

# Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia ad Bibliothecarum Scientiam Pertinentia XV (2017)

ISSN 2081-1861

DOI 10.24917/20811861.15.24

*Iwona Pietrkiewicz*

## Book culture in the male orders of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania 15th–18th centuries (assumptions of a research project)

The research project envisage study focused on book culture in the male orders existing in the territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>. The research program spells out a wide-ranging source query in national, church and religious archives as well as in libraries in within the country and abroad. On their basis, bibliographical processes characteristic of these collections, especially creation, circulation and reception of texts in monastic *environment*, the role of the book in spiritual formation and school education conducted there, canon of collected, copied and read books as well as the principles of library organization were analyzed. This issue was presented taking into account its social, religious, and monastic context making it possible to complete the image of Old Polish culture of the word and history of the book in the territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania<sup>2</sup>.

### Scientific aim of the project

The aim of the project is to bring out the culture of the book in Roman Catholic male monasteries existing in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania right to the time of liquidation of local monastic network and individual outposts. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania was for many years a place where many Latin monastic observances operated – monks (Benedictines, Cistercians, Camaldolists, Carthusians), Mendicants (Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites) as well as Canons (the canons Regular of the Lateran, Canons Regular of Penance) or even clerical orders ( Jesuits, Piarists), while the Vilnius itself was one of the most important centers of monastic life in the Commonwealth.

The literature created and used by these communities constituted the subject of conducted study. Both direct sources (preserved fragments of manuscripts and

---

<sup>1</sup> Research project financed by program realized in 2010-2012 at the Pedagogical University of Cracow (Project's registration No. NN 103 061438, agreement No. 0614/B/H03/2010/38).

<sup>2</sup> A monograph devoted to synthesis of book culture in the monasteries of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 15th–18th century was prepared for print.

printed texts) as well as inventories and catalogs provided the information used for analysis of the culture of books in local monasteries. However, their analysis requires not only a comprehensive knowledge of monastic reality, but also display of these book collections in the broader context of culture model.

Therefore, the project assumed a multi-faceted exhibition of the phenomena and processes of operation of texts in monastic communities. The study took into consideration analysis of formation and education of monks, the canons of the books created and collected by them, used in pastoral work, education, as well as scientific and literary work, and monastic publishing initiatives in the context of social impact of these monasteries. The culmination of the research project will be a habilitation dissertation, constituting an attempt at monographic addressing of these issues.

### **Significance of the project**

The state of present knowledge on the male orders from the territory of the Great Lithuanian Principality points to a lack of synthetic approach to phenomena of functioning of the text and book in this environment. Dispersion of the main sources, both archives and library collections (they are now found in Polish collections as well as archives and libraries of Vilnius, Minsk, Grodno and St. Petersburg), this being a result of liquidations of orders, monasteries, abbeys etc, is also of significance. So far in the scientific literature, these issues have been mostly taken up on the margins of other studies on the history of the Church or of history of art.

For centuries, the Orders were a stable and permanent element of social and religious life as well as an important factor of cultural change in the former Commonwealth. Their analysis is essential in obtaining a complete picture of the era in which they operated. Only such a multifaceted, dynamic perspective can deliver the culture of the book in a given society. However, it will be incomplete without showing the literature created in the monastic circle, both manuscript and printed.

A book created and functioning within a monastery being not only a sign of belonging to a particular spiritual culture, but also fulfilling an important motivational, cognitive, aesthetic and emotional functions in such an environment remains a sign of reading activities of the monks, a testimony of mentality and absorption of certain contents, intellectual interests, intensity of influence of ideas or penetration of cultures. The project has a significant importance for a more complete display of the culture of the book in the monastic environment. It is intended to add to the existing knowledge on the subject and allow for registration of hitherto unknown sources. The attempt at monographic understanding of bibliological processes in male monasteries of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is also intended to help complement the image of the achievements and show the significance of monastic orders in the lands of the Commonwealth, and at the same time documenting the common heritage of the several nations in these lands, in the context of the work undertaken by Lithuanian and Belarusian scholars in recent years.

