

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CYRILLIC ORTHOGRAPHY FOR LITHUANIAN IN 1864–1904

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In this article, I attempt to delineate the major trends in philological and sociolinguistic development of the Cyrillic script used for Lithuanian in Lithuania and Poland. After the failure of the insurrection in 1863 by Poland and Lithuania against Russia, Russian authorities initiated certain radical changes in the cultural life of Lithuania. One of them was a ban to use Latin letters for publications in the Lithuanian language and forceful introduction of the Cyrillic alphabet instead (the ban lasted from 1864 to 1904). Lithuania, a predominantly Catholic country, had a tradition of using Latin script (or a Gothic modification of it) for more than three centuries, and this attempt to instill different letters was a very unexpected undertaking for most Lithuanians.

Statistics show that, in the course of these forty years of prohibition, there were approximately sixty books published in Cyrillic Lithuanian. On average, this makes for a book and a half a year. Even for a nation of approximately two million people at that time, this number is very insignificant. By then, all people in Lithuania had become free under the law (the emancipation of serfs took place in 1861). This type of society was much more mobile. Literacy was steadily growing and

the demand for books was obviously much greater than one and a half per annum.

The other figure of relevance here is the almost four thousand (3,953) Lithuanian books and pamphlets that were published in the Latin and Gothic alphabet in the same forty years (not including periodicals). Almost all of them were published outside Lithuania—2,687 in East Prussia; 712 in the U.S. with very few exceptions (these figures are according to Merkys 1994, 185). Thus, during the years of prohibition, approximately 66 times more Lithuanian books and pamphlets were published in the Latin or Gothic script than in the Cyrillic.

So far, Lithuanian historians and philologists have clearly avoided researching the concrete texts published in Lithuanian in the Cyrillic alphabet. Traditionally, the opinion prevailed that these texts were to be scorned and simply rejected. Vytautas Merkys, a member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, has stated that these sixty Lithuanian books in the Cyrillic script “did not reach their goal and culturally had no importance at all” (Merkys 1994, 101). Did he really mean that books can be of no cultural importance?

Traditionally, in Lithuanian scholarship, the periodization of these forty years was based on certain phases of resistance to Russian letters. For instance, Vytautas J. Bagdanavičius divided it into three periods: (1) 1864–1875 (Lowland Lithuanian bishop Motiejus Valančius initiated the fight against the Cyrillic script by means of illegal Lithuanian publications in Latin letters; Valančius died in 1875 and his death marked the end of the first period); (2) 1875–1883 (this period is delimited by the death of Valančius and the establishment of the national newspaper *Auszra* (The Dawn) in 1883; this period was termed that of the “passive reader” and was associated with the name of bishop Antanas Baranauskas); (3) 1883–1904 (this period again was termed one of active resistance; it was represented by Vincas Kudirka, the editor of another national newspaper *Varpas* (The Bell)). (Cf. Bagdanavičius 1957, 13–14). Lithuanian tradition is full of brave heroes,

victims, and traitors in terms of their resistance and collaboration with the occupying regime.

In this article, I will discuss the periods of philological and sociolinguistic development of the Lithuanian Cyrillic script in a different way. Those sixty Lithuanian books in the Cyrillic alphabet are particularly diversified in terms of their applied orthographical tactics. I define at least four stages in the development of Lithuanian Cyrillic script:

1. 1864–1866: an “enthusiastic” beginning (two models: such “orthographists” as Stanislovas Mikuckis, Laurynas Ivinskis, and Tomas Žilinskis and their opponent Jonas Krečinskis).

2. 1867–1871: the domination of Krečinskis’s orthographic model (this domination was among the major reasons that evoked competition from the underground Lithuanian publications in the Latin alphabet).

3. 1872–1890: low productivity and several new orthographic models (Cyrillic Lithuanian books became quite scarce; they were published only occasionally, but nevertheless there were certain new orthographic models generated).

4. 1891–1904: the domination of the Warsaw orthographic model (the center of the Lithuanian Cyrillic book production shifted from Vilnius to Warsaw; a new orthographic model was developed there; however, it suffered from the great impact of secret Standard Lithuanian in Latin letters in terms of orthography and dialect).

1. 1864–1866. An “Enthusiastic” Beginning. Comparatively detailed research was undertaken in to how the engineering of the Lithuanian Cyrillic orthography historically commenced¹. In the early spring of 1864, the linguist Jonas Juška generated a specific proposal for a Cyrillic alphabet for the Lithuanian language and turned it in to the Russian au-

¹ More about philological peculiarities of this period see in Subačius 2004, 139–173.

thorities (Merkys 1994, 30). Later, however, he did not elaborate on his project, and it was not accepted as an official means to launch the production of Lithuanian Cyrillic books.

The next attempt was made by the linguist Stanislovas Mikuckis, who was called to Vilnius from Warsaw by the General Governor of the Northwest Region (*Severo-Zapadnyi Kray*) of Russia Mikhail Muravjov, who ordered him to adapt the Russian Cyrillic alphabet for Lithuanian. Mikuckis accomplished this task, and slightly later in the course of the same year, together with the teacher Laurynas Ivinskis, published the first two Lithuanian books in Cyrillic: *Primer*² and *Decree About Peasants*.³

These two books were prepared quite accurately for the time. The orthography was comparatively uniform. (It is important to point out that the orthography of the traditional Lithuanian Latin printed texts often featured instability and variation.) Both texts were prepared partly in the Lowland, partly in the Highland Lithuanian dialects, i.e., in a definite mixture, which was characteristic of the Lowlanders, when they attempted to write in the more prestigious Highland dialect without sufficient knowledge of it: they often left the texts palpably ornamented with the residue of features of their native Lowland dialect.

