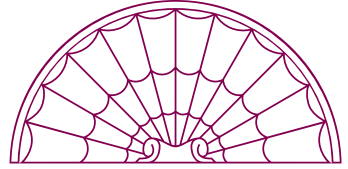




THE PALACE OF THE COMMONWEALTH





THE PALACE OF THE COMMONWEALTH

**Three times opened.
Treasures from the National Library of Poland
at the Palace of the Commonwealth**

Compiled by Tomasz Makowski
with Patryk Sapała

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National Libraries all over the world accumulate the intellectual achievements of countries, nations, cultures, and religions over their long existence. They demonstrate the civilizational aspirations of the communities that built them. Above all, they preserve intellectual heritage as it was and as it is, making them symbols of independence.

The National Library of Poland serves as a testament to this, having been closed and destroyed twice, coinciding with the loss of Poland's independence. Initially, during the transfer of this largest library of the enlightened Europe by Russian troops under Catherine II from Warsaw to Saint Petersburg. With the outbreak of World War II, a 5-year period commenced without the National Library, closed by the Germans. During the war, primarily due to the Germans' deliberate and arduous efforts to burn it, the Library lost almost its entire collection of manuscripts, old prints, music scores, maps, graphics, and drawings. Tens of thousands of manuscripts were burned. Most of these unique texts, preserved in manuscripts of Polish and European culture, will never be read again. This represents an unprecedented loss in world history. A glass urn containing the ashes of burned manuscripts and early prints will be permanently inscribed in history as an example of arrogant barbarism. Some of the incinerated volumes, solidified in October 1944, still retain their shape. The deliberate destruction of Poland's most valuable collections by the Germans had the symbolic character of depriving the nation of relics of its literature, historical sources of Polish history, and testimonies of unity of values expressed in literary, legal, philosophical, theological, musical, and linguistic evidence of Poland's cultural advancement.

The period between the first opening in the 18th century and the reopening after regaining independence spans over 100 years of intensive development of scientific and central institutions, including libraries worldwide. Occupied Poland did not participate

in it. The backlog was quickly made up for, a great merit of the Second Polish Republic.

During the People's Republic of Poland, the National Library tried to maintain as much autonomy as possible. An important role in its maintenance was especially played by pre-war employees, who passed on to subsequent generations of librarians the standards of independent functioning of the Library, primarily its unique role as a repository of Polish literature – printed and manuscript.

Just as after regaining independence in 1918, after the year 1989 Polish librarianship, including the National Library, had to catch up on years of backwardness due to limited contact with the international environment, as well as very limited financial possibilities. Fortunately, today the National Library of Poland can enjoy the successes and reputation as one of the fastest-developing national libraries.

In the treasury, we protect the most precious relics of our past, in its historical dimension, diversity, value, and tradition. Alongside the relics of the Polish language, such as the oldest record of Polish prose in the *Holy Cross Sermons*, the oldest complete text in the Polish language in the *Florian Psalter* of Saint Queen Jadwiga, and the most valuable sources of Polish statehood, such as the *Old Holy Cross Annals* with the phrases: “Dąbrówka came to Mieszko”, “Mieszko was baptized” from 965 and 966; the world's largest collection of musical manuscripts by Fryderyk Chopin, and literary works that ignite our imagination like *The Message of Mr Cogito* by Zbigniew Herbert with the quote: “Be faithful, go”; are treasures of many nations, cultures, languages, and religions. For hundreds of years, they peacefully co-created a community, respecting the values and laws of the Res Publica, which reciprocated by granting them freedom, tolerance, and encouragement to develop.

It is difficult to pinpoint the most valuable artifact among so many priceless ones. Among over 10 million items are relics of

medieval historiography: a manuscript of Gallus Anonymus or Wincenty Kadłubek's *Chronicle*. The artifacts of European medieval and Renaissance writing and illumination are also of priceless value.

A special place is occupied by collections of literary manuscripts. The only manuscript of Jan Kochanowski's poem, *Balladyna* by Juliusz Słowacki, *Ode to Youth* by Adam Mickiewicz, manuscripts and drawings by Cyprian Norwid with the poem *Hands swollen with clapping*, the most touching volume transcribed by Krzysztof Baczyński personally and given to his beloved Basieńka on their wedding day, and a collection of manuscripts by Zbigniew Herbert and Czesław Miłosz.

Among the musical relics, apart from the manuscripts of Fryderyk Chopin, are autographs of other Polish composers, including the complete archive of Henryk Mikołaj Górecki. The legacy of Krzysztof Komeda initiated the establishment of the Polish Jazz Archive.

The National Library of Poland has earned itself the status of an institution of public trust. This is why so many people from the cultural or scientific community want to pass on their collections to us.

Given the dispersion and destruction of 70% of Polish book collections during World War II, the preserved fragments, e.g., part of the magnificent library of King Sigismund Augustus or objects from family libraries – the Zamoyskis, Tarnowskis, and Krasińskis – are of particular importance.

Today, the Polish National Library is the largest scientific and public library in Poland. It has one of Europe's largest digital libraries, polona.pl, with 4 million items, which grows in cooperation with the best libraries in Poland.

The essence of human culture is not only the human understanding of the external world but also of oneself. Culture is the best educator of values, allowing us to identify with a community that has a longer history than an individual.

The National Library is the treasury of The Republic of Poland's literature; of what is the noblest, most beautiful, and most important in our history and culture.

We have no influence over the past, but we have an impact on what will be remembered and passed onto future generations. In every country, the memory of the state and the nation is the National Library. It is one of the symbols of independence.







OLD ANNALS OF THE HOLY CROSS

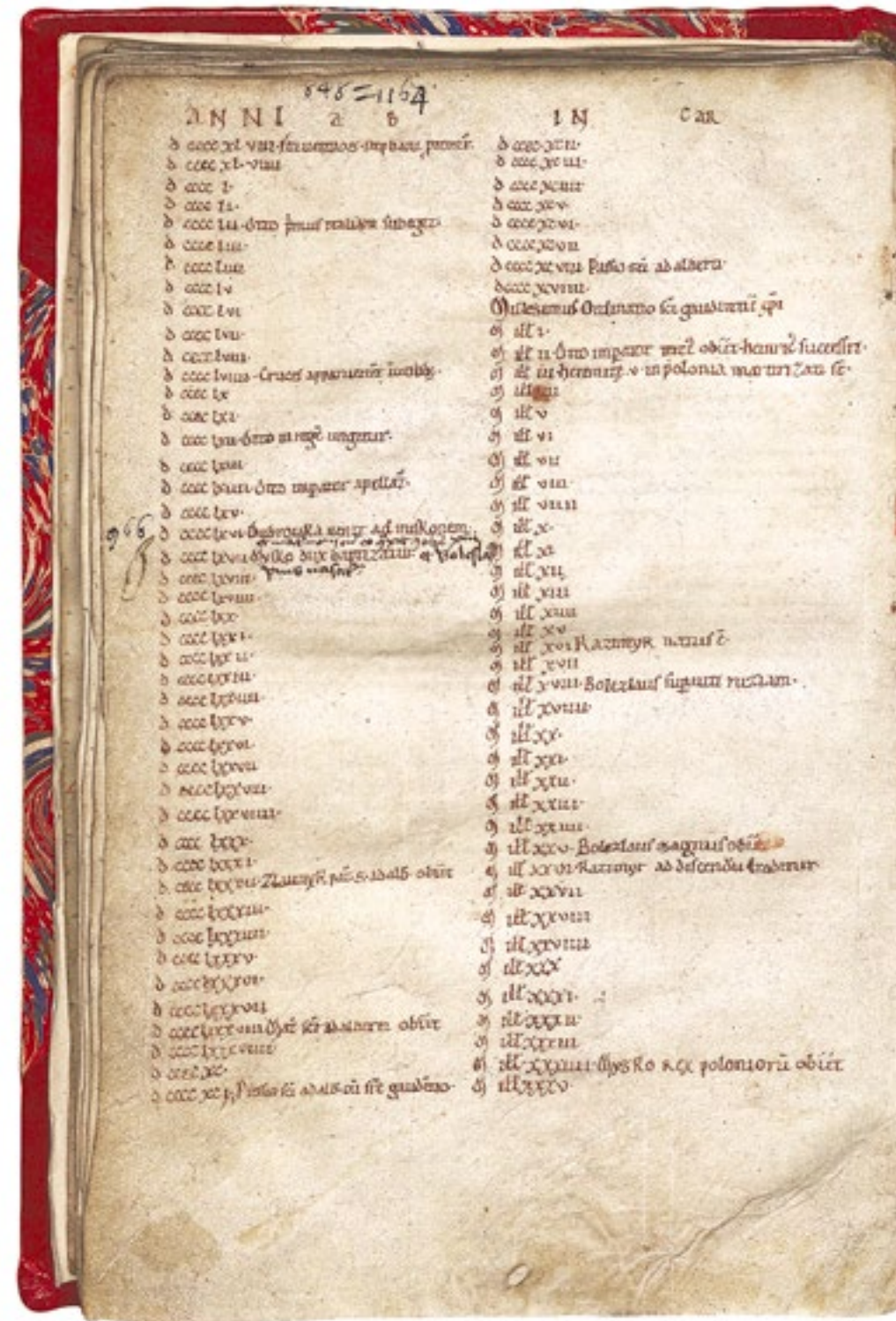
The oldest Polish written history, recording key events from the very beginnings of the Polish state. Its creator took the information it contains from an earlier yearbook that has not survived, probably written at the court of the first Piasts, the first Polish rulers.

The work consists of short, one-sentence notes in Latin, assigned to individual years. All the notes up to the year 1000 are incorrectly assigned one year later than the generally accepted date. For example, the coming of Bohemian Princess Dobrawa to Polish ruler Mieszko (*Dubrovka venit ad Miskonem*) is assigned to the year 966 instead of 965 and the bap-

tism of Mieszko (*Mysko dux baptizatur*) is assigned to 967 instead of 966.

The yearbook was produced between 1122 and 1136, most likely in Cracow. Its name is traditional, deriving from the place where it was stored: before it came to the first National Library, founded by the Załuski brothers in Warsaw in the 18th century, it belonged to the Benedictine library at the Holy Cross Abbey on Łysa Góra.

Before the outbreak of the Second World War the National Library of Poland sent the manuscript together with the Library's treasury to Canada for safety, from where it returned to Poland in 1959.



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qui nos dominet regis pa
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V e t e s t a t e i a n n i o i l i a s a r r e n t
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s i a n i m o p n a s i c i a o c a p p r i n t.
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i n a r e a n t s p r e u d e n a t e. n e l

POLISH CHRONICLE OF GALLUS ANONYMUS

The oldest Polish chronicle, describing events from the reign of the country's first rulers. As the identity of the author is unknown, he is referred to as *Anonymus*. The word *Gallus* ("Gaul") refers to the fact that he was previously thought to be a monk from the French Benedictine monastery of Saint-Gilles. In fact, more recent research shows that he was probably a Benedictine monk from the area around Venice. The Chronicle describes, in Latin, the beginnings of the Piast dynasty, including the legend of its founder, Piast the Ploughman. It ends in the times of Bolesław III Wrymouth, when the chronicle was written. The text also contains songs. The first song, which tells of the

miraculous birth of Prince Bolesław III Wrymouth (*Boleslavus dux inclitus*), is well known to Poles today thanks to modern versions of it, including one by the popular singer Ewa Demarczyk. The oldest surviving manuscript of the Chronicle was produced in the second half of the 14th century. It forms part of the collection of historical works known as the *Zamoyski Codex* after the family of magnates who owned the manuscript as early as the 16th century. After the Second World War, Jan Zamoyski, the 16th and final owner of the family library with the National Library of Poland, to which it now belongs.



WINCENY KADŁUBEK † POLISH CHRONICLE

A chronicle of Polish history in Latin, the first to be written by a Pole: Wincenty Kadłubek, Bishop of Cracow. The work is not only a historical chronicle but also a work of historiosophy, or the philosophy of history, showing the advanced intellectual milieu of the time. It dates from the late 12th, early 13th century and is written in the form of a dialogue between Jan,

Archbishop of Gniezno, and Mateusz, Bishop of Cracow. This device allows the author to present an exceptionally erudite argument.

Kadłubek's work is the source of many popular legends about the beginnings of the Polish state, such as the story of the Dragon of Wawel, and Queen Wanda, who – unlike the better-known story

in which she chooses death rather than marrying a German prince – in Kadłubek's version chases away his army. The manuscript contains a commentary by Jan of Dąbrówka, a professor from Cracow who as early as the 15th century was researching Kadłubek's text and lecturing on it to students. This copy belonged to the Benedictine Abbey in Lubiąż. After the

November Uprising against Russia, at that time occupying Poland, it was taken to St Petersburg, returning to Poland after the 1921 Treaty of Riga. In 1944, during the Second World War, the manuscript escaped destruction by being taken from Warsaw to Goerbitsch. From there, the Russians transported it to Moscow. It returned to the National Library of Poland in 1947.

Veneris Thetingar Commentator Elbingen turpiter ex proelio fugiens, non prius
fugam, q̄ in Elbing devenisset, sistere potuit, documentū non iustæ superbie et
presumptionis singulis futuris

*Superbam Vincti Magni Prælia legationū et
duos nuncios enses Wladislaus Rex misit
De acceptis, custodia corporis sui assignat
et lignum pugnae dare iubet*

Mortatis Regis Nicolaus Regni Poloniae Vicecancellarius acceptis, p̄ire
ceperat ad curiam, Rege galeam capiti superponere, et in pugna p̄ce-
dere gestiente, dum subito immittitur, duos Avolos, quoniam unus Romanorum
Regis, nigram v̄est aquilam in aureo campo, alter Sclavonum Ducis, rubeam gryphonem
in albo campo, deferrebant insignia, ex hostium exercitu egressos, duos enses natos
et vagina vacuos, deferentes in manibus, et p̄ntiam requirentes Regis, militū Poloiæ
tutela, ne violarentur, ad Regem conductos adesse. Illos si quidem Mgr̄ Em̄szie Vincti
ad Wladislaw Regem transmiserat, ad conferendum proelium sine cunctatione et
dimicandum acie exciturus, additis in sup̄ superbis mandatis. Quibus Wladislaw
Poloniae Rex nisi, ratus illos, ut emat, aliquot novæ et insolite legationis ferre,
et nuncios esse, Nicolaum Vicecancellarium renocare iubens, in eius atq; certorū Ba-
romum, quibus Regii corporis custodia mandata fuerat, v̄est Ducis minoris Masonie
Semonitzi, nepotis germana ex sorore Regii, Ioannis Mazik de Dambrowa, Zolane Bobei
Sbignei de Oleschna Secretarii, Dobeslaw Kobila, Volczkonis Rokutzi, Bogupbali Mgr̄i
coquinae, Sbignei Czajka de Nowotwor, Regii lancea, Nicolai Morawicz uexillum
parvulum, Danilkonis de Russia, sagittas Regias, deferentū, quoniam festinatio in proelium
Alexandri Ducem magnū Lituanie, et occupatio eius circa componentas suorum
acies, vetuit acciri, Avolorum legationem audit, qui reverentia aliquantulum apud Regē
facta, legationis sue verba Teutonico idioma, Ioanne Mazik interpretate, in hunc
modum dixerunt, Illius Rex, Mgr̄ Em̄szie generalis Vinctus, mittit tibi et fratri tuo,
suppresso et Alexandri et Ducis nomine, per nos Avolos, presentes duos gladios,
in suffragium pugnae future, quatenus cum eo et gente sua minus cunctanter, et magis
audacia, quoniam quem praesefers, animo, congregariis, neque decet eo latites et intra sylvas
nemoraque consistens, pugnam trahas, Si autem strictum et artum campum te ad expli-
candum tuorum acies habere existimas, offert tibi Mgr̄ Em̄szie Vinctus, quatenus te ad
certamen eliciat, de planicie campi, quam suo exercitu occupavit, ad quantum voles,
excedere, Aut saltem, ne pugnam viternis dilatum a te in contingat, Marti campum
quemlibet delige, Haec Avolati, In ipso autem legationis Avolorum puncto, Cruciferos
exercitus denunciationem suam, per Avolos factam, testatus, retrocessionem ad spa-
cium hanc exiguum notatus est fecisse, ut appareret eum factum Avolorum et m̄ti-
matorum suorum opere expressisse, Stulta profecto, et parum eorum religioni cognita
haec denuntiatio, quasi fortunam in suo consilio, si atque potestate habita, nonissent.
quod cuiusque luce illa assignatura foret, Wladislaus autem Poloniae Rex, superba et
arroganti legatione Cruciferorum audita, gladios de manibus Avolorum acceptos
non in bilem aut indignationem aliquam, sed in lachrymas resolutus, responsionem suam,
nulla deliberatione, mira tamen et quasi superna humilitate, patientia, et modestia
fretus, ad Avolos facit, Quamvis, inquit, in exercitu meo sufficientes gladios habes,
hostium meorum gladiis non egeam, pro maiori tibi suffragio tutela et defensione cause

JAN DŁUGOSZ † ANNALS

The most comprehensive and reliable account of Polish history produced in the Middle Ages, presented in the broad context of European history and geography, together with a history of the papacy and empire. The author, Jan Długosz, was a trusted secretary of Cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki, Bishop of Cracow, which is why in many places in the chronicle King Władysław II Jagiełło is presented in an unfavourable light and Oleśnicki in a favourable one.

Długosz worked on the chronicle right up until his death, using the abundance of sources he had access to thanks to his position at the royal court; he was, among other things, tutor to the sons of Casimir IV Jagiellon. The *Annals* include a detailed description of the famous Bat-

tle of Grunwald, and Długosz, although born five years after the event itself, was able to talk to actual participants in the conflict. The Polish-Teutonic war was later depicted in novel *Krzyżacy* (The Knights of the Cross) written by Nobel Prize winner Henryk Sienkiewicz, made into a film by Aleksander Ford in 1960. Both the novel and the film were immensely popular in Poland for decades. This carefully produced copy of Długosz's work dates from 1573–76 and was commissioned by Jan Krzysztoporski, the Castellan of Wieluń and owner of a notable collection of books. It later formed part of the Schaffgotsch Library in Cieplice. It found its way to the National Library of Poland following the Second World War.



TYNIEC SACRAMENTARY

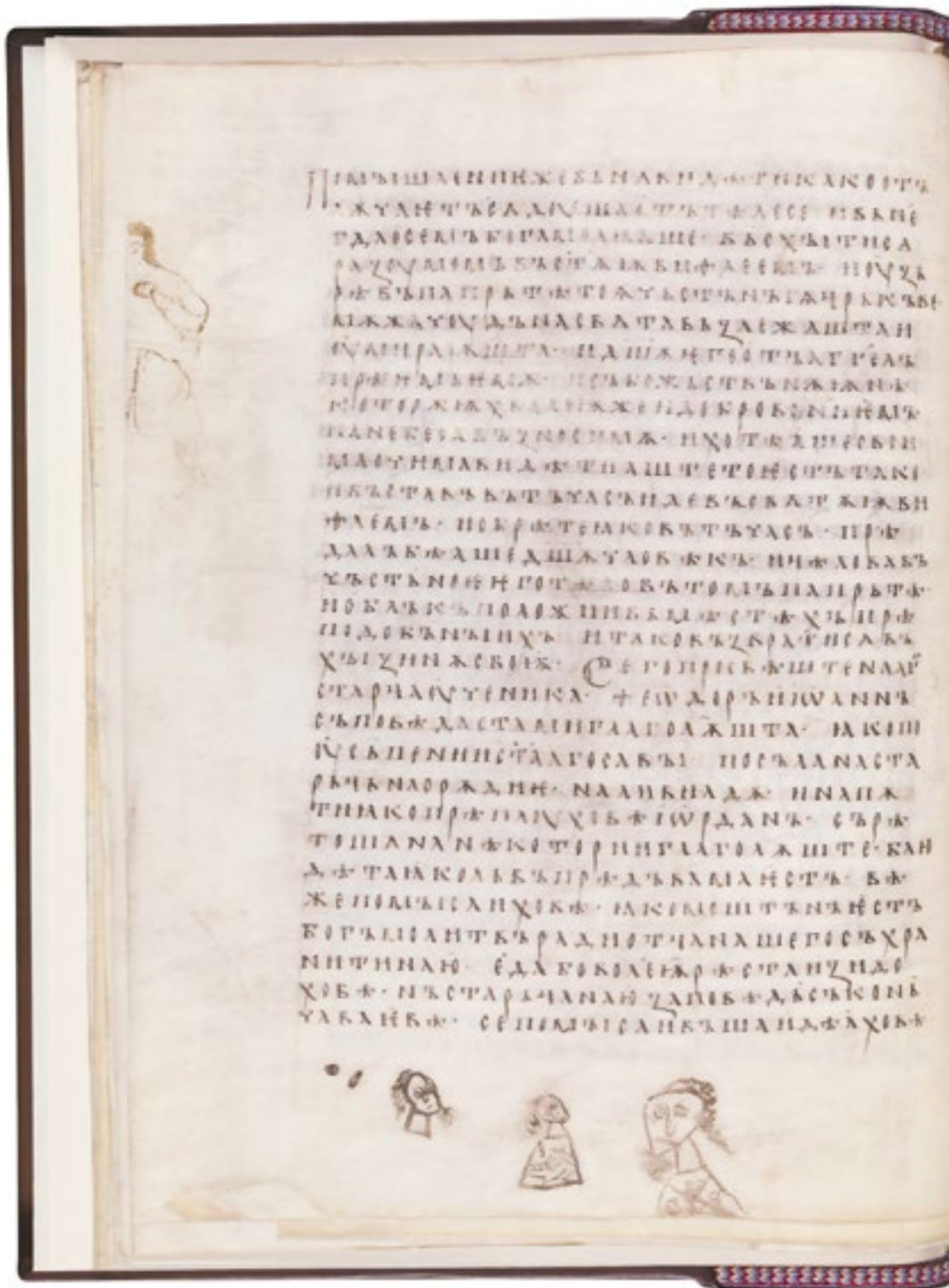
A luxurious liturgical manuscript kept in Poland for almost 1,000 years. It was transcribed and decorated with illuminations in Cologne, probably at the Monastery of St Pantaleon around 1072–75. Shortly afterwards or in the 12th century, it found its way to the Benedictine Abbey in

Tynieć near Cracow, one of the oldest and richest abbeys in Poland. We also know that it was used at the consecration of St Vincent's Church in Wrocław in 1149. The richly decorated parchment manuscript, in Latin, is partly written in gold and silver on purple-stained pages. It con-



tains 13 decorated initials and two full-page miniatures, one of the Crucifixion and the other a *Maiestas Domini* (Christ in Majesty). In 1814 the monks sold the manuscript to Count Stanisław Kostka Zamoyski, who included it in the library of the Zamoyski

family fee tail in the Blue Palace in Warsaw. After the Second World War, Jan Zamoyski, the 16th and final owner of the Zamoyski family fee tail, deposited the family library with the National Library of Poland, to which it now belongs.



THE SUPRAŚL CODEX

Inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, the Codex Suprasliensis is one of the oldest records of writing in Cyrillic and of the Old Church Slavonic language. Written in the late 10th century in Bulgaria by a copyist named Retko, the Codex contains the lives of the saints and teachings of the Church Fathers to be read during the liturgy in March. The leaves also feature drawings of heads and figures unrelated to the text, added later in the margins.

The book was discovered in 1823 in the Uniate Basilian monastery in Supraśl by Fr Michał Bobrowski, a professor from

Vilnius University. During preparation for publication, it was divided into three parts. It was acquired, probably in 1869, by the Library of the Zamość Fee Tail together with the collection of Władysław Trębicki. The most extensive part of the book, containing 151 pages, was lost during the Second World War. In 1967 it was offered for sale to Harvard University Library. Fortunately, the manuscript was recognised and, thanks to financial support from an importer of Polish ham in the United States, returned to Poland. It returned to its homeland on the MS Batory.

SANKT FLORIAN PSALTER

The oldest fully preserved work in the Polish language, over 600 years old. Written in the late 14th, early 15th century, the *Psalter* contains Psalms from the Bible translated into three languages: Polish, Latin and German. Its origins are thought to be connected with Saint Queen Jadwiga due to the coat of arms of the Anjou dynasty depicted on one of its pages. Particularly worthy of attention are the floral decorations, representations of animals and fantastic figures, drolleries, frivolous scenes and humorous elements appearing in the margins and other areas with no writing. The drawings include naked horsemen riding lions and boars, a monkey chasing a lion, and a startling figure that looks deceptively like Yoda from *Star Wars*.

The circumstances surrounding the manuscript's creation remain unknown. In the first half of the 15th century it belonged to the Hungarian patrician Jan of Lipiany. We also know that in 1557 a certain Bartłomiej Siess (or Süß) bought the book from an Italian merchant for seven *soldi*. From 1637 onwards the *Psalter* was housed at the Abbey of the Canons Regular of Sankt Florian near Linz in Austria, to which it owes its name. In 1931 the Polish government, with the approval of the Abbey and the Vatican, purchased the manuscript. Before the outbreak of the Second World War the National Library sent it to Canada. It returned to the treasury of the National Library of Poland in 1959.





DUCHESS ANASTASIA'S GOSPEL BOOK

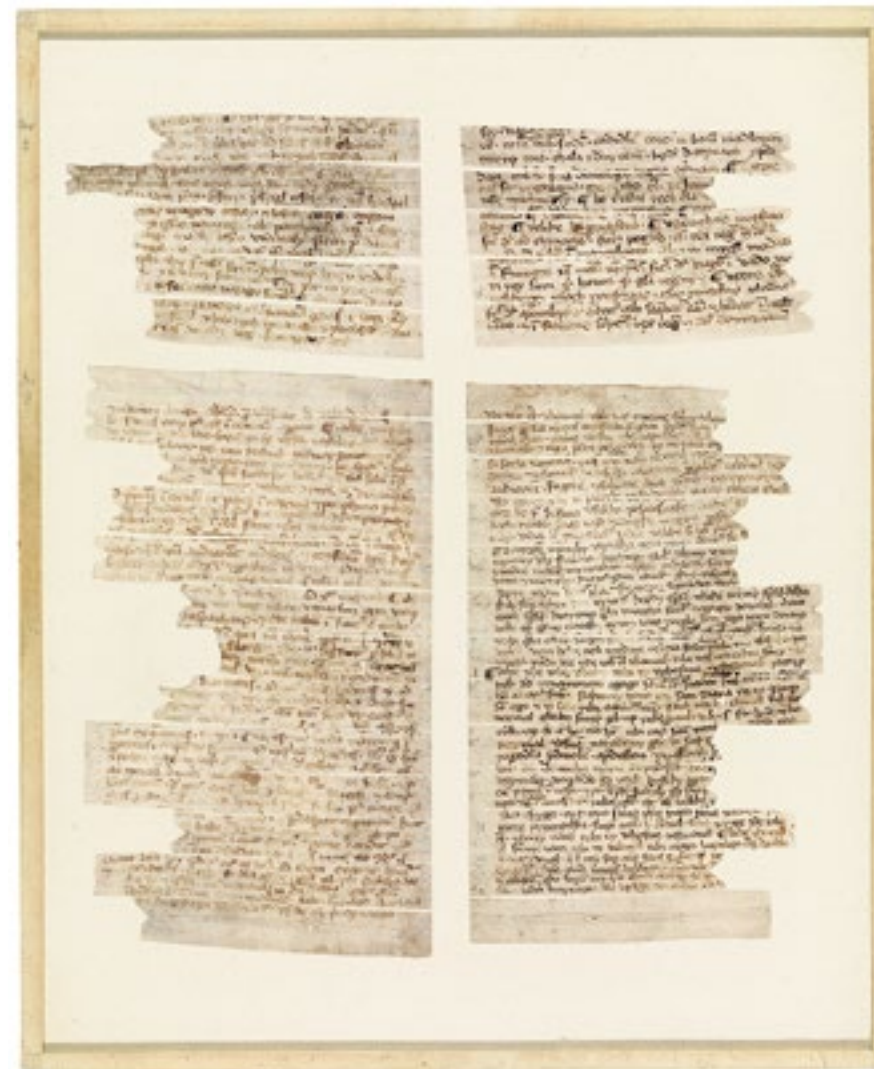
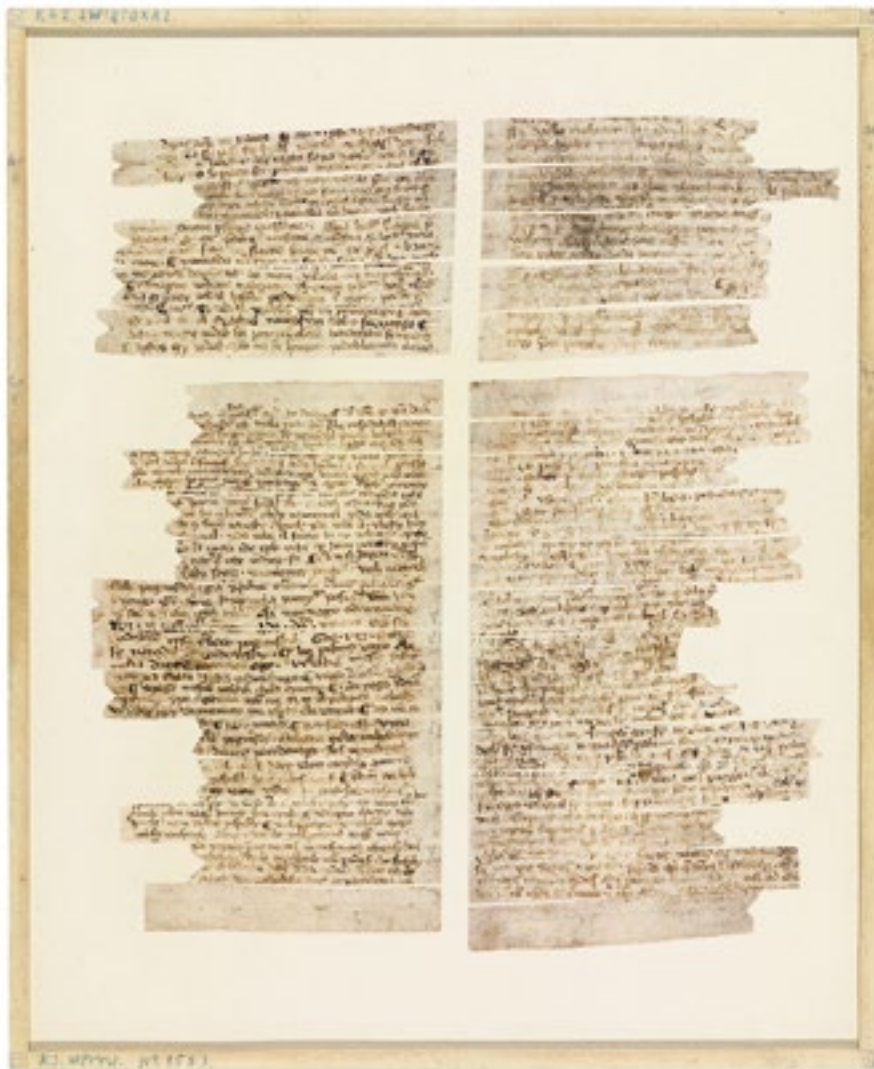
This parchment manuscript from the 12th century still has its original, richly decorated binding made of oak covered with silver. The front cover, which is incomplete, originally depicted a crucified Jesus and his mother Mary, St John and a figure indicated as “Anastasia”. The figure of Christ on the cross, probably

gilded, was torn off by the Swedes during the Swedish Invasion of Poland in 17th century. The medallions on either side at the top of the cross depict the sun and moon. On the back cover is a *Maiestas Domini* (Christ in Majesty). In the corners are the symbols of the four evangelists: a man for St Matthew, an eagle for

St John, a lion for St Mark and an ox for St Luke.

Inside the binding is a parchment manuscript from around 1160, the origins of which are connected with Duchess Anastasia, or Viacheslava of Novgorod, wife of Bolesław IV, Duke of Masovia. The manuscript belonged to the monastery

of the Canons Regular in Czerwińsk. During the Partitions of Poland the book was plundered and taken to St Petersburg, returning after the 1921 Treaty of Riga. Before the outbreak of World War II the National Library of Poland sent the manuscript together with the Library's treasury to Canada, from where it returned in 1959.



HOLY CROSS SERMONS

The oldest surviving prose text in literary Polish, comprising six sermons recorded in the first half of the 14th century. The text of the sermons, written bilingually in Polish and Latin, testifies to the high level of development of the Polish language and its literary maturity. The sermons were found by Professor Aleksander Brückner in 1890 while exam-

ining one of the Latin manuscripts seized by the Russians and taken to St Petersburg. He found the text on a number of parchment strips used as scrap paper to reinforce the binding of the manuscript. Because the manuscript from which the strips were removed originally came from the Benedictine library at the Holy Cross Abbey on Łysa Góra, the sermons became

known as the *Holy Cross Sermons*. The book fell victim to Russian looting after the November Uprising (1831) and was taken to St Petersburg. After Brückner discovered the sermons, the strips of parchment were removed and placed between glass sheets. The sermons and the book from which they were removed returned to Poland after the 1921 Treaty of Riga.

