

PRIVATE: DO (NOT) ENTER
PERSONAL WRITINGS AND
TEXTUAL SCHOLARSHIP

Edited by
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AMSTERDAM - NEW YORK, NY 2012

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Lithuanian Handwritten Books in the Period of the Ban on the Lithuanian Press (1864–1904)

Mikas Vaicekauskas

When we talk of the hand-written book (or the manuscript book), we first of all refer to the time before the appearance of the printed books, and the Middle Ages in particular. In the early modern period, we mostly see the handwritten book as a book prepared for publication but which remained unpublished in a manuscript form due to some political, social or individual reasons. In the Modern and Postmodern period, the appearance of the hand-written book is most frequently determined by the personal motives of the creator of such a book, someone's individual needs, or the striving for the appearance of a new and different type of a book. The change in the book as a phenomenon is closely related to political and social conditions of an actual local culture. The aggravation of these conditions (war, occupation, the application of a repressive apparatus, censorship, various bans and the like) often lead to the emergence of new and extraordinary cultural phenomena. This paper discusses one phenomenon of this type that so far has not been looked into, and that is the Lithuanian handwritten book intended for personal use during the period of the ban on the Lithuanian press from 1864 to 1904.

As one of the repressive measures introduced after the Lithuanian and Polish uprising of 1863 against tsarist oppression, printing in traditional Lithuanian (or Latin) script was banned in Lithuania in the period of tsarist occupation. The ban on the Lithuanian press started on 5 June 1864, when Mikhail Muravyov, the Governor-General of Vilnius issued a letter to the Censorship committee of Vilnius, which contained the decree prohibiting printing primers in Lithuanian script. The following year, on 6 September 1865, the Governor-General of Vilnius, Konstantin von Kaufman, issued a secret circular prohibiting the printing, import and dissemination of all Lithuanian publications in Latin script. This ban was approved of by circular No 141 of 23 September 1865 by Pyotr Valuyev, Russian Home Affairs Minister. Finally, on 30 January 1866, Nikolay Miliutin, the secretary of the state council for the affairs of the kingdom of Poland communicated a message from Alexander II to the Minister of Education, that in effect consolidated the Lithuanian press ban. From now on, all publications in Lithuania had to be printed in the Russian Cyrillic alphabet, the so-called "grazhdanka". That was how the ban on the Lithuanian press was consolidated (cf. Merkys 1994, 43–64; Vladimirovas 1985, 13; Merkys 2004, 7).

The ban lasted until 1904. During that period Lithuanian books were published, but illegally. From 1865 to 1904, about 4000 Lithuanian titles in Latin and Gothic script were published, not including the periodical press. Of these 4000, about 2700 were published in Lithuania Minor (East Prussia, which did not belong to Russia), and the rest in the USA and other countries. About 2000 of these 2700 titles were intended for Lithuania Major, and half of these consisted of religious literature. In addition, 66 were authorized by the authorities and published during the same period in Lithuanian Cyrillic script (cf. Žukas 1985, 22, 24–5, 29; Merkys 1994, 185; Merkys 2004, 10–11; [Černiauskienė] 2004, 7; Stonienė 2006, 20, 24–5).

Books intended for Lithuania were printed using a strategy of counterfeit: deliberately misleading publication data concealed the real identity of authors, translators, and editors, as well as the place of publication and the name of the publisher. The most frequently appearing name was that of Juozapas Zavadzki, a printer from Vilnius, and the most popular year of publication was 1864, that is, one year before the press ban. Counterfactual books were mostly printed in Lithuania Minor. The number of such publications exceeds 833. The so-called book-carriers, or “book-smugglers”, transported these books across the Prussian-Russian border and distributed them in Lithuania (Žukas 1985, 30; Aleksandravičius and Kulakauskas 1996, 287; Kaluškevičius and Misius 2004; Merkys 2004, 11; [Černiauskienė] 2004, 7–8; Stonienė 2006, 25).

The demand for Lithuanian books, especially those intended for religious practice, was extremely high at the time. This is demonstrated by large print runs – and reprints – of books printed in Lithuania Minor. Print runs of some prayer books (*Aukso altorius* [*The Golden Altar*], for instance) could be as large as ten to fifteen thousand, and they would be reprinted up to 32 times. Prayer books accounted for 29 percent of all publications intended for Lithuania (Vėbra 1979, 79). Total book production for the period was about six million printed copies. Religious books were in great demand for several reasons: (1) they were necessary for religious practice; (2) they were used in illegal underground schools, established in villages and townships, as teaching aids (Žukas 1985, 29, 32); (3) they were very fragile, while their users were inclined to have their own personal copies, especially of prayer books and hymnals.

