

<https://doi.org/10.15407/rksu.40.052>

UDK 930.2+94(477)"1907/1914":908

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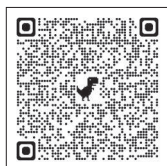
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**METRIC BOOKS AS A SOURCE FOR STUDYING
THE HISTORY OF EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE
ORTHODOX POPULATION OF THE CITY
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20th CENTURY:
ANALYSIS OF THE INFORMATION POTENTIAL
(USING THE EXAMPLE OF METRIC BOOKS OF
THE CYRIL AND METHODIUS BROTHERLY
CHURCH IN OSTROH, 1907—1914)**

The purpose of the work is to comprehensively analyse the information potential of metric books as a key source for reconstructing the history of the everyday life of the Orthodox population of the city of Ostroh at the beginning of the 20th century. This covers demographic, social, economic, cultural, and medical aspects. This is despite their inherent limitations. **The research methodology** is grounded in the principles of historical analysis, source criticism, and a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. This enables both the statistical analysis of demographic trends and the reconstruction of individual and family narratives, revealing the relationship between macro-historical events and the micro-level of everyday existence. **Scientific novelty** consists in systematizing and in-depth

Cite: Hodzhal, Svitlana, Hul, Tetiana (2026). Metric books as a source for studying the history of everyday life of the Orthodox population of the city at the beginning of the 20th century: analysis of the information potential (using the example of metric books of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherly Church in Ostroh, 1907—1914). *Manuscript and Book Heritage of Ukraine*, 1 (40), 52—67. <https://doi.org/10.15407/rksu.40.052>



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coverage of the multifaceted potential of metric books, which allows us to go beyond traditional narratives and create a «bottom-up» history focused on the experiences of ordinary people. The study highlights how metrical books contribute to a more empathetic and accurate understanding of human experience in history, revealing the complex details of life, hardship, resilience, social structures, and cultural practices of past generations. **Conclusions** confirm that metric books are an exceptionally rich and indispensable source for studying the history of everyday life, providing a unique window into the realities of the past and contributing to an inclusive and democratic understanding of history.

Key words: metric books, everyday life, historical source, demography, social history, Ostroh, Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood Church.

Introduction. The study of «everyday life» is one of the most important areas of modern historical science. Unlike traditional narratives that focus on large-scale political or military events, the history of the everyday delves into the lived experiences of ordinary people: their routines, customs, beliefs, and interactions. This bottom-up approach offers a much richer and more nuanced understanding of the past. The move to studying everyday life reflects a broader historiographical trend that values social and cultural history over purely political narratives. Traditional history has often focused on elites and significant events. The emergence of social history and the history of everyday life marks a democratic turn in historical research, seeking to understand the experiences of the general population. This makes sources such as metric books, which document ordinary lives, exceptionally valuable.

Among the variety of primary sources, metric books (or parish registers) act as a fundamental source for historical research, especially for demographic, social and economic history. They are not just genealogical records, but repositories of rich socio-historical data. Their unique ability for quantitative and qualitative research into population history and historical demography is extraordinary. This dual utility allows for both statistical analysis of trends and the reconstruction of individual and family narratives. The status of birth records as a primary source for studying population dynamics and family history means they are indispensable. Without them, significant layers of social and demographic history would remain unknown. This elevates their importance beyond mere data collection to the status of fundamental pillars of historical understanding, underscoring the critical need for source criticism and methodological rigour in their use. The central argument of this article is that metric books have a large and multifaceted information potential that allows for a deep and detailed reconstruction of the history of everyday life, covering demographic, social, economic, cultural, and medical aspects. This is despite certain inherent limitations.

Relevance of the research topic. The relevance of the study is due to the growing interest in micro-historical approaches and the history of everyday life, which requires the involvement and in-depth analysis of primary sources capable of revealing the lives of «ordinary» people. Metric books, as systematic

records of civil status acts, are one of the most accessible and informative sources for reconstructing demographic processes, social structure, economic realities, cultural practices, and the health status of the population of past eras. Their potential allows us to go beyond macro-historical narratives and delve into specific life stories, making the study of everyday life more complete and credible. The study of the metric books of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood Church of the city of Ostroh for 1907—1914 will not only expand the source base of historical science, but also fill gaps in regional history. This provides valuable material for understanding social, demographic, and cultural processes at the micro-level in the Ukrainian urban environment of the early 20th century.