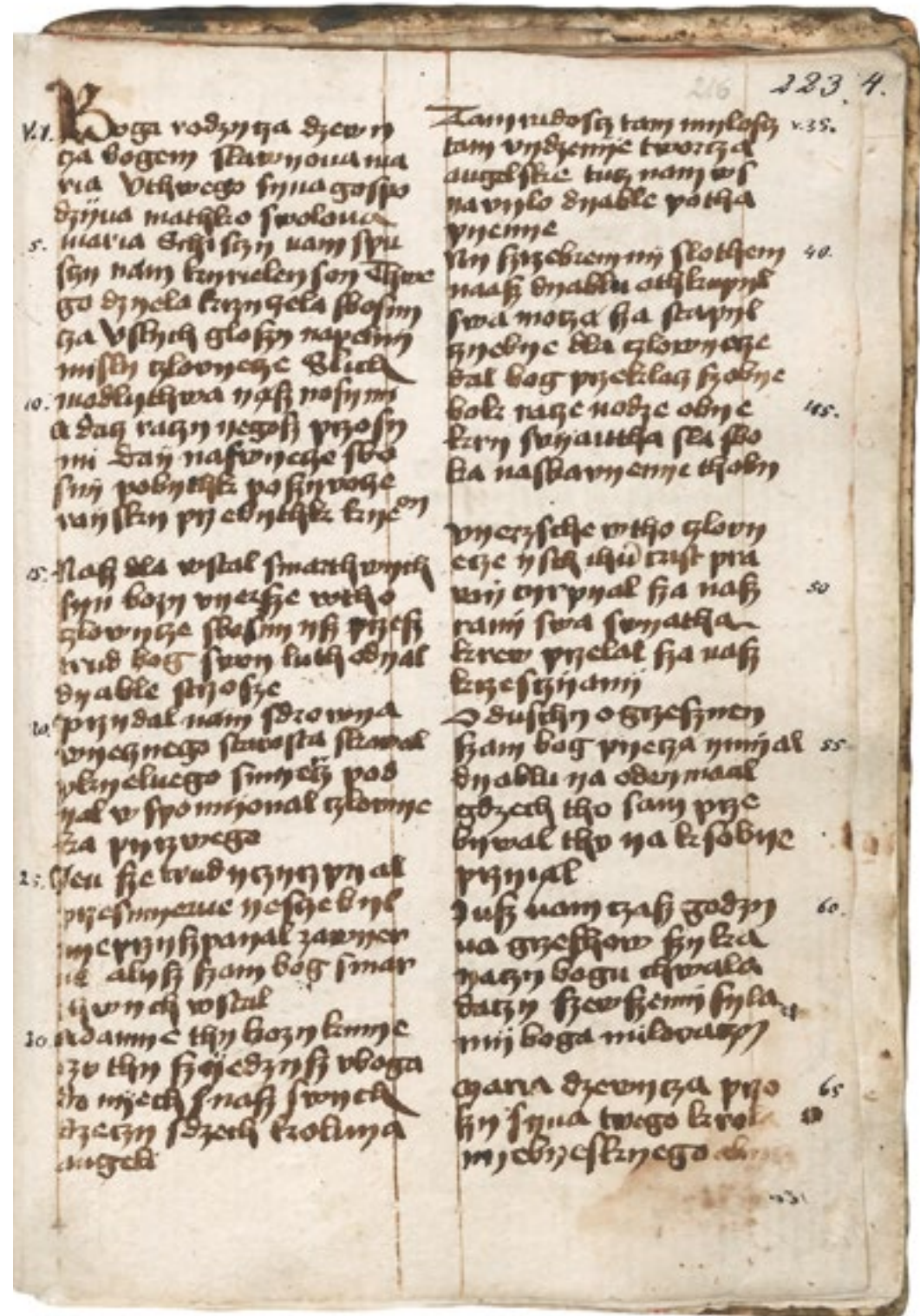
Before the outbreak of World War II the National Library of Poland sent the parchment strips to Canada, from where they returned in 1959. The book in which they were found was burnt by the Germans following the Warsaw Uprising. A new, full edition of the *Holy Cross Sermons* by Zbigniew Zapasiewicz was published in 2009.

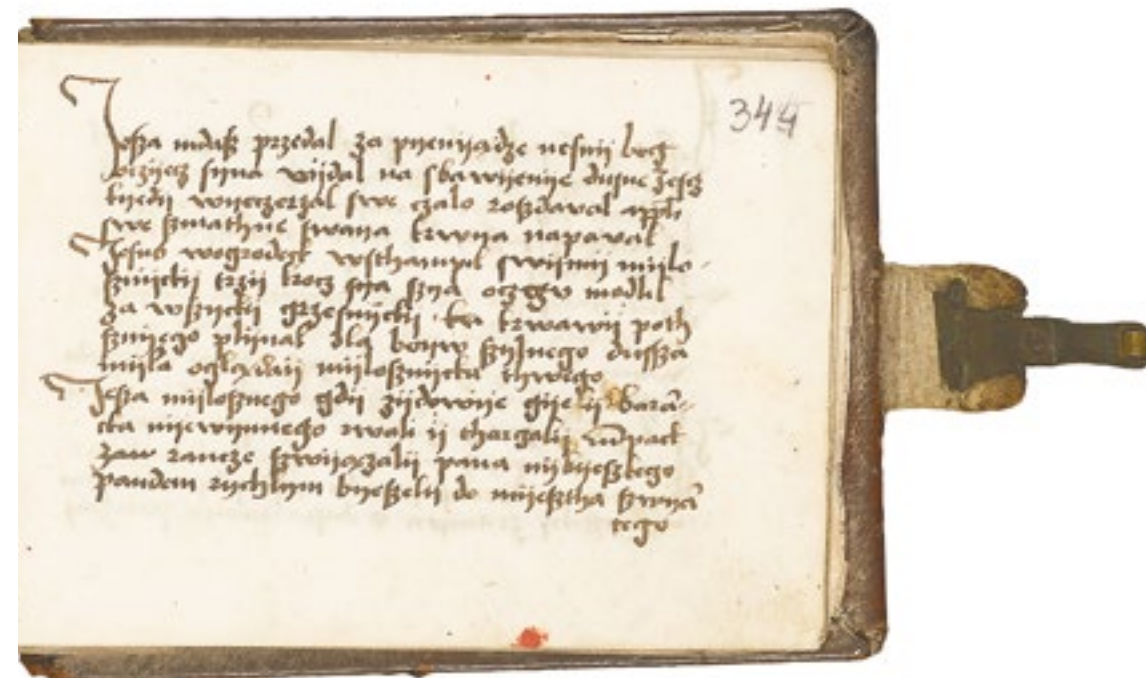
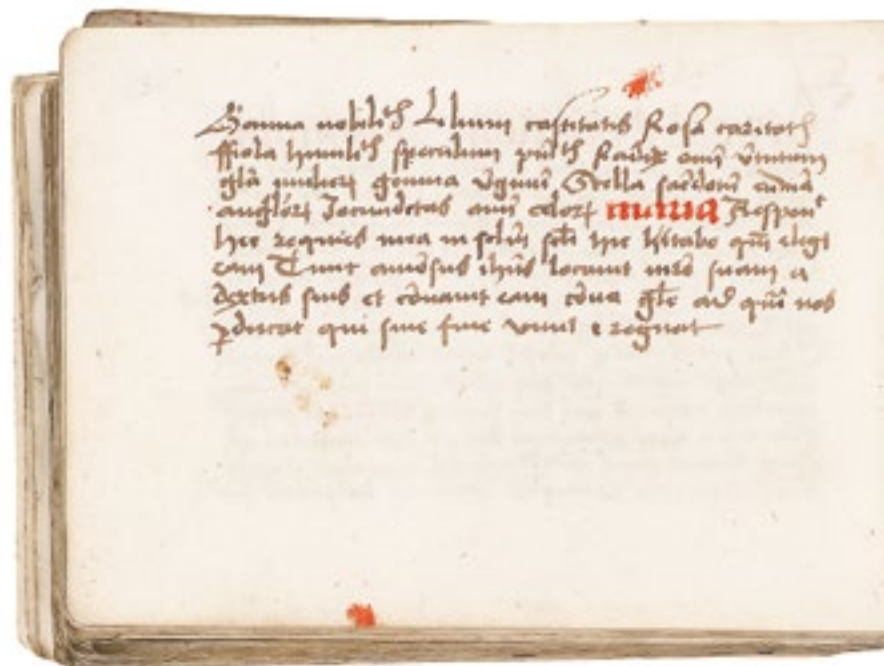
BOGURODZICA

Bogurodzica is considered the original Polish national anthem, predating the *Warszawianka*, *Rota* and *Dąbrowski's Mazurka*. Performed during major state and religious events, it is probably the oldest known religious song in the Polish language. The first two stanzas are believed to date from around the mid-13th century. Jan Długosz described it as the *carmen patrium*, or hymn of the fatherland. Several versions of the *Bogurodzica* have survived, including the Warsaw copy dating back to the year 1456. This is the third oldest manuscript version of the song. It comprises 19 stanzas, 15 of which are considered canonical, while the four

additional ones are requests for intercession with the patron saints of the Polish Kingdom and a prayer for Casimir IV Jagiellon and his children.

The manuscript comes from the Benedictine Holy Cross Abbey on Łysa Góra. After the November Uprising it was seized by the Russians and taken to St Petersburg, returning to Poland after the 1921 Treaty of Riga. In 1944, during the Second World War, it escaped destruction by being taken from Warsaw to Goerbitsch, from where the Russians transported it to Moscow. It returned to the National Library of Poland in 1947.





**BLESSED LADISLAS OF GIELNIÓW † ŻOŁTARZ JEZUSÓW
 (PSALTER OF JESUS)**

From a collection of popular texts and songs in Polish that were widely known and performed frequently over the course of several centuries. The author is Blessed Ladislav of Gielniów (1440–1505), a prominent Franciscan preacher and the first writer of poetic texts in Polish whose name we know. Since the 1960s he has also been the patron saint of Warsaw. *Żołtarz Jezusów* (Psalter of Jesus) is one of the oldest and most popular Polish songs about the Passion of Christ. The song

is contemplative in character and was intended to be sung, read or simply spoken as a personal prayer. This manuscript dating from the late 15th, early 16th century comes from the Count Tarnowski collection in Dzików Castle in Tarnobrzeg, Poland. It survived the severe damage caused to the castle library by a fire in December 1927 and later during the Second World War. The National Library of Poland purchased the manuscript collection from Dzików in 2020.

PRZEMYŚL MEDITATION

A collection of apocryphal texts in Polish from the 15th century describing the lives of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. It presents everything the medieval Christian world knew or wished to know about Jesus and his family that was not contained in the canonical Gospels.

The author – whether it was a man or woman is not known – combines events from the New Testament with fantasy episodes. For instance, the Holy Family

encounters dragons while fleeing to Egypt, the young Jesus hangs a vessel of water on a sunbeam, and he brings clay birds to life. The *Przemysł Meditation* is one most important early texts in the Polish language. The manuscript was produced sometime after 1512. From 1844 it was held by the Library of the Greek Catholic Chapter in Przemyśl. Since the end of the Second World War it has formed part of the collection of the National Library of Poland.

Documna hne
hrosimyslam
e o zquocue
nana uelusa

Jesus hazarunsky krol zydow

Jesus hazarens rex iudeor

Quisquis regnum in nobis

habet

Jurek Jadouza masek

omnia vultu ingratu

intra meo

1512

BALTAZAR OPEC † THE LIFE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The oldest entirely preserved printed book in Polish. This treatise by Baltazar Opec, published in 1522, is a reworking of a composition traditionally attributed to St Bonaventure, *Meditationes vitae Christi* (Meditations on the Life of Christ). Following hagiographical models, the text reconstructs the biography of Jesus, combining the biblical text with apocryphal themes. The biography also includes hymns, moralistic texts and sermons. Intriguingly written and compiled, it includes among other things an invented

version of Pilate's letter to Caesar about Jesus and an excerpt from the *Przemysł Meditation*. It also features 39 full-page woodcuts by Hans Leonhard Schäufelein, a German painter, draughtsman and printmaker from the school of Albrecht Dürer. The print depicts the Last Supper. This copy belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail, which was transferred to the National Library of Poland after the Second World War. It is one of the few copies that have survived to this day.



FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS † ANTIQUITIES OF THE JEWS

A manuscript commissioned by the Abbot of Tynieć, written and illuminated in Cracow. The binding was made by a book-binder also in Cracow. This is a rare case of a medieval book made entirely in Poland that has survived unchanged to the present day. The richly decorated Latin manuscript from 1466 features initials with figural representations by an illuminator known as “the Master of the Virgin with the Unicorn”. The manuscript contains twelve of the series of twenty books by the Jewish

historian Flavius Josephus, who lived in the first century AD. The books describe the history of the Jews from the biblical creation of the world up to the year 160 BC. The monks of Tynieć sold the manuscript to Stanisław Kostka Zamojski, who incorporated it into the library of the Zamojski family fee tail in the Blue Palace in Warsaw. After the Second World War, Jan Zamojski, the 16th and final owner of the family library with the National Library of Poland, to which it now belongs.



GRADUAL OF ABBOT MŚCISŁAW

A medieval illuminated liturgical book from the Benedictine Abbey of Tyniec. The parchment manuscript contains the Latin text of liturgical songs along with their musical notation, richly decorated by illuminators from Lesser Poland. The volume was produced around 1390 on the initiative of Abbot Mścisław, whose aim was to enrich the monastery's collection of impressive liturgical books. One

of the pages of the gradual contains an image of Abbot Mścisław himself praying at the side of St Gregory the Great, reformer and patron of the liturgy. After the dissolution of the monastery by the Austrians in the early 19th century, during the Partitions of Poland, the gradual was moved to the University Library in Lviv. It came to the National Library of Poland after World War II.



ANTIPHONARY OF ABBOT MŚCISŁAW

A Latin manuscript written and illuminated in the monastery scriptorium at Tyniec, compiled by Abbot Mścisław in the late 14th or early 15th century. The manuscript contains antiphons, or songs corresponding to particular parts of the liturgy, usually performed by two choirs singing alternate sections. The texts are accompanied by musical notation. The manuscript is decorated with

ten illuminated initials, including Christ Enthroned, the Adoration of the Christ Child, the Ascension, and Pentecost. After the dissolution of the monastery by the Austrians in the early 19th century during the Partitions of Poland, the antiphonary was moved to the University Library in Lviv, and after World War II to the National Library of Poland.





SKAWINKA'S GRADUAL

This richly illuminated gradual from around 1460 was produced on the initiative of Abbot Maciej of Skawina, known as "Skawinka", at the Benedictine Abbey in Tyniec. It contains the words and music that make up the chants for mass for the entire liturgical year. Particularly noteworthy are the rich decorations, attributed to the illuminator known as Master of Tomasz Strzępiński Pontifical. The illuminations include the Annuncia-

tion, the Adoration of the Christ Child by angels, the Entry into Jerusalem, the Crucifixion, the Ascension, Pentecost, and St Jerome dressing the wounded lion's paw. In the early 19th century, after the dissolution of the monastery by the Austrians during the Partitions of Poland, the gradual was moved to the University Library in Lviv. It came to the National Library of Poland after World War II.



GRADUAL OF THE CRACOW AUGUSTINIANS

A Latin manuscript from 1528, written and richly illuminated at the Augustinian Eremitic monastery in Kazimierz near Cracow, now part of the city. It was produced in the monastery scriptorium by Brother Jan for the celebration of the liturgy by the monks.

The gradual contains the words and music of the liturgical chants. The figural initials and numerous pen-flourished initials are particularly worthy of note. One of the miniatures depicts the patron saint of the monastery, St Catherine of Alexandria. She can be recognised by her attributes:

a book, a sword and a broken wheel, the symbols of her martyrdom. In the frame around the figure of the saint are realistic representations of plants (roses, cornflowers, carnations) and animals (birds, butterflies, snails).

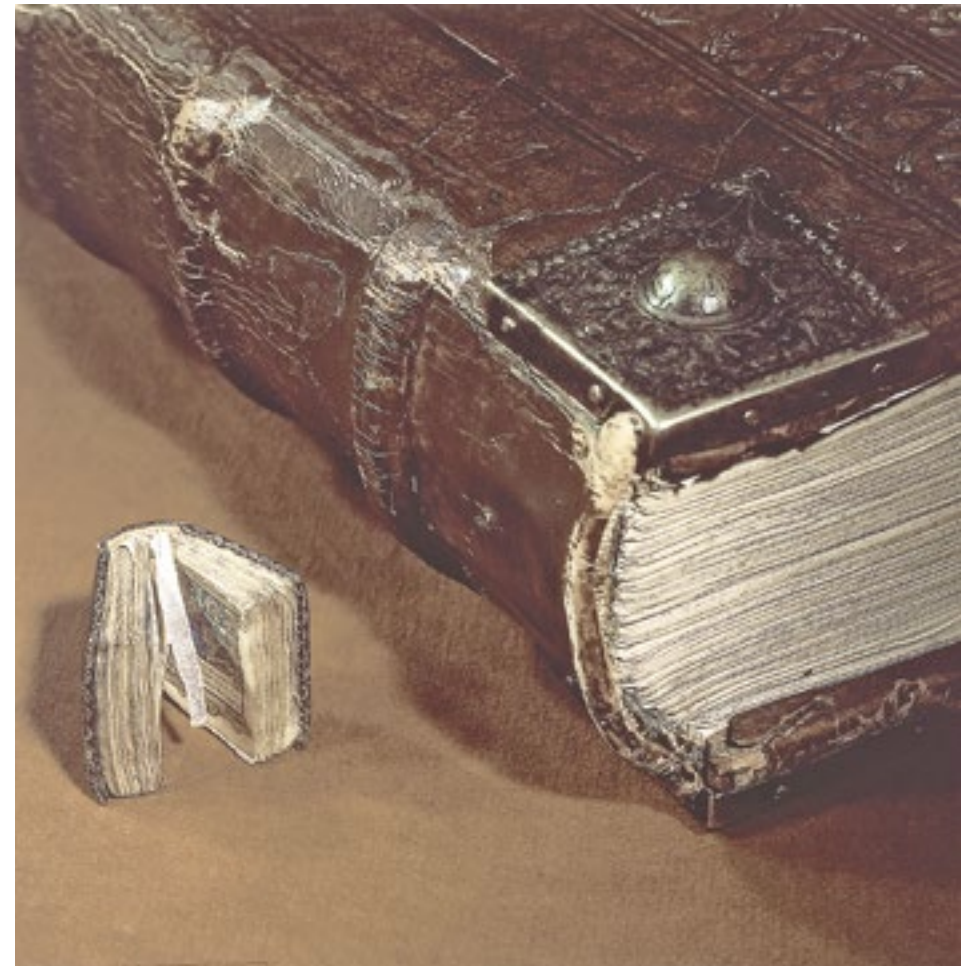
During the Partitions of Poland the manuscript was seized by the Russians, returning to Poland after the 1921 Treaty of Riga. During World War II the Germans transported it to Cracow. After the war it rejoined the collections of the National Library of Poland.

MINIATURE BOOK OF HOURS

A thumb-sized miniature prayer book for lay people. Written in Latin in the 15th century, this book of hours contains daily prayers asking for the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Thanks to its size, it could accompany its owner at all times, even when they were travelling. Despite its tiny format, the creator included the full-page miniatures typically found in books of hours, as well as numerous gold initials and even a bookmark.

The decoration is typical of French prayer books from the late 15th, early 16th century. The binding was made later, dating from the 18th century.

The book belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. After the Second World War, Jan Zamoyski, the 16th and final owner of the Zamoyski family fee tail, deposited the family library with the National Library of Poland, to which it now belongs.

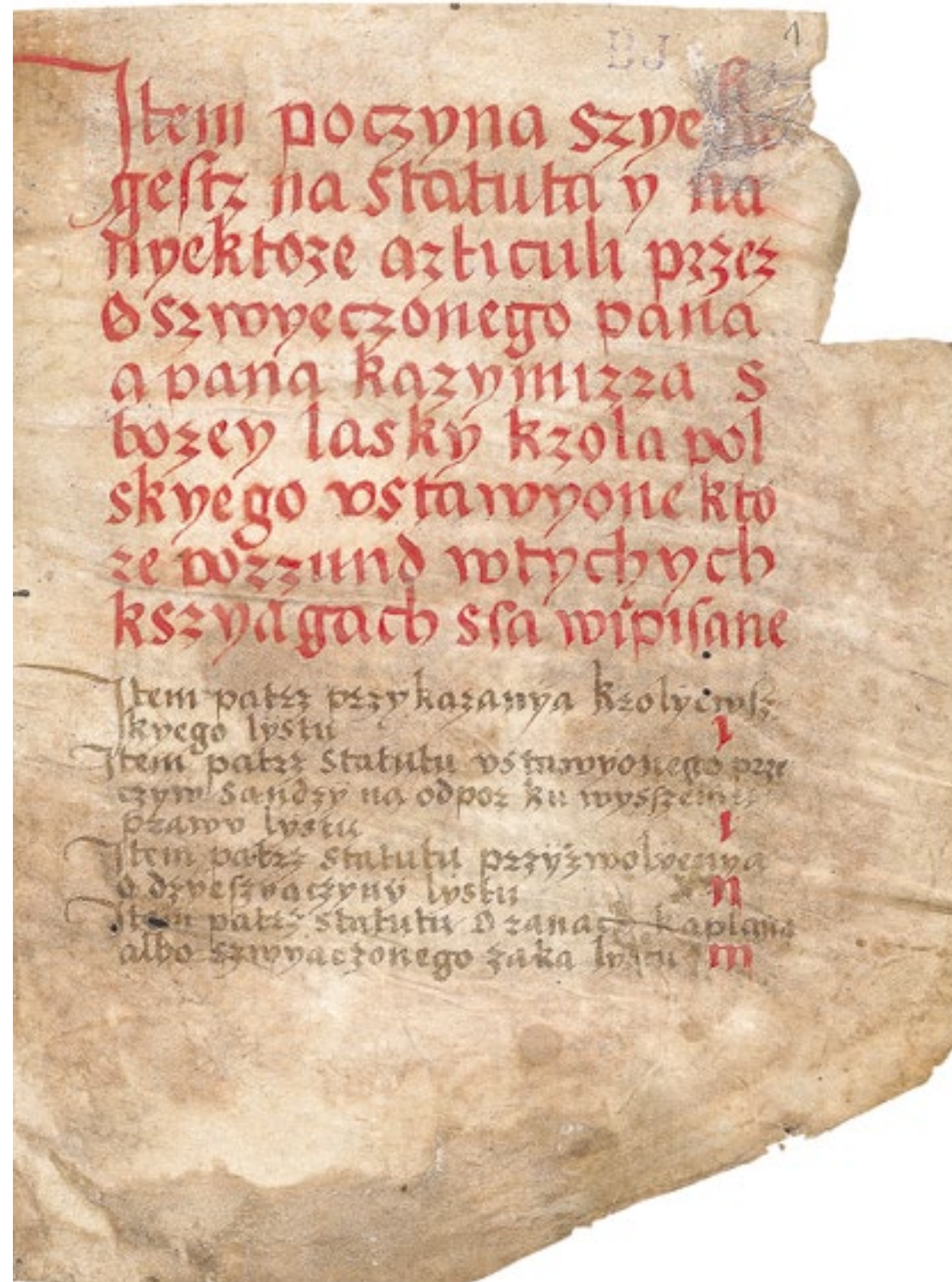


STATUTES OF CASIMIR THE GREAT

A collection of laws issued by Casimir II the Great, the reformer king and most eminent lawmaker of medieval Poland. These laws marked the beginning of the regulation of social and political life through written legislation, rather than by customary law passed on orally. Because of the distinctive nature of the different parts of the newly-united kingdom following its previous division into different areas, between 1357 and 1362 the King first issued statutes for Greater Poland and then for Lesser Poland. This written codification of the laws was not only importantly politically, contributing to the modernisation and centralisation of the monarchy, it also made it easier for anyone who had dealings with

the judiciary. The Statutes remained the source of binding law in Poland right up until the end of the First Republic. One of their many interesting parts is the early 16th century Polish translation of the “Dzików Codex”, commissioned by an unknown magnate. The text was written on parchment and illuminated with decorative initials and floral motifs in the margins.

This manuscript comes from the Count Tarnowski collection in Dzików Castle in Tarnobrzeg, Poland. It survived the severe damage caused to the castle library by a fire in December 1927 and later during the Second World War. The National Library of Poland purchased the manuscript collection from Dzików in 2020.



STATUTA REGNI POLONIAE

The first printed edition of Polish land laws. The book was published in Leipzig in 1487 at the printing house of Konrad Kachelofen, a pioneer of the “black art”, as printing was known, in that city. Its creation testifies to the demand for legal texts, which could no longer be satisfied by manuscripts alone.

The work, better known by the second part of its title as *Syntagmata* (Greek for “compilation” or “collation”), contains the statutes of Casimir the Great, Władysław II Jagiełło’s Statute of Warta, and Casimir IV Jagiellon’s Statutes of Nieszawa and Statute of Nowy Korczyn. These acts constituted the foundation

of Polish law until the end of the First Republic.

The copy belonged to Tadeusz Czacki, co-creator of the Constitution of 3 May 1791, co-founder of the Warsaw Society of the Friends of Science and a lover of old books. Czacki gave it to another prominent bibliophile, Joachim Chreptowicz, the last Grand Chancellor of Lithuania and the owner of a library in Szczorsy near Grodno. Later, the book formed part of the Tyszkiewicz Library in the town of Raudondvaris (Polish: Czerwony Dwór) near Kaunas. It came to the National Library of Poland after the Second World War.



ŁASKI'S STATUTE

The first modern collection of Polish laws. Thanks to the efforts of Chancellor Jan Łaski, in the year 1506 it was possible to collect all the laws that had been issued by the Polish kings and publish them together. This helped make legal texts more accessible for administrative and judicial functionaries, as well as the nobility.

The collection was an official work, approved by the King during a meeting of the Sejm (parliament). This is indicated not only by the royal approval printed in the publication but also by the fold-out engraving, illustrating the official nature of the collection. The engraving depicts the monarch surrounded by clerical and lay members of the royal council, i.e. the senate. Surrounding this are the coats of arms of the various lands that made up the kingdom. In the central section the Chancellor can be seen handing the document to the King for approval.

A number of copies of this edition were printed on parchment and the engraving coloured. This copy belonged to Jan Tarnowski (1488–1561), Castellan of Kraków and Hetman of the Crown. It was later integrated into the Tarnowski family collection in Dzików Castle in Tarnobrzeg, Poland. It survived the fire in the castle in December 1927. The Dzików library was purchased by the National Library of Poland in 2009.



ZI.
SECRETARIATVS †



SENATVS † REGNI * POLONIAE †

**TOMASZ TRETER † THEATRE OF THE VIRTUES
OF THE VENERABLE STANISLAUS HOSIUS**

A collection of 105 drawings by the eminent engraver Tomasz Treter, depicting the life of Stanislaus Hosius, one of the most important figures of the European Counter-Reformation. Before Hosius became Bishop of Warmia and a cardinal, he held the position of Royal Secretary, an important official in the Chancellery with access to state secrets.

One of the drawings depicts the swearing of the secretarial oath, which may have looked like a condition for taking office. Hosius kneels beside the Sub-Chancellor, who was in charge of the Chancellery during the Sejm of the Kingdom of Poland. The ceremony is led by the King, sitting on the throne, and the Crown Council (Senate) consisting of the Archbishop,

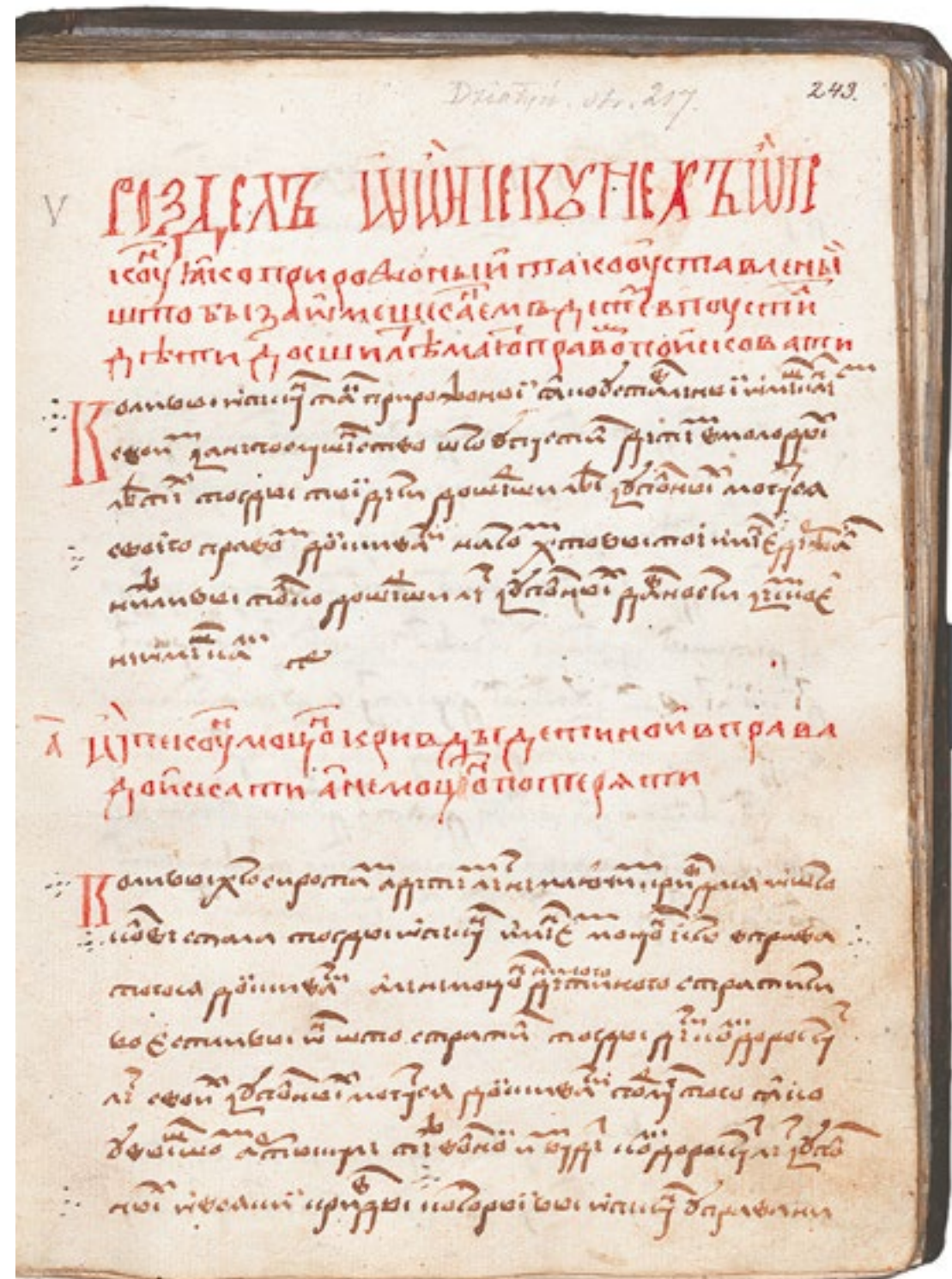
bishops, voivodes, castellans and ministers – the aforementioned Sub-Chancellor, Chancellor and marshals of the crown and court. Standing by the throne are the Grand Secretary and two registrars. Also visible, behind the senators, are the nobility, i.e. the landed deputies who have come to the Sejm.

