

LIETUVOS ISTORIJOS INSTITUTAS

XVIII

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VILNIUS

Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės
sostinė

Sudarytoja

RAMUNĖ ŠMIGELSKYTĖ-STUKIENĖ

Lietuvos istorijos
institutas

Vilnius
2024

XVIII amžiaus studijos | Eighteenth-Century Studies

Recenzuojamas tęstinis mokslo leidinys, leidžiamas nuo 2014 m. | Peer-reviewed journal published since 2014.

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Knygos leidybą pagal „Valstybinę lituanistinių tyrimų ir sklaidos 2016–2024 metų programą“ finansavo

Lietuvos mokslo taryba (sutarties Nr. S-LIP-2.4-14)

Sponsored by the Research Council of Lithuania

Svetainė internete | Website <http://www.istorija.lt/journals/xviii-amziaus-studijos/>

Redakcinės kolegijos adresas | Contact address

Lietuvos istorijos institutas

Tilto g. 17, 01101 Vilnius, Lietuva

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Bibliografinė informacija pateikiama Lietuvos integralios bibliotekų informacinės sistemos (LIBIS) portale [ibiblioteka.lt](http://biblioteka.lt)

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ISBN 978-609-8314-50-2

ISSN 2351-6968

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A BOOK ENGRAVING AS A SOURCE FOR STUDYING THE HISTORY OF VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

INA KAŽURO

Vilnius University Library

Abstract. The article discusses one of the earliest images of Vilnius University, which was engraved and printed in 1781 in two publications from the Vilnius Academy printing house. Copies of this image are nowadays found in modern historical literature and in various types of printed material (on book covers, diplomas and posters). However, until now, there has been no attempt to examine the original image as a historical source. The uniqueness and relevance of this engraving are determined by the fact that it was created during a crucial period in the university's reform by the National Education Commission. The aim of the article is to identify which elements of the image of Vilnius University are based on reality, and which represent the unfulfilled ideas of the reformers. Additionally, the article raises questions about the authorship of the engraving, the relationship with the book in which it appeared, and its reuse in later publications. A comprehensive bibliographical description of two publications in which the engraving was printed is provided in the article's appendix.

Keywords: book engraving, print culture, 18th century, Vilnius University, Academy printing house, Marcin Poczebout, Dawid Pilchowski.

Anotacija. Straipsnyje analizuojamas vienas seniausių Vilniaus universiteto atvaizdų, išgraviruotas ir išspausdintas 1781 m. dviejuose Vilniaus akademijos spaustuvės leidiniuose. Šio atvaizdo kopijos naudojamos šiuolaikinėje istorinėje literatūroje ir įvairios rūšies spaudoje (knygų viršeliuose, diplomuose, plakatuose). Tačiau iki šiol nebuvo bandoma nagrinėti pirminio vaizdo kaip istorinio šaltinio. Šios knygos graviūros išskirtinumą ir aktualumą nulemia tai, kad ji buvo sukurta itin svarbiu universiteto reformos laikotarpiu, kuriam vadovavo Tautinė edukacinė komisija. Straipsnio tikslas – nustatyti, kurie Vilniaus universiteto įvaizdžio elementai yra pagrįsti tikrove, o kurie reprezentuoja neįgyvendintas reformatorių idėjas. Be to, straipsnyje keliami klausimai dėl graviūros autorystės, santykio su knyga, kurioje ji pasirodė, ir jos pakartotinio panaudojimo būsimuose leidiniuose. Išsamus bibliografinis dviejų leidinių, kuriuose buvo išspausdinta graviūra, aprašymas pateikiamas straipsnio priede.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: knygos graviūra, spaudos kultūra, XVIII a., Vilniaus universitetas, Akademijos spaustuvė, Martynas Počiobutas, Dovydas Pilchovskis.

Introduction

Since the mid-20th century, numerous monographs devoted to the history of Vilnius University have frequently used an image from a book printed in 1781 as an illustration (Fig. 1). It depicts the university's coat of arms, surrounded by several buildings. The top section features the carved initials of the university's new name, given by the National Education Commission: S.P.M.D.L. (*Schola Princeps Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae*, or Principal School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania). Reproductions of this image can be found in modern catalogues of book exhibitions in Vilnius University Library, in monographs devoted to university departments, on student diplomas, and elsewhere. In the 21st century, the engraving has gained a broader significance, symbolising not only the higher school of Lithuania, but also the state itself. It serves as a graphic emblem for the research journal *Eighteenth-Century Studies: The Grand Duchy of Lithuania* published by the Lithuanian Institute of History.¹

The 1781 book engraving is notable for being the earliest artistic depiction of the university. Although it is a work of art, the depiction differs from several handwritten plans and diagrams of the university created at the end of the 16th and in the 17th centuries, which served a purely pragmatic purpose.² An early artistic depiction of the university also includes a drawing by Franciszek Smuglewicz, but it was created later than 1781, in 1785.³ Another feature of the 1781 book engraving is the Latin abbreviations. For the contemporaries of the creator of the engraving, these inscriptions did not pose any difficulties and were easily deciphered. However, any modern viewer wishing to understand what the artist sought to depict needs some further clarification and an examination of the historical context. It is likely that uncertainty about some of the abbreviations, which makes it difficult to identify historical objects, contributed to the fact that the engraving has not yet been studied.

1 *XVIII amžiaus studijos: Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė*, 2014–, ISSN 2351-6968.

2 Since the 20th century, researchers have relied on five plans created before 1781. Firstly, there is the drawing from 1582 by the vice-rector of the Jesuit College Paweł Boksza. Secondly, there are three anonymous handwritten plans of the academy's buildings from 1610, 1642 and 1773. Thirdly, there is a plan of Vilnius from 1737 drawn by the military architect Johann Georg Maximilian von Fürstenhoff, including the complex of buildings of the university. See: Audronė Mačiulytė-Kasperavičienė, *Vilniaus universiteto rūmai*, eds. Mečislovas Sakalauskas, Antanas Stravinskas, Vilnius: Vaga, 1979, p. 16–28; Vladas Drėma, *Vilniaus universiteto Didžiojo (Akademijos) kiemo pietinis sparnas*, in: *Architektūros paminklai*, t. 8: 'Vilniaus universiteto pastatų ansamblio restauravimas', 1984, p. 12–24; Jerzy Paszenda, *Zabudowania akademii Wileńskiej w XVI–XVIII w.*, in: *Budowle jezuickie w Polsce XVI–XVIII w.*, t. 1, Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 1999, p. 403–444; Manar Hammad, *Vilniaus universitetas: semiotinis architektūros ir planų tyrimas*, Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2014.