The ban on Lithuanian press in the Latin script depended to a great extent on the attitude of the Catholic Church to this matter. The attitude was negative, because the Church saw it as a disciplinary punishment directed against the Catholic faith, to encourage conversion to the Russian Orthodox Church. Initially, it was a matter of faith. Only later did other

national and state interests begin to play a part too. For this reason, more priests and Catholic activists were engaged as writers, editors and supporters of the illegal press than other people in the first two decades of the press ban, until the appearance of the underground periodical press in 1883 brought a change to this.

While the printing and distribution of counterfeit publications satisfied a need for religious literature, not everybody could acquire those publications. The ability to obtain books was determined by the financial spending power of readers, supply levels of printed titles and access to the distribution networks. Given these difficulties involved, especially for readers outside of Lithuania, a new mode of “publishing” was introduced: copying by hand.

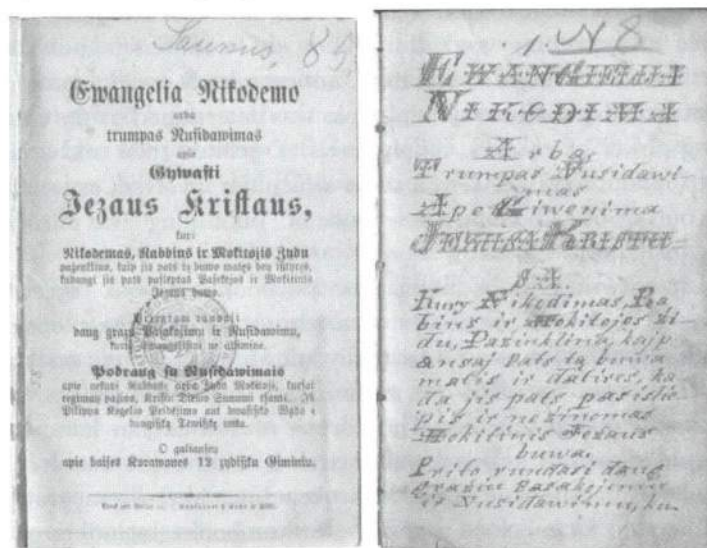
The hand-written book (or manuscript) book is a book copied from a published book and sometimes of a manuscript, mostly intended for personal purposes and use. All currently known hand-written books were copied by people who had not received any higher education, mostly peasants and public servants. The corpus of Lithuanian hand-written books is not numerous, and its thematic circle is not diverse either. It consists mostly of religious books that can be broken down into several groups: (1) books intended for religious practice – prayer books (including prayers, litanies, hymns, rosaries, hours, recollections, meditations), hymnals, catechisms; (2) various religious readers – lives of saints, descriptions of miraculous visitations; (3) religious and inspirational manuals – guides to good dying, guides to pious and god-fearing life; and (4) textbooks of all kinds.

Lithuanian hand-written books are mostly copybooks or loose leaves bound between hard covers. The writers often left marks or made inscriptions in their books: this includes information about ownership (the name of the writer), place of residence, the date of copying, the reason why a book was copied, or other types of minor comment. A frequent feature is an appeal to the reader to pray for the author. The books sometimes also contain information about the writer provided by others: about his life, the reasons for copying, and again there are appeals to pray for the soul of the writer.

One cannot claim that all the handwritten books have been examined and all information on their authors thoroughly studied. However, it is possible to assume that their number was small, and that the three writers covered below offer a fairly good picture. The names of these writers are very important in the history of Lithuanian writing.

The largest collection of handwritten books was compiled and copied by Jurgis Japertas, very likely a farmer from Samogitia who was born some

time before 1851 and who died after 1882. The library of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore in Vilnius has 55 items consisting of his manuscript texts in bound and unbound books, notebooks and separate sheets, as well as in eight published books.



