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MANUSCRIPT BOOKS: Collections of Political Life Materials from the Area of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania Dating Back to the 17th and 18th Centuries in Libraries, Archives and Museums in Poland

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Symmary. *The article discusses manuscript books – collections of public life materials created in the 17th and 18th centuries in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, now located in Poland. They were created mainly by nobles and by chancellery clerks and officials employed at magnates' and state dignitaries' courts as an expression of the interests of collectors or documentary and historiographical concerns, and sometimes also as support for public activity. They contained various materials related to conducting, documenting and recording public life. The present overview is based on an identification of copies and on the information contained in printed and online manuscript catalogues and inventories. The number of sur-*

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viving manuscripts of that type can be hypothetically estimated at ca. 400–500 copies, with ca. 100 copies identified in Poland. Their largest collection is held in the Radvilos Archives, part of the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, with single copies scattered across different libraries and museums. The oldest ones date back to the late 16th and early 17th centuries. The greatest value should be attributed to several manuscripts originating from the Radvilos of Biržai community from the mid-17th century. Other valuable manuscripts include some made by common nobles, especially in the 17th century, as they often contain unique materials, unknown from elsewhere, as well as those created in the circles of the Sapiegos and Radvilos of Nyasvizh magnate families. Standing out among the latter are miscellanies created during the first three decades of the 18th century by Kazimierz Złotkowski, secretary of the Grand Chancellor of Lithuania Karolis Stanislovas Radvila. These books attest to the integration of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's nobility and magnates with other lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They largely contain materials relating to public life of the whole Commonwealth, while often including materials relating to local issues.

Keywords: *Grand Duchy of Lithuania; book; manuscripts; public life materials; Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; Poland; libraries; archives*

Rankraštinės knygos bibliotekose, archyvuose ir muziejuose Lenkijoje: informacijos apie XVII–XVIII a. LDK politinį gyvenimą rinkiniai

Santrauka. *Straipsnyje aptariamos rankraštinės knygos – informacijos rinkiniai apie viešą gyvenimą, – sukurtos XVII–XVIII a. Lietuvos Didžiojoje Kunigaikštystėje, dabar saugomos Lenkijoje. Jas daugiausia kūrė didikai, kanceliarijos tarnautojai ir pareigūnai, dirbę magnatų ir valstybės garbingųjų asmenų teismuose, vedami troškimo kaupiti arba rūpesčio dėl dokumentavimo ir istoriografijos ateities, o kartais ir vedami noro paremti visuomeninę veiklą. Juose randama įvairios informacijos apie viešą gyvenimą bei jo dokumentavimą. Medžiaga šiam tyrimui surinkta iš spausdintinių ir internetinių rankraščių katalogų ir inventorių. Galima manyti, kad yra išlikę 400–500 tokio tipo rankraščių ir maždaug 100 dokumentų pačioje Lenkijoje. Didžiausia jų kolekcija saugoma Radvilų archyve, kuris yra Centrinio istorijos archyvo Varšuvoje dalis, o pavieniai egzemplioriai yra išsibarstę po įvairias bibliotekas ir muziejus. Seniausi yra XVI a. pabaigos ir XVII a. pradžios. Didžiausios vertės yra keli XVII a. vidurio rankraščiai iš Biržų Radvilų giminės. Tarp kitų vertingų dokumentų patenka XVII a. Sapiegų, Nesvyžiaus Radvilų bei paprastų*

didikų aplinkoje sukurti rankraščiai, kuriuose dažnai randama unikali, kitur nežinoma informacija. Iš pastarųjų išsiskiria įvairenybės, sukurtos Lietuvos didžiojo kanclerio Karolio Stanislovo Radvilos sekretoriaus Kazimierzo Złotkowskio pirmaisiais trimis XVIII a. dešimtmečiais. Šios knygos liudija apie Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės bajorų ir magnatų integraciją su kitomis Abiejų Tautų Respublikos (ATR) žemėmis. Rankraščiai iš esmės yra turtingi informacijos apie ATR viešąjį gyvenimą, o kartu išsaugo lokalinį kontekstą.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė, knyga, rankraščiai, informacija apie viešą gyvenimą, Abiejų Tautų Respublika, Lenkija, bibliotekos, archyvai.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

In bibliological research, the functioning of manuscript books in the first centuries following the invention of printing was utterly overshadowed by the functioning of printed books. This is no wonder, given the volume of the printing output and its social impact; nevertheless, it leaves a feeling of dissatisfaction, especially when it comes to the types of books the printing industry did not publish. A good example would be manuscript books – collections of political life materials, of the article's title, which successfully functioned in Polish-Lithuanian-Ruthenian lands for nearly three centuries¹. The creation of those manuscripts can be seen as an expression of private documentaries, collector's or historiographical interests of the people participating or interested in public life. They were, as a rule, created for the private use of their author and his closest entourage, sometimes with posterity in mind as a historical source (like in case of memoirs, though here the memoirist narrative was replaced by the documents themselves), and sometimes also for third party use. They often

1 There is relatively scant literature on the topic discussed in this article. Among older works one should cite, first and foremost, articles by ZACHARA, Maria (especially: Sylwy – dokument szlacheckiej kultury umysłowej. In: *Z dziejów życia literackiego w Polsce XVI i XVII wieku*. ed. Dziechcińska, Hanna. Wrocław, 1980, pp. 197-219) and GIRININKAITĖ, Veronika (Silva rerum termino, žanro bei tipologijos interpretacijos: Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos rankraščių atvejis, in: *Bibliotheca Litwana*, Vilnius, 2017, vol. 4, p. 41–68) and books by PARYKA, Joanna (*Rękopisy dworu szlacheckiego doby staropolskiej*. Warsaw 1995) and ROSZAK, Stanisław (*Archiwa sarmackiej pamięci. Funkcje i znaczenie rękopiśmiennych ksiąg silva rerum w kulturze Rzeczypospolitej XVIII wieku*. Toruń, 2004). Among newer ones, one can find a comprehensive discussion of the subject from the bibliological and historical perspective in my monograph *Zbiory materiałów życia publicznego jako typ książki rękopiśmiennej w czasach staropolskich (1660–1760)*. Warszawa, 2020.

had utilitarian functions too, serving as an aid to their creator or owner in their professional or public activities.

Briefly speaking, materials included therein were related to conducting, documenting and recording public life (e.g. decrees issued by authorities, official correspondence, documents of the Polish-Lithuanian diet (Pol. *sejm*) and regional diets (Pol. *sejmik*), international treaties, diaries of public meetings and speeches delivered therein) or aimed at influencing public life (e.g. political writings and satires, manifestos, statements on public matters). In the terminology used at the time, these materials were known as the so-called *acta publica*, as opposed to private documents, more of personal nature (egodocuments), such as private correspondences, memoirs, diaries, autobiographies, testaments etc.² The latter do not fall within the scope of this study, although their occasional appearance in manuscript books – collections of public life materials – is sometimes essential for establishing the authors of the collections or the circle in which they were created. Regarding the character of the collected materials, these books are close to official books of entries of public acts at that time; however, unlike the official books, their creation was not limited by any rules or formalities and depended exclusively on individual needs, preferences and possibilities of those who created them.

Depending on the available means and on the motivation behind creating those collections, they varied in form, from ad hoc home chronicles, *silvas* (“silva rerum”), intended for ongoing recording of different texts lest they are forgotten, and characterised by a non-uniform structure, haphazard arrangement and random selection of materials (their characteristic feature is the frequent presence of private documents), through miscellanies, more specialised in terms of selection and structure of the materials collected, to “manuscript editions” of those materials. The latter featured such a well-thought-out selection and structure of the materials collected that some of them can be even seen as harbingers of bona fide editions of historical sources³; in this case we are also

- 2 For the Lithuanian and Polish literature on the subject, see, inter alia: PACEVICIUS, Arvydas. Egodokumentų tyrimai: senos erdvės – nauji horizontai. In: *Bibliotheca Litwana*. Vilnius, 2017, vol. 4, pp. 11–20; ROSZAK, Stanisław. Ego-documents – some remarks about Polish and European historiographical and methodological experience, *Biuletyn Polskiej Misji Historycznej. Bulletin der Polnischen Historischen Mission*, 2013, t. 8, pp. 28–42.
- 3 I discussed manuscripts of this kind in the articles: “Acta interregnum” – rękopiśmienne zbiory materiałów dokumentujących dzieje bezkrólewi w Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej w XVII i XVIII wieku, *Roczniki Biblioteczne*, 2016, t. 60, pp. 187–207; oraz Rękopiśmienne “wydawnictwa” źródłowe z czasów stanisławowskich (1764–1795). In *Książki mają swoją historię. Studia ofiarowane profesor Barbarze Bienkowskiej*. ed. PUCHALSKI, Jacek. Warszawa, 2021, pp. 206–230.

dealing with manifestations of their commercial production – the evidence of this phenomenon (which was actually very rare in the Commonwealth) is the appearance of one work in two or more identical or very similar copies, written by the same hand⁴.

