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The Influence of Early Protestant Book Printing on the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood's Printing House: Evidence of Ornaments

Annotation. Until recently, the historiography of the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House (active 1595–1654 and 1693–1705) has been dominated by the belief that the decorative design of its printings was influenced exclusively by the book art of printers such as Francysk Skaryna, Ivan Fedorov, and other East Slavic Orthodox printing presses. Based on an analysis of printers' ornaments, this paper presents new evidence that the Brotherhood Printing House frequently used original ornaments and precise copies borrowed from Vilnius printing workshops which produced Latin-script books. Among these borrowings, the majority are initials (both Roman type and Gothic) as well as vignettes associated with Protestant printers Jan Karcan, and Jokūbas Morkūnas. In addition, the Brotherhood Printing House incorporated Jan Karcan's woodcut border for the coat of arms in its 1596 publication. Jokūbas Morkūnas's title-page border was also used by the Brotherhood to decorate large-format publications, such as the 1644 altar Gospel and 1646 prayer book *Poluustav*. Based on the evidence, it is plausible that Protestant printers could have personally printed books for the Brotherhood or collaborated during printing at the same press with its masters.

Investigation of the decorative elements of early Vilnius printing houses has also, for the first time, highlighted the extensive circulation of printers' cast ornaments across all city printing workshops. The earliest known printer to bring and employ castings in Vilnius was Daniel z Łęczycy. By the late 16th century, cast ornaments had become the most distinctive characteristic of the Vilnius book trade.

Keywords: printers' ornaments; cast ornaments; Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House; Daniel z Łęczycy; Jan Karcan; Jokūbas Morkūnas; Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Orphan; Vilnius Jesuit Academy Printing House; Vilnius.

Introduction. At the end of the 16th century, Vilnius experienced a flourishing of printing activity, marked by the establishment of new printing workshops and the publication of dozens of books in various languages. Among the city's printing enterprises of that period, the printing house of the Vilnius Holy Trinity Brotherhood – later known as the Holy Spirit Orthodox Brotherhood (hereafter, the Brotherhood Printing House) – stands out. This Brotherhood held considerable authority among the Orthodox Ruthenians of the Kyivan Metropolitanate¹.

The Brotherhood's publishing activities had notable influence in shaping the canon of the East European Cyrillic book. Alongside works in Cyrillic and Greek, the Brotherhood also published books in Polish, reflecting both the integration of the Ruthenians into the dominant secular culture of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and their interactions with other Christian denominations of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Between 1595 and 1654, more

1 For the most recent studies on this corporation, see: Chomik 2004; Kempa 2004; Shlevis 2004; Baronas 2012; Timoshenko 2018; Timoshenko 2020b; Timoshenko 2020c; Tymoshenko 2022.

than 110 books were printed at the Brotherhood Printing House in Vilnius and its branch in Vievis. Moreover, the Brotherhood is known to have issued five Cyrillic publications during the years 1693–1705.

Despite ongoing scholarly interest², the Brotherhood Printing House remains an insufficiently studied phenomenon to this day. Among the scholarly issues requiring exploration, a key question is which sources influenced the external characteristics and decorative design of its books. A major obstacle to resolving this question is the widespread belief that the Brotherhood Printing House operated exclusively under the influence of the Orthodox Cyrillic book tradition. This view was reinforced by the discovery of ornaments in early Brotherhood publications that originated from the books of Francysk Skaryna and the Mamonich brothers, as well as copies of ornaments used in Ivan Fedorov's Ostroh printing workshop³. Later books from the first half of the 17th century also include ornaments replicated from other Orthodox printing houses, such as the episcopal press in Striatyn and the Lavra Printing House in Kyiv (Putsko 1987, 125–126).

Only one researcher, Alexander Anushkin, has pointed out the presence of ornaments in Brotherhood publications that resemble those used in Latin-script books printed by other Vilnius printing workshops, such as those of Jan Karcan and the Jesuit Academy (Anushkin 1979, 14; Anushkin 1970, 144, 178, 191–192). Anushkin concluded that local artists and engravers worked in Vilnius across multiple printing enterprises, “serving all of them” (Anushkin 1970, 192)⁴. To date, Anushkin's observations have largely gone unnoticed by scholars studying the Brotherhood Printing House.

The idea for this study was prompted by the discovery of new cases of the Vilnius Holy Trinity (later Holy Spirit) Orthodox Brotherhood's use of ornaments from other Vilnius printing presses, which were previously unknown to Anushkin. These findings were uncovered in Vilnius University Library and in Ossolineum⁵. The new evidence encouraged further investigation to determine whether these instances were isolated or, instead, indicative of broader, consistent patterns⁶.

The main **aim** of this article is to clarify the origins of ornaments used by the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House through an analysis of the decorative elements, and to reassess its historical trajectory. Additionally, the study seeks to reconsider the technical aspects of the ornaments employed in early Vilnius printing workshops.

Methodology. The research primarily employs bibliographic and comparative methods. A key stage of the study involved gathering data on the books printed in Vilnius from the late 16th to the early 17th centuries⁷ and its further analysis. It was possible to gather a database of

2 For the most recent studies on the history of the Vilnius Brotherhood Printing House, see: Chomik 2003; Berezenko 2013; Bondar 2017; Voznesenskii 2018; Yarashevich-Perasloutsau 2020; Titovets 2021. Also of note are studies by Margarita Korzo, which examine the publishing strategies of the Brotherhood's press based on individual editions: Korzo 2016; Korzo 2021; Korzo 2023.

3 This information is reflected in the most recent bibliographies of 16th- and 17th-century Cyrillic books: Galenchanka 1986; Guseva 2003; Voznesenskii et Nikolaev 2019a; Voznesenskii et Nikolaev 2019b.

4 It should be noted that, in contrast to Anushkin, Jolita Liškevičienė rejects the local origin of the ornaments. She argues that initials and other decorative elements, particularly decorative ligatures, were borrowed from Western European book culture and disseminated through trade centers and specimen books (Liškevičienė 2014, 48, 58).

5 These discoveries have formed the basis of a forthcoming publication by Olga Tkachuk (Tkachuk 2026; in press).

6 The author sincerely thanks Olga Tkachuk for her help in acquiring copies of rare early printed books, and Ieva Rusteikaitė for insightful discussions that greatly assisted in interpreting the findings.

7 The principal bibliographic references documenting 16th- and 17th-century Latin-script books printed in Vilnius include: Narbutienė et Narbutas 1998; Narbutienė et Narbutas 2002; Ivanovič 1998; Dapkiewicz 2020.

printers' ornaments thanks to the significant spread of digitized collections. However, despite the rapid pace of digitization, many early printed books have yet to be scanned. Therefore, it is still essential to work directly with physical objects in libraries⁸ and to consult facsimile editions and various scholarly publications on early printed books.

To reconstruct the sets of ornaments and, in particular, the initials used by each Vilnius printer, it was necessary to examine as many printed books as possible. This, in turn, made it necessary to address the issue of books published without imprint data or with false information regarding their place and date of printing. Although most publications from the Brotherhood Printing House were issued without imprint data, bibliographers have rather reliably established their attribution based on typographic features (such as fonts and ornaments), combining this with an analysis of the content, authorship, and historical context⁹. The greatest challenge lies in anonymous books from other Vilnius printing houses, since their attribution remains insufficiently developed. For this reason, the present study primarily focuses on books from Vilnius printing workshops that contain imprint data indicating the place of publication and/or the name of the printing house¹⁰. While this approach significantly narrows the corpus of sources available for analysis, it helps minimize the risk of misattribution – though in some cases, it has not been possible to adhere to this criterion strictly.

This article consists of two parts. The first part focuses on identifying the key features of book ornamentation in Vilnius at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries. The historiography includes studies discussing the artistic style of ornaments in both Latin-script (Galaunė 1970; Liškevičienė 1998; Kuliešienė 2009; Liškevičienė 2014) and Cyrillic publications printed in Vilnius¹¹. However, this article focuses primarily on practical aspects – namely, production techniques and the dissemination of printers' ornaments. The second part examines the ornamentation of books produced by the Brotherhood Printing House up to 1654, with a focus on its originality and patterns of borrowing.

1. Printers' Ornaments in Books Printed in Vilnius in the Late 16th and Early 17th Centuries

1.1. Two Sources of Vilnius Printers' Ornaments

From the mid-16th to the early 17th centuries, approximately ten printing workshops operated in Vilnius for varying periods (*Drukarze* 1959, 5), and their activities may be linked to two distinct traditions of book art. Art historian Paulius Galaunė categorized these as the Eastern (i.e., East Slavic and Greco-Russian) and the Western (primarily German) traditions, both of which, he argued, stemmed from a common origin in Western European printing (Galaunė 1970, 120). Jolita Liškevičienė later refined this classification by suggesting that the Western tradition in Vilnius should be associated not with German, but with Cracovian book art (Liškevičienė 1998, 111). A key external distinction between the two traditions was their use of different typefaces: Cyrillic was used in the Eastern tradition, and Latin in the Western.