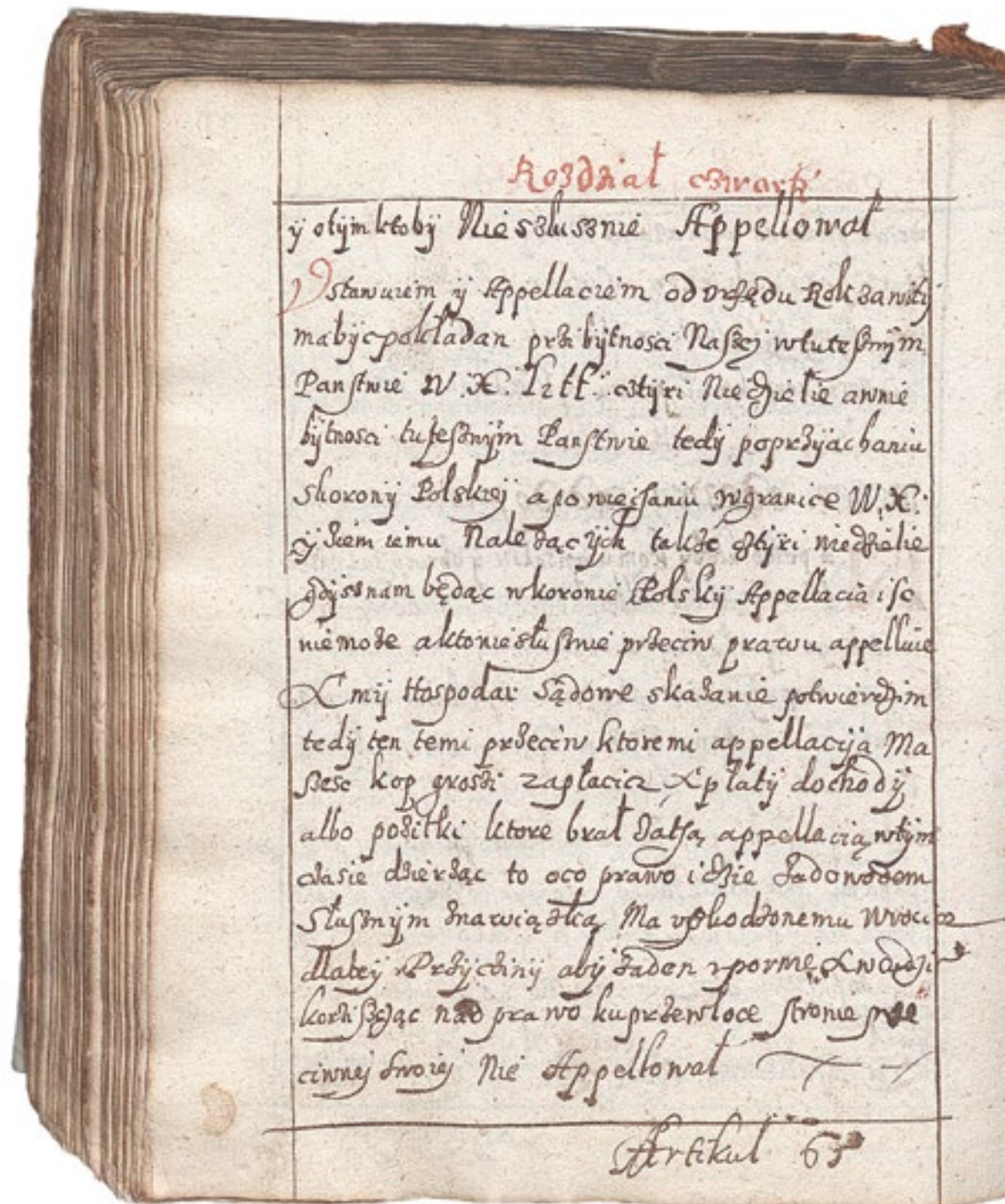
The manuscript belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. In 1944, during World War II, it avoided destruction by being sent from Warsaw to Goerbitsch. From there, the Russians transported it to Moscow. After its return to Poland in 1947 the manuscript found its way, along with other items from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail, to the National Library of Poland.

FIRST STATUTE OF LITHUANIA

The first of the three 16th-century codifications of the law of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, covering civil law, criminal law and regulated court procedures. It combines customs and ancient privileges with elements of Roman Law, the Magdeburg Rights and Polish law. It was drafted in 1522 and revised, supplemented and approved by the Sejm of Vilnius in 1528/1529. Co-author of the Statute was Albertas Goštautas, Voivode of Vilnius and Grand Chancellor, the most powerful magnate in Lithuania at the time. The showcased fair copy also belonged to him, as evidenced by his armorial stamp on the leather

binding. The work is written in Western Ruthenian, the official language of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The manuscript's only embellishments are the initials and titles of chapters highlighted by means of rubrication, i.e. the use of red ink. The manuscript belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. In 1944, during World War II, it was sent from Warsaw to Goerbitsch. From there, the Russians transported it to Moscow. After its return to Poland in 1947 it found its way, along with other items from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail, to the National Library of Poland.





SECOND STATUTE OF LITHUANIA

The second in the series of three 16th century codifications of the law of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. A special commission of ten people was set up to improve on the previous Statute. It comprised both members of the Lithuanian Council of Lords and experts – individuals proficient in law, including the “foreign doctors of law” Augustyn Rotundus (political writer and author of *Conversation of a Pole with a Lithuanian*) and Piotr Roizjusz (immortalised as the *Spanish Doctor* in a famous epigram by Jan Kochanowski).

The Second Statute was drafted during a period when Polish legal models were increasingly influential in Lithuania. This included the tendency to give equal priv-

ileges to all members of the noble estate without preference for dukes or lords. It was adopted at the Seimas of Vilnius in 1566, three years before the Union of Lublin. This manuscript copy from the collection of the National Library of Poland contains a translation from Western Ruthenian into Polish. It is probably the oldest Polish translation of the Second Statute, dating from between 1566 and 1568.

The manuscript belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. After the Second World War it became part of the collection of the National Library, along with the rest of the library.

... в общенъ и словесемъ.
... млатъи нашъ великоуи
... замальгоръвъ меегъ. а ли
... восторъи коли дѣи тѣв оу
... Володение и держаніе. а ли
... медисоторы и в рѣдѣ. а ли
... чинамъ свѣно в оу пуги. а ли
... в честь некоего члвкоу емца.
... а ли по лисоттамъ рѣчатыхъ
... махъ нашъ прѣ реченныи велико
... и нѣрѣ в а л и т о в ь е к с ѣ р а м ы
... и маши послѣзудѣи и рѣдѣ
... в держаніе и владение. а ли
... свѣдоути въ егю лисота пѣча
... нашъ есепъ привешма. а ли
... а ли оу а и дано черестъ рѣцѣ в
... емоу когю и ексю лисота а ли
... в и т о в ь е к с ѣ р а м ы
... и т о в ь е к с ѣ р а м ы
... в рѣдѣ егю пѣч и с т и м о т а .
... а ли т а м ы б ѣ т ѣ л а р о ж и н ѣ д т н ѣ д
... ч и т ы р и с т а . а ли . п ѣ р ѣ д ѣ
... и л р т и н о в ы м ы а л ѣ и с . а л ѣ
... т п а м ѣ с т р и н ѣ л о у .

... протѣ еще мѣста и мн
... мѣтныю. а ли оу поскы великоу
... и н ѣ з а л и т о в ь е к с ѣ р а м ы . а л ѣ
... прѣдисот иже мѣтой есепы и нѣ
... оу и н и в ѣ з а л и с о м ы т о . с и м ѣ
... у н а ш ѣ л а н ѣ с ѣ . х ѣ т о н а н е г о т о
... а л ѣ о б р и т ѣ . а л ѣ о б о т ѣ ч ѣ
... с а м ѣ и . и м ѣ с ѣ и с ѣ з а м ѣ н ѣ
... п а м ѣ р ѣ о н а ш ѣ в ѣ л и к о т о
... е н ѣ з ѣ с т ѣ в а л и т о в ь е к с ѣ . п о г ы
... д а в ѣ и н ѣ р ѣ л а н е с м о т а с т а .
... Ш ѣ т о с а м ѣ о п р и в ѣ д ѣ т а т а
... а л ѣ о у р ѣ л а н е м ѣ и ѣ z a m a t t i
... и н о z a m a t t i n t ѣ и с т r i c i o
... и а л и ч е г о в ѣ д ѣ м ѣ н е б ѣ д ѣ . а л ѣ
... д ѣ л ѣ н ѣ е л а s t o v ѣ d a l a z ѣ e m
... о у ж е в ѣ z p o c л ы м и . и н ѣ м ѣ н о т о
... а л ѣ t m i z a m a t t i n t o i . а т а м ѣ
... п а ш ѣ в ѣ s i n ѣ z a l ѣ d ѣ m a l ѣ r ѣ b ѣ
... и t ѣ i m i t a r o v ѣ . т а m ѣ v ѣ z n e k i
... s i n i . п а с а n ѣ z a d ѣ i n e i m ѣ t o i
... e d ѣ e t i ѣ z a m a t t i n t o i . и t o l ѣ n e z a
... в ѣ r ѣ z ѣ p ѣ m a l ѣ v a r o i t i n t o i
... i e c ѣ o v ѣ i s ѣ v i r ѣ d e n o . а p o c o n ѣ
... п o л o v ѣ n ѣ v e p ѣ d i t i n ѣ z a d ѣ i z
... n a c ѣ v ѣ i s e n i e . а л ѣ o t ѣ r ѣ d ѣ
... o u c r a d e n o . а c o u ѣ t r i c o v ѣ z ѣ
... i m o n e p ѣ v o e z a m a t t i n t o i s ѣ z ѣ
... а n o t ѣ г o c п o d ѣ n ѣ t o t a m a v ѣ y
... c o b ѣ b e r i . а c o l ѣ n ѣ v ѣ d e t ѣ m ѣ d

KORMCHAIA BOOK FROM DZIKÓW

A collection of rules of the Orthodox Church from the 15th century, providing a unique example of the activity of canonists in the lands that once belonged to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The original text has been rewritten and supplemented with documents issued by secular authorities.

1468, a code regulating the operation of the judiciary. The start of the *Sudebnik* is indicated by rubrication, i.e. the use of red ink. The manuscript comes from the Tarnowski collection in Dzików Castle in Tarnobrzeg, Poland. It survived both the severe damage caused to the castle library by a fire in December 1927 and the Second World War. The National Library of Poland purchased the manuscript collection from Dzików in 2020.

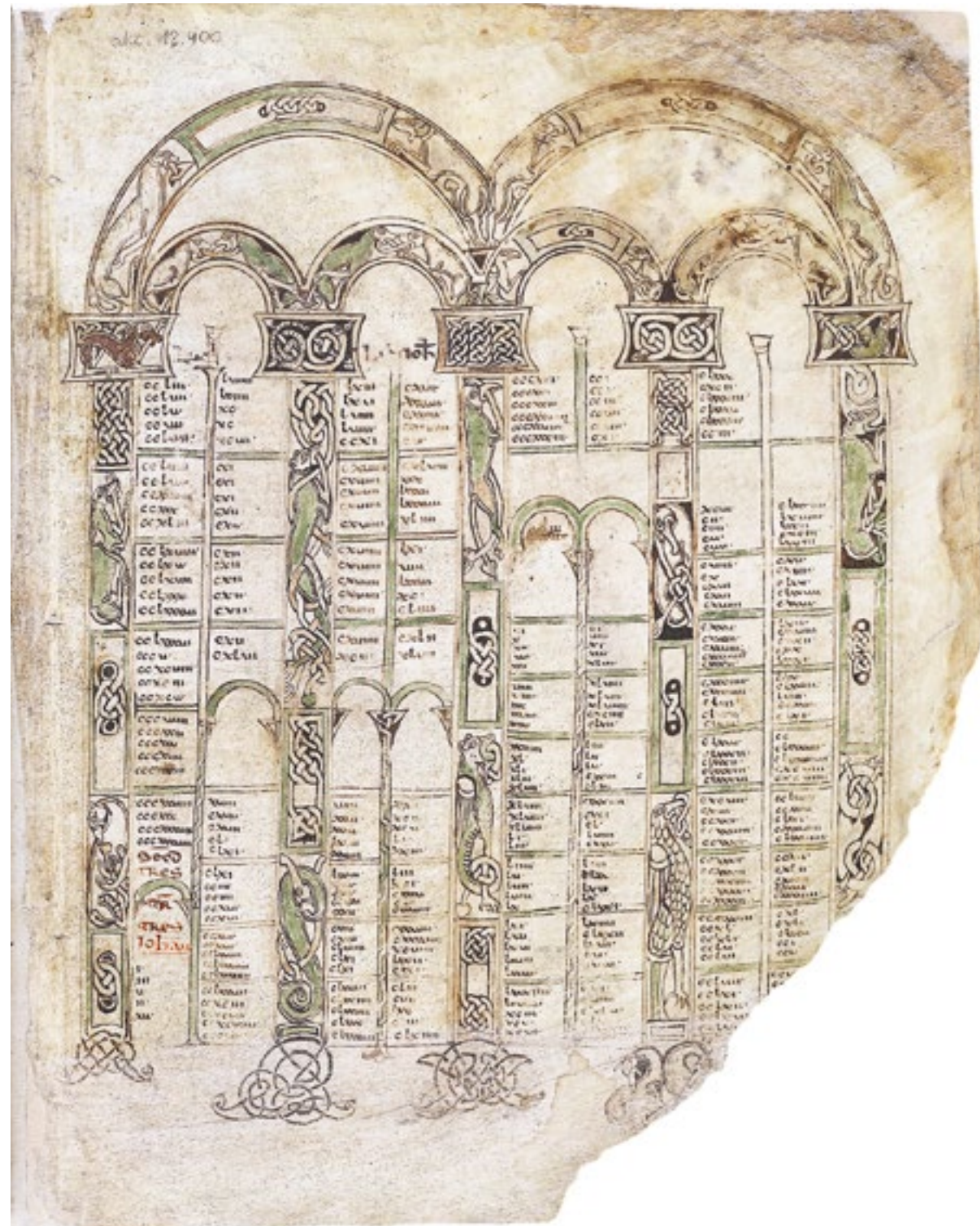
Handwritten notes and signatures in the bottom left corner, including a large flourish and some illegible text.

NEW TESTAMENT FROM THE 8TH CENTURY

One of the oldest manuscripts in any Polish collection.

This 8th century New Testament in Latin probably comes from somewhere on the border between present-day Germany and France. It is written in Carolingian minuscule, a calligraphic script easy to read even today, as modern print typeface is derived from it. A page of canon tables is enclosed in an architectural frame decorated with interlaces and zoomorphic motifs. The manuscript has been damaged in one of the bottom corners, probably

by rodents. The fifth page features a curse intended to defend the manuscript from theft: *Codex sancti Maximini. Si quis eum abstulerit anathema sit in eternum. Amen* ("A book from the Monastery of Saint Maximin. If anyone takes it, may he be cursed for eternity. Amen"). This notable manuscript formerly belonged to the Benedictine Abbey in Trier, one of the most important in Europe. It joined the National Library's of Poland collections in 1986.



THE OLDEST ANGLO-SAXON LECTINARY

This manuscript, containing Gospel readings, was written around the year 1000 on the border between France and Flanders, as indicated by the West Frankish and Anglo-Saxon influences seen in its rich ornamentation.

The tome contains three full-page miniatures with images of the Evangelists. The one shown here is of St Luke, recognisable by his symbol – an ox – at the top of the page. The evangelist is seen at work: he is seated at a lectern with a book spread out in front of him, holding a large knife in his hand for sharpening his quill.

The manuscript was probably purchased abroad for the first Polish National

Library, founded in 1747 in Warsaw by Józef and Andrzej Załuski. After the Third Partition of Poland the Russian Tsarina Catherine II had the collection of the National Library (known as the “Library of the Republic” or “Commonwealth”), including this manuscript, transported to St Petersburg. Under the terms of the Treaty of Riga, it was returned and placed in the National Library of Poland. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, the National Library sent the manuscript together with the Library’s treasury to Canada, from where it returned in 1959.





SKEVRA EVANGELIARY

One of the world's most valuable Armenian manuscripts, dating from the late 12th century. Also known as the *Lemberg Gospels*, this is an outstanding example of the illuminator's art from Lesser Armenia, or the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, a state founded in the Middle Ages by Armenians and centred around Cilicia, in what is today Turkey.

The manuscript first came to Poland in the 15th century. From the late 16th cen-

ture up to the outbreak of the Second World War it was kept in the Armenian Cathedral in Lviv. During the War it was hidden. In 2006 the head of the Armenian Catholic Church in Poland, who is the Catholic Archbishop of Warsaw, placed the Evangelary on deposit in the National Library of Poland.



REVELATIONS OF ST BRIDGET

One of the most popular religious texts of the Middle Ages. This manuscript, produced in Italy between 1375 and 1377, is one of the oldest surviving copies of the original version of the *Revelations*. The illuminations are attributed to a Neapolitan artist known as “Maestro del Seneca dei Girolamini”.

The only full-page miniature that the manuscript contains is an episode from the life of St Bridget, a vision that she had during a journey. The scene depicts the saint at the head of her retinue, the castle she is headed towards and a striking picture of what she sees in her vision: Christ enthroned with the Virgin Mary,

surrounded by saints, plus a monk climbing a heavenly ladder.

In the second half of the 14th century the manuscript was located in Rome in the possession of Matthaeus de Cracovia, who then brought it to Poland. After the defeat of the November Uprising it was seized by the Russians and taken to St Petersburg.

Under the 1921 Treaty of Riga it returned to Poland and was placed in the collection of the National Library of Poland. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, the National Library sent it together with the Library’s treasury to Canada for safety, from where it returned to Poland in 1959.



POTOCKI PSALTER

A spectacular example of a French illuminated manuscript from the 13th century. The Potocki Psalter, a collection of psalms in Latin, was produced in Paris between 1225 and 1250. The elaborate illuminations were painted in a Paris in what is known as “the workshop of the Potocki Master”. It is named after the first known owner of the manuscript, Stanisław Kostka

Potocki, a collector and pioneer of art history.

The book originally contained as many as ten full-page miniatures depicting events from the life of Christ. The illuminations were so valuable that some of them were later cut out and are now in foreign museums, such as the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

The copy belonging to the National Library of Poland contains four miniatures. One is a depiction of the Betrayal of Christ. In the central part we see Judas kissing Jesus, and on the right, St Peter cutting off the ear of Malchus, servant of the High Priest Caiaphas.

In 1933 the family of Count Branicki donated the book to the National Library

together with the rest of the Wilanów collection. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, the National Library sent the manuscript together with the Library’s treasury to Canada for safety, from where it returned to Poland in 1959.



CALENDARIUM PARIENSE

A superb example of medieval illumination. The manuscript was produced in the 14th century, probably in one of the scriptoriums in Paris. It contains a liturgical calendar with the days dedicated to specific saints clearly indicated. It consists of twelve pages, one for each month. At the bottom of each page are representa-

tions of labours appropriate to each of the months (an “occupational calendar”), plus the signs of the zodiac. The pages have an intricate floral border, finished in gold.

The *Calendarium Parisiense* was acquired in France by Józef Załuski for the first Polish National Library, which opened

in Warsaw in 1747. The binding was paid for by the last King of Poland, Stanisław August Poniatowski. After the Third Partition of Poland, Tsarina Catherine II had the collection of the National Library of Poland (the Library of the Republic), including this manuscript, taken to St Petersburg. It was only returned under

the terms of the 1921 Treaty of Riga. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, the National Library sent the manuscript together with the Library’s treasury to Canada for safety, from where it returned to Poland in 1959.

GUILLAUME DE LORRIS AND JEAN DE MEUN † ROMAN DE LA ROSE

One of the most popular texts about love, copied many times during the Middle Ages and often beautifully decorated. *Le Roman de la Rose* (The Romance of the Rose) consists of two parts. The first, written by Guillaume de Lorris, dates from the first half of the 13th century and tells the story of a young man who is searching for his chosen one, who has been transformed into a rose in an allegorical garden. The story breaks off when the hero attempts to pick the rose. Writing almost half a century later, Jean de Meun continues the tale. His second part is a kind of apotheosis of carnal love. The work was

strongly criticised by other medieval writers and was even officially condemned by the Archbishop of Paris, but it became immensely popular with readers. The copy dates to the late 14th century, illuminated in Paris by the artist known as “the Polycratic Master”. It contains 40 miniatures, of which the most striking and the only one in colour is found on the first page. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, the National Library of Poland sent the manuscript together with the Library’s treasury to Canada for safety, from where it returned to Poland in 1959.



JACOBUS DE VORAGINE † GOLDEN LEGEND

The most popular collection of saints' lives in the Middle Ages. The work was created in the second half of the 13th century thanks to the efforts of Jacques de Voragine, Archbishop of Genoa. The manuscript was produced between 1485 and 1490, mainly illuminated by two miniaturists active in Padua and Venice: the Master of the Barozzi Breviary, and Antonio Maria da Villafora. The incomplete decoration of the book consists of 84 miniatures mainly placed within the column of text, plus ornamental initials.

Around the year 1525 the book belonged to Krzysztof Szydłowiecki, Great Chancellor

of the Crown. Later it passed into the hands of Tadeusz Czacki, and then Adam Jerzy Czartoryski. In the 19th century it was integrated into the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. In 1944, during the Second World War, it escaped destruction by being taken for safety from Warsaw to Goerbitsch. From there, the Russians transported it to Moscow. After its return to Poland in 1958 it found its way together with the rest of the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail to the National Library of Poland.



assumptio



THE OLDEST PRINTED WORK IN CYRILLIC

The earliest surviving example of a work in Old Church Slavonic printed in Cyrillic script, published in Cracow by Schweipolt Fiol some time prior to 1491.

The printing workshop in question was closed down when the owner was accused of heresy. The incunabulum, as books printed before 1500 are known, contains

prayers and the rite for the season of Easter in the Orthodox Church. Only 33 copies of this edition have survived, excluding fragments.

This copy was kept in the Library of the Greek Catholic Chapter in Przemyśl. After World War II it was moved to the National Library of Poland.



JAN ZAMOYSKI'S PRAYER BOOK

The only copy in the world of the first printed edition of the French book of hours.

Published in the printshop of Jean Du Pré in Paris around 1485, this illuminated prayer book is written in Latin and French. It is decorated with full-page coloured woodcuts, including David and Goliath, the Annunciation to the Shepherds, the Christmas scene, the Adoration of Magi, the Flight into Egypt, the Presentation in the Temple, the Crucifixion, and St John of Patmos with a seven-headed dragon.

Between the sixteenth and the twentieth century, the copy was held by the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. It is traditionally identified as the prayer book of Jan Zamoyski, Grand Chancellor and Great Hetman of the Crown, the founder of Zamość. After the Second World War, Jan Zamoyski, the 16th and final owner of the Zamoyski family fee tail, deposited the family library with the National Library of Poland, to which it now belongs.

LA SFORZIADA

One of the most famous books printed in Renaissance Italy, the *Commentarii rerum gestarum Francisci Sfortiae*, also known as *La Sforziada*, is dedicated to Francesco Sforza, the ruler of Milan and founder of the Sforza dynasty. Four luxurious copies of the book were printed on parchment in 1490 in Florence, for four different members of the Sforza family. One copy is today held by the British Library, another is in the Bibliothèque nationale de France and a third, incomplete copy is in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. The fourth, presented here, is the most valuable and contains the artist's signature on the frontispiece. The signature can be seen on the basin at the bottom of the right-hand margin: "P[RE]SB[ITE]R IO[ANNES] PETR[US] BIRAGVS FE[CIT]" ("The Presbyter, Giovanni Pietro Birago, made me"). Giovanni Pietro Birago decorated each of the four copies differently, depending on the person for whom it was intended. The book probably formed part of the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail from the 16th century onwards. Together with the rest of the library's collection it was transferred to the National Library of Poland after the Second World War.





JAN DŁUGOSZ † CATALOGUE OF THE ARCHBISHOPS OF GNIEZNO

Decorated in Cracow between 1531 and 1535 by Stanisław Samostrzelnik, one of the most important Renaissance painters and miniaturists in Poland, this manuscript was created for the Bishop of Cracow and Vice-Chancellor of the Crown Piotr Tomicki, a well-known Polish humanist and patron of the arts.

The *Catalogue*, written by the great 15th century historian and chronicler Jan Długosz, contains biographies of successive archbishops of Gniezno, the primates of Poland. The work is noteworthy not only for the images of these individuals, but in particular for the full-page miniature of St Stanislaus taking the Kingdom of Poland under his protection. In the picture, the angels accompanying St Stanislaus are shielding under the saint's Cloth of Honour a kneeling King Sigismund I the Old with his secular dignitaries, and

Bishop Tomicki with his ecclesiastical dignitaries. One of the angels is holding the flag of the Kingdom of Poland, the other a palm of martyrdom – one of the attributes of the saint. The other attribute is the raising of the dead knight Piotrowin. From between medallions with the coats of arms of the King and the Bishop, a dog wearing an elaborate collar looks out at the reader.

The manuscript formerly belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. In 1944, during the Second World War, it escaped destruction by being taken from Warsaw to Goerbitsch. From there, the Russians transported it to Moscow. It returned to the National Library of Poland in 1947 along with other items from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail.



CIOŁEK'S MISSAL

A liturgical book created around 1515 during the heyday of the Cracow school of illumination. It was commissioned by Erazm Ciołek, Bishop of Płock, a colourful and somewhat ambiguous figure from the time of King Sigismund I the Old. Although born to a burgher family, Ciołek claimed to be a nobleman. He was also an educated humanist and a distinguished patron of the arts: the Missal was decorated by the best artists working in the Polish lands at the time. Stanisław Samostrzelnik, a famous painter known particularly for his miniatures, probably contributed to the decoration of the manuscript. In the showcased book,

what catches the eye is a full-page depiction of the Crucifixion, accompanied by a miniature featuring the Virgin Mary and the Pensive Christ on the adjacent page.

In the mid-18th century the manuscript belonged to the Załuski Library (Library of the Republic), the predecessor of the National Library of Poland. It was taken to St Petersburg after the Third Partition of Poland and returned after the 1921 Treaty of Riga. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, the National Library sent it together with the Library's treasury to Canada for safety, from where it returned to Poland in 1959.

BISHOP TOMICKI'S MISSAL

Published in Venice in 1532, this missal for the diocese of Cracow was compiled at the request of Bishop Piotr Tomicki. It has a beautiful Renaissance binding featuring the Bishop's coat of arms. Although the most important elements of the Roman Catholic liturgy were the same everywhere, some local differences existed such as additional prayers or a different calendar of saints particularly venerated in the area in question. This gave rise to

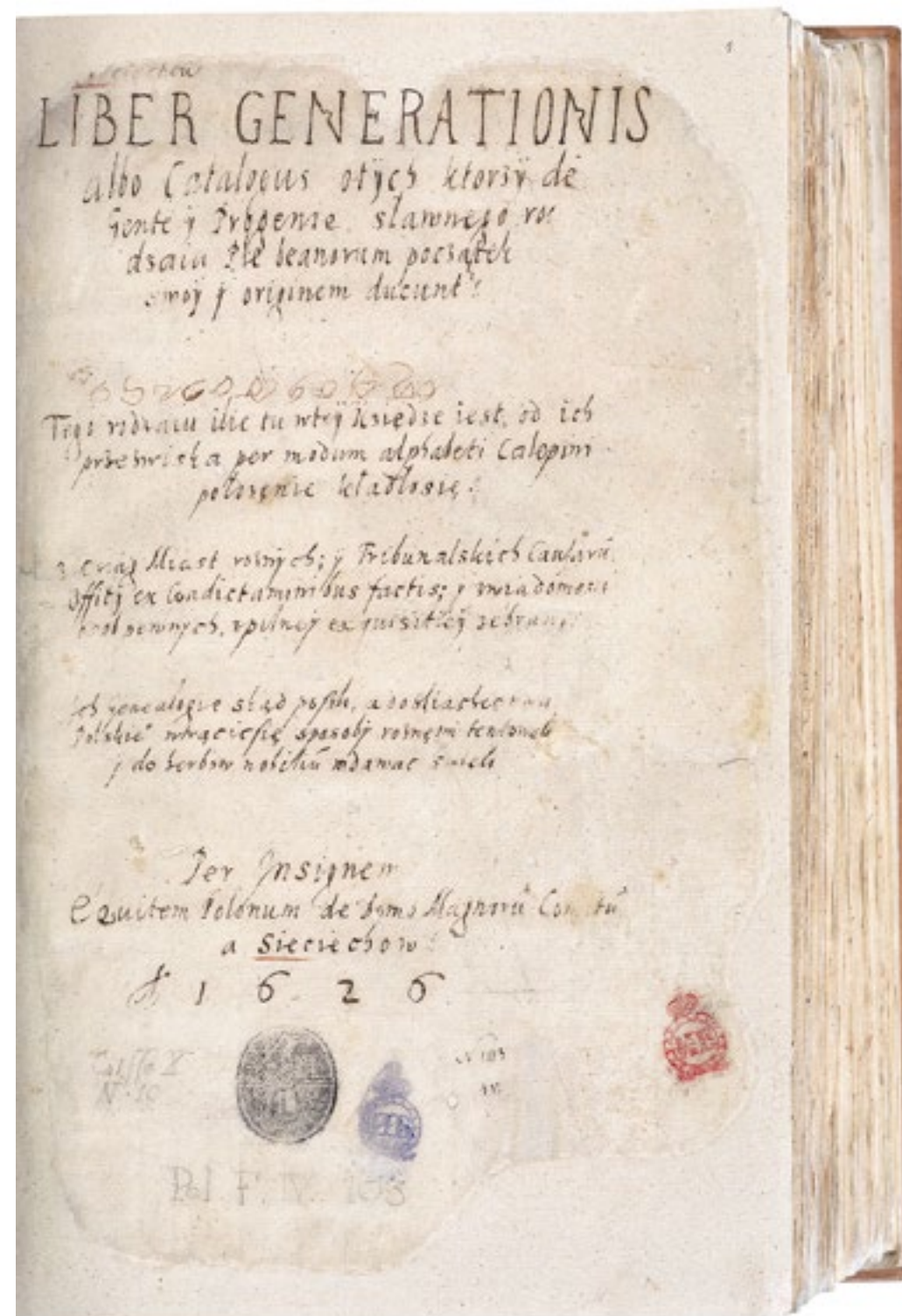
the need to develop and publish diocesan missals for use by the clergy. The manuscript hails from the Tarnowski collection in Dzików Castle in Tarnobrzeg, Poland. It survived the severe damage caused to the castle library by a fire in December 1927 and later during the Second World War. The National Library of Poland purchased the Dzików library in 2009.

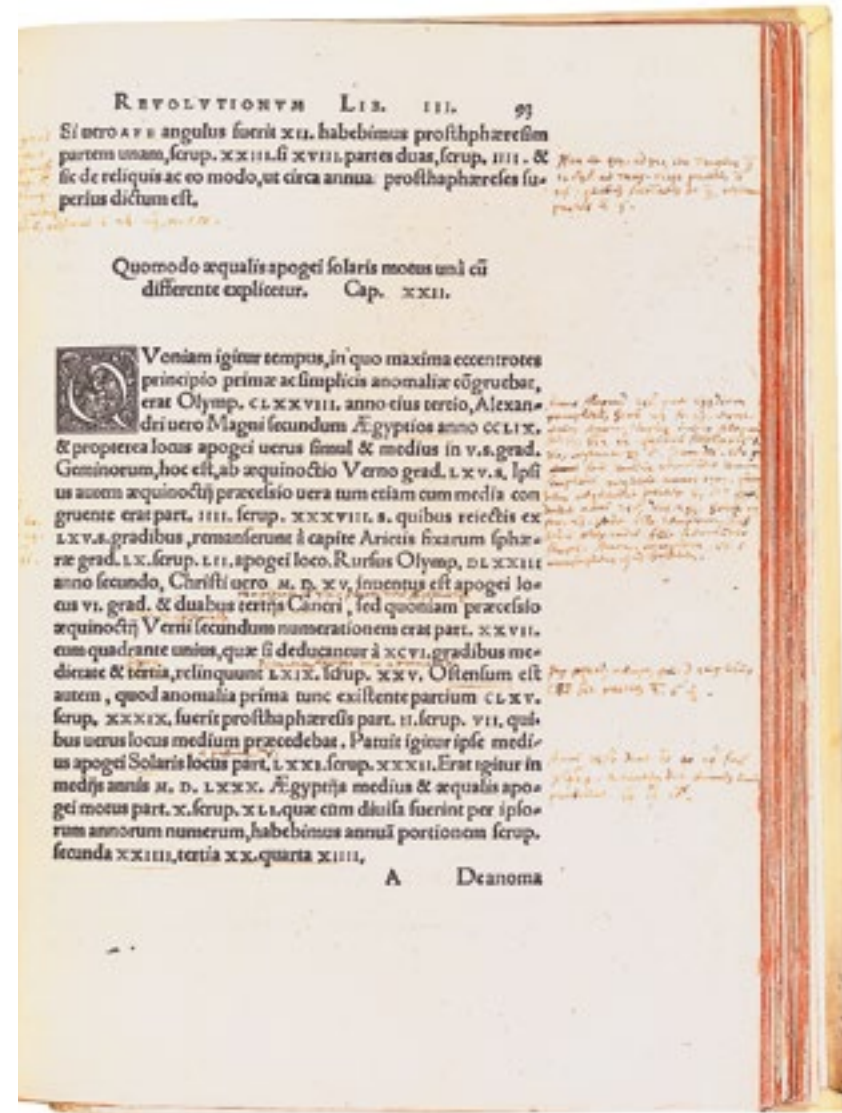


WALERIAN NEKANDA-TREPKA † LIBER CHAMORUM

Liber chamorum, also known as *Liber generationis plebeanorum*, is a 17th century catalogue of individuals and families falsely claiming to be nobles. Its author, Walerian Nekanda-Trepka, tracked down individuals and families whose membership of this class was, in his opinion, illegitimate. Sometimes he suspected they had plebeian, i.e. non-noble origins merely on the basis of gossip or the absence of a given family in Bartosz Paprocki's register of coats of arms. Much of the information cannot be verified as it is based on oral tradition. Nekanda-Trepka uses written sources at will, bending information to suit his preconceived ideas.