Depending on how materials were collected and for what purpose, they also took different outer forms: most often they were uniform cartularies or cartularies supplemented with loose materials, such as single manuscript or printed copies of public records – their presence in this kind of books most often resulted from the convenience and economy of the writers' work. They also varied in size – they usually consisted of 150–200 documents but in certain cases their number could reach even 400–500 and more documents⁵. They took the form of bound codices or remained for a long time in the form of loose sections with the intention of being bound later⁶. Their use and functioning according to the formula in place came to an end with cultural and civilisational changes of the late 18th and early 19th century.

Examining these works from the perspective of bibliology (book studies), I regard them as testimonies of the literary culture of the society at that time, as testimonies of its interest in certain types of public life documents and their content; in this regard, such books are an important source of knowledge about the political culture and views of the society of the time. Such an approach differs from the approach of historical or literary studies, in which the research interest focuses not on a book as a whole but on individual written documents contained therein.

The value of those manuscript books mainly consists in recording the documentation that did not make its way into official judicial books (such as the books of *poviat* (county) cities and central records of the Crown and Lithuanian *Metrica* (Pol. *Metryka Koronna* and *Metryka Litewska*, Lat. *Metrica Regni Poloniae* and *Acta Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae*). Thus, these books contain non-official writings, which were of great interest to readers. They included political writings, speeches delivered at public meetings, or the correspondence of state dignitaries concerning public matters, often disseminated by their authors in order to shape political views. Hence, they are now one of the basic sources in the

4 In the opinion of the English researcher Harold Love (LOVE, Harold, *The Culture and Commerce of Texts. Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-century England*. Amherst, 1998, p. 77), the existence of such copies is the most important premise to consider them as manifestations of commercial production.

5 MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, p. 199.

6 MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, pp. 189–196, 199.

study of political history. Collections created this way should be distinguished from collections intended for record-keeping and archiving, held and created by offices, institutions and state dignitaries in the course of their official acts. Such archive materials – belonging to the field of archive studies – fall outside the concept of a manuscript book, not to mention that they are not a subject of interest in bibliology and to discuss them would go beyond the purview of this article. The article is intended to showcase and characterise the surviving manuscript books containing public life materials created in the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania between the early 17th and late 18th centuries and currently to be found in Poland⁷. The narrowing down of the article's topic to this extent is justified by the vastness of the issue and by the extensive historical and documentary value of many books of that kind located in Poland, which represent an important source for historical and literary research. It should be also added that I have devoted a separate article⁸ to discussing this type of manuscripts held by libraries and archives in Vilnius, Lithuania; as it largely deals with manuscript books created in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania,

- 7 The following abbreviations of the names of archives or institutions holding manuscript collections have been used throughout this paper: ABŁ – Archiwum rodziny Bartoszewiczów (Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi) [Bartoszewicz Family Archives in the State Archives in Łódź]; AGAD – Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], AR – Archiwum Radziwiłłów (Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie) [Radziwiłł Archives in the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw]; BCz – Biblioteka Czartoryskich w Krakowie [Czartoryski Library in Cracow]; BJ – Biblioteka Jagiellońska w Krakowie [Jagiellonian Library in Cracow]; BK – Biblioteka Kórnicka [Kórnik Library]; BKUL – Biblioteka Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego w Lublinie [Library of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin]; BN – Biblioteka Narodowa w Warszawie [National Library in Warsaw]; BOK – Biblioteka Ordynacji Krasieńskich w Warszawie [Krasieński Library in Warsaw] (inexistent); BOZ – Biblioteka Ordynacji Zamojskiej w Warszawie [Zamojski Library in Warsaw] (currently as part of National Library in Warsaw); BPAU-PAN – Biblioteka Naukowa BPAU-PAN w Krakowie [Scientific Library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow]; BR – Biblioteka Raczyńskich w Poznaniu [Raczyński Library in Poznań]; BZNiO – Biblioteka Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu [Ossoliński National Institute Library in Wrocław]; BZP – Biblioteka Zielińskich w Płocku [Zieliński Library in Płock]; LMAVB – Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių biblioteka Vilnius [Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences in Vilnius]; MNK – Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie [National Museum in Cracow]; ZBS – Zbiór Branickich z Suchej (Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie) [Collection of the Branicki Family from Sucha in the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw].
- 8 MATWIJÓW, Maciej. Rękopiśmienne zbiory materiałów życia publicznego XVII–XVIII w. w bibliotekach i archiwach wileńskich, *Z badań nad książką i księgozbiorami historycznymi*, tom specjalny, 2017, pp. 95–107.

the two articles complement each other. Focusing on this type of manuscript book created in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is also warranted by the fact that its existence escapes the attention of scholars studying the country's history of book culture, which is highly inappropriate considering the state had a significant contribution to the development of this kind of writings⁹. Thus, this article aims to supplement the knowledge about literary culture in this part of the pre-partition Commonwealth. It is for the same reason that this article is based on identifying the manuscripts themselves, using – wherever possible – the information contained in printed and handwritten catalogues and manuscript inventories¹⁰.

PRODUCTION OF MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS OF PUBLIC LIFE MATERIALS IN THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA AND THEIR FATE

The emergence and development of this type of writings within the area of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania can be linked – as is the case of the neighbouring Poland – to the ever-increasing standard of the intellectual culture in the 16th century, inspired by the Renaissance and Reformation, and to the Lithuanian state adopting a democratic political system in the 1760s¹¹. It was characterised by a relatively high participation of the noble community (aside from the fact that most nobles in the Commonwealth did not exercise their rights, being absorbed in private, economic and administrative matters of their land estates) in ruling the state. This was true of both the local (district *sejmiks*, poviats and voivodships confederations) and central level (free election

- 9 One can cite here monographs by TOPOLSKA, Maria Barbara (*Czytelnik i książka w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w dobie Renesansu i Baroku*, Wrocław 1984) and NIKALAYEW, Mikola. (*Palata knihapishnaya. Rukapishnaya kniha na Byelarusi w X–XVIII stoboddzjakh*. Minsk, 1993; idem. *Historyya byelaruskay knihi*, Vol.1. *Knizhnaya kul'tura Vyalikaha Knyastva Litovskaha*, Minsk 2009). This is especially surprising in works by the latter scholar, who failed to take account of these books in his monograph on manuscript books in Belarus, in the chapter regarding holdings of miscellaneous content (“Збрнікі рознага зместу”).
- 10 It must be pointed out here that most of those manuscripts have not yet received exhaustive catalogue descriptions.
- 11 Studies on manuscript books in Lithuania until the mid-16th century fail to mention the existence of this type of books. See e.g. CICĖNIENĖ, Rima. *Książka rękopiśmienna w życiu społeczeństwa w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w XIV–połowie XVI wieku*. *Rocznik Lituanistyczny*, 2015, vol. 1, pp. 228–233; RAGAUSKIENĖ, Raimonda. *Dingę istorijoje. XVI a. Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės bajorijos privatūs archyvai*. Vilnius, 2017.

of kings, general confederations, rebellion rallies, *sejms*, tribunals). Obviously, and this must be firmly emphasised, the phenomenon of recording public life materials in the private sphere was not endemic to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – these manuscript books were created in all European countries, i.e. wherever the society had an interest in public life affairs and engaged in them. However, unlike in Western Europe, where documentary collections of this type were often printed¹², in the pre-partition Commonwealth they remained almost exclusively within the domain of manuscripts, very often causing them to acquire singular and unique characteristics in terms of the source and documentary value of the materials collected.

The contribution of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to the creation of this type of writings in all of the Commonwealth can be only ascertained with a great margin of error, which is largely due to the fact that for many of those manuscripts there is no way to unambiguously identify their original territorial radius. One of the main reasons for that is their usually anonymous nature (ca. 2/3 of them, according to my findings). Most often – if the manuscript's author or authors failed to clearly state their last name – some private materials included therein could help guess who wrote or commissioned a given manuscript. What could serve as a major clue is the material content, i.e., the presence of materials from a specific region or territory. This is especially the case of manuscript books created by common nobles, who included them quite often due to their ready availability. However, it must be also borne in mind that the ongoing unification of the noble culture and ideology, observable across the Commonwealth since the 16th century, favoured an interest in those materials across the Commonwealth, especially if they were related to the vital matters of noble estates. A similar role was played by the process of the unification and integration of the Commonwealth's political life, translating into a lessening emphasis on local idiosyncrasies in the collections created. This could be said, for example, of materials related to wars waged on the Lithuanian borderland against Sweden and Moscow, as a result of which it is impossible to determine beyond any doubt whether the many specimens of manuscripts containing copies of materials on the Dimitriad and the Polish-Lithuanian intervention in Moscow in the early 17th century were created in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania or in the Crown. From the second half of the 18th century, a lesser emphasis on local idiosyncrasies was favoured by the increasingly widespread presence of those materials in the public sphere, partly due to a greater use

12 MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, pp. 210–218.

of printing in reproducing them¹³. The phenomenon of reproducing materials hailing from even the most remote regions of the Polish-Lithuanian state was mainly the case of collections created at magnate courts, which were well-placed to gather them, thanks to their extensive contacts with various areas of the Commonwealth.

The language in which manuscripts were written is of no help in identifying their origin, either, which is due to the Polonisation of the Lithuanian and Belarusian nobility, advancing quickly already back in the 16th century. Copies of Ruthenian-language¹⁴ acts, still common in those manuscripts in the early 17th century, disappear completely in the mid-17th century¹⁵. No clues are provided, either, by the old inventory lists of book collections of that time – in a great majority of cases, their very general descriptions¹⁶ provide no basis for identifying them with any surviving copies of manuscript books. An additional difficulty stems from the fact that not all books held by the territory's noble or magnate families can be automatically classified as manuscripts created in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, since manuscripts created in the Crown would also find their way there through purchase, gift and inheritance¹⁷.

