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The Vilnius City Hall’s Main Publication “Biblioteczka Wileńska Series” (1929–1938)

Abstract: The Vilnius City Hall’s leading publication, “Biblioteczka Wileńska” Series, was published during 1929–1938. The initiative to publish it came from the Cultural and Educational Commission of the Vilnius City Council. The publishing house aimed to encourage scholars to undertake research on various aspects of the history of the city of Vilnius and to spread such knowledge in wider circles of society. Nine books were published in this series between 1929 and 1938. Except for the professor of the Stefan Batory University, literary historian Stanisław Pigoń, and the head of the State Archives in Warsaw, Major Bolesław Waligóra, the authors were young researchers and graduates of the Faculty of Humanities of the Stefan Batory University in Vilnius: Maria Łowmiańska, Sara Rabinowiczówna, Janina Rodkiewiczówna, Stefan Rosiak, Irena Zaleska-Stankiewiczowa, Bogumił Zwolski, Leonid Żytkowicz. Their work significantly contributed to the knowledge of Vilnius’ history and the general academic achievements of Vilnius historians in the interwar period.

Keywords: Vilnius, serial publication, Vilnius City Hall, history of the city of Vilnius, graduates of Stefan Batory University

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to present the series of the Magistrate of the city of Vilnius, “Biblioteczka Wileńska” [Vilnius Library] Series published in 1929–1938, the initiators and goals of its establishment, the scientific works published in it, their authors and the opinions of their reviewers contemporaries, as well as the importance of these publications for learning about the history of the city of Vilnius and enriching the general scientific output of Vilnius scholars in the interwar period. The article was written based on archival sources, publications of the “Biblioteczka Wileńska”, reviews published in the Society of Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk w Wilnie [Friends of Science in Vilnius] journal “Ateneum Wileńskie” [Vilnius Athenaeum], and works by Polish authors.

Publications in the “Biblioteczka Wileńska”

The initiative to establish a serial publication of the Vilnius City Magistrate “Biblioteczka Wileńska” came from the Cultural and Educational Commission of the Vilnius City Council. The chairman of the Commission, Stefan Ehrenkretz, a professor at Stefan Batory University (from now on also: USB), described its goals as follows:

Rozpoczynając wydawnictwo „Biblioteczki Wileńskiej” pragniemy przyczynić się do pogłębienia znajomości Wilna i ludzi, którzy w nim i dla niego pracowali lub duchowo z nim byli związani. Jednocześnie dążymy do zachęcenia młodszego pokolenia pracowników naukowych do zwracania swych badań w kierunku poznania dziejów miasta naszego. Stąd, obok prac wybitnych i znanych ze swej działalności na polu naukowym pisarzy, umieszczać będziemy wyniki badań młodszego pokolenia, dopiero pierwsze kroki stawiającego na polu pracy naukowej. Biblioteczka więc nasza będzie splaceniem długu, zaciągniętego wobec dawnych pokoleń, a zarazem podniętą do poznania i badania przeszłości naszej stolicy. Magistrat i Rada Miasta Wilna, podejmując to wydawnictwo, oddaje je w ręce czytelników z wiarą, że dojdzie ono do rąk tych, którzy miasto nasze i dzieje jego ukochali¹

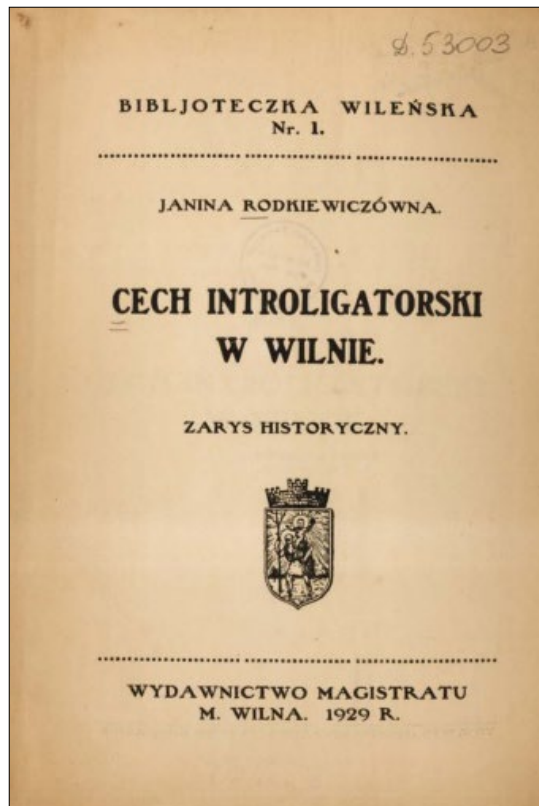
[By starting the publication of the “Biblioteczka Wileńska”, we wish to contribute to a more profound knowledge of Vilnius and the people who worked in and for it or were spiritually connected with it. At the same time, we aim to encourage the younger generation of academics to turn their research towards learning about our city’s history. Hence, in addition to the works of prominent writers known for their activity in the scientific field, we will place the results of the research of the younger generation, only taking their first steps in the field of scientific

1 S. Erenkretz [Foreword], [in:] J. Rodkiewiczówna, *Cech introligatorski w Wilnie. Zarys historyczny*, Wilno 1929, Biblioteczka Wileńska; no. 1, p. 1.

work. Thus, our library will be a repayment of the debt owed to past generations and, at the same time, an incentive to learn about and study the past of our capital. The Magistrate and Council of the City of Vilnius, taking up this publication, put it in the hands of readers with the belief that it will reach the hands of those who loved our city and its history].

The series began with a book published in 1929 by **Janina Rodkiewiczówna**, a graduate of the USB Faculty of Humanities, entitled *Cech introligatorski w Wilnie. Zarys historyczny* [The Bookbinding Guild in Vilnius. A historical outline]. It was her thesis (teacher's thesis) written under the supervision of Prof. Kazimierz Chodynicki and Prof. Stanisław Kościałkowski. The author, based on archival and printed sources and scientific literature, presented an outline of the history of the bookbinding guild in Vilnius, the composition of its membership, its more prominent representatives, financial matters, the attitude of guild members toward the Church, and the city authorities, the fight against part-timers, that is, artisans not belonging to the guild.

Title page of Janina Rodkiewiczówna's book
Cech introligatorski w Wilnie. Zarys historyczny, Wilno 1929



The bookbinding guild in Vilnius, studied by Rodkiewiczówna, was most likely established in the late 16th or early 17th century, although bookbinders were found in Vilnius earlier. The first people to bind books in Vilnius were monks. As for lay bookbinders, judging from references in the sources, they appeared in Vilnius in the 16th century, when the demand for books was increasing under the influence of the Reformation and spreading education. Most of the first bookbinders were located at bookstores, as booksellers were engaged in binding books and selling them. In addition to bookbinders-booksellers and bookbinders with their workshops in the city, there were also bookbinders working at homes of wealthy book lovers who could afford their libraries and the maintenance of bookbinders².

The development of the bookbinding guild, as well as that of other Vilnius guilds, was hampered by the disasters that struck the city in the early and mid-17th century (the Vilnius fire of 1610, the Moscow invasion of 1655–1661). Guild members had to fight against dissension within the guild and against numerous artisans who did not belong to the guild. It was only in the second half of the 17th century that the development of the bookbinding craft made significant progress. However, by the end of the 17th century, the bookbinding guild declined heavily due to new disasters befalling the city again and only rose in the second half of the 18th century³.

Vilnius bookbinders faced new difficulties after the partition of the Republic of Poland at the end of the 18th century, when Vilnius became part of the Russian partition. Under pressure from the Russian authorities, Vilnius guilds in the 19th century were transformed into craft unions with limited self-government. They were subordinate to the Supreme Administration of Crafts, which in its order was subordinate to the Governorate Government, the City Administration, and the City Council. After 1840, a Jewish bookbinding guild was established in Vilnius in addition to the Christian one. In 1885, the two guilds merged to form a single Christian-Jewish bookbinding guild, but this, too, was canceled by the Russian authorities in 1893⁴.