3 Vladas Drėma, *Vilniaus universiteto Didžiojo (Akademijos) kiemo pietinis sparnas*, p. 25.



Figure 1. The engraving in the lecture prospectus, 1781.

This article aims to explore the reasons for the appearance of the engraving, describes its features, and also deciphers the image in detail in the context of the reform of the university in the 18th century. The relevance of this research is determined primarily by the exceptional rarity of historical images of Vilnius University. In addition, the study of the 1781 engraving reveals the views and attitudes of contemporaries towards the reform of the university which was carried out by the National Education Commission.⁴

The starting point for the research is some brief information about the engraving in a work by Michał Baliński devoted to the history of Vilnius University.⁵ The main source of the research is copies of printed items depicting engravings stored in Vilnius University Library⁶ and the Jagiellonian University Library.⁷ Bibliographical analysis helps to establish the type and purpose of the engraving, as well as some features and the number of editions in which it was printed. The group of secondary research sources consists of archival documents and works on the history, and in particular the architecture, of Vilnius University in the second half of the 18th century.⁸ An analysis of the historiography helps us to connect

4 This paper extends my earlier publication on the 1781 engraving in the context of book illustrations of the 18th century for the Vilnius printings, see: Ina Kažuro, *Apšvieta ir knygos kultūra: XVIII a. antros pusės Vilniaus pasaulietinių leidinių iliustracijos ir jų šaltiniai*, in: *Acta Academiae Artium Vilnensis*, 2021, t. 101/102, p. 111–146.

5 Michał Baliński, *Dawna Akademia Wileńska*. Petersburg: nakładem i drukiem Jozafata Ohryzki, 1862, p. 265–266.

6 Vilnius university library (VUL) IV 16172/1781-1782, IV 30991.

7 Biblioteka Jagiellońska, BJ St. Dr. 103814 II. Access through the internet: <https://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra/publication/320802/edition/307008> (accessed 12 December 2023).

8 Among works on the architecture of Vilnius University, in addition to those mentioned above

and identify objects in the engraving with events of the time, and to determine their specific location on the map of Vilnius.

The historical background

To understand what is depicted in the 1781 engraving, it is first necessary to consider the socio-political circumstances that influenced its content. After the dissolution of the Jesuit order in 1773, responsibility for Vilnius University was transferred to the National Education Commission. The main task of the Commission was to develop a new concept of higher education, and to carry out reforms of Kraków and Vilnius universities in accordance with the ideas of the Enlightenment. However, the process of developing a new plan and the reform of higher schools was not easy, and lasted for ten years.

The first rector to carry out the reform of Vilnius University according to the instructions of the National Education Commission was the ex-Jesuit Ignacy Żaba, who was replaced in 1779 by the professor of philosophy and ex-Jesuit Joannes Chevalier. However, their efforts failed to bring about the intended changes. Only with the appointment of the astronomer Marcin Poczobut, also a former Jesuit, as rector of the university in November 1780 did the reform move to a new stage and reach its completion.⁹ As a result, in 1781 two main departments were established at the university, the College of Physical Sciences and the Medical Collegium.

In 1780, when starting the reforms, Poczobut planned to create four colleges: of physical, medical, legal and theological sciences.¹⁰ To achieve this goal, he engaged in recruiting staff while simultaneously addressing other tasks. There was little support in society for the university's reform. To attract students, the rector endeavoured to establish a curriculum based on existing schools. Negotiations were started to merge with the Vilnius Medical School. In addition, Poczobut sought to replenish the

(see footnote 2), the following are considered the most valuable: Teresė Dambrauskaitė, Buvusių universiteto klinikų, chemijos laboratorijos ir medicinos kolegijos pastatai, in: *Architektūros paminklai*, 1984, t. 8: 'Vilniaus universiteto pastatų ansamblio restauravimas', p. 34–38; Audronė Kasperavičienė, Vilniaus universiteto rūmų stilių raida, in: *Architektūros paminklai*, 1984, 8: 'Vilniaus universiteto pastatų ansamblio restauravimas', p. 3–11; *Lietuvos TSR istorijos ir kultūros paminklų sąvadas*, t. 1: 'Vilnius', eds. I. Barauskaitė et al., Vilnius, 1988; Vladas Drėma, *Dingęs Vilnius = Lost Vilnius*, Vilnius: Vaga 1991; Vladas Drėma, *Vilniaus namai archyvų fonduose*, Knyga 1, Vilnius: Savastis, 1998.

9 Janina Kamińska, Komisja edukacji narodowej a reforma uniwersytetów, in: *XVIII amžiaus studijos*, t. 2: *Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė: valstybė, kultūra, edukacija*, ed. Ramunė Šmigelskytė-Stukienė, p. 80.

10 Irena Szybiak, *Szkolnictwo Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim*. Wrocław, etc: Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1973, p. 50–51; Janina Kamińska, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej 1773–1794: Akademia Wileńska. Szkoła Główna Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IHN PAN, Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR, 2018, p. 87.

university at the expense of other institutions in Vilnius and Hrodna. In the summer of 1781, Joachim Chreptowicz, a member of the Education Commission, arrived in Vilnius and advised Poczobut on locations and terms under which the departments of the reformed university could operate. By the autumn, the professors and students had returned, allowing the university to commence its activities. Nevertheless, the structure of the newly reformed university remained incomplete, representing a compromise between the plans of the Education Commission and the actual situation in the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.¹¹ The best staffing was achieved in the Medical Collegium and the College of Physical Sciences. At the same time, the rector was unable to establish departments of law and theology. The main obstacle in organising a department of theology was the opposition from the Bishop of Vilnius, Ignacy Jakub Massalski. Therefore, the rector was forced to incorporate humanities subjects into the structure of the college of exact and applied sciences.

In order to attract public attention, Poczobut decided to link the academic inauguration with the king's name day, which fell in November. For this occasion, the university's hall was adorned with festive lighting and the new university coat of arms. It was planned that a prospectus of lectures for the new academic year would be distributed to participants during the inaugural ceremony. For this purpose, the academic printing house, led by the doctor of theology Dawid Zygmunt Pilchowski,¹² was instructed to print prospectuses.