The creation of such writings in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was mainly the domain of the nobility and of professional writers and other private clerks commissioned by magnates and state dignitaries, and most probably also of writers working in all sorts of state offices, as suggested by the highly professional workmanship of some manuscripts¹⁸. In my research into those writings

13 MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, p. 91 et seq.

14 Until 1697, the Ruthenian language played the role of the official language in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, though it was de facto replaced by Polish during the 17th century.

15 About the process of cultural Polonisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 17th century, stimulated by “integration processes in public life” See, inter alia, BUMBLAUSKAS, Alfredas. *Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie. Wspólna historia, podzielona pamięć*. Warszawa, 2013, p. 109; KIAUPA, Zigmantas, KIAUPIENĖ, Jūratė, KUNCEVIČIUS, Albinas. *Historia Litwy. Od czasów najdawniejszych do 1795 roku*. Warszawa 2007, pp. 254–255, 288–290; SAHANOVICH, Hyenadz'. *Historia Białorusi. Od czasów najdawniejszych do końca XVIII wieku*. Lublin 2001, pp. 289–291.

16 MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, pp. 57–61, 475.

17 The phenomenon of this type of manuscript books moving from the Crown to Lithuania can be observed as early as in the 1560s when Father Stanisław Górski handed over to the Lithuanian Senate a dozen or so volumes of the second edition of his “Tomiciana” (the so called Sapięha-Radziwiłł collection), see MARCINIĄK, Ryszard. *Acta Tomiciana w kulturze politycznej Polski okresu odrodzenia*, Warsaw-Poznań, 1983, pp. 189–190.

18 A good example of writing artistry would be miscellanies “Listy j.w.w. ichmściów ks.ks. Brzostowskiego wileńskiego, Gosiewskiego smoleńskiego biskupów...” [Letters of their

from 1660–1760 in all of the Commonwealth, I have managed to establish a proven or hypothetical link with a specific person for ca. 380 copies of this type of manuscripts, of which ca. 70–75 copies attributable to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Hence, they represented about 20 percent of all manuscripts identified, with a 25–30 percent share (37–37 manuscripts) among the authors representing the landed gentry of all of the Commonwealth (ca. 140 established manuscripts)¹⁹. Such proportions should come as no surprise as they essentially correspond to the proportions of the population of the Commonwealth as a whole (around 1772 the population of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania accounted for ca. 1/3 of the population of all the Commonwealth, and in the early 18th century, certainly for slightly less, ca. 1/4)²⁰. This suggests that the landed gentry's activity and achievements in this field in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania did not significantly differ from the Crown, except, of course, for the most politically active and culturally developed among its regions (Voivodeship of Kraków and Greater Poland). Meanwhile, as opposed to the Crown, it seems that the bourgeoisie community did not play a major role in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which could be attributed to its yet greater weakness than in the Crown²¹. The existence of the phenomenon of commercial production of such manuscripts in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania could not have been confirmed²². This should come as no surprise, seeing as the phenomenon was not widespread in the Commonwealth in general: it manifested itself mainly in the output of clerks hired at Crown Chancelleries in Warsaw in the late 17th and early 18th century and that of the private scribal workshop of Wojciech Wielądko that operated also in Warsaw in the late 18th century.

Lordships Father Brzostowski, Bishop of Vilnius and Father Gosiewski, Bishop of Smoleńsk], probably created in Sapieha social circles (LMAVB, F.17–24; Cf MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, p. 373, fig. 43).

19 MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, pp. 220, 244–247.

20 Ca. 1772, the Commonwealth as a whole had a population of ca. 14 million, of which 3.6 million in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The nobility had a similar share of the total population in both parts of the Commonwealth. See KIAUPA, Zigmantas, KIAUPIENĖ, Jūratė, KUNCEVIČIUS, Albinas. *Historia Litwy...*, pp. 243, 245.

21 In the Crown, books of such type were mainly created by rich Prussian cities (Gdańsk and Toruń) having a long-standing tradition of writing culture, as well as by academic centres (Kraków and Zamość). The supposition of little activity of the Lithuanian and Belarusian bourgeoisie in this field is supported by the fact that these manuscripts barely contain any materials relating to the affairs and public life of cities and the bourgeoisie of that region.

22 No two or more similar or identical manuscript books written by the same hand were found to exist (perhaps except miscellanies with copies of political materials, mainly dating back to the rule of August III, known due to two convergent copies held by LMAVB, F.17–38 and the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine in Kiev, fond I, No 1013).

It is extremely difficult to ascertain the scale of the production of manuscript books of this type in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Following the broadest possible query, for the period of 1660–1760 for all of the Commonwealth, I established the stock of currently existing manuscripts of that kind to consist of ca. 900–1000 copies; taking into account any copies I did not find and details of which are not mentioned in catalogues and information resources of libraries, archives and museums, such stock can be hypothetically estimated at ca. 1100–1200 copies. Assuming that roughly 1/4 of them are works created in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, we arrive at the number of around 250–300 copies. As the last four decades of the 18th century yielded an extensive production of manuscript books of this kind, and taking account of the pre-1660 period, it can be assumed that the number of surviving books created in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania throughout the 17th and 18th centuries may vary around 400–500 copies. Of course, this number is not inclusive of any copies that may have been destroyed throughout the history, which should be at least two- or threefold the number. Thus, it can be estimated that in the whole period between the last quarter of the 16th century and the late 18th century, no fewer than 1300–1500 copies of manuscripts of such kind were created in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. However, this number cannot be verified and should be treated solely as a guesstimate intended to show the scale of the phenomenon.

The value and significance of these writings is obviously determined largely by quality rather than quantity. In the same way that the Grand Duchy of Lithuania produced memoirs of excellent documentary value, which, until the mid-18th century, surpassed their equivalents created in the Crown, first and foremost the memoir by Albertas Stanislovas Radvila (Pol. Albrycht Stanisław Radziwiłł) and the diaries by Jan Antoni Chrapowicki and Marcin Matuszewicz, the Duchy had equally sophisticated collections. One such work (miscellanies by Stefan Franciszek Medeksza) was published nearly in its entirety in a printed edition in 1875 by Kraków historian Władysław Seredyński²³, and another (miscellanies written down in the entourage of Kristupas II Radvila, (Pol. Krzysztof II Radziwiłł), Grand Hetman of Lithuania) was the basis for compiling a source edition of *Sprawy wojenne i polityczne Krzysztofa Radziwiłła* [Kristupas Radvila's Military and Political Affairs] (Paris 1859). Further cases will be mentioned later in the article. It is worth adding that as early as in 1743 Kazimierz Niesiołowski, Castellan of Smolensk, published a printed edition his *silva* titled *Otia publica vix domestica* (Pińsk [Bel. Pinsk] 1743) containing abun-

23 See footnote 51.

dant public life materials – an edition of such a type of book was extremely rare in the publishing repertoire of the Polish-Lithuanian state of that time.

Throughout history, these books saw their storage location change, which resulted from divisions of family library and archive collections, sales, donations, evacuations, confiscations, robberies and other factors that for centuries have accompanied the development of library and archive collections. Another contributing factor was that the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was part of larger state organisms – from 1569 to 1795 of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and between 1795 and 1918 of the Russian empire. The movements of many copies to the territory of present-day Poland can be explained mostly by the many family connections between magnates and nobles from the Crown and those from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and by their sense of belonging to one state organism. The first phase of that process can be observed as early as in the mid-18th century with Mikolas Kazimieras Radvila (Pol. Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł), Grand Hetman of Lithuania, and some other Lithuanian magnates transferring some manuscript books of such kind in their possession to the Załuski Library in Warsaw, as a token of recognition of its significance as a *sui generis* Polish national library²⁴. Once its holdings were removed by the Russians and brought to St. Petersburg in 1796, this role was taken over by large private libraries, as well as those established by foundations and scientific societies, which developed throughout the 19th century (Ossolinski National Institute Library in Lvov (Ukr. Lviv), Działyński Library in Kórnik near Poznań, Krasieński Library in Warsaw, Zamojski Library in Warsaw, Library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in Kraków). These institutions made it their goal to protect Poland's and Polish-related cultural heritage, and routinely gathered all types of manuscripts from all of the pre-partition Commonwealth²⁵. At the same time, another important factor was the long-term shortage of similar institutions in the former territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the creation and unbridled development of which was curbed by the Russian authorities' policy from 1831/1832 all the way to the early 20th century²⁶. What also contributed to these processes after 1914 was that these lands were embroiled in hostilities, first during World War I, then the Bolshevik Revolution and, last but not least, during the Polish-Bolshevik war of 1919–21.