In the same year, 1929, a collection of works by literary historian and USB professor **Stanisław Pigoń** entitled *Z dawnego Wilna. Szkice obyczajowe i literackie* [From Old Vilnius. Customary and Literary Sketches] was published as the second item of the “Biblioteczka Wileńska”, dedicated to the 350th anniversary of the founding and 10th anniversary of the resurrection of the Vilnius University, which fell that year. Professor S. Pigoń wrote in the introduction:

2 Ibidem, pp. 5–7.

3 Ibidem, pp. 8–11.

4 Ibidem, pp. 12–18.

Przy tej sposobności niejednokrotnie uwaga publiczna zwracać się będzie w czasy minione, zatrzymywać przy wielkich imionach tych pracowników, którzy sławę Wszechnicy naszej tak wysoko podźwignęli. Zbiór niniejszy może się nieco przyczynić do takiego zwrócenia twarzy w przeszłość, może się stanie drobnym ogniwickiem wiążącym dawność z dzisiejszością w jedną nierozzerwalną całość⁵

[On this occasion, public attention will often turn to times past, stopping at the great names of those employees who raised the fame of our University so high. This collection may contribute a little to such a turning of the face to the past; it may become a small link binding the past and the present into one inseparable whole].

The collection contains 15 small works, called "customary and literary sketches" by the author himself. Pigoń considered mainly educational matters of the early 19th century, especially the former Vilnius University and its professors and students. He devoted some of the sketches to Adam Mickiewicz, a prominent graduate of the former Vilnius University, his poetry, and his ideas for immortalizing the poet's memory in Vilnius. These sketches are: *Sztambuch Maryli*⁶; *Postawa religijna młodego Mickiewicza: na stulecie I tomu jego poezji*⁷; *Przed odjazdem w „daleką, nieznaną drogę”*⁸; *Kilka słów o tzw. Madonnie Mickiewicza w Dukaszach*⁹; *Pierwszy pomysł pomnika Adama Mickiewicza w Wilnie*¹⁰ [respectively: *Maryla's Book of Friendship*; *The religious attitude of young Mickiewicz: on the centenary of the first volume of his poetry*; *Before departing on a "distant, unknown road"*; *A few words about the so-called Madonna of Mickiewicz in Dukaszty*; *The first idea of a monument to Adam Mickiewicz in Vilnius*].

The collection also includes sketches about the life in exile in Orenburg of Mickiewicz's close friend Tomasz Zan, a poet, philomath, and philareth¹¹, Towianist Jan Andrzej Rama¹², the opinions of Vilnius University scholars on ethnographic research conducted by Zorian Dołęga-Chodakowski¹³, the project

5 S. Pigoń, *Z dawnego Wilna. Szkice obyczajowe i literackie*, Wilno 1929, Biblioteczka Wileńska; no. 2, p. VIII.

6 Ibidem, pp. 75–85.

7 Ibidem, pp. 86–92.

8 Ibidem, pp. 93–104.

9 Ibidem, pp. 143–150.

10 Ibidem, pp. 151–163.

11 Ibidem, pp. 105–114.

12 Ibidem, pp. 135–163.

13 Ibidem, pp. 1–22; Zorian Dołęga-Chodakowski, born Adam Czarnocki (1784–1825), ethnographer, researcher of Slavic antiquities, member of the Warsaw Society of Friends of Sciences. See Chodakowski Zorian Dołęga, [in:] *Encyklopedia Ziemi Wileńskiej*. Vol. 1: *Wileński słownik biograficzny*, ed. by H. Dubowik, L.J. Malinowski, Bydgoszcz 2002, p. 49.

of the department of the Lithuanian language at the former Vilnius University¹⁴, censorship and the Vilnius press of the period¹⁵, the life of academic youth¹⁶, the Polish-Russian scholar and historian of Ukrainian origin Apollon Skalkowski¹⁷, and the struggle for a Polish school in the Russian partition¹⁸.

A book published in 1929 in the series “Biblioteczka Wileńska” by USB graduate **Maria Łowmiańska**, *Wilno przed najazdem moskiewskim 1655 roku* [Vilnius before the Moscow invasion of 1655] contributed significantly to the knowledge of the history of Vilnius. It was her doctoral dissertation, written under the supervision of Prof. Kościałkowski. Based on this dissertation, which was very well evaluated by the promoter Prof. Kościałkowski and Prof. Janusz Iwaskiewicz¹⁹, and on the doctoral examinations passed, M. Łowmiańska was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History²⁰ in 1931 at the Faculty of Humanities of the USB.

Based on scholarly literature and numerous printed and archival sources, Łowmiańska’s book includes an introduction, three chapters, and an index of people and places²¹. In the first chapter, the author describes the extent of Vilnius in the mid-17th century inside the defensive walls, its suburbs, fortifications, streets and alleys, temples, hospitals, and the castle. According to the author, the line of defensive walls of Vilnius, erected between 1503 and 1522, was 2.9 km long, and the space contained within the city walls was 0.8 km². It took more work to determine the extent of Vilnius, including the suburbs, located outside the city walls and without fixed borders. In the middle of the 17th century, Vilnius had such suburbs as Rossa, Szerejkiszki (Szerekiszki),

14 S. Pigoń, *Z dawnego Wilna...*, pp. 23–28.

15 Ibidem, pp. 29–42.

16 Ibidem, pp. 43–54.

17 Ibidem, pp. 115–123.

18 Ibidem, pp. 124–134.

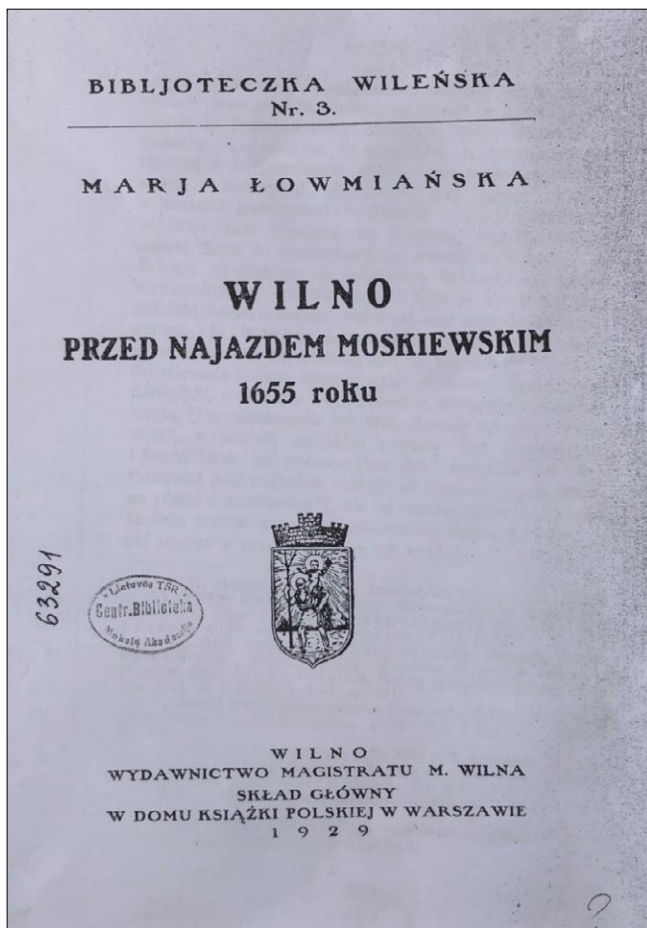
19 Lietuvos centrinis valstybės archyvas (State Central Archives of Lithuania, hereafter: LCVA), call no. F.175, ap. 5(IVB), b. 122, Ocena pracy p. Marii Łowmiańskiej p. t. „Wilno przed najazdem moskiewskim 1655 roku”, f. 5–6.

