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A. I. HRUŠA

**TRIUMPH AND NON-REALISED POTENTIAL OF WRITTEN WORD:
LITHUANIAN METRICA IN THE 15th – FIRST HALF OF THE 16th CENTURY**

Yakub Kolas Central Science Library of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus

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In this contribution I would like to summarize the results of researches on the following key questions of studying Lithuanian Metrica: the title, general notion, constitution of records of Metrica Books, the role of Metrica among various archive complexes of Grand Duke of Lithuania, the degree of authenticity of Metrica documents, status of Metrica Books, form of records, language of documents, the stage of copies creation, the form of storage of Metrica Books, principles of complete of Metrica written materials, the first reference to Metrica Books, functions of this Books.

1. The term «Metrica» as the title of this collection of written materials is late. The original title of Metrica Books is «Sovereign books», «books of his royal favor», «Chancery books», «books of Chancery of his royal favor» [1, p. 92–103]. The term «Metrica» to describe this collection of manuscripts was first mentioned in the sources for the year of 1528 [1, p. 93]. Used sporadically in the first half of the 16th century, it became gradually reserved for Books of Metrica in the second half of this century. There are grounds to believe that such a name for Metrica Books is related to the activities of one of the most prominent public and political figures of Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL), the first Vice-Chancellor of GDL (1566–1579), then Chancellor (1579–1587) Astafej Valovič. In the strict sense Metrica is a collection of manuscripts, deposited as a result home and foreign policy activities of the Chancery and its officials [on the various meanings of the term «Metrica»: 2, p. 8–9; 3, p. 57–58, 81–83]. Namely this material will be discussed below.

2. The records that were made into Metrica Books differ by types of documents which fixed these records. The main constitution of records of Metrica Books is as such. These are the records of the documents with the help of which Grand Duke of Lithuania sanctioned various property, social and other rights, different benefits, assignments to positions, etc., records of letters about grant (addressed to local authorities), records of documents related to judicial activities of the authorities; records of orders to officials and individuals; records of outgiving by Sovereign the items of movable property, records of diplomatic documents, records nobility requests addressed to Grand Duke and Grand Duke's replies, records of registration of state lands, etc.

3. The materials of Metrica should be strongly differentiated from other variety of the written materials stored at the helm of the Sovereign. The documents came to his archive in different way. The archive stored the documents issued by the monarch to different social groups, the documents and letters received by him in the result of diplomatic correspondence, conclusion of international treatments, registration of state and private ownership, accountability of grand-duke executives, the documents transferred to Grand Duke with vacant or acquired in a different way ownerships, etc. There was another way of formation of the Sovereign's archive materials – at the expense of copies and annotations of outgoing from central administration documents, records of various decisions of this administration. Namely these copies, annotations and records are represented in the materials of Metrica.

Different ways of entering of documents to the grand-duke archive formed different complexes (in modern language, however understanding the relativeness of the term – funds) within the given archive

[about the necessity to distinguish between different complexes of the given archive: 2, p. 9; 3, p. 82; 4, p. 88]. These complexes were stores in different places. The privileges of Grand Duke to different social groups, diplomatic acts, various registration materials, accounts, documents on the acquired by Sovereign ownerships were stored in the treasury. The book concentrated in a treasury had the same name – «treasury books». We should reject the widespread opinion according to which the completed books of Metrica were also stored in the treasury. Actually they kept stored at the Chancery. Hence, there is one of their names – «Sovereign Chancery Books», «Chancery Books» and others (In the 17th century old, already not used Metrica Books were taken to the treasury – after they had been rewritten at the end of the 16th century, at all this, it is characteristics, that new books-copies remained in the Chancery, to be more accurate in two Chanceries) [1, p. 28–32].

Different places of storing separate complexes of archive documents can evidence about their different purposes.