24 KOZŁOWSKI, Jan. *Szkice o dziejach Biblioteki Załuskich*. Wrocław 1986, pp. 32–38.

25 MAŁEJCZYŃSKA, Kazimiera. *Książki i biblioteki w Polsce okresu zaborów*. Wrocław 1987, pp. 117–126.

26 KOSMAN, Marcei. *Historia Białorusi*. Wrocław 1979, p. 255; MATWIJÓW. *Rękopiśmienne zbiory materiałów...*, p. 97.

The best known manifestations of this phenomenon included local librarian Kajetan Kwiatkowski removing some very valuable manuscripts from Nyasvizh (Pol. Nieśwież) without authorisation in the early 19th century and selling them in 1821 to Adam Tytus Działyński, founder of the Kórnik Library²⁷; shipping a major part of the Radziwiłł Archives in Nyasvizh along with their manuscript book holdings in 1919 from Minsk (where the Archives were moved in 1915 after the evacuation from Nyasvizh) to Warsaw and once nationalised, incorporating it after 1946 into Warsaw's Central Archive of Historical Records; or Wandalin Pusłowski, an art collector and landowner in the Slonim powiat donating to the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in Kraków in 1879 some books from Sapiehas' Dzyarechyn (Dereczyn) collection, which became his and his family's possessions after the fragmentation of this collection post-1832²⁸. A similar role to that of Pusłowski's was played by the heirs to the bibliophile and collector Władysław Trębicki, who, before his death in 1861, sold to the Zamojski Library in Warsaw the extensive manuscript holdings of the Sapieha and Ogiński families, amassed by the latter in Linova (near Pruzhany)²⁹. Manuscript books from the Ogiński collection also made their way, in unknown circumstances, to the Kórnik Library, and books from the collection of Adam Chmara, Voivode of Minsk, to different libraries, mainly by the doings of a famous Polish collector Aleksander Jelski from Zamoscie in Belarus and his heirs³⁰. After 1922, an additional increment in the number of manuscripts from the former territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania came with Russia's restitution to Poland of the extensive holdings of the Załuski Library and of other Polish libraries, removed by Russians from Warsaw to St. Petersburg (to the Imperial Public Library) in 1796 and 1831–32.

The latter of the restituted manuscripts, which had made their way to the National Library, and manuscripts of the Krasieński Library were almost entirely destroyed by the Nazis in October 1944 as they burned Warsaw to the ground after the fall of the Warsaw Uprising. Unfortunately, and with minor excep-

27 *Zbiory rękopisów w bibliotekach i muzeach w Polsce*. 2nd issue. ed. KAMOŁOWA, Danuta, with collaboration of SIENIATYCKA, Teresa, Warsaw 2003, p. 87; KRAKOWSKI, Bernard. Kwiatkowski Kajetan. In *Polski słownik biograficzny*, Wrocław 1971, vol. 16, p. 357.

28 SCHNAYDROWA, Bogumiła. Ofiarodawcy Akademii Umiejętności 1873–1919. Z badań nad proveniencją zbiorów Biblioteki PAN w Krakowie. *Rocznik Biblioteki Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Krakowie*, 1981, vol. 26, p. 17.

29 *Zbiory rękopisów w bibliotekach i muzeach...*, p. 358; ŁUSZCZYŃSKA, Maria. Trębicki Władysław. In *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej*, Łódź 1972, p. 909.

30 *Zbiory rękopisów w bibliotekach i muzeach...*, pp. 105, 354; MATWIJÓW. *Rękopiśmienne zbiory materiałów...*, pp. 98–99.

tions, due to the insufficient description of most of those manuscripts we are unable to establish how many of them were originally from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's area or provide any details on the contents for most of them³¹. Among the type of manuscript books that are of interest here, the biggest losses were among the oldest manuscripts: miscellanies most likely produced for Mykolas Radvila (Pol. Mikołaj Radziwiłł, d. 1589), Voivode of Navahrudak (Pol. Nowogródek), containing copies of materials relating to the political and military affairs of Livonia and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the reign of Sigismund August and Stephen Bathory (shelf mark in the Imperial Public Library No. Razn.IV.F.144), and a manuscript of similar nature partly compiled by Piotr Wiesiołowski (d. 1620), Grand Marshal of Lithuania, containing copies of political materials from 1611–24 (ditto shelf mark No. Pol.II.F.42) – according to the scant available data, it predominantly dealt with general state affairs regarding the whole Commonwealth, but, given the epitaphs and inscriptions dedicated to the Wiesiołowski family and signatures of Piotr Wiesiołowski in several places of the manuscript, it was undoubtedly written in the entourage of Wiesiołowski and his family³².

As regards the manuscripts of the Krasieński Library, what can be considered among the greatest losses is the destruction of the immense documentation collection (ca. 1000 leaves) containing copies of public acts mainly dating back to 1767–72 (BOK, Nos 3114–3119, 3124) created by Father Bernard Syruć (d. 1784) of the Piarist order at the request and initiative of his paternal uncle Szymon Syruć (d. 1774), Castellan of Vitsyebesk (Pol. Witebsk). However, we know nothing about the contents of this collection, though the fact it was used in the 1930s by the eminent historian Władysław Konopczyński in compiling a monograph of the Bar Confederation 1768–1772 attests to its significant documentary and historical value. As materials contained therein were arranged chronologically and provided with the author's explanations and descriptions of events, it cannot be ruled out that we would be dealing here with a highly specialised documentary work³³. Other lost manuscripts deemed precious are

- 31 I discuss the issues related to this type of materials held in the Załuski Library in: Manuscript materials of public life of the Załuski Library in Warsaw from the time of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (the second half of the 16th-18th century). *Z badań nad książką i księgozbiorem historycznymi*, 2020, vol. 14, no 2, pp. 179–212.
- 32 KORZENIOWSKI, Józef. *Zapiski z rękopisów Cesarskiej Biblioteki Publicznej w Petersburgu i innych bibliotek petersburskich*, Kraków 1910, pp. 203, 296–297. However, it is uncertain whether the latter manuscript belonged to the Załuski Library.
- 33 Wykaz inwentarzowy rękopisów Biblioteki ord. hr. Krasieńskich nieobjętych Katalogiem Fr. Pułaskiego. In PUŁASKI, Franciszek. *Opis 815 rękopisów Biblioteki ord. Krasieńskich*.

the 17th century miscellanies with copies of varied political materials, mainly dated to the period of 1587–1655, including numerous records of Lithuanian *sejmiks* dated to 1632–49 (BOK, No 309). Among other destroyed manuscripts of this library one can cite, first and foremost, miscellanies collected by Gedeon Jeleński, Castellan of Navahrudak, containing copies of public materials from the time of the Bar Confederation of 1770–1 (BOK, No 3458)³⁴ and a few other manuscripts (inter alia *silvas* of the Mosalski family dating back to the second half of the 17th century and of the Matuszewicz family dating back to mid-18th century³⁵, miscellanies probably compiled by Castellan of Smolensk Kazimierz Niesiołowski, dating back to the mid-18th century, and the miscellanies of Tadeusz Orwid, Standard-Bearer of Kaunas (Pol. Kowno), dating back to 1759–1782; BOK, No 105, 2933, 301, 3120).

Among manuscripts from other libraries, currently not registered in any public holdings and deemed lost, one should list the “manuscripta Kłokociana”, which, until 1939, were held in the Branicki-Tarnowski Library in Sucha Beskidzka (Nos 38 and 148). They contained copies of materials from the 17th century compiled by Kazimierz Kłokocki (ca. 1625–84), a printer, clerk of Liudvika Karolina Radvilaitė (Pol. Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłł), Electress of Pfalz-Neuburg, and governor of her Slutsk Principality³⁶ – all that is known from the old catalogue of the Sucha library manuscripts is that the first of the manuscripts (cartulary) contained “rozmaite dokumenta i pisma z czasów Zygmunta III i Władysława IV” [various documents and letters from the time of Sigismund III and Władysław IV] regarding, among other things, the affairs of Lithuanian dissidents and the Radvilos of Biržai (Pol. Birże); the second one, representing a follow-up to the only volume of the “Kłokociana” surviving to our time (ZBS, No 124/147), was presumably an archival collection of loose copies of public life materials and other texts dating back to ca. 1665–80, though one with a very high source value, as can be concluded from its catalogue description and from the contents of the surviving volume of the “Kłokociana”.

Warszawa, 1915, p. [24]–[25]; ROMANIUK, Przemysław. Siruć (Syruć) Szymon. In *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, Warszawa-Kraków 1996–1997, vol. 37, p. 580.

- 34 The current holdings in Poland include political and literary miscellanies probably authored by G. Jeleński, mainly dating back to 1776–1777 (MNK, No 111). The core amount of *silvas* and miscellanies written down by him are currently held in the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine in Kiev.
- 35 It could be of interest mainly due to the fact that it was probably created by Józef Matuszewicz, colonel of a Petyhorcy regiment, and brother of a well-known memoirist Marcin.
- 36 See Catalogue of Manuscripts of the Branicki Library in Sucha elaborated by Michał Żmigrodzki (ca. 1900), BZNIo, No 17747, pp. 23, 65–67.