Analysis of research and publications. Since the 19th century, birth records have attracted the attention of researchers as a unique source for studying demographic processes. Famous pre-revolutionary historians, such as D. Bagaliy and V. Antonovich, used them to reconstruct the history of individual settlements. In Soviet historiography, metric books as a source were less common, but at the end of the 20th century, with the development of historical demography and micro-history, interest in them was revived.

A significant contribution to the theoretical understanding of the source-based potential of metric books was made by Ukrainian researchers, in particular L. Zashkilnyak, who pointed out their importance for the reconstruction of social structure, migration processes, and family relations. Russian scholars, such as B. Mironov, used metric books to study the social history of Russia, analysing marriage customs, the age structure of the population, and causes of mortality.

It is also worth noting the works of V. Kabuzan, which concern demographic processes in Ukrainian lands, as well as the research of O. Gurzhiy, which reveal the features of demographic processes in the Cossack elders. Kyiv researchers T. Makovetsky and O. Novytsky examined metric books through the prism of issues of demographic processes, in particular, they were engaged in compiling «tables of mortality and fertility» [12, p. 101].

The study of metric books as a historical source began in the imperial period. Among the first researchers, such as S. Grigorovsky and L. Novikov, metrics were considered from the point of view of legal and organizational aspects [4]. Demographer S. Novoselsky identified the main shortcomings of church registration, in particular its orientation to religious events, rather than demographic data [15].

During the Soviet period, after a long ideological hiatus, interest in metric books was revived in the 1970s and 1980s. Researchers, including H. Palli, A. Yelpatyevsky, and V. Kabuzan, emphasized the information potential of these sources for historical and demographic research, although they also noted their shortcomings [12]. They viewed metrics primarily as a source for statistics, rather than for studying everyday life.

At the present stage, starting from the end of the 20th century, the emphasis in research has shifted. Scientists, in particular D. Antonov and I. Antonova [1],

divided the content of metric books into statistical and nominative parts. The nominative part, which contains data on social status, profession and relatives, allows studying local and personified history. Due to this, metric books are actively used for the reconstruction of everyday life, which is an urgent task for modern historical science.

In the context of the history of everyday life, the works of N. Yakovenko [16] are important, focusing on micro-historical analysis, in particular, through the study of family histories. In modern Ukrainian historiography, there are many studies devoted to the study of individual metric books. They are beginning to be studied in several directions, works on historical demography are appearing, and methods for using the data contained in the metrics are being created. Thus, among Ukrainian researchers in this field, it is worth noting I. Lyman [13; 14], S. Guzenkov [5], O. Zadniprovsky [9]. The modern historiography of the study of metric books is marked by a significant number of works. These documents have become a valuable source for statistical, demographic and genealogical research. Complex methods of information processing are actively used; in particular, specialized databases are being created.

It is worth noting that studies devoted specifically to the metric books of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood Church of the city of Ostroh from 1907 to 1914 are absent. However, there are publications on the history of the church by L. Zhukovskaya [7; 8]. In general, the history of Ostroh has been studied by such researchers as M. Kovalsky [10], S. Yesunin [17, pp. 45—49], O. Bondarchuk, V. Bondarchuk. Their works are mainly focused on political, cultural and social aspects [3, pp. 63—79], and not on a detailed analysis of everyday life, including based on metric books. Therefore, this study should fill this historiographic gap, focusing on the analysis of the information potential of a specific source.

Research objective. The purpose of the study is to analyse the information potential of the metric books of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood Church of the city of Ostroh from 1907 to 1914. This is a source for reconstructing the history of the everyday life of the Orthodox population of the city at the beginning of the 20th century.

Presentation of the main material. The metric books of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood Church in Ostroh cover the period from 1907 to 1914. These records were kept in the church, the history of which is closely intertwined with the activities of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood. Interestingly, the church was founded on the site of the old Capuchin monastery, which was liquidated in 1832. The decision to build it was made on October 22, 1865. Today, this place is known as the student and teacher church of the Rev. Fedir Ostrohsy [8, p. 118].

Already on January 19, 1866, Emperor Alexander II donated 19 thousand rubles for the restoration of the monastery's defunct church with the aim of transforming it into a church and for other charitable initiatives of the brotherhood. After the completion of the work, on October 10 of the same year, the church of

Saints Cyril and Methodius was consecrated. Divine services were held here every Saturday, as well as on Sundays and holidays [7, p. 393].