8 The author is deeply grateful to the National Library of Lithuania and the Ossolineum for their invaluable assistance in providing access to copies of unique printed materials.

9 See the most recent bibliographies of Cyrillic books referenced in footnote 3.

10 For example, in two books printed in 1580 by Jan Karcan's press, the imprint statement indicates no place of publication (*Karcan / [S. I.] 1580 A*; *Karcan / [S. I.] 1580 B*).

11 Researchers of Cyrillic books have also paid considerable attention to the material aspects of ornamentation, particularly their deterioration and migration routes, see: Zernova 1959; Zernova 1964; Bondar 2022.

The Eastern tradition is represented by the Mamonich brothers and their associates, including Pyotr Mstislavets and Vasily Garaburda, who all printed Cyrillic books. Their decorative style was heavily influenced by the work of Ivan Fedorov (Zernova 1959). Fedorov and Mstislavets had collaborated in Moscow and Zabłudów between 1564 and 1569, after which Fedorov continued working in Ostroh and Lviv independently. The decorative design of East Slavic printed books drew upon the artistic traditions of Muscovite and Ukrainian manuscript illumination and decorative arts, while also incorporating elements of Western European engraving (Zapasko 1974, 45).

In the Cyrillic books produced by the Mamonich printing house, the most prominent ornamental elements are the headpieces and initials found in large-format volumes. The frequent use of decorative headpieces to mark and embellish the beginning of a text is a distinctive feature of East Slavic Cyrillic books, distinguishing them from the Western European tradition (Zernova 1952, 12; Galauné 1970, 121). The headpieces in Mamonich publications are characterized by various semicircular shapes in the upper sections and are filled with floral motifs¹². The initials, copied from those used by Ivan Fedorov (Zapasko 1974, 208–209), are notable for their lack of framing and for their bodies filled with acanthus leaves. As for production methods, there is no doubt that the Mamonich ornaments were produced using engraving techniques¹³.

The second typographic tradition in Vilnius was shaped by printers specializing in Latin-script books. Among them, three individuals are notable for the duration of their activities and the volume of their production: two were outsiders, while one was a local resident. The first of these outsiders to arrive in Vilnius was Daniel of Łęczyca (Polish: Daniel z Łęczycy), who began his work in 1576 at the printing enterprise of Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Orphan and later collaborated with the Jesuit Academy Printing House. Nevertheless, a substantial portion of his work was published under his own imprint. Bibliographers attribute approximately 32 titles to Daniel z Łęczycy's independent workshop, including 17 in Latin, 13 in Polish, one in Italian, and one in Latvian. He was followed by Jan Karcan, who originated from Wieliczka. Karcan established the largest private Latin-script printing house in Vilnius. Between 1580 and 1611, he produced approximately 128 books and pamphlets in Polish, Latin, and Greek. Around 1592, Jokūbas Morkūnas, a resident of Vilnius who had been engaged in bookbinding and bookselling since at least 1575 (*Cech introligatorów w Krakowie* 1565, 20; Laucevičius 1976, 17), also began printing in the city. By 1607, Morkūnas had published approximately 25 books and pamphlets, including two in Latin, one in Lithuanian, and two in German. Other smaller printers mainly replicated the design of these three key figures, or their output was so limited that it is impossible to identify a distinct decorative style¹⁴.

Despite starting printing activities at different times in the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the three printers shared certain connections. In particular, both Daniel z Łęczycy and Karcan had learned the printing craft in Kraków. The early stages of their career were associated with work in provincial Protestant printing workshops in Nesvizh and Losk. The likelihood of a personal connection between Karcan and Morkūnas is further supported by the fact that both had access to ornaments from the Protestant printing house in Brest after it ceased

12 For example, in the 1600 Gospel (Guseva 2003, no. 170) and other liturgical publications.

13 The fact that the ornaments were engraved is consistently emphasized throughout Antonina Zernova's study of the Mamonich printing house (Zernova 1959).

14 Among the less productive printers in Vilnius, notable figures include Christoph Wolbramczyk, Melchior Petkiewicz, Stanisław Gołda, the brothers Salomon and Ulrich Sultzer, and Tomasz Lewicki (*Drukarze* 1959).

operations¹⁵. Based on this, it can be asserted: 1) that Daniel z Łęczycy, Karcan, and Morkūnas were already acquainted before they commenced their work as printers in Vilnius; 2) that they were already experienced craftsmen¹⁶; and 3) that they were affiliated with the Reformation movement.

In the decoration of Latin-script books by Daniel z Łęczycy, Karcan, and other Vilnius printers, dominant feature included the use of Roman type (Antiqua) and Gothic initials and a large number of vignettes featuring interlace and arabesque motifs, as well as fleurons. A defining attribute of Latin-script printing in Vilnius was the widespread use of Roman type initials with identical design across different printing enterprises. These were square-framed initials featuring backgrounds filled with arabesque and floral ornamentation, while the bodies of the Roman letters themselves were left blank. These initials appeared in the books printed by the presses of Daniel z Łęczycy, Karcan, Morkūnas, Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Orphan, and the Jesuit Academy during the period when Daniel z Łęczycy was not employed there¹⁷, as well as in numerous anonymous books and pamphlets published in Vilnius at the end of the 16th century.

Because of the broad circulation of identical Roman type initials in Vilnius, several scholars have proposed that local printers shared a common set of initials (Vladimirovas 1979, 470, 474; Petrauskienė 1976, 146, 148; Liškevičienė 1998, 112; Liškevičienė 2014, 41). This hypothesis is further supported by examples in which the same coat-of-arms woodcut¹⁸ or the same title page border appears in books from different printing enterprises¹⁹. Only recently did Wojciech Kordyżon establish that the printers – specifically Daniel z Łęczycy and Karcan – did not share a single set of initials but instead used two distinct sets with identical designs (Kordyżon 2021, 85–88). Kordyżon is convinced that these initials are woodcuts. Although he has convincingly demonstrated the existence of different sets of initials sharing the same design, the assertion that these are wood engravings is still subject to debate.

- 15 Levas Vladimirovas mentions that some Renaissance-style ornaments brought from Brest were still in use in Vilnius for 10–15 years, though he does not specify in which printing houses (Vladimirovas 1979, 456). Based on presently available evidence, it may be concluded that J. Karcan used several ornaments from the Brest printing house while working in Losk – for instance, two ornamental bands from the Brest ornament stock ([**Bazylik**] / **Brest 1565**, title page) were reused in Karcan's 1577 Losk edition (**Karcan / Losk 1577**, title page and f. 69r). On the use of Brest ornaments by Morkūnas, see footnote 24.
- 16 In his address to the reader in a book published in 1605, J. Morkūnas refers to himself as an elderly experienced printer (Abramowicz 1925, 57).
- 17 When Daniel z Łęczycy left the printing house of Prince Radziwiłł the Orphan in 1580 to join the Calvinists in Vilnius, other printers continued to work at the prince's workshop – namely, Jan Ślęcki and Martin of Kazimierz. Ślęcki printed six Latin works in 1579–1580. He is also thought to have been responsible for the large-format edition of Piotr Skarga's lives of the saints, published in 1579 (see the bibliographic entry in Dolnośląska Biblioteka Cyfrowa: <https://dbc.wroc.pl/publication/13431>). Martin of Kazimierz produced five Latin books and one in Polish at Radziwiłł the Orphan's printing enterprise between 1581 and 1582.
- 18 For example, one of the earliest Vilnius engravings featuring the Jesuit Order's coat of arms (the IHS monogram with the inscription *Iesus Sole Serenior et Balsamo Svavior*) was first used by printers Daniel z Łęczycy and Jan Ślęcki at Prince Radziwiłł the Orphan's printing house (**Radziwiłł the Orphan–Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1576 A**; **Radziwiłł the Orphan–Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1576 B**; [**Radziwiłł the Orphan–Ślęcki**] / **Vilnius 1579 A**), and later came into the possession of Jan Karcan (**Karcan / Vilnius 1588**). Conversely, the coat of arms of Jan Hlebowicz, Castellan of Minsk, printed in a book from Karcan's press (**Karcan / Vilnius 1583**), appeared a year later in a book printed by Daniel z Łęczycy (**Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1584**).
- 19 The history of various Vilnius printing workshops borrowing the title-page border from the Mamonich printing house – an exact copy of Ivan Fedorov's title-page border – is well known. This woodcut was subsequently used by the printing house of J. Karcan, the Vilnius Jesuit Academy, and J. Morkūnas (Gronek 2016). Some scholars inaccurately argue that the Mamonich family workshop did not possess a copy but rather Fedorov's original woodblock (Galaunė 1970, 121; Tumelis 1982; Liškevičienė 2014, 42).

