




Olha Maksymchuk
Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine,
Kyiv, Ukraine
zubrytska@yahoo.com.ua
 0000-0002-6932-6434

Structure and decoration of the Manuscript “Vinets Khrystov” by Antonii Radyvylovskyi from the Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine

Abstract: The paper presents the Cyrillic XVII-century manuscript “Vinets Khrystov”, comprising Baroque sermons by the prominent Ukrainian preacher Antonii Radyvylovskyi. Special attention is paid to the decorative elements employed for illuminating and structuring the content of the codex, which serves as the model for the namesake edition published in Kyiv in 1688. The study demonstrates that the embellishments of “Vinets” are an integral part of the manuscript, often correlating with its textual part. Initials, headpieces, and tailpieces, as well as the title composition in “Vinets Khrystov”, can be employed to purely decorate and meaningfully illustrate the monument.

Keywords: manuscript, sermon, decorative elements, illustration, initials

Słowa kluczowe: rękopis, kazanie, elementy dekoracyjne, ilustracja, inicjały

Over the last few decades, scientific interest in the Ukrainian culture of the early modern period has been constantly increasing. Being a prime time for Baroque esthetics and style, it is considered one of the most fruitful and peculiar in the continuum of the Ukrainian spiritual life. Ukrainian Baroque literature is distinguished by the almost complete prevailing religious component and the powerful impact of the Church and Christian tradition on its development, at least at the level of the so-called high literature created by intellectuals and clerical authorities of that time. Among the genre variety of the Ukrainian Baroque, preaching takes a unique place being the specific combination of literature and rhetorical practices and functioning as an important part of the liturgical life. The homiletic heritage of the most prominent Ukrainian preachers of the XVII century was collected and published, being recognized as valuable material for imitation and succession and literature for personal reading. The same fate befell the sermons of Antonii Radyvylovskiy, whose name is often mentioned when we regard the phenomenon of Ukrainian Baroque preaching.

Antonii is a monastic name of Radyvylovskiy; the preacher's baptismal name is still unknown. In the 1640s, Radyvylovskiy studied at the Kyiv Mohyla Collegium at the classes of Ukrainian Orthodox intellectuals and future Church authorities Lazar Baranovych and Innokentii Gizel. "Having taken" monastic "vows", Radyvylovskiy started his clerical career as an archdeacon of the Chernihiv cathedra¹. In the 1650s, he accepted the position of an official preacher in the Kyiv Caves Monastery (Pechersk Lavra). In 1666, he was already mentioned as a vicar of the Lavra. Since the end of 1683 or the beginning of 1684 and until he died in 1688, Radyvylovskiy held the position of the hegumen of the Kyiv Saint Nicholas's Monastery. Three handwritten codices of Antonii's Baroque sermons remained in the possession of the convent; meanwhile, according to provenances, at least some printed books that were in the ownership of the deceased preacher were transmitted to the Caves Monastery's library.

Two of these manuscripts are dated 1671 and are the first and second volumes of the sermon collection entitled "Ohorodok Presviatoi Bohordytsi" (The Garden of the Most Holy Theotokos). Another one, entitled "Vinets Khrystov" (The Wreath of Christ), was created between 1676 and 1683.

These manuscripts seem to serve as a sample or a model for two editions entitled *Ohorodok Marii Bohordytsi* (1676) and *Vinets Khrystov* (1688), which were published in the Kyiv Caves Monastery's printing house. It is difficult to determine how common this practice was since we do not have any similar examples of surviving manuscripts used as a basis for book publishing. In this way, they are nearly unique in the history of the Ukrainian culture of the

1 Т.В. Чухліб, Радивилівський, [ін:] *Києво-Могиллянська академія в іменах: XVII–XVIII ст. Енциклопедичне видання*, Київ 2001, р. 451.

XVII century, allowing tracing of how the manuscript was “transformed” into printed production. A comparison of the content reveals that sermons were included in the printed collections not in full and with certain amendments. Moreover, a certain number of totally new sermons were created and inserted into the published books. Among the latest summarizing research on the biography and the works of Radyvylovskiy are the studies of Tetiana Levchenko-Komisarenko (Getz)² and Volodymyr Spivak³.

This paper focuses on “Vinets Khrystov” manuscript as a sample of Ukrainian Baroque culture and the handwritten tradition.

Currently, “Vinets Khrystov” is held in the Institute of Manuscripts of the Vernadskiy National Library of Ukraine, Fund 308, Unit 560/2. The shelfmark is given according to the catalog of Nykolay Petrov *Opisanie rukopisnykh sobranii, nakhodiashchikhsia v gorode Kieve*⁴.

Yakym Zapasko in his work *Mystetski rukopysni pamiatky Ukrainy*⁵ provided a brief codicological description of the manuscript. Just a few words on the subject of the illumination of “Vinets” with headpieces and initials can be traced in the study of Heorhii Lohvyn *Z hlybyn. Davnia knyzhkova miniatiura XI–XVII st.*⁶ In this book, some photos of the manuscript’s initials were reproduced (illus. 68, 69). The thorough comparison of content in handwritten and printed versions of “Vinets” is presented in the fundamental study of Radyvylovskiy’s sermon legacy *Antoniy Radivilovskiy, yuzhnoruskiy propovednik XVII v.* by Mykhailo Markovskiy⁷.

