BOOK REVIEWS

Lietuvos Metrika, knyga Nr. 1 (1380-1584) / Užrašymų knyga 1

Parengė A. Baliulis ir R. Firkovičius [Lithuanian Metrica, Book No. 1 (1380-1584) / Book of Inscriptions 1. Edit. by A. Baliulis and R. Firkovičius]. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 1998. Pp. 208. ISBN 5-420-01428-9

Lietuvos Metrika, knyga Nr. 25 (1387-1546) / Užrašymų knyga 25

Parengė D. Antanavičius ir A. Baliulis [Lithuanian Metrica, Book No. 25 (1387-1546) / Book of Inscriptions 25. Edit. by D. Antanavičius and A. Baliulis]. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, 1998. Pp. xxii+462. ISBN 5-420-01425-4

Some progress can be observed in the publication of the *Lithuanian Metrica*, one of the most significant historical sources of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Two volumes, the First and the Twenty-Fifth Books of Inscriptions, prepared for publication in the Department of Palaeography by Algirdas Baliulis, Darius Antanavičius and Romualdas Firkovičius, were issued in 1998. One more book - the Fourth Book of Judicial Affairs - was published by scholars of the University of Vilnius this year.

The First Book of Inscriptions contains an inventory of documents dating from 1380 to 1548 which were kept in the archive of the GDL in the second half of the sixteenth century. They comprise 698 items, written in Polish. For unknown reasons these documents remained in the grand-ducal chancery - possibly they had not even been handed to their addressees, or maybe they were technically inappropriate rough copies of the originals which were left in the chancery. For a long time these acts and documents were kept in the bags together with other LM books. In the sixteenth century summaries of the contents of these items were compiled in a separate book. The originals themselves seem to have disappeared in the late sixteenth century. The copies of some acts in this book are found in other LM books (that fact is not indicated by the publishers in greater detail). It must be noticed that with regard to its contents the Second LM Book is

treated as a copy of the First Book; the copy must have been made after the Union of Lublin between Lithuania and Poland in 1569. The LM book, bearing no. 1, was registered in the middle of the eighteenth century, and finally this numeration was firmly established in the first half of the nineteenth century, when the archives of the annexed GDL were rearranged in the Senate of the Russian Empire.

The Twenty-Fifth Book of Inscriptions is a collection of documents taken from a number of sources: it consists of the acts recorded in other LM books, copies of charters, granted by the Grand Duke to the nobility and gentry and of some other documents. The initiative for the production of this Book is attributed to Bona Sforza, Queen of Poland and Grand Duchess of Lithuania (1518-1556). The title page of the Twenty-Fifth Book bears the date 1541. Its documents, covering the period between 1387 and 1546, are written in Latin and in the Ruthenian language of the Lithuanian state. Among them there are several of the major charters granted by Lithuanian rulers: on the rights and freedoms for the privileged estates, for Lithuanian nobles (the Goštautas, Radvila and Sapiega families), for cities, churches, etc. In the Twenty-Fifth Book there are 245 documents. The addendum to the Book contains the rules (formulated by D. Antanavičius, who also edited all Latin acts in the two books) for the publication of the documents in Latin, and that is possibly the first attempt of such a kind in Lithuanian scholarship.

Both books belong to the early complex of the LM books. Late in the sixteenth century they became worn out and had to be replaced by copied books. Such registers survive today, while the originals have disappeared irretrievably. That is why the information, found in the First and Twenty-Fifth LM Books about the state of affairs in particular in the fifteenth century, is simply invaluable. Both books are an inexhaustible source of information for the history of Lithuania, Poland, Belorussia, Ukraine, Prussia, Moldavia and other European countries. Comprehensive subject, place-name and personal name indices facilitate the use of the texts. Each document of the Twenty-Fifth Book is furnished with informative notes in Lithuanian.

Fundamental research is impossible without direct access to historical sources. Therefore publication of more LM books is under preparation at the Lithuanian Institute of History.

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