## Existing knowledge

In studies conducted in Western Europe the problem of the place of monastic culture in the history of European culture and its importance in the history of books and libraries is increasingly clearly being highlighted. The number of Polish centers initiating such works is also on the rise. A very interesting initiative of the last years is the establishment in Wrocław of Laboratory for Research on the Conduct of the Orders and the Congregation of the Church (Laboratoire de Recherches sur l'Histoire des Congrégations et Ordres Religieux), which aims to promote and develop research on monasticism in Central Europe, it organizes interdisciplinary symposia and undertakes publishing initiatives. For years, KUL also has been conducting systematic research devoted to Latin monastic structures (*Zakony męskie w Polsce w 1772 roku*, ed. Bieńkowski, Ludomir, Kłoczowski, Jerzy, Sułkowski, Zygmunt, *Materiały do atlasu historycznego chrześcijaństwa w Polsce*, t. 2, Lublin 1972; Litak, Stanisław (1996); *Zakony i klasztory w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej X-XX wiek*, ed. H. Gapski, J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1999; Litak, Stanisław, *Parafie w Rzeczypospolitej w XVI-XVIII wieku. Struktura, funkcje społeczno-religijne i edukacyjne*, Lublin 2004; Litak, Stanisław, *Atlas Kościoła łacińskiego w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga narodów w XVIII wieku*, Lublin 2006).

The revival of studies on the history of monastic orders brings new works which present their functioning in a multifaceted manner. The works of such talented researchers as Jacques Leclercq, Clifford Lawrence, Giles Constable, Jacques Le Goff and David Knowles are of particular value. Studies devoted to different monastic structures have their own dynamics and own social determinants. However, there is still a lack of interdisciplinary view of the role of the book in monastic communities, a multi-faceted view of the book and the text in the monastery. And yet such researchers as Robert Darnton, Roger Chartier, Henri-Jean Martin, Steven Fischer, Joan S. Rubin or, in Poland, Barbara Bieńkowska have for years been postulating precisely research on the book in the social context, the context of history of ideas and mentality (Martin, Henri-Jean, *Histoire et pouvoirs de l'écrit*, Paris 1996; Fischer, Steven R., *A history of writing*, London 2001; Id., *A history of reading*, London 2003; Manguel, Alberto, *Moja historia czytania*, Warsaw 2003; *The book history reader*, ed. Finkelshtein, David and McCleery, Alisatair, New York 2002). Well organized bibliographical works revealing a number of sources of the history of monastery collections from the former lands of the Commonwealth have been undertaken in Poland in recent years (Paszkiwicz, Urszula, *Rękopiśmienne inwentarze i katalogi z ziem wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej (spis za lata 1553–1939)*, Warszawa 1996; in, *Inwentarze i katalogi z ziem wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej (spis za lata 1553–1939)*, Warszawa 1998; Id., *Inwentarze i katalogi bibliotek z ziem wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej do 1939 roku. Suplement 1*, Warszawa 2000; Id., *Inwentarze i katalogi bibliotek z ziem wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej do 1939 roku. Suplement 2*, Warszawa 2006), this is complemented by the works of Lithuanian researchers (Vladimirovas, Levas, *Vienuloyną ir bažnyčių bibliotekos Lietuvoje (iki 1800 m.)*, „Knygotyra” 1970, vol. 1, pp. 97–98; Feigelmanas, Nojus, *Lietuvos inkunabulai*, Vilnius 1975; *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos paleotipai. Katalogas*, sudarė Nojus Feigelmanas, Irena Daugirdaitė, Petras Račius, Vilnius 2003; *XVII a. Lietuvos lenkiškos knygos. Kontrolinis sąrašas*, parengė Maria Ivanovič, ed. Nojus Kišūnienė, Vilnius 1998; Račiūnaitė Tojana (2003); Narbutienė,

