The Postil Time Machine: "God help those who have begun writing down these books in Lithuanian" (BP1591 II 77,2–4)

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The *Postil Time Machine* (PosTiMe, 2021–2025) is a novel research project on knowledge transfer in 16th-century Europe; specifically, on the situation in Lithuania Minor, the Lithuanian-speaking part of the Duchy of Prussia. It aims to reveal the intratextual and intertextual relationships of the Old Lithuanian Lutheran postils – the *Wolfenbüttel Postil* (WP1573/1574) and the *Bretkūnas Postil* (BP1591) – and their relationship to their Latin and German translation sources and models. These postils are collections of sermons for the Sundays and feast days of the liturgical year (Gelumbeckaitė 2017). Early Modern postils as "the applied distillation of Christianity delivered on a regular basis by the clergy to the laity" (Frymire 2010: 443) were broadly influential texts offering references not only to Biblical texts and the Church Fathers, but also the classics, theologians and historians, bridging scholarly and popular culture. The main objective of PosTiMe is the genetic and historical linguistic study of these Lithuanian texts and their presentation in a digital *time machine*-type publication (cf. Kaplan 2013).

Previous work on Old Lithuanian in the Digital Humanities was focused mainly on digitizing Old Lithuanian texts and making them searchable (e.g. in TITUS and the *Senieji raštai* database). More recently, linguistically deeply annotated corpora have been created (SLIEKKAS, CorDon). The *Postil Time Machine* follows this corpus-linguistic tack while contributing new data, a systematic philological edition of its texts, and a visualization of inter-textual relations.

Specifically, this interdisciplinary linguistic-philological and technological project consists of the following tasks: (1) the identification of the construction principles and translation strategies of the Lithuanian texts, (2) the study of the textual relations of the postils both with the translation sources and among each other, (3) the detection of intra- and intertextual references as well as the alignment with the so-identified originals using machine translation methods (which necessitates the creation of a language technologies stack for Old Lithuanian), (4) the linguistic-historical interpretation of their contents in the form of a linguistically deeply annotated reference corpus, (5) the modeling as a graph (and the development of a Linked Open Data interface in RDFa based on and connected to the TEI documents, cf. Tittel et al. 2018 and Chiarcos & Ionov 2018) as well as the representation of these structures as interactive visualizations, and (6) the implementation of a platform to make the research results searchable, traversable and generally accessible. The scholarly digital edition of the postils is carried out in accordance with the principles formulated by Patrick Sahle, who stresses that "a digitised edition is not a digital edition" (Sahle 2016: 33).

Literature

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Databases and Corpora

CorDon, https://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/cordon/menu/eng/start.html

Senieji raštai, http://seniejirastai.lki.lt/home.php

SLIEKKAS, https://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/sliekkas/index.html

TITUS, https://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/indexd.htm