The narrative strategy of the Ukrainian preacher is explored in Volodymyr Krekoten’s monograph *Opovidannia Antonii Radyvylovskoho. Z istorii ukrain-skoi novelistyky XVII st.*⁸ The study concentrates on short stories and historical anecdotes incorporated by Radyvylovskiy into his sermons, including those from the “Vinets” manuscript.

The question of multiple editor amendments inserted in the text of the Lavra edition of “Vinets” is examined in Oksana Nika’s article *The Language and*

2 Т. Левченко-Комісаренко, *Життєвий шлях і творчий доробок Антонія Радивиловського*, “Слово і Час” 2016, no. 9, pp. 79–91.

3 В. Співак, *Філософські погляди Антонія Радивиловського в контексті української духовної культури XVII століття*, Чернівці 2018.

4 Н. Петров, *Описание рукописных собраний, находящихся в городе Киеве*. Вып. 2: *Собрания рукописей Киево-Печерской Лавры, киевских монастырей Златоверхо-Михайловского, Пустынно-Николаевского, Выдубецкого и женского Флоровского, и Десятинной церкви*, Москва 1896, p. 253.

5 Я. Запаско, *Мистецькі рукописні пам’ятки України*, Львів 1997, p. 48.

6 Г.Н. Логвин, *З глибин. Давня книжкова мініатюра XI–XVIII століть*, Київ 1974, p. 174.

7 М. Марковский, *Антоний Радивиловский, южнорусский проповедник XVII в.*, “Университетские Известия” 1895, no. 11.

8 В.І. Крекотень, *Оповідання Антонія Радивиловського. З історії української новелістики XVII ст.*, Київ 1983.

*Cultural Contacts in the XVII Century and the Sermon Discourse of Antonii Radyvylovskiy*⁹. The researcher considered substitutions of Latinisms and Polishisms used in the sermons with Church Slavonic lexemes, made by an editor who worked with the manuscript, leaving marks and corrections on the margins of the pages or above the lines of the main text. Some of his edits were transmitted to the printed edition, whereas others were omitted and replaced with similar phrases.

The discourse analysis of the so-called war sermons of A. Radyvylovskiy from the “Vinets” manuscript was presented in her study by Yuliia Oleshko¹⁰.

Another approach to the interpretation of Radyvylovskiy’s war homilies is proposed in Alicja Nowak’s article *Walki z wyznawcami Mahometa w życiu i twórczości duchowieństwa ruskiego w XVII w.*¹¹ The researcher applies thematology and imagology to describe the content of the sermons, including those from the manuscript.

Olena Kurhanova examines the visualization of the symbol of the wreath and the metaphor of the “Church year” in engraved illustrations of the printed edition of “Vinets Khrystov”¹². The researcher painstakingly scrutinizes and explains the xylography presented on the book’s title page and ties elements of its composition with the text of the prefaces.

Although the description of some physical characteristics and the manuscript’s content have already been presented in earlier studies, more detailed research is needed to analyze the monument as a unity of textual and visual, that is, decorative, components. Thus, this article aims to give an overall review of the embellishment of “Vinets” as an integral part of the book structure. To achieve the set goal, not only employing descriptive and analytical methods but also an integrated cross-disciplinary approach is required.

Similar to the “Ohorodok” manuscript¹³, the handwritten “Vinets Khrystov” resembles the structure of a modern printed book with a title page, one or more forewords, and dedications. However, “Ohorodok” has more structural

9 O. Nika, *The Language and Cultural Contacts in the 17th Century and the Sermon Discourse of Antonii Radyvylovskiy*, [in:] *Integration of traditional and innovative scientific researches: global trends and regional aspect. Collective monograph*, Riga 2020, pp. 286–305.

10 Yu. Oleshko (J. Oleško), *Old Ukrainian war sermons of the second half of the 17th century. A discursive dimension*, [in:] *Ukraine und ukrainische Identität in Europa. Beiträge zur Standortbestimmung aus/durch Sprache, Literatur, Kultur*, München 2017, pp. 163–170.

11 A. Nowak, *Walki z wyznawcami Mahometa w życiu i twórczości duchowieństwa ruskiego w XVII w.*, [in:] *Słowiańszczyzna wielowyznaniowaw dawnych wiekach*, Kraków 2019, pp. 73–88.

12 O. Курганова, *Візуалізація метафори “Богослужбового року” в художньому оформленні видання “Вінець Христов” Антонія Радивиловського*, “Рукописна та Книжкова Спадщина України” 2020, vol. 25, pp. 69–80.

13 Some basic information on the handwritten “Ohorodok” see in my article: O. Maksymchuk, *Рукописний Огородок Антонія Радивиловського як унікальна пам’ятка української книжкової культури XVII ст.*, [in:] *Бібліотека. Наука. Комунікація*, Київ 2018, pp. 194–199.

elements of the book, lacking in “Vinets”, notably a table of contents and a thematic index. Still, in both “Ohorodok” and “Vinets”, such elements of text organization as catchwords and running titles, likewise used in printed editions, are preserved. All of this points to the mutual influences of a handwritten and a printed book in early modern Ukrainian culture, resulting in a similarity of text arrangement and book format.

The manuscript “Vinets Khrystov” has a skillfully illustrated title page, a book’s dedication to Jesus Christ, a preface addressed to readers, and the corpus of sermons as they are. Compared to the manuscript, the printed “Vinets” has one more dedication, addressed to the secular power, namely to Russian Tsars Ivan and Peter, and the Regent Sophia. The analysis of this text and its connection with the political situation in then Moscovia and Ukraine was regarded by Giovanna Brogi Bercoff in the article *The Sermons of Antony Radyvylovs’kyj: history, culture, mentality*¹⁴.