1.2. Cast Ornaments in Vilnius

A thorough examination of the impressions left by framed Roman type initials in Latin-script books produced by Daniel z Łęczycy, Karcan, Morkūnas, and other Vilnius printing workshops – alongside comparisons with books from printing houses abroad – suggests that these initials were not woodcuts but castings²⁰ (**Figure 1**). Since this fact has not previously been asserted, it is necessary to provide detailed evidence.

First, identical framed initials were used simultaneously in other cities. They are known in Kraków, the capital of the Polish Crown, where Łazarz Andrysowicz employed them (Kordyzon 2021, 87). From 1562 to 1585, an identical set of initials was often in use in the Silesian city of Nysa – first by the printer Johann Creutziger and later by Andreas Reinheckel²¹. The arabesque initials introduced to Vilnius by Daniel z Łęczycy were also widespread in German printing houses. Their impressions are found in books printed in Strasbourg ([**Emmel**] / **Strasbourg 1558**, f. A2r [init. V], pp. 1 [init. N], 15 [init. P], 626 [init. I], 641 [init. A], 797 [init. D], 837 [init. S], etc.), Leipzig (**Rambau** / **Leipzig 1558**, f. A2r [init. I], p. 224 [init. V]), Frankfurt an der Oder (**Eichorn** / **Frankfurt (Oder) 1558**, f. B5r [init. Q]), Wittenberg (**Lufft** / **Wittenberg 1558**, ff. 17v [init. P], 25r [init. E], 33r [init. I], 101r [init. A], 131v [init. N], etc.), Jena ([**Rödinger**] / [**Jena 1558**, p. [6] [init. H]; **Hüttich** / **Jena 1571**, ff. 282v [init. Q], 292v [init. P], 315v [init. H]), and Magdeburg ([**Kirchner**] / [**Magdeburg 1560**, f. A2r [init. M]).

The earliest books featuring framed arabesque initials identified in this study were printed in 1558, while Daniel z Łęczycy first employed them around 1559 (**Daniel z Łęczycy** / **Pińczów 1559 C**, ff. A2r [init. Q], B1v [init. D]; **Daniel z Łęczycy** / **Pińczów 1559 A**, ff. A2r [init. Q], B1v [init. D], A2r [init. E], D6r [init. Q], G1r [init. S]). Thus, the wide geographic range and concurrent use of these identical initials suggest a different, less labor-intensive, and more cost-effective production technology than woodcutting. It is also important to note that many of the books featuring these initials were authored by proponents of the Reformation, including Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, Georg Major, Matthias Flacius, Tilemann Heshusius, and Justus Jonas, among others.

Secondly, the framed arabesque initials used in Vilnius exhibit defects that are uncharacteristic of carved woodblocks. These flaws point to metal casting as the production method. In 16th-century Europe, the reproduction of wood engravings by hot-metal casting became widespread (Dijstelberge 2007, 38–42). Typically, the original wooden model served as the basis for creating metal matrices. The resulting cast pieces were thin metal plates mounted on wooden bases. To affix the plate to the base, a small nail was driven in. If the nail was inserted improperly, it would eventually leave a mark on the printed page – either immediately or as the casting wore down with use (Dijstelberge 2007, 40). Such marks might appear in print impressions as white circles with a dark rim or as blurred black dots.

Another typical defect of cast ornaments arose under the repeated impact of the press. Whereas woodblocks would usually crack or break, cast metal plates would deform differently – through the curvature or distortion of the cast lines (Dijstelberge 2007, 40).

An analysis of the impressions shows that the initials used by J. Karcan more frequently display circular marks or blurred dots, whereas such defects are rarer in the initials used by Daniel z Łęczycy (Kordyzon 2021, 101). In other words, each printer possessed his own stock of cast

20 The author expresses sincere gratitude to John A. Lane, and especially to Paul Dijstelberge, for their valuable consultations on cast ornaments.

21 See the initial I (**Creutziger** / **Nysa 1562**, f. A2r), initials P and I (**Creutziger** / **Nysa 1580 B**, f. A2r, p. 1), initials S and O (**Creutziger** / **Nysa 1580 A**, ff. A2r, A4r), and the initial E (**Reinheckel** / **Nysa 1587**, f. E3v).

initials, despite sharing an identical design. As for J. Morkūnas, he printed only two books in Latin (Narbutienė et Narbutas 2002, nos. 324, 362), in which he used the Roman type initials O and I (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1592 A**, f. A2r [init. O]; **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1592 B**, f. A1r [init. I]). Three circular marks are clearly visible on the letter body on the initial O, while no evident defects appear on the I.

It is worth noting that, among the complete set of arabesque cast initials, the letter Z appears to be one of the rarest. We were able to identify only a single Latin book printed in Vilnius that includes an impression of this initial. In that instance, however, the letter is rotated sideways and is used as the letter N (**[S. n.] / Vilnius 1603**, f. A2r). The exceptional rarity of the Z initial in Vilnius books is likely due to the nature of Latin vocabulary, which contains very few words beginning with the letter Z. Moreover, no arabesque cast initials representing the letters G, K, X, and Y have been identified in Vilnius books.

In addition to initials, certain vignettes and illustrative elements should also be classified as cast ornaments. Among these elements is one of the earliest images of the Jesuit Order's emblem, owned by Daniel z Łęczycy, with nail marks discernible in the impressions made from this cast (**Radziwiłł the Orphan–Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1577**; **Radziwiłł the Orphan–Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1578**)²². This defect is quite noticeable, which may explain why the printer rarely used this element.

For some Vilnius vignettes that do not exhibit manufacturing flaws, the only evidence of their cast origin is the discovery of identical copies in books printed simultaneously in other countries. For instance, in the 1586 book *Moscovia* by Antonio Possevino, printed at Karcan's printing press, a vignette in the form of an arabesque garland (**Karcan / Vilnius 1586 B**, f. 3r) is entirely identical to a vignette used by the Plantin Press in Antwerp (Glorieux 1989, 229 [example F22A]), the printing house of David Gutgesell in Bardejov (present-day Slovakia) (Soltész 1962, 422–423 [example 3]), and the Poznań printing house of Melchior Nering (**Nering / Toruń 1585**, f. [473]r). This allows them to be associated with the same matrix. The exact same vignette later appears in Vilnius publications printed by Daniel z Łęczycy and the Jesuit Academy (**Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1594 A**, 105; **Academy / Vilnius 1595**, 190), although with slight differences from Karcan's plate.

In conclusion, the appearance of cast ornaments in Vilnius was not coincidental. In the 16th century, the rising demand for printed materials across Europe created a parallel need for typographic supplies. Printers required not only type but also decorative elements. This demand could be met thanks to the adoption of casting technology. Cast ornaments began spreading in Germany around 1560 (Valkema Blouw 1997, 215, footnote 58). In the Netherlands, the Plantin Press was the first to use them (Valkema Blouw 1997, 215, footnote 58). In England, such ornaments began to circulate in the 1570s (McKerrow 1927, 114, 117). Elisabeth Soltész documented a variety of cast ornaments in printing enterprises in Hungary and Slovakia in the second half of the 16th century (Soltész 1962, 416–424). Thus, Vilnius was not isolated from broader European trends and innovations. The introduction of cast initials and other ornaments in the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania began with the arrival of the first Polish Protestant printers, Daniel z Łęczycy and Karcan (Karcan, especially, used them extensively in the 1586 book *Moscovia* by Possevino (**Karcan / Vilnius 1586 B**)). Cast initials became one of the distinctive features of the local book trade.

22 The same woodcut featuring the Jesuit Order's emblem, linked to Daniel z Łęczycy, also appears at the end of the thesis dated 15 July 1577, for which the imprint statement is missing (**[S. n.] / [Vilnius] 1577**).

Another important conclusion concerns the sharing of the same typographic materials. The available evidence does not rule out instances of borrowing or exchanging certain graphic elements, such as coats of arms or title page borders. However, when it comes to purely decorative elements (initials and vignettes), our research suggests that Vilnius printers typically used their own individual stocks. The Roman type initials with arabesque motifs that appear in books from various printing houses were not the same physical blocks but rather precise replicas.

1.3. Gothic Initials in Vilnius

Vilnius printing houses published a significant number of books in vernacular languages: primarily Polish, but also Lithuanian, German, and Latvian. To decorate these publications, printers usually employed Gothic initials. As with Roman ones, some Gothic initials with identical designs appear across different printing houses. This indicates that these initials were also produced by casting technology. The use of Gothic initials with identical designs is most commonly found in the works of Karcan and Morkūnas.