Daiva (2004); Pacevičius, Arvydas (2005); *XVI-XVII a. lituanika. Lietuvos mokslų akademijos bibliotekoje. Katalogas*, sudarė Daiva Narbutienė, Violeta Radvilienė, Dalia Rauckytė-Bikauskienė, Vilnius 2007). The works of M. Pidlypczak-Majerowicz (Pidlypczak-Majerowicz, Maria (1996) and A. Pacevicius (Pacevičius, Arvydas 2005), in which monastic librarianship in selected male monasteries in the eastern lands of the former Commonwealth were characterized in a fairly limited chronological range, present a typical bibliography of monastic books. P.P. Gach too wrote about the fate of the monastic books (Gach, Piotr Paweł (1984); *Mienie polskich zakonów i jego losy w XIX wieku*, Rzym 1979; *Geografia strat zakonów polskich w końcu XVIII i w XIX wieku*, Rome 1980), however, these works still do not fully reflect the problem of book culture in the monasteries in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

In the context of these works, the project provides a comprehensive, based on archival and library research, presentation of bibliographic processes in this environment; on the other hand, it provides recording of intellectual heritage of representatives of male monasteries in these lands, and finally provides verification of stereotypical and often deprecating assessments of the role of reading and the book in monasteries. Scientific reflection on the monastery as a cultural institution in which books and libraries had a very important place provides an insight into the essential content of the spiritual life of monastic groups. It poses a number of questions for us to answer, for example, to what extent did these actions constitute an integral part of the spiritual ideal and a result of attempts to accomplish it? It also allows us to find an objective system of values needed to assess the intellectual heritage of individual congregations, monastic activities in religious, national and social life.

## Research methodology

On the one hand, the method of research on the history of monastery collections is determined by the specific place of their functioning, however, on the one hand it is determined by the fate of these collections, especially the destruction and dispersion of their archival and library resources being an effect of liquidation of monastic institutions. Therefore, the basis of the research is to carry out numerous archival research works that serve to reconstruct the principles of organization and operation of monastic libraries. Both searches in national and church archives within Poland as well as abroad (Vilnius, Minsk, Grodno, Saint Petersburg) are necessary.

A rich set of direct sources as well as inventories and catalogs always provides basic information needed to analyze the book culture in the monastery, however, equally important is the taking into consideration in the research indirect sources such as documents regulating the life of monastic communities - rules and commentaries to them as well as constitution, where issues of organization and functioning of libraries as well as the principles of individual and collective readings in the monastery were outlined, as well as chronicles, *menologia*, *after-visits entries* and literature created in monastic circle - sermons, historical, legal, spiritual and philosophical texts.

The surviving copies of the books and the provisional notes found therein, and all the traces of reading, constitute a direct source of information not only on the content of book collections, but also on the reading interest of the monks. The

project supposes their registration, elaboration and analysis as well as an attempt to establish a certain canon of texts operating in monastic circuit. These searches are based both on scanning through available and published library informants as well as on recording of scattered fragments of these collections in state and church libraries. The basis of the project is to create a base of manuscripts and prints of monastic provenance from these lands.

Monastic book collections ought to be examined in a multi-faceted way. They are diverse collections, dominated by various religious, philosophical and theological literature, but also rich in historical, legal, medical, literary and textbook literature. They are meant to be studied using basic book knowledge methods – typographic, bibliographical and provenance, but also a whole set of methods specific to historical, anthropological, social, ethnological, and literary expert studies. Analyzing the content of collections requires particular caution, mainly due to the incomplete nature of the material and lack of certainty as to the relationship between the creators of the collections and their owners.

Elaboration of study results will be presented in several problem groups, including those taking into consideration synthetic outline of the history of the male orders at an established place and time, structure of particular monastic observations, monastic formation and education, normative bases of functioning of the book and reading, and finally the monastery as a place of book creation, circulation and reception of texts in this environment.

### **Synthetic description of obtained results**

The prepared synthesis on the issue of *the book Culture in the male orders of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century* constitutes an attempt at monographic presentation of the problems of book culture in male monasteries existing in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, from their establishment until liquidation of local monastic network and the abolition of individual institutions.

During the research project, the author conducted numerous archival and library research, mainly in Vilnius, Minsk and Grodno. Source materials from the Russian archives collections collected over several years as well as sources found in Polish collections on the territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, were also put used.

The result of the conducted research was accumulation of a rich source database related to the functioning of book collections in male Roman Catholic monasteries in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and circulation of text in the discussed group.