As to the physical characteristics, the codex is bound in wood boards covered with brown leather. The cover is in bad condition: the upper board is detached from the text block, and the leather is partly separated from the boards. Binding has traces of stamping; however, due to its poor preservation, it is hard to describe the details. Still, it seems typical of the books of Kyivan origin of that time. There are fragments of two ancient stickers that probably had previous shelfmarks on the damaged spine, now unseen. The edges of the book are colored blue. The last folios have dark waterstainings.

The front endpaper of the manuscript has old (crossed out) and new ciphers of the book and stamps of the libraries of both the Kyiv Saint Nicholas’s Monastery and the UAN (Ukrainian Academy of Science).

The paper in the manuscript is of good quality. Watermarks are present on some of the sheets, but their analysis is outside the purview of this article. The measures of the book block are 31,5x20 cm. The format of the volume is 2°. The modern pagination in the manuscript, made with a pencil, accounts for 1616 pages. The codex has 16 empty folios at the close of the book and a few empty folios between some sermons. Each homily starts on a new page. The ending of the sermons often has a figured form.

The codex is written in black and red ink. Red ink was used to highlight the titles of sermons and other parts of the book, the names of sermons in the header, and some capital letters in the text.

The reverse of the first unnumbered folio has an inscription in cursive saying about the “fate” of the manuscript. It informs a reader that sermons from the codex were printed with numerous edits and amendments (“з значною поправою

14 G. Brogi Bercoff, *The sermons of Antony Radyvylovs’kyj: history, culture, mentality*, [in:] *Theatrum humanae vitae: студії на пошану Наталі Яковенко*, Київ 2012, pp. 414–424.

и отмѣною”). The second statement concerns the passing of the book after the author’s death to the library of Saint Nicholas’s Monastery; it indicates the dates of his demise and funeral (the 10th and 15th of December, 1688).

The manuscript is written in “pivustav” (semi-unical Cyrillic script) on the same hand. Some edits and insertions are on page margins made by someone who probably prepared “Vinets” for publication. Although several printed books with Radyvylosvki’s autograph survived, it is hard to define if there are any samples of his writing in either “Vinets” or the “Ohorodok” codex.

The language of “Vinets” is Middle-Ukrainian (*середньоукраїнська*), or Ruthenian (the bookish Ukrainian language of the middle period of its development).

The monument has 126 sermons on Sundays and other subjects. Namely, the collection comprises three sermons on Resurrection of Christ, two sermons on the second Sunday after the Easter, as well as third, fourth, fifth and sixth Sundays after the Easter, three sermons on the Ascension day, two sermons on the seventh Sunday after the Easter, two sermons on Pentecost, two sermons on Whit Monday on the Most Holy Trinity, two sermons on the first Sunday after the Pentecost followed by sermons on the second, third, fourth and fifth Sundays after the Pentecost (two homilies on each occasion), two sermons on the sixth Sunday after the Pentecost, two sermons on seventh as well as eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, twenty-first, twenty-second, twenty-third, twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, thirtieth, thirty-first, thirty-second, thirty-third, thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth, and thirty-sixth Sundays after the Pentecost, two sermons on the first Sunday of the Great Lent, along with two sermons on the second, third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of the Great Lent, two sermons on the Palm Sunday (Christ’s entry into Jerusalem), a sermon on Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, a sermon on the Sunday before the Christmas, a sermon on Sunday after the Christmas, a sermon on the Sunday before the Epiphany, a sermon on the Synaxis of John the Precursor, a sermon on the Sunday after the Epiphany, a sermon on Sunday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, a sermon on Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, a common («общее») sermon on holy male martyrs, a common sermon on apostles, a common sermon on holy hierarchs, a common sermon on saint teachers of the church, a common sermon on holy female martyrs, five sermons on the time of a war, a common sermon on holy reverend women and a common sermon on holy reverend men.

“Vinets Khrystov”, likewise the manuscript of “Ohorodok”, is artfully illuminated with different decorative elements drawn with red and black ink. The codex has a complicated symbolic composition on the title page, figured headpieces, decorative tailpieces, and an abundance of fanciful decorated initial letters marking the beginning of the sermons.

Although the illuminating of the title page of “Vinets” (see Illus. 1) has been scrutinized in publications by previous researchers, it still merits a little more consideration. The illustration that adorns the folio is made with black ink. In the center of the composition of the drawing is a stylized oval wreath with 16 medallions depicting episodes from the terrestrial life of Jesus and events preceding his nativity (Mary’s birth, the annunciation, the presentation of the Lord, the passion of Christ, etc.). It is peculiar that some important life events of Jesus are absent; for example, there is no scene depicting His baptism, though the feast of the Theophany was deeply respected in the Orthodox Ukraine. The upper medallion, starting the whole cycle, shows Mary as the woman of the Apocalypse standing on the serpent, which resembles a Catholic iconographic type of the Immaculate Conception. Radyvylovskiy, as well as other Ukrainian Orthodox authorities of that time, shared the belief that Mary was conceived and born without original sin, although this doctrine was mostly maintained by Catholic believers. The image reveals the Western impact on Ukrainian art and theological thought of the early modern period.