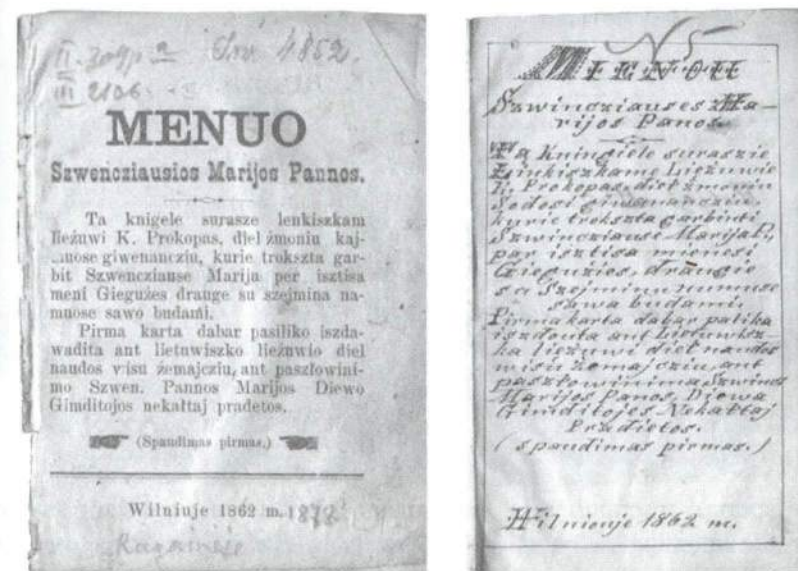
Figs. 1, 2. Title pages of *Evangelija Nikodemo* (1888) and of Jurgis Japertas' *Evangelija Nikodima* (1873) (LLTIB, 1195 f. 1, b. 2013)

Between 1851 and 1882, Jurgis Japertas copied six printed books: *Kalvarija, arba Kelias kryžiaus sopulių Jėzuso Kristuso* [The Calvary, or the Painful Road of the Cross of Jesus Christ] (1871?); *Evangelija Nikodemo* [The Gospel of Nicodemus] (1873); *Mėnuo Švenčiausios Marijos Panos* [The Month of the Holy Virgin Mary] (after 1878); *Apsakymas stebuklingo nusidavimo su Liudovika Lateau* [A Story of the Miraculous Occurrence with Liudovika Lateu] (after 1880); *Aukso knygelė, arba Mokslas nusižeminimo* [The Little Golden Book, or the Teaching of Humility] (1882); *Kelias kryžiaus pono mūsų Jėzuso Kristuso, arba Kalvarija* [The Road of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, or the Calvary].¹ He also copied manuscript texts (*Rekolekcijos dvasiškos* [Spiritual Recollections], 1852, 1869); parts of books, mostly prayer books (*Meditacija* [Meditation], 1851; *Gadzinkos apie mūką Jėzuso Pono* [Hours on the Suffering of Lord Jesus]; *Nobaženstva laiko priėmimo sakramento pakūtos šventos* [Worship of the Time of Receiving the Sacrament of Sacred Penance]), and he compiled selections from various books (*Knygelė vedimo gero ir krikščioniško gyvenimo* [A Small Book of Leading a good and Christian Life], 1852; *Knygelė didžiai sugadlyva prie nabaštiko* [A Book Very Useful at a

¹ The dates given are for the (approximate) date the copies were produced.

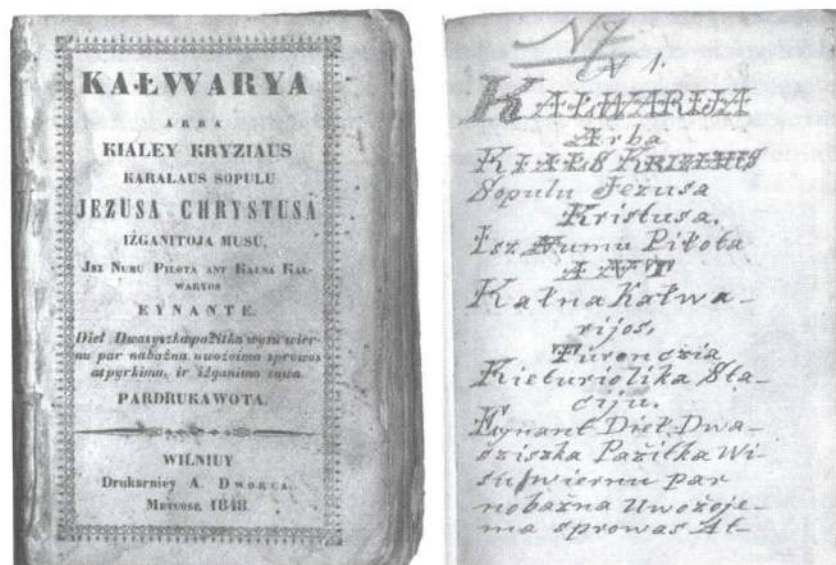
Deceased], 1852). He also copied texts for other people (for example the *Meditacija* he copied for Elena Simutaite from the parish of Laukzeme).