In his orthography, Mikuckis included the letters <ô> and <ÿ> (that were absent in the Russian Cyrillic alphabet) to denote the Highland Lithuanian diphthong [uo] (e.g., *đômu* ~ *duoti* 'to give') and the second component of the diphthong [au] (e.g., *đajz* ~ *daug* 'many, much'). In contrast to Russian orthography, Mikuckis sometimes used an apostrophe to separate a prefix from the word root (e.g., *иш'еме* ~ *išėmė* 'took out'). These were new additions for the Lithuanian Cyrillic script when compared to the Russian Cyrillic alphabet.

² *Абецеле Жемайтишкэй-Льтүвишка, Вильнюе, 1864.*

³ *Указас (ужсакимас) апе иредима вальціоню (содишкю, укинику), [Vilnius: 1864].*

Also, Mikuckis's alphabet did not exploit the Russian letters <ы>, <ѣ>, since there were no equivalent sounds for them in most Lithuanian dialects. A very characteristic peculiarity of Russian orthography in the nineteenth century was the letter *yer* <ъ> in word final position after the velar consonant. It did not designate any specific sound; it only indicated the velar (not palatal) nature of the preceding consonant. Mikuckis rejected this mute redundant letter as not conveying any sound in Lithuanian (e.g., *ант* ~ *ant* 'on'; cf. Russ. *онъ* 'he').

Thus, obvious modification—addition and rejection—characterized the Cyrillic alphabet after Mikuckis had adapted it for Lithuanian.

A Lithuanian student at the University of Warsaw, Tomas Žilinskis, also prepared texts using Mikuckis's orthography—*Primer* (1865)⁴ and *Ordinance* of the Russian tsar about the school system in the Kingdom of Poland (1865).⁵ Žilinskis set the same innovative letters <ô> and <ÿ>, apostrophe, he rejected the letters <ы>, <ѣ>, and *yat* <ѣ> in word final position. He prepared these books in the Highland Lithuanian dialect, without any traces of the Lowland dialect, as happened in Mikuckis's, and Ivinskis's cases.

By and large, there were at least four books printed in the orthography of Mikuckis, which were prepared by him, by Ivinskis, and by Žilinskis. In other words, this was the first model of Lithuanian Cyrillic orthography launched and sustained by this first orthographic group.

Thus, in Vilnius and Warsaw Lithuanian books were printed in the same comparatively uniform Cyrillic orthography. Mikuckis, Ivinskis, and Žilinskis demonstrated as convenient a Cyrillic orthographic system as they could. They

⁴ *Абецеле Лѣтѣвишкѣй-Русишкѣ, Дѣл Наудос Лемѣнторишкѣ Мокслинийчю, Варшава, 1865.*

⁵ *Аўкцеўсес Указас апе Лемѣнторишкас Мокслинийчес Каралистее Ленку, Варшава, 1864.*

were the people that most probably believed (at least at the very beginning) in the importance of what they were doing. Even if they did not support the idea of the alphabet change into Cyrillic *per se*, they made an effort to create the most convenient writing system for Lithuanian under the conditions prevailing at the time. It seems that they tried to achieve as precise a sound-letter correspondence as they could.

During the time of Independent Lithuania (1918–1940) and in the Soviet periods (1940–1941, 1944–1990), Lithuanians usually depicted attempts to introduce the Cyrillic script as an extremely negative phenomenon—it was perceived as dangerous since it undermined the traditional Lithuanian way of writing. Danutė Petkevičiūtė in her biography of Laurynas Ivinskis termed Ivinskis’s work on the Lithuanian Cyrillic texts as a “futile labor” (Petkevičiūtė 1988, 77). She also said, that Ivinskis “obviously did not understand the harm of this work” (Petkevičiūtė 1988, 75).

Paradoxically, Ivinskis, even though he was among the pioneers of the implementation of the Cyrillic script, was not condemned, but usually regarded as a victim himself, as a person who was forced to execute a task he was ordered to do. For instance, Ivinskis

“was ordered by the government and that’s it, he was not used to contradicting anyone, so he arrived to fulfill his duty.” (Tumas 1924, 24).

“Ivinskis, having returned home to Joniškėlis, received a notification that by the order of the executives of the Kaunas Educational District he was being transferred to Kaunas to conduct the preparation of Lithuanian writings for print [in Cyrillic script].” (Merkys 1994, 50).

Žilinskis, on the other hand, never regretted that he had prepared texts in Cyrillic script in his youth. In his memoirs, he justifies himself thus:

“There were four editions of my primer [in Cyrillic script], and for more than ten years it was the only book for reading in the elementary schools of Suvalkai district. [...] Basanavičius commended it and said that I achieved great linguistic results; canon Prapuolenis quoted it by heart and said that he took great pleasure in reading Lithuanian from those books.” (Žilinskis 1921, 488).

Žilinskis even seems to be proud of his work and, in spite of it, he was always respected in different Lithuanian cultural discourses.

Mikuckis nevertheless was usually pictured as a traitor of Lithuanian “national ideals.” Even though his texts were prepared in the same innovative orthography as those of Ivinskis and Žilinskis, he was traditionally condemned as the main *initiator* and *implementator* of the Cyrillic script. Tumas called him “a shabby soul” (Tumas 1924, 38) and wrote:

“We will never forget the concrete work of Mikuckis, who plunged Lithuanians into the Russian ‘Babylonia’ for forty years, even though he demonstrated much greater benevolence towards Lithuanians than towards Poles.” (Tumas 1924, 25–26).