There is a text in black and red providing the long, pompous Baroque name of the book inside the wreath. In the title, the author is called a hieromonk and a vicar of the Kyiv Caves Monastery who gave grounds to M. Markovskiy to determine the date of producing the manuscript not later than the end of 1683¹⁵. Besides the wreath, the half-figures of four Evangelists are portrayed looking out from the flower buds. The location of the saints inside flowers repeats the scheme of the title composition of “Ohorodok”; it is typical for the decoration of title pages in the Ukrainian editions of the second half of the XVII century; see, for example, *Sluzhebnyk* – Lviv 1666, *Anfologion (Festive Minea)* – Novhorod-Siverskiy 1678; *Triodion (Pentecostarion)* – Chernihiv 1685; *Anfologion (Festive Minea)* – Lviv 1694; *Pateryk (Patericon)* – Kyiv 1661, 1678; *Akafisty (Akathists)* – Kyiv 1663, 1674, 1693; *Apostol (Acts and Epistles of the Apostles)* – Kyiv 1695. At the bottom of the page, two saints hold the “ribbons” with Bible quotations (2 Cor 4, 17 and Rom. 8, 18). The figures are not subscribed, but as they have groups of monks behind their backs who probably represent brothers of the Caves Monastery, they are Sts Anthony and Pheodosius, the founders of the shrine¹⁶.

The upper part of the drawing features allegorical personages of Mercy (“Милосердіє”) and Truce (“Правда”) accompanying people who have been rewarded for their good deeds with wreaths from heaven. They are surmounted by the Holy Trinity, with the apostles and other righteous men on both sides

15 М. Марковський, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

16 The woodcut on the title page of the printed “Vinets” has the same image of saint monks, this time with their names, viz., Anthony and Pheodosius, above their heads.

as the apex of the composition. The arrangement of the figures shows the hierarchy of the spiritual power: God the Father crowns Jesus with the crown of glory, whereas Christ, as a mediator, gives wreaths to the believers (some of them depicted wearing dark klobuk, symbolizing monastic order, while others have a priest's epitrachelion on).

It should be noted that when creating the wood engraving for the title page of the printed "Vinets", the engraver¹⁷ followed the drawing the manuscript was opened with. However, the woodcut from the printed book has some differences from the illustration in the codex. On the title, besides the evangelists, St. Nicholas and St. John Chrysostom are depicted. Their appearance is justified in the first preface of the book, which is somewhat amended and supplemented for the edition, which gives reason to assert that the changes to the woodcut were made with the agreement or even initiative of Radyvylovskyi himself. He explains the reference to the figure of St. Nicholas by the fact that he is a saint patron of the monastery where the author was a hegumen at the time of the book's publication. John Chrysostom is also not a random person but a symbol and a patron of all preachers, so he was chosen to be a kind of promoter of Radyvylovskyi's preaching work. At the same time, it is conceivable that some political motives may come into play. G. Brogi Bercoff draws attention to the fact that the printed "Vinets" has a dedication to the Muscovite Tsars, however, there is no indication of the newly elected Ukrainian hetman Ivan Mazepa in it¹⁸. Although the saint patron of Mazepa was believed to be John the Baptist, mentioning another saint with the same name as the hetman could be perceived as a hint to the ruler of Ukraine, who took his post in 1687, that is, a year before the publication of the book. The engraving of Ivan (Ilarion) Myhura, presented to the hetman in October 1705, shows St. John Chrysostom next to other namesake saints of Mazepa (this work is usually entitled "Hetman Mazepa among his good deeds")¹⁹.

17 The full-page woodcut on the title of the printed "Vinets" was made by Ivan (Ioan) Reklinskyi, the Kyivan master acting in the second half of the XVII century; this name is seen on the bottom of the illustration. Pavlo Popov took into consideration the fact of reemploying this woodcut in another edition, which occurred from the Kyiv Caves Monastery printing house, i.e., in the *Apostol* printed in Lavra in 1695 (f. 253v) – see: П. Попов, *Матеріали до словника українських граверів*, Київ 1926, p. 91. However, the central part of the engraving has been changed: in the *Apostol* edition, the space inside the rose wreath – where in "Vinets" the title of the book was typed – comprises another symbolic image depicting the year cycle with four seasons and twelve months. *Vinets Khrystov* (1688) has another illustration, inserted in the book twice (f. 222r and 363v), which is subscribed with the monogram "Июан Р" (Ioan R), most likely indicating his name. There are several other woodcuts subscribed mainly with Cyrillic letters "I. P." that are considered to belong to the works of this master; all of them are placed in books published by the Lavra printing house at the turn of the century.

18 G. Brogi Bercoff, *The sermons of Antoniy Radyvylovs'kyj...*, p. 421.

19 Other differences between the illustrations on the title pages of the manuscript and the edition are insignificant. Onto the engraving, the upper part of the composition was reversed. The form

Therefore, it can be concluded that the symbolical composition from the title pages of the manuscript and the printed edition of “Vinets” was elaborated to correlate with the name, the content, and the main idea of the book and to allow a reader to preview its leitmotifs and the central metaphor.

It is possible that the author felt the need to explain the meaning of the title and the illustration on the title page more clearly, thus at the beginning of the printed “Vinets”, he inserted the verses in Church Slavonic, developing this theme. The manuscript does not have this piece of text.