Although the church continued its activities for a long time, after the signing of the Treaty of Riga in 1921, according to which Ostroh was ceded to Poland, it found itself under the jurisdiction of another state. In February 1930, the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood was finally liquidated, and the church was closed and transferred to the Catholics. In the period 1938—1939, the building was rebuilt into a church, returning it to its almost original appearance [2, p. 125].

Metric books were primarily church records kept by church parishes (Orthodox, Catholic, etc.) for administrative and spiritual purposes. Their original purpose was to record sacraments (baptisms, marriages, burials) and to record church membership and religious affiliation. The spread of metric books in the Ukrainian lands that were part of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires was due to the relevant state and church decrees that mandated their keeping. For example, in the Russian Empire, their keeping was mandatory from the beginning of the 18th century, and from 1802 they became official civil status documents.

The ecclesiastical origin of the register books inevitably shapes their content and can introduce potential biases. Since the church kept these records, their primary focus was on individuals under its jurisdiction. This means that non-believers, those outside formal religious structures, or events not sanctioned by the church (e. g. unregistered births, civil marriages) may have been under-represented or absent altogether. This requires a critical approach to the «completeness» of the data for a comprehensive history of everyday life.

The typical structure of the birth records included three main sections: birth (baptism), marriage, and death (burial). Birth records contained detailed information about newborns and their families. Usually, the date of birth and baptism, the child's name, the names of the parents (often with an indication of the father's profession and social status), the names of the godparents (godparents), and sometimes notes on the legality of the birth were recorded. For example, in the birth records of the Kyiv Spiritual Consistory, in addition to the basic data, other information could be recorded that allowed tracking changes in the composition of families and their social status.

An analysis of the birth records of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood Church in Ostroh for the period from 1907 to 1914 allows us to reconstruct the demographic picture of its parish. During this time, the following statistical data were recorded: 17 infants were baptized, of whom 5 were boys and 12 were girls (16 of them were Orthodox); 7 marriages were concluded (in 1907, 1908, 1910 and 1912); 13 burials were carried out (9 women and 4 men) in 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1913 and 1914. It is worth noting that the names Mykhailo and Maria are most often mentioned on the pages of the birth records, which indicates their popularity among parishioners. These data reflect a relatively small number of

believers, which is probably due to the special status of the church and the religious composition of the population of Ostroh at that period [6, fols. 2—49].

Marriage records recorded: the date of marriage, the names of the bride and groom, their ages, social status, previous marital status (single, widowed), the names of the parents, and the names of witnesses. Witnesses often indicated social connections and networks. For example, the registry books of the Volyn Spiritual Consistory (to which the Cyril and Methodius Brethren Church belonged) recorded the ages of the bride and groom, their social status, and the names of the parents, which allowed for the study of demographic and social aspects of marriages.

All the records of the birth records constantly mention the names of the church rector Ioan Balevich, and the psalmist, Volodymyr Krynytskyi. An interesting detail is that in November 1910, Volodymyr Krynytskyi became the godfather of Vera, the daughter of peasants from the village of Borovytsy. They, according to the next section of the birth record, were married in the same church in January of the same year. This fact gives grounds for assuming that the bride could have been pregnant at the time of the wedding. It is also indicative that another church servant, the freelance psalmist Andriy Podilshalskyi, was a witness on the bride's side at their wedding [6, fols. 2—49].

The rector of the Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius was Ioan Balevich, who conducted almost all the services. However, for unknown reasons, he was replaced twice by other priests. In 1908, two baptism ceremonies (February 1 and April 14) were conducted by Oleksandr Korchzhan, a priest and law teacher at the Ostroh Men's Gymnasium. From April 20, Ioan Balevich appears in the records again. The second replacement took place on November 7, 1910, when the priest of the Ostroh Cathedral, Mykhailo Tuchemsky, performed the baptism of the child, and the psalmist Volodymyr Krynytskyi became her godfather [6, fol. 21].

Other records in the birth records also mention church ministers. For example, in April 1913, the deacon of the Cyril and Methodius Church, Sozontot Yarovtsky, baptized his son Boris. Interestingly, the child's godmother was a woman from Kyiv named Paraskeva [6, fol. 40].

