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ДНЕВНИК КАК ИСТОЧНИК ПО ИСТОРИИ РАННЕГО НОВОГО
ВРЕМЕНИ: ТОНКОСТИ НАУЧНОЙ ПУБЛИКАЦИИ И ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ

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Лазарева Арина Владимировна — кандидат исторических наук, доцент кафедры новой и новейшей истории истфака Московского государственного университета им. М.В. Ломоносова (Москва, Россия).

E-mail: unimoskau@yandex.ru

Researcher ID: AAU-6091-2021

A.V. Lazareva

THE DIARY AS A SOURCE ON THE HISTORY OF THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD: THE FINER ELEMENTS OF ACADEMIC PUBLICATION AND INTERPRETATION

Rec. ad op.: ERICH LASSOTA VON STEBLAU. KREUZ UND QUER DURCH EUROPA. VON KRIEG, POLITIK, KULTUR UND RELIGION. DAS TAGEBUCH DES HABSBURGERISCHEN DIPLOMATEN UND LANDSKNECHTFÜHRERS ERICH LASSOTA VON STEBLAU (1573–1594) / Hrsg. Th. Riis. Kiel: Solivagus-Verlag, 2021. 446 S.

Arina Lazareva, Lomonosov Moscow State University (Moscow, Russia).

E-mail: unimoskau@yandex.ru

Researcher ID: AAU-6091-2021

The last quarter of the twentieth century gave history — as an academic science — a number of new methods for studying sources, thanks to which a rather familiar and seemingly well-studied corpus underwent a thorough rethinking. This primarily applies to personal documents. To classify them, the famous Dutch historian J. Presser proposed a new term back in the late 1950's — “ego-documents”. Despite the controversy of many definitions given to the ego-documents, it has established itself in the academic literature since the 80's — 90's of the twentieth century¹ and is often used in the classification of memoirs, autobiographies, personal letters and diaries, since in all of these sources reveal not just private information, but the author's personality, his own unique and inimitable “I”. The anthropological and linguistic transcends with their inherent concentration on a person, the ways and evidence of his self-expression gave an impetus to the active publication of archival ego-documents and the

scientific reprint of valuable (but not commented on in accordance with the modern laws of source study) publications of the 19th century.

The publication of various personal testimonies in the last two-three decades has repeatedly become the basis for numerous successful projects of historians to introduce new ego-documents into academic

¹ For more, see.: *Krusenstjern B. von. Was sind Selbstzeugnisse? Begriffskritische und quellenkundliche Überlegungen anhand von Beispielen aus dem 17. Jahrhundert // Historische Anthropologie: Kultur, Gesellschaft (1994). S. 462–471; Ego-Dokumente. Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte (Selbstzeugnisse der Neuzeit 2) / hrsg. W. Schulze. Berlin, 1996; Dekker R.M. Jacques Presser's heritage. Ego-documents in the study of history // Memoria y Civilización. Anuario de Historia. 2002. № 5. P. 13–37. In Russia, publications on the subject be. См.: История в эго-документах. Исследования и источники / гл. ред. Н.В. Суржикова. Екатеринбург, 2014.*

circulation². The publication of the diaries of the imperial diplomat and military leader Erich Lassota von Steblau (1550–1616), undertaken by the Danish historian Professor Thomas Riis and a group of his colleagues, is a successful continuation of this already stable tradition of presenting little-known, enriched historic documents of personal origin to readers. This publication allows you to expand the discussion both about the term “ego-document” and the appropriateness of its use in relation to the copyright certificates of the 16th–17th centuries, and to refer to the possibilities of diaries and the boundaries of these texts as a historical source in the Early Modern period. The publication of E. Lassota's diary paves the way not only for new accents in the study of sources in the Early Modern period, but may also become a key to expanding narratives on the history of this period.