4. The degree of authenticity is a fundamental feature differentiating manuscripts. Depending on it the documents are divided into primary and secondary [about this classification, see: 5, p. 84]. A primary document has independent legal force. In other words, it is a full-fledged from a legal point of view. This is, for example, a document as a single piece of parchment or paper having the elements of authenticity (signature/signatures, seal/seals, etc.). A copy of this document with respect to its original is a secondary document. This document is secondary, not only when it did not preserve the elements of authenticity, but even in that case, if the document was provided with them, however, at the same time, its status was defined as a copy (there are cases where a copy was authenticate by a seal).

As part of books that were kept at the helm of the officials and institutions there were primary documents as well. The fact that they were written into these books gave them legal force. Such documents were referred to, from them extracts (*vypisy*, *vidimusy*) were made. An extract had the same legal force with the document written into the book. To such documents and extracts, for example, belonged notary documents. Primary records were often made in the third person. They had no indication that a seal was attached to the document, but they might contain a message that on the basis of the record an extract was issued.

The practice of issuing of secondary documents says about a special treatment of the document, the safety of which required additional measures, in the given case – creation a copy. Such a form of primary documents as a record into the book reflects a new stage in functioning of a legal document. It was expressed in the appearance of a new way of their authentication (inclusion in the book). Legal force of these books lay in the fact that the book was stored at the helm of an official, an institution. The inclusion of a document into the book goes back to the practice of oral announcement and statements made before the local community or an official, and their acceptance by the given community or the said person in the same form.

Metrica Books contained both secondary and primary documents (we point out this fact, because in papers and works it is often said that the copies of outgoing documents were written in Metrica Books [6, p. 14]). To primary documents of Metrica Books a group of records made «for memory» should be referred. The records «for memory» or as they are sometimes called – «for the coming time» most often combined in Metrica Books information on unaccomplished lawsuits: about complaints of the party, about statements of the one party that the other party did not appear in the court, about suspension of judgment. They also included the records containing the verdicts [7, p. 110–111, 174; 8, p. 115–118].

As already has be mentioned, secondary documents of Metrica were presented by the outgoing documents and letters.

5. The presence in Metrica Books primary documents gave these books an official status. This – general – status of books, to a certain extent, made official secondary documents of the said books as well – copies of the outgoing documents. However, storing them at the helm of an official or an institution gave this status to books most of all. Secondary documents vary in form: it is full (or nearly full) copies of documents. But it is also a brief summary of documents (registration records). In the form of annotations are the records of the oldest of the remaining of Metrica Books – «Book of Kazimir' givings» (1440–1475/1483), separate records of other books. To determine the regularity of use of this or that language in the records of Metrica Books, it is necessary to take into account whether these records are primary

or secondary. A secondary document was recorded in the language in which the original document was written. In the first half of the 16th century it was mostly Ruthenian, to a lesser extent, Latin. Primary documents – records of a judicial nature, for a long time were written into Metrica Book only in Ruthenian.

6. In the case of issuing secondary documents the key question was whether the work on the making was included in the same «production stage» with the making of the original or in different «production stages». A scribe could make a copy of a document or make its annotation in the process of issuing the document. But he could do it already after issuing a document after some time (on the initiative of the recipient or by request of the authorities) [6, p. 14]. Copies regularly made in the process of issuing a document, formed the current Metrica Books. The copies that were written into Metrica Books after the document was ready made after some time made book-collections. Such collections appeared at the initiative of the authorities – while checking the rights of document holders. The availability of all of these books was a sign of ever-increasing role of a document in regulation of legal relations.

7. In terms of special treatment to documents requiring taking additional measures to their storage – through creation of copies, as well as to authenticate the document, it does not always require binding the sheets and folded sheets with the records into the book. These sheets and folded sheets may be collected in bundles (later called *fascykuly*). Probably, such bundles were originally called «books». With this word the written materials intended for long-term storage, as well as the form of storage of the given materials, other than scrolls were defined [9, p. 135–148; 10, p. 78–79, 82; 11, p. 40; 12, p. 19–20]. But the same name had the books with typical modern attributes – sewn into the block folded sheets protected with hard covers.