Jurgis Japertas worked with great precision. He wrote out title pages, wrote some letters in a calligraphic style, embellished them, and used inks of different colours.



Figs. 3, 4. Title pages of *Mėnuo Švenčiausios Marijos Panos* (1878) and of Jurgis Japertas' *Mėnuo Švenčiausios Marijos Panos* (after 1878) (LLTIB, 1109, f. 1, b. 2614)

Some texts Japertas copied are bound into the back of published books – again usually prayer books: *Gadzinkos apie mūką Jėzuso Pono* [Hours on the Suffering of Lord Jesus] in Motiejus Valančius' *Davatkų knyga* [A Book of Pious Women] (1867?); *Karunka saldžiausio vardo Jėzaus* [The Wreath of the Sweetest Name of Jesus] in Motiejus Valančius' *Garbinimas Švenčiausios širdies Dievo mūsų Jėzaus Kristaus* [Worship of The Sacred Heart of Our God Jesus Christ] (1874). Interestingly, if Japertas had a book that had some pages missing, he would copy those pages and then bind the complete book. We find this for example in *Naujas altorius, arba Surinkimas persergėjimų ir maldų prie spaviednės, komunijos šventos dël ligonių ir mirstančių* [A New Altar, or a Collection of Warnings and Prayers for the Holy Communion for the Sick and Dying] (1864). He also copied individual prayers, hymns and other texts containing religious exercises.



Figs. 5, 6. Title pages of *Kalvarija*, arba Keliai kryžiaus karaliaus sopolų Jėzuso Christuso (1848) and Jurgis Japertas' *Kalvarija Arba Kials Križiaus Sopolu Jėzusa Kristusa* (1871?) (LLTI, B 915, f. 1, b. 2605)

Japertas' inscriptions in these manuscripts are a significant source for documenting his work. For instance, in *Evangelija Nikodemo* he left the following inscription: "O! Dabar Antra karta apraszi Jurgis Japerts. metus 1873" ["O! Now Jurgis Japertas wrote for the second time. Year 1873"] (Japertas 1873, 1), or in *Aukso knygelė*: "Jurgis Japerts tą parraszi isz Drukawotos wadinama Auksa Kningiele metus 1882" ["Jurgis Japertas copied this from the published one, called *Aukso knygelė*, in 1882"] (Japertas 1879, 208). Another inscription in *Evangelija Nikodemo* describes the purpose behind his work and writes an appeal characteristic of these handwritten books:

Ant didesnis gar-|bies ir sžlowis Po-|nou Diewou, ta | Proce muna, O
| tims Skajūttojems | kurie isztu Knin-|gielu Pažitkawos, | Douk Diewe
Łoska | rejkalinga ant isz-|ganima dušies | atrasti ir Pažitka | Dwasiszką
apturie-|ti. O už muna du-|szie beñ powięna | Swejka Marija... | ir
powięna amži-|na atilsu sukałbie-|kiet Skajūtdami. | Prasžau Jurgis
Ja-| | perts Metuse. — | 1873. Mienesie Ko-|wa 20. diejno | |

[This work of mine is dedicated to God's greater honour and glory. And Lord, give mercy needed for the saving of the soul and for the spiritual

benefit to those readers who will use these books. As for my soul, say at least one 'Hail Mary' and one 'Eternal Rest' while reading. I appeal. — Jurgis Japertas, 20 March 1873 (Japertas 1873, 372–4).]

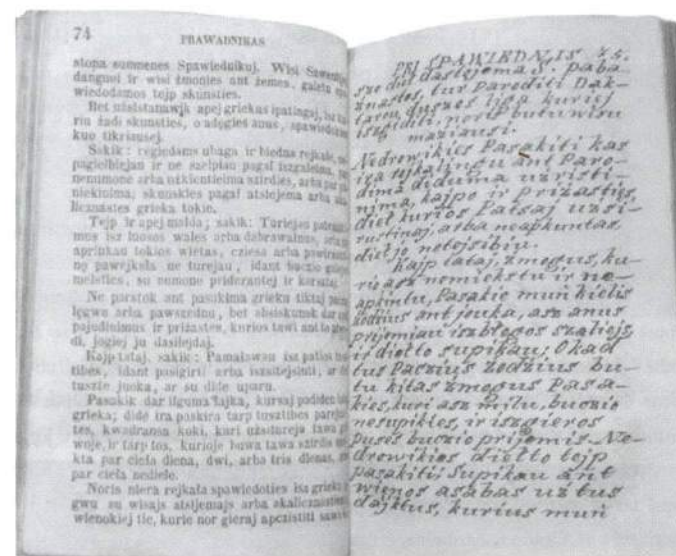


Fig. 7. Missing pages copied and bounded by Jurgis Japertas in *Naujas altorius* (1864) (LLTIB, B 872)