Death records contained information about the date of death and burial, the name of the deceased, his age, social status, cause of death (if indicated), and sometimes the place of death or burial. In particular, the metric books of the Volyn Spiritual Consistory recorded the names, ages, and social status of the deceased, which allowed for the analysis of mortality rates and life expectancy. It is important to note that although the main categories were consistent, the specific fields and level of detail could vary significantly depending on the region, period, and even on the individual parish priest [11, p. 150].

Birth records are fundamental to reconstructing the size, growth, and decline of populations. Birth, marriage, and death records allow for the calculation of fertility, mortality, and natural population growth rates. They also allow for the reconstruction of family composition, the number of children born to a couple,

and patterns of birth spacing. This allows for the analysis of fertility rates and family size across generations.

Data on age at marriage and age at death provide insights into life expectancy, typical life cycles, and the timing of major life transitions. For example, analysis of the birth records of the Volyn Spiritual Consistory allows us to determine the average age at marriage, which is an important demographic indicator. Records of place of birth and residence provide important data for studying internal migration, both short-term (e. g., within the district for marriage) and long-term.

The ability to quantitatively track demographic trends allows us to identify periods of crisis or prosperity. Spikes in mortality rates or declines in birth rates can be directly correlated with historical events such as famines, epidemics, or economic downturns. Conversely, periods of steady population growth can indicate relative stability and prosperity. This allows us to go beyond simple numbers and understand the direct impact of macro events on daily survival and family planning. Analysis of migration patterns can indirectly reveal economic opportunities or hardships in different regions. A consistent pattern of population outflow from a given area may indicate economic hardship or lack of opportunity, while an inflow of population may indicate the growth of industry or the availability of land.

This directly links demographic movement to the socio-economic realities and challenges that shape everyday life. Information on the occupations and social status of parents, spouses, and witnesses allows us to map social hierarchies in communities. This can reveal the prevalence of different social groups (e. g. peasants, clergy, nobility, merchants). The consistent recording of godparents and witnesses at marriages provides invaluable data for reconstructing family networks, patronage systems, and wider social ties in the community. Godparents often represented important social ties that extended beyond the immediate family.

By comparing occupations and social status across generations (e. g., the father's occupation at birth versus the son's occupation at marriage), researchers can infer patterns of social mobility. Birth records can also reveal the prevalence of stepfamilies and single-parent families, offering a more nuanced view of family dynamics that goes beyond the idealized nuclear family. Birth records from other churches in Ostroh recorded cases of illegitimate births, allowing for the study of social norms and their observance, but no such cases were found in the birth record under study.

Analysis of the professional status of the individuals mentioned in the service records showed that retired servicemen did not indicate the place of their previous service, while active servicemen recorded this data. In particular, the records include: godfather — captain of the 32nd Artillery Brigade; groom-second lieutenant of the 38th Artillery Brigade; witness on the groom's side — serviceman of the 10th Engineer Battalion. It is noteworthy that soldiers of various ranks of the 32nd Artillery Brigade are mentioned in the records repeatedly [6, fols. 9, 18].

The birth records also record other representatives of civil professions who held various positions. Among the educators there is a doctor of medicine, teachers of the Ostroh Men's Gymnasium, the Lutsk Gymnasium, the Volyn Women's School, as well as the director of the Ostroh Women's School named after Count Bludov.

As for representatives of state power, the records include justices of the peace of the Lutsk and Izyaslav — Ostroh districts, as well as the chairman of the congress of judges of the latter. This information indicates that the parishioners of the church belonged to different social classes, including representatives of the intelligentsia and the state administration [6, fols. 2—49].