In general, both printers used several types of Gothic initials. The first set, earlier and of simpler design, was used for printing the New Testament in Polish by Karcan in 1580 and by Morkūnas in 1593. Despite having the same design, Morkūnas's impressions of the letters B, N, P, and Z show visible nail marks, whereas Karcan's impressions do not exhibit such defects (**Figure 2**).

For a longer period, both Karcan and Morkūnas used larger initials featuring interlace motifs. Some of these initials (A, P, and two forms of S) are identical in design, while others (I, K, R, T) differ, despite stylistic similarities. Between 1577 and 1587, an identical set of initials was used by the printer, bookbinder, and bookseller Melchior Nering in Poznań and Toruń. In total, twelve Gothic initials in Nering's and Morkūnas's books share the same design: A, D, E, J, K, L, N, O, P, S, W, and Z (**Figure 3**). This overlap is unlikely to be coincidental, as Morkūnas is known to have worked with booksellers and binders in Poznań (*Drukarze* 1959, 166). In Karcan's publications, there are much fewer identical initials: A, P, and S (**Karcan / [S. I.] 1580 A**, f. Cc8v [init. P]; **Karcan / Vilnius 1585 A**, 118 [init. S], 175 [init. A]).

The Gothic initials used by the printing houses of Daniel z Łęczycy, Prince Radziwiłł the Orphan, and the Jesuit Academy are somewhat distinct. Particularly notable are two types of ornamented initials – one is decorated with interlace motifs, the other with ribbon patterns – not found in the output of Karcan or Morkūnas but shared among these three houses (**Figures 4–5**). Eventually, the Jesuit Academy inherited most of the ornament sets from Prince Radziwiłł and Daniel z Łęczycy.

These observations concern only large ornamented Gothic initials and outline a general trend, which does not yet capture the full complexity of ornament circulation. For example, an outlier to this trend is a type of interlace initial A that appears in identical impressions both in the works of Karcan and Morkūnas and in the Lithuanian Postil published by the Jesuit Academy press (**Karcan / Vilnius 1585 A**, 175; **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 B**, 2; **Academy / Vilnius 1599**, 189). Similarly, Daniel z Łęczycy and Morkūnas used the same initial Z in 1592–1593 (**Academy–Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1592**, 1; **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 A**, f. A2r). Such cases are best explained by the existence of copies from the same matrix across different printing houses.

1.4. Karcan's Floriated and Historiated Initials

In addition to matrix-based ornaments shared among printing houses, some decorative elements were specific to a single Vilnius printer.

Jan Karcan possessed a set of framed Roman type initials featuring backgrounds filled with realistic depictions of plants, animals, birds, and human figures (**Figure 6**). Some of these were already in use during his activity in Losk, before his arrival in Vilnius. Within Karcan's ornament stock, there were two versions of the initial W, identical in design²³, suggesting that he might have possessed duplicates of other ornaments as well. Karcan's floriated and historiated initials were not original; near-identical copies are found in books printed in Kraków by Mateusz Siebeneicher (**Siebeneicher / Kraków 1600**, ff. a5r [init. A], 29r [init. M], 49v [init. S with two birds]), some of which trace back to German models. The distinctive hatching used on Karcan's initials indicates that they are wood engravings rather than castings.

1.5. Morkūnas's Ornaments

Jokūbas Morkūnas also possessed a number of ornaments that distinguish his publications from those of other Vilnius presses. Notably, he used decorative elements previously employed in Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Black's printing house in Brest. These ornaments originating in Brest adorned the title page of the Polish New Testament printed by Morkūnas in Vilnius (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B**)²⁴ (**Figure 7**).

The decorative design of the 1594 Polish edition of Mikołaj Rej's *Postil* in folio is especially striking (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 B**). It was a reprint of the first printed edition (*editio princeps*) by the Kraków printer Maciej Wirzbięta (**Wirzbięta / Kraków 1557**, with subsequent editions issued by Wirzbięta in 1560, 1561, and 1571). For his reprint, Morkūnas used some old ornaments from the Radziwiłł printing workshop in Brest and also commissioned (or carved himself) a new title-page border and headpieces, which are loose copies of the Kraków edition. According to Karol Estreicher, the borders decorating the title pages of both Wirzbięta's and Morkūnas's editions depict an altar (Estreicher 1915, 180–182). The model for the Kraków printer was an engraving from a Nuremberg edition of Luther's *Hauspostille* (Komorowska 2015, 339).

In our view, Morkūnas's title-page border omits altar motifs altogether, and the entire composition instead resembles an arched gateway. Like the border in the Kraków *editio princeps*, Morkūnas's version includes the engraver's initials at the base of the image. Wirzbięta's engraver's initials, reading "I. C. B. || 1556" are located at the bottom of the two columns of the printed image, while Morkūnas's edition bears "H. I. V. 1593" at the base of the left column. Notably, there is a one-year discrepancy between the 1593 date on the wood engraving and the imprint date of Morkūnas's *Postil* (1594). It is the same in Wirzbięta's *editio princeps*, where the engraving is dated 1556, while the imprint date on the title page is 1557. In the hand press period, it could take several years to print large-format books. It seems likely that, in both printing houses, the border was engraved well before the multi-page text of the *Postil* was printed.

23 See the initial W in: **Karcan / Vilnius 1585 A**, f. 5r and p. 190. A later version of this W appears in: **Karcan / Vilnius 1599**, f. Q4v.

24 The ornaments on the title page of the New Testament printed by Morkūnas (1593) were previously used in the following publications of the Brest printing workshop: the upper band with human figures had earlier appeared in: [**Bazylik**] / **Brest 1565**, title page; [**Bazylik**] / **Brest 1567**, f. 203r, etc. The lower floral band was previously printed in: **Bazylik** / **Brest 1569**, pp. 206, 389, 617; [**Bazylik**] / **Brest 1567**, ff. 110v, 194v, etc.

2. “Alien” Ornaments in the Publications of the Brotherhood Printing House

The second part of this article examines the ornaments used by the Brotherhood Printing House. The printing house published its first books in 1595. Within two years, it had produced over ten books in Cyrillic, as well as Greek and Gothic scripts. All were printed in small octavo format.

From its earliest days, the Brotherhood used old ornaments from F. Skoryna’s printing press (Anushkin 1979, 62–63) – namely, small, framed initials with patterned backgrounds and decorative bands featuring geometric ornamentation²⁵. According to Viktor Shmatau, these ornaments reflect Renaissance aesthetics and derive from models used in Venetian printing houses of the late 15th and early 16th centuries (Shmatov 1987, 58). However, the number of Skoryna’s surviving blocks, already approximately 70 years old, was insufficient. To make up for the shortage in material, the Brotherhood printers employed two strategies. First, they created a number of new initials in Skoryna’s style. Second, they began to incorporate ornaments from contemporary Vilnius printing workshops producing Latin-script books. These borrowed elements were either original blocks obtained from other printers or exact copies of pieces used elsewhere.

1. Psalter (published on 26 September 1595) is among the earliest editions issued by the Brotherhood Printing House (Guseva 2003, no. 137). In this book, the Brotherhood’s printers used two ornamental vignettes – an oval on f. 168r and a band on f. 168v (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1595**), which are copies of ornaments from Jan Karcan’s printing press (**Karcan / Vilnius 1585 A**, 14, 162). In addition, an arabesque diamond on f. 185v (**Figure 8**) is most likely an original block from Karcan’s printing workshop as well ([**Karcan**] / [**Vilnius**] 1597, f. A8r)²⁶. Karcan-style vignettes continued to appear in several Brotherhood editions throughout 1595–1596.

2. *Slavonic Grammar* by Lavrentiy Zizaniy (published on 15 February 1596) is the Brotherhood’s first publication to include an illustration (Guseva 2003, no. 142). Notably, this book features not only Skaryna’s woodcuts but also a number of ornaments from the Protestant printing house in Brest, which, through unknown means, came into the possession of the Vilnius printer Morkūnas. The title-page border of the *Slavonic Grammar* is composed of four blocks – architectural columns on either side joined at the top and bottom by decorative bands (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 B**) (**Figure 9**). These identical columns were used decades earlier by the Brest printing house to decorate both the Radziwiłł Bible (**Radziwiłł the Black / Brest 1563**, 50) and the biography of Prince Gjergj Kastrioti (**Bazylik / Brest 1569**, title page)²⁷. Additionally, a decorative band found in the biography of the Albanian Prince (**Bazylik / Brest 1569**, 319, 431) also appears at the bottom of the *Slavonic Grammar* title page²⁸. Meanwhile, the decorative band placed at the top of the Brotherhood’s title page was identified on the last page of the voluminous 1594 Postil printed by Vilnius printer Morkūnas (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 B**, p. 166 of the second sequence).