20 LCVA, call no. F.175, ap. 5(IVB), b. 122, Wilno, 14 marca 1931 roku, Do Pana Dziekana Wydziału Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego w Wilnie. Podanie Marii Łowmiańskiej, absolwentki USB o dopuszczenie jej do egzaminów doktorskich w zakresie historii, jako przedmiotu głównego i historii sztuki, jako pobocznego, f. 112; LCVA, call no. F.175, ap. 5(IVB), b. 122, Protokół z egzaminu doktorskiego p. Marii Łowmiańskiej z historii, jako przedmiotu głównego i historii sztuki, jako pobocznego, dn. 24 czerwca 1931 r., f. 3–4; LCVA, call no. F.175, ap. 5(IVB), b. 122, Dyplom doktora filozofii w zakresie historii, wydany Marii Pelagii Łowmiańskiej z domu Plackowska przez Radę Wydziału Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego w Wilnie, Wilno, 30 kwietnia 1932, Dyplom doktora filozofii w zakresie historii, wydany Marii Pelagii Łowmiańskiej z domu Plackowska przez Radę Wydziału Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego w Wilnie, Wilno, 30 kwietnia 1932, f. 1.

21 M. Łowmiańska, *Wilno przed najazdem moskiewskim 1655 roku*, Wilno 1929, Biblioteczka Wileńska; no. 3.

Zarzecze, Antokol, and Subocz. On the other hand, it is still being determined to what extent the village behind the Neris River opposite the castle, named Rybaki, was inhabited then. In any case, the author points out that the extent of the city for those times was considerable²².

Title page of Maria Łowmiańska's book
Wilno przed najazdem moskiewskim 1655 roku, Wilno 1929



Continuing, Łowmiańska attempts to reconstruct the condition of the city walls before the Moscow invasion of 1655, based on sources, mainly a plan of Vilnius city fortifications drawn up in 1648 by military engineer and cartographer Fredericus Getkant (Latin: Fridericus Getkant). The Vilnius city wall, although far from the menacing grandeur of the fortifications of other

22 Ibidem, pp. 16–20.

European cities, was relatively high and massive, provided in its upper part with one row of longitudinal, perpendicular gun embrasures, indicating the existence of a platform on the side of the city where the cannons and the crew serving them were deployed during the siege. Nine gates were marked on the Getkant's plan: the Maria Magdalena (Wet), Bernardyńska (Bernardine), Ostra (Gate of Dawn), Rudnicka (Rūdininkai), Spaska (Saviour's), Subocz (Subačius), Tatarska (Tatar), Trocka (Trakai), and Wilejska (Vilnius) gates. In addition to the gates, there were wickets in the wall, pierced for the convenience of the population. One such gate was marked on the Getkant's plan, apparently a more significant, leading towards Vilenka, north of the Subocz gate. Records from the second half of the 17th century mention a wicket at the Metropolitan Orthodox Church. Three towers rose above the walls, the first between the Rudnicka and Ostra gates, the second north of the Subocz gate, and the third between the Spaska and Bernardyńska gates. Due to their considerable projection beyond the walls, the towers and the more powerful gates allowed flanking defense of the fortifications, but too few of them could not be sufficient²³.

Besides the inadequacy of Vilnius's fortifications, the gates were poorly maintained. Feeling generally safe from the external enemy for a long time, not only the city fortifications were put down – Vilnius castles also lost their defensive character. Thus, in the fourth decade of the 17th century, when the threat from Moscow and the Tatars increased, the need arose to strengthen Vilnius' defense system. The walls were repaired and secured by erecting a second defensive line of ramparts and fortifications, covering the inner defensive line, which was too weak for the new means of attack. The moat running along the western line, filled with water from numerous suburban springs, was cleaned and probably deepened. All townspeople stood up to work on repairing the fortifications, and all were charged with conscription for this purpose. However, Vilnius' defense system proved too weak and could not withstand the attack of the Moscow army. The city was occupied in 1655, and for the six years the Russians stayed there (1655–1661), it was utterly looted and heavily damaged²⁴.

The attention of merchants and travelers arriving in Vilnius was drawn to the numerous temples. Łowmiańska lists 23 Catholic churches that were in Vilnius in the middle of the 17th century, seven Uniate churches, the Orthodox Church of the Holy Spirit with male and female monasteries and a hospital, two Protestant churches (a Calvinist one behind the city walls north of the Trakai Gate and a Lutheran one in Niemiecka Street), a synagogue in Żydowska Street and a mosque in Lukiškės²⁵.

23 Ibidem, pp. 20–30.

24 Ibidem, pp. 31–33.

25 Ibidem, pp. 38–55.

In addition to the temples, the most impressive buildings in the city were those of the Jesuit Academy (University). They occupied a large area adjacent to St. John's Church in the east, bounded by Świętojańska Street in the south, Biskupia Street in the west, and Skopówka in the north. The Vilnius Castle spread out at the foot of Castle Mountain with the ruins of the old castle and church on top, including, in addition to the lower castle and the cathedral church, buildings of public use that housed state courts, a prison, an armory, etc.²⁶

The second chapter is devoted to the residents of Vilnius, their religious, national, and cultural relations, their daily and economic life, the development of trade and crafts, guilds and organizations of merchants, and their importance in the city's life. According to the author's findings, in the middle of the 17th century, Vilnius had about 14,000 residents, including about 12,000 Christians (Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, and Unitarians) and about 2,000 adherents of other religions – Jews and Muslims²⁷.

In the third chapter, Łowmiańska writes about the municipal authorities and their functions, the burghers' benefits to the city and the state, the organization of the treasury board, municipal revenues, and expenditures²⁸.

In summary, Łowmiańska points out that until 1655, the development of the city of Vilnius showed no signs of decline – crafts and commerce developed, and the municipal authorities functioned efficiently. Only the Moscow occupation in 1655–1661 made a turnaround in the city's economic life due to the destruction caused first by the accidents of war and then by plundering the occupants in the controlled city. After the retreat of the Moscow army, the city had to be rebuilt with great difficulty, with exhausted forces and material resources, under conditions of general economic deterioration in the country²⁹.

In 1932, the fourth item of the "Biblioteczka Wileńska" was published. – a book by a graduate of the Faculty of Humanities at USB, **Sara Rabinowiczówna** *Wilno w powstaniu roku 1830/1831* [Vilnius in the Uprising of 1830/1831]³⁰. It was her master's thesis written and defended in 1831³¹. The pause of a couple of years in publishing another position was due to financial difficulties related to the world economic crisis. The choice of the topic of the master's thesis and

26 Ibidem, pp. 61–65.

27 Ibidem, pp. 71–134.

28 Ibidem, pp. 135–185.

29 Ibidem, pp. 184–185.

30 S. Rabinowiczówna, *Wilno w powstaniu roku 1830/1831*, Wilno 1932, Biblioteczka Wileńska; no. 4.

31 *Wykaz tematów rozpraw doktorskich oraz prac magisterskich i nauczycielskich w zakresie historii, przyjętych w latach 1923–1939 przez Komisję Egzaminacyjną Wydziału Humanistycznego USB*, comp. by B. Zwolski, [in:] *Księga pamiątkowa Koła Historyków Słuchaczy Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego w Wilnie 1923–1933*, Wilno 1933, p. 371.

its publication in the “Biblioteczka Wileńska” was connected with the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the November Uprising. Prof. Kościałkowski, recommending Rabinowiczówna’s work for publication, thought it would contribute to a better understanding of the events of 1830/1831 in Vilnius. In the foreword to the book, the professor wrote:

Wypadki te, mgłą czasu gęsto zasnutę, ciężarem późniejszych przeżyć i cierpień narodowych przytłoczone, niemal całkowicie przygasły w pamięci społeczeństwa wileńskiego [...]. Nieznany jest dzisiejszemu ogółowi sam przebieg wydarzeń wileńskich z r. 1831, nieznane miejsce trwania i grzebania straconych czy poległych wówczas patriotów, zapomniane niemal zupełnie nawet ich imiona³²

[These events, thickly shrouded in the mist of time and overwhelmed by the weight of later experiences and national suffering, have almost wholly dimmed in the memory of the Vilnius society [...]. The course of the Vilnius events of 1831 is unknown to today’s general public; the place where the patriots were executed and buried at that time is unknown; even their names are almost entirely forgotten].

