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STATUTES OF LITHUANIA AS HISTORICAL MONUMENTS IN THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL SOURCES OF LAW

Among the researches carried out at the present stage of development of national historical and legal science, important place occupies learning and generalization of experience of systematization of legislation on Ukrainian lands. At the same time researchers focus attention on the codification of law of almost all chronological periods of Ukrainian law-making. However, despite multidimensionality of contemporary coverage of the history of Ukrainian law, there still remain a number of unexplored problems. In particular, of some interest is the study of the causes of completion, revealing the sources and structure of Lithuanian Statutes, as well as their application in the Ukrainian lands.

The greatest achievement in the systematization of law in Grand Duchy of Lithuania was signing of three Statutes of Lithuania in the XVI century. Lithuanian-Ruthenian law codification took place on the principles of priority of written laws (though the Statutes of Lithuania contain links to ancient customs), the unity of the law (though the Statute of Lithuania did not contradict the validity of other regulations), the sovereignty of the State (though in 1569 this sovereignty was lost) and the equality of all before the law (though actually statutes recognized the uneven legal capacity of different social groups).

The First Statute of Lithuania during its adoption was not printed. For practical usage, it was rewritten and distributed in hand-

written form. As a result of the evolution of legislation, handwritten lists of the Statute were supplemented with new articles

Subsequently, lists of the First Lithuanian Statute became numerous. They were also translated into other languages, including Latin (1530) and old Polish (1532). The Statute of 1588 was the first Lithuanian Statute, which was printed. Original language of this document was old Russian. Though on the Ukrainian, Belarusian and Lithuanian lands usually was used Polish edition of the Third Statute of Lithuania and publication in ancient Russian language was rare. However, it does not give evidence to state that the original language of the document was Polish, because all the Polish editions except edition of 1786 contained a reference to the possibility of an appeal to Russian edition if needed.

Lithuanian statutes were an important source of law in the Ukrainian lands. They provided continuity and succession of many regulations and institutions of Ukrainian law formed in Kievan Rus and Galicia-Volhynia state. The Statutes of Lithuania were distinguished by rather high for the time level of legal technique: there were many definitions of legal terms (e.g., crime, property rights, treaty, contracts, etc.). Lithuanian statutes also positively influenced the development of Ukrainian legal thought and the formation of legislation.