At the same time, the teacher Jonas Krečinskis was in favor of a very different orthography. He was working on the Cyrillic texts in Kaunas, in the same officially established group as Ivinskis. But he did not share Ivinskis’s attitudes toward the Lithuanian Cyrillic orthography. In those beginning years of 1864–1866, Krečinskis prepared and published several books⁶ in which he radically declined the orthography of the first

⁶ (1) *Кантычкась Арба Книнга Гъсмю, Парь Мотъю Волончевски Вискупа, Вильной, 1865*; (2) *Букварсь Жемайтишкай-Русишкись, Парашитась Пагаль Мокима Ну В. Золотова Падота, Ишгульдигась Парь Иона Кречински, Ковна, 1865*; (3) *Календорюсь Антъ 1866 Мету, Вильна, 1866*; (4) *Сенась Аукса Алторюсь, Вилнюъ, 1866*; and other.

orthographic group (Mikuckis's orthography). For instance, Krečinskis rejected Mikuckis's letters <ô> and <ÿ> and used the digraph <yô> (*duodami* ~ *duodami* 'while giving') and the letter <y> with no diacritic (*daug* ~ *daug* 'many, much') respectively. He did not use an apostrophe to separate a prefix from the word root, and he always used the mute letter *yer* <ь> in word final position after the velar consonant (*ant* ~ *ant* 'on'). Krečinskis also included the letter <ы> in certain texts (*didis* ~ *didis* 'big'); its usage, however, was very inconsistent.

Along with these pivotal differences, Krečinskis also used the letter *yat* <ѣ> in a special way. In the standard spoken Russian of that time, the letter *yat* <ѣ> had the same phonetic value as the letter <e>. Thus, there was the theoretical possibility of rejecting one of the two letters and keeping the remaining one for the same phonetic meaning. Eventually, discussions took place among the Russians that the letter *yat* <ѣ> was redundant and, along with the other redundant letter *yer* <ь>, could easily be eliminated from the civil Russian alphabet.

Here I wish to make a digression about sound-letter correspondence. Generally, we speak about two strong interacting forces. The first I would name the force of *simplicity* which forms an alphabet easy to learn, with no complicated rules, with only one clear requirement—an exact correspondence between letters and sounds. At least theoretically this requirement means that orthography is to be as "transparent" as possible—if you know a sound, you will find a letter for it. The ideal operative here is one simple rule—you write the way you speak.

The other operative force is *tradition*. At the very beginning of adaptation of an alphabet to a language the simplicity requirement usually prevails. But with the flow of time language sounds shift, and letters in the meantime may remain unaltered. As the Romans used to say—*verba volent, scripta manent*. I would paraphrase this as *sounds change, letters do not*.

The tradition to use concrete letters in concrete words remains even after the sounds represented by those letters significantly change. The correlation between letters and shifted sounds may become less obvious.

This is what happened to the Russian alphabet—*yat* <ѣ> started to signify the same sound as the letter <е>, although initially they had signified different sounds (similarly, the letter *yer* <ѣ> was attached to a sound that was lost in standard spoken Russian). Force of tradition kept the Russian orthography stable. It also generated tension between letters and shifting sounds, which in its turn launched the production of orthographic rules to cover the gap (writing inconsistencies) and diminish the tension. The more traditional orthography is, the more complex its rules become.

If corrections to adjust to the shifting sound system were made very frequently in orthography, the readers would lose the knack to read and write quickly and correctly. They would have to master literacy again; the changes in orthography would make all society “illiterate” in particular modified cases.

Thus, since there was *no tradition* to write Lithuanian in Cyrillic script, the most plausible way to go was to endeavor to adapt the correspondence of the new letters to extant Lithuanian sounds, to make the orthography as simple and as convenient as possible: i.e., to obey the simplicity requirement. Eventually, Mikuckis and all members of the first orthographical group attempted to exploit the tendency to simplicity.

To return to Krečinskis, it can be observed that he did not follow the simplicity requirement. Eventually, he used both the letter *yat* <ѣ> and the letter <е> in the same three phonetic positions—South Western Highland Lithuanian (1) sound [e], (2) sound [ê], and (3) diphthong [ie]. The impression might arise that Krečinskis did not see any difference between the two letters and used them accidentally. But after more elaborate investigation, it becomes obvious that Krečin-

skis used *yat* <ѣ> for certain roots and <е> for certain other roots. Words with *yat* <ѣ> were not confused with words having <е>. How then to determine which words take <ѣ> and which—<е>?

The answer lies in Russian orthography. Krečinskis noticed that certain Lithuanian and Russian words had at least a slight similarity, and he made use of this similarity in acquiring the letter for Lithuanian. Krečinskis often just transferred it from a Russian word into the Lithuanian analog. Some examples are given in table below:

Lith. phonetic features	Orthographic features			
	<ѣ>		<е>	
	Lith.	Rus.	Lith.	Rus.
[e]	<i>рѣтай</i> ~ <i>retai</i> 'rarely'	<i>рѣдко</i> 'idem'	<i>атнеше</i> ~ <i>atnešė</i> 'brought'	<i>принесѣ</i> 'idem'
[ĕ]	<i>ѣсти</i> ~ <i>ėsti</i> 'to eat (about an animal)'	<i>ѣсть</i> 'to eat'	<i>тевасѣ</i> ~ <i>tėvas</i> 'father'	<i>отецѣ</i> 'idem'
[ie]	<i>стѣнасѣ</i> ~ <i>sienos</i> 'walls'	<i>стѣны</i> 'idem'	<i>дена</i> ~ <i>diena</i> 'day'	<i>день</i> 'idem'

In other words, since Lithuanian did not possess its own Cyrillic tradition, Krečinskis made an effort to infiltrate the Russian one instead. It means that Krečinskis endeavored to include the exclusively Russian orthographic tradition. The judgment of how to write in Lithuanian was taken from Russian orthography. This way Krečinskis selected a very inconvenient orthographic model for a Lithuanian user. A Lithuanian could not handle this script easily if he/she did not know the Russian orthographic conventions and its inconsistencies accumulated through a longer period of time.