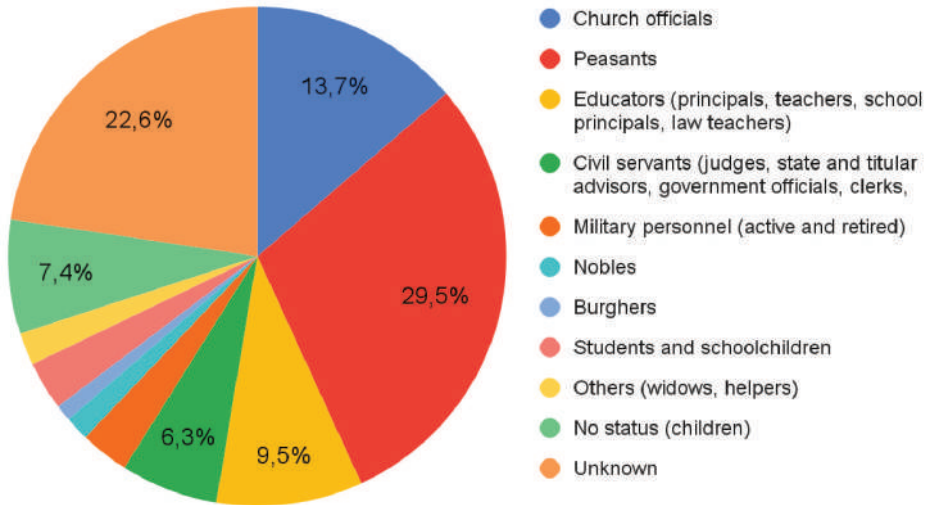
Records of conversions to Orthodoxy are rare, but all recorded cases concern one family. On September 20, 1909, three sisters (aged 14, 12, and 8) were baptized of their own free will. Five years later, on September 17, 1914, their fourth sister, aged 9, also converted to Orthodoxy [6, fols. 17, 45].

Detailed information on godparents offers a unique qualitative perspective on community cohesion and social capital. The choice of godparents was often strategic, reflecting alliances, friendships, or aspirations for social advancement. Analysis of who chose whom as godparents can reveal the strength of local ties, the role of patronage, and the informal social networks that supported daily life. The presence of diverse family structures challenges simplistic narratives of family life and highlights the resilience of societies in the face of mortality. High rates of remarriage and the formation of stepfamilies indicate how communities adapted to high mortality rates by ensuring household continuity and childcare. This reveals practical, often pragmatic aspects of family life and survival strategies in historical contexts.

Occupational records provide a direct snapshot of the economic activities prevalent in a community, indicating the dominance of agriculture, crafts, trade, or other sectors. Although birth records are not direct economic records, changes in occupational patterns over time or changes in marriage rates and age at marriage may indirectly reflect economic prosperity or hardship. For example, later marriages may indicate economic hardship.

Recorded occupations, while valuable, may be simplistic or reflect social ideals rather than the full complexity of economic activity. A single designation of «peasant» may conceal a variety of agricultural roles, seasonal work, or secondary crafts. This requires historians to be cautious in interpreting occupational data, recognizing that they may not capture the full informal economy or the multiple sources of income that characterized everyday economic life. Analysis of occupational data across generations can reveal the pace and nature of economic transformations. A gradual shift from purely agricultural occupations to a mix of agricultural and craft/trade occupations may signal early industrialization or increased market integration. This offers a dynamic picture of how economic forces transformed everyday work and livelihoods.

Number of mentions



III. 1. Socio-professional structure of parishioners (1908—1914). Compiled by the authors

The status of women in the birth records was often determined by their relatives. For example, women were recorded as the wife of a merchant, the daughter of an official, or the daughter of a retired colonel. This reflects the patriarchal structure of society at the time, where a woman's social position largely depended on the status of her husband or father [6, fols. 2—49].

Directly mentioned professions of women are rare and limited to the field of education. Records indicate that women worked as teachers or other employees of various educational institutions, which was one of the few ways of professional fulfilment available to them [6, fols. 2—49].

The names given to children provide insights into popular saints, family traditions, and cultural influences. Repetitive names for deceased children may reflect practices of remembrance. As church records, birth records inevitably reflect the religious life of the population. The timeliness of baptisms, especially for newborns, may indicate fears of infant mortality and the importance of religious rites for salvation. Birth records also record a case of alleged name inheritance: the father of a newborn in 1911, Mykola, had the name and patronymic Mykolai-vych [6, fol. 27].

The presence or absence of signatures (versus marks) for parents, witnesses, or godparents provides a direct, albeit imperfect, measure of literacy levels in a community, offering insights into educational access and cultural capital. Records of illegitimate births and other «deviations» from social norms (e. g., «out-of-wedlock») shed light on contemporary moral values, societal attitudes toward births outside of marriage, and the role of the church in maintaining social order.

The birth records record one case where the parents of a child born in 1908 were of different faiths: the father was Lutheran and the mother was Orthodox. Presumably, the newborn was named Vera in honour of the mother, since they have the same name [6, fol. 9].