COPIES FROM THE 17TH CENTURY

For the purposes of this article, it was possible to establish a little over 100 copies of this type of manuscript books, more or less likely created in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and located in libraries, museums and archives in Poland – for the reasons already mentioned, this number may be only a guesstimate, though. An overview of such historic books should start from the oldest specimens. Two manuscripts should be regarded as such: miscellanies of Krzysztof Zawisza (d. 1614), Voivode of Brest (ZBS, No 9/53) and the *silva* of Krzysztof Moniwid Dorohostajski (1562–1615), Grand Marshal of Lithuania, one of the leaders of the Calvinist faction in Lithuania, author of the then-popular work *Hippica, to jest o koniach księgi* [Hippica or books about horses] (BZNiO, No 185). The former manuscript, largely representing a carefully crafted cartulary (titles of respective acts are written in red ink), contains the “akta rozmaite publiczne” [miscellaneous public acts] of 1493–1605 (more than 350 documents). It was probably drafted in the late 16th century and was continued until the early 17th century³⁷. Most of its content is unrelated to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; it mainly contains copies of records of diplomatic missions and international relations of the Crown under the reign of the Jagiellonian dynasty, starting from the late 15th century, their probable source being the “Acta Tomiciana” by Father Stanisław Górski, as well as various materials relating to the political affairs from the early reign of Sigismund III and the correspondence of Krzysztof Zenowicz, Voivode of Brest, and other materials dealing with his family. The latter of the manuscripts, in addition to political materials relating to the 1587 election of Stephen Bathory, among other things, also contains poems and correspondence by K. M. Dorohostajski. The manuscript was written down by different people (largely by the owner himself³⁸) in the late 16th and early 17th century, most probably at Dorohostajski’s court in Muravanaya Ashmyanka (Pol. Murowana Oszmiana), and still continued after his death by its later owners who are unknown to us³⁹.

The slightly later miscellanies of 1591–1612, probably compiled between 1620 and 1630, were undoubtedly written down by Jan Brzostowski, Strzemię

37 Ibidem, pp. 29–30. The time of creation of the manuscript according to that catalogue is 15–16th century, which is most likely inaccurate.

38 This is suggested by Dorohostajski using, on several occasions, the first singular form in texts entered (“Carmina compositionis meae”, “Respons mój do KJM” [My response to HRM] etc.).

39 KĘTRZYŃSKI, Wojciech. *Katalog rękopisów Biblioteki Zakładu Nar. im. Ossolińskich*, Lwów 1881, vol. 1, pp. 422–426.

coat of arms (BR, No 34), the first person in his family to move from the Voivodeship of Sandomierz to Lithuania upon acquiring the Michaliszki estate there in the Vilnius poviat in 1604⁴⁰. Like the previous manuscripts, this one also contains materials relating to the affairs of the Polish-Lithuanian state as a whole (mainly the Zebrzydowski rebellion of 1606–7); however, its Lithuanian origin is unquestionable, given the inclusion of records relating to the internal affairs of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, some of which written down in the Ruthenian language⁴¹. It is hard to determine beyond any doubt the Lithuanian provenance of the fragments of various miscellanies and respective records contained in the very interesting manuscript of the Czartoryski Library No 375 – it seems to be supported by the presence of a fragment of the chancellery book of Lew Sapieha of 1589 (pp. 157–174) and of a great number of materials relating to Lithuanian affairs, including copies of records of the *sejmik* of the Navahrudak poviat from the years 1628–1646. Similar conjectures are suggested by political miscellanies containing copies of materials from 1605–50 (BCz, No 378), as they include numerous records of the *sejmik* of the Duchy of Samogitia in Raseiniai and the correspondence of Lithuanian senators.

Miscellanies created in the *community of the* Radvilos of Biržai in the 17th century are certainly among the most precious manuscripts of that kind, due to the paramount role played by this community in the political and cultural history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The first to be mentioned are miscellanies of 1620–3 (BK, No 332) containing “Diariusz wojny w Inflanciech przeciwko Gustawowi Adolfowi” [a diary of the war in Livonia against Gustavus Adolphus] of 1620–2, numerous letters from Field Hetman of Lithuania Kristupas II Radvila to the king and senators regarding the matters of the war, his speeches, military and public records, and fragments of a diary kept by Piotr Kochlewski, Radvilas’s trusted secretary, clerk and political activist. The link between this manuscript and the hetman’s chancellery headed by Piotr Kochlewski is undisputable in light of its contents, but even though the manuscript dates back to the 17th century, there is no certainty as to whether this is the original document created in circles close to the Radvilos or just a copy⁴². The same ori-

40 BONIECKI, Adam. *Herbarz polski*. Warszawa 1900, vol. 2, s. 191; *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich*. ed. SULIMIEŃSKI, Filip [et al.], Warszawa 1885, t. 6, p. 296.

41 SOSNOWSKI, Maksymilian Edward, KURTZMANN, Ludwik. *Katalog der Raczynskischen Bibliothek in Posen*. Posen, 1885, vol. 1, p. 137–144.

42 Indeed, two very similar later copies of that manuscript are known: BK, No 331 (from the 18th century) and BR, No 195 (from the 19th century). See: Online manuscript catalogue of the Kórnik Library, <http://baza1-bis.man.poznan.pl/cgi-bin/makwww.exe?BZ=Rekopisy>.

gin – given the presence of Piotr Kochlewski’s diary – can be ascribed to the 17th century miscellanies containing copies of materials relating to the Polish-Turkish relations between 1620 and 1624 (BK, No 333). Another manuscript (or to be more precise, its much later copy dating back to more or less the first half of 18th c.) which can be linked to this community is an edition of political and literary miscellanies with copies of materials from the first half of the 17th century (BK, No 1195), later supplemented with additional materials from the late 17th/early 18th centuries⁴³. Last, but not least, the fourth manuscript contains miscellanies with copies of materials from 1657–72 (BN, No 3092), containing, among others, a cartulary of the correspondence of Boguslavas Radvila (Pol. Bogusław Radziwiłł) and copies of various political, journalistic and literary materials. It cannot be ruled out that a famous poet and Arian, Zbigniew Morsztyn, linked to the house of the Radvilos of Biržai from ca. 1648, contributed to its creation⁴⁴. It is hard to determine with absolute authority whether the manuscript was created in the 1670s in the Arian diaspora circles in the Duchy of Prussia, where Morsztyn had his permanent residence, or in Lithuania, where he stayed from time to time as one of the administrators of Liudvika Karolina Radvilaitė’s estate. In any case, its close connection to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Radvilos circles is beyond a shadow of doubt. Last but not least, the list of manuscripts originating from these circles can be concluded with the aforementioned “manuscripta Kłokociana”. Meanwhile, the closest circles of the Radziwiłł of Nyasvizh are likely responsible for the miscellanies containing copies of political materials mainly from 1607–40 (BOZ, No 855, part 2: leaves 20–433), as suggested by the presence of the private correspondence of Albertas Vladislovas Radvila (Pol. Albrycht Władysław Radziwiłł) and of a few other Radvilos⁴⁵.

Unfortunately, the issue of this and other manuscript books of that type created or functioning in the social circles of Radziwiłłs of Birże is entirely overlooked by JARCZYKOWA, Marola in her work *Książka i literatura w kręgu Radziwiłłów birżańskich w pierwszej połowie XVII wieku*. Katowice 1995.

- 43 Online manuscript catalogue of the Kórnik Library, <http://baza1-bis.man.poznan.pl/cgi-bin/makwww.exe?BM=07&IM=12&WI=BKb01190&NU=07&DD=1> (retrieved on 20.10.2020).
- 44 *Katalog rękopisów Biblioteki Narodowej*, series II. *Rękopisy z Biblioteki Zaluskich i innych zbiorów polskich, zwrócone z Leningradu w latach 1923–1934*. ed. KUPŚĆ Bogumił Stanisław, MUSZYŃSKA, Krystyna. Warszawa, 1980, vol. 2, p. 171.
- 45 *Katalog rękopisów [Biblioteki Narodowej]*. Series III. *Zbiory Biblioteki Ordynacji Zamojskiej*. ed. SMOLEŃSKA, Barbara. Warszawa, 1991, vol. 2, pp. 161–177. According to ZACHARA (*Sylwy*, p. 305), this manuscript was written down at the court of Krzysztof II Radziwiłł,

Other noteworthy 17th century manuscripts include several *silvas* and miscellanies created by the common nobility, their precious nature being due to the original character of the materials collected, which bear witness to their social circulation and readers' interests. The first of them, compiled by a nobleman whose name is unknown to us, probably hailing from the Ashmyany (Lith. Ašmena, Pol. Oszmiana) powiat, contains copies of political materials (universals, letters, *sejmik* instructions and *sejm* materials) from 1551–1652 (MNK, No 160). In addition to materials strictly related to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (deeds of incorporation of the so-called “hooded courts” – interregnum courts – of 1587, the deed of limitation of the General Tribunal, resolutions and instructions of the *sejmik* for the Ashmyany powiat for *sejm* deputies from 1632–42), partly written in the Ruthenian language, it also featured materials relating to general state affairs and to the role and significance of the noble estate, and even one political commentary piece regarding economic affairs, advocating a replacement of the privilege awarded to Gdańsk for “cechowanie angielskich i cudzoziemskich wszelakich sukien” [a privilege to stamp all English and foreign textiles with a cloth mark]. The author was most likely of protestant faith, as suggested by the political commentary pieces contained therein (“Considerationes de exceptione ichmciów pp. duchownych contra securitatem dissidentium in religione, pisane po sejmie AD 1632” [*Considerationes de exceptione* of the Reverend Lords of the Church *contra dissidentium in religione* written after the Sejm of 1632], “Głos Anonima ewangelika do Króla JMci i stanów Rzeczpospolitej na sejmie A. 1630 o wydanie mandatu KJMci [...] przeciw ewangelikom [...]” [A voice of an anonymous Protestant to His Majesty and to the estates of the Commonwealth gathered at the Sejm of 1630 to issue His Majesty's mandate [...] against Protestants [...])⁴⁶. Another manuscript (APP, No 124) was written down mostly around the mid-17th century by an anonymous nobleman, probably from the Vilnius or Trakai (Pol. Troki) Voivodeship⁴⁷. The manuscript, kept until the early 18th century, contains a number of materials related to the Radvila family of Biržai, such as copies of

which cannot be ruled out. One might add that also part I (pp. 1–19) with copies of materials dating back to the rule of Jan III undoubtedly originate from Lithuania.