Krečinskis was not alone in thinking this way. Even more—he was directed to prepare Lithuanian texts in Russian orthographic tradition by the Russian government officials residing in Lithuania (Kaunas and Vilnius), like the inspector for education in the Kaunas district, Nikolai Novikov, and the censor and Orthodox priest (formerly a Catholic priest) Antanas Petkevičius. Petkevičius was very determined as to the principles of this orthography:

“once and for all we have to implement the original Russian alphabet into the usage of the Lithuanian-Samogitian [Lowland] language; simultaneously the spelling of this language is to be attuned as much as possible to all the rules of Russian Grammar.” (Petkevičius 1864, 262v).

Merkys claimed that Mikuckis’s alphabet was later widely accepted by the authorities:

“Governmental institutions in Vilnius began considering this alphabet, even though it was not completely stable, as an exemplary, and later, after its simplification (after all special letters were rejected), as obligatory for all Lithuanian publications.” (Merkys 1994, 41).

But it is hard to agree with Merkys that Mikuckis’s alphabet was promoted by the government (even after “simplification”). The alphabet it promoted was not Mikuckis’s own. Petkevičius wrathfully criticized Mikuckis’s orthography. He said as much in the manuscript review of Krečinskis’s *Primer*:

“The book mentioned [...] might be [...] reprinted [...] exceptionally under the condition, that [...] it would be published exclusively in conventional Russian letters, in the Russian alphabet, and in Russian orthography, which is accepted of old by the Russian nation, but not in the alphabet of Mikuckis.” (Petkevičius 1864, 261v).

In addition, Petkevičius ordered that one of Ivinskis's manuscripts (in Mikuckis's orthography), which he termed "good-for-nothing" (cf. Merkys 1994, 51), be corrected. Novikov turned this work over to Krečinskis and explained afterwards, that

"Krečinskis corrected it in red ink; i.e., he simply wrote on the same original, so that it obviously disclosed the way Ivinskis's work was totally useless." (Cited from Merkys 1994, 51).

Inspector Novikov knew that Lithuanians traditionally used the Latin letters with diacritics <ą> and <ę>, which had no equivalents in the Russian script. However, Novikov rejected the idea of accepting these letters into Lithuanian Cyrillic. He suggested instead the Old Church Slavonic letters big *yus* <ѣ> and small *yus* <ѧ> (which were never used in Standard Russian). Michail Dolbilov has found this proposal in the Russian archives and has interpreted it as an attempt to attach the political goals to linguistic details: "yus'es were to bring up the old traditions of Russian-Lithuanian kinship" (Dolbilov 2004, 129).

Darius Staliūnas refers to Novikov's 1867 idea that a prayer book in Latin letters did not have to be rewritten in longhand in Cyrillic letters. Novikov wrote that it "can be printed in Russian letters directly from the original; therefore, there is no need to transcribe it into Russian letters" (Staliūnas 2004, 106, n. 108). In other words, Novikov thought that a typesetter, who knew both Lithuanian and Russian, could automatically adapt Cyrillic letters himself in the process of setting the type!

Russian officials Petkevičius and Novikov believed that it was not permissible even to think about a modification of Russian orthography, as did Mikuckis, Ivinskis, and Žilinskis (with the exception of the soon forgotten idea of the two 'yuses'). In the years 1865–1866, the initial efforts of the first orthographic group to create an alphabet, original to some degree, and adjust the Cyrillic letters to Lithuanian sounds

were abandoned. The requirement to secure the Russian alphabet intact and to navigate the Lithuanian language by Russian grammatical rules prevailed instead. From the two different initiatives, the version of Krečinskis—an adoption of the Russian alphabet, orthography and grammar—was selected as appropriate. None of the three members of the first orthographic group returned later to work on Lithuanian Cyrillic texts (one exception involved Mikuckis; in 1876 he transliterated and published a chapter⁷ from the seventeenth century Lithuanian author Konstantinas Sirvydas's *Collection of Sermons*). If Mikuckis's efforts had been accepted, he could have worked with the Cyrillic Lithuanian texts much longer. But his version was not found desirable, because the notion of simplicity for the new alphabet was denied; Russian officials preferred to base themselves on the force of Russian tradition.

This was a relatively “enthusiastic” time period, when the possibility to instill the Cyrillic script for Lithuanian might still have appeared viable and attractive to many officials and to some Lithuanians as well.

2. 1867–1871. Domination of Krečinskis's Orthographic Model. Krečinskis prepared many more Lithuanian Cyrillic texts in the period up to ca. 1872. His Russian model of alphabetization absolutely dominated the Lithuanian Cyrillic market of the time.

This period is also associated with the activity of bishop Motiejus Valančius (see Bagdonavičius 1957, 14–18). At the very beginning, in the “enthusiastic” period he seemed unsure of how to deal with the new situation. But in the years 1867–1870, Valančius organized opposition to Lithuanian Cyrillic publications. He initiated the first illegal organization of book-carriers (book-smugglers), who managed to carry manuscripts over the border into neighboring East Prussia, to bring

⁷ “Литовская хрестоматія изъ сочиненія Константина Ширвида,” *Варшавскія университетскія извѣстія* 3, 1876, 1–24 p.

them back printed in Latin letters, and later to distribute them throughout Lithuania.