This autograph copy with the author's own corrections and additions is part of the National Library's of Poland collection. Contrary to the date appearing on the title page, the work was not completed in 1626; it contains details up to 1639. In the mid-18th century the manuscript belonged to the Załuski Library (Library of the Republic), the predecessor of the National Library of Poland. It was taken to St Petersburg after the Third Partition of Poland and returned after the 1921 Treaty of Riga. During the German occupation it was sent out of Warsaw, only returning to the National Library after the end of the War.





NICOLAUS COPERNICUS † DE REVOLUTIONIBUS ORBIUM COELESTIUM

A first edition of Nicolaus Copernicus's *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres) from 1543, a work that changed the way we see the solar system and triggered a scientific revolution. Copernicus's heliocentric theory challenged the belief

that the human world was at the centre of the universe. The book was published in Nuremberg shortly before his death; according to legend, he only received a copy on his deathbed. During his lifetime he did not gain the recognition he deserved, nor did he have to defend

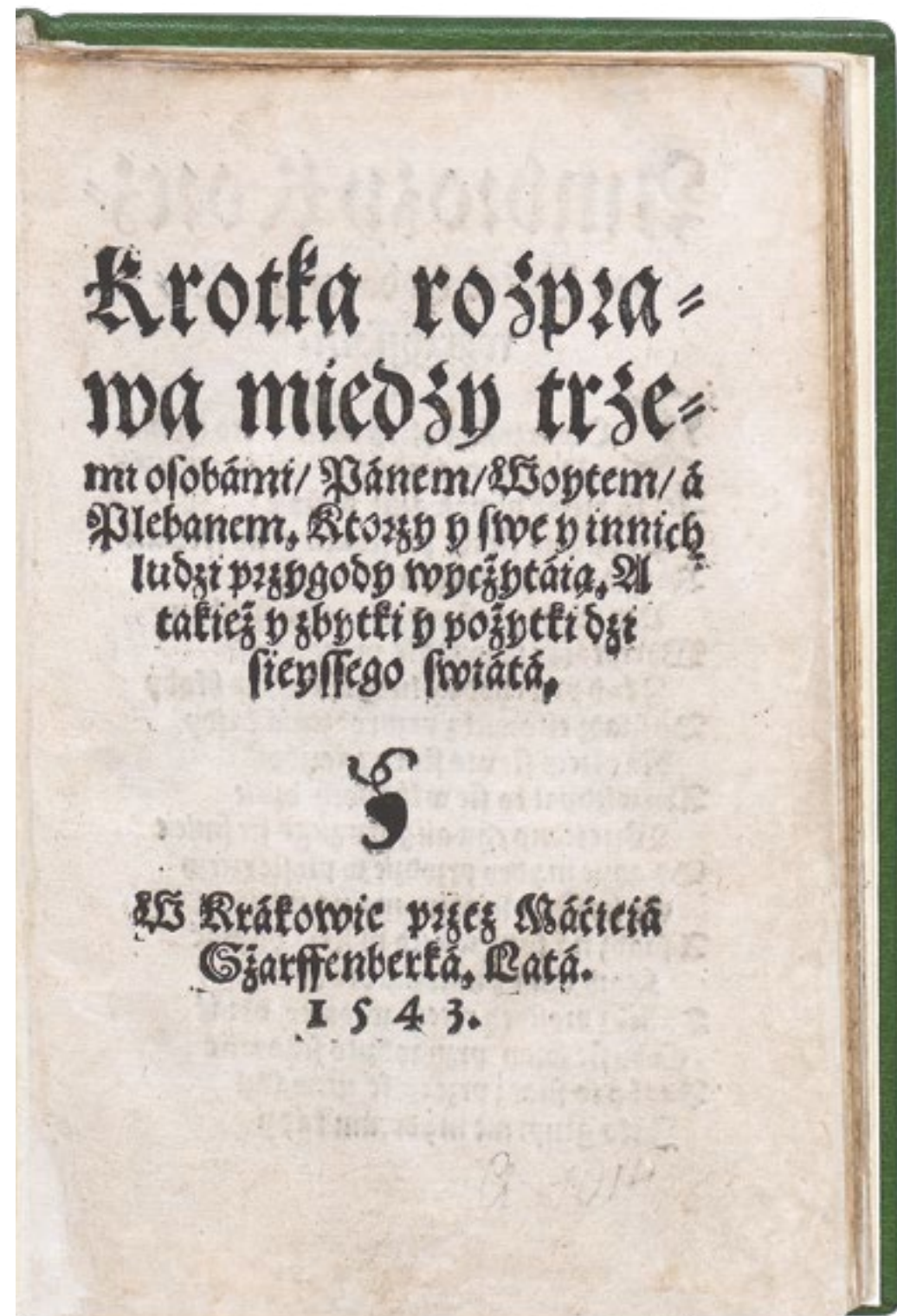
himself before the Catholic Church. His concept gradually gained adherents, and even its inclusion on the Church's Index of Forbidden Books in 1616 failed to prevent this. Surviving copies of the first edition are a great rarity, sold at auction for huge

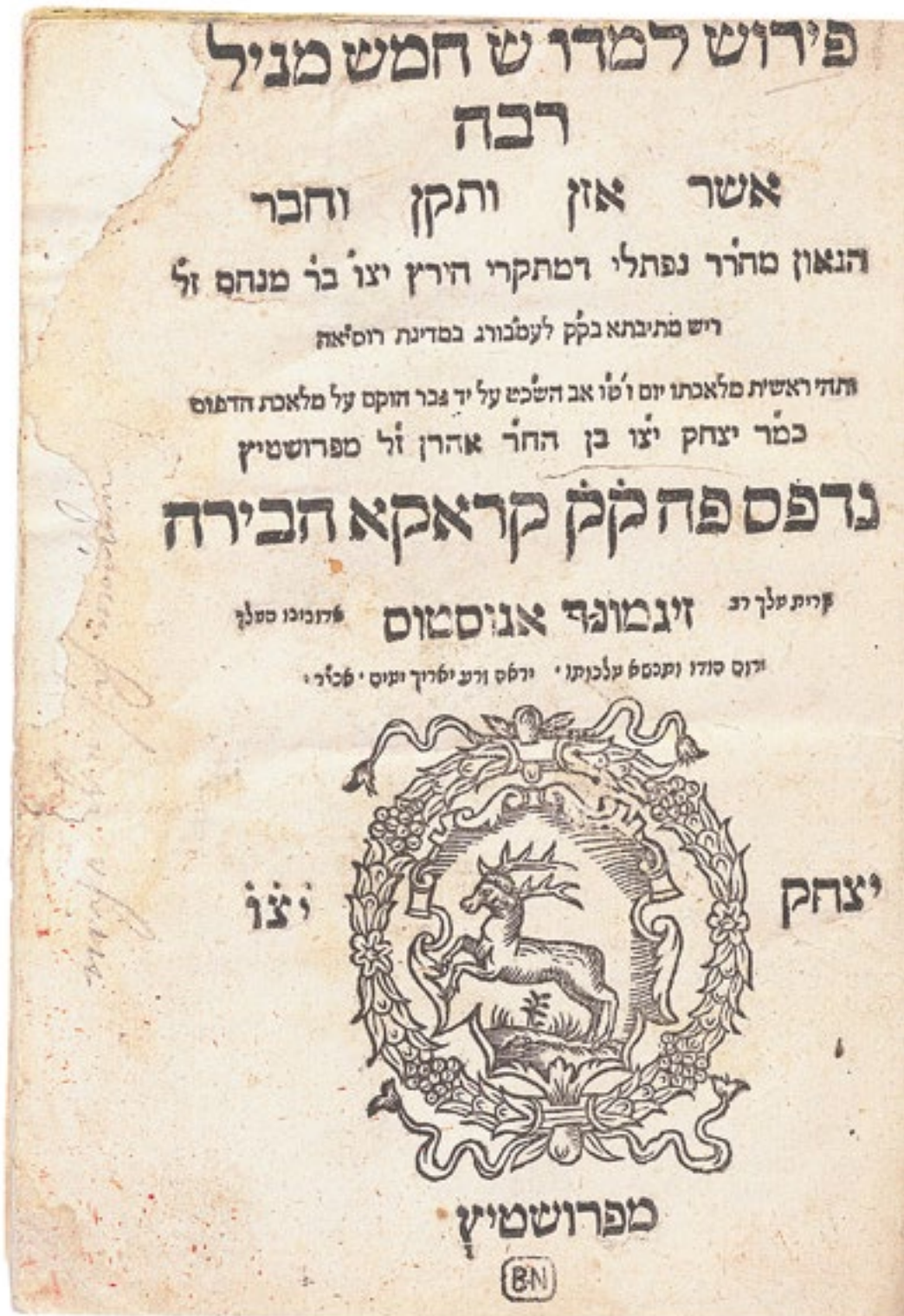
sums. The National Library's of Poland copy was donated in 1982 by Colonel Roman Umiastowski, a soldier in the Polish Army and an antiquarian and collector in London after the War.

MIKOŁAJ REJ † A SHORT CONVERSATION...

The only surviving copy of the first edition of the well-known work *Krótka rozprawa między trzema osobami, Panem, Wójtem a Plebanem* (A Short Conversation Between Three Persons, a Squire, a Bailiff, and a Parson) by Mikołaj Rej, one of the masters of the Polish Renaissance. The date of the work's publication, 1543, is regarded as a turning point in the development of Polish: by convention, the transition from Old Polish to Middle Polish. It also marks an improvement in the status of the Polish language in both public life and literature. Rej's dialogue in verse is an example of literature dealing with political problems.

It is a satire on social relations, condemning clericalism, the selfishness of the nobility and the oppression of the plebeians. Rej does not spare even the members of the sejmiks (local parliaments), who he says care more about receiving their allowances than the public interest. According to Rej, the best solution to the ills plaguing the country can be found in the ethical attitude of its citizens. The copy belonged to the Potocki Library in Krzeszowice, whose collection was transferred to the National Library of Poland after the Second World War.

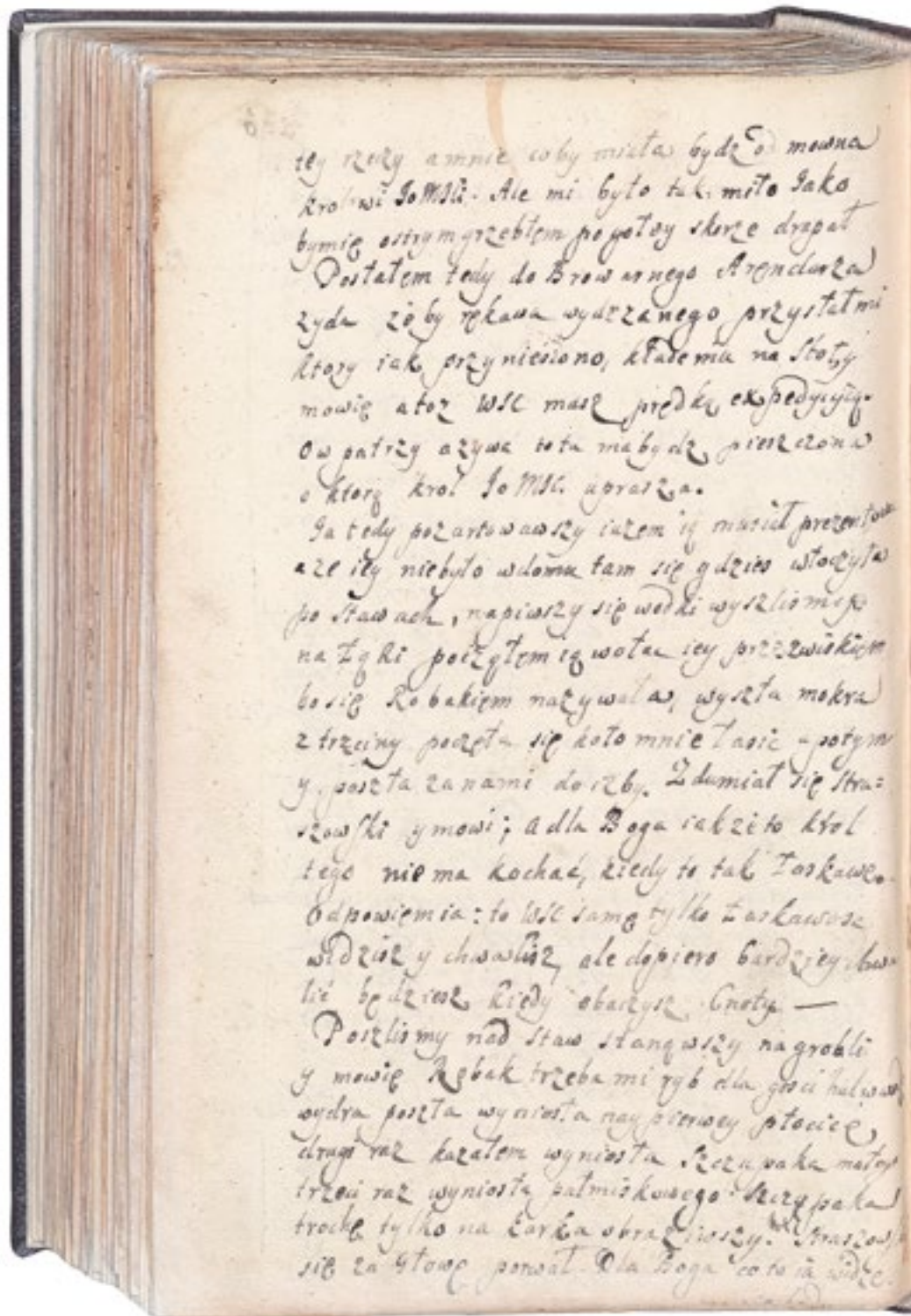




FIRST PRINTED WORK FROM THE PRINTING HOUSE OF ISAAC BEN AARON PROSTITZ

An important early example of Jewish printing in Cracow. The first Hebrew-language printing house in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland was established in 1534. However, its owners, the Helicz (or Halicz) Brothers, were baptised, so their printing house was boycotted by Jews and the printing house only operated until 1541. The next Jewish printing house in the city was not established until nearly 30 years later: in 1568, King Sigismund II Augustus granted Isaac ben Aaron from Prostitz (Czech: Prostějov) in Moravia the exclusive right to print Jewish books in Cracow and the surrounding area. The copy is the earliest book printed by Isaac ben Aaron Prostitz, dating from

1569. It contains a commentary by Naf-tali Hirc (Hirtz) ben Menachem of Lviv on the Midrash on the Five Megillot (Scrolls): the Song of Songs, the Book of Ruth, the Book of Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and the Book of Esther. The title page contains a printer's mark depicting a deer (a symbol of love for the Torah) and a symbol of the lineage of Naphtali, a character in Genesis, the progenitor of one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. The National Library of Poland purchased the book in 1971 from Władysław Chrapusta, a journalist, diplomat in Israel and bibliophile.



tey rzeczy a mnie co by miasto byde o mowa
krolowi Sobieski. Ale mi bylo tak, mite jako
bymig ostrym grzebtem po gotay skrze drapat
Postatem tedy do Browarowego Arondurza
zyda zoby rekawa wydzranego przystat mi
ktory jak przyniesiono, kladem na stoly
mowis atoz wsc masz przedka ekspedycyjn.
Ow patrzy a zywa to ta ma by de pierzono
o ktory krol Sobieski uprasza.
Ja tedy pozartowawszy iadem iz musiat prezentow
acz ily nie bylo wiadoma tam sie gdzies wstocyla
po strasach, napisaly sie wedki wyszli moga
na tyki poligtem iz wota sey przewiekim
bo sie Robakiem nazywala, wyzeta mokra
z trzcinny poadet sie koto mnie Tasiu - jety m
y, poseta za nami do rzby. Zdumiat sie Stra-
zowski y mowi; a dla Boga jak z to krol
tego nie ma kochac, kiedy to tak Torkawca.
Odpowiem ia: to wsc samg tyko Torkawca
Wdrzisz y chwaslarz, ale dopiero bardziej bar-
lic by dzies kiedy obaczysz Gnoty -
Porzli my nad staw stangwicy na grobli
y mowis Robak trzeba mi ryb dla zroci halowad
wydra poseta wyniosta nay pierwszy ptowiec,
drug raz karatem wyniosta koczynaka matop
trzeci raz wyniosta palmiskowego koczynaka
troche tyko na karcia obracajacy. Wstraszony
sie za stowc powiat. Dla Boga co to ja widze.

JAN CHRZYSTOM PASEK † MEMOIRS

A colourful description of life in the turbulent, war-filled 17th century. Jan Chryzostom Pasek studied at a Jesuit college but did not graduate, enlisting instead in the army. He spent many years at war, serving under the famous Stefan Czarniecki, among others. In his later years he settled down on his estate, where he devoted himself to farming and reminiscing about his past adventures. In fact, his memoirs cover more than events on the battlefield. For example, he boasts about his pet otter, Robak ("worm"). She would fetch him fish, sleep in his bed with him and guard him like a dog. In the memoir there is a description

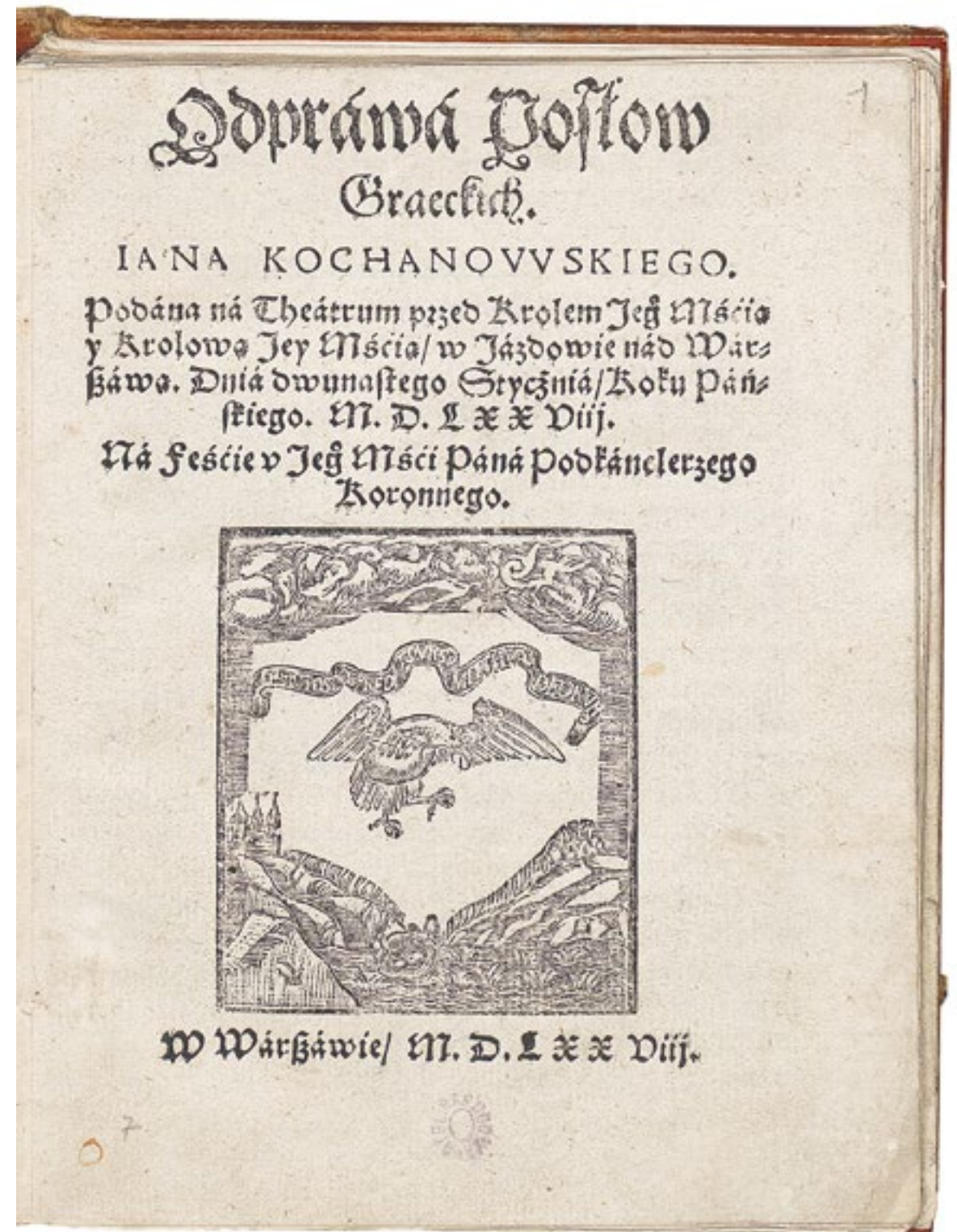
of the animal's skills as demonstrated to the royal envoy. Robak became so famous that King John III Sobieski asked that she be given to him. The manuscript in the collection of the National Library of Poland is the only surviving early copy of the work, dating from the first half of the 18th century. It was taken to St Petersburg after the November Uprising, returning to Poland in the interwar period under the 1921 Treaty of Riga. It survived the German occupation safely in a conservation workshop. In 1944 it was taken from Warsaw to the Austrian castle of Fischhorn, from where it returned in 1946.

JAN KOCHANOWSKI † THE DISMISSAL OF THE GREEK ENVOYS

The first printed edition of the earliest Polish Renaissance tragedy, performed at the wedding of Jan Zamoyski and Princess Krystyna Radziwiłłówna on January 12, 1578 in Ujazdów near Warsaw in the presence of King Stephen Báthory. It was printed in the so-called “flying printing house”, which moved around with the monarch’s court, a workshop set up for the rapid publication of royal universals and other official writings. The

flying printing house was also used to disseminate works celebrating the monarch, as well as events in the life of Jan Zamoyski, who aspired to the highest political rank below the monarch.

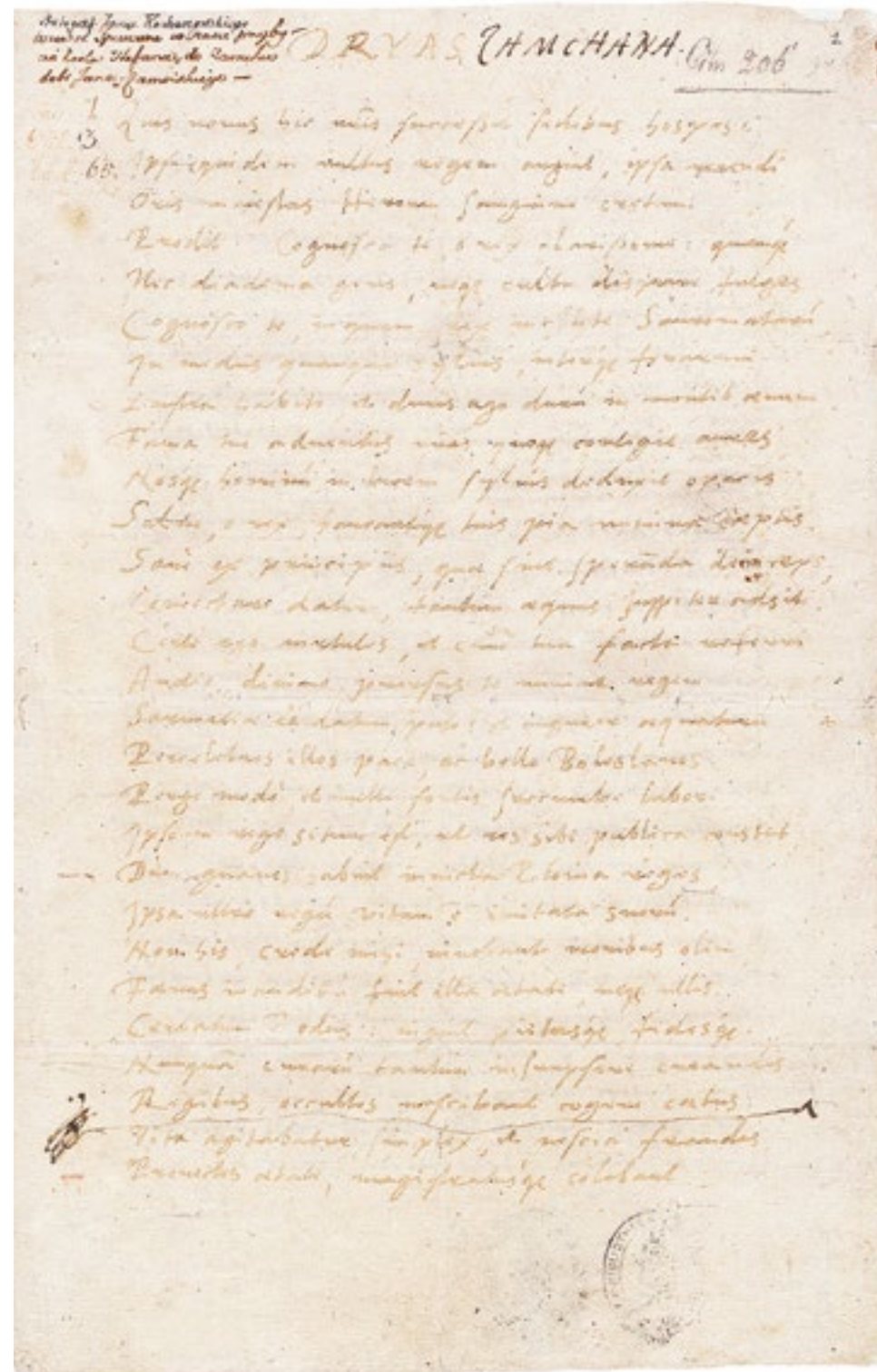
The copy comes from the Tarnowski collection in Dzików Castle in Tarnobrzeg, Poland. It survived the destruction of the castle library by fire in December 1927. The Dzików library was purchased by the National Library of Poland in 2009.

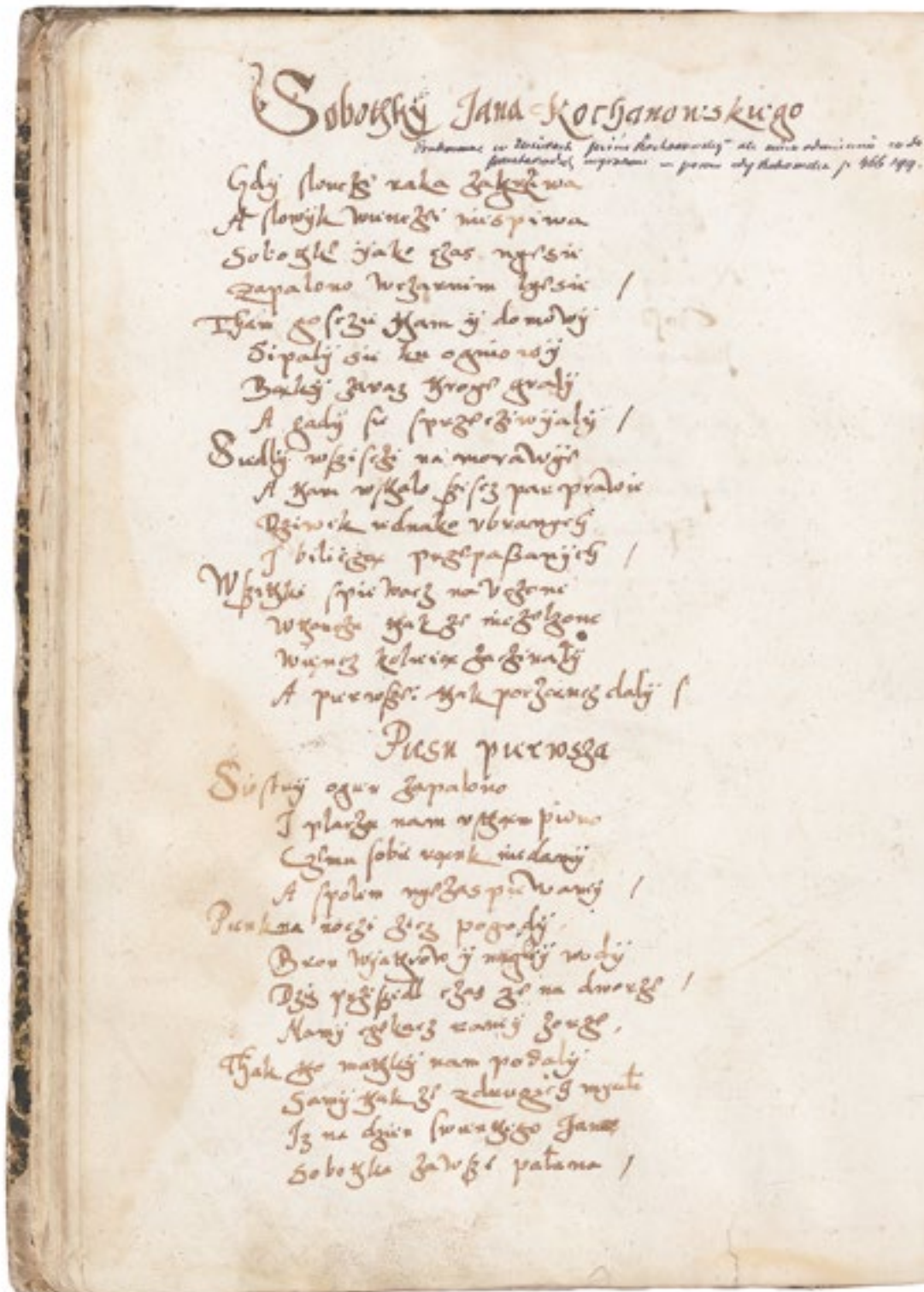


**ONLY COPY OF A WORK BY JAN KOCHANOWSKI
IN THE AUTHOR'S HAND**

A fair copy of the poem *Dryas Zamchana*, written for the visit of King Stephen Báthory to the estate of Jan Zamoyski in Zamch in 1578. *Dryas* means “dryad”, a forest nymph in Greek mythology. The piece was presented as a spectacle, with actors representing the dryad and Pan, the Greek god of forests. The manuscript formed the basis for the first printed edition of the work, as evidenced by the horizontal lines on it marking where the text is to be divided up onto different pages. The second word of the title in the heading (“ZAMCHANA”)

was added by Jan Zamoyski. The manuscript later lay for two and a half centuries in the family archive. It was only rediscovered in 1874 by the librarian of the Zamoyski library fee tail, Józef Przyborowski. In 1944, during the Second World War, it escaped destruction by being taken from Warsaw to Goerbitsch. From there, the Russians transported it to Moscow. After its return to Poland in 1947 it found its way, along with other items from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail, to the National Library of Poland.





JAN KOCHANOWSKI † SONG OF ST JOHN'S EVE

A manuscript version of *Pieśń świętojańska o sobótce* (Song of St John's Eve) by Jan Kochanowski in a slightly earlier version of the work than the first printed edition of 1586. This copy forms part of a collection of poems by various late Renaissance authors, including Mikołaj Sęp Szarzyński and the "Anonymous Protestant". The manuscript testifies to the popularity of Kochanowski's works even before they were published.

The differences between the manuscript and the printed edition are easy to identify. For example, the title of the entire cycle in the manuscript is *Sobótki* (St John's Fires) and the individual parts are headed *Pieśń pierwsza*, *Pieśń wtóra* (First song, Second song) and so on rather than *Panna pierwsza*, *Panna druga* (First maiden,

Second maiden) as in the published version.

The manuscript's origins date back to the 1670–80s, but contrary to earlier beliefs it could not have belonged to the Zamoy-ski collection during the lifetime of Jan Zamoyski. In fact, it only came to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail in 1869, as part of the collection of Władysław Trębicki of Linowa in the Grodno region. In 1944, during the Second World War, the manuscript escaped destruction by being taken from Warsaw to Goerbitsch. From there, the Russians transported it to Moscow. After its return to Poland in 1947 it found its way, along with other items from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail, to the National Library of Poland.

BOOK BINDING FROM THE SILVER LIBRARY OF DUKE ALBRECHT OF PRUSSIA

A masterpiece of Renaissance goldsmithing. The “Silver Library” is the name given to the collection of prints for which Duke Albrecht Hohenzollern of Prussia had artistic cover decorations made of precious metals.

The binding dates from around 1555 and was made by the Basel-based goldsmith Paul Hoffmann. He covered the boards and the back of the volume with silver sheeting and used gold for the reliefs. In the centre of the upper cover is a plaque showing an allegory of justice. Above and below it are scenes from the Old Testament featuring Moses, who can be recognised by the horns on his head,

common in medieval and early modern depictions of the prophet. In the corners are plaques showing allegories of faith, patience, temperance and hope. The lower cover features a plaque with a sleeping cupid, and in the corners are further plaques containing allegories of hope, fortitude, love and justice.

The Silver Library belonged to the State and University Library in Königsberg. In 1943 the collection was removed from the city and dispersed. The book itself was lost, but the binding survived and became part of the collection of the National Library of Poland.





PTOLEMY † GEOGRAFIA

Renaissance maps based on the treatise on geography by the 2nd century Alexandrian mathematician, astronomer and geographer Claudius Ptolemy, one of the greatest scholars of antiquity. The Greek title of the work, *Geographike hyphegesis*, means “guidance on the drawing of maps”. In it, the author gives detailed descriptions of individual regions and guidelines for their visual presentation.