Rabinowiczówna’s work is based mainly on archival materials from the Vilnius State Archives, which came from the office of the Vilnius Governor General. These include ordinances and protocols of local and central Russian authorities, official correspondence, and secret reports of the Vilnius gendarmerie. The second important group consists of the materials of the Investigative Commission, set up to determine the degree of guilt of individuals belonging to the uprising and the sequestration of their property. This commission held office in Vilnius from the autumn of 1831 to 1835. The author also used diaries and memoirs of participants in the uprising³³.

After analyzing sources, diaries, and studies, the author presents in the first chapter of the book the situation in Vilnius before the outbreak of the uprising in 1830, the reaction of Vilnius residents to the news of the uprising in the Kingdom of Poland, and the conduct of the Russian authorities³⁴. In the second chapter, she writes about establishing the Vilnius Committee, the associations of academic youth, and their participation in the uprising³⁵. In the third chapter, she examines the case of Jan Kudrewicz and his accomplices, who wanted to start an uprising in the city. The conspiracy was formed in early March 1831, detected by Russian authorities, and liquidated in early April³⁶. In the fourth

32 S. Rabinowiczówna, *Wilno w powstaniu roku 1830/1831...*, pp. 1–2.

33 Ibidem, pp. 3–7.

34 Ibidem, pp. 8–29.

35 Ibidem, pp. 30–66.

36 Ibidem, pp. 67–107.

chapter, Rabinowiczówna describes the situation in Vilnius in April and May 1831. At that time, many patriotic Vilnius residents, seeing no possibility of starting an uprising in Vilnius itself, left the city to join insurgent units operating in other towns³⁷.

In the conclusion, the author reflects on the reasons for the failure to initiate the uprising in Vilnius itself. In her opinion, the main reason for this was the great superiority of Russian forces. At the beginning of April 1831, the Russian garrison in Vilnius amounted to more than 3,000 soldiers, and the governor-general was still asking for additional reinforcements. In addition, the Vilnius garrison was aided by Russian troops advancing through Vilnius to the Kingdom of Poland. Unable to free themselves from the Russians on their strength, the residents of Vilnius pinned their hopes on an expedition of the Polish insurgent army under the command of Generals Dezydery Chłapowski, Antoni Giełgud, and Henryk Dembiński to Lithuania. However, this expedition failed. After the insurgent troops suffered defeat in a battle on June 19, 1831, in the Ponary Mountains and had to withdraw, all the hopes of Vilnius residents for liberation from Russian rule collapsed³⁸.

In 1933 the fifth book of the series was published – **Leonid Żytkowicz's** *Zburzenie murów obronnych Wilna (1799–1805) (z ilustracjami i planem)*³⁹ [The Demolition of the Defensive Walls of Vilnius (1799–1805) (with illustrations and a plan)]. Based on this work, evaluated “very good” by Professors Iwaszkiewicz and Kościółkowski, and after the examinations passed, Żytkowicz received a Master of Philosophy degree in History⁴⁰ in the same 1933 at the USB Faculty of Humanities. Recommending Żytkowicz's master's thesis for publication, Prof. J. Iwaszkiewicz expressed his conviction that it would contribute to the knowledge of a specific fragment of Vilnius's past among a broader circle of readers. Thus, this “Biblioteczka Wileńska” volume would duly fulfill the task for which the publishing house was established⁴¹.

37 Ibidem, pp. 108–132.

38 Ibidem, pp. 139–143.

39 L. Żytkowicz, *Zburzenie murów obronnych Wilna (1799–1805): z ilustracjami i planem*, Wilno 1933, Biblioteczka Wileńska; no. 5.

40 LCVA, call no. F. 175, ap. 5 (IV)Ca, b. 1557, Komisja egzaminacyjna Wydziału Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego dla egzaminów magisterskich [Protokoły egzaminów, złożonych przez Leonida Żytkowicza], f. 1–16; LCVA, call no. F. 175, ap. 5 (IV)Ca, b. 1557, Ocena pracy magisterskiej Leonida Żytkowicza, studenta Wydziału Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego p.t. „Sprawa zburzenia obwarowań m. Wilna w latach 1799–1805” przedstawiona Komisji Egzaminacyjnej 22 maja 1933 r., Wilno, dnia 24.VI.1933, f. 17–19; LCVA, call no. F. 175, ap. 5 (IV)Ca, b. 1557, Dyplom magistra filozofii w zakresie historii, wydany Leonidowi Żytkowiczowi przez Radę Wydziału Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego na wniosek Komisji Egzaminacyjnej 26 czerwca 1933 r., f. 28.

41 J. Iwaszkiewicz, *Przedmowa*, [in:] L. Żytkowicz, *Zburzenie murów obronnych Wilna...*, p. 3.

Żytkowicz's work includes a preface by Professor Iwaszkiewicz, an introduction, three chapters, and a list of archival sources. In the foreword, Żytkowicz discusses the literature and sources. In the first chapter, he describes the time and reasons for the fortification of Vilnius in the early 16th century, basically confirming the findings of M. Łowmiańska⁴².

In the second chapter, Żytkowicz, citing watercolors by Franciszek Smuglewicz and the "Inwentarz domów i budowli publicznych m. Wilna" [Inventory of the Houses and Public Buildings of the City of Vilnius] prepared in 1802 by the magistrate's scribe Franciszek Krupowicz, describes the condition of the Vilnius fortifications before their demolition. The Vilnius walls, neglected at the end of the 18th century, also suffered severely in 1794 during the battles between the insurgents and the Russian army. After the capture of Vilnius in August 1794, Russian General Bohdan Knorring ordered the walls to be repaired at the expense of the residents, who spent more than 18,000 Polish zlotys on this from a joint contribution. At that time, the breaches in the wall caused by the bombardment were walled up, and the damage to the Trocka, Wileńska, and Spaska gates was repaired. The tower north of the Subocz gate was already primarily demolished. The Subocz gate itself, meanwhile, was in relatively good condition. Built in the shape of a large quadrangle, it had four stories. At the bottom was a vaulted passage gate; above it used to be the city executioner's chamber, and the last two floors formed protrusions equipped with machicolations for vertical defense. Two rows of vertical rifles were visible from the front and sides. The Ostra gate consisted of two parts: the city gate proper, topped with an attic at the top, and a chapel with a miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin Mary attached to it on the city side. The Round Tower was also in good condition, scratched only in a few places, perhaps during the battles of 1794. Under Smuglewicz, the Rudnicka Gate retained its original appearance. Its front part strongly protruded outside the walls, while the part facing the city, twice as high as that one, rose well above the wall line. Both, covered with a flat roof, formed a terrace. The strength of this gate was evidenced by its massiveness and two rows of circular architraves. According to Krupowicz's inventory, the Trocka and Wileńska gates were well-preserved. The Tatarska Gate was then occupied as a barracks for 86 soldiers, so it, too, was said to be in good condition. The Wet Gate, otherwise St. Mary Magdalene, probably no longer existed, as sources from the late 18th century did not mention it⁴³.

In the third chapter, the author describes the demolition of Vilnius' defensive walls in 1799–1805. The initiative came from the then Lithuanian civil governor Johann Fryzel, a German of Estonian descent. On August 21, 1799,

42 L. Żytkowicz, *Zburzenie murów obronnych Wilna...*, pp. 8–18.

43 *Ibidem*, pp. 19–25.

he addressed a letter to War Governor General Boris O'Brien de Lascy, proving the need to tear down the walls surrounding Vilnius since, from them, "powietrze w mieście jest zbyt zgęszczone, a przeto nieczyste" [the air in the city is too thickened and therefore unclean]. The governor-general sent this proposal to St. Petersburg. On September 10, 1799, he received a decree from Russian Emperor Paul I authorizing the demolition of Vilnius' centuries-old walls⁴⁴.