Of particular interest is the border of several blocks on the verso of the *Slavonic Grammar*’s title page, which frames an illustration accompanied by a quotation. The vertical sides of this border originate from the Brest Protestant printing house (**Bazylik / Brest 1569**, 207, 258),

25 All of Skaryna’s ornaments that were reprinted in the publications of the Vilnius Brotherhood Printing House are listed in: **Galenchanka 1993**, 240–251. Samples of Skaryna’s Vilnius-period ornaments are reproduced in: **Shmatau 1990**.

26 This arabesque diamond later passed to Jan Karcan’s son, Józef (**Karcan (Junior) / Vilnius 1617**, f. B4v).

27 In Morkūnas’s printing house, these columns adorn the title page of: **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B**.

28 In Morkūnas’s printing house, this ornamental band adorns the book: **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 B**, 817.

while the top and bottom sides derive from Skaryna's stock (Galenchanka 1993, 241). Additionally, Zizaniy's *Grammar* features several vignettes borrowed from other printers, including Morkūnas and Karcan. Specifically, the Brotherhood's printer used at least two original vignettes by Morkūnas: one with twigs radiating from a central knot, printed on ff. 15r, 80v, and 84v²⁹, and an eight-pointed arabesque vignette, appearing on f. 78r³⁰. In addition, a triangular vignette with a garland motif, printed by the Brotherhood's printer on f. [3]v, is a close copy of a vignette from books by Morkūnas and Karcan (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1592 A**, title page; **Karcan / Vilnius 1585 A**, 219). It differs only by the absence of the lower tip.

3. *Daily Prayers* (published on 26 October 1596) (Guseva 2003, no. 145). This book contains a decorative band (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 E**, f. [1]v of the second sequence) that originates from the Brest printing house (**Bazylik / Brest 1569**, f. A3r), as well as two vignettes taken from Vilnius books printed by Morkūnas in 1593–1594 (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 A**, title page; **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 A**, f. C5v): a small oval on f. [2]r; and a small triangle on f. 49v of the third sequence. In addition, the Brotherhood's printers used a triangular vignette with a garland motif (f. [4]v), which had already appeared in Zizaniy's *Slavonic Grammar* and is a copy of ornaments from Morkūnas and Karcan.

4. *The Sermon of St. Cyril, Patriarch of Jerusalem, on the Antichrist and His Signs* by Stefan Zizaniy, with parallel text in Ruthenian and Polish (1596 edition) (Guseva 2003, no. 146)³¹. The Polish text was set in type and small Gothic initials, which were both typical of all Vilnius printing workshops that used Latin-script³². The only large Gothic initial W printed in the dedication to Prince Konstanty Konstantynowicz Ostrogski (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 C**, f. [3]v), came from Morkūnas's stock (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 C**, f. A4v). When composing the text, however, the Brotherhood's compositor inverted the W. Meanwhile, Ostrogski's coat of arms is set within a heraldic frame borrowed from Karcan's ornament stock. This frame, featuring five ostrich feathers atop a helmet, was used by various noble families and thus appears in several of Karcan's books (**Karcan / Vilnius 1595**; **Karcan / Vilnius 1600**) (**Figure 10**).

5. A collection of articles against various anti-Christian heresies (1596 edition) is known in bibliographies under two titles – *The Book of Faith* (Guseva 2003, no. 148) and *The Book of Signs, of Cross, of God's Praise...* (Voznesenskii et Nikolaev 2019a, no. 39a). This edition features a precise replica of Karcan's framed initial of the letter M, set against a background depicting a branch with acorns (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 D**, f. [1]r). A difference can be observed in the depiction of the insect perched on the right stem of the letter (**Figure 11**). Above all, *The Book of Faith* reuses the Karcan-style oval and band vignettes (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 A**, ff. 25v, 52r, 78r) previously seen in the 1595 Brotherhood edition of the Psalter. It also features an arabesque diamond (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 A**, f. 103r), which differs slightly from the Karcan plate used in that Psalter. Such details confirm once again that the Brotherhood's printer used copies of ornaments nearly identical to those of other Vilnius printing presses.

6. *New Testament and Psalter* (1596 edition) was another early publication that included illustrations (Guseva 2003, no. 150). Bibliographers have identified ornamental elements origi-

29 Morkūnas used this ornament in: **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1592 A**, f. 2v; **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B**, f. 331v.

30 Morkūnas used this arabesque vignette in: **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B**, f. 677v. A very close copy of the eight-point arabesque vignette appears in Karcan's book: **Karcan / Vilnius 1585 A**, 28, 208.

31 Some bibliographers attribute this book to the Mamonich printing house (Bondar, Rudakova et TsiBOROV's'ka-Rimarovich 2023, 31).

32 Andrei Voznesenskii described the typefaces used in this edition as follows: "To print the Polish text, the printers employed a Gothic typeface of unknown origin" (Voznesenskii et Nikolaev 2019a, p. 70, no. 37a).

nating from F. Skaryna and I. Fedorov in this edition (Guseva 2003, no. 150). However, these represent only part of the book's decorative design. For example, it features two eight-pointed arabesque vignettes. The first, a more rounded vignette on f. 211v (Voznesenskii et Nikolaev 2019a, 207), has a precise prototype in publications from Morkūnas's printing house – namely, the New Testament of 1593 (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B**, f. 677v) and the 1594 edition of Rej's Postil (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 B**, f. [4]v). The second, more horizontally elongated eight-pointed vignette on f. 90v (Voznesenskii et Nikolaev 2019a, 206) has not been found in Vilnius printing workshops but has been identified in exact copies within books from foreign printing houses – those of Kraków printer Mikołaj Scharffenberg (**Szarffenberg / Kraków 1569**, f. F4r) and Riga printer Nikolaus Mollyn (**Mollin / Riga 1599**, title page).

After 1596, the Brotherhood Printing House ceased operations due to conflicts with both secular and church authorities over the introduction of the church union. The Brotherhood was embroiled in lawsuits that entailed substantial financial costs. Printing resumed only at the beginning of the 17th century – initially in Vilnius and later in the town of Vievis, which belonged to the Orthodox Oginski family. The printing house remained active until the outbreak of the Polish–Muscovite War and produced approximately 85 books. In the 17th century, the share of Polish-language publications increased. In the decoration of Cyrillic books, a trend emerged of copying ornamental elements from Ukrainian Orthodox printing houses. At the same time, as in the earlier period, ornaments of non-Orthodox Vilnius printers continued to appear in Brotherhood publications.

For instance, Gothic initials used by Morkūnas in a 1594 Postil appear in Polish-language Brotherhood books: initials D and R in the 1610 polemical treatise of Meleti Smotrisky (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1610**, ff. [2]r, 188v), initials J and O in Leontii Karpovych's funeral sermon (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1619**, ff. [1]v, [3]r), the initial P in Smotrisky's polemical treatise *Verificatia niewinnosci* (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1621**, f. 2r), and the Gothic initials K and Z in another of his polemics published in 1622 (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1622**, ff. 2r, 37r).

To decorate their Church Slavonic and Polish books, the Brotherhood continued to employ a range of Roman type initials based on the designs of Daniel z Łęczycy and Karcan. For instance, in the large-format Gospel Homiliary in the Ruthenian language, the printers used exact copies of Karcan's Latin historiated initials A, V, and P (**Brotherhood / Vievis 1616**, ff. 28v, 97r etc. [init. P], 101r [init. V, inverted], 105v [init. A]). On the other hand, this edition also includes cast arabesque initials P (f. 109v of the second sequence) and Z (f. 218v), which were first brought to Vilnius by Daniel z Łęczycy.

As already mentioned above, the Gothic initials of Morkūnas appear in Smotrisky's polemical treatise *Verificatia niewinnosci*. In addition to these, the printers also adorned this publication with several Roman type initials – copies of Karcan's historiated initials S and V (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1621**, ff. [2]v [init. S], G5r [init. V]) as well as a cast plate with an ornamental initial V on f. 8v, typical of local Latin-script printings.

Only a single instance of a Roman type initial B with an arabesque background has been documented in Brotherhood editions (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1627**, p. 165)³³, together with a historiated initial N featuring insects (**Brotherhood / Vievis 1646**, f. [2]r) and corresponding to Karcan's style.

33 The Roman type initial B with arabesque motifs is also very rare in Vilnius Latin printings; an impression of it appears in: **Radziwiłł the Orphan-Academy / Vilnius 1586**, 1.