In Lithuanian historical literature there are some major explanations of why Valančius began this clandestine competition. Very often, the religious aspect is emphasized. For instance, in the Cyrillic Lithuanian *Catholic Catechism* of 1865 the Orthodox formula for crossing oneself was printed instead of the Catholic one (cf. Merkys 1994, 55). Censors used to correct the Catholic manuscripts after the Bishop's approval before letting them go to the printing press. Because of this, Valančius was afraid of the distortion of Catholic dogmas and of his own prestige as well. As a Catholic bishop, Valančius could not swallow this.

Merkys sums it up:

"After the encounter with the preparation of the official publications, Valančius became firmly convinced that the Russian government's goal was national and religious assimilation in Lithuania, and he initiated systematic printing of literature abroad [in Eastern Prussia] that was not controlled by censorship." (Merkys 1994, 235).

Another reason for Valančius to begin competing with the government was the poor philological quality of official texts in the Cyrillic script:

"M. Valančius was absolutely right in claiming that the Russian alphabet was not adapted to the phonetic peculiarities of Lithuanian (nobody tried to achieve this)." (Merkys 1994, 54).

Valančius must have known that the attempts to create phonetically simple and convenient texts (like those of Mikuckis, Ivinskis, and Žilinskis) would be strictly rejected by the officials. Thus, it seems very plausible to claim that among the important reasons for Valančius to begin the clandestine competition with the official books was the inconvenience of the dominant Krečinskis model of Cyrillic script for Lithua-

nian at that time. All Lithuanians would have great problems reading those texts and understanding the reasons why the Cyrillic letters were set that way. Krečinskis's model was much more convenient for Russians, who might want to attempt mastering Lithuanian in that script. Experience with Russian orthography was mandatory for understanding Krečinskis's texts.

No one knows how Valančius would have acted if the initial phonetic model of the first orthographic group had prevailed. He might have waited longer to initiate his opposition, he might have had fewer supporters, and he might have found still other ways in communication with the Russian officials. But attempts to force the Russian orthographic tradition upon Lithuanian, to instill Russian orthography along with Russian letters by Krečinskis, Novikov, and Petkevičius most probably went too far to be tolerated.

So, the domination of the Krečinskis model might have been among the spurs to launch the counterproduction of Lithuanian Latin books abroad. If some Lithuanians still need a symbolical Judas in this situation, it is difficult to see why they don't choose Krečinskis instead of Mikuckis.

3. 1872–1890. Low Productivity and Several New and Different Orthographic Models. The second period, up to ca. 1872, was quite important for the initial competition between the Cyrillic and the Latin script, since the production of Lithuanian Cyrillic books was comparatively extensive (according to Merkys, there were twenty-eight books published in eight years, 1864–1871; cf. Merkys 1994, 82). But then, the production of Cyrillic Lithuanian books drastically diminished. In the third period of 1872 to 1890—nineteen years—there were only nine books published, according to Merkys (1994, 82). This means that in the years 1872, 1874, 1877, 1879–1882, 1885–1886, and 1889–1890 there were no Cyrillic Lithuanian books published at all. Merkys writes that “starting in

1870, the Vilnius Educational District ceased publishing Catholic religious books entirely” (Merkys 1994, 90).

The last *Calendar* prepared by Krečinskis was also published in 1872 (Merkys 1994, 92). Krečinskis also worked on the *Calendar* for 1873, but Merkys thinks that after it was prepared it was never published (Merkys 1994, 93). Among those several books printed in this period, there were also three reprints of the Krečinskis *Primer* (in 1875, 1878, and 1883). In other words, there were only a few new original works prepared and printed in the whole nineteen-year period.

First of all, it is important to discuss the book *Divine Liturgy*, printed in 1887.⁸ It was an exception, since it was not a Catholic, but an Orthodox liturgy publication; and it was not printed in Lithuania, but in Saint Petersburg. *Divine Liturgy* was initially translated by Krečinskis, but then edited by several specialists in the Orthodox faith. However, the initiator of the book, Eduardas Volteris, a well-known Lithuanian literary activist, was greatly dissatisfied with the results. Together with some other priests and teachers, he edited the text once more (see Merkys 1994, 91). Thus, the authorship of the final shape of the orthography can be attributed to Volteris.

Volteris heavily modified the orthography of Krečinskis. Along with some other features, he rejected *yer* <ь> at the word final position (*швэнтам* ~ *šventam* ‘in holy’) and introduced the Latin letter <j> (*литурҗија* ~ *liturgija* ‘liturgy’). This publication was severely criticized by the Orthodox priests. Merkys explains:

“The main reasons for the dissatisfaction were the synonyms given in brackets adjacent to the rare words and terms (it was argued that they would evoke ambiguities in religious matters), and also this ill-fated Latin *j*, which was imported from J. Juška’s alphabet.” (Merkys 1994, 91).

⁸ *Дієвішка Літурҗија Швэнта Јоно Ауксбурнію, Швэнтам Петербурге, 1887.*

Farther on, Merkys quotes the opinion of the special commission assembled to evaluate this book:

“Lithuanian Liturgy, published in the Russian script, which contains Latin letters (it does not matter if it’s one letter or more), would simply be a temptation in the Orthodox church; priests and other supporters of the purity of Orthodoxy would turn their backs on such a liturgy; they cannot stand Latinness in any form.” (Merkys 1994, 91).

This unwillingness to tolerate a Latin letter in the Orthodox religious texts reminds us that the shape of the letters had a very important symbolic meaning in maintaining religious dogmas, whether Catholic or Orthodox.

The letter <j> was also a problem for the Serbian Cyrillic alphabet. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, the author of the Serbian Cyrillic alphabet, had introduced the Latin letter <j> into Standard Serbian. As early as 1818, Karadžić argued that

“It is possible that the letter j will be disparaged for the reason that it is Latin; but that is nothing—we have other letters that also coincide with the Latin ones.” (Popović 1981, 10).