Shortly after that, the Russian administrative authorities began issuing permits to take materials from the walls and towers to remove the remaining rubble and the liberated site. First, the Rudnicka gate was demolished, the bastion near the Spasskaya Orthodox Church was largely destroyed, and breaches were made in the perimeter wall. Most of the materials excavated from the ruined walls, Żytkowicz supposes, were sold to private individuals with a small compensation to the city. For this reason, the next governor-general, Leon Benigsen, in 1802, forbade further demolition of the walls and demanded an explanation of where the previously excavated material went. However, in the city court books of the time, there remained no record of a lawsuit brought for the resale of materials excavated from the demolished walls. Most likely, the matter was hushed up. Benigsen himself was in charge of further demolition of the city walls, and the materials obtained in this way went to the construction of government facilities, including the expansion of the Governor General's residence in Vilnius. By 1805, the gates and towers had been demolished in addition to the perimeter wall. Only the Gates of Dawn remained of the entire extensive perimeter of Vilnius fortifications, which protected Vilnius and its residents from the enemy for almost three centuries. It was spared because of a chapel at it with a miraculous image⁴⁵.

In conclusion, Żytkowicz suggests that although the demolition of the Vilnius fortifications was initiated by the Russian governors and confirmed by a tsarist decree, by principle, the residents of Vilnius and the magistrate representing them were not opposed to it. The magistrate's disputes with the Russian administrative authorities were concerned only with who was to do it and to whom the excavated building material would belong. None of them attempted to save mementos of ancient architecture from destruction or to preserve historic gates and towers, as there was no understanding of their value. Medieval or later, the defensive walls of European cities were mostly demolished, and Vilnius was no exception⁴⁶.

Żytkowicz's book was positively evaluated by his contemporaries reviewers. M. Łowmiańska, in a review published in the journal "Ateneum Wileńskie",

44 Ibidem, pp. 26–27.

45 Ibidem, pp. 31–35.

46 Ibidem, pp. 36–37.

emphasized such qualities of the book as its source, transparency, and clarity⁴⁷. It kept interest in later times, too. In 1984, the émigré Lithuanian historian Marijus Blynas translated it into Lithuanian and published it in the United States⁴⁸.

In 1935, a book by a former student of the USB, teacher **Irena Zaleska-Stankiewiczowa**, entitled *Pensje żeńskie w Wilnie (1795–1831)* [School for Young Ladies in Vilna (1795–1831)], was published as the sixth item of the “Biblioteczka Wileńska”. The book includes an introduction, five chapters, an index of persons and localities, and a list of archival sources⁴⁹.

In the first chapter, the author gives general information about the private female boarding schools operating in Vilnius in those years, their number, duration, and relations with school authorities. According to the author, between 1795 and 1830, there were 25 secular female boarding schools in Vilnius for a shorter or longer period. They were primarily three classes; less often, they had two or four classes. The number of classes varied depending on the number of female boarders. Two-class schools turned into three-class ones over time, and conversely, three-class schools dropped to two-class ones in some years. The total number of female students at individual secular female boarding schools was small, ranging from 15 to 38. In 1814, there were a total of 70 girls in private female boarding schools in Vilnius Governorate. In the following years, the number of female boarders increased significantly. In 1830, there were 256 of them in Vilnius alone. Tuition fees depended on living conditions and the level of education in a particular institution. Pupils living in a boarding school paid from 150 to 300 silver rubles per year, and incoming pupils – from 30 to 75 rubles per year⁵⁰.

In the second chapter, the author cites news about the owners of private women’s boarding schools, teachers and female teachers, their qualifications, and the visiting inspectors’ evaluation of the teacher’s work and the female students, their background, and religion⁵¹. In the third chapter, she presents the goals and scope of teaching, subject selection, school schedules, visitation, and examinations⁵². In chapter four, she analyzes the textbooks used to teach the boarders⁵³. In chapter five, she considers religious-moral and physical education⁵⁴.

47 M. Łowmiańska, rev. Żytkowicz Leonid, *Zburzenie murów obronnych Wilna (1799–1805)*, *Biblioteczka Wileńska*, nr 5. Wyd. Magistratu m. Wilna. Wilno 1933. Str. 39+3 ilustr. +plan, „Ate-neum Wileńskie” 1934, vol. 9, pp. 337–341.

48 L. Żytkowicz, *Gynybinių Vilniaus sienių nugriovimas (1799–1805)*, vertė Marijus Blynas, [Brooklyn]: Kęstučio Jeronimo Butkaus fondas, 1984.

49 I. Zaleska-Stankiewiczowa, *Pensje żeńskie w Wilnie (1795–1831)*, Wilno 1935, *Biblioteczka Wileńska*; no. 6.

50 Ibidem, pp. 6–28.

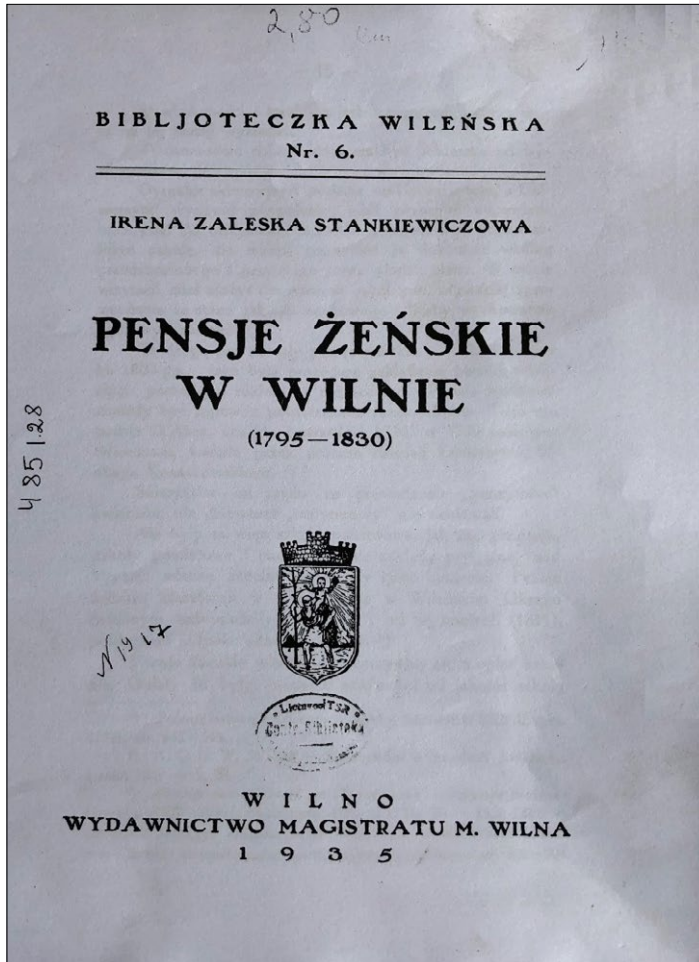
51 Ibidem, pp. 29–53.

52 Ibidem, pp. 54–88.

53 Ibidem, pp. 89–126.

54 Ibidem, pp. 127–148.

Title page of the book by Irena Zaleska-Stankiewiczowa
Pensje żeńskie w Wilnie (1795–1830), Wilno 1935



In 1936, "Ateneum Wileńskie" published a review of Zaleska-Stankiewiczowa's book by an educator and employee of the Vilnius University Library, Dr. Michał Ambros. The reviewer stressed the importance of the topic taken up by Zaleska-Stankiewiczowa since the field of women's education was very little developed at the time. At the same time, he showed the existence of many debatable places in the book, requiring supplementation and clarification. He also pointed out the author's insufficient use of archival and printed materials⁵⁵.

⁵⁵ M. Ambros, rev. *I. Zaleska-Stankiewiczowa, Pensje żeńskie w Wilnie (1795–1830)*, Wilno 1935, *Biblioteczka Wileńska*, nr 6, „Ateneum Wileńskie” 1936, vol. 11, pp. 578–588.