By borrowing and adapting initials with Latin letters, the Brotherhood repurposed them for texts in Ruthenian and Church Slavonic. For example, the Latin B represented the Cyrillic B; Latin P stood for Cyrillic P; Latin C was used for Slavonic C (e.g., in *Spiritual Discourses* by Macarius of Egypt (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1627**, f. [9]r)); and an inverted Latin V indicated the Cyrillic Л (**Brotherhood / Vievis 1616**, f. 101r) (**Figure 12**). Notably, using the Latin Roman-style Z, which is characteristic of Latin script (see **Figure 1**), in place of its Cyrillic counterpart (as in: **Brotherhood / Vievis 1616**, f. 218v; **Brotherhood / Vilnius 1620**, f. A1r) marked a distinctive feature of the Brotherhood's printing. This set it apart from the Mamonich printing house, which favored a Z-initial derived from I. Fedorov's tradition (**Mamonich / Vilnius 1600**, f. 106r).

Unlike initials, vignette copies from various Vilnius printing workshops are encountered somewhat rarely in Brotherhood publications. Foremost among them is a braided band, a close replica of a Karcan block, which appears in numerous Brotherhood books of the 17th century (it was already mentioned in the Psalter published in 1595). A more interesting case involves a rectangular interlace vignette. This ornament was used in 1584 in a Latin-language book from Daniel z Łęczycy's printing press (**Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1584**, f. c5r of the second sequence), and then again in 1593 in a Polish New Testament printed by Morkūnas (**Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B**, f. *2v). The Brotherhood employed it to decorate a number of Cyrillic books (**Brotherhood / Vievis 1612**, f. 181v; **Brotherhood / Vievis 1616**, f. 97 of the second sequence; **Brotherhood / Vievis 1619**, f. ы8v). In all cases, beginning with 1584, the vignette displays the same defect – a line dissecting its long edge (**Figure 13**).

The Brotherhood's distinctive openness to European book design is illustrated by a vignette featuring a mask (mascaron). None of the Vilnius printing houses producing Latin-script books used such a vignette – it was a distinctive element of the Brotherhood's decorative scheme. The mascaron first appeared in a Cyrillic book of 1596 (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 A**, f. 59v), and was later reused in Meleti Smotritsky's Polish-language polemical treatise (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1610**, f. 218v). Since the woodblock was damaged (the right eye of the face was worn), the printers acquired a copy of it, which went on to decorate a number of publications from the 1620s to 1630s (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1627**, f.)(9v; **Brotherhood / Vilnius 1628**, f. 129r; **Brotherhood / Vievis 1635**, f. F2r) (**Figure 14**). The mascaron enjoyed considerable popularity in Western Europe – similar versions, closely resembling the Brotherhood's image, can be found in printings from Kraków, Toruń, Frankfurt, Ingolstadt, and Altdorf, among others (**Piotrkowczyk / Kraków 1598**, f. A3r; **Nering / Toruń 1585**, f. [477]v; **Spies / Frankfurt-am-Main 1595**, f.)()(4r; **Sartorius / Ingolstad 1584**, f. A6r; **Talaeus / Altdorf 1587**, title page).

The most remarkable example of the Brotherhood's reuse of "alien" ornaments appears in a late, large-format liturgical publication (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1644**). The title page of the 1644 altar Gospel features a title-page border originally from Morkūnas's printing workshop (**Figure 15**). Fifty years had passed since Morkūnas used this border in his reprint of Rej's Postil. By the time it reached the Brotherhood, the woodblock had been divided into several parts: the side columns separated from the upper central section, with flowers cut out from the section depicting the vault of the arch. Additionally, in composing the title page of the Gospel, the Brotherhood's printer incorporated a smaller border printed in red ink within Morkūnas's border. Notably, the red border was itself an adaptation composed of at least six separate blocks previously employed in various Cyrillic editions produced by the Brotherhood Printing House (Bondar 2022, 127). Subsequently, Morkūnas's title-page border was reused to decorate the 1646 Brotherhood prayer book in folio (**Brotherhood / Vilnius 1646**).

The evidence discussed above confirms that, both at the end of the 16th century and during the first decades of the 17th, the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood adopted original ornamental blocks alongside copies of ornaments from Vilnius printers of Latin-script books – primarily Protestants like Morkūnas and Karcan. Additionally, the Brotherhood's decorative elements included a number of vignettes (including the mascaron) that closely resemble those commonly disseminated in the Western European printing milieu.

Conclusions. The printing house of the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood began its operations approximately 1595, at a time when two distinct printing traditions dominated the city. One tradition was represented by the Mamonich brothers, who adhered to the East Slavic decorative style established by I. Fedorov and P. Mstislavets. The other tradition involved Protestant printers such as Daniel z Łęczycy and J. Karcan from Poland, along with J. Morkūnas, who collectively adopted the visual design of German Protestant books through the mediation of Krakow's printing workshops. Notably, the most distinguished contribution of Protestant printers to the Vilnius book trade was the introduction of cast ornaments.

This new evidence challenges previous historiographical assumptions that all ornament blocks used in early Vilnius printings were engravings, either wood or metal. Our research reveals a widespread use of cast ornaments – such as cast initials and vignettes – in local printing houses. The incorporation of castings from Western sources was instrumental in aligning local book design with broader European trends. Additionally, cast ornaments contributed to transforming the local book printing craft into a commercial enterprise, reshaping printer relationships in the trade.

From its very first publications, the Brotherhood Printing House began to emulate the decorative book designs of F. Skaryna and to adopt ornamental elements used by Protestant printers at the same time. In particular, the Brotherhood's printers copied or reused blocks of vignettes and initials originally employed by Morkūnas and Karcan, sometimes incorporating Latin Roman type initials that blended Latin and Cyrillic letterforms. The decorative style of the Brotherhood's printings thus developed at the intersection of Skaryna's legacy and the innovations introduced by Protestant printers. It is not unlikely that Protestant printers may have themselves produced books on behalf of the Brotherhood.

This raises the question of why the Brotherhood was more inclined to adopt the Latin-script book style rather than the Cyrillic tradition pursued in Vilnius by the Mamonich brothers. The answer lies in the broader socio-political context of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which fostered solidarity between Orthodox and Protestant communities in their struggle for political rights and freedoms. Favorable conditions for interaction between printers from two dissident factions arose in part from familial ties and interconfessional marriages among their elite.

For instance, the principal female patrons of the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood were the noble sisters Dorota Abramowiczowa and Teodora Zenowiczowa, members of the Wollowicz family. Their husbands, voivodes Jan Abramowicz of Smolensk and Krzysztof Zenowicz of Brest, both prominent leaders of the Calvinist movement, supported their wives' religious affiliations and expressed sympathy towards Orthodox believers (Tyszkowski 1935, 13; Tymoshenko 2020a, 357).

Drawing on these familial ties, Jan Abramowicz and Krzysztof Zenowicz notably supported, among various cultural initiatives like founding schools and collecting books, the printing activities. For example, Jan Abramowicz financed the publication in Vilnius of works by the Calvinist theologian Stanisław Sudrowski, as well as catechisms for Protestants (Dapkievicz 2020, nos. 96–99, 159, 177). He also acted as a patron to the prominent Calvinist writer

Andrzej Wolan (Tyszkowski 1935, 13). Krzysztof Zenowicz, a graduate of the University of Zurich, likewise was active in literary endeavors (Padalinski 2024, 130–131). Surviving dedications in printed books attest to his patronage of contemporary writers. In 1595, for example, the poet Jan Kozakowicz published a historical work at Karcan's printing house with a dedication to Zenowicz (Dapkievicz 2020, no. 93). Another dedication to the voivode of Brest was printed in Vilnius by his namesake, the Ashmyany chamberlain Mikołaj Juriewicz Zenowicz (Dapkievicz 2020, no. 136). At that time, the Vilnius bookbinder and printer Morkūnas resided in Mikołaj Juriewicz's house and referred to himself as his servant (*Akty* 1893, 125).

Thus, the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood could have established direct contact with Protestant printers through its principal patrons and their husbands, who were leaders of the Calvinist community and influential supporters of printing. This interaction was likely facilitated by a shared culture of tolerance, serving as a crucial precondition for collaboration between printing houses and enabling the infiltration of Western European book art traditions into the Cyrillic book culture of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Translated from Russian by Gleb Zamarajev

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OLD PRINTED BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS GROUPED BY PRINTING HOUSES AND PRINTERS

ACADEMY PRINTING HOUSE (VILNIUS)

Academy–Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1592: Grodzicki, Stanisław. 1592. *O czyściu pierwsze kazanie na pogrzebie [...] Katarzyny z Tęczyna Radziwiłowej, wojewodziny wileńskiej.* W Wilnie: w Drukarni Akademij Societatis Iesu, przez Daniela Łęczycyusa. <https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/objects/990004239081008452>.

Academy / Vilnius 1595: Śmiglecki, Marcin. 1595. *O Bostwie Przedwiecznym Syna Bożego [...].* W Wilnie: w Drukarni Akademij Societatis Iesu. <https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/objects/990002652061008452>.