The celebration on 24 November 1781 left an impression on guests and residents of Vilnius. During the solemn assembly, the university was given its new name, the Principal School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The ceremonial speech by the rector Marcin Poczobut emphasised the idea of the importance of higher education to the prosperity of the state. Kazimierz Naruszewicz, the university secretary, highlighted in his speech the importance to society of the applied sciences. After the university secretary gave his speech, prospectuses were distributed to all the participants in the celebration. Printed in Latin, these included a table detailing the order and schedule of lectures.¹³

After the conclusion of the festivities, with the aim of perpetuating their memory, Poczobut ordered the lecture prospectus to be reprinted, incorporating the speech by the secretary of the Principal School. A copy of the prospectus was sent by the rector to his colleague, the eminent French astronomer Joseph de Lalande.¹⁴ It was in these two editions of the lecture prospectus that the engraving depicting the university first appeared.

11 Irena Szybiak, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

12 Elżbieta Aleksandrowska, Pilchowski (Pilichowski) Dawid Zygmunt, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, t. XXVI, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wyd. PAN, 1981, t. 26/2, p. 249.

13 Michał Baliński, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

14 Edmund Rabowicz, Poczobut Marcin, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, t. XXVII/1, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wyd. PAN, 1982–1983, t. 1, p. 56.

The first and second editions of the lecture prospectus: structure and typography

What are the distinctive features of the first and second editions of the 1781 lecture prospectuses commissioned by the rector for the beginning of the academic year? Firstly, a large format in folio was chosen for the publication. Secondly, the prospectuses are composed of several sections, which were interconnected by various means in the first and second editions.

In the first edition, the title page and lecture descriptions are printed first. The lectures are arranged according to the lecturers. In total, in the year 1781, ten lecturers commenced their work. It is noteworthy that the lecturers were not divided according to college, as the final organisation of the colleges lacked certain departments.¹⁵ Subsequently, the inaugural speech of the rector is printed separately. It required seven sheets, precisely the same number needed for the lectures. In the process of folding the printed sheets, the rector's speech was inserted between the title page and the lecture descriptions.

The design of the title page in the first edition of the prospectus imparts a sense of solemnity (Fig. 2). The entire text of the title is divided into 22 lines (see Appendix, Description 1). When printing the title of the book, nine Antique fonts were employed, among which a line composed of the single word '*Lectio-num*' stands out, set in a notably larger font size of 19 millimetres. Some parts of lines on the title page are printed in bold Antiqua, with only one line in italics. The imprint information of the prospectus is separated from the title by a vignette with an image of a horn and a staff.

It was customary in the 18th century to embellish the beginning of a text with a decorative headpiece. However, the publisher of the lecture prospectus abandoned the tradition, and instead included a narrative headpiece featuring an illustration of the university. The headpiece is printed twice in the book: at the beginning of the rector's inaugural speech, and at the beginning of the lecture descriptions. The dark strip around the frame of the image indicates that the engraving was etched into metal and printed using the intaglio printing technique. This engraving technique required a special printing process. Initially, an impression was made from the engraving on a special press designed for intaglio printing. Once the ink had dried, the sheets with the printed engraving were placed on another press for printing the text itself. Thus, impressions of two different types, intaglio and relief printing, appeared on one sheet.

In addition to the narrative headpiece, a line of fleurons and an engraved decoration for an initial letter are printed at the beginning of the rector's speech.

¹⁵ The grouping of lectures into colleges only began in 1783.

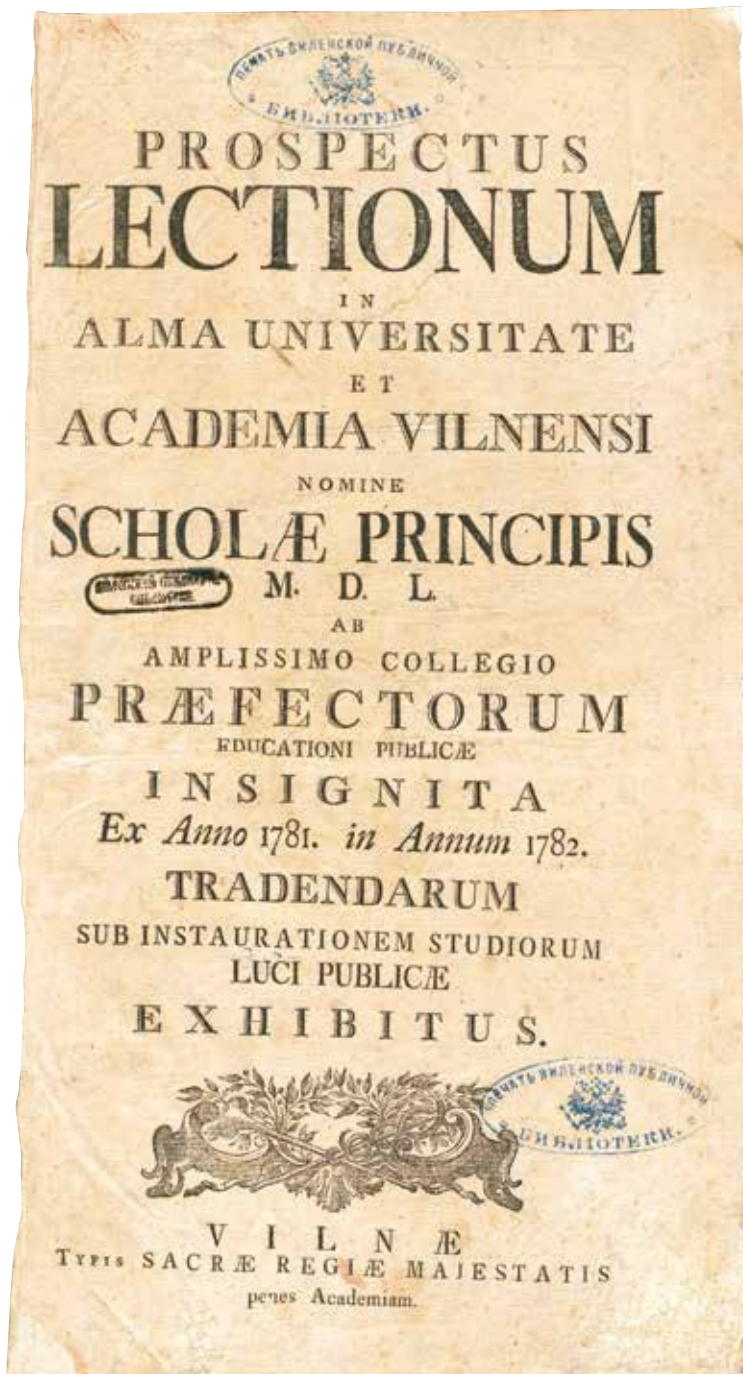


Figure 2. The first edition of the lecture prospectus (Vilnius, 1781); the title page (VUL).