The change of the forms of storage of records has substantial significance from the point of view of development of legal writing. The appearance of a book in a modern sense of this word says about a new level of use and storage of documents. The records gathered in one block were located in one place. The bound folded sheets prevented from losing of separate records. Hard covers of books provided a better preservation of records, especially when they were intensively used. Therefore, the use of books to write the documents into them can evidence, firstly, about a mass character of issuing legal documents, secondly, about increasing intensity of their use, thirdly, about a search of the most optimal options to store them.

The oldest of the remaining Metrica Books is «Book of Kazimir' givings» consists of the separate records and groups of records, completed in accordance with different principles: the place and the time of issuing documents and the persons who took control over the issuing of documents, the clerk who drew up the documents; the place of issuing documents, the persons who gave an order about issuing documents or the persons who controlled their issue, etc. [the latest research: 13]. Most of the records of the book are represented in the form of annotations. These are separate records and groups of records which did not keep to the chronological order. Most probably all of them (in the form of copies or annotations) were initially stored in separate sheets-bundles. Thus, they did not represent books in modern understanding of the given word. In the 70s or the 80s of the 15th century the text of the given records was re-written and probably, processes, as well. The re-writing was carried out rather by separate sheets than separate records. There was no definite order of storing and rewriting of sheets. This became a cause of chronological disorder of the records in the book. The materials re-written in the 70s or the 80s of the 15th centuries were not bound immediately.

Evidently, the current materials for the 80s of the 15th century were stored in bundles for some time – the first decade of the 16th century, which in future were introduced to Metrica Books 4 (1479–1490), 5 (1492–1506), 6 (1492–1506), 7 (1506–1539), 8 (1506–1514). The material of these books was bound in the second-the third decade of the 16th century. Exactly at the same time, more or less modern binding of current written materials started [1, p. 114].

8. Any written material is stored for use. In this case, efficient search of necessary materials is important, especially in the conditions of continuous accumulation of these materials and increasing activity of their use. To provide real-time search of materials data, certain principles of its complete should be used. They can be completed by the type of documents (each specific book contains only legal documents, or only grant documents, etc.), in chronological order of their issuing, according to

the place of issuing, the clerk who drew up the documents, the person who gave the order for their issuing, controlled this issuing; the region to which the grant referred etc. In books in the process of complete of written materials multiple principles were used. A separately taken book could be completed in the following way: it could contain a collection of documents of one type (for example, court letters) placed in chronological order. The sequence of use of these principles increases in proportion of replenishment of written materials, intensity of their use. The application of these or those principles of completion also depended on fulfillment by the staff of the chancery of these or those kinds of activities, their specificity.

The problem of application of principle of complete of Metrica Books depending on the type of documents in modern historiography is one of the most hotly debated. The most valuable are the opinions of those scholars who are experts in this issue. N. G. Berežkov from the study of early Metrica Books (up to 1522) came to the conclusion that from the very beginning keeping the books, as well as in subsequent time, they were completed depending on the type of the documents. The use of this principle resulted in creation of the books of separate types: books of givings and judicial affairs, books of rent, account books, legation books. Keeping of current books of these types began in the 80s in the 15th century [7, p. 96]. From 1506 books of givings and court books were singled out into separate books. K. Pietkiewicz objected to the opinion of N. G. Berežkov. According to him, only when A. M. Haštold took the position of Chancellor Metrica Books separate types of documents began [14, p. 31–35; 15, p. 17–20]. I. Valikonytė also expressed doubts about the validity of the conclusions of N. G. Berežkov. However, at the same time, she objected to the opinion of his opponents, according to which keeping of books by separate types of documents started only in the second half of the 16th century. I. Valikonytė believes that early books were characterized by type of diversity of documents included into them. However at the same time there was a tendency to type uniformity. In her view, in this case one can speak of «organized and systematized diversity» [16, p. 104–111].