- 46 The same political commentary pieces were included in a lost volume of the “Kłokociana” (Branicki Library in Sucha, No 38); however, these two manuscripts cannot be considered as the same.
- 47 The Lithuanian origin of this manuscript is additionally confirmed by the paper used, bearing a watermark with the name of district judge of Vilnius Marcin Giedroyć and his coat of arms.

speeches and public letters of Jonušas (1579–1620), Lithuanian Cupbearer, Kristupas II (1585–1640), Grand Hetman of Lithuania and his son Jonušas II (1612–1655), a starost of Samogitia, poems by Daniel Naborowski – a poet linked to this branch of the Radvila family, as well as copies of many records and materials relating to political affairs, commonly found in other manuscripts of that period. It seems that the author of this manuscript too was of the Calvinist faith, as he included in his miscellanies the text of a speech delivered at the *sejm* in 1639 on behalf of dissident deputies to King Władysław IV “przeciwko inwektywom na dissidenty [uczynionej przez] ks. biskupa chełmińskiego [Kaspra Działyńskiego]” [against the invective hurled at dissidents [by] the Bishop of Chełmno [Kasper Działyński]]⁴⁸. The third manuscript, which was created in ca. 1640 and continued all the way until the late 17th century, is a *silva* written down by members of the Dobkiewicz family from the Vilnius Voivodeship (BCz, No 362, pp. 127-ca. 420), as revealed from the notes and private materials contained therein⁴⁹. It contains many materials relating to the Radvilos of Biržai, such as, for example, copies of correspondence of Jonušas Radvila (Pol. Janusz Radziwiłł), Court Chamberlain of Lithuania of 1633; the author of the *silva* must have been an employee at the court in Kėdainiai (Pol. Kiejdany), considering he included copies of confidential letters of Kristupas II Radvila (“Odprawa listów do Niemiec przez pana Jerzego Greffena” [Dispatch of letters to Germany by Mr Jerzy Greffen]). Furthermore, the *silva* contained some materials relating to political events in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, including a copy of the Act of Lithuania’s surrender to Sweden in 1655.

Among noblemen’s manuscripts from the second half of the 17th century, miscellanies compiled by Stefan Franciszek Medeksza (d. 1692), deputy district judge and then district judge of Kaunas (BPAU-PAN, No 1053), clearly stand out above others. The work is known from Władysław Seredyński’s edition dated 1875, so there is no need to discuss it in detail here. Suffice it to add that the most valuable materials contained therein relate to public functions performed by Medeksza, such as the diary of the proceedings personally written down by himself and other materials gathered by him on the ex-

48 SEMKOWICZ, Władysław. *Przewodnik po rękopisach wilanowskich*. ed. Bańkowski, Piotr. Warszawa, 1961, pp. 110–111; NABOROWSKI, Daniel. *Poezje*. ed. DÜRR-DURSKI, Jan. Warszawa, 1961, pp. 204–205.

49 One might add that one of the Dobkiewicz, Krzysztof, was a servant of Bogusław Radziwiłł in the 1660s, but it is hard to say if he had anything to do with the creation of that *silva*.

traordinary *sejm* of January–March 1668, where he was a deputy of the Kaunas poviat⁵⁰. Another work of significant documentary and historical value are the political miscellanies by Bogusław Kazimierz Maskiewicz (ca. 1625–83), a nobleman from the Navahrudak Voivodeship, author of a memoir and diary of 1643–49 and 1660 (published in print in 1961). They are known from a later copy dating back to the late 18th/early 19th century made at the initiative of Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (BCz, No 1666)⁵¹, and as is the case of miscellanies by S.F. Medeksza, they are strictly related to public functions performed by Miaskowski, mainly as deputy of the Navahrudak *sejmik* to several *sejms*. They contain copies of various public records from 1661–76, their most important part being the diaries of *sejms*, apparently written down by Maskiewicz himself (abdication and convocation *sejm* of 1668, election *sejm* of 1669, election *sejm* of 1674 and coronation *sejm* of 1676), partly published in print by Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz in 1840. Much inferior in value to the abovementioned are the *silva* written down, among others, by Jan Kazimierz Kirkor, Butler of Mstsisław (Pol. Mścisław) from the periods of 1662–83 and 1701–14 (BZNiO, No 364), and Stanisław Samuel Szemiot, Standard-Bearer of Ukmergė (Pol. Wiłkomierz), from the years 1672–1673 (BZNiO, No 212)⁵².

The Upytė poviat in the Trakai Voivodeship is the probable origin of the typically structured *silva* from the late 17th century (BPAU-PAN, No 370) written by an anonymous Lithuanian nobleman or dignitary. It contains copies of varied political materials relating, among other things, to the interregnum of 1668–69 and to the rule of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki and Jan III Sobieski (such as diaries of the election *sejm* of 1669 and of the ordinary *sejm* of 1672), as well as copies of numerous private materials of the manuscript's author. However, there is no way to clearly identify the author based thereon⁵³. Of much lesser source value is a *silva* created over several decades (ca. 1670–ca. 1735) by several generations of the Szyrma, a noble family from the Pinsk area (BZP, No R. 113)⁵⁴. The nobility of the Duchy of Samogitia is represented by an

50 SEREDYŃSKI, Władysław. Wstęp In: *Stefana Franciszka z Prószcza Medekszy Księga pamiętnicza wydarzeń zaszłych na Litwie 1654–1668*. ed. SEREDYŃSKI, Władysław. Kraków, 1875, pp. VII–XVII.

51 KUTRZEBA, Stanisław. *Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum Musei Principum Czartoryski Cracoviensis*, Cracoviae 1908–1913, vol. 2, pp. 355–356.

52 KĘTRZYŃSKI, *Katalog...*, Lwów 1886, vol. 2, pp. 429–431.

53 MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, s. 246.

54 For a detailed discussion of that *silva* see ZACHARA, Maria. *Silva rerum Szyrmów. Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce*, 1981, vol. 26, pp. 161–177.

anonymous *silva* containing copies of political materials from 1721-68 (BK, No 436) – its provenance from that territory is suggested by the numerous *sejmik* and other records originating from that area. It is possible that it was authored by members of the Billewicz family, a small part of whose correspondence and family materials is included in the manuscript⁵⁵.

Another riddle is in the authorship and place of origin of the manuscript titled “*Silva rerum variarum in publico Poloni, orbis theatro nostris temporibus collectarum ex variis scriptis dictisque virorum illustrissimorum Anno Domini 1679 huic libri insitarum*” containing copies of materials from 1665–1720 (BOZ, No 1176). Its Lithuanian provenance is highly likely in light of the numerous documentation contained therein relating to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and given that the manuscript later belonged to the library of Jonas Frederikas Sapiega (Pol. Jan Fryderyk Sapieha) in Kodeń. The manuscript, or at least its first part dating back to the late 17th century, was created in noble circles, written down by an anonymous land official who can be seen as a client of the Pac family first, and after 1684 of the Sapiegas, as suggested by the choice of materials relating to the activities of both those families⁵⁶. However, in terms of documentary value, it is surpassed by miscellanies from the last years of Jan III Sobieski’s rule (MNK, No 213). Its substantial part was probably written down between 1694 and 1697 in the close entourage of Kazimieras Jonas Sapiega (Pol. Kazimierz Jan Sapieha), Grand Hetman of Lithuania, perhaps by a chancellery clerk, as in addition to the wealth of public life materials it contains copies of the Hetman’s foreign correspondence (not to be found in the public domain) and chancellery form templates (i.e. titles of address used in letters, and templates for documents issued at the chancellery) as well as copies of materials relating to the notorious dispute between the Sapiegos and the Radvilos over the Neuburg estates, formerly owned by Liudvika Karolina Radvilaitė, Electress of Pfalz-Neuburg.

Collections created among Lithuanian dignitaries are characterized by a wealth of materials held. These include miscellanies with materials from 1655–92 (BCz, No 425), written down in the closest entourage of Kazimieras Mykolas Pacas (Pol. Kazimierz Michał Pac), Grand Notary of Lithuania and a Knight of Malta, notorious for causing the *sejm* of 1702 to be dissolved, as indicated by the inclusion of materials relating to his public activity. Equally high source

55 Online manuscript catalogue of the Kórnik Library, <http://baza1-bis.man.poznan.pl/cgi-bin/makwww.exe?BM=07&IM=12&WI=BKb00419&NU=18&DD=1> (dostęp 20.10.2020).