Then to adorn the initial letter of the lecture description, a factotum is employed: an ornamental frame within which the letter 'P' is inserted. Furthermore, two tailpieces with plant motifs are employed in the book, framing the main parts of the publication, the rector's speech and the lecture descriptions. These are features of the structure and the design of the first edition of the lecture prospectus.

The second edition of the 1781 lecture prospectus is not a copy of the first and differs significantly from it. Firstly, the publisher altered the text of the title page (see Appendix, Description 2). It contains 26 lines set in eight different Antique fonts (Fig. 3). The first word of the title '*Universitas*' is emphasised with the largest font, 11-millimetre Antiqua. Due to the larger number of lines on the title page, there is no space for the vignette that adorned the first edition. The book title now includes the names of historical figures from the 16th century who founded the university: the Bishop of Vilnius Walerian Protasewicz, Pope Gregory XIII, and the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Stephen Báthory.

Secondly, the reissued edition incorporates modifications to the content of the book. In addition to the inaugural address by the rector, the speech by the secretary of the Principal School Naruszewicz has been included. Furthermore, the lecture descriptions are now presented in two languages, Latin and Polish, and printed in two columns. These changes led to the publication expanding by 12 sheets. Among other minor changes to the content, it is worth mentioning that details about the dates of the speeches by leaders of the university were included (before Poczobut's speech *Octavo kalendas decembres anno 1781*; before Naruszewicz's speech *Anno Domini MDCCLXXXI. Octavo kalendas Decembres*). Additionally, a footnote mentions the presence of Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski at the festivities. The order of signatures in the second edition indicates that the main sections of the book were printed sequentially: the title page, followed by the rector's speech, the secretary's speech, and the lecture descriptions.¹⁶ The engraving depicting the university in the reissued edition is used only once, preceding the rector's speech. The secretary's speech and the lecture descriptions are adorned with decorative headpieces.

To sum up the analysis of the material features of the two editions of the 1781 lecture prospectus, it can be asserted that the choice of format, font and decoration, and the overall composition of the printing, was predetermined by their purpose, to establish the authority of the university in society. In other words, these editions had an official character. The placing of the engraving at the beginning of the main sections of the text (at the beginning of the rector's speech and the lecture descriptions) indicates that it served both as an illustration and as a decorative embellishment for the start of the text. In other words, the features identified allow for the interpretation of the engraving as a vignette with a representative landscape.

¹⁶ The table that according to Baliński was part of the publication is missing in the surviving copies, see: Michał Baliński, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

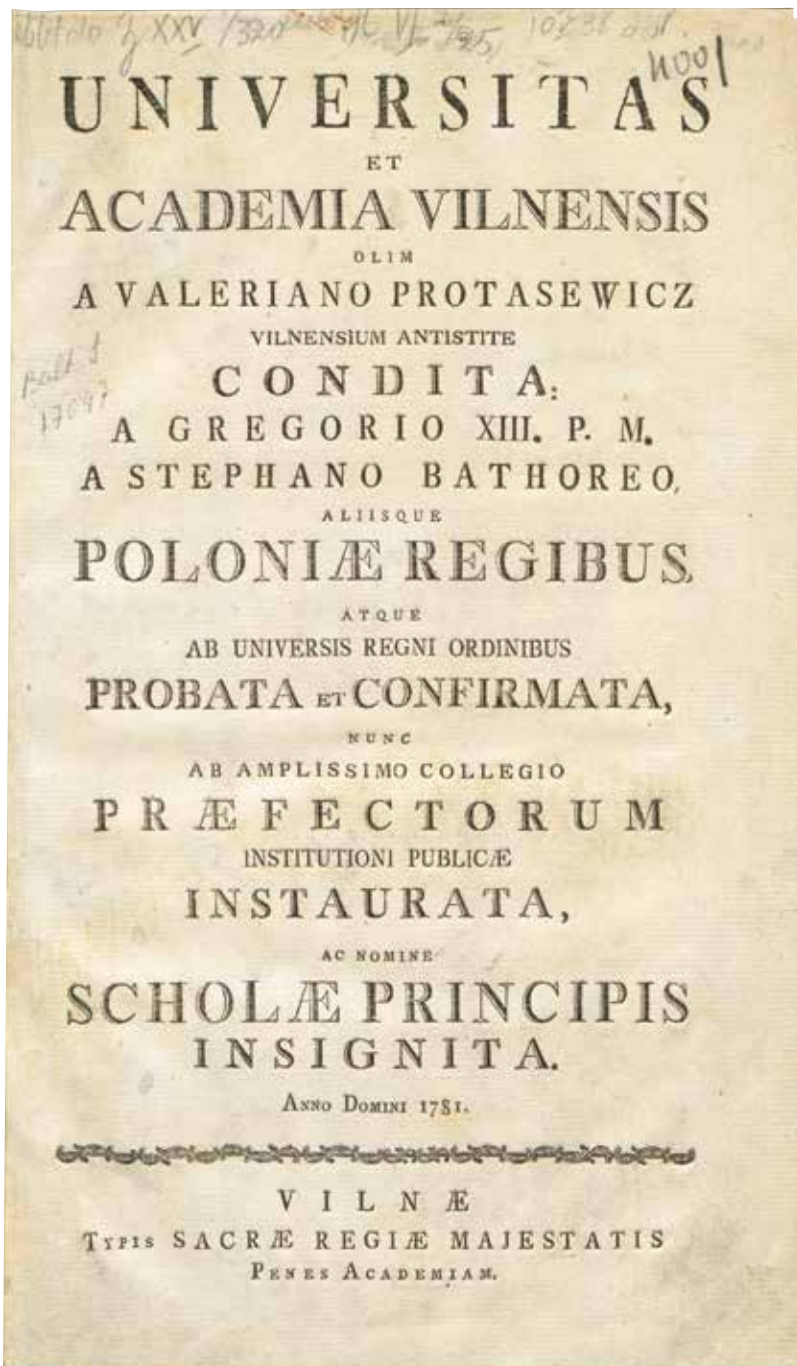


Figure 3. The second edition of the lecture prospectus (Vilnius, 1781); the title page (VUL).