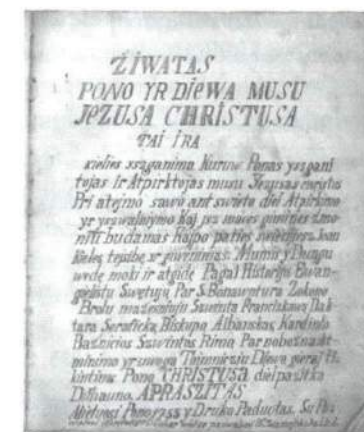
Our second copyist of handwritten books, Jonas Matulionis (1850 – after 1914), was from the Lithuanian Highlands. Between 1870 and 1877 he copied *Žyvas Pono ir Dievo mūsų Jėzuso Christuso* [*Life of Our Lord and God Jesus Christ*] (Matulionis [1870–1877]) by Saint Bonaventure, from an anonymous translation published in 1759. He did not finish this work. A note by his brother Povilas Matulionis indicates why Jonas Matulionis undertook copying of the book, what he intended it for, and how the work proceeded. Here I will cite this text, which bears the title "Izangos vietoje" ["Instead of an Introduction"]:

Izangos vietoje. | Lietuviai, išalkę savųjų
knygų, jau 1870 metais | pradeda blaškyties iš troškimo. Jonas – Stasio
sunus | Matulionis iš Kupiškio, ištrokęs knygos, paskolina | jo motinos
miliamąją knygą ir iemasi ją visą | savo ranka atspaudinti, kad kiti lietuviai,
jo kai-|mynai, nemokanti rankos raštą skaityti galetų | semti šviesą, kaip ją
semia visi sutverimai iš skai-|sčios Dievo saules. Šventadieniais, poguliais,
nakti-|mis pre balanės šviesos Jonas – 20 metų jaunikis rašo-|spaude
knygą, kolai ne buvo pašauktas kariume-|nien ir išvežtas Kaukazan. Iš ten

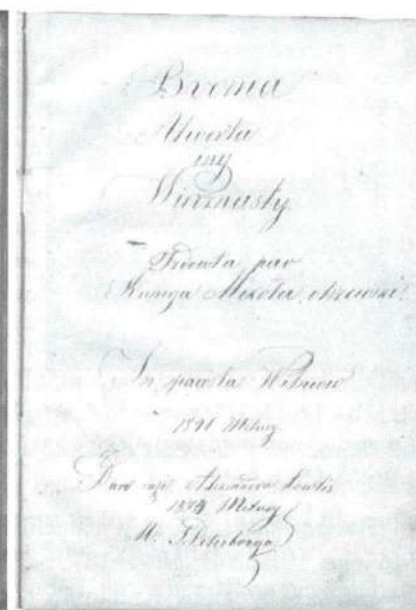
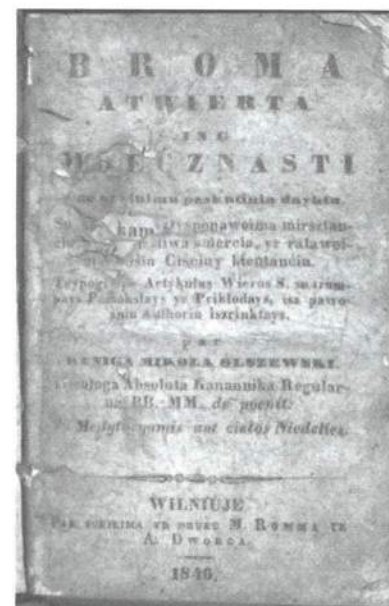
jau unterapicierius | Jonas šale pulkininko Skobeleva percina Turkestano
| smelių tyrus, kovoja su Kivos sultonų; gauna užu dru-|sybę šv. Jurgio
križių ir paleistas namon vel rašo-spau-|do savo knygą priepuoliais ir poilsio
valandomis. | 1877 metais liko vel pašauktas su turkais karen ir | knygos
nebaigė. | Dabar 1914 metais skaito lietuvių gazetas, metės skai-|tyti
lenkiškiasias. | Šis vaizdelis lai prisideda pre nesuskaitomo liu-|dimų
skaitliaus, susikrovusių Lietuvoje per 40 metų | kančios iš uždraudimo
lietuviams spaudos. | Paduodu 17 Balandzio men. 1914 metų Jono brolis |
Povilas Matulionis | Iš Smolensko. ||