One of the most eminent cartographers who used *Geografia* in his work was Nicolaus Germanus, active in Rome and Florence in the second half of the 15th century. He produced luxurious copies of the Latin translation of Ptolemy’s work, made on parchment, richly illuminated and finished with gold leaf. The most valuable part of these manuscripts are the sets of colour maps: a map of the “ecumene”

(the entire known world) and maps of 29 different regions of Europe, Asia and Africa.

The manuscript was dedicated to Pope Paul II around 1467. According to family tradition, Jan Zamoyski (1542–1605), Grand Chancellor and Great Hetman of the Crown, received the work as a gift from Pope Gregory XIII. In 1944, during the Second World War, it escaped

destruction by being taken from Warsaw to Goerbitsch. From there, the Russians transported it to Moscow. After its return to Poland in 1947 it found its way, along with other items from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail, to the National Library of Poland.



PORTOLAN OF ANGELO FREDUCCI

The first of two known nautical atlases by Angelo Freducci, a 16th-century cartographer from Ancona. This is an example of an accordion-folded *portolan*, or collection of charts for sailors, such as were made in Mediterranean countries from the Middle Ages to the 17th century. In line with their purpose, the charts covered seas, islands and coasts but generally left the land blank.

The 1554 portolan is distinguished by its depiction of the coast, highly detailed even for a portolan, as well as the sizeable areas of land shown, including rivers, cit-

ies and even characteristic buildings. It consists of five charts on parchment, together covering an area stretching from the western coasts of Europe, across the Mediterranean, Black Sea, Red Sea, southern coast of the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf, to the Caspian Sea. The exhibit previously belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. It entered the collection of the National Library of Poland after the Second World War together with the surviving part of the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail's collection.



PORTOLAN OF ANTONIO MILLO

A hand-drawn atlas from 1583, consisting of eight ornately executed portolans on parchment, one of the few objects of this type so well preserved in a Polish collection. The creator of the atlas, Antonio Millo, was a Greek cartographer active

in Venice in the second half of the 16th century. The valuable piece of cartographical history was probably not actually used for sailing, but rather for education and planning future voyages. The atlas covers the

coasts of Western Europe, the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, Central America and Africa. The charts are notable for their gilded wind roses, colour illustrations, and the coats of arms of the countries and cities shown.

The object exhibited belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. It entered the collection of the National Library of Poland after the Second World War together with the surviving part of the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail's collection.



MICHAŁ BOYM † FLORA SINENSIS

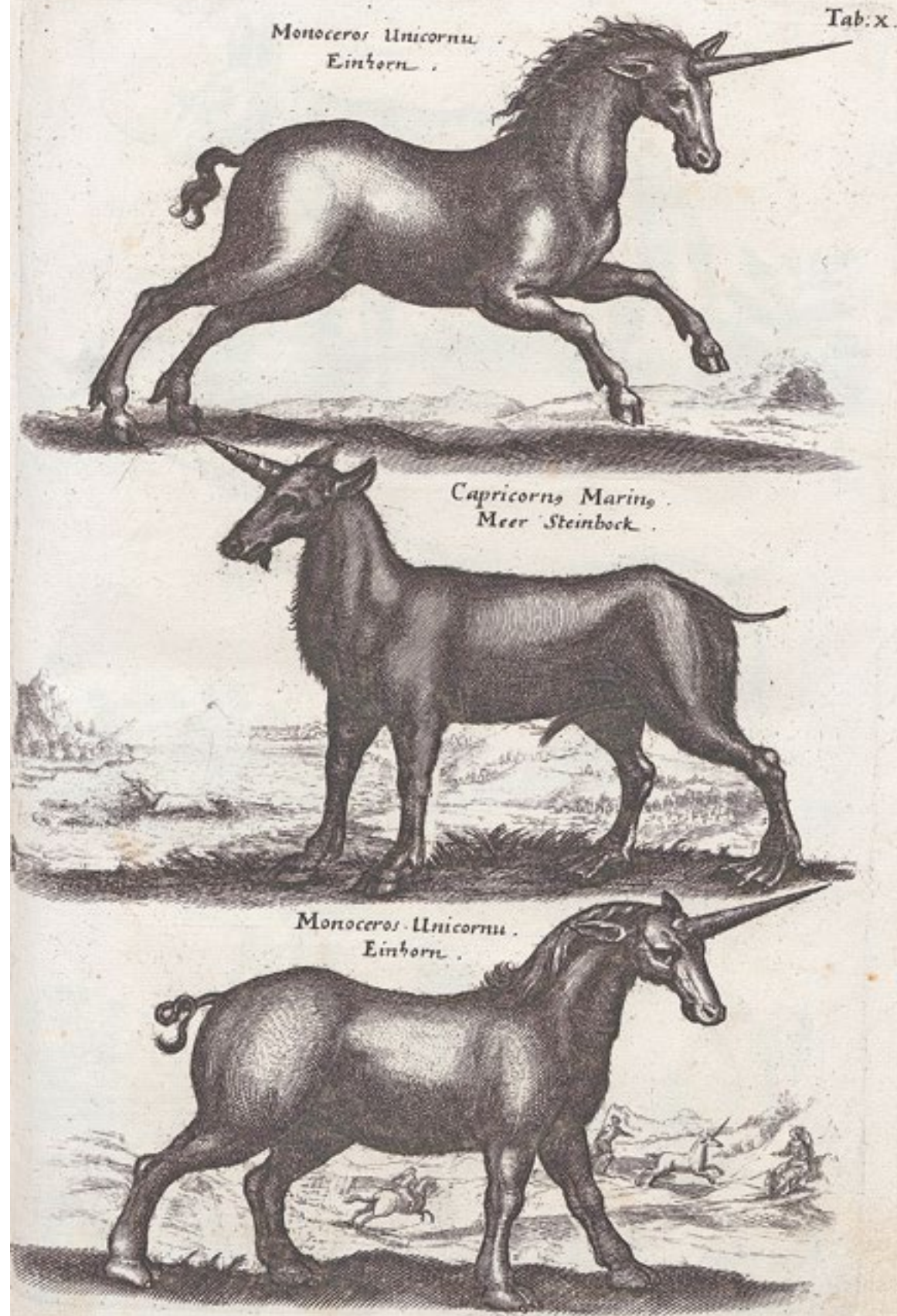
One of the first European albums on the natural history of East Asia. This is the best-known work by Michał Boym, a Polish Jesuit and pioneer of sinology who worked in China as a missionary and diplomat in the 1740s and '50s, where he learnt the local language and studied the local culture and natural world. Boym was the first European to write a systematic description of the flora of the Far East, supplementing it with information on some animals. His selection of material for the book was dictated by his desire to show on the one hand exotic specimens,

and on the other those which were economically and medicinally useful. Written in Latin, the work was first published in Vienna in 1656. In addition to the text it contains detailed illustrations, hand-coloured in some copies. Boym's descriptions include lychees, bananas, mangoes, breadfruit, peppers, rhubarb, cinnamon and ginger. The animals he depicts include the musk deer, for example. This copy belonged to the University Library in Lviv. It entered the collection of the National Library of Poland after the Second World War.

JOHN JONSTON † HISTORIAE NATURALIS

The first Polish zoology textbook, dating from the mid-17th century. The *Historiae naturalis* was written by John Jonston while he was associated with the *gymnasium* in Leszno, a school which owed its high profile to Jonston himself. Jonston was born in Poland the son of a Scottish immigrant. He was educated at Protestant grammar schools in Bytom, Toruń and elsewhere, studied at the University of St Andrews and visited various scientific centres in Western Europe. He obtained his doctorate in medicine from Leiden. In the *Historiae naturalis*, Jonston aims to provide basic information about all the animal species known at the time, including fantastic ones. He divides his work

into several parts, following the system for classifying animate beings in use at the time. The volume, published around 1652 in Frankfurt am Main, is devoted to four-legged creatures. An integral part of the work are the numerous engravings of animals, stemming from the famous workshop of Matthäus Merian. The book is open at the beginning of the chapter about his tour and features pictures of two unicorns and a goat. This copy comes from the Count Tarnowski collection in Dzików Castle in Tarnobrzeg, Poland. It survived the destruction of the castle library by fire in December 1927. The Dzików library was purchased by the National Library of Poland in 2009.



ALBUM OF TURKISH COSTUMES

A collection of 90 miniatures depicting characteristically dressed figures – dignitaries and functionaries of the Sultan's court from the reign of Ibrahim I (1640–1648). Similar albums had been produced since the 16th century and were a source of information for Westerners, familiarising travellers to the Ottoman Empire with Turkish culture. In addition they served as entertainment, stimulating the reader's imagination through contact with the exotic, a distant and incomprehensible world known to them only from the popular epic poems of the time. Each page of the manuscript features a picture with a caption in Turkish, writ-

ten in Arabic script, and a transcription in Latin script below or beside it. An explanation of the Turkish terms has been added at the top of the page in French. The first page depicts the Sultan on horseback, surrounded by his courtiers. Later in the collection, in addition to commanders of the guard and various officials, we find people such as a falconer and the official responsible for serving coffee. The album was purchased in Paris in 1802 by Stanisław Kostka Zamoyski. It entered the collection of the National Library of Poland after the Second World War together with other items from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail.





INAYATULLAH KAMBU † THE GARDEN OF KNOWLEDGE

A lavishly illuminated collection of stories in the Persian language about the love between the Mughal Prince Jahandar and Queen Bahrewar Banu. Its author was Inayatullah Kambu, a scholar, writer and poet who lived in 17th century India. The work is structured as a frame nar-

ative, similar to *One Thousand and One Nights*. In addition to the main plot there are many fantastic tales within the work, for example featuring an advice-giving parrot, demons and magical objects such as a flying throne. After numerous highly

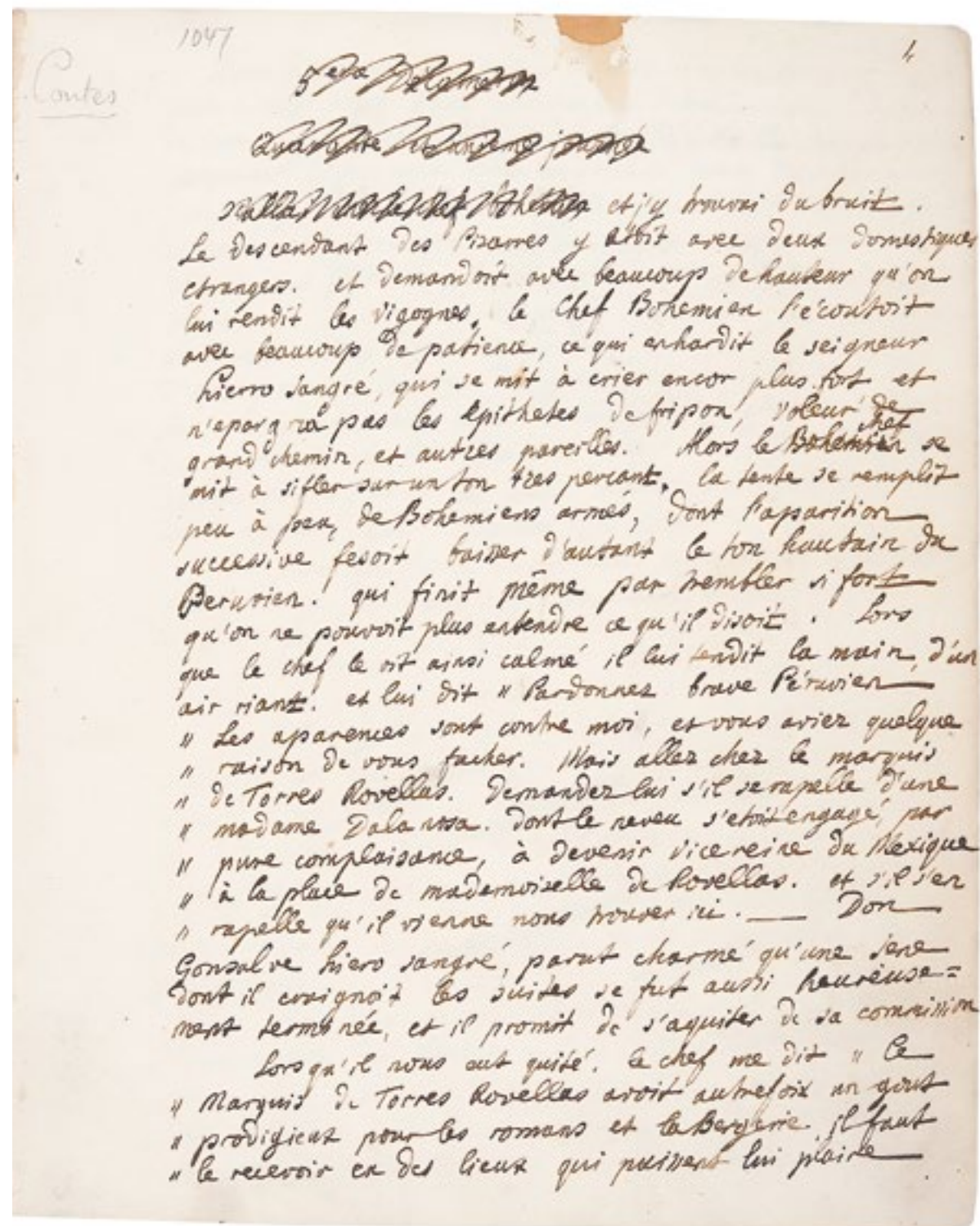
involved adventures, Prince Jahandar finally marries his beloved. Produced in 1784, the manuscript was acquired for the collection of Stanisław Kostka Zamoyski in 1803 in London by the renowned English orientalist William Ouseley. In 1944 it was taken

to Goerbitsch, from where the Russians transported it to Moscow. After its return to Poland in 1958 it found its way to the National Library of Poland together with the rest of the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail.

JAN POTOCKI † THE MANUSCRIPT FOUND IN SARAGOSSA

Excerpt covering Days 41–51 of the famous frame-tale novel. Potocki, who came from one of the most influential families in Poland, wrote in French, as the primary language of communication among the cosmopolitan aristocracy and educated society in the 18th and 19th centuries. Different conventions and styles are intermingled in the work. There are picaresque tales, horror stories, romances and even philosophical reflections. Many unexpected characters appear, such as Moorish princesses, pirates, a cabalist and even a gypsy chief. The action takes place not only in different regions of Europe but also in Mexico, for example. The different

threads are tied together by the narrator, Alfonso van Worden, a young captain of the Walloon Guard sent by King Philip V to Madrid in 1739. Van Worden takes the shortest route for his journey, through the Sierra Morena mountain range, despite warnings of the dangers that await him there. The novel was turned into a film by Polish film director, screenwriter and film producer Wojciech Jerzy Has in 1964. The manuscript belonged to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. After the Second World War, along with the surviving part of the library's collection, it became part of the National Library's of Poland holdings.





WACŁAW SEWERYN RZEWUSKI † CONCERNING THE HORSES OF THE ORIENT AND THOSE ORIGINATING FROM ORIENTAL BREEDS

A description of the Arabian Peninsula by Wacław Seweryn Rzewuski. Rzewuski was an enthusiast of the Orient and pioneer of ethnography who received the title of *Emir*. He was also a breeder and consummate expert on pure-bred Arabian horses. Between 1817 and 1819 he travelled through the Balkans and Istanbul to Syria, settling in a palace in Aleppo. From there he embarked on further expeditions

to Cilicia (in the south of modern Turkey), Palestine and in particular the desert region of the Najd in the central part of the Arabian Peninsula. Rzewuski compiled the information he gathered during his long journey into a three-volume work in French, which contrary to its title is not solely devoted to thoroughbred horses. The work is a valuable source of knowledge about the cul-

ture of peoples who did not produce much written material about themselves, such as the nomadic Bedouins. The text is accompanied by numerous illustrations by the author. The text is enriched with drawings depicting, among other things, a stylised sign (*balad*), a donkey laden with packs, a caravan and a camp that has been set up in the desert during a journey to Mecca.

After the author's death, the manuscript remained in the possession of the family of Count Rzewuski. In the 1920s Adam Rzewuski sold it to the National Library of Poland. Fragments of the work were published in French on several occasions but it was not until 2017 that it was published in its entirety by the National Library, accompanied by English and Polish translations of the text.

CONSTITUTION OF 3 MAY 1791

The first modern constitution in Europe and the second in the world after the Constitution of the United States of America, enacted just a few years earlier. The *Governance Act* – the official name of the act – regulates the legislative, executive and judicial powers of government. It abolishes the *liberum veto*, under which every member of parliament had an absolute veto. Separate sections are devoted to the burghers and peasants, whom the state “took under the protection of law and government”.

The Constitution of 1791 was intended not only to bring modernisation, but also through internal reform to free the

Republic from foreign influences, above all Russian tutelage. For this reason, although it was only in force for a short time, it became a symbol of the struggle for freedom.

The showcased edition of the Constitution is today considered a “national monument”, which is why it has been given a protective textile binding. It belonged to Paweł Ksawery Brzostowski, who held the office of Great Lithuanian Writer and to whom the ideas expressed in the Constitution were very dear: on his own estates he replaced serfdom with a system of land rents and granted personal freedom to the peasants.

PRAWO UCHWALONE

Dnia 3. Maja R. 1791.

USTAWA RZĄDOWA

Przepis ten jest wydany w tym samym roku, kiedy to Prawo zostało uchwalone; dla pamiętki zachowujemy się, się.

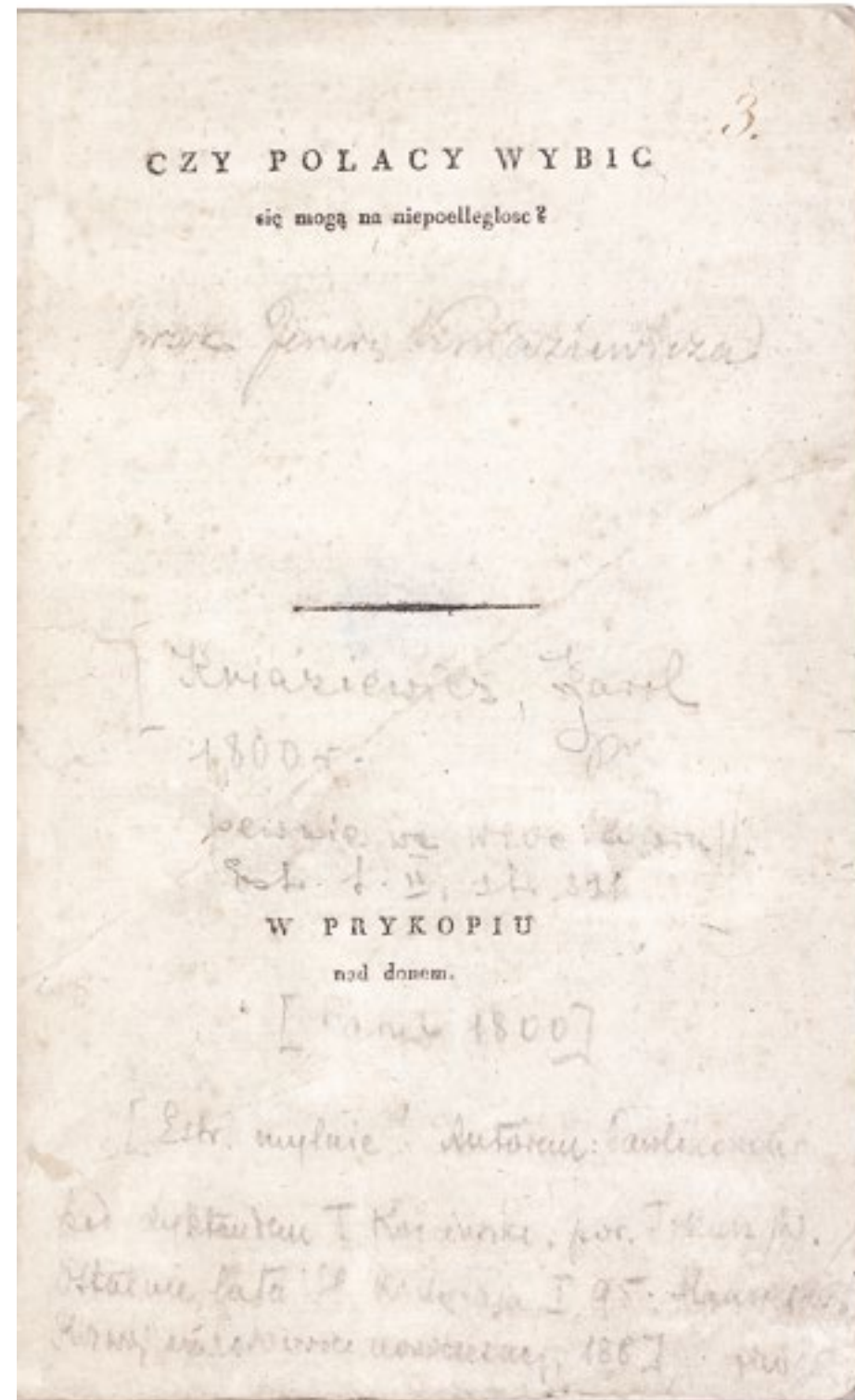
J. Cyniński

JÓZEF PAWLIKOWSKI † CAN POLES WIN THEIR INDEPENDENCE?

A pamphlet from 1800 published anonymously by General Tadeusz Kościuszko's secretary, who may also have had a significant influence on its content. The answer to the question posed in the title is positive, according to the author, despite the extremely difficult situation of the Polish cause at the time – the pamphlet was published five years after the defeat of the Kościuszko Uprising and the beginning of the Third Partition, which put an end to Poland's independence for the following 123 years. The short treatise contains a programme for the creation of a modern, Polish nation, without divisions into separate states. Pawlikowski believed that the success of the independence uprising would be determined by the liberated popular masses. The Ukrainians from the

south-eastern lands of the former Commonwealth would be instrumental in defeating and breaking up Russia. The pamphlet was published in many editions, including seven between 1831 and 1843, a period of heightened pro-independence activities.

The showcased copy is the only surviving one of the first edition, published in Paris; after its publication in 1800, Russia intervened and the French police confiscated the entire edition except for this copy. It belonged to the library of the Poniński Dukes in Horyniec, whose collection was incorporated into the National Library of Poland in the 1920s. This copy is inscribed on UNESCO'S Memory of the World Register.



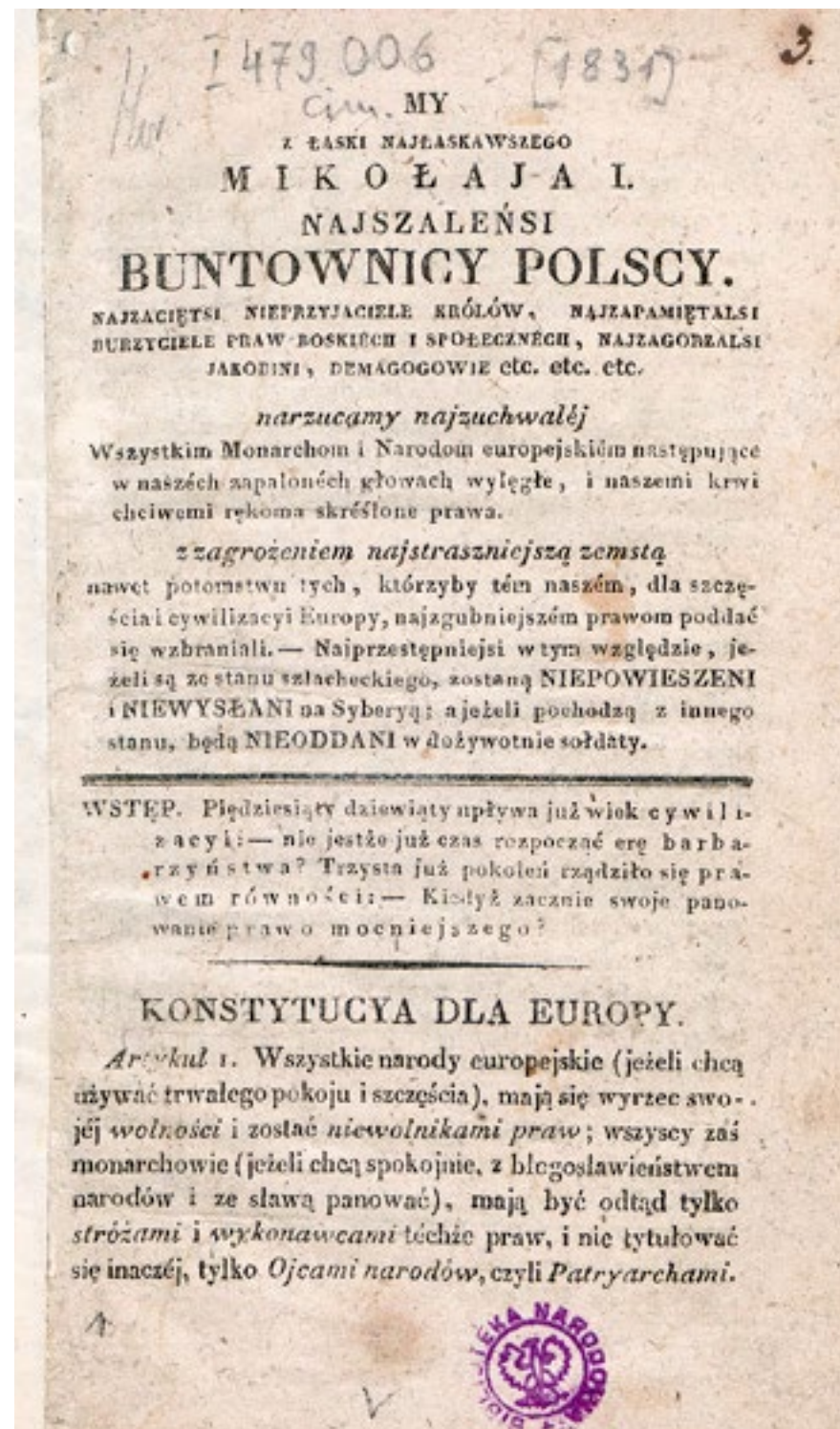
WOJCIECH JASTRZĘBOWSKI † A CONSTITUTION FOR EUROPE

A project for an alliance between nations to end war in Europe. The author, Wojciech Jastrzębowski, was a naturalist, a November insurgent and a socio-political thinker. In 1831, when the Polish independence uprising was still in progress, Jastrzębowski drew up a set of lasting and just norms on which he believed peace should be based.

The author argues for the equality of all nations regardless of their size, the abolition of borders, common laws and a common parliament. It is no coincidence that the publication date for *A Constitution for Europe* is given as 3 May 1831, the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of 3 May 1791 by the Four-Year Sejm,

thereby making the connection to the Polish parliamentary tradition. The text proper is preceded by a parody of the Tsarist manifesto, beginning with the words: “My z łaski najłaskawszego Mikołaja I Najszałeński buntownicy polscy” (“We, by the grace of the most gracious Nicholas I, most crazy Polish rebels”). Despite the cosmopolitan overtones of the project, Jastrzębowski considered himself first and foremost a Polish patriot.

The showcased copy comes from the former Krasieński Library in Warsaw, which was almost completely destroyed in 1944. The surviving remnants of the collection were transferred to the National Library of Poland after World War II.

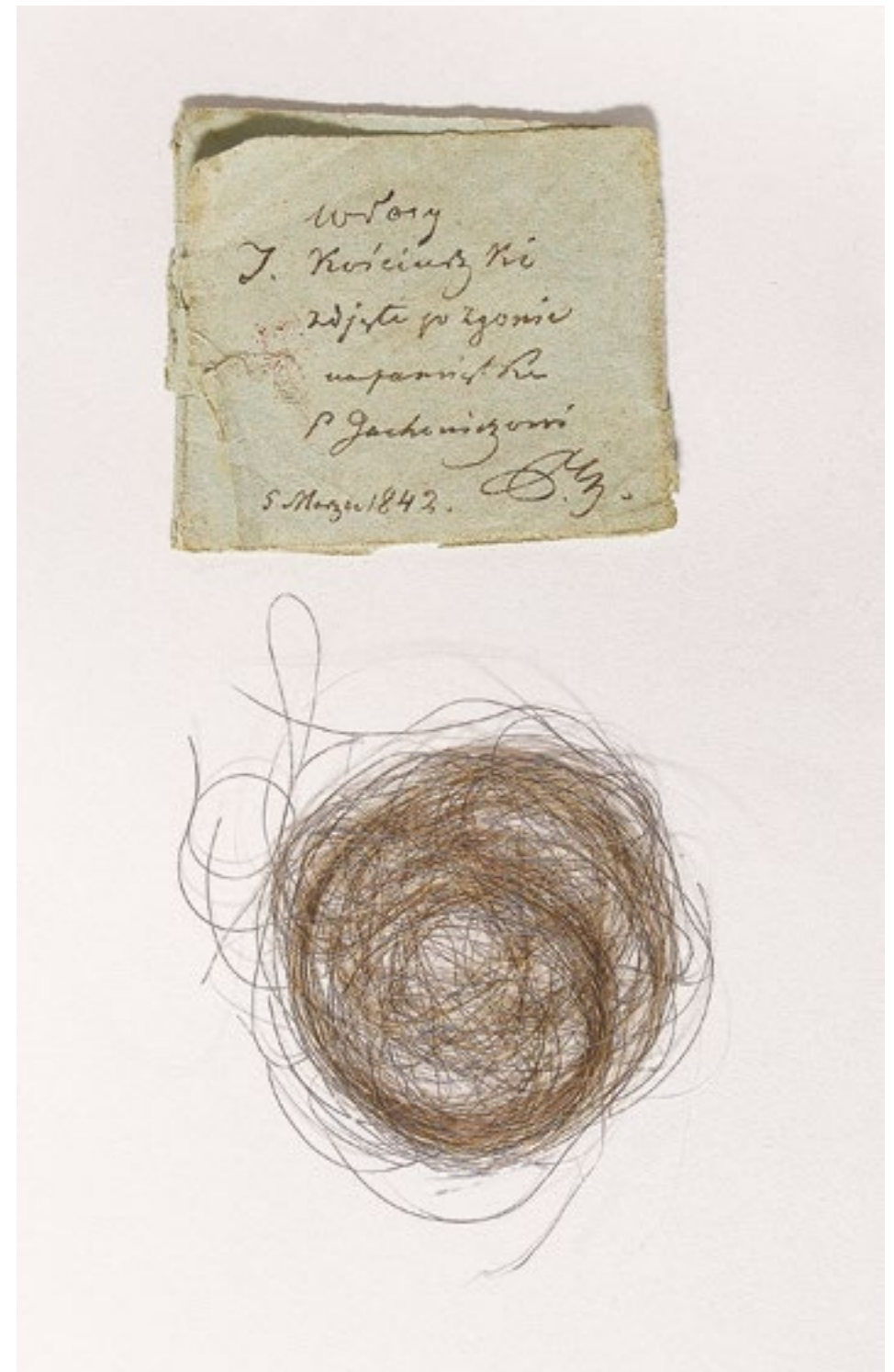


A LOCK OF GENERAL TADEUSZ KOŚCIUSZKO'S HAIR

A memento of the leader of the 1794 insurrection, a national hero in Poland and the United States, testimony to the cult that arose around him during the Partitions of Poland.

This lock of Kościuszko's hair was cut off after his death and placed in a special pouch. Its first owner was Kościuszko's friend and heir, General Franciszek Paszkowski, who was particularly important in the cultivation of his memory. Paszkowski also wrote a biography of Kościuszko and was one of the initiators of the construc-

tion of the Kościuszko Mound in Cracow. In his will he bequeathed the lock of hair to Stanisław Jachowicz, a well-known poet and writer of fairytales. It then found its way to the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail, where it was added to the collection of objects related to Kościuszko. It was integrated into the collection of the National Library of Poland after the Second World War together with the rest of the collection from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail.



PLUME FROM PRINCE JÓZEF PONIATOWSKI'S SHAKO

The plume from the ornate shako, or high military cap, belonging to Prince Józef Poniatowski, Commander-in-Chief of the troops of the Duchy of Warsaw and Marshal of France, killed in the Battle of the Nations at Leipzig in 1813. Poniatowski famously fought in many battles, was a knight of the War Order of Virtuti Militari, distinguished himself in the Austro-Polish War of 1809 and fought in the vanguard of the Grand Army in the 1812 expedition to Russia. His numerous

engagements on the battlefield and heroic death led to the emergence of a cult around his figure in the patriotic circles fighting for Poland's independence. Poniatowski's shako was one of the objects sold after his death. In 1814 it was purchased by Stanisław Kostka Zamoyski. The shako itself has since been lost and only the plume remains. It came to the National Library of Poland after World War II together with the collection of the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail.