56 ZACHARA, p. 304.

value should be attributed to the two *silvas* of Krzysztof Stanisław Zawisza, a memoirist, Voivode of Minsk from 1720 (BZNiO, No 348; BPAU-PAN, No 656) containing copies of materials from 1634–1748, relating mainly to political affairs of the whole Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It should be added that both texts, rather than being Zawisza's original manuscripts are their slightly later copies, continued by his successors until as late as the mid-18th century⁵⁷. Strictly public matters are discussed in cartularies of records relating mostly to the Polish-Muscovite relations from ca. 1605 to ca. 1680 and sometimes supplemented with copies of materials relating to the internal affairs of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (BCz, No 2101-2104, 2108, 2111-2113, perhaps also ABŁ, No 498). They were created for the purposes of Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski (d. 1688), Referendary of Lithuania, and in his last years a Castellan and Voivode of Trakai, from 1658 – a regular participant of diplomatic negotiations between the Commonwealth and the Muscovite state. Hence, in their case, we are dealing with an example of manuscript books strictly related to the author's professional activity and thus bordering on archival documentation.

The clerk community of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is the possible source of several other collections of public life materials. They include, among others, miscellanies with copies of numerous political materials from 1694–98 (ZBS, No 41/55), most likely written down in the Grand or Little Chancellery of Lithuania, and a private cartulary of the records of Lithuanian confederation of 1734–35 (ZBS, No 102/123), written down by the secretary of that confederation, Antoni Korsak, Steward of Polatsk (Pol. Połock), and later continued by other people as a typical *silva*.

COPIES FROM THE FIRST HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY

The scale of opportunities to access public materials, offered to those working at a state chancellery and at a large magnate's court, is best exemplified by manuscripts created at the Radvilos courts in Nyasvizh and Biała Radziwiłłowska (present-day Biała Podlaska) by Kazimierz Złotkowski (ca. 1667–1734), the Butler of Sieradz, a trusted chancellery official ("secretary of the great seal") of Chancellor Karolis Stanislovas Radvila from the late 17th century until 1719 and meanwhile also a likely personal secretary of the latter, and later administrator of an estate for his widow, Ona Kotryna Sanguškaitė-

57 KĘTRZYŃSKI, vol. 2, p. 398–408.

Radvilienė (Pol. Anna Katarzyna Radziwiłłowa, née Sanguszko). The biography and activity of this nobleman from White Ruthenia is relatively well-known thanks to the research by Andrzej Rachuba⁵⁸; less known is his extensive manuscript writing activity spanning about 30 years, during which he created no fewer than 6 manuscript books with public life materials – their list is known from the certificate of transferring those manuscripts to the Nāsviž archives upon his death in 1734⁵⁹. He wrote down at least three of them when working at the Lithuanian Chancellery. These are as follows: 1) manuscript with copies of materials from 1702–5 (AR, sec. II, No 44); 2) manuscript with copies of materials from 1655–1718 (AR, sec. VI, No II-51, in which materials from 1712–18 were already entered by other people); and 3) manuscript with copies of materials from 1699–1703 (AR, sec. VI, No II-51a). Except for Złotkowski's few private documents, they represent the type of highly specialised miscellanies, characterised by a careful and expert choice of contents relating exclusively to public matters.

Other manuscripts are more varied in nature, which was probably due to the fact that in 1719 Złotkowski ceased to work at the Lithuanian Chancellery following the death of his employer. The type of a private cartulary of chancellery records combined with a private notebook intended for recording different information is represented by “Zbiór różnych pism i wiadomości publicznych rzeczy tyczących się” [Collection of miscellaneous letters and notices relating to public matters] written down successively by Złotkowski and other people in ca. 1710–34 (AR, sec. II, No 45), containing, in addition to copies of public records ordered according to the dates in which they were received by the Great Chancellery of Lithuania between 1712 and 1717, copies of books and notes to the Radvilos' genealogy of 1734. Similar in nature to a typical *silva*, two volumes of miscellanies with copies of public materials dated 1717–29 (AR, sec. VI, No 54) and 1718–19 (BR, No 95) feature important documents of nationwide significance, partly originating from the records of the Grand Chancellery of Lithuania, placed by Złotkowski alongside sermons, Radvilos' genealogy, excerpts of scientific literature, epitaphs, occasional works etc. Incidentally, Złotkowski's handwriting can be also found in two other miscellanies: the one with copies of materials from ca. 1682–1701 (AR, sec. II, No 27) and the one with copies of materials of 1688–93 (BK, No 390; copy AR, sec. II, No 29); the variety of handwriting to be found

58 RACHUBA, Andrzej. *Kazimierz Antoni Złotkowski, uczonego sługa Radziwiłłów*. In *Mahnatski dvor i satsyyal'naye wzajemadzyeyannye (XV–XVIII stst.)*. Zbornik navukovykh prats. ed. YANUSHKYEVIICH, Andrey Mikalayeovich. Minsk, 2014, pp. 412–420.

59 MATWIJÓW. *Zbiory materiałów...*, pp. 282–283 and footnote no 260.

there makes it impossible to qualify them beyond any doubt as his own authorial manuscripts. As is the case of many other manuscripts created in Lithuania, all of Złotkowski's manuscripts – except for the manuscript from the Radziwiłł Archives No 45 – contain predominantly materials relating to the affairs of the Crown; Lithuanian materials most often surface in the context of K.S. Radvila's activity, such as, for example, his universals, responses to Lithuanian *sejmiks'* delegations, official correspondence.

The type of specialised miscellanies, strictly oriented to gathering exclusively public life materials and containing no private materials, is represented by many other manuscripts dating back to the first half of the 18th century. This is the case of miscellanies containing copies of materials from 1701–7 (BCz, No 536, a slightly later and of lesser quality copy BCz, No 3059, though also made in Lithuania) – the choice of materials relating to the political life of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (to which lists related to the Lithuanian Tribunal were added) leaves no doubts as to its Lithuanian origin. The modestly sized miscellanies containing copies of political materials from 1701–3 (BOZ, No 1105) are similarly homogenous.

This type of miscellanies is also present among the many manuscript books held in the Archives of the Radvilos of Nyasvizh, most probably collected successively from the mid-17th century⁶⁰. As previously mentioned, these books ended up in Warsaw together with the “political” part of those archives. It can be hypothesised that most of them were created in Radziwiłł family residences or compiled in other localities of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the family's request. The number of these books can be estimated at ca. 30–35 copies⁶¹, obviously not including the books which are known for certain or can be assumed to have originated in the Crown, books relating to Radvilos' private affairs or related to the administration of their land estates, and the abovementioned Złotkowski's manuscripts. It should be also added that some of them are duplicated, which may be explained by the establishment of the library in Białfa in

60 They were held for a long time in the Nyasvizh library (until ca. 1750 whereupon they were moved to the archives), as attested by 17th century annotations “Ascriptus catalogo bibliothecae arcis Nesvisiensis” preserved on some of them (e.g. on a cartulary of records of the negotiations regarding a European alliance against Turks in 1595 and 1596, BK, No 310). Unfortunately, manuscript books of this type from the Radvilos Archives have not to date received either detailed catalogue descriptions or a scientific discussion, except only for a collection of *sejm* diaries (JANKOWSKI, Rafał. *Diariusze w tzw. Archiwum Warszawskim Radziwiłłów. Archiwa – Kancelarie – Zbiory*, 2005, vol. 1, pp. 45–85).

61 They form the core part of Sections II (ca. 20–25 copies) and VI (ca. 10 copies).

1719 by Ona Kotryna Sanguškaitė-Radvilienė. As for the time of their creation, the oldest ones probably date back to the first half of the 17th century (e.g. AR, sec. II, No 1, 3 and 12), the last ones probably to ca. 1770–80 (AR, sec. II, No 36; AR, sec. VI, No II-77). It seems, however, that some of the manuscripts, probably dating back to the first half of the 18th century and containing copies of materials from the first half of the 17th century, are not originals but copies of older manuscripts executed to preserve their contents, as the originals had been damaged or worn out by use (inter alia AR, sec. II, No 13).

As a detailed discussion of those manuscripts goes beyond the scope of this article, I will focus on providing their basic characteristics. Most of them represent the type of homogenous cartularies made more or less according to a plan by professional scribes. In one case (miscellanies with copies of materials dating back to the rule of the Vasa kings and that of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki, AR, sec. II, No 22) we have direct evidence of that – the names of a dozen scribes involved in its copying feature on top of pages in respective quires. It should be added that this group of manuscripts is supplemented with collections of loose records, both in the form of bound books (inter alia AR, sec. II, No 41 and 58) and, most commonly, unbound fascicles (so called loose documents of section II). In terms of documentary value of the materials they contain, the books should be highly appreciated. By way of example, we can mention here the very carefully and expertly executed cartulary of materials relating to the Tarnogród confederation from 1715–16 (AR, sec. VI, No II-52), probably created based on archival records of the confederation itself, and partly based on records from the Radvilos archives. Understandably, given the political significance of the Radvilos family, materials contained in those manuscripts relate to the public life of the Commonwealth as a whole. Among manuscripts broadly dealing with Lithuanian matters, one can indicate, e.g., miscellanies containing materials from 1695–99 (AR, sec. II, No 32 and a copy *ibidem*, No 34), which, as suggested by the choice and contents of the materials, were probably created in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, not in the Radvilos circles but those of the Sapiegos.