On the third page of the handwritten “Vinets”, there is a “narrative” headpiece with an angel in its center (see Illus. 2), holding a thorny wreath and a ribbon with the words “за сей вѣнецъ Христу Богу исплетенный / маешъ бытъ онымъ же, отъ оного жъ почтенный” (“for this wreath woven to Christ God, you have to be honored with it by Him”). Thus, the focal metaphor of the book has been repeated once more in both graphic and verbal form. Besides, the headpiece is ornamented with floral motifs, which is typical for the general mode of decoration of the manuscript.

Some other “narrative” headpieces occurred in the manuscript. On page 23, the headpiece, prefacing the 1st sermon on Easter, has an image of Christ rising from the tomb. The drawing’s details are common for the iconology of the Resurrection: Christ stands on the grave slab holding a banner, whereas two guardians are lying nearby. On page 57, there is a headpiece displaying the scene of the appearance of Jesus to the apostles described in John 20, 24–29. It is located at the beginning of the 1st sermon on the second Sunday after Easter. Christ shows the wound on his side to St. Thomas to make him believe in the miracle of resurrection. The illustration relates to the sermon’s text, as the theme of the wounds of Christ was mentioned in its introduction. So these headpieces are intended to reveal the content of the sermons they illustrated. In contrast, the rest of the decorative elements used as headpieces in the manuscript play the role of just embellishments without any references to the subject of the text. Some of them look like they were copied from the printed books of that time²⁰. For example, the headpiece on page 28 with a stylized jug and acanthus leaves likely imitates a similar design element used in some early printed books circulating in the reader’s environment of Ukraine: the headpiece with a “jug” is utilized in *Apostol (Acts of the Apostles – Lviv 1574, f. 1r, f. 172v, f. 203r, f. 210v)*, *Yevanheliie Uchytelne (Didactic gospel – Zabłudów 1569, f. 1r unnumbered, f. 282r)* and Vilnius editions of *Yevanheliie (Gospel – Vilnius*

of the nimbus of God the Father was changed from square to triangular while the inscription over his head, saying “ветхий денми” (“Ancient of Days”), was deleted. The scene of the Nativity of Christ in one of the medallions is altered, depicting the worship of the shepherds.

20 I am grateful to Dr. Natalia Bondar, who drew my attention to these similarities.

1600)²¹. Some other drawn headpieces (for instance, the one on p. 105) could have also been copied from the woodcut prints.

Tailpieces created by the handwritten “Vinets” illustrator often have the appearance of floral compositions or a single flower. It’s not particularly original, but the usage of floral motifs fits with the book’s title and central metaphor – a mystic wreath that the author offers to Christ. Other tailpieces with heads of angels were designed, as it seems, after the model of some book engravings. They perform a purely decorative function, analogous to most tailpieces from the Cyrillic early modern printed books²².

The manuscript abounds with initials of different sizes, embellished with diverse types of ornaments. Usually drawn with red ink, they are designed to brighten up the monument’s text by visually indicating the beginning of sermons. While most of them are just enlarged pen-flourished capital letters, some initials are inhabited, depicting the figures of Jesus Christ, God the Father, angels, saints, or Biblical characters. Such initials can be defined as historiated when they present recognizable scenes and identifiable persons.

Persons displayed in or around the shape of letters may correlate or not with the text of the sermon. There are a certain, albeit small, amount of historiated initials in “Vinets Khrystov” referring to the topic and the content of the following text. For example, on page 605, preceding the 1st sermon on the 13th Sunday after the descent of the Holy Spirit, there is an initial with the Cyrillic letter “Б” and the figure of God the Father behind it (see Illus. 3). God is presented as a Creator, leaning with outstretched hands above the earth, covered with flowers. Worth noting, the sermons’ introduction indeed features the history of the world’s creation, therefore the decoration of the initial is connected with the text.

Another case of such a correlation between the sermon and the design of the initial can be seen on page 1259 (the 1st sermon on the 3rd Sunday of Lent), where the illustrator portrayed a saint with a cross in his hands while the Bible epigraph and the introduction of the text develops a topic of boasting in the cross (see Gal. 6, 14). Similarly, the initial on page 358 (the 1st sermon on the 4th Sunday after the descent of the Holy Spirit) has a figure of an angel subscribed as «аргел Товиин» («Tobias’s angel»). This figure refers to the story from the book of Tobit, following which angel Raphael instructs young Tobias how to heal his father and free his future bride from the power of a demon

21 Н. Бондар, *Вільнюські Євангелія 1575–1644 рр. з фондів Національної бібліотеки України імені В.І. Вернадського. Дослідження, попримірниковий опис, альбом ілюстрацій*, Київ 2021, pp. 122–123, illus. 32.

22 See, for example, the following article on tailpieces in Cyrillic early printed books: A. Gronek, *Finalik w najstarszych drukach cyrylickich. Manifestacja nowożytnej estetyki*, [in:] *Latopisy Akademii Supraskiej*. Vol. 7: *(Dawna cyryliccka księga drukowana: twórcy i czytelnicy)*, Białystok 2016, pp. 137–148.

(Tob. 6, 1–9). The sermon does not mention Raphael or the scene of the cure of Tobit, however, the theme of illness and healing is central in the text. The above examples indicate that the illustrator thought through the subject and details of, at least, some of the initials.