In 1936, a book by a graduate of USB, historian **Bogumił Zwolski**, *Sprawa zboru ewangelicko-reformowanego w Wilnie w latach 1639–41*⁵⁶ [The Case of the Evangelical-Reformed Church in Vilnius in 1639–41] was published as the next item of the “Biblioteczka Wileńska”. Based on this work, written under the supervision of Prof. Kościółkowski, he received a Doctorate of Philosophy in History⁵⁷ at the Faculty of Humanities of USB in 1937.

Zwolski’s work, based chiefly on archival material, much of it from the collection of the archives of the Evangelical-Reformed Synod in Vilnius, contains an extensive introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, and an index of persons. In the introduction, the author discusses religious tumults and their nature, the Warsaw Confederation of 1573, and its life application⁵⁸, the position of dissenters in Lithuania, the first demolition of the Calvinist church in Vilnius in 1611, the Calvinist church’s clashes with the Bernardine nuns in Vilnius, and the literature on the incidents of 1639–1641 in Vilnius⁵⁹.

In the first chapter, Zwolski describes the conflict between Catholics and Calvinists in Vilnius. The reason for its outbreak was the arrows released from a bow on October 4, 1639, toward St. Michael’s Church, belonging to the Bernardine Sisters. Since the shots were fired from the side of the nearby Calvinist congregation, where a christening was being held at the same time, suspicion fell on the Calvinists, with whom the Bernardine sisters had not had the best of relations even before. The next day, an outraged mob attacked the church and the Calvinist school and hospital. On the orders of the governor of Vilnius, Krzysztof Radziwiłł, the riots were quelled, but the conflict did not die down. There were further excesses for which both sides blamed one another. The matter reached King Władysław IV. The ruler tried to bring the parties to an agreement, and when that failed on December 15, 1639, he appointed a commission to investigate⁶⁰.

56 B. Zwolski, *Sprawa zboru ewangelicko-reformowanego w Wilnie w latach 1639–41*, Wilno 1936, Biblioteczka Wileńska; no. 7.

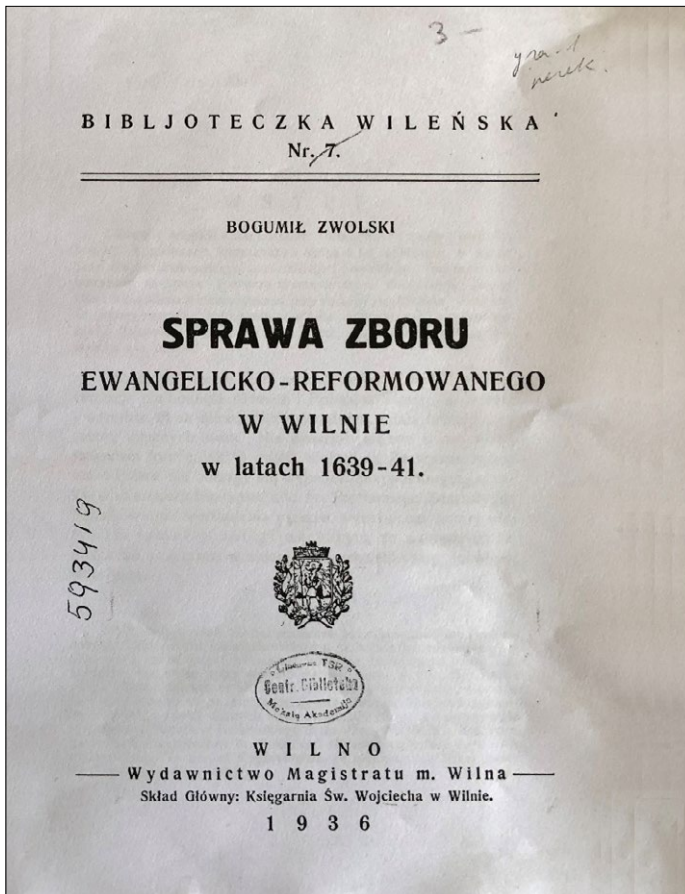
57 M. Kozłowski, *Wychowawca i nauczyciel. O uczniach Stanisława Kościółkowskiego*, [in:] *Stanisław Kościółkowski pamięci przywrócony*, ed. by M. Dąbrowska, Warszawa–Łódź 2016, pp. 156–158.

58 Warsaw Confederation – a term for the resolution passed on January 28, 1573, at the Convocation Sejm in Warsaw, containing provisions for ensuring freedom of religion for the nobility in the Republic. It guaranteed unconditional and eternal peace between all those who differed in faith and ensured that dissenters had equal rights with Catholics and the protection of the state. The legal validity of the confederation was constantly questioned. However, practically, it came into force, sworn in by kings at their coronations, despite the opposition of the Holy See and the objections of the episcopate. See [online] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warsaw_Confederation [accessed 18.11.2023].

59 B. Zwolski, *Sprawa zboru ewangelicko-reformowanego...*, pp. 3–16.

60 Ibidem, pp. 16–29.

Title page of Bogumił Zwolski's book *Sprawa zboru ewangelicko-reformowanego w Wilnie w latach 1639–1641*, Wilno 1936.



In the following two chapters, Zwolski considers the work of the commission, sitting in Vilnius from January 19 to February 15, 1640, the new riots that took place on February 25, 1640 in Vilnius during the funeral of Aleksander Przytkowski, a courtier of Krzysztof Radziwiłł⁶¹, describes the course of the parliamentary court in May 1640, at which the verdict was passed. Those guilty of causing a riot in Vilnius were to be punished, and the Calvinist church was to be moved outside the city walls. Calvinists tried to appeal for the verdict revoked, but without success, especially after they lost their mighty protector, Krzysztof Radziwiłł (he died on the night of September 18–19, 1640)⁶².

61 Ibidem, pp. 29–49.

62 Ibidem, pp. 49–63.

In conclusion, Zwolski, based on the material he has researched, concludes that the fact of shooting at St. Michael's Church on October 4, 1639, was only a pretext for religious riots in Vilnius. The reasons should be sought deeper in the tense relations between Catholics and Calvinists that prevailed in Vilnius then. Removing the church outside the city walls as a factor of constant unrest also did not normalize relations, as evidenced by later riots and the demolition of the new church in 1682⁶³.

Other historians positively evaluated Zwolski's book. M. Łowmiańska, in a review published in the "Ateneum Wileńskie", emphasized: "Zarówno w sposobie zestawienia różnych grup dokumentów, jak i w krytyce ich, analizie, ostrożności wnioskowania – wykazał autor dobrą metodę naukową, która czyni wywody jego przekonywającymi" [Both in the manner of the juxtaposition of various groups of documents and in the criticism of them, analysis, caution of inference – the author has demonstrated a good scientific method, which makes his argument convincing].⁶⁴

In 1938, the eighth item of the "Biblioteczka Wileńska" was published. It was a book by a graduate of the Faculty of Humanities of the USB and an employee of the State Archives in Vilnius, **Stefan Rosiak** *Księgarnia „E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka” 1879–1882* [Bookstore "E. Orzeszkowa & Co" 1879–1882]. The book has three chapters preceded by an introduction, an epilogue, and an appendix containing a statistical list of the bookstore's publications and a list of people and places⁶⁵. In his introduction, Rosiak noted that this work of his is aimed at:

Przypomnienie małego ułamka życia wielkiej pisarki, kiedy to w ciągu trzech lat współpracowała z Wilnem bezpośrednio, stworzywszy dla swej działalności nowe tereny pracy – księgarnię „E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka” istniejącą w Wilnie w latach 1879–1882. Praca ta wiązała Orzeszkową z Wilnem silnymi więzami miłości, przeżywała w niej swoje jeszcze młodzieńcze porywy i cały zapal egzaltowanej natury. W hołdzie należnym od Wilna za tę jej pracę chociaż skromnym szkicem z dziejów księgarni chcemy uczcić pamięć Orzeszkowej⁶⁶