The recording of «illegitimate» births is not simply a statistical fact, but a reflection of the prevailing moral framework and authority of the church. The language used, the frequency of such records, and any subsequent notes (such as acknowledgement of paternity) reveal the social judgments and social stigma attached to non-conformity. This provides insight into the moral landscape that governed everyday interactions and personal lives. Trends in literacy over time can be correlated with broader social changes, such as urbanisation or the spread of schooling. An increase in the number of signatures, especially among certain social groups or women, may indicate expanded educational opportunities or a growing need for literacy in a developing economy. This connects a seemingly simple piece of data to major societal transformations affecting everyday life.

Where causes of death were recorded, they are important for understanding common diseases, the prevalence of specific diseases, and the impact of epidemics on communities. High rates of infant mortality, often evident in baptism and burial records, highlight the harsh realities of childhood and the challenges faced by families in historical periods.

The accuracy of «causes of death» should be critically assessed, as they reflect current medical knowledge and diagnostic limitations. Terms such as «fever» or «tuberculosis» were broad categories. Historians need to understand the historical context of medical terminology to avoid anachronistic interpretations. However, even vague descriptions provide insights into the perception of disease and the limitations of health care in everyday life. Analysis of mortality spikes can pinpoint the impact of major health crises on specific communities. Sudden increases in deaths caused by specific diseases (e. g., cholera, smallpox) allow us to map outbreaks, their duration, and demographic impact. This provides concrete evidence of how public health challenges directly shaped the daily lives and survival of populations.

The birth records also record the deaths of two young girls, daughters of prophets, who died with a small difference in time. Vira Gerasimovna Vilenska died in 1908, and Galina Georgievna Mogilevska in 1911. Both were students of the school named after Count Bludov, but the specific place of service of their parents is not specified in the records [6, fols. 10, 22].

Metric to Table 1 is a valuable source for the study of history, as it contains systematic records of births, marriages, and deaths. These documents allow researchers to delve into the daily lives of past eras, analysing social structure, demographic changes, and cultural practices. To better understand the information potential of metric books, the following table summarises the types of information and their potential for studying daily life.

Despite their value, the use of metric books as a historical source is accompanied by certain methodological challenges and limitations. Metric books are rarely complete. Gaps can arise due to loss, damage, or inconsistent record-keeping. Legibility due to handwriting, fading ink, or linguistic variations can also pose significant difficulties for researchers.

Church records reflect the lives of those who adhered to the dominant faith. Information about religious minorities or non-believers may be absent or incomplete. The inherent biases of church records mean that the metric books offer a partial view of everyday life, primarily through the lens of formal religious and administrative structures. To truly understand everyday life, it is necessary to be aware of what these records do not record. This requires a critical awareness of the «silences» in the archives and the need to seek out additional sources (e. g. court records, personal diaries, folklore) to triangulate and enrich the narrative. The level of detail may vary depending on the social status of the individuals recorded, potentially providing less information about the poorest or most marginalised.

Birth registers record formal events. Informal unions, unregistered births out of wedlock, or cohabitation practices may be underrepresented, resulting in an incomplete picture of everyday life. The lack of standardised forms, varying levels of detail, and inconsistent terminology across parishes or periods can make comparative analysis difficult. Information such as age or cause of death may be based on estimates or common knowledge rather than precise measurements, requiring careful critical evaluation.

The need for critical analysis of sources and triangulation with other historical sources is paramount to obtaining reliable historical conclusions. Relying solely on metric books, despite their richness, can lead to distorted interpretations. Cross-checking data with censuses, tax registers, court documents, or personal memoirs allows historians to verify information, fill in gaps, and gain a more holistic and accurate understanding of the complexities of everyday life.

Table 1. Causes of death of parishioners (1908—1914)

Year	Cause of death	Quantity
1914	From old age	1
1913	Meningitis, Cardiosclerosis	2
1912	Unknown	—
1911	Heart disease, Typhoid fever, Unknown	3
1910	Anaphylactic shock, Concussion, Unknown	3
1909	From old age	1
1908	Tuberculosis, Kidney disease	2
Totally		12

Note: Compiled by the authors

Table 2. Types of information in metric books and their potential for studying everyday life