[By way of Introduction. Desperate for books of their own, Lithuanians began fussing about it as early as in 1870. Jonas, the son of Stasys Matulionis from Kupiškis, driven by a desire for a book, borrows from his mother her most favourite book and embarks on rewriting it in print letters, so that other Lithuanians, his neighbours, unable to read handwriting, could draw light just like all creatures draw it from the bright sun of God. On Sundays and throughout resting hours, and at the torch light at night, Jonas – a young man of twenty – copies the book, until he is called to the army and taken to the Caucasus. From there, Jonas, already a sergeant in the regiment of Colonel Skobelev, crosses the sandy wilderness of Turkestan, fights the sultan of Khiva, gets St George's Cross for courage, and upon discharge he again copies his book in fits and through the hours of rest. In 1877, he was again called to the war against Turks and did not finish the book. Now in 1914, he reads Lithuanian newspapers but no longer Polish ones. Let this picture add to the countless number of testimonies that have accumulated in the last forty years, about the pain caused by the ban on Lithuanian press. Povilas Matulionis, Jonas' brother, submits on 17 April of 1914. From Smolensk.]

One of the most interesting examples of the handwritten books from the period of the Lithuanian press ban is that of our third writer, Aleksandras Luotys (? – before 1899). He copied two works in one book (Luotys 1875): Motiejus Valančius' *Trumpas katekizmas* [A Short Catechism] published in Lithuanian Cyrillic, and Mykolas Olševskis' *Broma atverta ing viečnastj* [The Gate Open to Eternity] (the 1846 edition; first edition 1753), one of the most popular Lithuanian works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, devoted to the theme of death and consisting of a spiritual reader with sermons, edifying examples, spiritual meditations and other texts of a similar kind.



Figs. 8, 9. Title pages of *Žyvatas Pono ir Dievo mūsų Jėzuso Christuso* (1759) and Jonas Matulionis' *Žyvatas Pono ir Dievo mūsų Jėzuso Christuso* (1870–1877) (1998 facsimile, f. 1, b. 3513)



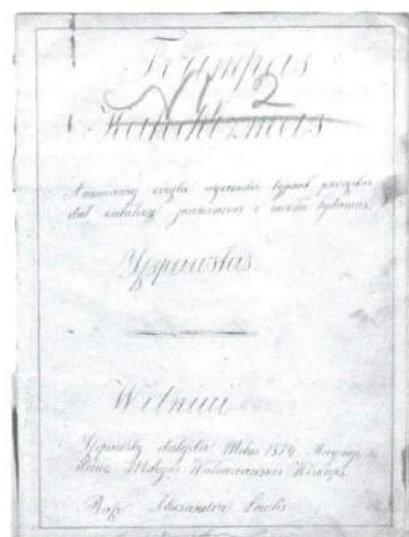
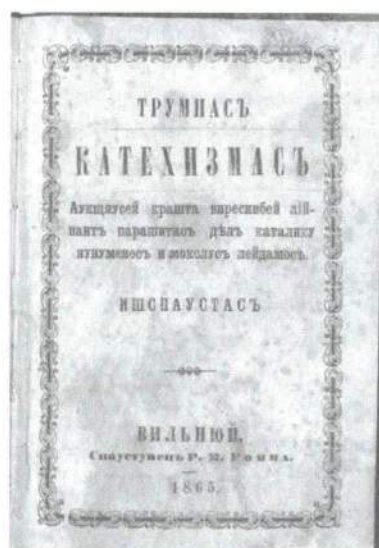
Figs. 10, 11. Title pages of Mykolas Olševskis' *Broma atverta ing viečnastj* (1846) and Aleksandras Luotys' *Broma atverta ing viečnastj* (1875) (LLTIB, B 861, f. 1, b. 3468)

Little is known about the writer of this handwritten book: only that he was related to Skuodas in Samogitia, that in 1874–1875 he lived in St. Petersburg and worked as a printer in the lithography department of the Senior Artillery Board, where, according to his own words, he "wrote" Mikas Vaicekauskas Lithuanian Handwritten Books (1864–1904) 65

Trumpas katekizmas and *Broma atverta ing viečnastj* while he was on duty. He died before 1899, because in this year Juozas Tumas ([Tumas] 1899, [17]) recorded his book in his catalogue, and also because the book contains an inscription by one of its previous owners:

Mitas skaititoiaw praszaw | asz Jonas Gadejkis kiekwejna | skajutoiaus kad atsyduksietumi | uz duže Aleksandras Łowtes nes | iaw ira posuda P. Diewa. ||

[Dear reader, I, Juozas Gadekis, ask each reader to pray with hope for the soul of Aleksandras Luotis, because he already faced the judgement of God Almighty ([Luotys] 1875, Br, [277]).]