The image on the engraving: meaning and symbols

A review of the historical context reveals that the engraving depicting the university was created in the first year of Marcin Poczubot's rectorship, a period when the university lacked a distinct structure. This circumstance influenced the subject of the image. On the other hand, the publication of the lecture prospectus served an official purpose, thus also shaping the character of the image. To facilitate the analysis, all objects depicted in the engraving are categorised in three thematic blocks: 1) the coat of arms, 2) the university buildings, and 3) the urban landscape.

1. The coat of arms. In the 1781 engraving, the central role is assigned to the coat of arms. It is positioned at the centre of the rectangle, with its upper and lower parts nearly touching the frame of the engraving. The centrepiece of the university's coat of arms is the state emblem of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Pahonia (or Vytis). Following the dissolution of the Jesuit order, the emblem underwent some minor changes: the double cross and the IHS monogram on the rider's shield were replaced with the monogram of King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Stanisław August Poniatowski 'SAR' (from Latin, Stanislaus August Rex), along with two crossed sceptres.¹⁷ Vilnius University presumably adopted the sceptres from the emblem of the oldest institution of higher education in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the University of Kraków. The coat of arms on the 1781 engraving is placed in a cartouche, surrounded by a laurel wreath topped with the rector's cap.

2. The university buildings. The next group of images is directly related to the university. This consists primarily of a series of buildings concentrated in the lower part of the engraving. To the left of the coat of arms, facing the viewer, stands a three-storey building with the inscription 'COLLEG[IUM]. PHYSICUM'. The College of Physical Sciences occupied a prominent place in the structure of the renewed university. Joachim Chreptowicz placed the college in the three-storey west building of the university, which faced the facade of the Church of St Johns, and named it the Bacon Gallery (Galeria Bakonska).¹⁸ The choice of the name of the philosopher Francis Bacon was not accidental. Bacon was one of the most influential figures of the Enlightenment era, and the members of the Education Commission referred to the ideas of the English philosopher in their decisions. For instance, the Education Commission provided instructions to use Francis Bacon's system when classifying the sciences.¹⁹

¹⁷ Michał Baliński, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

¹⁸ *Opisanie Topograficzne Gabinetu oraz izb profesora fizyki experimentalney* będących w Galerii Bakońskiej (manuscript), VUL Manuscript Division, F2-DC22, p. (29).

¹⁹ *Alma Mater Vilnensis: Vilniaus universiteto istorijos bruožai*, ed. Alfredas Bumblauskas, Zenonas Butkus, Sigita Jegelevičius et al., Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2009, p. 404.

In 1781, the College of Physical Sciences started the academic year with only two departments. Tadeusz Kundzicz began teaching a course on applied mathematics, while Józef Mickiewicz initiated a course on experimental physics. It is apparent that the incorporation of theoretical courses was necessary in order to advance scientific knowledge, and organising them remained a pressing objective for the coming years.²⁰ Nevertheless, by 1781, the importance of the College of Physical Sciences within the structure of the university was unquestionable, and the engraving serves as confirmation of this.

Near the College of Physical Sciences is a three-storey building bearing the inscription '*SEM. CAND.*', deciphered as '*Seminarium Candidatorum*'. In the 18th century, the term 'candidate' referred to a student teacher. A training college for teachers in parish schools, established by the Bishop of Vilnius Ignacy Massalski, was already in operation by 1775 (in the former Jesuit residence in the suburb of Lukiškės). However, the Education Commission was dissatisfied with the arrangements there and ceased funding it in 1780. An agreement was then reached with the bishop ensuring the preparation of parish school teachers in Church seminaries, while the Commission would oversee the training of teachers for secondary schools in the university.²¹ In doing so, the Education Commission sought to elevate the level of teacher training to a point where future university lecturers could be recruited from its ranks. The Piarist Hieronim Stroynowski arrived in Vilnius to establish the teachers' institute at the university. Since there was a prevailing negative opinion in the nobility about the secular teaching profession, Stroynowski faced a challenge in attracting enough students. By September 1781, he was compelled to leave with a few stipendiaries for the Kraków Teachers' Seminary.²² Thus, by mid-1781 the Lukiškės seminary was no longer operational, and the teacher training college at the university had not yet been set up. Additionally, there was no suitable accommodation for it.²³ Consequently, the engraving depicts the teachers' institute as a presumed, but not yet existing, academic and educational subdivision of the reformed university.

On the right-hand side of the coat of arms there is a three-storey building that protrudes directly from its flank, labelled '*Schol. Palat.*'. This inscription should be interpreted as '*Schola Palatina*', signifying the Palace School.²⁴ The

²⁰ Irena Szybiak, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

²¹ Jonas Minginas, Pasauliečių mokytojų rengimo pradžia Lietuvoje, in: *Acta Paedagogica Vilnensis*, 2007, t. 7, p. 262.

²² Irena Szybiak, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

²³ In 1775, at the initiative of Massalski, the Education Commission supported the construction of a new teacher training college; however, in 1777 the work was halted, see: Jonas Minginas, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

²⁴ Valdas Rakutis, Lietuvos karo mokyklos XVIII a. valstybės ir kariuomenės reformų kontekste, p. 40.

term conventionally denoted institutions where the training of senior officers took place. In the 18th century, the preparation of senior military personnel for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was conducted at the Warsaw Corps of Cadets, also commonly referred to as the Knightly School. A cadet school was established in Hrodna in 1773 specifically for training officer candidates from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In contrast to the Warsaw Corps, the Hrodna school catered for students from less affluent noble families, as opposed to aristocratic individuals.²⁵ The Hrodna school was not well thought of, as it lacked financial resources and qualified educators. By 1780 its activities had nearly come to an end. The Education Commission and the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Stanisław August Poniatowski agreed to its relocation to Vilnius. Marcin Poczubut hoped that the cadets could help alleviate the shortage of university students.²⁶ Indeed, they joined the ranks of attendees studying experimental physics, applied mathematics and other disciplines.²⁷ The transfer of the cadet school from Hrodna only took place in 1782.²⁸ However, plans for its integration into the university were discussed much earlier. Therefore, the engraver depicted it among other divisions of the university. The Latin name Palace School (*Schola Palatina*) to denote the cadet school appears somewhat imprecise. It is conceivable that the creator of the engraving found it challenging to identify an exact Latin equivalent for the term ‘cadets’.

