



**Vilnius  
universiteto  
biblioteka**

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# **Creating digital stories: experience of Vilnius University Library**

**Brussels, 2023 11 07**



# Main points

1. About Vilnius University Library (VUL)
2. First digital exhibitions
3. Collaboration with GA&C
4. What's next?





# Central Library



+

# Scholarly Communication and Information Center





## Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka

Jesuit college library

Founded in 1570

Library of state importance

1+1=1 philosophy

Situated in the city Center  
(Central Library)

and

In the student campus (SCI  
Center)

- Manuscripts – more than 347 000 documents and still growing

- Rare books – more than 165 000 items

- Graphics – over 95 000 artworks

The 19th century collection (circa 150 000 items)

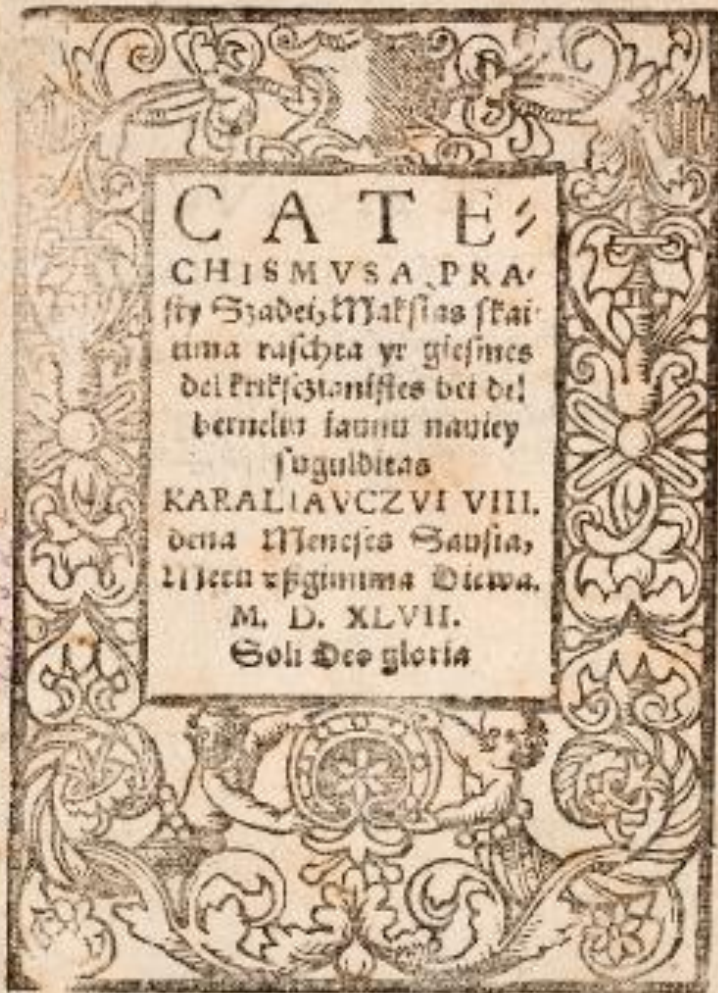
1900-1945 books (over 450 000 items)

Digital collections (20 000 digital objects, ~ 1.2 million pages)



# Some treasures

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The first Lithuanian book (M. Mažvydas. *Catechismus prasty szadei...* Königsberg, 1547)

The first Lithuanian book in GDL (Daukša, Mikalojus. *Katechizmas arba mokslas kiekvienam krikščionii priwalus*. [Vilnius: Akademijos sp.], 1595. [108] p.)

344 incunabula (Valturio, Roberto. *De re militari*. [Verona], 1472)

The oldest manuscript from the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century