However, as was said before, most of the initials of the manuscript do not relate semantically to the sermons they belong to. They function as purely decorative accents in the text. But occasionally, they serve like a “riddle”, prompting readers to speculate about what they represent. This is especially noticeable when the image denotes a person or an item that starts with the letter of the initial, thus a recipient has to comprehend who or what is meant by the illustrator. The letter of the initial becomes a hint to simplify the task. In the aforementioned initial depicting God the Father, a large Cyrillic “Б” stands for the word “Бог”, that is, “God”. Probably in the initial with a saint holding a cross, a letter “К” means the Church Slavonic and Middle-Ukrainian word “крест”, i.e., a “cross”.

There are some other initials in the manuscript, in which a picture corresponds to a capital letter. Initials with a large Cyrillic “Х” are several times accompanied by the image of Jesus Christ because it is the first letter of his “title” in Church Slavonic and Ukrainian – “Христос” (p. 633, 672).

A Cyrillic letter “П” in the initials means different people and scenes. On p. 698 (the 2nd homily on the 15th Sunday after the descent of the Holy Spirit), the historiated initial displays a saint with a key, which indicates Apostle Peter (“Петр”). On page 723 (the 2nd sermon on the 17th Sunday after the descent of the Holy Spirit) the figures of Jesus, Moses, and Elijah allude to the Transfiguration of Christ, or “Преображеніє Христово” (see Illus. 4). On page 1075 (the 1st homily on the 31st Sunday after the descent of the Holy Spirit), the artist depicts a female saint holding a sword and a book. In the iconography, the sword means the instrument of execution of a martyr. One can presume that the saint in the initial is a great martyr Paraskeva of Iconium, or Paraskeva Piatnytsia (“Параскева П’ятниця”) who was very revered in Old Ukraine. In the local tradition, this saint was often combined with the person of saint martyr Paraskeva of Rome. On Ukrainian icons, Paraskeva is occasionally drawn with a scroll or a book (see, for example, the Baroque icon of St. Paraskeva with a book dated from 1730 year, now held in the National Art Museum of Ukraine²³). This detail, along with the first letter of her name, gives reason to assume that the saint in the initial is precisely Paraskeva.

On page 835 (the 1st sermon on the 22nd Sunday after the descent of the Holy Spirit), there is another female saint with a sword standing behind the

23 See the description of the icon in: *Український іконопис XII–XIX ст. з колекції НХМУ. Альбом*, Хмельницький–Київ 2005, pp. 106, 229.

letter “K”. Once more, the sward means she belongs to the order of martyrs. Letter “K” provides the basis for a suspicion that this female figure represents a great martyr Katherine of Alexandria, who was very popular and revered also in the Ukrainian religious culture.

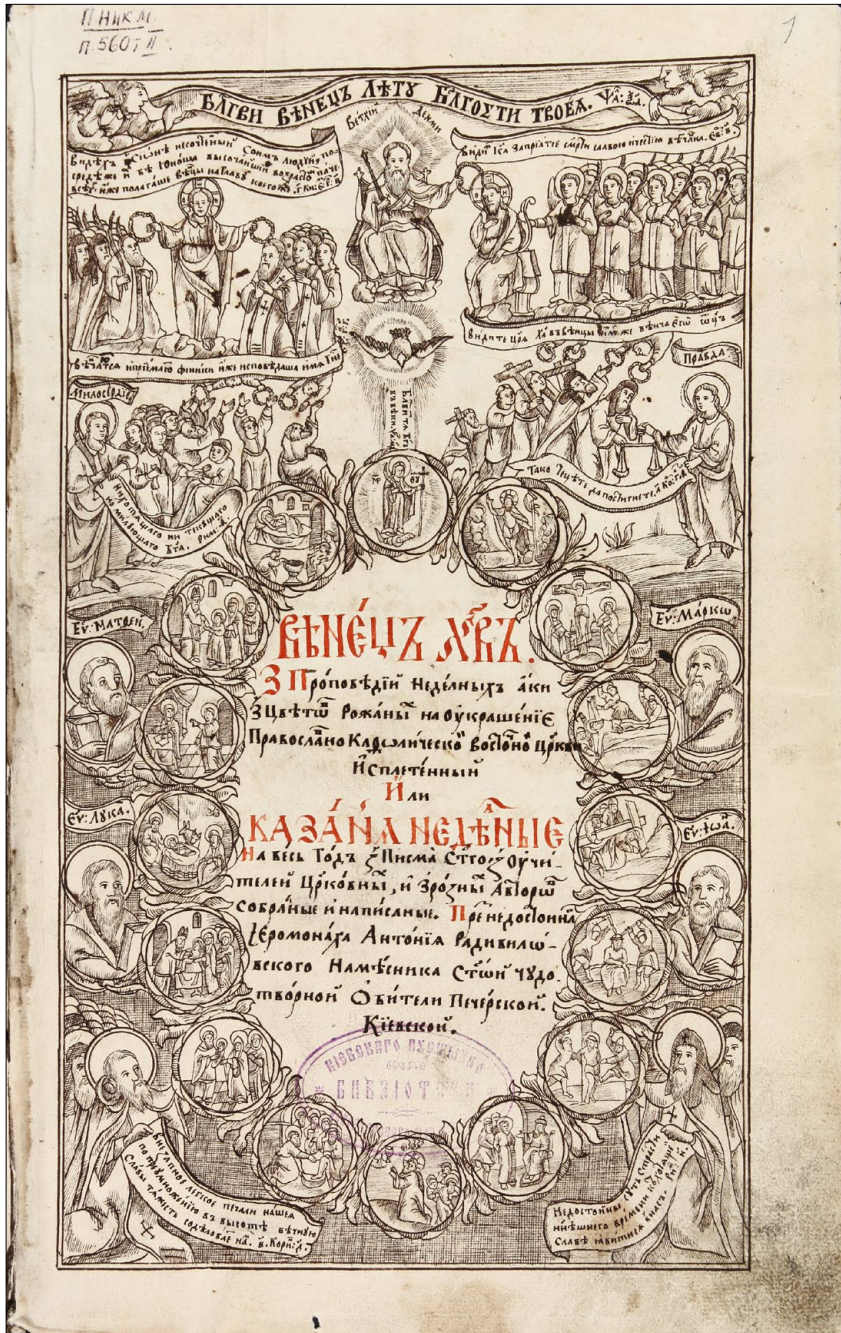
The Old Testament characters are among the figures used to “inhabit” the initials either. On page 848 (the 2nd sermon on the 22nd Sunday after the descent of the Holy Spirit), an image of a man in the vestment of the high priest of the Israelites is inserted within the letter “A”. Wearing a mitre and a breastplate, the personage is supposed to be Aaron, Moses’ brother and the first high priest of the Judaic institution of priesthood mentioned in the Bible. The illustrator worked on the details of his appearance to make him recognizable to the readers.