[A reminder of a small fraction of the life of the great writer, when she directly cooperated with Vilnius for three years, having created a new area of work for her activity – the bookstore "E. Orzeszkowa & Co", existing in Vilnius from 1879 to 1882. This work bound Orzeszkowa to Vilnius with strong ties of love; she experienced her still youthful impulses and all the

63 Ibidem, pp. 64–66.

64 M. Łowmiańska, rev. Zwolski Bogumił, *Sprawa zboru ewangelicko-reformowanego w Wilnie w latach 1639–41, Biblioteczka Wileńska, nr 7. Wyd. Magistratu m. Wilna. Wilno 1936. Str. 70, „Ateneum Wileńskie” 1936, vol. 11, pp. 688–690.*

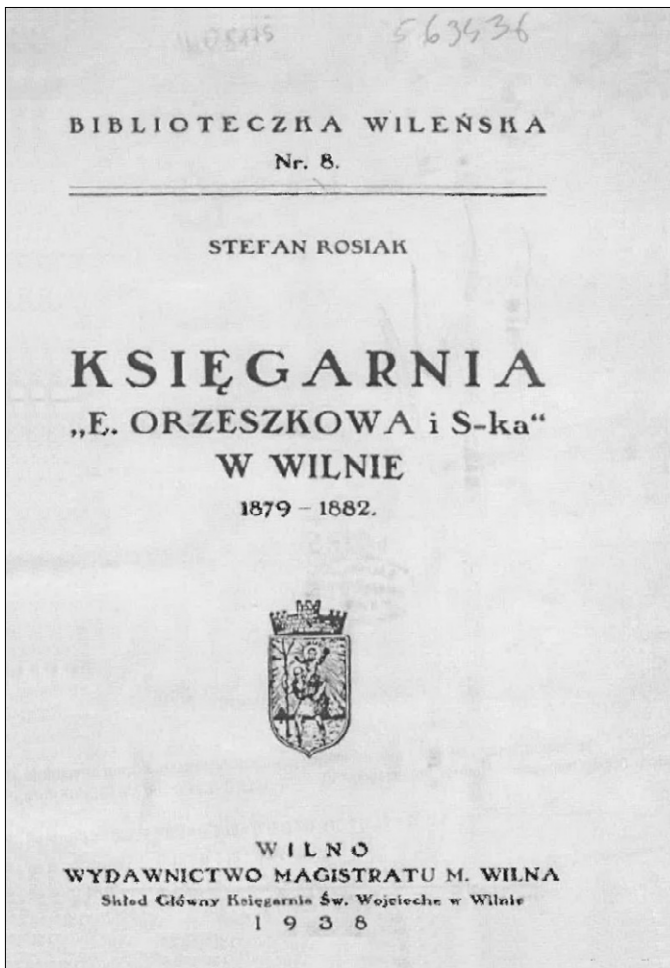
65 S. Rosiak, *Księgarnia „E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka” w Wilnie, 1879–1882*, Wilno 1938, Biblioteczka Wileńska; no. 8.

66 Ibidem, p. 3.

enthusiasm of a holy nature in it. As a tribute from Vilnius for this work of hers, although with a modest sketch of the bookstore's history, we want to honor Orzeszkowa's memory].

Further, the author gives brief biographies of Eliza Orzeszkowa, Wincenty Chelmiński, and Waclaw Makowski and lists the sources on which he based his work (letters of various people who directly or indirectly participated in the bookstore's work, official documents of administrative and judicial authorities, notes in magazines and journals of the era, etc.)⁶⁷.

Title page of the book by Stefan Rosiak *Księgarnia*
"E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka" w Wilnie 1879–1882, Wilno 1938



67 Ibidem, pp. 3–7.

In the first chapter, Rosiak describes the establishment and activities of the bookstore “E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka” in Vilnius. According to him, the main initiator of the establishment of the bookstore was the writer W. Chełmiński, who was employed at the time as an accountant for the Wittgenstein estate in Werki near Vilnius. At Chełmiński’s urging, Orzeszkowa in 1879 purchased the dilapidated bookstore from Stefan Romanowski, along with the concession, and assumed full responsibility for the newly established company “E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka”, which initially also included S. Romanowski and expeditor Aleksandra Moniuszkowa, then W. Chełmiński. After strenuous efforts, permission was obtained from the Russian authorities to trade books in all languages except Jewish and to lend books in all languages except Polish. This was at odds with the founders’ goals, who were precisely concerned with the broadest possible dissemination of Polish books. Nevertheless, they were enthusiastic about setting up the bookstore, which was moved to new premises at 2 Świętojańska St. The bookstore officially opened on September 29, 1879, with W. Makowski as its manager, having previously worked at the Gebethner and Wolff bookstore in Warszawa. Disregarding the ban, the bookstore not only sold but also lent Polish books, which did not escape the attention of the Russian administration, which closely followed its activities. The authorities were also suspicious of the bookstore’s publishing activities. One did not have to wait long for the consequences. On April 23, 1882, the bookstore was closed and sealed on the order of the Governor General of Vilnius. Orzeszkowa and Chełmiński were expelled from Vilnius and placed under police supervision for three years. Makowski remained in Vilnius, doing everything he could to save at least part of the bookstore’s stock. After a search, the unsold books, the content of which did not raise any objections from the searchers, were returned to the company without the right to sell on the spot. After the final liquidation of the bookstore, the publications taken on consignment were returned to the owners, other bookstores acquired the rest, and some books and oleographs by private individuals. The money forgiven from the resale only partially covered the expenses for its equipment⁶⁸.

The second chapter is devoted to the publishing activity of the “E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka” bookstore. The bookstore, overcoming various difficulties, published dozens of books in Polish, including literary and journalistic works by Orzeszkowa herself, Maria Konopnicka, Edward Lubowski, Jan Karłowicz, Piotr Chmielowski, Michał Bałucki, Leopold Mèyet, T.T. Jeż (Teodor Tomasz Miłkowski) and others. He also published the *Kalendarz Wileński na rok 1882* [Vilnius Calendar for 1882], the *Kalendarz Litewski na rok 1882* [Lithuanian Calendar for 1882], and the literary and satirical magazine *Kartki satyryczno-humorystyczne Argus. Zebrał Alfabet* [Argus satirical and humorous cards. Collected

68 Ibidem, pp. 9–37.

by Alphabet], some musical works and photographs with views of Vilnius and its environs. It was intended to publish a newspaper, but it was unrealized⁶⁹.

The third chapter briefly discusses starting a reading room at the bookstore⁷⁰. The epilogue briefly presents the fate of the employees of the liquidated bookstore. After long efforts, Chełmiński, sent from Vilnius to his hometown in Podlachia, was allowed to stay in Warszawa on time, where he could more easily find casual work as a journalist. After finishing his term of exile in 1887, he returned to Vilnius, where he soon died of tuberculosis and was buried in the Rossa cemetery. Orzeszkowa lived permanently in Grodno and was under police surveillance for three years. Makowski, after the liquidation of the bookstore "E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka", took a job at Feliks Zawadzki's bookstore and, in 1883, acquired his bookstore on the same Świętojańska Street only in a different building⁷¹.

Rosiak's book was reviewed in the "Ateneum Wileńskie" pages by Dr. Maria Dunajówna, an assistant at the Department of Polish Literature at the USB. She made some remarks about the book's structure, Chełmiński's and Makowski's contribution to the bookstore's work, the relationship of Orzeszkowa's bookstore to Zawadzki's, etc. At the same time, she noted that these remarks do not diminish the book's value, which is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to the historical literature⁷². Based on this book, Rosiak, who left for Poland in its new borders after the war, earned his doctorate at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń in 1947. The promoter was Professor Ryszard Mienicki⁷³.