Figs. 12, 13. Title pages of Motiejus Valančius' and Jonas Krečinskis' *Трумнась катехизмаць* (1865) and Aleksandras Luotys' *Trumpas Katechizmas* (1874) (LLTIB, 21056, f. 1, b. 3468)

Trumpas katekizmas is a catechism written in Lithuanian by bishop Motiejus Valančius (1801–1875) and transcribed in Cyrillic as *Трумнась катехизмаць* by Jonas Krečinskis (c. 1820 – after 1884) (Valančius and Krečinskis 1865). It is the first and, it seems, the only instance of this kind in the history of Lithuanian writing, when a text previously printed in Cyrillic was copied, converted or brought “back” into Lithuanian (Vaičekas 2003, 16; Subačius 2006, 283, 304; Vaičekas 2007, 76). Aleksandras Luotys did not abridge the text of *Trumpas katekizmas*, and did not add anything to it. Occasionally, however, one sees a desire to edit the

lexicon, to replace some words by others. In copying the text he returned to old traditional Catholic church terminology that Motiejus Valančius had attempted to replace with original, not borrowed words (Subačius 2006, 291–2). Aleksandras Luotys, however, changed aspects incompatible with the Catholic faith. The rule was that before printing a publication of religious content in Cyrillic, it was subject to spiritual censorship, and required approval from the Vilnius Censorship committee (Medišauskienė 1998, 42). The Catholic way of doing the Sign of the Cross from left to right was changed by the censor into the Orthodox formula, from right to left:

Женклонъ крижяуъ Ш. дарау: деда-|маъ дешиненъ ронконъ пирму при | кактаъ, паскяуъ антъ крутини, даръ | паскяуъ антъ дешине иръ кайре пете | сакидамаъ: [...].

[I am doing the Sign of the Cross: with the right hand first touching the forehead, then the chest, and after, the right and the left shoulders, and uttering: [...]] ([Valančius and Krečinskis] 1865, 12; Italics mine – M. V)

In his rescript of the catechism, Aleksandras Luotys restored the Catholic formula (Merkys 1994, 54–5; Subačius 2006, 290):

Ženkla križews S. daraw: diedamas defžine raka | pirmo pri kaktas, paskiaws ant krutine, dar paskiaws | ant kajre ir defzeni pete sakidamas: [...].

I am doing the Sign of the Cross: with the right hand first touching the forehead, then the chest, and after, the left and the right shoulders, and uttering: [...] ([Luotys] 1875, TK, 7). Italics mine – M. V

Unlike *Trumpas katekizmas*, the text of *Broma atverta ing viečnastj* ([Olševskis] 1846) is shortened, and Latin quotations are omitted. That these texts were copied not for printing but for personal use, and with the intention of possessing personal copies probably because it was impossible to acquire them in St. Petersburg) is indicated by the inconsistencies in spelling, and the writer's failure to adapt to the norms of the Lithuanian written language of the time (Subačius 2006, 292, 302).

Manuscript books that were intended for other than personal use are also known. They were rewritten in the period of the ban on the Lithuanian press. In the late nineteenth century, Jonas Katele (1831–1908), the priest of the Panemunėlis parish, organised a wide network of secret Lithuanian schools.² Jonas Katelė supplied these secret Lithuanian

² The official school system allowed only Russian as the language for teaching, and only text books in Russian or Lithuanian Cyrillic were permitted.

schools with textbooks and other teaching materials. When the schools ran short of textbooks he would ask the organist of the Panemunėlis church, Silickas, to copy more. The three textbooks that Silickas copied were Feliksas Sereika's grammar of the Lithuanian language, *Lietuviškas pradžiomokslis mažiems vaikams aukštaičių ir žemaičių lietuvių* [*A Lithuanian Primer for Small Children of Highland and Lowland Lithuanians*] (1896), Jonas Spudulis' and Povilas Matulionis' arithmetics workbook, *Užduotynas, tai yra Rankius užduočių aritmetikos arba rokundos mokslo* [*A Workbook, or a Collection of the Science of Arithmetic Sums or Calculation*] (1885) and Juozapas Žebrys' geography, *Trumpas aprašymas apie žemę arba žemrašys* [*A Short Description of the Earth, or Geography*] (1896) (Bičiūnas 1934, 167, 201–208; Merkys 1994, 310–11).