Page 748 contains the initial with scene from the Book of Judges 15:15 where Samson conquered the Philistines with a jawbone of an ass. The initial has tree figures, namely Samson (“Самсон”) with his improvised weapon and two Philistines lying prostrate before him. The letter “Σ” signifies the name of the legendary strongman; possibly the illustrator used the form of the Greek letter *sigma* to refer to the Cyrillic “C”.

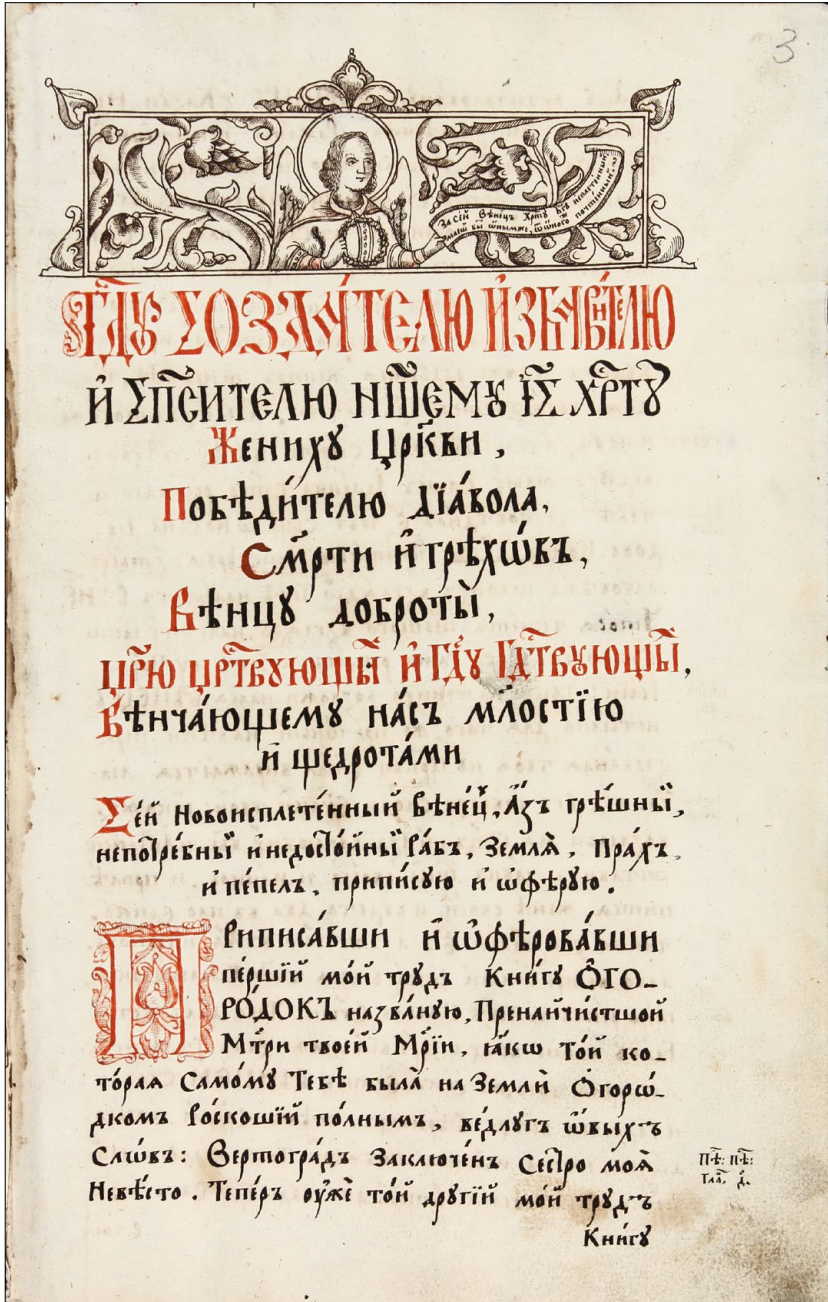
It is necessary to emphasize that there is no connection between the pictures in these initials and the subject of the sermons they illustrate.