E. Lassota von Steblau belonged to the aristocratic elite of the Holy Roman Empire, being a descendant of a noble family, well-known in Silesia. He received a good education, graduated from the University of Leipzig³, and then, in accordance with the ideals of classical education of the second half of the 16th century, went on a European tour for several years, staying in Padua in 1576 to complete his studies at the University of Padua. E. Lassot began his career in the service of the Spanish King Philip II (1556–1598): he took part in the Spanish Conquest of Portugal in 1580. Returning home, he spent some time in his native Silesia, and later received the post of a diplomatic agent under the Archduke Maximilian (1558–1618), then – a diplomatic post under Emperor Rudolf II (1576–1612). His career was interrupted when he was taken prisoner by the Swedes (his Swedish captivity stretched for three years, from 1590 to 1593). His loyalty to the Austrian Habsburg dynasty was rewarded, and in 1611 he became an “imperial adviser” – a position that in most cases testified to personal ties with the imperial family, rather than about the real impact on internal and foreign policy affairs in the empire. Lassota's service ended in Kosice, then the capital of Upper Hungary, where he was – for several years – remained in charge of army supplies. Numerous events from of E. Lassota von Steblau's intriguing life were reflected in his diary.

T. Riis took as the basis for his publication materials that first saw the light in the second half of the 19th century, thanks to the German professor Robert Schottin⁴. Of course, the modern publication of the diary differs strikingly from the 19th century publication. Considering Lassota's diary not only as a historical source, but also as a source on the history of the language, T. Riis did not correct the grammar and style of the author's writing, allowing his “protagonist” to write as was customary for his time. Nevertheless, all nouns, in contrast to the publication of Shottin, were unified by the historian according to the modern rules of German writing. From the original edition, as noted by T. Riis in the preface, his publication is distinguished by a number of other important points, in particular, he deciphered the numerous abbreviations that Lassota constantly used, such as, for example, “village” (in the original “v”), “city” (in the original “c”) “market / fair” (in the original M), “breakfast” (in the original frst), making reading the text of the diary much more convenient. Scrupulous work with many archival originals allowed the historian to come to a number of important discoveries, including a chance to prove, thanks to the paleographic analysis of Lassota's archival letters, that the published manuscript was subjected to the author's own handwritten correction (p. 9). This discovery is extremely important for understanding the diary as a historical source. Traditionally, it is believed that the authors who kept the diary did not work on their periodic entries in the future, trying to keep in memory all the episodes, “how they actually happened”. However, for the early modern times, this statement cannot be unambiguous and universal, as T. Riis beautifully proves in his publication. The diaries of the early modern era could be revised by the author, depending on the life circumstances in which he fell. The text carried significant information, and its value began to be realized more and more during the formation of a single European communicative space of the 16th–17th centuries. The publisher rightly assumes that Lassota revised the manuscript of the diary, probably deliberately excluding certain passages that could cause him trouble in Swedish captivity.

Undoubtedly, one of the fundamental and most important differences in the modern publication of E. Lassota's diary is the academic commentary given by T. Riis. The publication is divided into five thematic/chronological chapters, each of which is followed by a page-by-page commentary on the main semantic

² For more, see.: Зарецкий Ю.П. Новые проекты изучения личных свидетельств (Нидерланды, Германия, Франция) // Автор, биография, письмо и чтение. Сборник докладов междисциплинарного исследовательского семинара факультета философии НИУ «Высшая школа экономики» / под ред. Ю.П. Зарецкого, В.П. Лихачева, А.Ю. Зарецкой. М., 2013. С. 24–41.

³ Absmeier Ch. Das schlesische Schulwesen im Jahrhundert der Reformation. Stuttgart, 2011. S. 193.

⁴ Tagebuch des Erich Lassota von Steblau. Nach einer Hs. der von Gerdtsdorff-Weicha'schen Bibliothek zu Bautzen / hrsg. R. Schottin. Halle, 1866.

categories used by Lassota. In the text of the diary itself, they are highlighted in bold for the convenience of the reader. The numerous translations accompanying each chapter deserve special attention. Lassota quite often cited copies of numerous documentary evidence in the original language. For example, a letter from a Polish diplomat to Stefan Batory (1575–1586) with a detailed description of the alignment of international political forces (p. 79–89), military orders (p. 43–48), or an official instruction of the Duke of Alba (1507–1582) dated August 28th 1580, was completely rewritten. There are many such interesting documents that reveal the nature of international relations of the era in Lassota's diary. All this material, extremely valuable for historians, was carefully translated by the researcher and placed in special sections "Translations" after the comments. T. Riis did a great job, collecting all the names in a special register, and those individuals who really played an important role in the life and in the story of Lassota, gave biographical characteristics. No less valuable for the scientific apparatus of the publication is the glossary, which includes an explanation of the typical and frequently encountered terms and concepts used by Lassota in Latin or other languages.

