene* City celebrated its 95th anniversary, just as the old building of *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School, whose fate is closely intertwined with the life of engineer and teacher *J. Rupais*. The history of the first and only Principal of *Gulbene* State Commercial School and Vocational School has remained history, but the life of the building continues, giving pupils the opportunity to learn.

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Pedagogical  
Activities of  
Graduate (1916) of  
Riga Polytechnic  
Institute  
Jānis Rupais  
(1889–1974)  
in Latvia

## SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

**Figure 1.** Gulbenes novada vēstures un mākslas muzejs, GVMM 12421.

**Figure 2.** Gulbenes novada vēstures un mākslas muzejs, GVMM 11419.

**Figure 3.** Gulbenes novada vēstures un mākslas muzejs, GVMM 12434.

**Figure 4.** Gulbenes novada vēstures un mākslas muzejs, GVMN 13334.

**Figure 5.** Gulbenes novada vēstures un mākslas muzejs, GVMN 4218.

**Figure 6.** LNA LVVA 4725. f., 1. apr., 12. l., 79. lp.

**Figure 7.** LNA LVVA 1632. f., 1. apr., 7234. l., 12. lpp.



ALĪDA ZIGMUNDE, *Dr. paed., Mg. phil.*, has been a Specialist at the Museum of Riga Technical University since 1989. From 2007 to 2015, she was a Senior Researcher. She is currently a Professor with the Institute for Humanities and the Head of the Department for Historic Research and Scientific Publications of the RTU Research Centre for Engineering History. Her main academic interests include the history of pedagogy in Europe, history of the institutions of education, and history of engineering sciences and universities.

*Address: 1 Kronvalda Boulevard, Room 203, Riga, LV-1010, Latvia*

*Phone: +371 29869642*

*E-mail: alida.zigmunde@rtu.lv*



ILZE GUDRO, *Dr. sc. ing.*, is currently Head of the Research Centre for Engineering History of Riga Technical University, Head and Assistant Professor at the Department of Design and Material Technology of the Institute of Design Technologies of RTU. Her main academic interests include the history of Riga Technical University, engineering sciences, interior, furniture and product design, and materials science. She is a member of the team organizing exhibitions of works of bachelor and master students of the Institute of Design Technologies of RTU (e. g. Fashion show, design



product exhibitions «*Ķīpsalas Dizaina Kods*», «Design Isle», etc.).

*Address: 1 Kronvalda Boulevard, Room 203, Riga, LV-1010, Latvia*

*Phone: +371 28897223*

*E-mail: ilze.gudro@rtu.lv*



ILZE ŪSELE, *Bc. Oec.*, since 1991, history specialist at *Gulbene Municipality Museum of History and Art*. Her main academic interests include the history of *Gulbene* and *Gulbene District*.

*Address: 3 Pils Street, Gulbene Municipality Museum of History and Art, Gulbene, LV-4401, Latvia*

*Phone: +371 26128984*

*E-mail: muzejs@gulbene.lv*



INETA BAUERE, *Mg. paed.*, since 1991, Head of the History Unit at *Gulbene Municipality Museum of History and Art*. Her main academic interests include the history of *Gulbene* and *Gulbene District*.

*Address: 3 Pils Street, Gulbene Municipality Museum of History and Art, Gulbene, LV-4401, Latvia*

*Phone: +371 29132068*

*E-mail: ttanex@inbox.lv*

*Alīda Zigmunde, Ilze Gudro, Ilze Ūsele, Ineta Bauere*

### **Rīgas Politehniskā institūta absolventa (1916) Jāņa Rupā (1889–1974) pedagoģiskā darbība Latvijā**

Pētījums par inženieri, pedagogu, Rīgas Politehniskā institūta (RPI) Ķīmijas nodaļas absolventu (1916) Jāni Rupo (1889–1974) veikts, izmantojot Latvijas Nacionālā arhīva, Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīva un Latvijas Valsts arhīva dokumentus, kā arī Gulbenes novada vēstures un mākslas muzeja krājumu. Raksts par Latvijā 20. gadsimtā pazīstamo pedagogu – Gulbenes Valsts komercskolas un arodskolas ilggadējo un vienīgo direktoru (1926–1944) J. Rupo atklāj arī viņa darbību pēc Otrā pasaules kara Rīgas industriālajā politehnikumā. Tajā raksturotas gan mācību iestādes, gan direktors un skolotājs J. Rupais un viņa darba metodes, paveiktā nozīmīgums Gulbenei un Latvijai.

**Atslēgvārdi:** Jānis Rupais, Rīgas Politehniskais institūts, Gulbenes Valsts komercskola un arodskola, Rīgas industriālais politehnikums.