We find quite reasonable the conclusion of N. G. Berežkov that from the 80 of 15th century there were kept separate books of givings and court books were separated into separated books. However, admitting these conclusions reasonable, we have one limitation. The written materials accumulated over the period of time from the 70s or the 80s of the 15th century to the first decade of the 16th century were not promptly bound; the process of creation of books stopped at the stage of selection of folded sheets and letters with one-type documents written into them. The most explicitly ready selections are selected in the constitution of Metrica 8.

The study of Metrica Books for the 20–40s years of the 16th century showed that many of them had quite a homogeneous constitution. The peculiarities of the court books of the 30–40s of the 15th century was inclusion into them the documents of certain sub-types having no mass character. Some of the books were named under the main type of the document, included into their structure – «Court books» [1, p. 102–103].

9. During the reign of Grand Duke Vitaūt the traces of existence of the books were not found. Perhaps they did not exist at all [17, p. 137–138; 18, p. 154]. «Book of Kazimir' givings» remained a record on the first years reign of Kazimir. The date – 1440 – could be regarded as the date of the beginning of keeping of Metrica Book. In fact, the question about when Metrica was first referenced to is complicated. Its solution depends on the answer to the question if it is possible to consider a bundle of sheets and folded sheets (not embedded in the cover) as Metrica Books. From all appearances, namely in this form were originally stored the records included in future into the most oldest of the remaining Metrica Books – «Book of Kazimir' givings» (1440–1475/1483). To be more precise from the point of view of the form of storing of written materials and to admit only stitched folded sheets and sheets, protected by hard covers as Metrica Books, than the beginning of keeping of Metrica Books should be moved to 70–100 years closer to our time – to the second-third decades of the 16th century. If the bound materials are thought only as a «perfect» but also not obligatory form of medieval register, we tend to consider books the bundles of written materials designed for long term storage as well. If they can be regarded as books too, then we should recognize that the moment of keeping Metrica Book when copying the documents on sheets, designed to be stored for a long time started to actualize. Such copying was carried out from 1440.

10. The Metrica is often called the GDL's state archive. This definition is not exact (because apart from Metrica there existed other archival complexes, stored, for example, in treasury) and too general. It does not reflect a complex specificity of these written materials.

An overview of the types of use of Metrica convinces us that it had a multifunctional nature. But it also appears that its various functions did not immerge simultaneously. What was the original purpose of Metrica Books? This question is crucial. After all, namely this purpose has actually given them life. As a conditional boundary, to which we determine the period of performance by Metrica its primary functions, we chose the 30s of the 16th century. Namely from this time, changes in the activity of use of Metrica Books could be observed.

«Book of Kazimir' givings» has its own particular characteristics. As N.G. Berežkov found out, a considerable amount of its records were made during the first 16 years of the reign of Kazimir – to 1440–1455 [7, p. 77]. In the 40s of the 15th century Kazimir had to deal with the resolving of a serious internal crisis which led to the abruption from the state a number of areas: Smolensk, Žomojt' etc. Kazimir managed to return them to the previous lap. One of the means of engaging local elites, support and reward of these elites for their loyalty was mass bestowing them with estates. So the results of this generosity were reflected in the «Book of Kazimir' givings». These records collected together, stored in one place, were necessary for Kazimir, apparently in order to have written evidence of his generosity, to be a tool to enhance the memory of the monarch for the grants he had made.

To clarify the original functions of the other Metrica Books a differentiated approach to different types of its records is necessary. First, consider the use of the following types of records: 1) records of privileges authorizing various property, social and other rights, various benefits, nominations, etc., record of letters on grants (addressed to local authorities), 2) records of the documents related to judicial activities of the authorities, and 3) records of orders to officials and private individuals.

To bring to light the original purpose of these types of records, it is necessary to have an idea of whether those records are primary or secondary. Most of these records are secondary documents. Reveal, firstly, who was the recipient of the original documents, the copies of which were recorded to Books of Metrica, secondly, when the scribe made copies of the documents: in the process of issuance of the documents or after they were issued. The recipient of the originals of these documents were the subjects of Grand Duke, not Grand Duke, Sovereign did not leave the originals of these documents with him. The scribe made copies of the documents in the process of issuing of the documents.