The same year, 1938, saw the publication of the ninth item of the "Biblioteczka Wileńska" – a book by the head of the Military Archives in Warsaw, Polish Army infantry major **Bolesław Waligóra** *Walka o Wilno. Okupacja Litwy i Białorusi w 1918–1919 przez Rosję Sowiecką*⁷⁴ [Fight for Vilnius. The occupation of Lithuania and Belarus in 1918–1919 by Soviet Russia]. The book was published in connection with the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Self-Defense of Lithuania and Belarus, which fell in December 1938 and was solemnly celebrated in Vilnius⁷⁵.

The book's author, Waligóra, and his works on military history were well known in Vilnius. In 1936, he participated in the founding of the Scientific Unit

69 Ibidem, pp. 38–112.

70 Ibidem, pp. 113–114.

71 Ibidem, pp. 115–116.

72 M. Dunajówna, rev. S. Rosiak, *Księgarnia „E. Orzeszkowa i S-ka” w Wilnie, 1879–1882, Wilno 1938, Biblioteczka Wileńska, nr 8, „Ateneum Wileńskie” 1938, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 314–317.*

73 K. Śreniawska, *Rosiak Stefan (16 VII 1897 Ozorków – 1 I 1973 Łódź), historyk, archiwista*, [in:] *Słownik historyków polskich*, Warszawa 1994, p. 450; *Rosiak Stefan (1897–1973)*, [in:] *Encyklopedia Ziemi Wileńskiej*. Vol. 1: *Wileński słownik biograficzny...*, p. 336.

74 B. Waligóra, *Walka o Wilno. Okupacja Litwy i Białorusi w 1918–1919 przez Rosję Sowiecką*, Wilno 1938, Biblioteczka Wileńska; no. 9.

75 *XX-lecie Samoobrony Litwy i Białorusi „Ateneum Wileńskie” 1939, vol. 14, no. 1, p. 366.*

of the Military Historical Bureau in Vilnius, and in 1937, he became a member of the newly established Section of Recent History of Division III of the Society of Friends of Sciences in Vilnius⁷⁶.

The book contains an introduction, three parts, which in their order are divided into chapters and subsections, a list of sources, a list of sketches, a list of photographs, and an appendix (a supplement on the numerical status of Polish Military Organization members). In the introduction, B. Waligóra wrote:

W pracy tej chodziło o przedstawienie w zarysie zdarzeń na ziemiach północno-wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1918–1919, a mianowicie: okupacji Białorusi i Litwy przez wojsko Rosji Sowieckiej, próby narzucenia siłą obcego ustroju pod hasłem władzy sowieckiej i dyktatury proletariatu a sprowadzającego się do dyktatury komunistycznej partii oraz przedstawienia się tym dążeniom miejscowej ludności; wreszcie przygotowań Rosji Sowieckiej do ofensywy w głąb Polski i przebiegu operacji wojennych, zakończonych zdobyciem przez Polaków Wilna w dniu 10 kwietnia 1919 r.⁷⁷

[The purpose of this work was to outline the events in the northeastern lands of the Republic of Poland in 1918–1919, namely the occupation of Belarus and Lithuania by Soviet Russia's army, the attempt to impose by force a foreign regime under the banner of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat vs. boiling down to the dictatorship of the Communist Party, and the presentation of these aspirations to the local population; finally, the preparations of Soviet Russia for an offensive deep into Poland and the course of war operations, ending with the capture of Vilnius by the Poles on April 10, 1919].

In the book's first part, he highlights events such as the upheaval or the November Revolution of 1918 in Germany, Russia's launching of an offensive in the West, the occupation of Belarus, and preparation for the occupation of Lithuania and Poland by Soviet Russia, the formation of the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Lithuania, the Communists' efforts to seize power in Vilnius, the formation of the Self-Defense of Lithuania and Belarus and the smashing of the Communists' fighting group by the Self-Defense forces, the battle near Vilnius on January 3–5, 1919, the entry of the Soviet army into Vilnius, the position on the front in January 1919, the stopping of the Soviet Western Front offensive by the Polish army⁷⁸.

76 Z. W. (Zbigniew Wawer), *Waligóra Bolesław Andrzej (9 IX. 1898 Kraków – 1941 London) historyk wojskowości, major*, [in:] *Słownik historyków polskich*, ed. M. Prosińska-Jackl, Warszawa 1994, p. 543; *Pracownia Naukowa Wojskowego Biura Historycznego w Wilnie*, „Ateneum Wileńskie” 1936, vol. 11, p. 802; *Sprawozdanie ze stanu i działalności Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk w Wilnie za rok 1937*, Wilno 1938, pp. 12–13; *Sprawozdanie ze stanu i działalności Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk w Wilnie za rok 1938*, Wilno 1939, pp. 12–13.

77 B. Waligóra, *Walka o Wilno...*, p. 1.

78 *Ibidem*, pp. 1–74.

In the second part, the author writes about the activities of the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Lithuania, the introduction of the Soviet system in Lithuania, and the Communists' fight against political opponents. He also considers the issue of the socialization of land in Lithuania, undertaken by this government, and the peasants' attitude toward the Provisional Workers and Peasants' Government. He also outlines the formation of Communist territorial authorities, the establishment of the Revolutionary War Council of Lithuania, the Communist-led campaign to enlist volunteers for the Red Army, and the reasons for its failure. In this section, he discusses the position on the Western Front in February and March 1919⁷⁹.

In the third part of the book, the author presents the circumstances of the establishment of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania and Belarus (Litbiel), the economic, educational, and cultural reforms announced by the communist government, the organization of the administrative and military authorities, the warfare in March and early April 1919, Kaunas Lithuania's offensive on Vilnius, the communists' hopes for the outbreak of revolution in Western European countries and Poland, the capture of Vilnius by the Polish Army, the arrival of Józef Piłsudski in Vilnius and his announcement of the famous proclamation "Do mieszkańców byłego Wielkiego Księstwa Wileńskiego"⁸⁰ [To the inhabitants of the former Grand Duchy of Vilnius].

The publicist, historian, and head of the Scientific Unit of the Military Historical Bureau in Vilnius, Valerian Charkiewicz, favorably evaluated the book by B. Waligóra. In a review published in the "Ateneum Wileńskie" magazine, he stressed that the main merit of B. Waligóra is bringing to light an accurate analysis of events from autumn 1918 to April 19, 1919. Waligóra presented in his book not only the actions of the Polish army but also the hitherto almost unknown patriotic, social, and armed efforts of the population of the lands occupied by Soviet Russia. In addition, he has outlined in great detail the efforts of the occupiers to introduce their rule on the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This work contains not only a new synthesis but also new source material, hence its great importance, concluded Charkiewicz⁸¹.

B. Waligóra's book was the last printed item of "Biblioteczka Wileńska". Publication of subsequent issues was discontinued due to the outbreak of World War II.

79 Ibidem, pp. 75–214.

80 Ibidem, pp. 215–449.

81 W. Charkiewicz, rev. *Waligóra Bolesław, Walka o Wilno: okupacja Litwy i Białorusi w 1918–1919 przez Rosję Sowiecką*, Wilno: Wydawnictwo Zarządu Miejskiego w Wilnie, 1938, „Ateneum Wileńskie” 1939, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 284–289.

Conclusions

The Magistrate of the City of Vilnius serial publication, “Biblioteczka Wileńska”, was published in 1929–1938; nine items were published. Their authors, except USB professor S. Pigoń and the head of the Military Archives in Warsaw, Maj. B. Waligóra were young historians and graduates of the Faculty of Humanities of Stefan Batory University. The works of their alumni were recommended for publication by USB professors under whose supervision they were written. The best teacher’s, master’s, or doctoral dissertations on various aspects (urban, military, political, cultural, religious) of Vilnius’ history were received. The publishing house thus fulfilled the tasks set for it – it encouraged young scientists to research the history of Vilnius and spread such knowledge in wide circles of society. The works published in “Biblioteczka Wileńska” significantly contributed to the overall scientific output of Vilnius historians in the interwar period.

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