Academy–Patro / Vilnius 1596 A: Śmiglecki, Marcin. 1596. *O lichwie y trzech przedniejszych kontrakciech.* W Wilnie: w Drukarni Akademij Societatis Iesu, Christophorus Patro. https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/islandora/object/kolekcijos:VUB01_000262619.

Academy–Patro / Vilnius 1596 B: *Threni in obitum nobilis et generosi adolescentis Nicolai Szymanowski [...].* 1596. Vilnae: In Officina Academiae Societatis Iesu, Christophorus Patro. <https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/objects/990004278591008452>.

Academy / Vilnius 1599: Wujek, Jakub. 1599. *Postilla Catholica: Tai est Iszguldimas Ewangeliu kiekwienos Nedelos ir szwetes per wissus metus.* Per Kuniga Mikaloju Dauksza [...] iz lekiszko perguldyta. W Wilniui: Drukarnioi Akademios Societatis Iesu. <https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/objects/990003074931008452>.

Academy / Vilnius 1618: *Monumentum virtuti meritissimae [...] D. Theodori Tiskiewicz Skumin palatini Novogrodensis [...].* [1618]. Vilnae: in Acad. Soc. Iesu. <https://polona.pl/preview/9134653c-60cb-4951-ae53-3b4d6941aac7>.

BAZYLIK, CYPRIAN

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BROTHERHOOD PRINTING HOUSE (VILNIUS, VIEVIS)

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Ankstyvosios protestantų knygų spaudos įtaka Vilniaus stačiatikių Šv. Dvasios brolijos spaustuvei: ornamentų liudijimai

Santrauka

Iki šios dienos istoriografijoje įsitvirtinusi nuomonė, kad Vilniaus stačiatikių Šv. Dvasios brolijos spaustuvės (veikė apie 1595–1654 ir 1693–1705) knygų dekoratyvinis dizainas remiasi tik Pranciškaus Skorinos, Ivano Fiodorovo ir kitų rytų slavų stačiatikių spaustuvių knygos puošybos tradicija. Straipsnyje, remiantis knygų ornamentų analize, atskleidžiami iki šiol nežinoti faktai, liudijantys, kad Brolijos spaustuvininkai dažnai naudojo ornamentus iš kitų Vilniaus spaustuvių, spausdinusių knygas lotyniškais rašmenimis, o taip pat turėjo tikslias jų kopijas. Tarp skolinių vyravo inicialai (antikvos bei gotiški) ir vinjetės iš protestantų Jono Karcano bei Jokūbo Morkūno spaustuvių. Taip pat, be ornamentų, Brolijos spaustuvininkai spausdino kitus protestantiškos kilmės grafinius elementus, t. y. J. Karcano herbinių rėmelio graviūrą ir J. Morkūno antraštinio lapo frontispisą. Atskleistas ornamentų skolinimo mastas leidžia kelti prielaidą, kad protestantų spaustuvininkai galėjo patys spausdinti knygas stačiatikių Šv. Dvasios brolijai, arba dirbti prie staklių kartu su jos meistrais. Ankstyvųjų Vilniaus spaustuvių knygos puošybos elementų tyrimas taip pat padėjo atskleisti neįprastą lietuvių ornamentų paplitimą tarp visų miesto spaustuvių. Į Lietuvos sostinę pirmą kartą šiuos ornamentus atsi-vežė Lenkijos protestantų spaustuvininkas Danielius Lenčickis. XVI a. antroje pusėje lieti ornamentai tapo ryškiausiu Vilniaus knygų spaudos bruožu.

Esminiai žodžiai: spaustuvininkų ornamentai; lieti ornamentai; Vilniaus stačiatikių Šv. Dvasios brolijos spaustuvė; Danielius Lenčickis (Daniel z Łęczycy); Jonas Karcanas; Jokūbas Morkūnas; Mikalojus Radvila Našlaitėlis; Vilniaus akademijos spaustuvė; Vilnius.

*Įteikta 2025 m. rugsėjį
Delivered in September 2025*

ILLUSTRATIONS



Prince M. Radziwiłł
the Orphan,
Martin of Kazimierz



Prince M. Radziwiłł the
Orphan



Daniel z Łęczycy



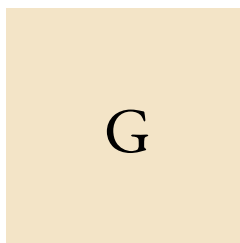
Daniel z Łęczycy



Anonymous



Jesuit Academy



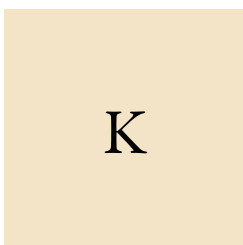
G



Jan Karcan



Jokūbas Morkūnas



K



Prince M. Radziwiłł
the Orphan



Prince M. Radziwiłł
the Orphan



Anonymous



Prince M. Radziwiłł
the Orphan,
Krzysztof Patro



Krzysztof
Wolbramczyk



Daniel z Łęczycy

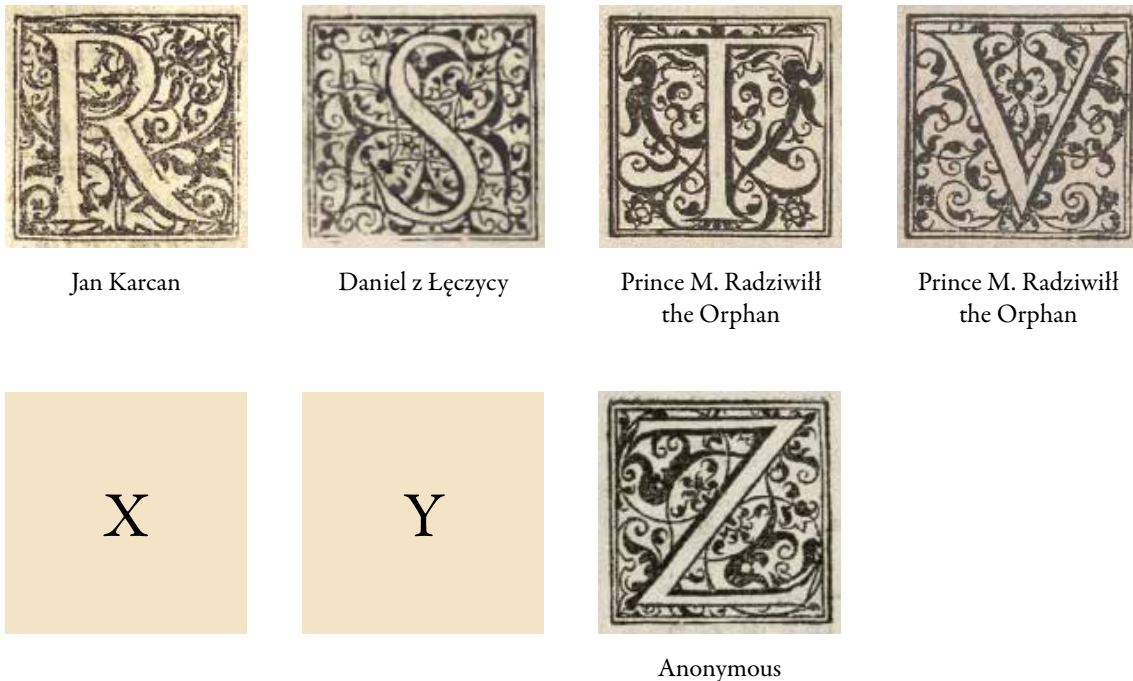


Figure 1. A set of Roman type cast initials featuring arabesque and floral motifs (each measuring approximately 26 × 26 mm), commonly used in Vilnius printing houses in the late 16th and early 17th centuries

Sources (NB: To avoid overloading the text with bibliographic descriptions, each initial is cited from a single book printed by one of the Vilnius printing houses. Two exceptions are the initials Q and S that come from the Pińczów printing house of Daniel z Łęczycy, although they are very common in all Vilnius presses of the period. Initials G, K, X and Y could not be found in Vilnius printings):

Init. A: **Radziwiłł the Orphan–Marcin z Kazimierza / Vilnius 1581**, f. A2r. Init. B: **Radziwiłł the Orphan–Academy / Vilnius 1586**, f. A2r. Init. C and D: **Radziwiłł the Orphan–Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1576 A**, ff. A2r, B4v. Init. E and N: **[S. n.] / [Vilnius] 1585**, ff. 13v, 18r. Init. F: **Academy / Vilnius 1618**, f. B1r. Init. H and R: **Karcan / Vilnius 1586 B**, ff. 139r, 142v. Init. I: **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1592 B**, f. A1r. Init. L, M and V: **Radziwiłł the Orphan / Vilnius 1582**, 1, 30, 106. Init. O: **Academy–Patro / Vilnius 1596 B**, f. A3v. Init. P: **Wolbramczyk / Vilnius 1594**, 1. Init. Q: **Daniel z Łęczycy / Pińczów 1561**, f. A2r. Init. S: **Daniel z Łęczycy / Pińczów 1559 B**, f. A2r. Init. T: **Radziwiłł the Orphan / Vilnius 1576**, 224. Init. Z: **[S. n.] / [Vilnius] 1603**, f. A2r.