With this in mind, let's find out whose and what interests should the given materials of Metrica serve. In this matter there are two possible answers. Issuing and storage of these materials served primarily the interests of the grand-duke power, controlling the costs of the land fund, income to the treasury and household goods costs, types and stages of the judicial process that led this power. Production and storage of these materials was due primarily needs of recipients – subjects for which these materials were the means of storing information about the award, conflict resolution, a reserve fund for the restoration of lost documents.

Let us check the first assumption. A big mass of copies of grant documents for land, peasants, etc., containing in Metrica Books really gives an impression that Sovereign carefully kept a record of the expenditures on land fund. In fact, such an inventory count was never performed. This is evidenced, in particular, by the following fact. If Grand Duke kept control of the expenditures and income data from Metrica Books documents, all issued by Sovereign's grants would have been introduced to these books. However, this was never practiced, and as archival materials show, a large number of outgoing documents were not copied into Metrica Books. According to estimates of K. Pietkiewicz of all acts of Grand Duke Alexander, the information on which is known to him, in the remained Metrica Books about 44 % of the documents is missing. On the basis of this data, the researcher suggests that this half of the documents was either not written into the books, or half of Metrica Books was not preserved to the present day. The truth, according to K. Pietkiewicz, should be sought in the middle. In his opinion, the Chancery copied only part of documents issued in it [19, p. 71–72; 14, p. 37–42].

From some of the reports it follows the records of Metrica Books serve as a means to strengthen judicial acts. However, not all court documents, as well as the privileges and letters of grants, were introduced into Metrica Books.

Fundamental importance, when checking the assumption that the production and storage of the given materials of Metrica served the interests of the recipients for whom the materials were means of storing information on grant, conflict resolution, a reserve fund for the restoration of lost documents, is the contents of the record made by a clerk in one of the act books. This book does not really belong to Metrica Books (although it has been preserved in the same complex with Metrica Books). This book was created as a result of judicial activities of judges nominated by Grand Duke outside the Chancery. But it, like other books, reflecting the activities of the grand-duke judges was an analogue of Metrica Books. That's what the record says: «Who gave *zapisnoje* to scribe, the court case is written» (*zapisnoje* is payment for the record)» [20, p. 23]. According to this record only those documents were written into the book, the introduction of which into this book has been paid (*zapisnoje* is payment for the record.). It follows herefrom, that the record of the document into the book was voluntary. Based on the content of this record, one can assume only those documents were written into Metrica Books which rather the recipient thought it was necessary to record, than an official. And this concerned, from all appearances, not only legal documents, but also the documents related to grad-duke grants.

Secondary records of privileges authorizing various property, social and other rights, various benefits, nominations, etc., records of letters about grant, records of documents related to judicial activities of authorities are primarily *a variety of private archive of subjects* of Grand Duke. One can draw a parallel between the place of storage of documents in Metrica Books and storage of original documents by individuals – in Vilna. The choice of Vilna, in addition to such an advantage, as stone and brick buildings, was also stipulated by its political status and significance. The Sovereign stayed in this place more often and for longer than in other towns of GDL. Namely in this place Grand Duke made his verdicts on legal proceedings, confirmed grants – his own and his predecessors, private transactions. As a center of public life Vilna was the most suitable town for centering in it legal documents for practical use (at the highest level into the bargain). However, such an archive, as Metrica Books for subjects was *an additional, optional archive*. And Grand Duke often did not think it necessary to use the documents of the book as a source of legal information.