FREDERIC CHOPIN † PIANO CONCERTO IN F MINOR

The earlier of the two piano concertos written by Frederic Chopin, one of the world's best-known composers. The composition is thought to have been inspired by Chopin's affection for the singer Konstanca Gładkowska, his youthful muse. The first performance took place before Chopin left Poland in 1830 in the since-destroyed home of the National Theatre

on Krasieński Square, with Chopin himself at the piano. Today, one of Chopin's two piano concertos is always performed by finalists in the International Chopin Piano Competition held in Warsaw every five years.

The separate staves for each instrument can be seen. However, this is not a full autograph score: only the piano part is

in Chopin's own hand. It can be seen on the third and fourth staves from the bottom, marked *Piano-forte*.

For many years the score was kept in the archives of the publisher of Chopin's works, the Leipzig firm of Breitkopf & Härtel. In 1936 it was purchased by the Polish state together with other mementoes of the composer. In January 1938

the Chopin collection was transferred to the National Library of Poland. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, the National Library sent the manuscript together with the Library's treasury to Canada for safety, from where it returned to Poland in 1959.



FRYDERYK CHOPIN † PRELUDES

A series of small, free-form pieces for piano. The “prelude” as a musical form originates in the introductory pieces, often improvised, to other larger compositions. Chopin completed his cycle of preludes in 1838–39 during a stay on Mallorca with George Sand, the French writer and one of the

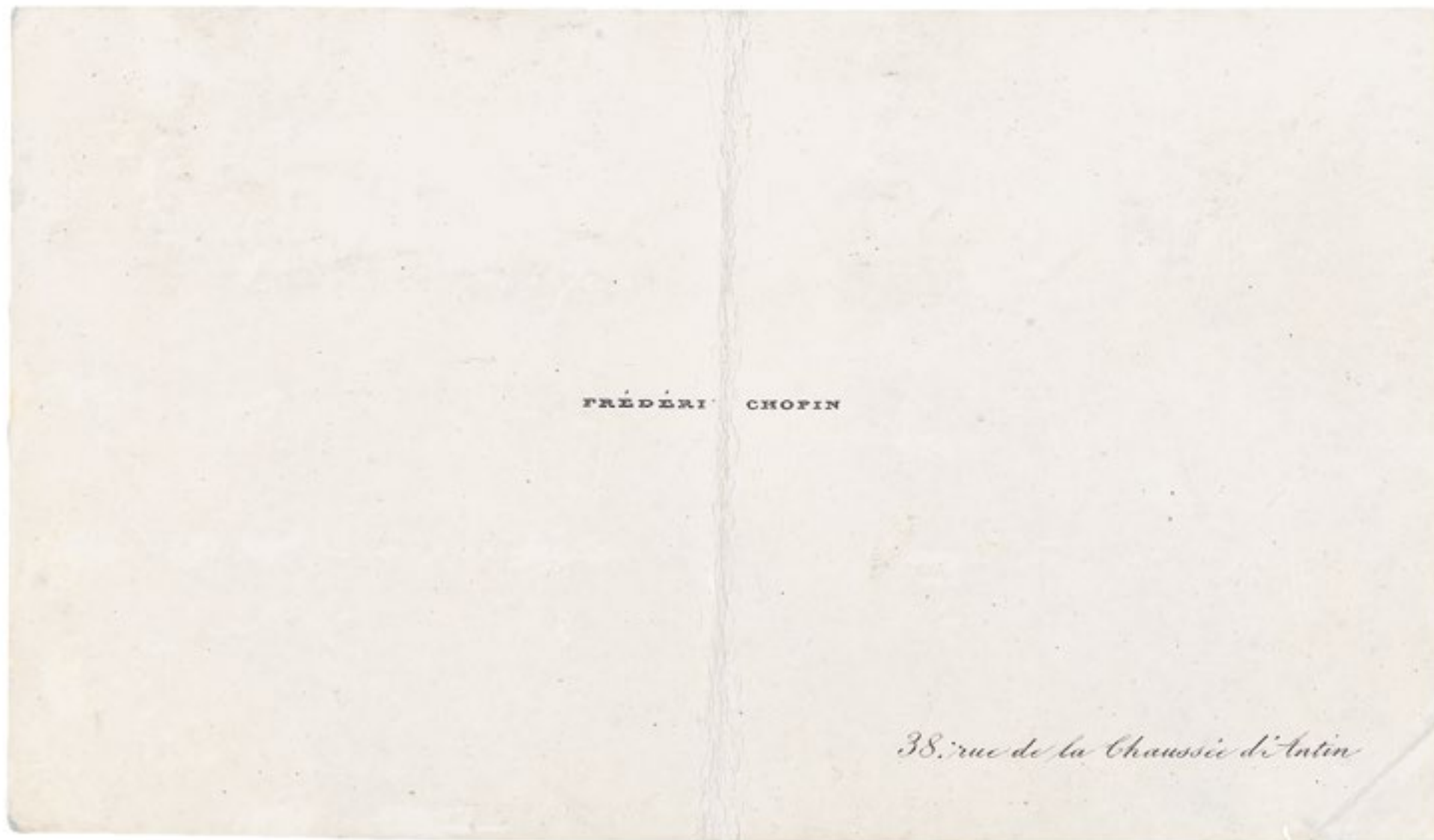
most famous personalities of the Romantic era.

Each of the preludes in Chopin’s cycle has a different character and makes references to different musical genres. The Prelude in A flat major (No. 17), is calm and poetic in mood, for which reason it is known as one of Chopin’s *nocturnal* prel-

udes – evocative of the night. This autograph copy of the preludes is a fair copy ready for publication.

Chopin sent the completed manuscript to the pianist Julian Fontana, who managed his contacts with publishers. What happened to the manuscript after that is unknown, until the spring of 1939 when it

appeared in the collection of the National Library of Poland. In 1943 it was lent out for an exhibition in Cracow. Then as the front approached at the end of the War, it was sent elsewhere for safety. It was not found until 1947, in Kłodzko County.



VISITING CARD OF FRYDERYK CHOPIN

A memento of Chopin's life in Paris, a city which in his day was not just the most important destination for the Great Emigration of Poles and Lithuanians in the mid-nineteenth century, but also the cultural capital of the world. Chopin arrived in Paris in September 1831. Although he often travelled away from the city later in

life, it was here that he spent many of his most creative years, here that he gained fame, and here that he died and was buried.

The visiting card dates from around 1836. In addition to the composer's name, it gives one of his addresses in Paris: 38, *rue de la Chaussée d'Antin*. Chopin lived

here with the doctor Jan Matuszyński, a childhood friend. There, they were visited by some of the greatest figures in musical life at the time, such as the eminent composer and virtuoso pianist Franz Liszt.

This visiting card comes from the album of the painter Zofia Ossolińska (née Chod-

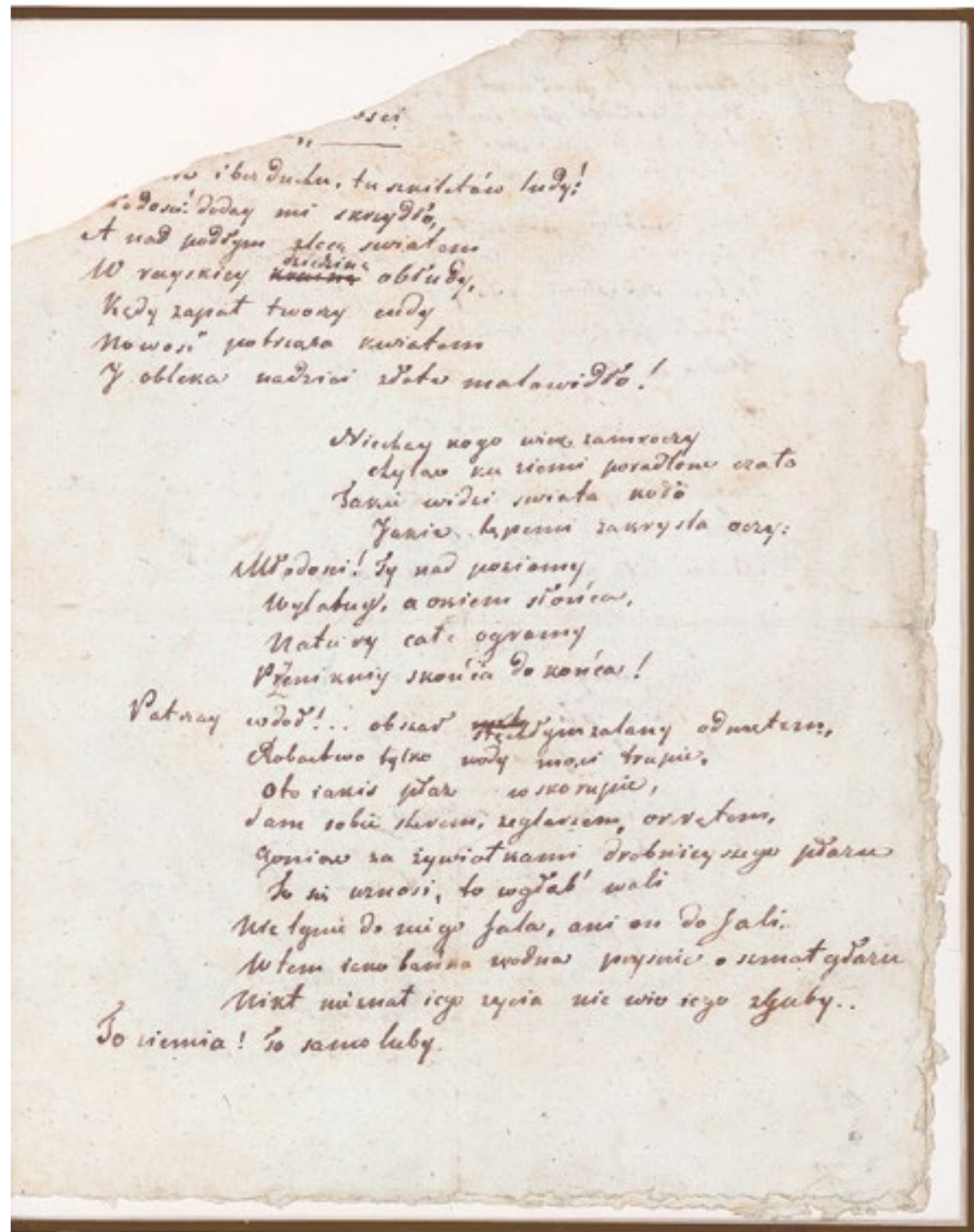
kiewicz). Her album contains items such as letters, leaflets, posters, concert programmes, prints, musical scores, newspaper cuttings, dried flowers and visiting cards. It became part of the National Library's of Poland collection in 1946.

ADAM MICKIEWICZ † ODE TO YOUTH

A copy in the author's own hand of a poem considered a manifesto for the first generation of Polish Romantics. Mickiewicz describes the power of youth, its enthusiasm and its ability to tear down the old order and create a new one. The *Ode* was originally to be published in the first volume of Mickiewicz's collection of works entitled *Poezje* (Poetry) in Vilnius in 1822, but was stopped by censors due its revolutionary associations. Ultimately, it did not appear in print until 1827 in Lviv. The showcased manuscript contains the earliest version of the poem, created in Kaunas in December of 1820. The text dif-

fers from the final version in a number of places. A small number of corrections can be seen in this clean copy, ready for publication.

The manuscript was looked after by Onufry Pietraszkiewicz, the archivist of the Philomath Society. At some point after 1930, Stanisława Pietraszkiewicz donated it to the Society of Friends of Science in Wilno. It was preserved together with the papers of the last President of the Society, Professor Stanisław Kościółkowski, and integrated along with the rest of this legacy into the National Library of Poland in 1969.



ADAM MICKIEWICZ † BALLADS AND ROMANCES

The book which marked the birth of Romanticism in Poland. Mickiewicz's first collection of works, entitled *Poezje* (Poetry), was published in Vilnius in 1822 by the distinguished publishing house of Józef Zawadzki. In it, the author intentionally abandons the classicistic style prevailing at the time in favour of "ballads and communal songs", which he believed to be closer to the truth about man. The most important part of the book is the cycle *Ballady i romanse* (Ballads and Romances), in which Mickiewicz puts into practice his conception of new poetry. The second work in the cycle, *Romantyczność* (Romanticism), is programmatic in character. It is the source of the famous declaration: "Czucie i wiara silniej mówi do mnie, / Niż mędrca szkiełko i oko" ("Feeling and faith to me far more

reveal/Than eyes and spectacles, though learned, do" – transl. Jewel Parish). The cycle also includes the poems *Świtezianka*, *Pani Twardowska*, *Lilies* and others. The copy belonged to Prot Lelewel, brother of the famous historian Joachim Lelewel. Later it found its way to the Polish Museum in Rapperswil, Switzerland, one of the most important institutions in exile for the preservation of Polish cultural heritage during the occupation of Poland by Russia, Prussia and Austria, when it was not possible to set up free cultural and scientific institutions dedicated to collecting important artefacts relating to Polishness. Transported to Poland after independence in 1918, the Rapperswil collection formed one of the cornerstones of the National Library's of Poland collection.

POEZYE ADAMA MICKIEWICZA.

TOM PIERWSZY.



W I L N O.

DRUKIEM JÓZEFA ZAWADZKIEGO.

1 8 2 2.

JULIUSZ SŁOWACKI † BALLADYNA

A fair copy of one of the most popular Polish Romantic dramas. In the past 150 or more years, *Balladyna* has been one of the most frequently performed works on the Polish stage. In 2021 this manuscript was inscribed on UNESCO'S Memory of the World Register.

Słowacki wrote *Balladyna* in Geneva in 1834. It was first published in Paris in 1839. The author gave this manuscript to his friend Józef Reitzenheim, who in April 1874 donated it to the literary historian Stanisław Tarnowski. The National Library of Poland purchased it

from Stanisław's nephew, Zdzisław Tarnowski, in 1937. It was sent to Krzemieniec in May 1939, where it was to form part of an exhibition devoted to Słowacki. However, after the German invasion in September 1939 it was hidden in the home of Oktawian Duda, a botany teacher at the Krzemieniec Lyceum, from where it was brought to the National Library while the Second World War was still ongoing. At the end of the German occupation it was taken to Castle Fischhorn in Austria, and returned to the National Library in April 1946.

Balladyna

Akt 1.

Scena 1.

Las blisko jeziora Gopota, chata pustelnika utrojona kwiatami i bluszczem.

Kirkor wchodzi w karawackiej szubi - bogato ubrany, z orłami sznypkami...

Kirkor. (sam.)

Stady niezgrybi warte u ciemniczek
które się kryje w tej zacisznej klatce.
Pobrzyni staję - ma jednak w sobie mię
Niewo szalenictwa i złości mu prawić.
O zamkach, korbach, o królewskich dworach
To jak szalony od rozumu błądzi
Miota przeklinając, pnieci się, narzekając.
Musiał od króla doznać wielki ataku
I z owym wiatem przyjął się gminu.

(stuka do uci.)
Puk! puk! puk!...

Głos z celi?

to sam.

Kirkor

Kirkor.

Pustelnik (wychodzi z celi..)

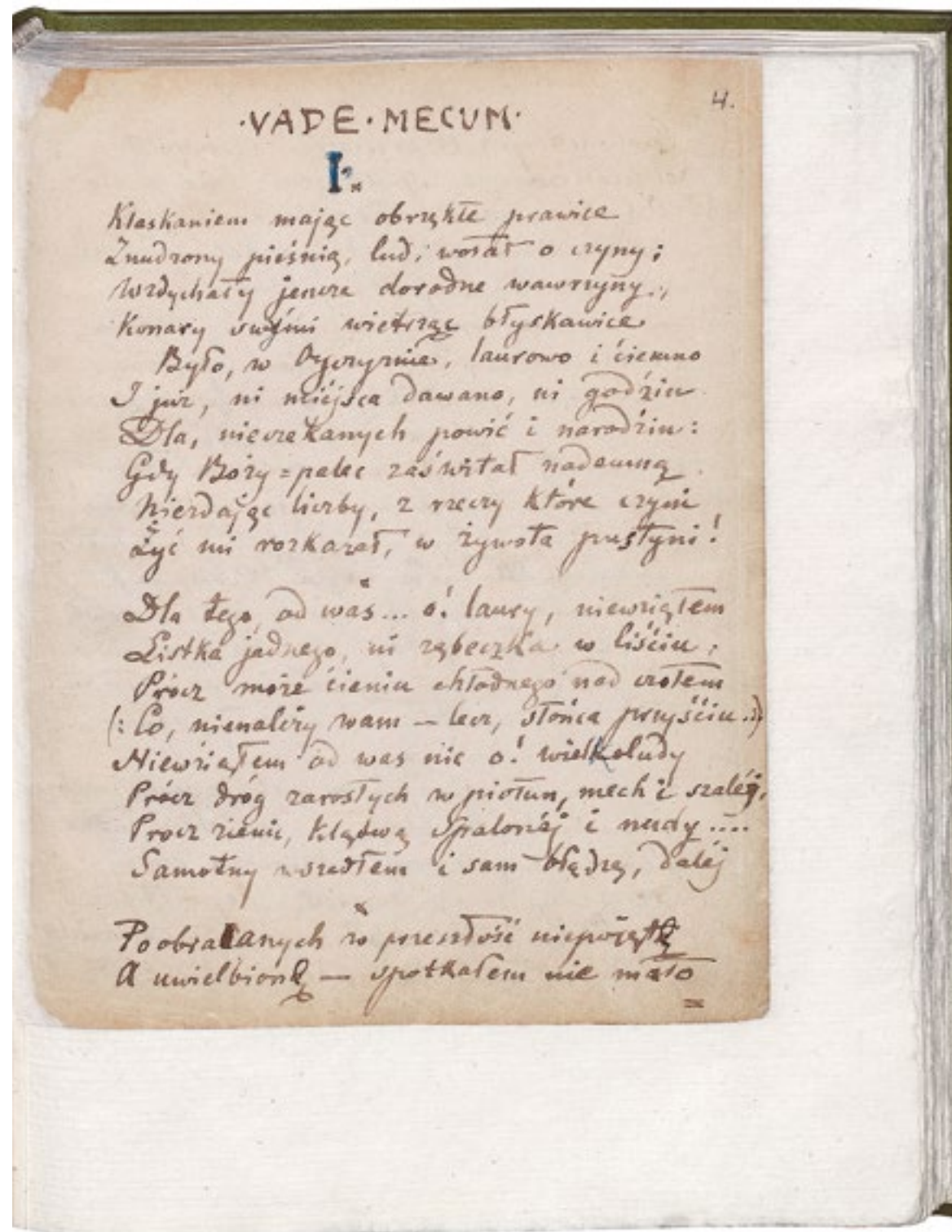
Witaj synu...

Czego chcesz?

CYPRIAN KAMIL NORWID † VADE-MECUM

An autograph copy of the most important collection of poetry by Cyprian Kamil Norwid, often considered the fourth of the “Three Bards” – Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki and Zygmunt Krasiński. Norwid did not enjoy the fame of his contemporaries, publishing little and dying in obscurity. His *Vade-mecum* of 1865 did not see print during his lifetime, although the poet had prepared it for publication. The title of the cycle, *Vade-mecum* (“come with me” in Latin), invites the reader into the poet’s inner world. It includes some of the works today considered Norwid’s most important, such as *In Verona* and *Chopin’s Piano*.

After Norwid’s death, the manuscript was kept by his relatives, the Dybowski family. In 1898 it became the property of Zenon Przesmycki (pen name: “Miriam”), a distinguished populariser of the poet’s work. During the German occupation, Przesmycki hid his collection of items relating to Norwid for safety in the cellar of the house where he lived. Przesmycki himself died during the Warsaw Uprising and the house was destroyed, but Norwid’s papers survived. It was integrated into the collection of the National Library of Poland after the War.





CYPRIAN KAMIL NORWID † ORBIS I, ORBIS II

Two albums documenting Norwid's extra-literary activities. In the collections entitled *Orbis* ("world" in Latin), the poet put illustrations intended to reflect the whole of human civilisation. He brought together copies and original works in various media, in addition to hand-

written notes, magazine cuttings and photographs. From the first volume comes a watercolour depicting an Arab sheikh from Palmyra. It is based on an engraved reproduction of a painting, that Norwid copied from the Parisian weekly magazine



L'Univers Illustré in 1872. From the second volume is a watercolour bust of Christ wearing a crown of thorns. At the bottom of the page the artist has pasted a photograph of a landscape featuring a tower, colouring it with watercolours.

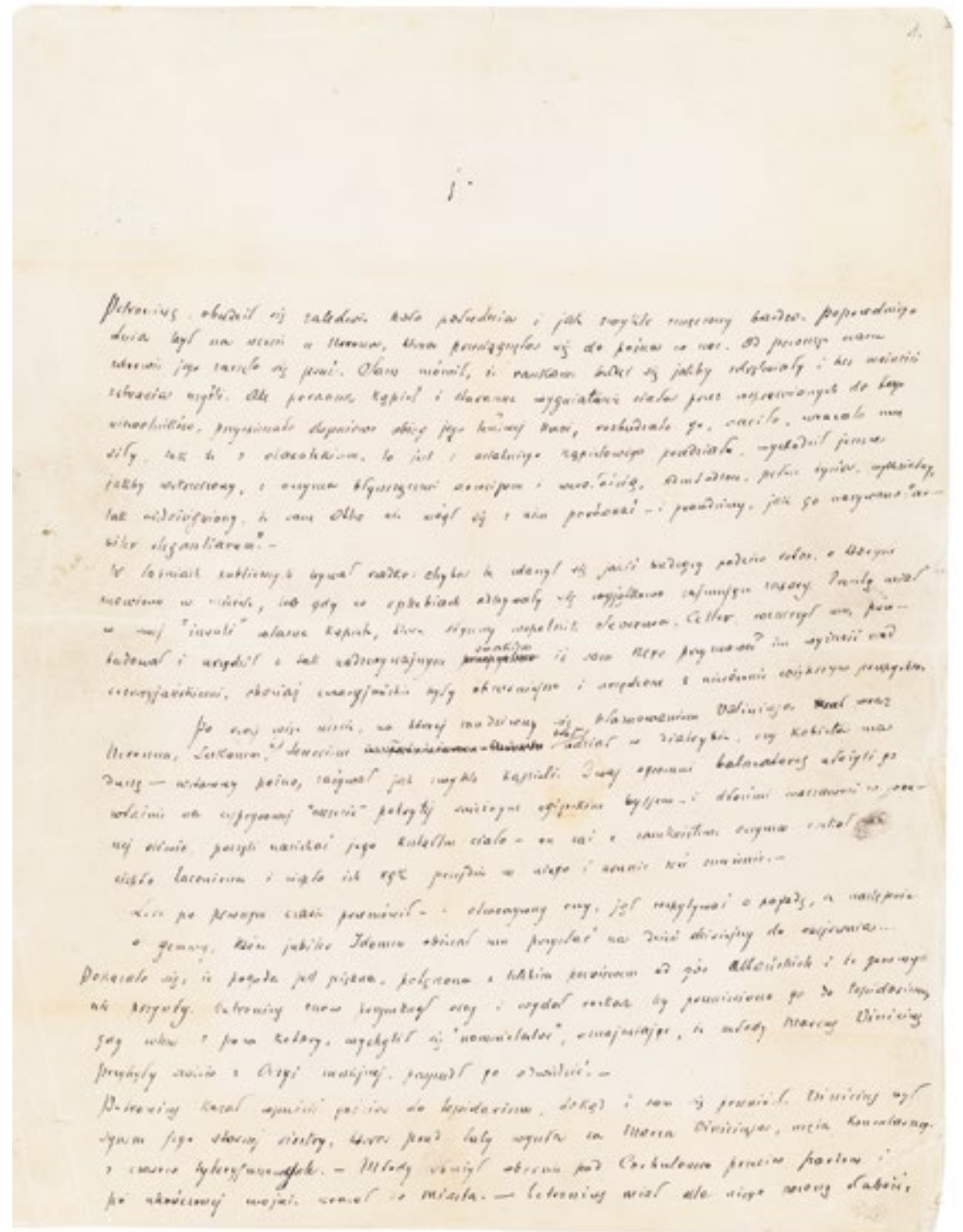
Norwid gave the two albums to Teodor Jełowicki, an émigré philanthropist who supported him in the final years of his life.

HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ † QUO VADIS?

A copy in the author's own hand of the most widely translated work of literature in Polish. To date, translations have appeared in more than 70 countries and 57 languages, including Amharic (the official language of Ethiopia), Gujarati and Malayalam (two of India's many languages) and Sotho (used in Lesotho and South Africa). The international success of the novel, first published in its entirety in Cracow in 1896, contributed to Sienkiewicz being awarded the Nobel Prize in 1905. *Quo vadis?* has been turned into a film several times, the 1951 American version receiving eight Academy Award nominations.

Sienkiewicz chooses a historical background for the action, placing the romance between the main characters – the Roman officer Marcus Vinicius and Ligia, the daughter of a barbarian chieftain – against the backdrop of the bloody reign of Nero. He includes portrayals of the mad emperor, the persecution of the first Christians and the great fire of the Eternal City.

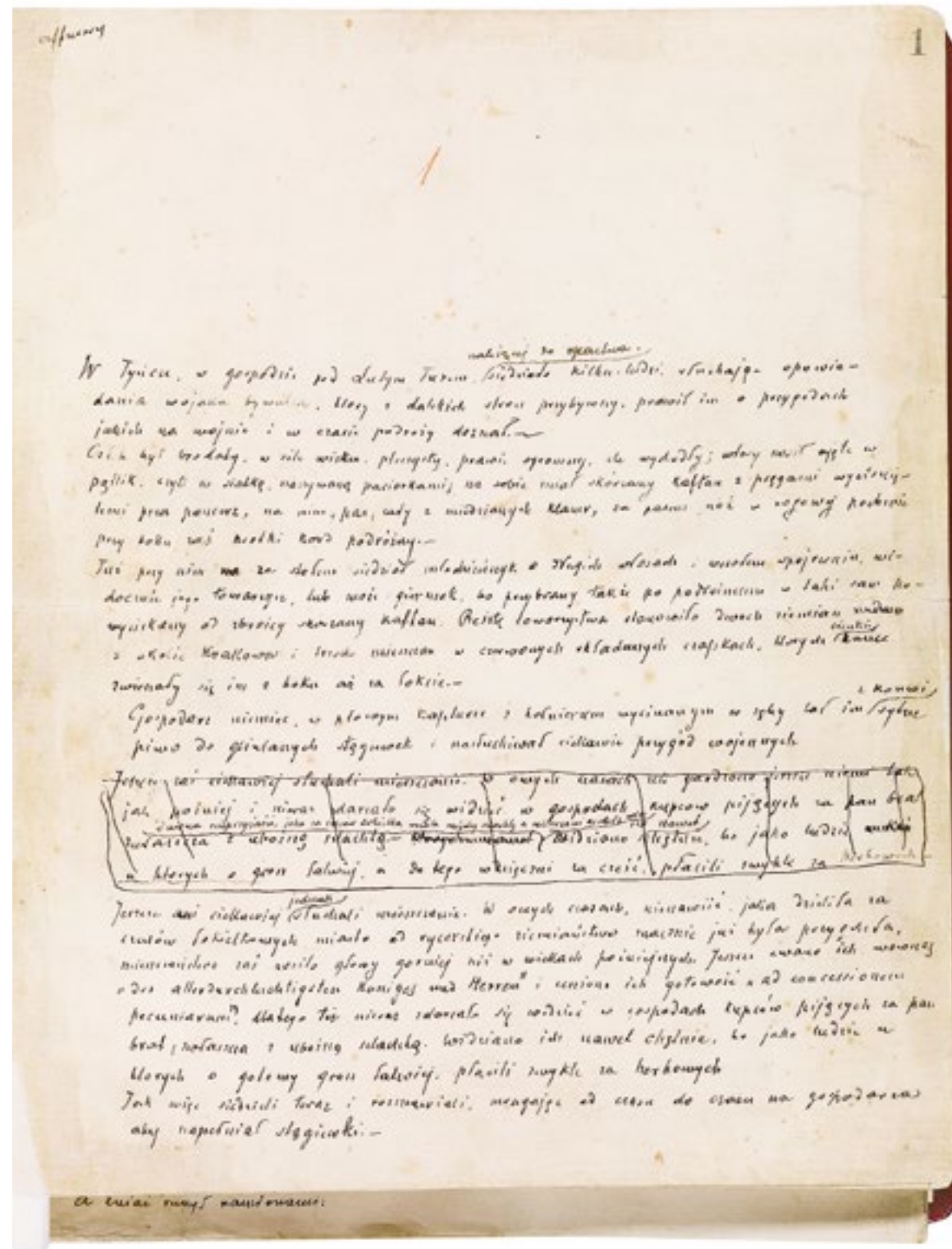
The manuscript belonged to the Kronenberg family, Polish financiers of Jewish origin. Deposited at the Bank Handlowy in Warsaw, it was incorporated into the collections of the National Library of Poland in 1951.



HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ † THE KNIGHTS OF THE CROSS

An autograph copy of one of the most popular Polish novels, the plot of which, covering the years 1399–1410, is set against the background of the Polish-Teutonic conflict, ending with the victory of Władysław II Jagiełło's army at Grunwald. The work was intended as a protest against the policy of Germanization pursued by the Prussian authorities during the Partitions of Poland. Initially published in serial form between 1897 and 1900 in the weekly illustrated magazine *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, Sienkiewicz's novel first appeared separately in its entirety in 1900. Reprinted many times, it was turned into a film by Polish director Aleksander Ford in 1960. The beginning of the book describes a scene in the inn "Pod lutym turem" belonging to the Benedictine monks in

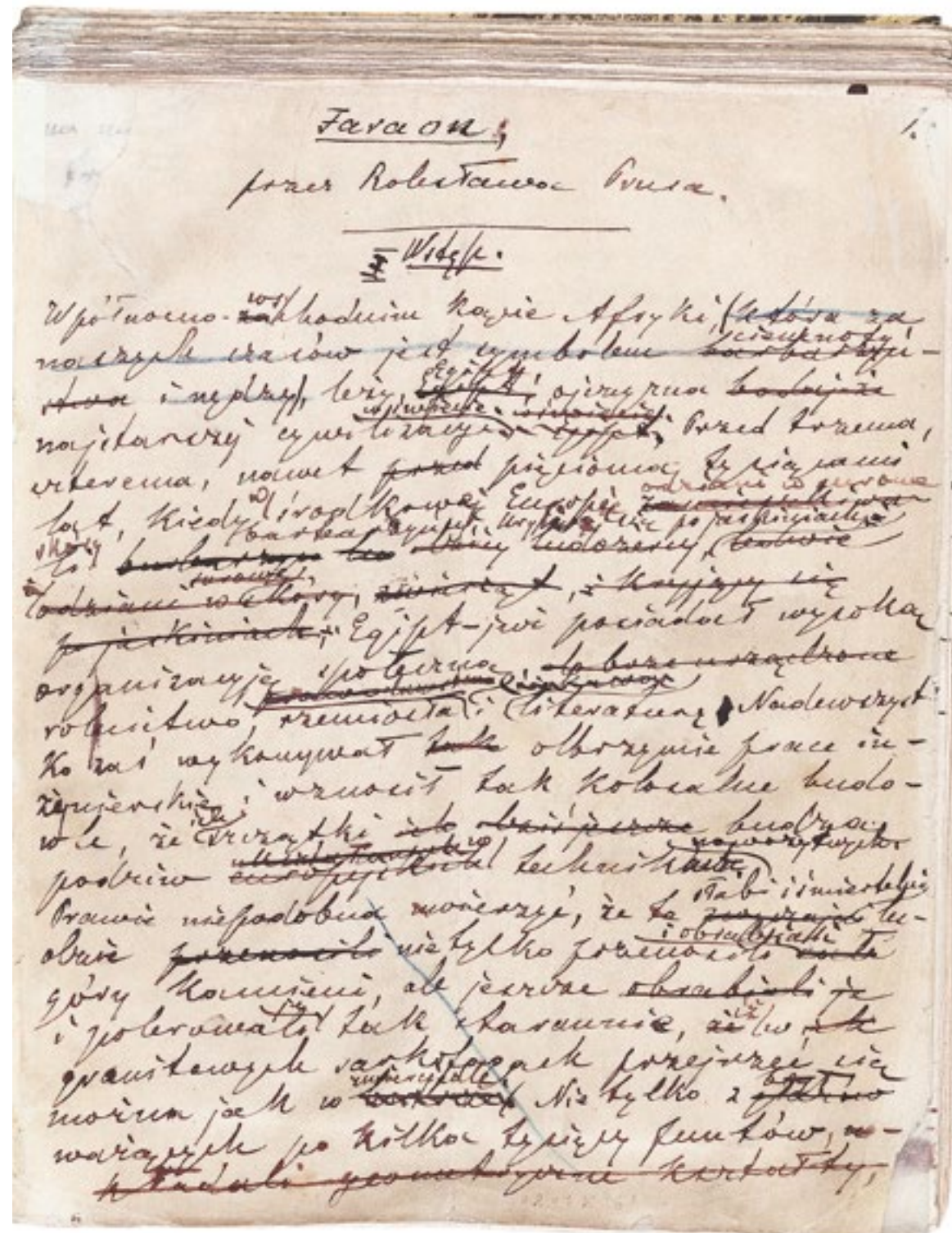
Tyniec, where the reader is first introduced to the characters Maćko and Zbyszek of Bogdaniec. Additions and deletions made during the initial editing process can be seen in the text. This copy of the manuscript was used as the basis for the first edition by the Warsaw publishing house Gebethner and Wolff. It was previously in the possession of the historian Professor Ludwik Kolankowski, who sold it to the National Library of Poland in 1947. The manuscript had a number of missing pages, one of which was found at the National Library in the collection from the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail. The final section of the manuscript belonged to the well-known engineer Stefan Bryla and was donated to the National Library of Poland by his widow in 1947.