12
A. Женклонъ крижяусъ. Ш. дарау: деда-
масъ дешиненъ ронконъ пирму при
кактасъ, паскяусъ антъ крутини, даръ
паскяусъ антъ дешине иръ кайре пете
сакидамасъ: Вардонъ Дева Тева иръ
Сунаусъ иръ Двасесъ Швентосъ. А.

A. Viena knygos S. darau: deklamau dešinė vagna
pirmu pri kantas, paskiaus ant kvitini, dar paskiaus
ant kaje ir dešinė pite sanidamas: Warda Deiva
Pecva ir Sunaus ir Dvases Svintos Amia

Figs. 14, 15. Fragments of pages of Motiejus Valančius' and Jonas Krečinskis' *Трумнась катехизмасъ* (1865) and Aleksandras Luotys' *Trumpas Katechizmas* (1874) with Orthodox and Catholic formulas of crossing (LLTIB, 21056, p. 12; f. 1, b. 3468, p. 7)

It should be mentioned that the ban on the use of Latin characters also extended to the Latgalian region in Latvia, which at the time was part of the province of Vitebsk. As in Lithuania, the demand for Latvian books in Latgale was large during the press ban and, and, for the same reasons as in Lithuania, it was not met. Thus in Latgale, too, popular printed books were rewritten. Most of the manuscript books in this region were also on religious topics, but there were other books too which dealt with more practical topics. Again, the copyists were mostly peasants, who did this work in their free time (Jēkabsons 2004, 195).

Finally, it is worth noting that the handwritten books of Aleksandras Luotys and Jurgis Japertas were exhibited at the 1900 World Exhibition in Paris. The banned books were included in a section on Lithuanian printing, which was part of the country's exhibition on ethnography of the European nations in the Trocadero Palace. The banned Lithuanian press was displayed in the exposition of Lithuanian press at the exhibition of Lithuanian ethnography ([Žilinskis] 1902, [16]; [Tumas] 1924, 186; [Tumas-Vaižgantas] 2007, 99; Laučkaitė 2000, 501–3; Merkys 2004, 19; [Misiūnas] 2006, 68). Unlike the rest of the display, however, the handwritten books did not attract the attention of visitors. Juozas Tumas, an editor and publisher of forbidden Lithuanian publications, one of the assistants in setting up the Lithuanian exposition who had provided the handwritten books for the exhibition, wrote the following:

[Rankraštinės knygos parodoje] turėjo pasauliui parodyti, į kokius vargus ir klapatus buvo mus įmurdžiusi Rusijos administracija. Šis mūsų sumanytas spaudos draudimo barbarybės įrodymas, rodos, nebuvo tinkamai išnaudotas ar buvo nesuprastas, kad nebuvo reklamuotas. O būtų pasakęs pasauliui daugiau originalių dalykų apie lietuvius, neg rodomos jų klumpės ir kultuvės, kurias tiek iliustracijų tada garsino. Nei patys parodos rengėjai, nei publika rašytojo [Japerto] knygos neįvertino, gal nė nepastebėjo. Užtat mums, kovotojams už spaudos laisvę, ašaras triškė bet-kuris "raštas", kuriam nelemta buvo virsti ar pabūti – spaudiniu. ([Tumas] 1924, 186)

[The exhibition of handwritten books] was meant to demonstrate to the world the hardships and troubles that the Russian authorities had dragged us into. It seems that our idea to prove the barbarian nature of the press ban was not properly exploited or was misunderstood, because it was not advertised. [...] Neither the exhibition organisers nor the public appreciated the writer's [Japertas'] library; maybe they did not even notice it. To us who were fighting for the freedom of the press, any "piece of writing" that was not destined to be printed would draw tears from our eyes.]

The material and research here presented shows that in Lithuania the repressive structures (occupation, Russification, the press ban and censorship) led to the invention of a new type of a book – a handwritten book for personal use. Although not widespread, it was not an incidental phenomenon during this period in Lithuanian history. Even under the most unfavourable conditions of political and cultural oppression, the need for books in society was strong. When smugglers and book-carriers could not ensure sufficient supplies of books, especially of religious literature, people resorted to new, private initiatives, and began compensating for the

shortage of books by copying printed books by hand. Thus an alternative mode of “publishing” came into existence.

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