Thanks to the academic publication of the diary of E. Lassota von Steblau, T. Riis reveals to the readers both the political intricacies of the late 16th century and the peculiar everyday life of an early New Age person who spent a lot of time traveling. Lassota cannot be called a participant in big politics, but it is impossible to exclude his involvement in important, primarily foreign policy, processes of the last quarter of the 16th century would also be unfair. His diary contains unique descriptions associated with the so-called "First War of the Polish Succession" (1587–1588), in which he participated as the diplomatic representative of Archduke Maximilian, who was proclaimed king by part of the Polish magnates. Together with Maximilian Lassota was captured. In the service of Rudolf II, E. Lassota again found himself in the center of another military conflict in Eastern Europe. In 1590 he was sent on a mission to Muscovy during the Russian-Swedish War of 1590–1595. The Habsburg diplomat did not describe his mission, however, according to the assumption of the 19th century the Russian historian F. Brun, he was associated with anti-Swedish sentiments at the imperial court⁵. Lassota never reached the capital of the Russian state, as he was captured by the Swedish at the western border. A few years later, in 1594, appar-

ently using the reputation of a person who understood Eastern European affairs at the court of Rudolf II, Lassota was sent to the Zaporozhye Cossacks with gifts as a sign of the emperor's gratitude for the help they were ready to provide in the case of a Tatar campaign on the southern borders of the empire or in case of a Crimean invasion in the sphere of the Empire's geopolitical interests. It should be noted that the description of this journey of Lassota, published by Shottin, appeared rather quickly in the Russian translation. The Russian academic F. Brun, who sought to acquaint readers with the "antiquity of the south of Russia", translated, commented and published Lassota's notes on his trip in 1594.

During his travels, the Austrian diplomat risked his life more than once, which is reflected in detail in his notes. Thus, finding himself in Swedish captivity in 1590, he tells how the Swedes threatened him with the gallows, because they did not believe his words (p. 248). Of interest are Lassota's testimonies on the organization of diplomatic trips. Often, diplomats fell into the hands of charlatans, who promised to take them to the appointed place, but in reality abandoned them at the first opportunity, regardless of their high diplomatic rank. Lassota himself turned out to be the captain of a ship landed on an unfamiliar coast, en route to the Moscow state (p. 235). Along with political assessments, Lassota enthusiastically describes the everyday details of his travels: how he enjoyed a hot bath (p. 54), noted almost daily whether he had received breakfast, talked about the weather conditions and the trials of fate (p. 29–30; 239).

As T. Riis notes, from the diary, its general chronological framework of 1573–1594, only some fragments have been preserved in detail (p. 11). Records 1573–1576 sketchy. The years 1585–1589, 1590–1593 and January–August 1594 are covered much more fully. Despite the rare and obviously incomplete records of the 1670's, which T. Riis rightly did not exclude from the publication, we can conclude that the desire to keep a diary originated in Lassota in his youth (p. 14–18). This only confirms the uniqueness of the diaries of the early modern era. Few could afford at that time to write down their thoughts and impressions. This was primarily due to the level of literacy and social status of the author. According to various estimates, the literate in the Holy Roman Empire in the 16th–17th centuries comprised 2–4% of the population, while 10–30% of urban residents could hardly make out the printed text⁶. However, despite the imbalance in literacy, it is clear that more people in cities had

⁵ Брун Ф. Путевые записки Эриха Лассоты, отправленного римским императором Рудольфом II к запорожцам в 1594 г. СПб., 1873. С. 8.

⁶ Würgler A. Medien in der Frühen Neuzeit. Oldenburg, 2013. S. 34.

reading skills than in the villages, men were more likely to read than women, and in general, the higher the income, the higher was one's opportunity to learn grammar. Those. The notes of a 23-year-old young man, like E. Lassota, in 1573, testified to the level of his education and belonging to the aristocratic elite.