In conclusion, “Vinets Khrystov” must be recognized as a valuable and striking example of the Ukrainian manuscript heritage of the early modern period. Although already known in the academic environment, “Vinets” has not been sufficiently evaluated as a highly artistic work of art. Elaborately embellished with various decorative elements and ornaments, the codex is a sample of the Baroque style in Ukrainian manuscript book culture. The title illustration, headpieces, tailpieces, and penwork initials make up the compositional unity of the decoration of “Vinets”. Some perform a purely aesthetic function, while others have a certain semantic load referring to the topic and the content of the following text. For example, the symbolic illustration on the title reveals the book’s central metaphor, i.e., the wreath of Christ, which is repeated in the decoration of one of the headpieces of the manuscript. Several other headpieces have images illustrating the text they precede. Historiated initials may go together with the theme of the sermons, although mostly they do not correlate with the subject of the sermon. Thus, the manuscript “Vinets Khrystov” presents a noteworthy combination of artistic means of expression with the text of the codex. Although it was seemingly used as a model for the namesake printed book, the manuscript is somewhat different in decoration and content from the later publication. A more detailed comparison of the handwritten book with the Lavra edition of “Vinets” looks promising for further studies.

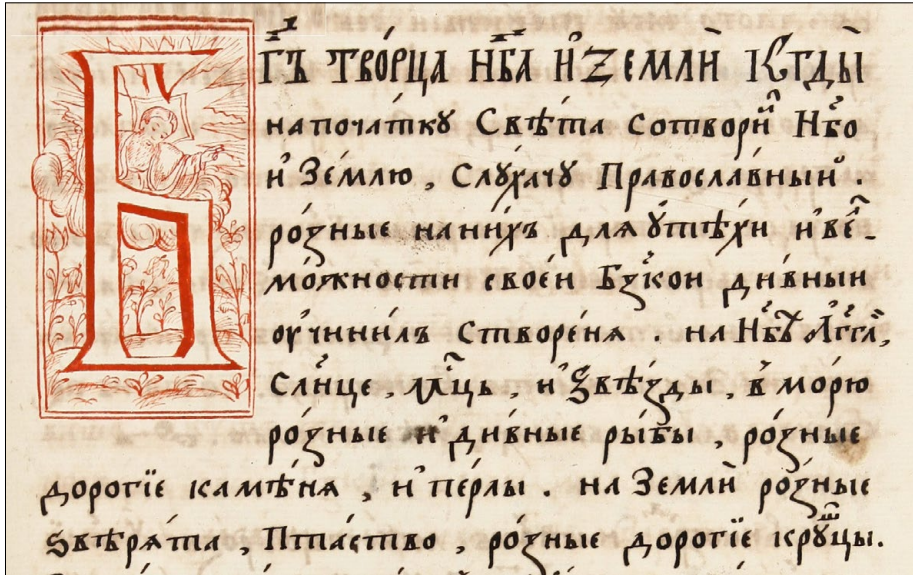
II. 1. *Vinets Khrystov*. The title page. Kyiv, the Institute of manuscript of the Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine, fund 308, unit 560/2. Photo by Oleh Petrenko.



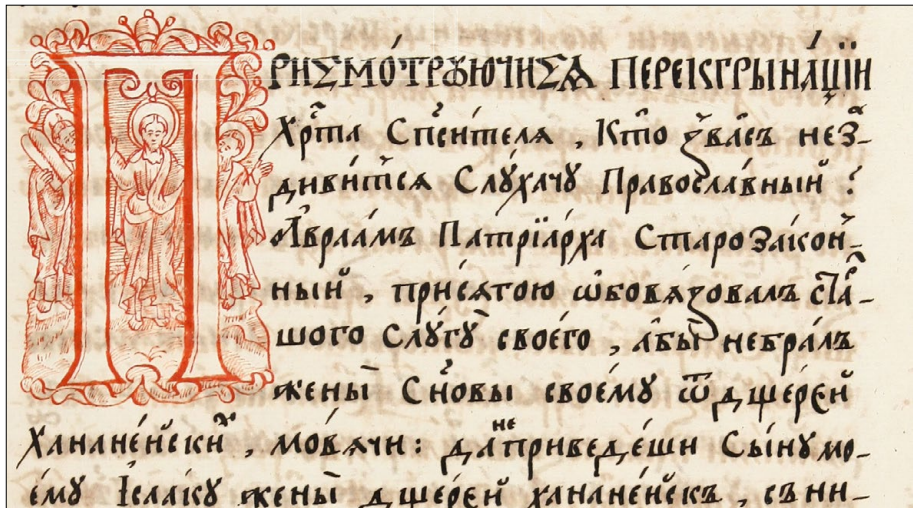
II. 2. *Vinets Khrystov*. The first page of the dedication of the book to Jesus Christ. Kyiv, the Institute of manuscript of the Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine, fund 308, unit 560/2. Photo by Oleh Petrenko.



II. 3. *Vinets Khrystov*. The initial with the figure of God the Creator. Kyiv, the Institute of manuscript of the Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine, fund 308, unit 560/2. Photo by Oleh Petrenko.



II. 4. *Vinets Khrystov*. The initial with the scene of Transfiguration of Christ. Kyiv, the Institute of manuscript of the Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine, fund 308, unit 560/2. Photo by Oleh Petrenko.



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