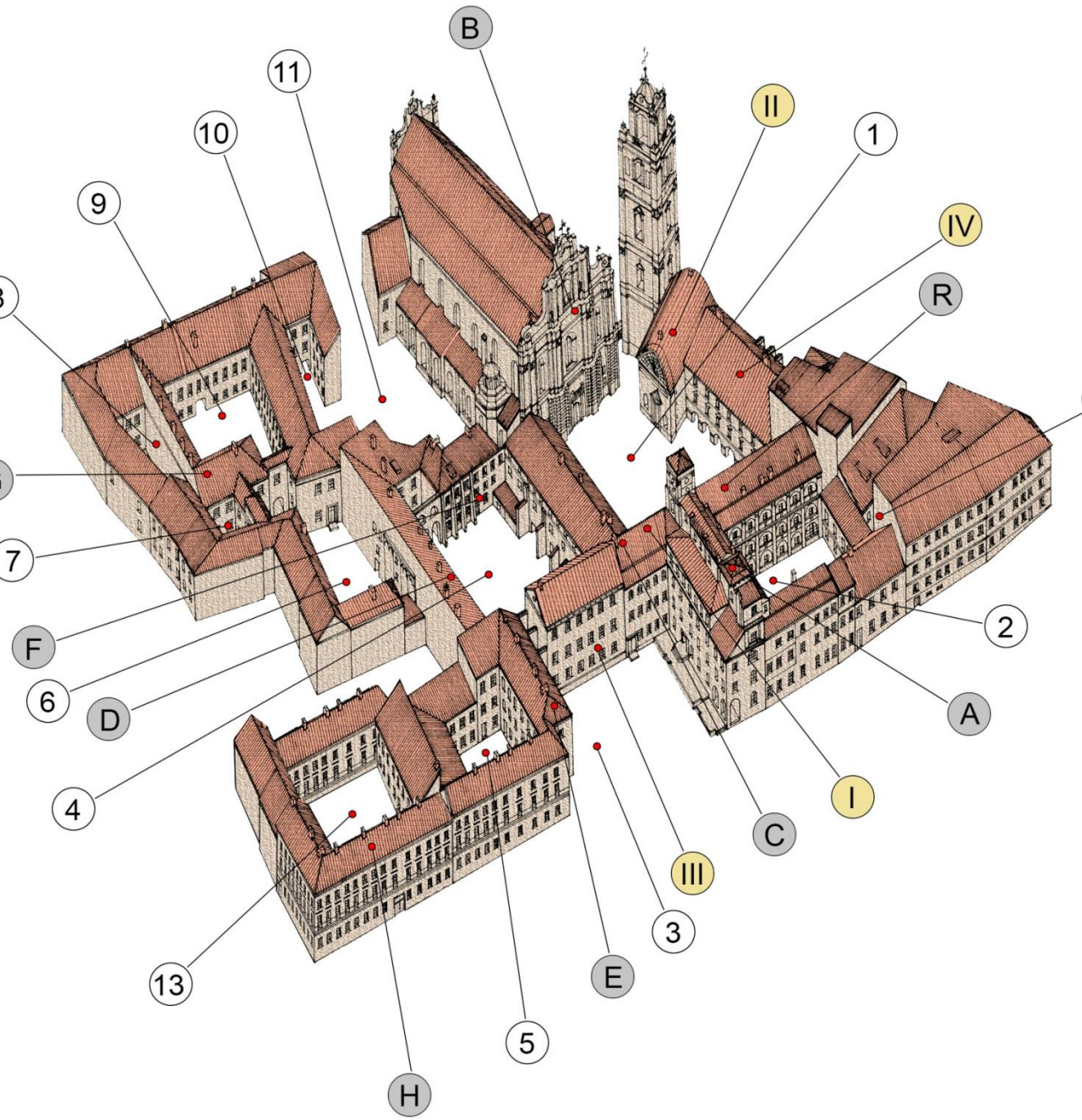
600 court books

Collection of cartography and atlases

Portraits of Radvila family, Vilnius Album

19 positions in UNESCO Memory of the world programme national and regional registers