Jan Karcan (1580)

Jokūbas Morkūnas (1593)

Figure 2. Gothic initials B, N, P, and Z from the New Testament printed by Jan Karcan (1580) and Jokūbas Morkūnas (1593)

Sources:

Karcan / [S. I.] 1580 A, ff. A2r (init. P), O6v (init. B), Z2v (init. N), Oo2r (init. Z).

Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B, ff. 11v (init. N), 32r (P), 80v (init. Z), 104r (init. B).



Melchior Nering (Poznań, Toruń)

Jokūbas Morkūnas (Vilnius)

Figure 3. Gothic initials used by the Poznań printer Melchior Nering and the Vilnius printer Jokūbas Morkūnas

Sources:

Melchior Nering: **Nering / Poznań 1577** (init. A, J, K, N, O, S, W, Z); **Nering / Toruń 1584** (init. E, L); **Nering / Toruń 1587** (init. D, P).

Jokūbas Morkūnas: **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 B**.



Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1594 B, f. [1]v.



Radziwiłł the Orphan–Daniel z Łęczycy /
Vilnius 1576 B, f. A2r;
Academy / Vilnius 1595, 1.



Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1594 B, f. A1v.



Academy / Vilnius 1595, f. [2]r.

Figure 4. Gothic initials N, P, R, and Z with ribbon motifs from books printed by the Vilnius printing houses of Prince M. Radziwiłł the Orphan, Daniel z Łęczycy, and the Jesuit Academy



**Daniel z Łęczycy /
Pińczów 1560,**
ff. B7v (init. A),
G4r (init. B, var.),
B1v (init. W).

**Radziwiłł the Orphan-
[Ślęcki] / Vilnius
1579 B, 906 (init. B).**

**Academy-Patro /
Vilnius 1596 A,**
5 (init. A),
3 (init. W).

Academy / Vilnius 1599,
6 (init. A),
1 (init. B),
578 (init. B, var.),
355 (init. W).

Figure 5. Gothic initials A, B (1st form), B (2nd form), and W with interlace motifs from books printed by the Vilnius printing houses of Prince M. Radziwiłł the Orphan, Daniel z Łęczycy, and the Jesuit Academy



Figure 6. Jan Karcan's floriated initials (A, L, R, S, V measuring approximately 30 × 30 mm) and historiated initials (the D measuring approximately 30 × 30 mm, and the Q with a grotesque mask measuring approximately 20 × 20 mm; other initials could not be examined directly)

Sources: Init. A: Karcan / Vilnius 1586 B, 114r. Init. C: Karcan / Vilnius 1586 B, 187r. Init. D: Karcan / Vilnius 1610, f. [4]r. Init. I: Karcan / Vilnius 1599, f. K1r. Init. L: Karcan / Losk 1580, 56. Init. M: Karcan / Losk 1577, f. [3]r. Init. N: Karcan / Vilnius 1604, f. A2r. Init. Q: Karcan / Vilnius 1586 A, f. A2r. Init. Q with a grotesque mask: Karcan / Vilnius 1586 B, f. 45v. Init. Q with human figures: Karcan / Vilnius 1585 B, f. A2r. Init. R: Karcan / Losk 1580, 83. Init. S: Karcan / Vilnius 1585 B, f. A4v. Init. S with human figures: Karcan / Vilnius 1599, f. A3r. Init. V: Karcan / Losk 1580, 1. Init. W: Karcan / Vilnius 1585 A, f. 5r and p. 190.



Figure 7. Title page of the New Testament printed by Jokūbas Morkūnas (1593) – the decorative frame incorporates ornaments from the Brest Protestant printing house
Source: **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B.**



Figure 8. Arabesque diamond-shaped vignette belonging to the printer Jan Karcan from the Psalter printed by the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House (1595)
Source: **Brotherhood / Vilnius 1595, f. 185v.**



Figure 9. Title page of the *Slavonic Grammar* by Lavrentiy Zizaniy (1596) printed by the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House – the decorative frame features ornaments from the Brest Protestant printing house

Source: **Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 B.**



Jan Karcan (1595)



Brotherhood Printing House (1596)

Figure 10. Woodcut depicting a heraldic frame with five ostrich feathers in a book printed by Jan Karcan (1595) and in a book printed by the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House (1596)

Sources: **Karcan / Vilnius 1595; Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 C.**



Figure 11. Floriated initial M in a book printed by Jan Karcan (1577) and its copy in a book printed by the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House (1596)

Sources: **Karcan / Losk 1577**, f. [3]r; **Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 D**, f. [1]r.

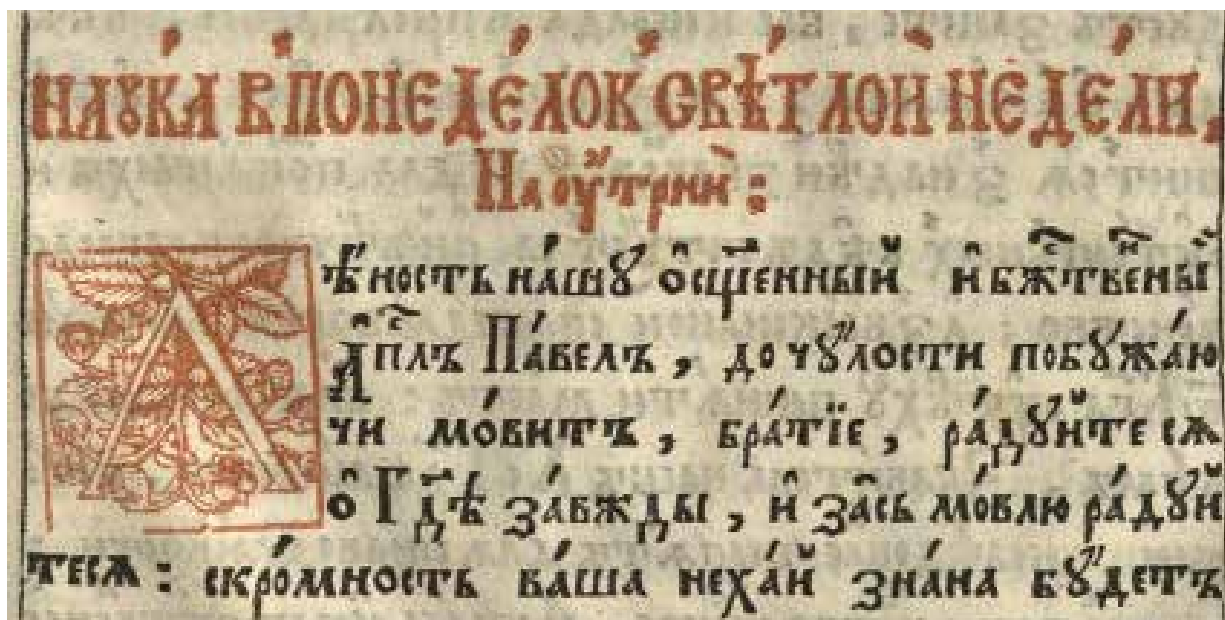


Figure 12. Use of Latin floriated initial V by Jan Karcan to represent the Cyrillic letter Л in a book printed by the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House

Source: **Brotherhood / Vievis 1616**, f. 101r.



Daniel z Łęczycy (1584)



Jokūbas Morkūnas (1593)



Brotherhood Printing House (1612)

Figure 13. Rectangular interlace vignette in books from various Vilnius printing houses

Sources: **Daniel z Łęczycy / Vilnius 1584**, f. c5r of the 2nd sequence; **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1593 B**, f. *2v; **Brotherhood / Vievis 1612**, f. 181v.



First type (1596)



Second type (1628)

Figure 14. Two types of mascarons in books printed by the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House

Sources: **Brotherhood / Vilnius 1596 A**, f. 59v; **Brotherhood / Vilnius 1628**, f. 129r.



Jokūbas Morkūnas (1594)



Brotherhood Printing House (1644)

Figure 15. Title-page border by Jokūbas Morkūnas, reused fifty years later in a book by the Vilnius Orthodox Brotherhood Printing House

Sources: **Morkūnas / Vilnius 1594 B**; **Brotherhood / Vilnius 1644** (Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka, Rk 48).