Search for the documents in Metrica Books was seldom carried out, as well as the restoration of their texts in the books. The documents lost due to various reasons were recovered by evidence of local authorities, members of Council of Lords. To confirm the existence of the documents references to an evidence of good people that the lost documents really existed was sometimes enough. If it was about lost documents, in some cases, Grand Duke could appoint an investigation of whether or not the petitioner owned these of those lands, etc. However, in most cases the evidence of the petitioner was sufficient, that this or that document ever existed, or providing the remains of this document. In any case, in the sources there are no indications of any additional evidences. Sometimes, to confirm the existence of documents, Grand Duke could turn for help to the Chancery – to clerks or Chancellor. The main reason to issue, in particular, new documents was length of ownership of the petitioner.

At first glance, the appearance of Metrica Books had to reflect a significant degree of the needs of address to their content, if not the absence of some of the critical elements of the auxiliary apparatus of these books. Metrica Books of the 40s of the 15th – the first half of the 16th centuries as well as the consequent period with few exceptions, *had neither a table of contents nor headers*, not to mention any indexes. Without them, quick and even a successful search for the necessary records in the books *is greatly reduced*.

The most frequent sphere of Metrica Books were used was is diplomacy. The dynamism and versatility of diplomatic relations, the technical complexity of the procedures which regulated them, led to the need to copy not only outgoing but also incoming diplomatic documents, the latter to be used in daily practice [about recorded in Metrica Books incoming diplomatic documents, see 10, p. 64–84; 6, p. 21–23].

It is difficult to say something about intensity of using the records of donations by Sovereign of movables, records of registration of state dispossess, etc. The information about their use has not been preserved.

Accounting of simultaneously the forms of storing records (books, binders), the principles of complete of materials in them, and the structure of Metrica Books gives us an idea of the dynamics and the extent

of their use. From the 1470s or 1480s the records stored from 1440s (partly from 1430s) were re-written on separate sheets. From 1480s outgoing documents were regularly copied into the folded sheets. Folder sheets were completed by the type the documents belonged to and in chronological order of their issuing. If a table of contents, headers were not available the application of these principles should facilitate search of the relevant documents. From 1506 the documents in folded sheets were distributed into groups, depending on the place of their issuing [16, p. 99], and from the third decade of this century, not only in books of judicial affairs, but also in books of inscriptions to the indication of the place of issuing of documents they became to add information about which of the clerks made the given a documents. They started to precede these groups of documents with special headers. That is, if it was necessary to find a particular document, then they remembered where it was and which clerk issued it. In the second and third decades of the 16th century they started timely to bind books. All this testifies to the increasing activity of use of Metrica Books. However, absence of most of these tables of contents and headers indicate in general the low level of this use.

There is good reason to believe that the secondary records of the three first mentioned types of documents of Metrica Books, originals of which were not addressed to Grand Duke, were not completely identified with those which could be used: subjects – to ground their rights, the authorities – to make decisions. Metrica was not designed for regular mass addressing to it by subjects. The clerks of Chancery also did not abuse their use. In practical terms this archive was of secondary importance. Metrica Books had the same value for the nascent bureaucracy – Chancery clerks and scribes. One of the main sources of legal information was original documents.

A clear line takes shape when the attitude to Metrica Books changes, however not to all of them, but only to court books. It's the 30s of the 16th century. Since that time, more and more frequently compared to the previous period, they start to write primary documents in Metrica Books – judicial documents, fixing the information about incomplete and complete lawsuits. The books with these primary records became to gain independent legal force.

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A. И. ГРУША

ТОРЖЕСТВО И НЕРЕАЛИЗОВАННЫЙ ПОТЕНЦИАЛ ПИСЬМЕННОГО СЛОВА: ЛИТОВСКАЯ МЕТРИКА В XV – ПЕРВОЙ ПОЛОВИНЕ XVI В.

Резюме

Рассмотрены следующие вопросы истории Литовской метрики: название, общее понятие, состав записей книг Метрики, место Метрики среди различных архивных комплексов великого князя литовского, степень аутентичности документов Метрики, статус книг, форма записей, язык документов, этап создания копий, форма хранения книг Метрики, принципы комплектования письменных материалов Метрики, время появления книг Метрики, функции этих книг.