# Historical halls

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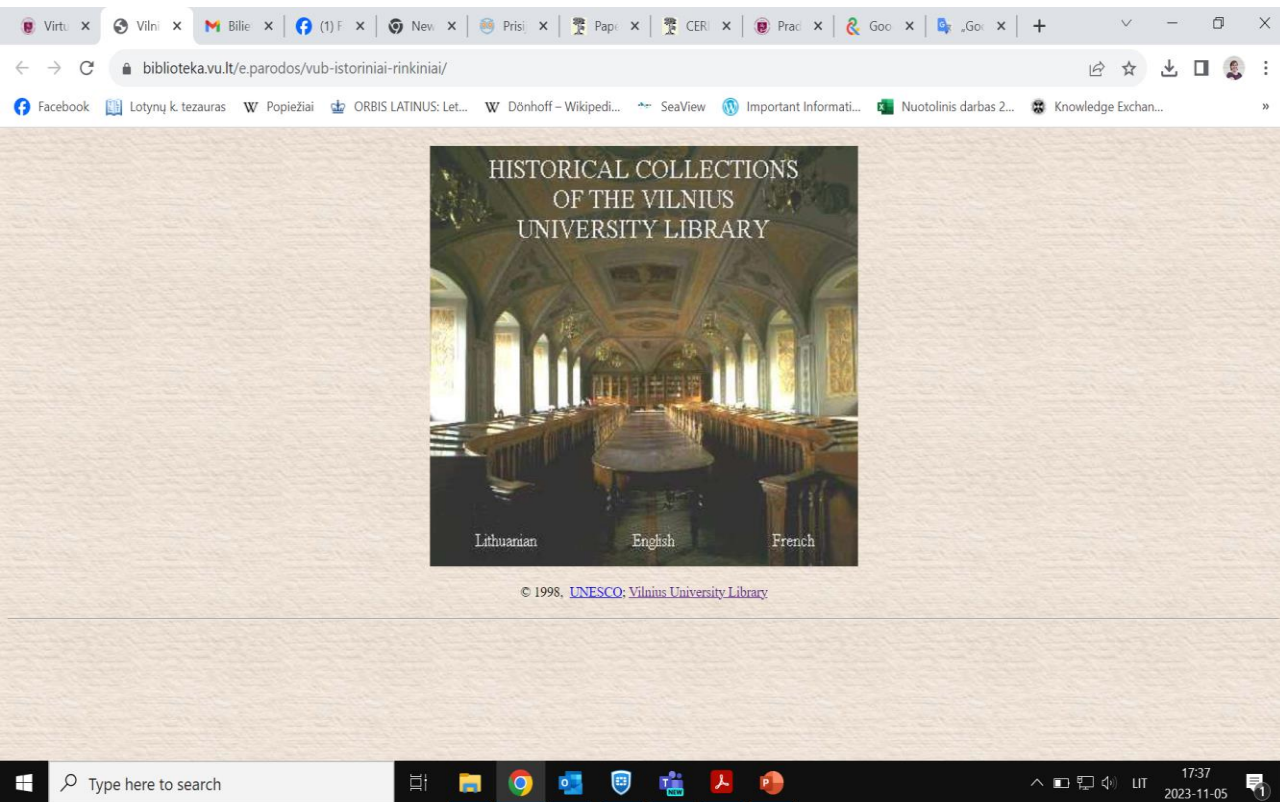
P. Smuglevičius Hall



White Hall

# Virtual exhibitions

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Since 1998

Collaboration with UNESCO, the first CD in Lithuania

8 exhibitions

<https://biblioteka.vu.lt/en/resources/virtual-exhibitions>



# Historical hall + virtual space

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**Catechisms of Martynas  
Mažvydas and Mikalojus Daukša  
in the virtual hall of J. Lelevelis  
(2021 04 01)**

This virtual tour is created on other platforms - Matterport and Google Street View - but in its form and essence of the idea belongs to the field of digital exhibition.