BOLESŁAW PRUS † PHARAOH

A manuscript copy of a historical novel set in ancient Egypt by Bolesław Prus, a master of realist prose, written in the author's own hand. Prus portrays the struggles of the young ruler-soldier Ramses XIII against the power of the priests, in which Ramses draws on his own strength and knowledge. However, the young Pharaoh's lack of political experience, impulsiveness and disregard for the knowledge of the priests lead to his death and to the High Priest Herhor assuming the throne. The novel was originally published in 1895–96 in serial form in the weekly illustrated magazine *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*. The first edition was published by Gebethner

& Wolff in Warsaw in 1897. A film adaptation, directed by Jerzy Kawalerowicz and starring Jerzy Zelnik, appeared in 1965. There are numerous corrections but the first sentence can still be read easily: "W północno-wschodnim kącie Afryki leży Egipt, ojczyzna najstarszej cywilizacji w świecie" ("In the north-eastern corner of Africa lies Egypt, the home of the oldest civilisation in the world"). The manuscript was initially in the archives of the publishers Gebethner and Wolff. It was later owned by the historian Professor Ludwik Kolankowski, who sold it to the National Library of Poland in 1947.



STEFAN ŻEROMSKI † THE FAITHFUL RIVER

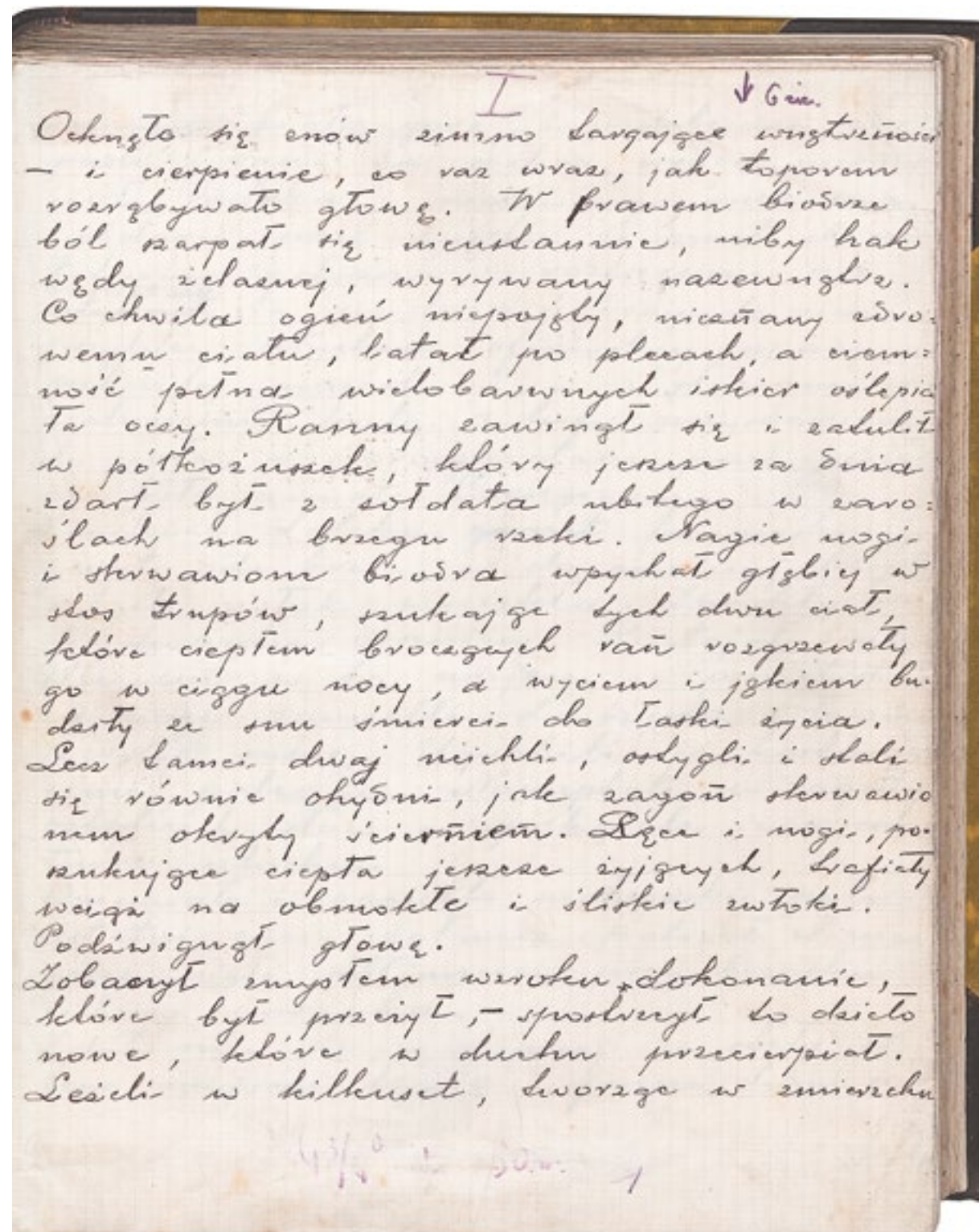
An autograph copy of the historical novel *Wierna rzeka* (The Faithful River) by Stefan Żeromski, set during the January Uprising. Żeromski wrote the novel in 1912, shortly before the 50th anniversary of the Uprising. Three film adaptations exist, two of them dating from before the Second World War; the first is a silent film from 1922, the second was made in 1936 and the third in 1983.

The Faithful River is set mainly in the manor house of Niezdoly on the Łośna River in the Świętokrzyskie region, where the wounded insurgent Prince Józef Odrowąż finds shelter and is tenderly cared for by the young noblewoman Salomea Brynicka.

The fair copy of the novel in the author's own hand is written very neatly with few

corrections. This manuscript is particularly valuable because the draft manuscript, which belonged to the author's daughter, Monika, has not survived; when it was excavated from under the rubble of a destroyed house in Warsaw's Old Town in 1950, it was so decayed and mouldy that it was decided by committee to burn it.

The National Library of Poland holds a considerable number of items relating to Żeromski, various materials left by the writer having found their way to the collection via various channels. This particular manuscript was acquired by the National Library in 2013 from an antiquarian bookshop in Warsaw.



STEFAN ŻEROMSKI † ASHES

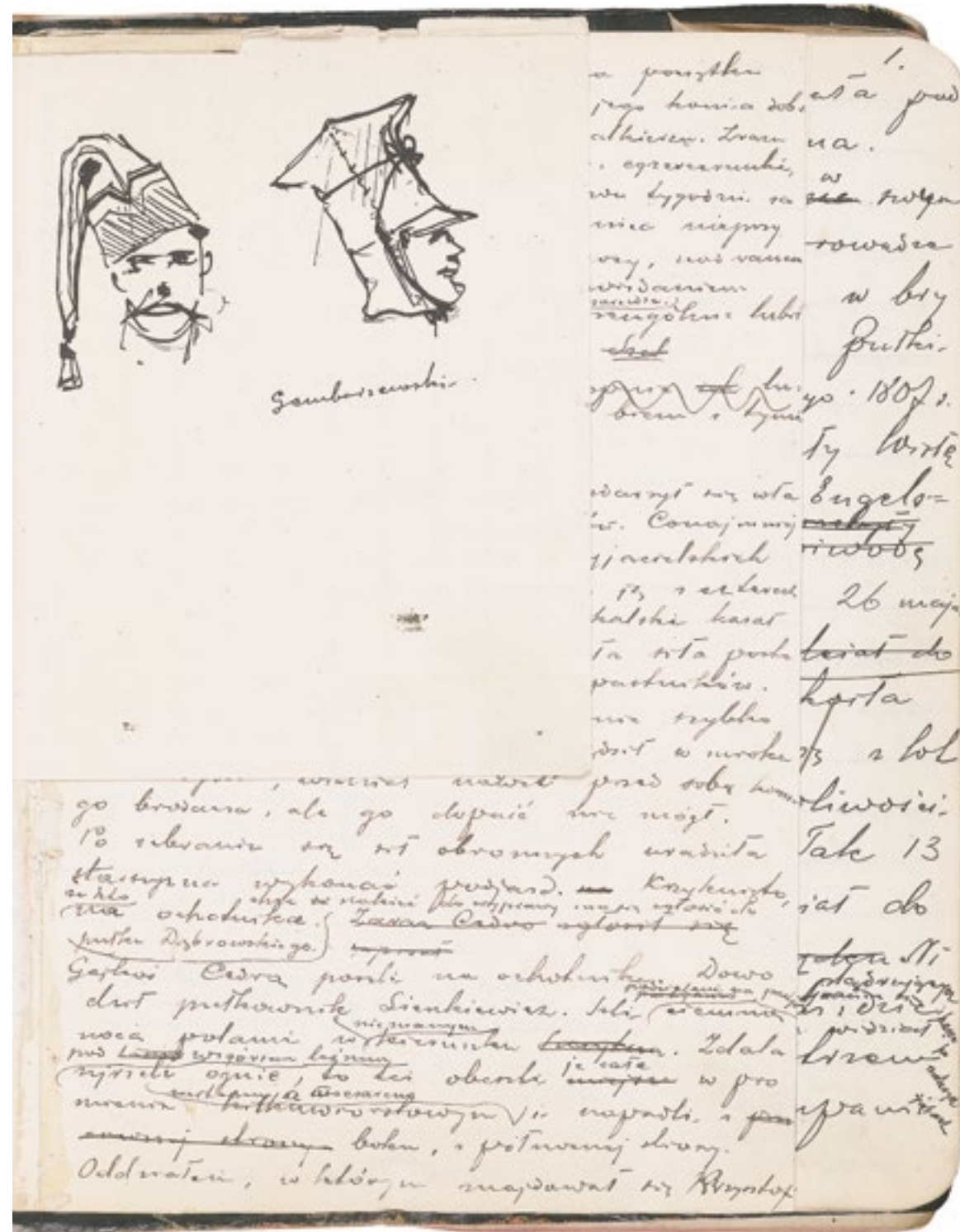
An autograph copy of Żeromski's novel *Popioły* (Ashes), about national liberation struggles in the Napoleonic era. The main character in the novel is Rafał Olbromski, a young nobleman who enlists in the Polish army on the side of the French Emperor. Żeromski shows the process of formation of a modern national identity in the initial years of the Partitions of Poland.

Żeromski wrote this monumental work while employed at the library of the Zamoyski family fee tail in Warsaw. This made it easier for him access historical documents about the events he describes. *Ashes* was first published in serial form in

1902–03 in the weekly illustrated magazine *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*. The first volume was published separately in 1902, and the full novel in 1904. A film adaptation by Andrzej Wajda was released in 1965.

The text is written in notebooks bound together with oilcloth covers, glued together by heat. These notebooks were kept in the cellar of a house in Warsaw's Old Town that burned down in 1944, the notebooks having been moved there just before the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising.

The manuscript was purchased by the National Library of Poland from the author's daughter, Monika, in 1984.



MARIA KONOPNICKA † ABOUT THE DWARFS AND LITTLE ORPHAN MARY

A first edition of one of Poland's best-known children's books, *Historya o krasnoludkach i o sierotce Marysi* (About the Dwarfs and Little Orphan Mary). Although the year 1896 appears on the title page, the book was in fact published before Christmas 1895 so it could be given as a Christmas present. It was printed by the publishing house of Michał Arct, which specialised in illustrated publications for children and young people, as well as textbooks and sheet music. The text itself is part verse and part prose, accompanied by twelve full-page colour illustrations which were produced independently before the book was written.

Children's books generally have a short lifespan as they are exposed to the effects of intensive use by very young readers. Once read, they are often disposed of. Moreover, in the 19th and early 20th century they were often printed on acidic paper, which quickly turned yellow and began to fall apart. In addition, there was no National Library in Poland where they might have survived, as this had been abolished by the Russians in 1795. For this reason it was particularly important when the National Library acquired this complete copy, in excellent condition, of Konopnicka's book in 2018.



ROTA.

Słowa M. Konopnickiej. Muzyka Nowowiejskiego

Uroczyście

Nie rzu - cim zie - mi, z kąd nasz ród, Nie da - my po - grześć mo - wy, Pol - ski my na - ród,
 Pol - ski lud, Kró - le - wski szczep Pia - sto - wy! Nie da - my by nas zgnę - bił wróg!

mf *I i II raz* *Ostatni raz*

Tak nam do - po - móż Bóg! Tak nam do - po - móż Bóg! Tak nam do - po - móż Bóg!

II

Do krwi ostatniej kropli z żył
 i onieć będziemy Ducha,
 Aż się rozpadnie w proch i pył
 Krzyżacka zawierucha.
 Twierdzą nam będzie każdy próg,
 — Tak nam dopomóż Bóg!



III

Nie będzie Niemiec pluł nam w twarz,
 Ni dzieci nam germanił,
 Orężny wstanie hufiec nasz,
 Duch będzie nam hetmanił.
 Pójdziem, gdy zagrzmi złoty róg,
 — Tak nam dopomóż Bóg!

MARIA KONOPNICKA † THE OATH

“Nie rzucim ziemi, skąd nasz ród” (“We won’t forsake the land we came from”) is one of the best-known phrases in Polish history. It is the first line of Maria Konopnicka’s poem *Rota* (The Oath), written in 1908 in reaction to the persecution of Poles in Greater Poland, hence its strong anti-German overtones.

Although first published in *Głos Wielkopolek*, a women’s magazine from Poznań in Greater Poland, the published version omitted parts of the poem and had been cut by the Censor. The poem was set to music by Feliks Nowowiejski. Contributing to the song’s rapid success were both the figure of Maria

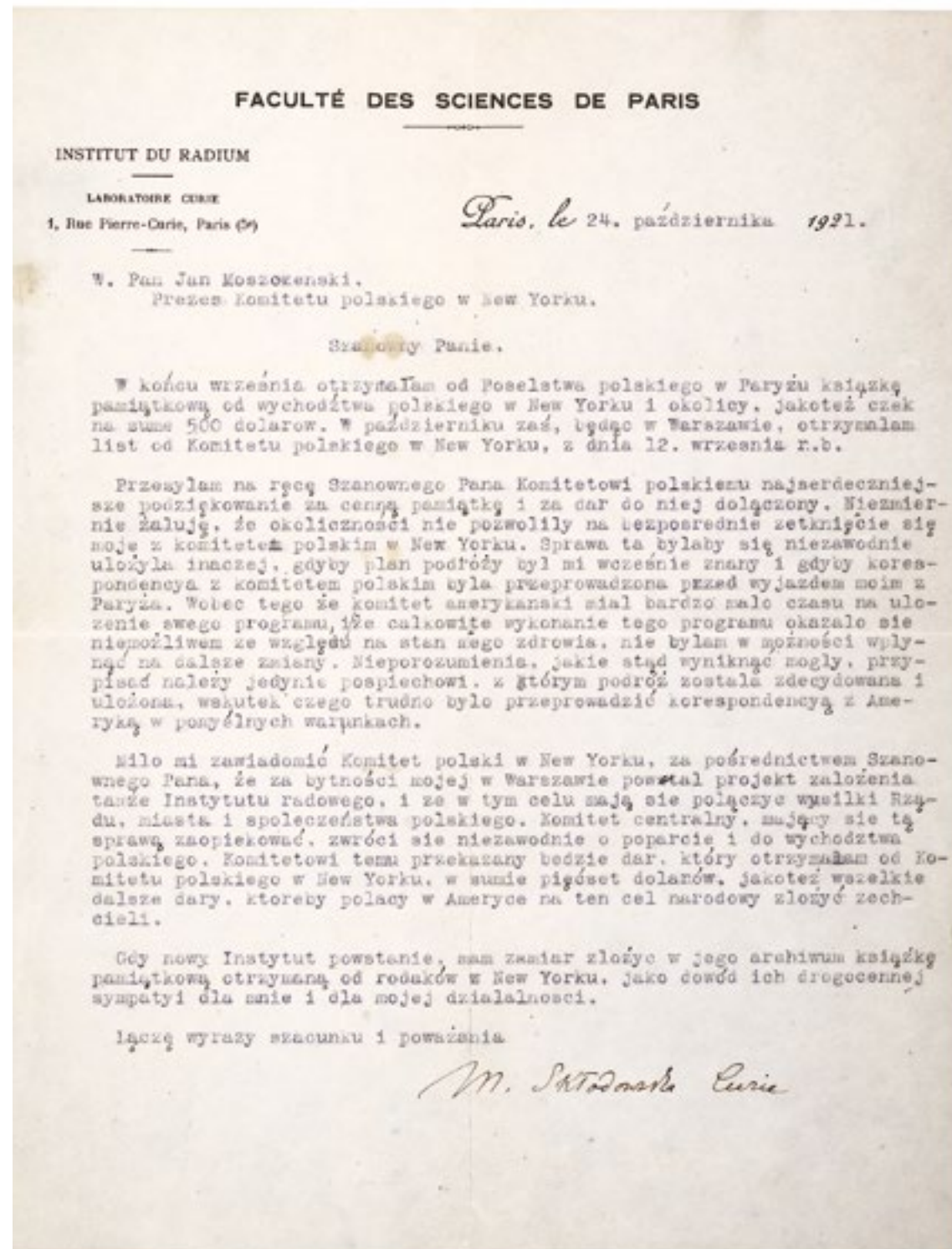
Konopnicka herself, by then already a highly respected author, and the subject matter, which was in line with the public mood, strengthened by the pressure to Germanise coming from the authorities in Berlin. Nowowiejski’s music also added to its popularity. It was first performed publicly in 1910 during the unveiling of

the Grunwald Monument in Cracow and very quickly became a popular patriotic song and protest against Germanisation. It functioned for a time as the Polish national anthem. The exhibit has formed part of the National Library’s of Poland collection since 1978.

LETTER FROM MARIA SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE

A reply from the eminent Polish scientist, Maria Curie (née Skłodowska) to a letter from Jan Moszyński, President of the Polish Committee in New York. In the letter, dated 24 October 1921, the double Nobel Prize winner (1903: Physics, 1911: Chemistry) expresses her thanks for the commemorative book donated to her by the Polish Committee in New York and the cheque for 500 dollars, a considerable sum at the time. In addition, she writes that during her last stay in Warsaw a project was conceived to establish a Radium Institute there, to which she would be donating the gift.

The foundation stone for the Radium Institute on Wawelska Street was laid in 1925. The building was opened on 29 May 1932 in the presence of Maria Curie and the Polish President Ignacy Mościcki. It was the first modern centre for the treatment of cancer in Poland and still operates today as the Maria Skłodowska-Curie National Research Institute of Oncology. The exhibit comes from the Krystyna Piórkowska Collection. It was purchased by Krystyna Piórkowska for the National Library of Poland in 2020.



Pogrążeni w głębokim żalu razem z narodem polskim, Żydzi polscy pochylają głowę przed wielkim bohaterem polskim i wielkim człowiekiem, Józefem Piłsudskim.

Pierwszy Marszałek Polski, Józef Piłsudski, nie przebywa więcej między nami. Planeta świecąca nad Polską zgasła, lecz jej cudowne promienie będą oddziaływać na wieki i z tej siły promieniotwórczej inna planety powstaną.

Był on nie tylko wielkim bohaterem i patriotą, lecz również wodzem odrodzonego kraju i siłą swej woli jak i swym geniuszem doprowadził go do Wielkiego Kocarstwa.

Był On nie tylko człowiekiem myśli, lecz również człowiekiem czynu. Życie Jego, czy to podczas zaboru, czy to po odrodzeniu, było pełne poświęceń i niezmierniej pracy i dzięki temu doczekał się On odrodzenia swego ukochanego kraju.

Szedł On po myśli naszego wielkiego uczonego Akabia Ben Machalal, powiedział on: spełnij te trzy rzeczy, a nie zgrzeszysz;

1/wiedz skąd przychodzisz

2/wiedz dokąd idziesz

3/wiedz przed kim będziesz musiał zdać sprawozdanie

Marszałek Józef Piłsudski spełnił te trzy rzeczy.

1/wiedz skąd przychodzisz

Żyjąc pod jarzmem carskim nie zapomniał ani na chwilę, że pochodzi z wielkiego narodu, pełne bogatej i bohaterskiej historii i z tej też historii czerpał swoje siły do walki z najeźcą.

2/wiedz dokąd idziesz

Już jako młody student rzuca się do walki o wolność narodu polskiego i uświadamia sobie, że życie swoje, energję swoją, musi poświęcić w walce o tę wolność.

Wolność tę, mimo Sybiru, więzienia i cierpień doznanych, geniuszem swym, siłą woli i poświęceniem osiągnął.

3/ wiedz przed kim będziesz musiał oddać sprawozdanie.

Wiedział On, że za swoje czyny będzie odpowiedzialnym przed Bogiem, Narodem i historją. Marszałek Piłsudski zdał nam sprawozdanie, odradzając wolne i mocarstwowe państwo, jakim dziś jest Polska na świecie. Czcijmy jego pamięć nie tylko słowami, ale też i czynami. Idźmy w jego ślady, kontynuując jego dzieło i tem uczcimy pamięć Wielkiego Syna Polski.

Proszę więc Pana Konsula Lechowskiego, Jego zwolennika i ucznia, wyrazić narodowi polskiemu, rządowi i rodzinie głębokie współczucie Żydów z Polski, zamieszkałych w Strasburgu.

- - -

SEKRETARJAT OSOBISTY
MINISTRA SPRAW WOJSK.
1865
L. _____ /S.O.

Warszawa, dn. 26 lipca 1935 r.

Pani Marszałkowie Piłsudska, dotknięta ciężką żałobą i obarzoną licznymi zajęciami, poleciła mi podziękować bardzo serdecznie za okazane jej wyrazy współczucia. Hołd dla pamięci Pana Marszałka i łyczliwość dla pozostałej po Nim żałobnej rodziny ze strony Polaków, pozostających poza granicami kraju, a jednak poczuwających się do łączności z ojczyzną, są sercu Pani Marszałkowej szczególnie miłe.

Kazimierz
Hłakowiczówna
Sekretarjat Osobisty.

Polska Gmina Żydowska
Strasburg.

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE FROM THE POLISH JEWISH COMMUNITY IN STRASBOURG ON THE DEATH OF JÓZEF PIŁSUDSKI

A testimony to the close connection between Poland and the Jewish community in Strasbourg, capital of Alsace. Piłsudski's death on 12 May 1935 had an immense impact both within Poland, which declared a period of national mourning, and beyond its borders. Piłsudski's role in the restoration of an independent Polish state and his importance in international politics was appreciated far and wide.

Among the many messages of condolence arriving in Poland was a letter, written in Polish, from the Polish Jewish commu-

nity in Strasbourg addressed to the Consul General of the Republic of Poland, Jerzy Lechowski. Also preserved the reply sent by Kazimiera Hłakowiczówna, Piłsudski's personal secretary and a well-known poet, on behalf of Piłsudski's widow, Aleksandra Piłsudska. The reply, dated 26 July 1935, is typed on paper with a black border, typical of correspondence sent whilst in mourning.

The exhibit comes from the Krystyna Piórkowska Collection. It was purchased by Krystyna Piórkowska for the National Library of Poland in 2023.

BRUNO SCHULZ † SECOND AUTUMN

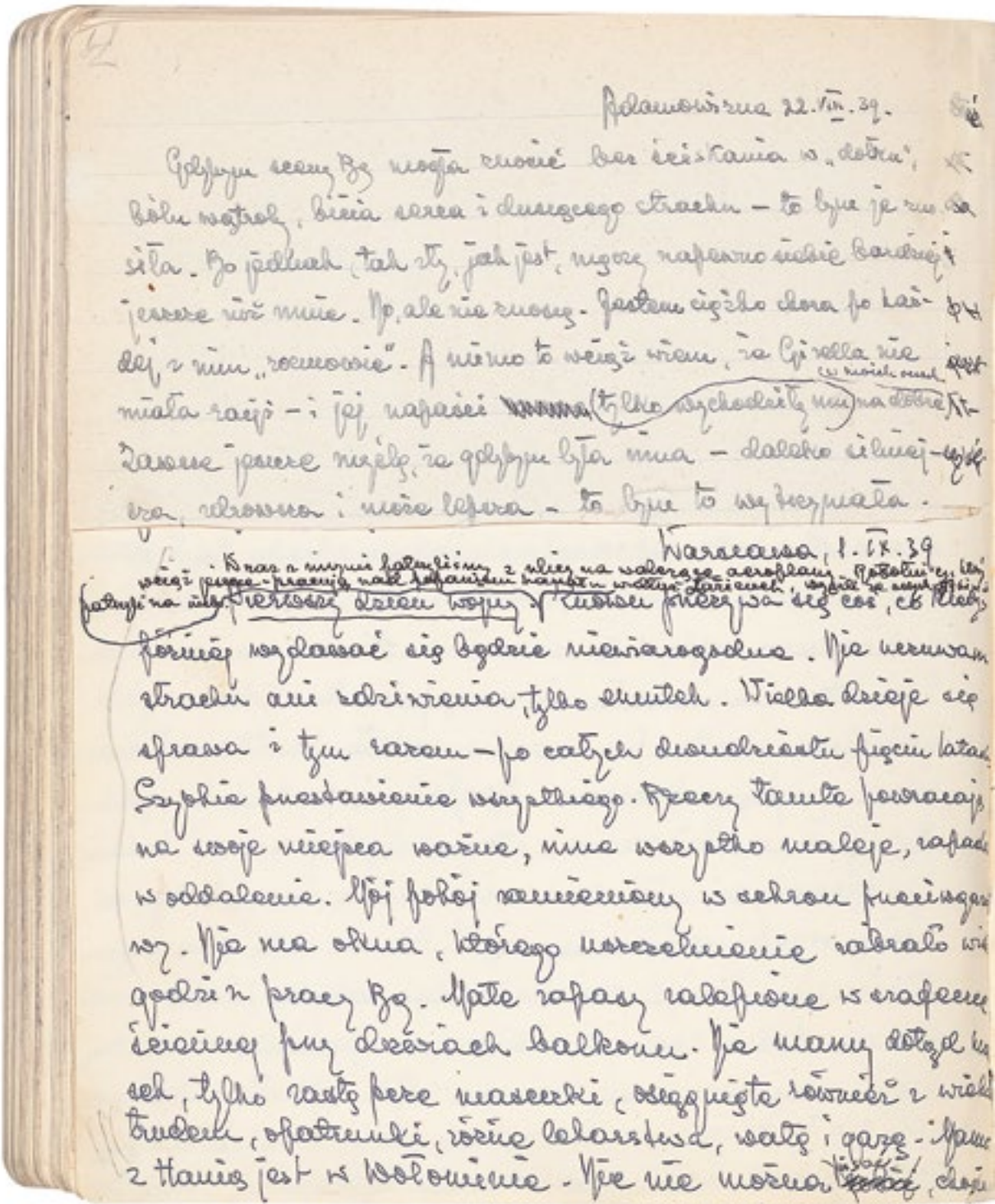
The only surviving literary manuscript by Bruno Schulz, one of the most original Polish authors of the 20th century. Schulz was an outstanding writer as well as a graphic artist, draughtsman and painter. The short story *Druga jesień* (Second Autumn) was first published in the literary magazine *Kamena* in 1933 and then, with a few small alterations, in the 1937 collection *Sanatorium pod klepsydrą* (Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass), considered one of the most outstanding achievements in Polish literature in the inter-war period.

The autograph is a fair copy with just a few corrections. The author sent it to the editors of *Kamena* as the basis for publication. It was in the possession of the magazine's publisher, Zenon Waśniewski, and after his death in the German concentration camp Bergen-Belsen in 1945 kept by his widow, Michalina (née Rzyziński). It then joined the materials relating to Schulz collected by Jerzy Ficowski, an admirer and promoter of his work, which was purchased by the National Library of Poland in 2013.

Bruno Schulz

Druga jesień.

Wśród wielu prac naukowych podejmowanych przez mego ojca w ramach chęci⁴ spokoju i ucieczki od wojennego, pomiędzy ciętami kłósk i katastrof, u jakie⁵ obfitowało to życie barokowe - najbliżej jego sercu były studia nad meteorologią porównawczą, a zwłaszcza nad specyficznym klimatem naszej prowincji pełnym osobliwymi i jedynymi w swoim rodzaju osobliwociami. On to ~~przebieg~~ właśnie, mój ojciec, polubił podstawy pod umiejętną analizę formacji klimatycznych, jego „Zarys ogólnej systematyki jesieni” wyjaśnił raz na zawsze istotę tej pory roku, która w naszym klimacie prowincjonalnym przebiega tak ~~przewlekłą~~ rozgłoszoną, pasażerską, co rozrosła formę, która pod nazwą „chińskiego lata” ~~przebiega~~ przebiega nie daleko w głąb naszych zim kolorowych. Cóż powiedzieć? On pierwszy wyjaśnił istotny, pochodny charakter tej piwnej formacji, nie będącej niczym innym, jak pewnego rodzaju zatrzymaniem klimatu miarotami ~~przejmającej~~ ^{wyrabiającej się} ~~nie~~ sztuki barokowej, stłoczonej w naszych muzeach. Ta rozkładająca się w nudzie i zapomnieniu sztuka muzealna przeciekła się, zamknęła bez odpływu, jak stare konfitury, przesadza nasz klimat i jest ~~inaczej~~ przyczyną tej piśkanej, malarycznej febrzy, tych kolorowych delirjów, którym agonizuje ta przewlekła jesień. Piśkano jest bowiem chorobą, a mój ojciec, jest pewnego rodzaju dremarem tajemniczej infekcji, cieniem zapowiadającym rozkładu, wstającego z głębi doskonałości i witaną przez doskonałość westchnieniem najszlachetniejszego ~~rozpaczenia~~.



Poland 22. IX. 39.

Gdybym wiedział, że wojna będzie tak długa, to bym nie miał...
Bola wstrząs, bicia serca i drugiego strachu - to bym nie miał...
sita. Po jedynej, tak jest, nigdy napewno nie będę...
jeszcze nie miał. No, ale nie wiem. Jakiś czas...
daj z nim „rozmowa”. A mimo to wciąż wiem, że...
miata razi - i jej napewno ~~nie~~ (tylko wychodził mi na dobre)...
Zawsze jeszcze nie było, że gdybym był...
wa, zdrowa i nie leżała - to bym to wytrzymała.

Warsaw, 1. IX. 39

Krasa i męstwo bohaterów z ulicy na walczące aeroplany...
formy wygłaskać się będzie niewarogowo. Nie ulewam...
strachu ani zdziwienia, tylko smutek. Wielka dzieje się...
sprawa i tym razem - po całym dwudziestu pięciu latach...
Sylvia przedstawienie wyjątkowe. Przez tańce powracają...
na swoje miejsce w domu, nina wszystko maleje, rap...
w oddaleniu. W jej fobie mniemaniu w sercu pręgnę...
wz. Nie ma otwarcia, którego uroczystości wabrało...
godzi w pracy. Mate rapaz wależone w rade...
ścisłej przy drzwiach balkon. Nie mamy dotąd...
sel, tylko rasty pere naszeki, osiągnięte równie i wiel...
trudni, ofatruki, różne lektura, walc i gary -...
z tawis jest w kolonnie. Nie wie moim...

ZOFIA NAŁKOWSKA † DIARY

An invaluable source of information not only about the life of the writer Zofia Nałkowska but also about the historical events occurring between 1899 and 1954. Among other things, Nałkowska was the author of more than a dozen novels. Of these, *Granica* (Boundary) is the best known and has often been reprinted. Her collection of short stories *Medaliony* (Medallions) is a shocking record of the cruelty of the German occupiers during the Second World War. By contrast, *Dziennik* (Diary) is a testimony to her own artistic development and a portrait of the

intellectual milieu of the inter-war period, the time of the Nazi occupation and the post-War years. The manuscript of *Dziennik* consists of 58 notebooks. The dramatic entry from September 1, 1939, the day Poland was invaded, is found in notebook 40. Nałkowska was in Warsaw at the time and she observed the air battles and city preparing to defend itself. The manuscript of *Dziennik* forms part of the Zofia Nałkowska Archive, purchased by the National Library of Poland from the writer's cousin Tadeusz Wróblewski in 1993.

Mojej ukochanej Basienice
w dniu naszego ślubu

Rzymstof.

dn. 3 / VI / 1942r.