In studies on the history of the architecture of Vilnius University, it is stated that the cadet school was situated on Pilies Street in a two-storey building (No 11).²⁹ However, a three-storey structure is depicted in the engraving. This discrepancy can be explained in various ways. It is possible that in 1780–1781 the exact location of the cadet school was not precisely known. On the other hand, another explanation is plausible: by depicting uniform three-storey buildings, the artist may have sought to emphasise the commonality between different divisions of the university.

The next structure in the engraving, connected at the far end to the Cadet School, depicts the Medical Collegium, ‘*COLL[EGIUM] MEDIC[UM]*’. The situation of the Medical Collegium was the most favourable in the inaugural year of the Principal School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania compared to other departments.³⁰ Firstly, the authorities succeeded in incorporating the Vilnius Medical

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁶ Irena Szybiak, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Valdas Rakutis, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

²⁹ Audronė Mačiulytė-Kasperavičienė, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

³⁰ Aurimas Andriušis, Angelė Rimševičienė, Institucinė medicinos mokslų pradžia Vilniaus universitete: nuo Vilniaus medicinos mokyklos iki Collegium Medicum (1775–1781), in: *Vilniaus medicinos istorijos almanachas*, 2006, t. 2, p. 20.

School (also known as the Anatomical and Surgical School) into the university. According to an agreement with the Vilnius Magistrate, students at the medical school were required to attend public university lectures on anatomy and surgery.³¹ Moreover, the student population was expanded by individuals who had previously attended the medical school in Hrodna.³² Secondly, Poczobut succeeded in recruiting four foreign professors for the Collegium: Stefano Lorenzo Bisio, Nicolas Regnier, Jacques Briôtet and Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert. Thirdly, the issue of accommodation for the Collegium was resolved. Several three-storey houses with inner courtyards on Pilies Street were allocated to the department of medicine to house classrooms, laboratories, an anatomical theatre, and apartments for professors. These houses belonged to the former Noble Collegium (Collegium Nobilium) (Nos 20 and 22) and the Szyszka hostel (No 24), which were previously owned by the Jesuits.³³ Of the entire complex of buildings, the artist included only one three-storey house in the engraving.

A few years later, the Medical Collegium emerged as a significant scientific institution. The authority of professors of medicine was so high that after the amalgamation of the department of medicine with the College of Physical Sciences in 1783, the old name Collegium Medicum continued to be used in both local urban society and academic milieus.³⁴ Another confirmation of the success of the Medical Collegium is evident in the fact that by the spring of 1782, the professor of natural history Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert was able to establish a botanical garden in the courtyard of the Collegium. Remarkably, the engraver was aware of Gilibert's plans, as is indicated by the depiction of four plots with plants behind the building of the Medical Collegium. Although the plots do not have inscriptions, it can be asserted that they constitute the botanical garden of the university, a new place for experimental and theoretical research.

Another inscription requiring deciphering is carved above the botanical garden on a single-storey house with a sloping roof '*Colon. Paup.*'. One end of this house abuts the Medical Collegium, while the other extends to the right-hand edge of the engraving. The inscription on the house is decoded as '*Colonia Pauperum*', signifying a hostel for the poor. Essentially, it was a boarding facility with meals for students who needed financial support. After 1773, all former Jesuit student hostels in Vilnius came under the jurisdiction of the Education Commission. Students from the hostels were organised into sections called 'Colonies'.³⁵ A colony typically occupied a separate house, and consisted of seven boarders and

31 Irena Szybiak, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

32 *Ibid.*

33 Józef Bieliński, *Uniwersytet Wileński (1579–1831)*, t. 1, Kraków: druk W. L. Anczyna i Spółki, 1899–1900, p. 81–83; Teresė Dambrauskaitė, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

34 Michał Baliński, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

35 Józef Bieliński, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

one supervisor.³⁶ Including a hostel for hard-up students in the illustration of the university symbolised its openness to all strata of society regardless of their financial status. It is quite possible that the engraving depicts the colony of the former Jesuit Szyszka hostel on Pilies Street (No 24), as both in the depiction and in actuality it borders the facilities of the Medical Collegium.

Thus, we have established that the lower tier of architectural facilities in the engraving includes two colleges, the teacher training college, the cadet school, the botanical garden, and the hostel for financially challenged students. The artist filled the space in front of all these facilities with a cobbled pavement, thereby emphasising the location of parts of the university within the urban area. Now let us redirect our attention to an examination of two architectural facilities constituting the upper tier of the structures.

Firstly, above the College of Physical Sciences, there is an image of a building with a tower and the inscription 'OBSER. REG.', which is deciphered as '*Observatorium Regium*' (Royal Observatory). Both in the shape of the structure and in the abbreviation, it is easy to recognise the observatory, the esteemed undertaking of the astronomer Marcin Poczobut, and a matter of great pride for the entire university. The observatory was constructed above the third floor of the academics' house between 1752 and 1766. A few years later, another small hall was added to the roof of the observatory, along with the construction of two towers.³⁷ In 1765, Poczobut assumed the leadership of the observatory, and within a year had conducted significant astronomical observations that refined the longitude and latitude of Vilnius. The King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Stanisław August Poniatowski, who was interested in creating an accurate map of the Commonwealth, valued highly Poczobut's scientific contribution, and on 15 January 1767 conferred upon the Vilnius astronomer and the observatory the royal title.³⁸ Hence, in the 1781 engraving, the title 'Royal' is incorporated into the name of the observatory, symbolising this honour.

On taking on the role of rector, Poczobut found himself obliged to step back from scientific pursuits. In the first year of the Principal School of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the assistant astronomer Andrzej Strzecki was entrusted with teaching astronomy.³⁹ Nevertheless, the rector never gave up his interest in scientific developments. The news of the discovery of the planet Uranus in 1781 prompted him to return to scientific observations and undertake another reconstruction of the observatory.⁴⁰ All this shows the continuing im-

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Lietuvos TSR istorijos ir kultūros paminklų sąvadas*, t. 1, p. 514–515.

³⁸ Edmund Rabowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

³⁹ Irena Szybiak, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁴⁰ Edmund Rabowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

portance of the observatory among the new scientific divisions in the reformed university.