10000 views in 2 years

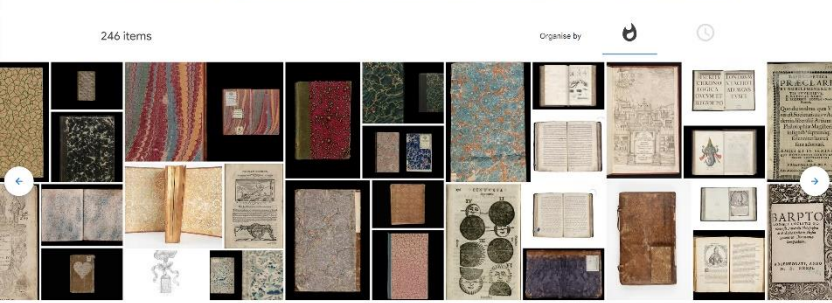
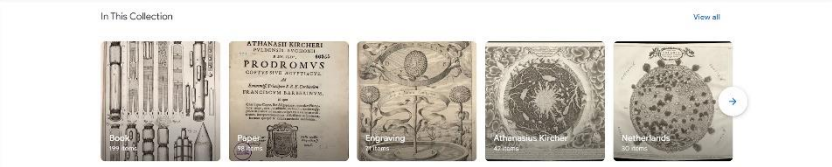
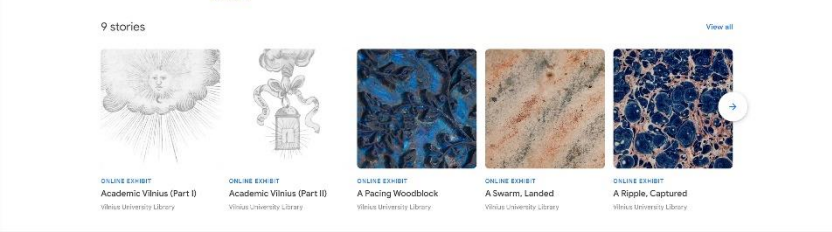


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# VUL in GA&C



Vilnius University Library – the oldest and largest academic library in Lithuania, celebrated its 450th anniversary in 2020. Started with valuable donations of Grand Duke Sigismund Augustus and suffered the fate of Vilnius Benedictine Abbey in mid-17th century, the library currently stores over 5 million documents, dating as early as 13th century. This unique collection of...



*Map of Threads. Pages of Athanasius Kircher's books (December, 2019)*

*Books and Non-Books. 450 years in the treasury of Vilnius University Library (October, 2020)*

*Stories of fancy paper. A series of five stories (September – October, 2021)*

*Academic Vilnius: the thesis culture of the old University (parts I and II) (April, 2023)*

*One story from History of Vilnius (Winter, 2024)*

9 stories, 246 items

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/vilnius-university-library>



9 stories



ONLINE EXHIBIT

Academic Vilnius (Part I)

Vilnius University Library



ONLINE EXHIBIT

Academic Vilnius (Part II)