Decades later in 1862, however, Karadžić was no longer as easygoing about <j>. He wrote that, up to that very day, the greatest pretext for his being regarded with disgust by his enemies and detractors was the Latin letter <j> (Popović 1981, 10). This is an eloquent parallel. Latin <j> had roiled Orthodox faith-oriented minds in Serbia too, since it was expected that only “real” Cyrillic letters served the Orthodox church’s purposes. The letter <j> upset the same Orthodox minds in Lithuania, as the discussion about Volteris’s *Divine Liturgy* demonstrates.

But this was an obvious change in attitude in comparison to Krečinskis’s orthographic model. There was the prece-

dent of the letter <ј> in Orthodox texts. It meant that this letter was definitely acceptable in other kinds of Lithuanian texts too (see the fourth time period below).

Other orthographic models from this third period were presented in Kazimieras Lelis's and Ipolitas Liutostanskis's books.

In 1887, Lelis published a book, *For Lithuanian Tailors*,⁹ in Mintauja (Jelgava, Latvia)—a primer for those who wanted to master sewing on their own. It was the only book printed in Lithuanian Cyrillic letters at the personal initiative of the author.

Lelis's model of Cyrillic script was intended to be fairly phonetic. He used the Cyrillic letter <е> mostly to denote the sound [è] (*падушкелесъ* ~ *paduškélès* 'little pillows,' *рягеима* ~ *regėjimo* 'of seeing') and for the first component of the diphthong [ei] in the unaccented position (*нyseй* ~ *pùsei* 'for a half') or in the accented position with ascending intonation (*тейтъ* ~ *teĩp* 'this way'). He also used the letter *ya* <я> for the sound [e] (*бятъ* ~ *bet* 'but,' *попяря* ~ *poperia* 'of paper,' *ня* ~ *ne* 'no') more systematically of any of his predecessors. The letter *yat* <ѣ> was quite consistently used for the phonetic position of the diphthong [ie] (*вѣнась* ~ *vienas* 'one,' *двѣю* ~ *dviejų* 'of two') although, as we have seen, this was not the case in Krečinskis's texts.

Lelis, however, used the mute *yer* <ь> in word final position (*прѣшь* ~ *prieš* 'against; before'). Therefore, not all features of his system can be referred to as phonetic. Besides, Lelis's edition was also not very accurate, for there were obvious traces of inconsistency.

Liutostanskis published a translation of Lev Tolstoy's short story *If You Let the Fire Out—You Won't Stop It*¹⁰ in 1888 in Vilnius again. He wrote the mute *yer* <ь> in word final po-

⁹ *Льтувосъ Кряучѣмъ Драпану Сукиртима Мокласъ, нуогъ Казимяра В. Лялисъ, Минтауіо, 1887.*

¹⁰ *Ишлайденсъ Угни, Не Бе Ужгясинси, Вильна, 1888.*

sition (*матемъ* ~ *matēm* ‘we saw’) as well, which made his orthographic system look less phonetic. Otherwise, Liutostanskis aspired to make his orthography phonetic. He totally refused the letter *yat* <ѣ>. This was something new in the history of adaptation of the Cyrillic script for Lithuanian. Liutostanskis used the letter <e> in at least three positions: (1) to denote the diphthong [ie] (*венасъ* ~ *vienas* ‘one,’ *нека* ~ *nieko* ‘nothing’); (2) to denote the sound [è] (*норея* ~ *norèjo* ‘wanted,’ *тевасъ* ~ *tèvas* ‘father’); (3) to denote the sound [e] in unaccented position (*герай* ~ *gerai* ‘nicely,’ *геру* ~ *geri* ‘nice’). He also wrote the letter *ya* <я> mostly to denote [e] in the open accented syllable position (*гярасъ* ~ *gēras* ‘good,’ *ужважява* ~ *užvažiãvo* ‘arrived in’). The letter <э> was used for the unaccented vowel [e] (*свэчйоси* ~ *svečiuosì* ‘on a visit’), the accented but short vowel [e] (*бэть* ~ *bèt* ‘but’), or accented [e] with ascending intonation in the mixed diphthongs (*швэнтте* ~ *šveñtè* ‘holliday’).

All these peculiarities prove that Liutostanskis searched for a phonetic solution, but was not very accurate in its practical implementation. His system might have been intended to stay simple, but the orthography’s dependence on accent made it look quite complex. Liutostanskis translated two more of Tolstoy’s books at the same time, but they were published slightly later—*A Prisoner in the Caucasus* in 1891¹¹ and *God Is Where Love Is* in 1891¹². These texts were prepared in analogous orthography.

Thus, this third period of 1872–1890, which covers almost half of the whole prohibition time span, is marked by a decline in activity and by several different attempts at innovation in its final years. Volteris, Lelis, and Liutostanskis—all three of them—were attempting to apply a different version of more or less phonetic orthography. Volteris’s philological accuracy was praised in the illegal Lithuanian press (in the

¹¹ *Кауказа Невальникасъ, Ляона Толстои, Вильна, 1891.*

¹² *Куръ Мяйле, Генъ и Девасъ, Вильна, 1891.*

newspaper *Apszvieta* [Enlightenment], 1892, No. 6, p. 488; cf. Merkys 1994, 91). On the other hand, Volteris criticized Liutostanskis as “having poor philological knowledge” (Merkys 1994, 87).

4. 1891–1904. Domination of the Warsaw Orthographic Model. In this fourth period, the center of Cyrillic Lithuanian book production shifted from Vilnius to Warsaw. The Kingdom of Poland encompassed vast southwestern territories of the Highland Lithuanian dialect area; they were forced to used Lithuanian Cyrillic texts as well.