Secondly, at the upper right of the coat of arms, above the cadet school building, a part of a tall tower is depicted, extending beyond the engraving's boundaries and partly unseen by the viewer. By the outline of the tower, it is easily recognisable as the bell tower of the Church of St Johns. This church, along with its bell tower, forms an integral part of the university's buildings, although it is not an academic division. For centuries, the bell tower of the Church of St Johns was the tallest building in Vilnius. Its depiction in the engraving serves as a symbol of the history of the university, tracing its foundation back to the initiatives of leaders of the Catholic Church in the 16th century. Notably, the engraver intentionally left no space for depicting the church itself, as it had relinquished its former role in the spiritual leadership of the university in the Age of Enlightenment. The bell tower of St Johns' Church completes the group of objects associated with the university.

3. The urban landscape. Let us now examine the townscape details unrelated to the university. On the left of the university observatory, three architectural structures with crosses are depicted: a dome, a tower, and the pediment of a church. Vilnius had very few churches with domed roofs in the second half of the 18th century. Among them, the dome of the Chapel of St Casimir, the patron saint of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, stood out in size. Additionally, this chapel was the closest domed structure to the university. If the engraving depicts the Chapel of St Casimir, the adjacent pediment signifies Vilnius Cathedral, with the cathedral bell tower also depicted.⁴¹ The Cathedral is the focal point of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, much as the university is the centre of higher education and science. In the engraving, their closeness serves as a reminder that despite secularisation in the 18th century, religion remained pivotal in society and among the academic elite of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Hills are depicted on the right-hand upper edge of the engraving. In one of them, the engraver showed the ruins of the upper princely castle from the 15th century, while on another the three crosses commemorate Franciscan missionaries who, according to legend, died at the hands of pagans in the 14th century. These historical objects symbolically balance the representation of the Cathedral on the left-hand edge of the engraving. Together with the symbol of higher ecclesiastical authority, the historical monuments on the hills of Vilnius are intended to reflect the foundational values of the nation.

⁴¹ It is worth emphasising the fact that, in reality, when viewed from various vantage points in the Old Town, the bell tower should be positioned to the left of the chapel, contrary to its depiction in the engraving.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is affirmed that the rector of Vilnius University Marcin Poczubot commissioned the publication of a lecture prospectus in 1781 that features an image of the university. Dawid Pilchowski, a doctor of theology and translator of Latin literature, supervised the academic printing press. Nevertheless, the identity of the creator of the image and the name of the engraver remain unknown.

The engraving depicting the university was printed in 1781, in two editions of the official university publication featuring prospectuses for lectures and inaugural speeches by the university's leaders. A lecture prospectus was not printed the following year, probably due to the university's critical situation.⁴² It resumed in 1783 and continued until the closure of the university in 1832. It is important to note that, starting from 1783, the engraving was never again printed in the prospectus. Furthermore, no instances of its printing were found in other publications from the academic printing house.

The engraving depicting the university combines the characteristics of an illustration and a decorative heading for the text.⁴³ The image in the engraving constitutes a view combining real and imaginary objects, symbols and inscriptions. The artist faced the challenge of uniting structures located in different parts of the town to form the appearance of the renewed university. Additionally, efforts were made to depict departments that were either planned for incorporation or creation, such as the teacher training college, the cadet school and the botanical garden. It is crucial to note that in 1783 a subsequent and definitive reorganisation occurred, resulting in the merger of the Medical Collegium with the College of Physical Sciences. Simultaneously, a new College of Moral Sciences was established, although it is absent from the engraving. Therefore, the 1783 reorganisation could be the reason why the engraving ceased to be printed in the official publications of the university.

However, the life of the engraving did not end there. In the 19th century, the historian Michał Baliński was one of the first to use a copy of it as an illustration for a comprehensive history of the university.⁴⁴ In the 21st century, reproductions of the engraving have adorned many scholarly and official publications. Now the focus shifts to qualities such as its artistic merit and symbolism. Indeed, its aesthetic impact is achieved through the harmonious arrangement of diverse ob-

42 While Karol Estreicher mentions the publication of lecture prospectuses in 1782, we have been unable to locate any existing copies of these documents, see: Karol Estreicher, *Bibliografia Staropolska*, t. 25, Kraków: drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1913, p. 306–307; Karol Estreicher, *Bibliografia Staropolska*, t. 32, Kraków: drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1938, p. 49.

43 In the 18th century, engravers usually included their initials on illustrations, portraits, and frontispieces, while leaving decorative elements unsigned.

44 Michał Baliński, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

jects, framed ornamentally in a way reminiscent of a picture frame. The symbolic significance of the image is underscored by objects that function as markers in Lithuanian history: the Cathedral, Gediminas' Castle Tower, and the Hill of Three Crosses. The features and qualities highlighted, along with the rarity of the engraving, allow it to be associated with important historical artefacts of Vilnius University and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

APPENDIX. Bibliographical description of two editions of the Vilnius University Lecture Prospectus (1781)

Description 1. The first edition of the lecture prospectus (Vilnius, 1781)

PROSPECTUS | LECTIUNUM | IN | ALMA UNIVERSITATE | ET |
ACADEMIA VILNENSI | NOMINE | SCHOLÆ PRINCIPIS | M. D. L.
| AB | AMPLISSIMO COLLEGIO | PRÆFEOTORUM | EDUCATIONI
PUBLICÆ | INSIGNITA | *Ex Anno 1781. in Annum 1782.* | TRADENDA-
RUM | SUB INSTAURATIONEM STUDIORUM | LUCI PUBLICÆ |
EXHIBITUS. | [vignette] | VILNÆ | TYPIS SACRÆ REGLÆ MAJESTATIS
| penes Academiam.

Collation: 2^o: π1 A² (A1+'(a)2')b⁽²⁾c⁽²⁾'(d)1') B² C² D1 = 14 leaves, unnumbered.

Contents: l. [1r] – Title; l. [1v] – blank; l. [2r–8v] – *Oratio in studiorum instauratione habita a Martino Poczobutt Sac. Theol. Doctore, Astronomo Regio... nec non Universitatis et Acad. Vilnen. Rectore Magnifico*; l. [9r–14v] – *Prospectus Lectionum*.

Ornamentation: vignette, headpiece depicting the university with the abbreviation S. P. M. D. L. (14 x 7.1 cm), fleurons, decoration for initial letter, factotum, two tailpieces.