Vilnius University Library



ONLINE EXHIBIT

A Pacing Woodblock

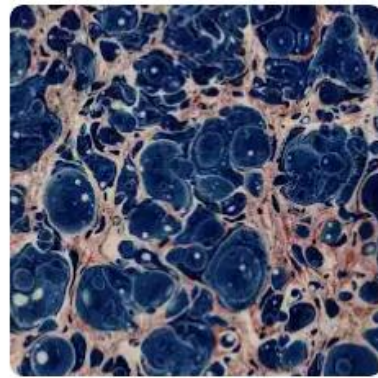
Vilnius University Library



ONLINE EXHIBIT

A Swarm, Landed

Vilnius University Library



ONLINE EXHIBIT

A Ripple, Captured

Vilnius University Library



ONLINE EXHIBIT

A Soft Footprint

Vilnius University Library



ONLINE EXHIBIT

A Golden Garden

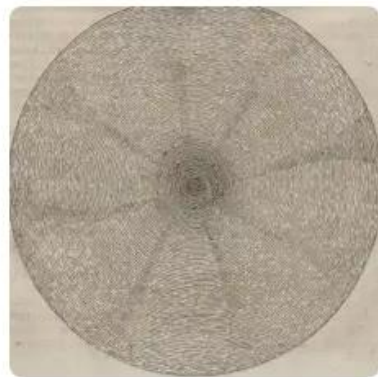
Vilnius University Library



ONLINE EXHIBIT

Books and Non-Books

Vilnius University Library



ONLINE EXHIBIT

Map of Threads

Vilnius University Library

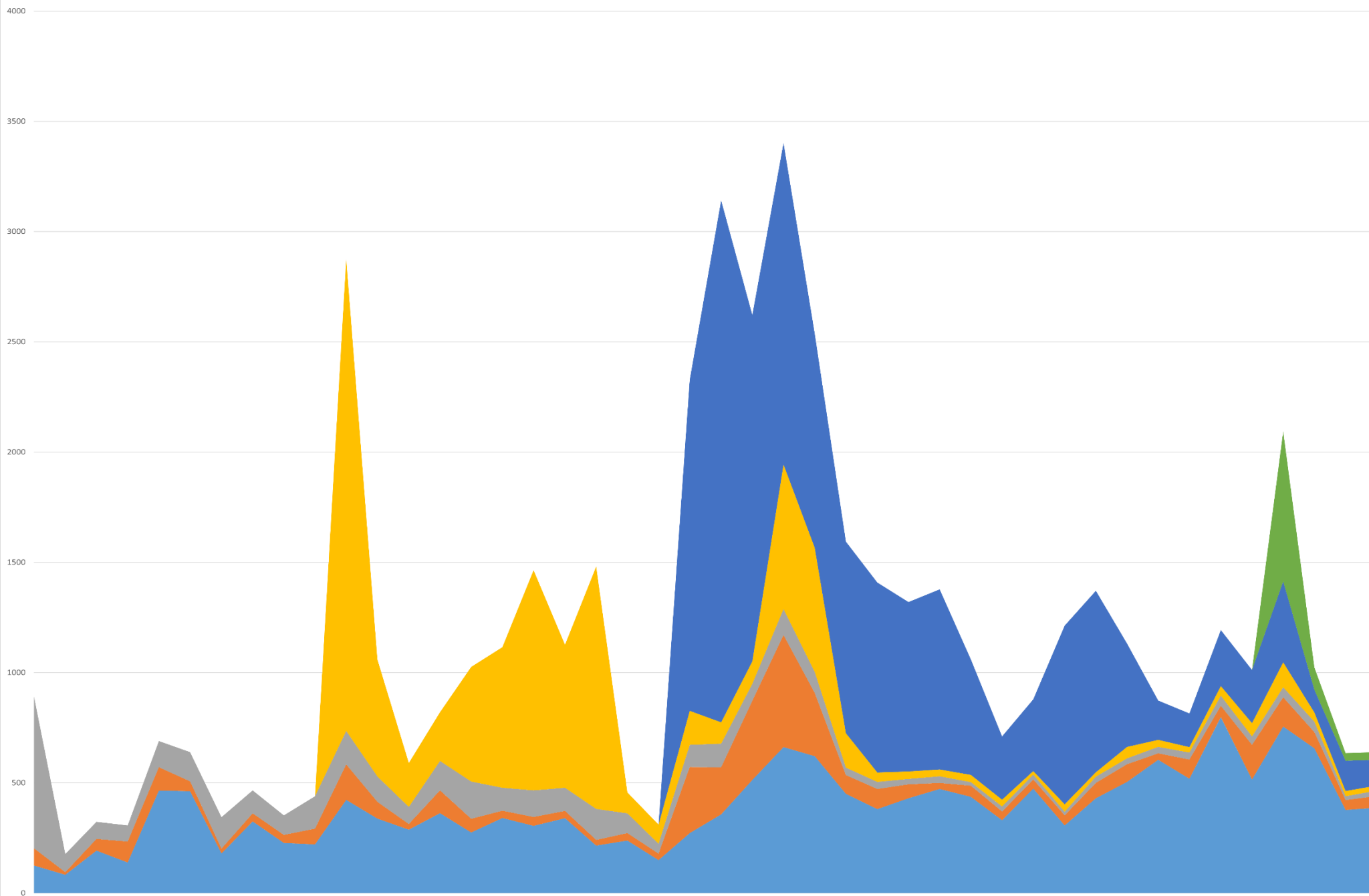
# Viewers (unique visits) by year

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# Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka



Digital objects/Items Starting from 12/2019 | VU Library's profile on Google Arts & Culture | Map of Threads, Pages from Athanasius Kircher's Books Published: 9/12/2019 | Books and Non-Books, 450 Years Among the Treasures of Vilnius University Library Published: 15/10/2020 | Tales of Decorated Paper Published: September-October 2021 | Academic Vilnius, Culture of Theses of the Old University Published: 1/4/2023



A Golden Garden

Brocade Paper



By Vilnius University Library



# Key points

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Idea – concept – finding the best way to express  
Research

Non-academic – popular science / art

Principle of brevity

Selection of objects (links to Digital Collections of VUL)

Connections between objects (telling a story)

Google editorial review (2 stages)