Record category	Typical information fields	Potential for studying everyday life
Birth / baptism record	Date of birth / baptism, child's name, parents' names, father's profession, social status, godparents' names, legality certificate	Demography (birth rate, infant mortality), social structure (family ties, patronage, social status), cultural practices (names, religious rites, literacy), health (infant mortality)
Marriage record	Date of marriage, names of the bride and groom, age, marital status, previous marital status, names of parents, names of witnesses, signatures / marks	Demographics (marriage, age at marriage, migration), social structure (social stratification, networks, mobility), economic aspects (occupations, economic conditions), cultural practices (traditions, literacy)
Death / burial record	Date of death/burial, name of deceased, age, social status, cause of death, place of death / burial	Demography (mortality, life expectancy), health and disease (epidemics, common diseases, infant mortality), social structure (impact of mortality on families)

Scientific novelty consists in systematizing and in-depth coverage of the multifaceted potential of metric books, which allows us to go beyond traditional narratives and create a «bottom-up» history focused on the experiences of ordinary people. The study highlights how metrical books contribute to a more empathetic and accurate understanding of human experience in history, revealing the complex details of life, hardship, resilience, social structures, and cultural practices of past generations.

Conclusions. Based on the analysis of the metric books of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood Church of Ostroh for 1907—1914, several key conclusions can be drawn. First, the metric books are a valuable, multifunctional source for studying the history of everyday life, which goes beyond purely demographic statistics. They allow us to reconstruct the socio-professional structure of the parish, to identify its specifics and internal connections. The study showed that the parishioners of the church belonged to different social strata—from peasants and townspeople to representatives of the intelligentsia (teachers, doctors), officials and military personnel. This indicates that the church was a centre that united various social groups.

Secondly, the analysis of causes of death and religion helps to better understand the medical and sanitary situation in the city at the beginning of the 20th century and ethno-confessional processes. Records of common diseases (tuberculosis, typhus) and age-related deaths (senile infirmity) provide an idea of the main threats to the health of the population. The identified cases of conversions to Orthodoxy, even within the same family, reflect the dynamics of interfaith relations in Ostroh at that time.

Third, the nominative part of the metrics allows for the study of interpersonal relationships and families. Records of godparents, witnesses at weddings, and probable cases of name inheritance make it possible to reconstruct social networks, family traditions, and naming.

Thus, the information potential of metric books is much broader than statistical records. Their comprehensive analysis allows us to recreate the details of everyday life, which makes these sources indispensable for local, personalised, and historical-demographic research.

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Отримано 25 серпня 2025 р.

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Received on August 25, 2025

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МЕТРИЧНІ КНИГИ ЯК ДЖЕРЕЛО ДО ВИВЧЕННЯ ІСТОРІЇ
ПОВСЯКДЕННОГО ЖИТТЯ ПРАВОСЛАВНОГО НАСЕЛЕННЯ МІСТА
НА ПОЧАТКУ ХХ СТОЛІТТЯ: АНАЛІЗ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНОГО ПОТЕНЦІАЛУ
(НА ПРИКЛАДІ МЕТРИЧНИХ КНИГ КИРИЛО-МЕФОДІЇВСЬКОЇ
БРАТСЬКОЇ ЦЕРКВИ МІСТА ОСТРОГ 1907—1914 РОКІВ)

Мета роботи полягає у всебічному аналізі інформаційного потенціалу метричних книг як ключового джерела для реконструкції історії повсякденного життя православного населення м. Острог на початку ХХ ст., охоплюючи демографічні, соціальні, еко-

номічні, культурні та медичні аспекти, попри притаманні їм обмеження. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципах історичного аналізу, джерелознавчої критики та поєднанні кількісних і якісних методів. Це дозволяє проводити як статистичний аналіз демографічних тенденцій, так і реконструкцію індивідуальних та сімейних наративів, виявляючи взаємозв'язок макроісторичних подій з мікрорівнем повсякденного існування. **Наукова новизна** полягає в систематизації та поглибленому висвітленні багатогранного потенціалу метричних книг, що дозволяє вийти за межі традиційних наративів і створити історію «знизу вгору», зосереджену на досвіді звичайних людей. Дослідження підкреслює, як метричні книги сприяють більш емпатичному та точному розумінню людського досвіду в історії, розкриваючи складні деталі життя, труднощі, стійкість, соціальні структури та культурні практики минулих поколінь. **Висновки** підтверджують, що метричні книги є винятково багатим та незамінним джерелом для вивчення історії повсякденного життя, надаючи унікальне вікно в реалії минулого та сприяючи інклюзивному й демократичному розумінню історії.

Ключові слова: метричні книги, повсякденне життя, історичне джерело, демографія, соціальна історія, Острог, Кирило-Мефодіївська братська церква.