In addition to those manuscripts, the Radvilos courts in Biała and Nyasvizh also collected immense holdings of public life materials of the *silva* format, where, alongside these materials, all sorts of documentation of diverse nature was entered, including documents relating to the private affairs of the Radvilos – such is the nature of manuscripts including “Miscellanea variorum scriptorum et gestorum tam in Regno Poloniae quam M[agno] D[ucatu] L[it]huaniae” with copies of materials mainly from 1717–46 (AR, sec. II, No 51) and a voluminous

silva (ca. 435 documents) with copies of materials from 1750–57 (AR, sec. II, No 46) which is a follow-up to the latter.

COPIES FROM THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY

Manuscript books created in the second half of the 18th century appear to be the least interesting, which seems to be due, to a certain extent, to their standardised production and unified contents resulting from the reproduction of materials that were commonly available in the public domain at the time. Of this nature are the political and literary miscellanies from 1763–77 (mainly from 1767 and 1775–76 (BOZ, No 639), probably compiled for or by Mykolas (Pol. Michał) Butler, the starost of Prienai (Pol. Preny), as suggested by the poems added at the end of the manuscript about himself and his daughter Franciszka on the occasion of her marriage to Jerzy Radziwiłł in Prienai in 1778⁶². The same can be said of the miscellanies compiled by Father Marian Stecewicz, Prior of the Carmelite monastery in Mahilyow (BZNiO, No 12770) – this one, in addition to copies of very numerous political materials mainly from 1765–73 and known from other similar manuscripts, features some copies of speeches delivered by deputies at the Lithuanian tribunal, Polish and French literary works, the correspondence of the manuscript’s author, and all kinds of “sundries”⁶³. Also of Lithuanian provenance, with respect to the place they were written down, Hanuta (at present Ruchytša) in the Vilnius powiat, are the modestly-sized miscellanies by Antoni Skarżyński titled “Zbiór mów różnych w czasie dwóch sejmów ostatnich roku 1775 i 1776 mianych” [Collection of different speeches delivered at the last two sejms of 1775 and 1776] (BK, No 910)⁶⁴.

62 *Katalog rękopisów [Biblioteki Narodowej]. Series III...*, pp. 114–118. Nothing is mentioned about this manuscript by the editors of the alleged M. Butler’s travel diary from 1779–1780, see *Butlerio kelionės į Italiją ir Vokietiją 1779–1780 metais dienoraštis = Dziennik podróży Butlera do Włoch i Niemiec w latach 1779–1780*. ed. CHORAŻYCZEWSKI, Walde-mar, PACEVIČIUS, Arvydas, ROSA, Agnieszka. Vilnius, 2013.

63 *Inwentarz rękopisów Biblioteki Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu*. ed. FASTNACHT, Adam. Wrocław 1966, vol. 3, pp. 456–474. The inscription on the back of the manuscript “Manuskrypt X. M. S. S. T. M. K. 1769”, which the catalogue fails to decipher, can be safely interpreted as: Manuskrypt ks. Mariana Stecewicza świętej teologii magistra, karmelity [Manuscript of Father Marian Stecewicz, Master of Sacred Theology, Carmelite].

64 Online catalogue of the Kórnik Library <http://baza1-bis.man.poznan.pl/cgi-bin/makwww.exe?BM=07&IM=12&WI=BKb00909&NU=02&DD=1> (retrieved on 20.10.2020).

That latter manuscript, as well as a couple of others, can be possibly linked to the entourage of the Oginskiai family, especially Tadas (Pol. Tadeusz, 1712–1783), Castellan and from 1770 Voivode of Trakai, and Mykolas Kazimieras (Pol. Michał Kazimierz, 1730–1800), Voivode of Vilnius and from 1768 Grand Hetman of Lithuania, whose residence in Slonim became a major centre of cultural life. This is suggested by their private materials included in those manuscripts (correspondence, poems, occasional speeches). In terms of contents, these manuscripts represent the period's favourite potpourri of contents and genres, combining ample public life materials with occasional literary materials and texts on various topics. Two of those manuscripts were authored by Tadeusz Kajetan Szawernowski in 1769 (BK, No 924) and Jan Sawicki in 1783 (BK, No 906)⁶⁵ – one can even surmise these were officials (clerks?) in Ogiński family's employment. As for the third manuscript, created ca. 1755–65 (BZNiO, No 2788), we do not have such certainty as to where they were written and by who; they can only be hypothetically linked to Stanisław Russel, Clerk and from 1763 Deputy Starost of Upytė. The above comments also apply to the miscellanies compiled in the entourage of Adam Chmara (1720–1805), Voivode of Minsk, containing copies of materials dating back to the rule of August III and Stanisław August Poniatowski (BKUL, No 644; BJ, No 6214), where, alongside ample political materials particularly relating to the events of 1767, we also find occasional poems and other materials⁶⁶.

A different case is that of miscellanies created, most probably, in the entourage of Sapiehas of the Ruzhany (Pol. Różana) line ca. 1750–70 and based almost exclusively on materials from their family archives in Ruzhany. Materials contained therein date back all the way to the first half of the 17th century, representing the type of history-themed miscellanies (BOZ, nr 931 i 1217). Another manuscript book originating from these circles is a cartulary of letters and *sejm* speeches dating back to the rule of king August III and Stanisław August (BOZ, Np 906), especially the correspondence of the Vice-Chancellor of Lithuania Mykolas Antanas Sapiega (Pol. Michał Antoni Sapieha), mainly with Lithuanian senators and dignitaries. However, the source value of the manu-

65 Online catalogue of the Kórnik Library <http://baza1-bis.man.poznan.pl/cgi-bin/makwww.exe?BM=07&IM=12&TX=&NU=17&WI=BKb00890> i <http://baza1-bis.man.poznan.pl/cgi-bin/makwww.exe?BM=07&IM=12&TX=&NU=16&WI=BKb00909> (retrieved on 20.10.2020)

66 See *Inwentarz rękopisów Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej nr 6001–7000*, part 1. ed. JAŁBRZYKOWSKA, Anna, ZATHEY, Jerzy. Kraków, 1962, pp. 117–118 (incomplete description, overlooking most public life materials contained in this manuscript).

script is limited, as it was created mainly as a model of good style, which is why letters contained therein were often entered without including dates and their authors' names⁶⁷.

FINAL REMARKS

To conclude, one may venture the opinion that manuscript books located in Poland – holdings of public life materials of Lithuanian origin – are a relatively representative sample of their entire output in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It allows to draw a few conclusions of a more general nature. The most striking finding is the lack of specialised manuscript “source publications” among them. Given the latter were created in the Crown, as it appears, mostly in the circles of officials employed at central state chancelleries, this seems to point to a weaker development of central chancelleries of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It may be probably explained by the dominant role of Crown Chancelleries in the state administration, which was the reason why they, rather than Lithuanian Chancelleries, attracted the most numerous and best qualified clerical staff⁶⁸, which also successfully engaged in the production of this type of manuscript books. Meanwhile, what is amply represented in libraries, archives and museums in Poland are the *silvas* and miscellanies created by the common nobility and compiled at courts or in the closest circles of magnates and state dignitaries. In terms of compilation methods, they do not differ from similar books created in the Crown territory. The great participation of clerks from the circle of Radvilos of Biržai of the 17th century in their creation is particularly noticeable, confirming the intellectual and culture-forming role of this community in the life of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. A similar phenomenon can also be observed in the case of Radvilos of Nyasvizh in the first half of the 18th century – the courts of Ona Kotryna Sanguškaitė-Radvilienė in Biała and Mykolas Kazimieras Radvila in Nyasvizh. There is no other magnate circle of the time which could match them, even that of the Sapiehas. As far as the nobility (landed gentry) is concerned, the activity of the Protestant nobility in this field in the first half of the 17th century from the Vilnian and Trakai Voivodeships is noteworthy – out of several recorded manuscripts created by landlords, as

67 *Katalog rękopisów [Biblioteki Narodowej]*. Series III..., pp. 245–253, 291–294.

68 Cf comments on RACHUBA, Andrzej. *Kancelarie pieczętarzy WKsL w latach 1569–1795*. In *Lietuvos Metrika. 1991–1996 metų tyrinėjimai*, ed. Kiaupa, Zigmantas, Urbanavičius, Agnius. Vilnius, 1998, pp. 258, 261.

many as three had most likely originated from this circle, not counting the *silva* by K. M. Dorohostajski from the 16th/17th century.

Their source and documentary value sets them apart from other manuscript books of that kind, and some of them (miscellanies by Stefan Franciszek Medeksza and Bogusław Kazimierz Maskiewicz) are among the most important achievements of private documentation of public life in the whole Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (the otherwise unknown *sejm* diaries from the second half of the 17th century are particularly noteworthy in this respect). Their contents attest to the phenomenon of the unification of political life across the Commonwealth and to a high level of sophistication among the Lithuanian nobility, or at least its elite. Except in singular cases, these holdings are not local in nature or focused on provincial issues – on the contrary, they give extensive attention to issues of nationwide importance. This proves how deeply the Lithuanian nobility and magnates were integrated within the noble circles of other Commonwealth areas. It is also a testimony to the wide circulation of public life documents throughout the whole state.

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