In 1886, the Warsaw Educational District assembled a commission to prepare Lithuanian books in Cyrillic script (Merkys 1994, 86, 90), but the first book was published only in 1891: *A Lithuanian Grammar* in two volumes¹³. Symbolically, this book begins the fourth period of Lithuanian book printing in Cyrillic.

I single out this period not only because the production of Cyrillic books moved to Warsaw, and not only because the first book published in this phase was a *grammar* (an extremely important genre for the codification of concrete norms), but mostly because this grammar changed the direction of the development of the Lithuanian Cyrillic script once more.

The grammar was a translation of the *Lithuanian Grammar* by Julius Schiekopp, written in German and published in 1879 and 1881 in Tilžė (Tilsit; today Sovietsk, Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia).¹⁴ Actually, Schiekopp was not the author of the grammar norms he used in his books. What he did was to

¹³ *Литовская Грамматика, Курсъ Младшаго Возраста*, Варшава, 1891; *Литовская Грамматика, Курсъ Старшаго Возраста*, Варшава, 1891.

¹⁴ Julius Schiekopp, *Litauifche Elementar=Grammatik*, I. Theil, Formen=Lehre, Tilfit, 1879; Julius Schiekopp, *Litauifche Elementar=Grammatik*, II. Theil, Satzlehre (Syntax), Tilfit, 1881.

shorten and adapt the very comprehensive *Lithuanian Grammar* of 1876 by Friedrichas Kuršaitis (Kurschat).¹⁵ Jonas Pajevskis and Jurgis Gylis translated Schiekopp's grammar into Russian and published it in Warsaw (Lithuanian examples in Cyrillic script).

First of all, it is to be emphasized that features of the nascent Standard Lithuanian were obvious and quite sharp by the 1890s in Lithuanian Latin script books. This means that publications in illegal Lithuanian Latin letters were powerful enough to shape very concrete standardized written norms, based on a certain dialect (the southwestern Highland dialect) and expressed in comparatively uniform orthography. Earlier, in the 1860s and 1870s, dialect selection for the texts was still somewhat accidental: sometimes Lowland Lithuanian was used, sometimes Northern Highland Lithuanian, sometimes a certain mixture of Lowland and West Highland dialectal features, sometimes only Southwestern Highland Lithuanian. In 1864, Novikov envisioned that:

“the present condition of the Lithuanian language in the Kaunas District gives us the possibility of rebuilding it from the ruins and to erect a certain different language on those ruins.”
(Cited from Dolbilov 2004, 129).

Mikhail Dolbilov interprets this as Novikov's intention to create a more unified and standardized written language in Cyrillic letters (*ibid.*). It means that Novikov did not see any existent Lithuanian standard in 1864. In the 1890s, however, the nascent Standard Lithuanian norms in Latin letters began to influence Cyrillic Lithuanian orthography. (Thus, Novikov's project to standardize Lithuanian in Cyrillic script first was a failure.) Pajevskis's and Gylis's translation of the grammar is a good example of such influence.

¹⁵ Friedrich Kurschat, *Grammatik der Littauischen Sprache*, Halle, 1876.

First of all, Pajevskis and Gylius used the Latin letter <j>. Juška's and especially Volteris's precedents with <j> were accepted. Pajevskis and Gylius wrote <j> mostly in the positions where the Standard Lithuanian had (1) <j> (*дѣножѣ* ~ *dienoje* 'in the day,' *јис* ~ *jis* 'he') or (2) the letter <i> to mark the palatalization of the preceding consonant (*валдѣжоѣ* ~ *valdžioje* 'in authority,' *кѣрпѣ* ~ *kurpių* 'of shoes'), or (3) even to denote the second component of a diphthong (*аркѣлѣ* ~ *arkliui* 'for the horse,' *Пранѣцѣ* ~ *prancūzai* 'Frenchmen;') this last feature is reminiscent of the Polish orthography, and it might be related to the importance of the place of preparation and publication—Warsaw). The impact of Standard Lithuanian orthography is quite obvious here.

Then Pajevskis and Gylius introduced unusual letters <ŷ> (i.e., <y> with the ring <°> above) and <è>. Both were unknown in the Russian Cyrillic alphabet. The first letter <ŷ> was introduced to denote the Lithuanian diphthong [uo] (*кѣлмѣѣ* ~ *kelmuose* 'in the stumps,' *тилмѣѣ* ~ *tiltuose* 'in the bridges'). No doubt it was recomposed from the equivalent Lithuanian Latin letter <û> of Schiekopp's grammar. The second letter <è> was to signify the sound [é] (*вѣяс* ~ *vėjas* 'a wind,' *кѣрпѣ* ~ *kurpė* 'a shoe'). It was taken directly from the Standard Lithuanian Latin alphabet (just like <j>) and inserted amid Cyrillic letters.

Also, the usage of the letter *yat* <ѣ> was very different from Krečinskis's model, but similar to Mikuckis's and to all first orthographic group usage—it denoted the diphthong [ie] (*Дѣвоѣ* ~ *Dievopi* 'towards God,' *дѣножѣ* ~ *dienoje* 'in the day'). The Cyrillic letter <e> denoted only the sound [e] (*гѣрас* ~ *geras* 'good,' *тилмѣѣ* ~ *tiltuose* 'in the bridges'). In other words, where Standard Lithuanian had the digraph <ie>, the Cyrillic equivalent was <ѣ>. And where Standard Lithuanian had <e>, the equivalent in Cyrillic was also <e> (but in this case it was really not Cyrillic, but rather the Latin letter in the Cyrillic text, since it denoted the Lithuanian monophthong [e]). The Latin letter <e> sneaked into the Cyrillic text and might remain unnoticed by censors, like a wolf in sheep's clothing.