Motto:

"Pieśń twa - nie skoła z niedokończoności -
Jeżeli umielstwo jej wyżywi złotasz."

C. K. Norwid.



7978

KRZYSZTOF KAMIL BACZYŃSKI † IN PUREST SORROW

A manuscript copy dating from 1942 of Baczyński's volume of poetry *W żalu najczystszym* (In Purest Sorrow). It was the poet's wedding gift to his wife, Barbara Baczyńska (née Drapczyńska). This handmade collection of poems holds a special place in the poet's oeuvre due to its very personal nature: both the selection of works and the graphic design were intended by the author to represent his feelings for the person closest to him in his life besides his mother. The aesthetic value of the volume is enhanced by the decorated initials and watercolour vignettes painted by the poet. Baczyński

was one of the most popular and widely read Polish poets of the 20th century, some seeing him as the continuation of the great Romantic tradition, a successor to Juliusz Słowacki. His tragic death in the Warsaw Uprising also had an impact on shaping his legend.

In 2021 the volume was inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.

The manuscript was purchased by the National Library of Poland in 1963 from Baczyński's mother-in-law, Feliksa Drapczyńska.

202.

X

ELEGIA O.....

Oddzielili cię syneczku od snów co jak motyl dręgi,
 haftowali ci syneczku smutne oczy rudy krawiec,
 malowali krajobrazy w żółte śniegi pościół,
 rozrywali wściekaniem drzew pływające morze.

Afiszowali cię syneczku ziemi twój na pamięć,
 gdyś jej ścisli porzucił i klasnął trzaskiem!

Odkrowali cię ~~syneczku~~
^{z ciemności}, otkrowili bo kłosem trawy,
 przemierzyłeś ~~poornacku~~ ^{niezwykłości} z ~~niekiedy~~ ^{niekiedy} dróg

I rozpadłeś jasny synku z czarnej brzozy w noc
 i parasteś jak się już w dźwięku minut-eto.

Zanim parasteś jeszcze cieniem przesiąkniesz ręką.
 Czy to była kula synku, czy to serce pękło?

20. III. 1944

KRZYSZTOF KAMIL BACZYŃSKI † ELEGY ON A POLISH BOY

A poetic portrayal of the tragic fate of Second World War generation. Baczyński is considered one of the most important voices of this first generation born after Poland regained its independence in 1918. He and his contemporaries reached adulthood during the Second World War and experienced violence and suffering all around them.

The title of the poem in Polish is *Elegia o...* ("Elegy on..."), often with the words "...*chłopcu polskim*" ("...a Polish boy") added to it. The poet speaks in the voice of a mother bidding farewell to her son, who has to face the nightmare of a world at

war. The poet depicts the horror of the situation on the country's borders using powerful metaphors and ending with an image of death. The work is all the more poignant because Baczyński completed the work on 20 March 1944, dying just a few months later on a barricade during the Warsaw Uprising.

The fair copy of the poem was prepared by the poet's own hand.

The manuscript was acquired for the National Library of Poland in 1964 from Kazimierz Wyka, a literary historian, critic and a strong promoter of Baczyński's work.

KRZYSZTOF KOMEDA † ROSEMARY'S BABY

One of the best-known soundtracks in the history of world cinema. The music for Roman Polański's 1968 horror film *Rosemary's Baby* includes the famous *Lullaby*, which served as something of a musical trademark for Komeda. The film itself was a huge hit, attracting crowds of cinema-goers and garnering critical acclaim around the world. Komeda's disturbing and memorable music greatly contributed to its success.

Few autograph scores by Komeda survive from his time in the United States. In the manuscript there are some musical sketches by the composer himself corre-

sponding to different parts of the film. At the top of the page Komeda has written: "[She] gets out of bed". Between the staves are small notes on the performance. As a jazz musician, Komeda based his compositions on improvisation, which is reflected in the relaxed way in which the material was recorded. The handwritten score forms part of the Krzysztof Komeda Archive donated to the National Library of Poland by his sister, Irena Orłowska, and stepson, Tomasz Lach. The gift formed the beginning of the Polish Jazz Archive at the National Library.

WHITE ZŁOZKA
Fragment

Tosim I
MM 1/4 = 32

Tosim II
MM 1/4 = 60

Tosim III
MM 1/4 = 30

MM 1/4 = 54

1. Linie 1a 1b 1c 1d 1e 1f

PRAZA TP. 1a 1b 1c 1d 1e 1f (a part of the improvisation)

KOMEDA

PARAMOUNT PICTURES CORPORATION

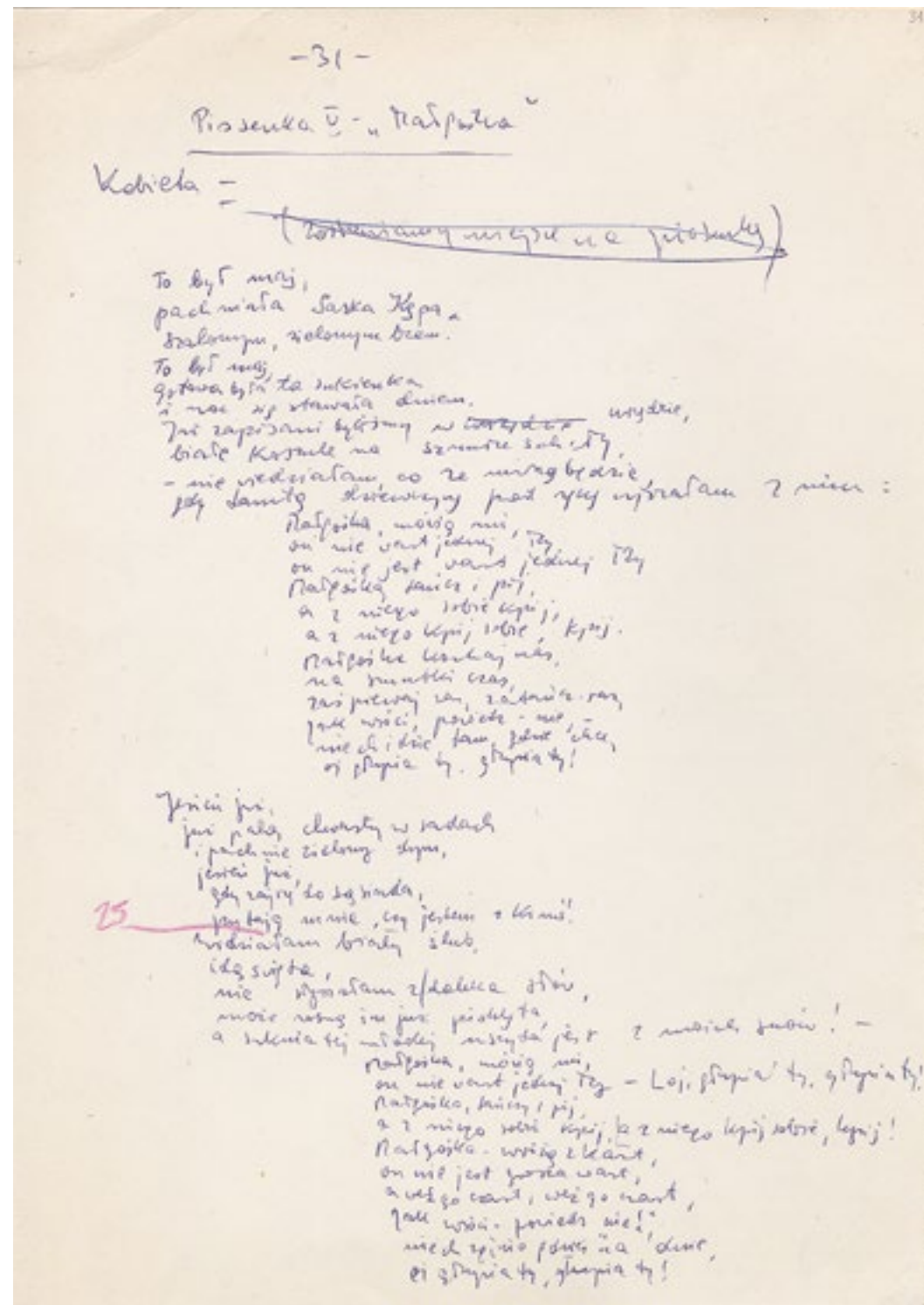
AGNIESZKA OSIECKA † MAŁGOŚKA

One of the biggest Polish pop hits of all time. Music is by Katarzyna Gärtner, lyrics by Agnieszka Osiecka. It was made famous by Maryla Rodowicz, who first sang it publicly at the 1973 Sopot International Song Festival, where she won the Grand Prix.

The handwritten text comes from the materials for Osiecka's show *Apetyt na*

czereśnie (Appetite for Cherries). Osiecka has written out the words to *Małgośka* herself as one of the songs to be performed in the show.

The manuscript forms part of the Agnieszka Osiecka Archive. It was sold to the National Library of Poland in 2012 by her daughter, Agata Passent.



JACEK KACZMARSKI † MURY (WALLS)

The unofficial anthem of the Polish trade union Solidarity and a musical symbol of the Polish struggle against Communism. In 1978 Kaczmarek wrote new lyrics to the melody of the song *L'Estaca* (meaning "the stake") by Catalan singer Lluís Llach, written as a protest against General Franco's dictatorship. The result, *Mury* (Walls), gained enormous popularity in Poland, comparable to the fame of the original. It was sung and played dur-

ing strikes, street protests and at meetings of supporters of the democratic opposition. It was also used as the station identification for the underground radio station *Solidarność*.

The typescript is a fragment from the Jacek Kaczmarek Archive, which the National Library of Poland purchased in 2014 from Kaczmarek's daughter, the actress Patrycja Volny.

Mury

On natchniony i młody był, ich nie policzył by nikt
On im pieśnią dodawał sił, śpiewał że blisko już świt.
Świec tysiące palili mu, znad głów podnosił się dym,
Śpiewał, że czas by runął mur...
Oni śpiewali wraz z nim:

Wyrwij murem zęby krat!
Zerwij kajdany, połam bat!
A mury runą, runą, runą
I pogrzebią stary świat!

Wkrótce na pamięć znali pieśń i sama melodia bez słów
Niosła ze sobą starą treść, dreszcze na wskroś serc i głów.
Śpiewali więc, klaskali w rytm, jak wystszał poklask ich brzmiał,
I ciążył łańcuch, zwlekał świt...
On wciąż śpiewał i grał:

Wyrwij murem zęby krat!
Zerwij kajdany, połam bat!
A mury runą, runą, runą
I pogrzebią stary świat!

Aż zobaczyli ilu ich, poczuli siłę i czas,
I z pieśnią, że już blisko świt szli ulicami miast;
Zwalali pomniki i rwali bruk:- Kto z nami! Kto przeciw nam!
Kto sam, ten nasz najgorszy wróg!...
A śpiewak także był sam.

Patrzył na równy tłumów marsz,
Mileżał wsłuchany w kroków huk,
A mury rosły, rosły, rosły
Łańcuch kołysał się u nóg...

1978.

**TADEUSZ WOŹNIAK † ZEGARMISTRZ ŚWIATŁA
(THE WATCHMAKER OF LIGHT)**

One of the best-known Polish popular songs of the 20th century. Tadeusz Woźniak wrote the music, while the words are by the poet, painter and graphic artist Bogdan Chorążuk. Woźniak sang the song together with the band Alibabki at the 1972 National Festival of Polish Song in Opole, where it won one of the prizes. The ballad combines a simple, catchy

melody with a serious text about man's encounter with death. The exhibit is a fair copy of the song scored for voice with guitar accompaniment. The text appears below the melody. The score forms part of the Tadeusz Woźniak Archive, donated by the composer to the National Library of Poland in 2021.

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. At the top right, it is titled "Zegarmistrz światła" in large, cursive letters. Above the title, it says "nowe T. Woźniak" and "st. B. Chorążuk". The score is written for voice and guitar. The voice part is on a single staff, and the guitar part is on a six-staff system. The lyrics are written below the voice staff. The score is divided into systems, each starting with a letter (C, E, B, D, E, H, E) indicating the key signature. The lyrics are in Polish and describe a watchmaker's encounter with death.

Lyrics (from top to bottom):
 KIE- DY PRZY- JACIE TA- KIEC DO HURO
 ZE- GARMISTRZ ŚWIATŁA FUR- DO - RO- LUY
 BY MI ZIŁ- DOK- TAC DŁG- MIT WŁOŚ- WIE
 TO DŁ- DŁ- ŻE- SŁY- I GO- FO- ŻY
 SPW- MŁ PRZE- ZO- HURO DZI- MŁ PRZE- STAJE
 ŻOŁ- SŁY- PO- DŁO- SI- I PO- WIE- TRZEP

HENRYK MIKOŁAJ GÓRECKI † SYMPHONY OF SORROWFUL SONGS

The best-known work by Mikołaj Górecki, one of the most outstanding Polish composers of the 20th century. Górecki's Symphony No. 3, or *Symfonia pieśni żałobnych* (Symphony of Sorrowful Songs), was written in 1976 and first performed in 1977 at the Royan Festival in France. However, the composition did not achieve worldwide acclaim until 1992, after the release under an American label of a recording by the London Sinfonietta conducted by David Zinman. The album was a bestseller and made Górecki famous even outside classical music circles.

In the second movement, the composer sets the moving words scrawled onto the wall of a Gestapo prison cell in Zakopane

by Helena Blazusiak: "Mamo, nie płacz, nie. Niebios Przczysta Królowo, Ty zawsze wspieraj mnie" ("Mamma, do not cry! Immaculate Queen of Heaven, support me always"). The manuscript score is open towards the beginning of the second movement, where the singer enters with these words. This is a very careful handwritten copy of the score, written by the composer himself, on which the facsimile edition published by Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne is based. The manuscript forms part of the Henryk Mikołaj Górecki Archive at the National Library of Poland, purchased in 2017 from the composer's wife Jadwiga and his children.

74.

6

CL 1.2 $\text{cl} \text{ } 1.2 \text{ } \text{cl}$
3+ $3+ \text{cl}$

CR 1.2 $\text{cr} \text{ } 1.2 \text{ } \text{cr}$
3+ $3+ \text{cr}$

ff ff

sovrano sovrano

Ma — mo Ma — mo nie płacz

VL 1p $\text{vl} \text{ } 1p$
2p $2p$

VC 1p $\text{vc} \text{ } 1p$
2p $2p$

Vb 1p $\text{vb} \text{ } 1p$
2p $2p$

22

PWM-807

1969

- I (pings 27.II): Powleku zoyuar chidi ("staiuy" z kity. b. stopaisia pappua, lapy apetyt. Marisa za uirde b. uide ronse u. pacyiz Polauika o krad. Problem windy. Opuki Fry: Chulok. Masara, hoiarua uic. Jertan kace orobocioay pshkawi, stie uir redutaps. Fambon. Moustauis. Nade. Operayz Paroukay.
- II Choroba, Iliab na hforad- uide. Klyoty edicts. Moustauis. Nade. Nic.
- III Rita kuka uierkawi, zuyduje o pobwie uicua. Choroba Moustauis. Ertan bym uierkawi pna kity. kizla Janewa (televizja) Pnytolowacia do pnyproawdki. 28.III pnyproawdka, tyra rydioty, uierkawi eptoma z pnykay uerawdy, uide uicob kapiua pna kity. Spayz po utraectie z lasto, ala b. stebanica. Tapistories Spawoy i pnyuay, dyrau Fry, toaletka Chulokty.
- IV Janawo (ryiad kelen), Alastan kika deei, 2 Cab. 3 Spawoy fawachodora St. Palul, dol. Loup, Antites. Popoda zuiu fatalua (ziac i uicua nopyt okropua) z uay cora pnyej a sbawo Joway c) mrodit u ustad ek. Analiz wykaraje uice wa kawi. Marwan poroda ju' z solg! Lity Soldschlapp.
- V Bawliety. Cereketes, pantet, 2 sad., Kialbera, esekopa z puzia sta rnytura auouent. Pnyperd Jowawika, Karay fil. (raz z Fry, potyca i witalde) Wtda 2 deei. Lulubego u knyjach, rany Cag. Sklor. 20, uic uic roby, stebini. Pnydy uici fatalua (do du. 8. I. 69). Zpnyuwika: de Jowto kstypit. Zuhetay po uicuwiecku, opareta pna fawc. Tei zuyouuicawia. Lertan z kileu odmawiaz autoryzaji na wydawie Joway u Bouzpai, je groy uicupytawia auoy na oparety, spawki z kofeu blawie zerbawia. (do 8. I.)

WITOLD GOMBROWICZ † KRONOS

The intimate diary of the writer Witold Gombrowicz, containing personal notes from the years 1953–69. Unlike Gombrowicz's *Dzienniki* (Diaries), which were intended for publication, *Kronos* does not contain the author's reflections on the world and his place in it as an artist. Rather it is a record of his everyday life, covering day-to-day matters, his work, expenses, medicines he was taking, what he was reading, details of trips and meetings. During the period covered by the notes Gombrowicz initially lived in Argentina, where he worked as a bank clerk for some

time before devoting himself exclusively to writing. In the 1960s he became famous worldwide, his works appearing in several languages. He then moved to Europe, first to West Berlin on a Ford Foundation scholarship and later to France. He was very close to receiving the Nobel Prize. He spent the last years of his life in Vence near the Côte d'Azur. The manuscript of *Kronos* was preserved by the writer's widow, Rita. It later found its way to the publishing house Wydawnictwo Literackie, which issued a critical edition. In 2013 the manuscript was donated to the National Library of Poland.

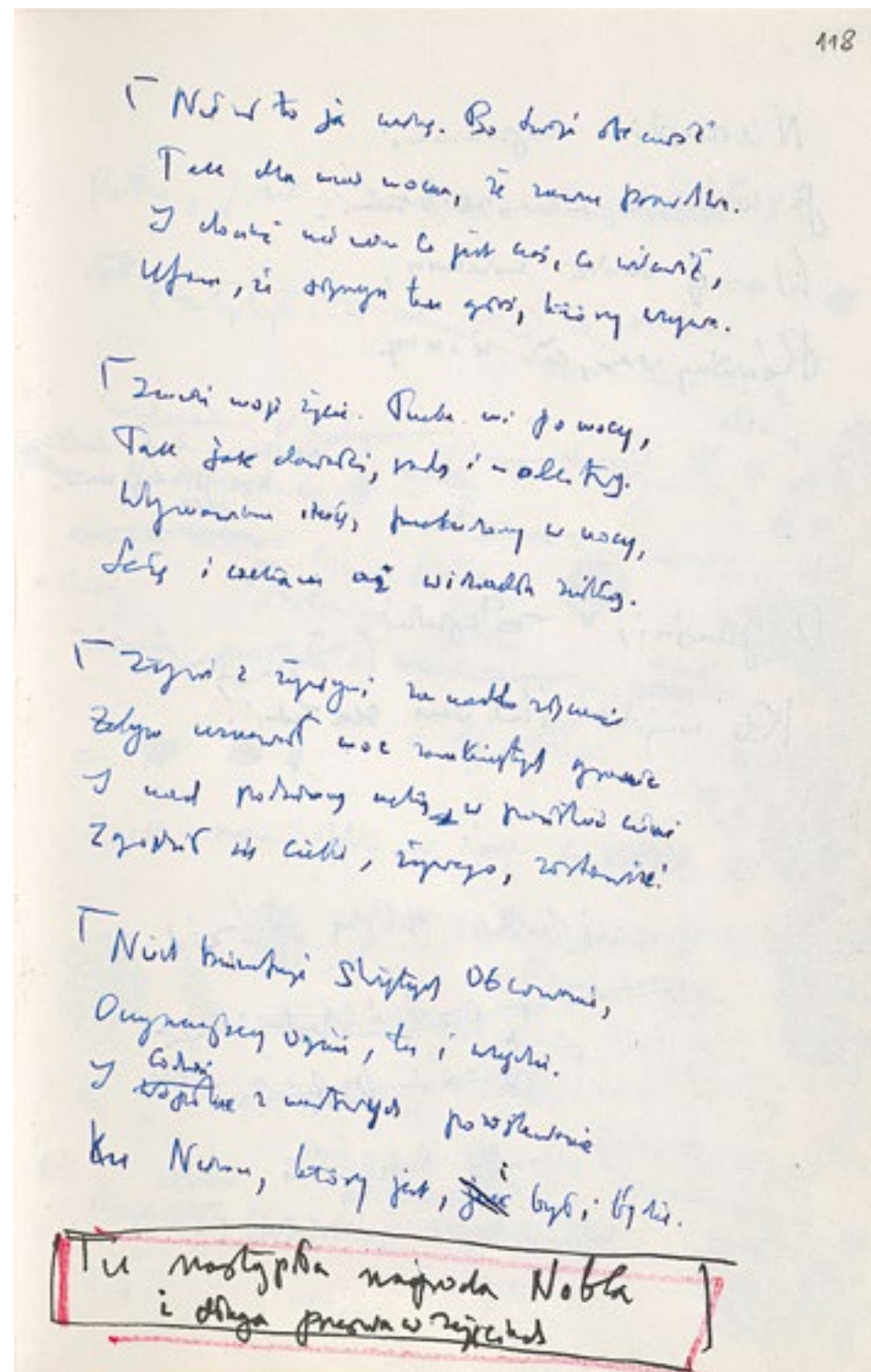
NOBEL PRIZE NOTEBOOK OF CZESŁAW MIŁOSZ

When the poet Czesław Miłosz received the news that he had been awarded the most prestigious literary prize in the world, he made a telling entry in his notebook: "Here followed the Nobel Prize and a long pause in my activities". The Nobel Prize not only brought with it fame and honours but also public duties which the author – who had hitherto guarded his privacy carefully – was obliged to carry out. The travelling, banquets, meet-the-author sessions and lectures that ensured all distracted him from his literary work.

The last poem that Miłosz was working on before the news of the Nobel Prize

reached him can be seen above the entry quoted above. It is dedicated to Father Józef Sadzik, a Pallottine priest, philosopher and above all close friend of the author. Sadzik inspired Miłosz to work on translations of biblical books from Hebrew and Greek. Sadzik's sudden and untimely death in August 1980 came as a shock to the poet.

The notebook forms part of the Czesław Miłosz Archive, one of the largest collections of materials documenting the poet's life and work. The archive was purchased for the National Library of Poland in 2013.

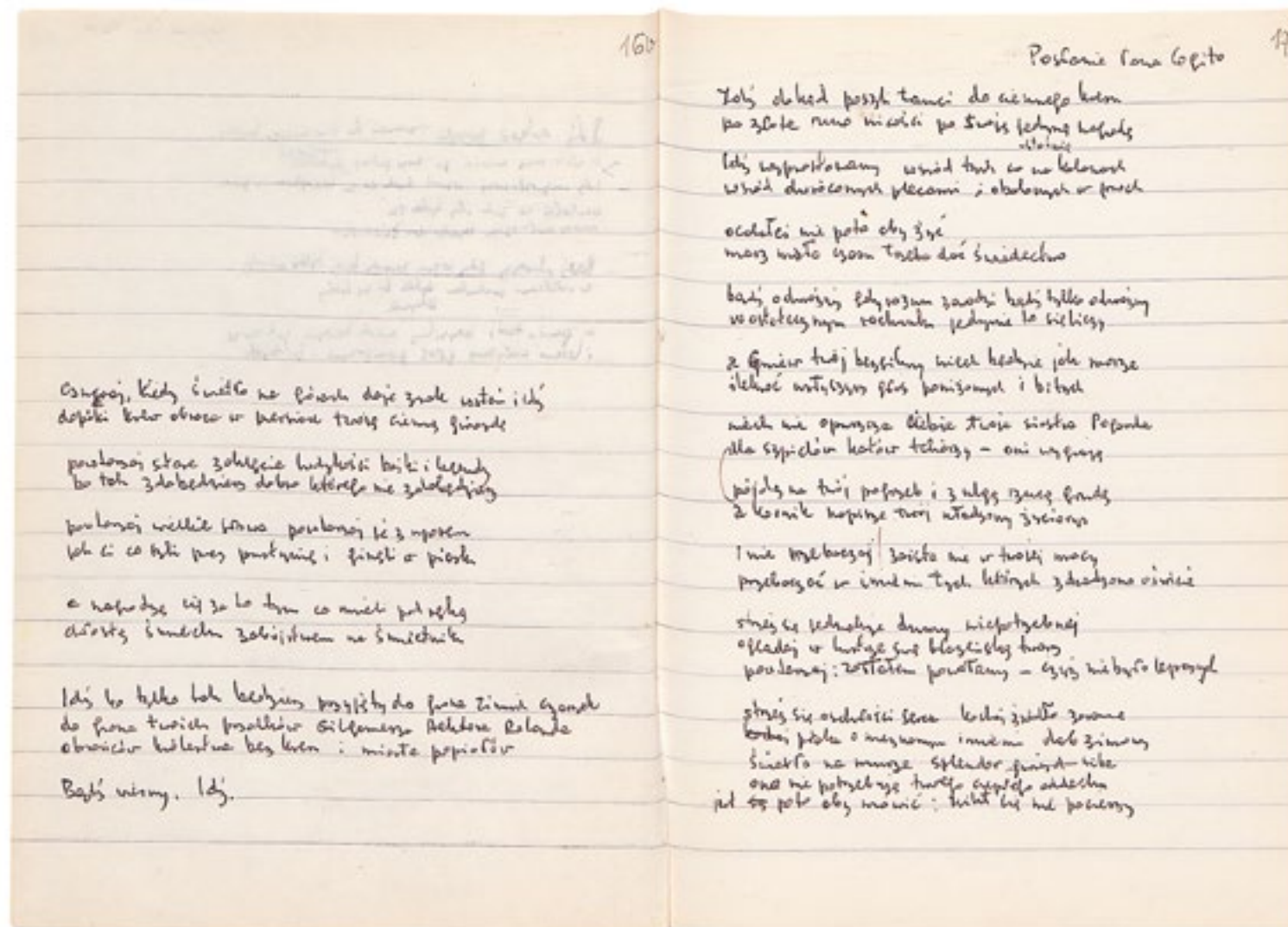


CZESŁAW MIŁOSZ'S NOBEL PRIZE MEDAL

Czesław Miłosz was presented with the Nobel Prize by King Carl Gustaf XVI of Sweden at a gala ceremony held on 10 December 1980 in Stockholm. For a writer unaccustomed to courtly conventions, the ceremony was quite a challenge. He had to borrow a formal tailcoat, learn the exact sequence of bows to be made (a video with instructions was provided) and even dance during the banquet. The Nobel Prize medal has a diameter of 65.9 mm, weighs 113 grams and is made of 18-carat gold. The obverse features a profile of Alfred Nobel, while the reverse has an image of a young man sitting under a laurel tree, listening to and

writing down the words of a song performed to the accompaniment of a lyre by the muse Erato, a quotation in Latin from Virgil's *Aeneid* (translated by William Morris in 1876 as "and they who bettered life on earth by new-found mastery") and the Nobel Prize winner's name engraved on it. The medal was designed by Swedish artist Erik Lindberg and its form has not changed for more than a century. The object forms part of the Czesław Miłosz Archive, one of the largest collections of materials documenting the poet's life and work. The archive was purchased by the National Library of Poland in 2013.





**ZBIGNIEW HERBERT † PRZESŁANIE PANA COGITO
(THE MESSAGE OF MR COGITO)**

One of the most important works of 20th century Polish literature, *Przesłanie Pana Cogito* (The Message of Mr Cogito) represents the quintessence of Zbigniew Herbert's mature poetic style, combining deep erudition combined with a strong commitment to fundamental humanist values. The poem comes from the volume

Pan Cogito, published in 1974, in which Herbert introduces the figure of Mr Cogito (from the Latin *cogito* – "I think"), a sensitive intellectual caught up in everyday life under "real socialism". The poem consists of moral precepts and instructions for a dignified and courageous life. Despite the internal compli-

cations of the stance taken by Mr Cogito, the poem became a voice of conscience for subsequent generations of Poles in their struggle for freedom. Many metaphors and formulations from the work found their way into everyday language, above all the exhortation at the end of the work: "Bądź wierny, idź" – "Be faithful, go".

The manuscript is part of the Zbigniew Herbert Archive, purchased by the National Library of Poland from the writer's widow, Katarzyna Dzie duszycka-Herbert, and sister, Halina Herbert-Żebrowska.

**ZBIGNIEW HERBERT † TREN FORTYNBRASA
(ELEGY OF FORTINBRAS)**

A poem from Herbert's third volume of poetry, *Stadium przedmiotu* (Study of the Object), published in 1961. The collection was very positively received by both literary critics and readers. It includes a number of poems today considered absolutely canonical, including *Apollo i Marsjasz* (Apollo and Marsyas), *Mona Liza* (Mona Lisa), *Kamyk* (Pebble), *Powrót prokonsula* (The Return of the Proconsul) and *Tren Fortynbrasa* (Elegy of Fortinbras). The last of these has been translated the greatest number of times and been the subject of the most literary criticism. Elegy of Fortinbras is a technically highly accomplished poem. It is written in

the voice of Fortinbras, the Norwegian prince in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, who will be crowned ruler after Hamlet's death. Fortinbras appears on stage after Hamlet has been killed and speaks an artfully constructed victor's monologue to the deceased. The poet, through Fortinbras, juxtaposes two contrasting stances: ineffectual idealism and brutal pragmatism. The fair copy belongs to the Zbigniew Herbert Archive, purchased by the National Library of Poland from the writer's widow, Katarzyna Dzieduszycka-Herbert, and sister, Halina Herbert-Żebrowska.

Tren Fortynbrasa

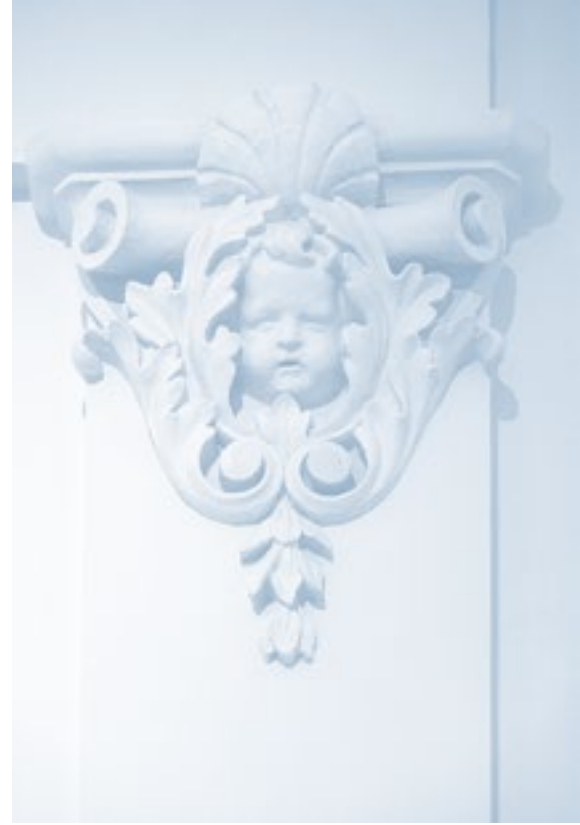
Teraz kiedy zostaliśmy sami możemy porozmawiać leniwie jak ^{myśliwy z} ~~myśliwym~~ ^z
chociaż leżysz na schodach i widzisz tyle co martwa młodość
to masz czarne stonice o ztanowiąc promieniach
Nigdy nie możesz myśleć o dwóch stonicach bez wzmianki
i teraz kiedy leżysz na kamieniu jak stracone gniazdo
szukasz tam samo bezkonne jak przedtem. To jest właśnie koniec
Rzecz leżysz osobno. Upada leżysz osobno. Osobno głowa
i noga rzuca w niekiedy pantoflach

Poprzez mnie będziesz zafornisz: chociaż nie byłeś zaforniszem
jest to jedyny rytuał na jakim trochę się man
Nie będzie promień i spieniu będą luty i huk
Kier wleczony po bruku kątowy podłukie luty komin ortopedyczny werbel werbel
wien nic piękniejszego
to będą moje nanieży przed objawieniem wstady
twoja wisi morto pod sztyft i ustępując nim trochę

Tak czy owak musisz zginąć Hamlecie nie byłeś do zginia
wzrostu i kognitorem porcja a nie głębi ludzkiej
złoty wątek słucham jak we śnie łowisz chimery
Kopanywie jesteś powścią i walczyliście wzmianki
nie musisz żadnej ludzkiej rzeczy nawet oddać mi musisz

Teraz masz spokój Hamlecie widziałeś co do ciebie należało
i masz spokój krewta nie jest miękkiem ale należało do mnie
wybawieś cześć tajemniejszą efebularny wstych
leżysz cennie jest śmierci bohaterstwa wobec własnego erusana
z zimnym obłędem w otomni na wosku kucy
z widokiem na mrowiska i taras repasa





The project “Modernisation and interior design of the Krasiński Palace (Palace of the Republic) at Plac Krasińskich 3/5 in Warsaw” was cofinanced by the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014–2021 and the Polish state budget.

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The Palace of the Commonwealth

Three times opened. Treasures from the National Library of Poland
at the Palace of the Commonwealth

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