Language: Latin.

Copy examined: VUL IV 16172/1781–1782. Also available through the internet: <<https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/>>.

Description 2. The second edition of the lecture prospectus (Vilnius, 1781)

UNIVERSITAS | ET | ACADEMIA VILNENSIS | OLIM | A VALERIANO
PROTASEWICZ | VILNENSIVM ANTISTITE | CONDITA. | A
GREGORIO XIII. P. M. | A STEPHANO BATHOREO | ALIISQUE |
POLONLÆ REGIBUS | ATQUE | AB UNIVERSIS REGNI ORDINIBUS |
PROBATA ET CONFIRMATA, | NUNC | AB AMPLISSIMO COLLEGIO
| PRÆFEOTORUM | INSTITUTIONI PUBLICÆ | INSTAURATA, | AC
NOMINE | SCHOLÆ PRINCIPIS | INSIGNITA. | ANNO DOMINI 1781.
| [fleurons line] | VILNÆ | TYPIS SACRÆ REGLÆ MAJESTATIS | PENES
ACADEMIAM.

Collation: 2°: (1)² A–M² = 26 leaves, unnumbered.

Contents: l. [1r] – Title; l. [1v] – blank; l. [2r–8v] – *Oratio habita a Martino Poczubutt Sac. Theol. Doctore, Canonico Smolensc. Astronomo Regio... Atque Universitas et Academiae Vilnensis Rectore Magnifico Octavo Kalendas Decembres Anno 1781... renuntiarentur*; l. [9r–14r] – *Casimiri Naruszewicz S. Theologiae Doctoris... Vilnen. Universitatis Secretarii Oratio in Studiorum Instauratione Antequam Prospectus Lectionum in Universitate tradendarum promulgaretur, Habita. Anno Domini MDCCLXXXI Octavo Kalendas Decembres*; l. [14v] – blank; l. [15r–26r] – *Prospectus Lectionum. Partitio et Ordo hujus Prospectus et Ratio studiorum, veteri hujus Universitas consuetudine praescribi solita, a quovis Professore tenenda, sequens erit = Układ Lekcyi. Porządek Nauk y sposob dawania Lekcyi, dawnym w tey Akademii zwyczajem dla Nauczycielów przepisuwany, na ten Rok, będzie następujący*; l. [26v] – blank.

Typography: part of the text in two columns.

Ornamentation: fleurons, headpiece depicting the university with the abbreviation S. P. M. D. L. (14 x 7.1 cm), two headpieces, decoration for initial letter, three tailpieces.

Language: Latin, Polish.

Copies examined: VUL IV 30991; Biblioteka Jagiellońska, BJ St. Dr. 103814 II. Also available through the internet: <<https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/>>, <<https://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl>>.

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KNYGOS GRAVIŪRA KAIP VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO ISTORIJOS TYRIMŲ ŠALTINIS

INA KAŽURO

Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka

Straipsnyje aptariamas vienas seniausių Vilniaus universiteto – Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės Vyriausiosios mokyklos – atvaizdų, išgraviruotas ir išspausdintas 1781 m. dviejuose Vilniaus akademijos spaustuvės leidiniuose. Šio Vilniaus universiteto ansamblio atvaizdo kopijos ypač dažnai naudojamos šiuolaikinėje istorinėje literatūroje ir įvairios rūšies spaudoje (knygų viršeliuose, diplomuose, plakatuose). Tačiau iki šiol nebuvo bandoma nagrinėti pirminio vaizdo kaip istorinio šaltinio. Šios knygos graviūros išskirtinumą ir aktualumą nulemia tai, kad ji buvo sukurta itin svarbiu universiteto reformos laikotarpiu, kuriam vadovavo Tautinė edukacinė komisija. Straipsnio tikslas – nustatyti, kurie Vilniaus universiteto įvaizdžio elementai yra pagrįsti tikrove, o kurie reprezentuoja neįgyvendintas reformatorių idėjas. Straipsnyje taip pat keliami klausimai dėl graviūros autorystės, santykio su leidiniu, kuriame ji buvo publikuota, ir jos pakartotinio panaudojimo vėlesniuose leidiniuose. Straipsnio priede pateikiamas išsamus bibliografinis dviejų leidinių, kuriuose buvo išspausdinta graviūra, aprašymas.

Atlikus tyrimą prieinama prie išvados, kad Vilniaus universitetą vaizduojanti graviūra buvo išspausdinta 1781 m. dviem oficialaus universiteto leidinio leidimais, kuriuose pateikiami paskaitų prospektai ir universiteto vadovų inauguracinės kalbos. 1782 m. paskaitų prospektas nebuvo išspausdintas, greičiausiai dėl sudėtingos finansinės universiteto padėties. Spausdinimas buvo atnaujintas 1783 m. ir tęsėsi iki universiteto uždarymo 1832 m., tačiau nuo 1783 m. leidžiamuose prospektuose graviūra nebebuvo spausdinama. Kituose akademinės spaustuvės leidiniuose šios graviūros spausdinimo atvejų nerasta.

Graviūros vaizdas sudaro reprezentacinį peizažą, jungiantį realius ir įsivaizduojamus objektus, simbolius, užrašus. Menininkas susidūrė su iššūkiu sujungti skirtingose miesto vietose esančias struktūras, suformuojant atsinaujinančio universiteto vaizdą. Be to, buvo stengiamasi pavaizduoti fakultetus ar kitus Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės Vyriausiosios mokyklos struktūrinius padalinius, kuriuos buvo planuojama įkurti, pavyzdžiui, mokytojų seminariją, kadetų mokyklą ir botanikos sodą. Labai svarbu pažymėti, kad 1783 m. įvyko vėlesnė ir galutinė Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės Vyriausiosios mokyklos reorganizacija, dėl kurios Medicinos kolegija buvo sujungta su Fizikos kolegija. Tuo pat metu buvo įkurta nauja Moralės mokslų kolegija, nors ji graviūroje ir nėra pavaizduota. Tikėtina, kad dėl 1783 m. įgyvendintos reorganizacijos atsisakyta spausdinti graviūrą vėlesniuose oficialiuose universiteto leidiniuose.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: knygos graviūra, spaudos kultūra, XVIII a., Vilniaus universitetas, Akademijos spaustuvė, Martynas Počobutas, Dovydas Pilchovskis.