The letter <я> was used to denote the sound [e], but only in those cases where it was written as <ia> but not <e> in Standard Lithuanian (*жвирблямс* ~ *žvirbliams* 'for sparrows,' *свѣчяс* ~ *svečias* 'a guest'). It means that the usage of this letter <я> evidently depended on the orthography of Standard Lithuanian in Latin letters.

Along with those features closely related to Standard Lithuanian, it is relevant to note that the letters <ь>, <э>, and *yer* <ѣ> in word, final position were all rejected as superfluous, denoting no sound in Lithuanian. Also three different diacritics very often marked accent and intonation (this feature was taken over directly from Schiekopp's grammar). All this demonstrates an orientation to phonetics.

To sum up the most important features of the *Lithuanian Grammar*, translated by Pajevskis and Gylius, is to emphasize these radical changes: (1) orientation to the Latin-Lithuanian Standard; (2) orientation to phonetics; (3) drastic modification of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet. The newest direction of the third period laid down in this grammar was the first one—giving in to the powerful development of the Standard Lithuanian language. By and large, the ideology of this grammar was much closer to Mikuckis's project than to Krečinskis's.

Some other Lithuanian Cyrillic books from that period published in Warsaw followed quite precisely the model of the *Lithuanian Grammar* of 1891. For instance, the collection of *Prayers*¹⁶ (1892) and Valančius's *Sacred History*¹⁷ (1896) both had the same orthographic features—extremely similar to the *Lithuanian Grammar* of 1891. They both integrated the letters <ј>, <ѣ> (i.e., <у> with the ring <°> above) in analogous ways; gave the same phonetic meanings to the letters <е>, <ѣ>; and rejected the letters <ь>, <э>, and *yer* <ѣ> in word-final position in exactly the same way. Only the letter <ѐ> was not incorporated; the letter <е> with no diacritical mark was substituted for it.

¹⁶ *Потеряј ир Малдос, Варшаваје, 1892.*

¹⁷ *История Швента Сено ир Наујо Истатимо, Варшаваје, 1896.*

In Valančius's *Sacred History* we can observe exactly how the Standard Lithuanian equivalents (the Southwestern Highland Lithuanian) were substituted for his Lowland Lithuanian dialectal forms: *nebuva* 'was not' changed to *не бuvo* ~ *nebuvo*, *saka* 'says'—*сакo* ~ *sako*, *obulus* 'apples'—*обулюс* ~ *obuolius*, *pargalėje* 'defeted'—*пергалėje* ~ *pergalėje*, *prisz* 'against; before'—*пршу* ~ *prieš*. By that time (1896), everyone who could read both Latin and Cyrillic Lithuanian texts might have observed the immense impact of the Standard Lithuanian on the Warsaw model of Lithuanian Cyrillic script and dialect.

This Warsaw model was much more accurate than Krečinskis's. But it was not independent; it was more or less a simulation of Standard Lithuanian. Philologically the Warsaw model was much better than any extant before, but it was too late for it to become more popular than Standard Lithuanian. Also, there were no possibilities for such a style to come about at an earlier date, since no model to imitate (no Standard Lithuanian) existed as yet.

Three years before the lifting of the ban on Latin letters *Lithuanian Grammar* (1901) by Jonas Jablonskis (under the pseudonym Petras Kriaušaitis) was published in Latin letters.¹⁸ This was a symbolical codifying grammar of Standard Lithuanian. It was prestigious, and a preponderant majority of authors accepted the norms fixed in that grammar. Any form of Cyrillic Lithuanian, even a "perfect" one, could not have any imaginable chance to become more popular and to defeat the prestigious standard language. After Jablonskis's 1901 grammar, writing in Cyrillic letters would make you a Don Quixote idealist in the eyes of your contemporaries.

Thus, Novikov's dream to shape the standard in Cyrillic Lithuanian remained only a fantasy. The reality was quite the opposite. In the 1890s, Cyrillic Lithuanian texts began to imitate their illegal competitor—Standard Lithuanian in Latin Letters.

* * *

¹⁸ Petras Kriaušaitis [Jonas Jablonskis], *Lietuviškos kalbos gramatika*, Tilžeje, 1901.

The question remains, when did the Latin letters for Lithuanian win the competition with their Cyrillic analogues?

I would say that the first battle was won around 1865, when Mikuckis's phonetic orthography was rejected and comparatively more books using Krečinskis's non phonetic (reflecting Russian orthography) style were published. Bishop Valančius initiated the illegal rivalry.

The second battle was won around 1872, when newly prepared Krečinskis-style texts almost ceased to be produced. The predominant majority of Latin-based Lithuanian books that were brought from abroad did not help books in the Krečinskis style to gain in popularity.

The third battle was won around 1891, when the Standard Lithuanian norms began having an obvious orthographic and dialectal impact on the scarce legal Lithuanian Cyrillic books. It was not the legal Cyrillic script that was influential, but illegal Lithuanian Latin letters. Even if the users of the Cyrillic script might not have been aware of this, Latin letters regulated "the development" of Cyrillic writings.

The fourth and final battle that Latin letters won was the official permission to use them for Lithuanian in 1904. This was not a real battle, though. This was rather an unconditional capitulation of Cyrillic. Even if the Cyrillic letters were never prohibited, no one knows of any extant attempt to use them after 1904.

When Lithuanians need brave heroes, cultural explorers, and spiritual cowboys, they have them in their book-carriers' (book-smugglers') image—they were distributing illegal Lithuanian Latin alphabet books and newspapers, which finally gave shape to the Standard Lithuanian. When they need a warrior chief, winner of the war, a spiritual Alexander the Great, they find him in the figure of Bishop Valančius.

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