The base of documents illustrating the functioning of the book in individual monastic observations was also complemented by the numerous manuscripts and prints of monastic provenance from these lands. The query was conducted at: Lietuvos Valstybinis Istorijos Archyvas: 694 *Wileńska katolicka Kuria Metropolitalna*, 604 *Rzymskokatolicki konsystorz duchowny biskupstwa wileńskiego*, 696 *Kancelaria biskupstwa żmudzkiego*, 993 *Kurator szkół parafialnych Guberni Wileńskiej*, 669 *Rzymskokatolicki konsystorz duchowny biskupstwa żmudzkiego*), Department of manuscripts and old prints, the Vilnius University Library: 3, 4, 57, 196, Department of manuscripts, the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences Library: 9, 11, 43, 44, 273, 318, Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania: 90, 155, 190. Archival research was continued in the collections from Minsk and Grodno, and from the Polish

collections: primarily in the collections of the Jagiellonian Library, the National Library of Poland, the Czartoryski Library, PAU and PAN Library in Krakow, the Warsaw University Library. The source database was complemented using numerous bibliographic bibliographies. The base of documents illustrating the functioning of the book in particular monastic observations was also supplemented with numerous manuscripts and prints of monastic provenance from these lands. Preserved copies of books and provenance notes found in them as well as all traces of reading are a direct source of information not only on the content of book collections, but also on the reading interest of the monks. The project supposes their registration, elaboration and analysis as well as an attempt at establishing a certain canon of texts operating in monastic circulation. These searches are based both on looking through available and published library informatics and on recording of fragmented fragments of these collections in scientific and church libraries.

Literature facilitating description of cultural heritage of monasteries in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was also collected, a chapter devoted to problems connected with methodology and primary source analysis of this type of research was compiled, the structure of the network of Latin male monastic orders of the various observatories in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was identified, and the book's cultural manifestations in monasteries within this region was analyzed, including examples of the original works of representatives of the male monastic orders.

Based on archival and library research, biblical processes were analyzed, especially the creation, circulation and reception of texts in the monastic environment, the role of the book in the formation operating there, the canon of the collected, copied and read books, the rules of library organization. This issue will be presented taking into consideration social, religious and religious context of these issues, which will allow for complete the image of Old Polish culture of the word and the history of the book in the territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

An attempt was made to show the phenomena and processes of functioning of texts in the monastic circles in a multifaceted way. The study takes into consideration analysis of the formation and education of monks, canons of the books created and collected by them, used in pastoral work, in teaching, but also in scholarly and literary work, monastic publishing initiatives in the context of the social impact of these monasteries.

Monastic book collections ought to be examined in a multi-faceted way. These are diverse collections, dominated by varying types of religious, philosophical and theological literature, but also rich in historical, legal and medical texts, in literary and textual literature. They are to be studied using basic book knowledge methods - typographic, bibliographical and provenance, but there is also a need to reach for a whole set of methods specific to historical, anthropological, ethnological, and literary research. Analysis of the content of collections calls for particular caution, this mainly being due to incomplete material and lack of confidence in the relationship between the creators of the collection and their owners.

In the elaboration of study results, an attempt was made at taking into consideration synthetic outline of history of the male orders in the established place and time, the structure of particular monastic observances, monastic formation and education, normative basis for the functioning of the book and reading, and finally the monastery as a place of book creation, circulation and reception in this environment.