Future researchers, who will use E. Lassota's diary commented by T. Riis as a source for their work, will be able to fully assess the personality and self "I" of the imperial diplomat. However, it is necessary to take into account the specifics of the manifestation of their individuality by the authors of the early modern period in the ego — documents. As it is widely known, after J. Presseur in historiography, a discussion that has not subsided even today began both about the expediency of the term "ego-document" and about its content, especially regarding the evidence of the 16th–17th centuries. Today, following a number of specialists in this field, among whom such famous figures as R. Dekker, J. Amelang, V. Schulze, B. von Krusenstern occupy a special place, the very concept of "ego-document" has undergone changes, expanding its original boundaries. If J. Presseur argued that ego-documents can be understood as "those historical sources in which the researcher encounters "I" — or sometimes (Caesar, Henry Adams) "he" — as with the subject simultaneously writing and present in the text descriptions", and later clarified that ego-documents are those documents in which the ego deliberately or unintentionally reveals or hides itself⁷ then his followers, and sometimes even critics included in the category of ego-documents all sources in which a person talks about himself, doing it freely, as, for example, in a personal letter or diary, or in any other autobiographical manner.

Despite the author's self-expression necessary for the classification of ego-documents, the famous German historian W. Schulze emphasized that the sources of this type of the early modern era nevertheless contain many typical patterns, which were considered necessary when compiling any text, including personal records⁸. If we classify Lassota's diary as ego-documents, then we must not forget about this specificity of such personal testimonies. The first part of the diary is generally extremely stingy with its own assessments and is really rather focused on the traditional canons of travel diaries, in which the author was obliged to describe various monuments, shrines, and interesting legends that he met during the trip (for example, p. 54, 68, 73–74). Lassota's description of his

trip to the Zaporozhye Cossacks is no exception (p. 337–387). He talked in detail about all the "sights" that he encountered during his journey, practically not mentioning himself, describing what he saw not so much through his own perception, but simply stating the facts. The author's personal "I" comes to the fore more actively in extraordinary situations associated with a threat to life. Much more personal, usually negative, assessments and the author's mood were conveyed in the records of the mission to Poland and Russia, since both events were associated with great risks. He fears for his life, suffers from hunger and rejoices at any piece of bread (p. 231), is forced to endure bad weather (p. 231). In addition, Lassota presents himself as a cunning person with great life experience: "So that no one knows where it is buried (our good. — *A.L.*), I ordered a large fireplace to be built at this place" (p. 230). To a greater extent, he talks about himself personally, writing down how he was interrogated by the Swedes (p. 236–238). Here he emphasizes both the antiquity of his kind and social position. One cannot but agree with one of the generally recognized specialists in ego-documents today, V. Beringer, who argued that interrogations to a greater extent contribute to the disclosure of internal motives and certainly show the author's own "I"⁹. Lassota's notes confirm this subtle observation of the German historian. However, Lassota, even in his diary, is not always sincere. Perhaps, in the case of Swedish captivity, one should really remember about the deliberate revision of the diary. Lassota assured the Swedes that the main purpose of his appearance at Narva was the desire to enter the Swedish service (p. 233), although there is no confirmation of such intentions. Subsequently, the Habsburg diplomat also repeatedly resorted to distortions of his biography. For example, being with the Zaporozhye Cossacks, he claimed that he had never been to Poland (p. 363), while his diary shows his participation in the Polish campaign of Archduke Maximilian in 1587–1588.

The scientific publication of the diary of the imperial military leader and diplomat E. Lassota von Steblau, carried out by T. Riis, can be attributed to the qualitative modern publications of historical sources. When working with E. Lassota's diary, however, one should not forget the specifics of the ego-documents of the 16th–17th centuries. Truly personal experiences in them are often hidden behind stereotyped thinking, which largely depended on the social status and level of education of the author. The individuality of the author was not always present in the texts of the early modern period in the usual understanding today of

⁷ Dekker R.M. Op. cit. P. 14.

⁸ Schulze W. Ego-Dokumente. Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte? Vorüberlegungen für die Tagung "EGO-DOKUMENTE" // Ego-Dokumente. S. 24.

⁹ Beringer W. Gegenreformation als Generationenkonflikt oder: Verhörprotokolle und andere administrative Quellen zur Mentalitätsgeschichte // Ego-Dokumente. S. 282–283.

describing his own inner world of feelings and emotions. Nevertheless, it is she who is the main foundation of the entire story of Lassota. This is manifested both in what he, as a person of high culture, pays attention to, and in what specific words and expressions he describes what he saw. This allows us to extend the term “ego-document” to the diary published by T. Riis. This is, of course, an example of self-expression of the author of the early modern times, which can fully serve as proof of the legitimacy and necessity of using the term “ego-documents” in source studies. Commentaries, the scientific apparatus, supplements and translations made by T. Riis contribute to the inclusion of this unique source in the circle of texts for the study of the Early Modern era.

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