N.B. main language English



# Academic Vilnius (Part I)

Culture of Theses of the Old University



By Vilnius University Library

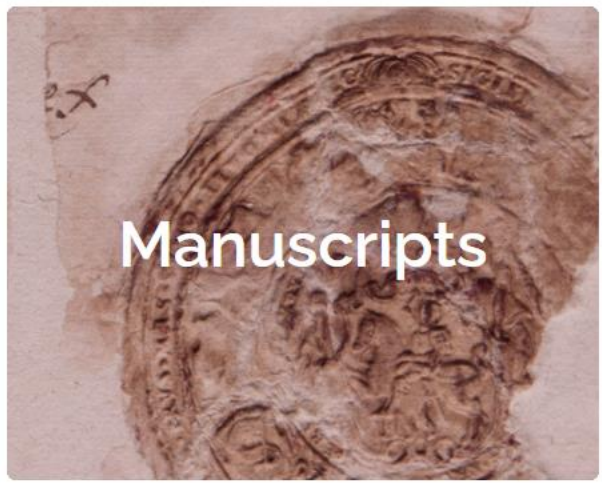


## Research on the dissertations of the old Vilnius University (1579-1773) and creating a database (VUDis)

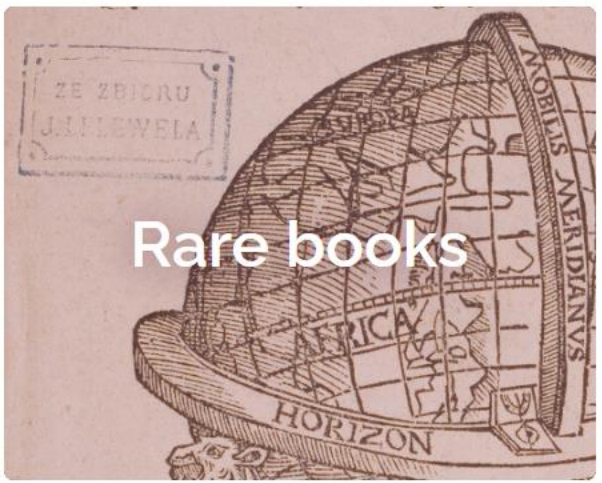
- The aim of the project - to research and present to the public the published theses of old Vilnius University (1579-1773) and form their digital collection.
- more than 60 items were selected, metadata and descriptions were created
- The first theses in 1583, the oldest surviving theses 1585
- Results: 3 scientific articles, digital collection, **virtual exhibition**, conference



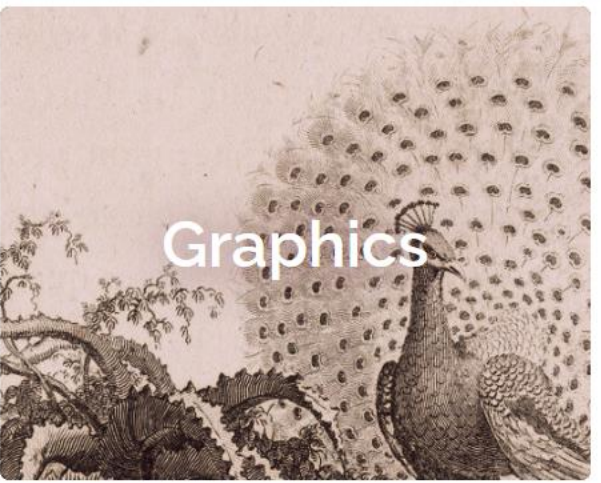




# Manuscripts



# Rare books



# Graphics



# Photography

## Theses of the Old Vilnius University

Theses and other scientific papers that were written at the Jesuit Vilnius University (1579–1773) and intended for a public dispute or for gaining scientific degree.

VIEW COLLECTION

## Uniate Collection

The Church of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's Uniates or Catholics of the Greek Rite was established in 1596 and abolished in 1839.

VIEW COLLECTION









# Challenges

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Physical exhibition / digital collection vs digital story

Time frame of the project

Project team

Ideas

Too much / too little digital content

# Final remarks

Ideas – Always have something prepared

Practise – you only gain experience by doing

Discussions produce the best results

Future plans of VUL

- Searching for new ways / places to promote cultural heritage
- Editor's choice in Digital Collections
- Waiting for digital story dedicated to Vilnius700 to be published
- Generating ideas for 2025







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# Contacts

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