## References

- Dębowska, Maria (2002), *Archiwa Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce. Informator*, oprac. Maria Dębowska, Kielce 2002
- Flaga, Jerzy (1998), *Formacja i kształcenie duchowieństwa zakonnego w Rzeczypospolitej w XVII i XVIII wieku*, Lublin 1998
- Gach, Piotr Paweł (1984), *Kasaty zakonów na ziemiach dawnej Rzeczypospolitej i Śląska 1773–1914*, Lublin 1984
- Gach, Piotr Paweł (1999), *Struktury i działalność duszpasterska zakonów męskich na ziemiach dawnej Rzeczypospolitej i Śląska w latach 1773–1914*, Lublin 1999
- Grzebień, Ludwik (1975), *Organizacja bibliotek jezuickich w Polsce od XVI do XVIII w.*, „Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne” 1975, vol. 30, pp. 223–282; vol. 31, pp. 225–282
- Kamolowa, Danuta i in. (2003), *Zbiory rękopisów w bibliotekach i muzeach w Polsce*, oprac. Danuta Kamolowa, przy współud. Teresy Sieniatckiej, Warsaw 2003
- Kawecka-Gryczowa, Alodia et al. (1959–1960), *Drukarze dawnej Polski od XV do XVIII wieku*, z. 5: *Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie*, ed. Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa, Krystyna Korotajowa, Wojciech Krajewski, Wrocław-Kraków 1959–1960
- Kłoczowski, Jerzy, *Zakony męskie w Polsce*, in: *Kościół w Polsce*, vol. 2: *Wiek XVI–XVIII*, Kraków 1970
- Kubicki, Paweł (1938), *Bojownicy kapłani za sprawę Kościoła i Ojczyzny w latach 1861–1915. Materiały z urzędowych świadectw władz rosyjskich, archiwów konsystorskich, zakonnych i prywatnych*, oprac. P. Kubicki, part 2: *Dawna Litwa i Białoruś*, vol. 4: *Niszczenie przez rząd rosyjski katolickich kościołów, kaplic, klasztorów [...], bibliotek [...]. Domówienie i zestawienie*, Sandomierz 1938
- Kurczewski, Jan (1912), *Biskupstwo wileńskie od jego założenia aż do dni obecnych, zawierające dzieje i prace biskupów i duchowieństwa diecezji wileńskiej, oraz wykaz kościołów, klasztorów, szkół i zakładów dobroczynnych i społecznych*, Wilno 1912
- Litak, Stanisław (1996), *Kościół łaciński w Rzeczypospolitej około 1772 roku. Struktury administracyjne*, Lublin 1996
- Narbutienė, Daiva (2004), *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos lotyniškoji knyga XV–XVII a.*, Vilnius 2004
- Pacevičius, Arvydas (2005), *Vienulynų bibliotekos Lietuvoje 1795–1964 metais. Dingęs knygos pasaulis*, Vilnius 2005
- Pearson, David (1997), *Provenance research in book history. A handbook*, New Castle 1997
- Pidtypczak-Majerowicz, Maria (1996), *Biblioteki i bibliotekarstwo zakonne na wschodnich ziemiach Rzeczypospolitej w XVII–XVIII wieku*, Wrocław 1996
- Račiūnaitė Tojana (2003), *Vizijos ir atvaizdai. Basijų karmelity palikimas*, Vilnius 2003
- Radwan, Marian (2001), *Kościół katolicki w archiwach Departamentu Wyznań Obcych Rosyjskiego MSW. Repertorium*, Lublin 2001
- Topolska Maria B. (2002), *Spółczesność i kultura w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim od XV do XVIII wieku*, Poznań–Zielona Góra 2002
- Ussas, Bronisław (1936), *Z dziejów grabieży i niszczenia polskiego mienia kościelnego przez Rosjan w świetle świadectw rosyjskich (1655–1925)*, part 1–2, „Przegląd Powszechny” 1936, vol. 53, vol. 210, no. 4, pp. 45–66; no. 5, pp. 185–203
- Wormald, Francis (1974), *The monastic library*, Baltimore 1974
- Żurek, Waldemar (2005), *Biblioteki Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce. Informator*, oprac. Waldemar Żurek, Kielce 2005

**Book culture in men monasteries of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 15<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries.****Abstract**

The aim of the research realised within the project was to present the book culture in the Roman Catholic men monasteries existing in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania since the elimination of the urban monastery network and the cassation of its individual outposts. An analysis was made of the literature created and used by these communities. The project assumed a multi-aspect presentation of the phenomena and processes of functioning of the texts in monastic environments. The research included an analysis of the formation and education of monks, the canon of the books created and stored by them, which were used in priesthood, education, but also scientific and readership work and the monastic publishing initiatives in the context of the social interactions of these monasteries.

**Keywords:** Book history, monastery, sources, Grand Duchy of Lithuania, 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries

Iwona Pietrkiewicz  
Institute of Information Sciences  
Pedagogical University of Cracow