

**TABLE SET FOR DIPLOMATS:
FOOD, DRINK, AND POLITICS IN POLAND-LITHUANIA'S
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS (1674–1696)**

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation addresses the social, cultural, and political dimensions of eating and drinking in Poland-Lithuania's diplomatic landscape during the reign of Jan III Sobieski and Marie Casimire d'Arquien. I argue that hospitality centered around the table was essential for the practice of early modern diplomacy, as it involved a wide range of diplomatic actors. Among them were kings and queens, dignitaries, as well as messengers, residents, envoys, ambassadors, and lower-ranking members of their embassies. The concept of taste and diplomatic hospitality serve as the framework that helps to define the relationship between food, drink, and diplomacy, and consequently to establish connections between practices previously discussed in isolation.

By adopting an approach informed by new diplomatic history and cultural food and drink history, my dissertation offers an alternative perspective to the narrative focused solely on bilateral relations or evaluating the success of foreign missions in political agreements. Instead, it concentrates on ubiquitous food and drink to paint a more nuanced picture of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy in the seventeenth century.

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NOTE ON NAMES, PLACES, DATES, AND TRANSLATIONS

I generally prefer not to translate the proper names of individuals and leave them in their original Polish, French, German, or Italian spelling. However, sometimes that means choosing between alternatives. For example, I refer to Marie Casimire rather than Maria Kazimiera (or Marysienka), mainly because it is the version commonly used in English. The same principle guides names of rulers and high officials in Russian and Turkish.

I have opted to use the modern versions of place names, as commonly used in English, with alternatives provided in parentheses when they are mentioned for the first time. For example, while the sources I use may read Żółkiew, I refer to it as Zhovkva (Жовква, Żółkiew).

All translations are mine, unless stated otherwise. Polish terms, especially institutions or offices, presented a particular challenge. I have provided translations, accompanied by the original term in parentheses. Similarly, I have attempted to include the text of a source I translated either in parentheses or in footnotes.

Finally, as the diplomatic partners of Poland-Lithuania mentioned in this dissertation originated from Muscovy, England, and the Ottoman Empire, it is important to note that the dates are presented in accordance with the New Style calendar.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGAD	Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych
AKP	Archiwum Królestwa Polskiego
APP	Archiwum Publiczne Potockich
ASK	Archiwum Skarbowe Koronne
AR	Archiwum Warszawskie Radziwiłłów
AWr	Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu
BCz	Biblioteka Czartoryskich, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie
BPAUiPAN	Biblioteka Naukowa Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności i Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Krakowie
BRicc	Biblioteca Riccardiana
LL	<i>Libri Legationum</i> = Księgi Poselskie
MPC	<i>Monumenta Poloniae Culinaria</i> = Polskie zabytki kulinarne
Oss	Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich
PSB	Polski Słownik Biograficzny
iPSB	Internetowy Polski Słownik Biograficzny
PAN	Polska Akademia Nauk
PAU	Polska Akademia Umiejętności
TN	Teki Naruszewicza
TSz	Teki Szackiego
VL	<i>Leges, statuta, constitutiones et privilegia Regni Poloniae, Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae. Omniumque provinciarum annexarum, a commitiis visliciae anno 1347 celebratis usque ad ultima regni comitia</i> = Prawa, konstytucje y przywileje Królestwa Polskiego, Wielkiego Xięstwa Litewskiego y wszystkich prowincyi należących na walnych seymiech koronnych od seymu wiślickiego roku pańskiego 1347 aż do ostatniego seymu

INTRODUCTION

for in this world only what we eat well and deliciously is ours

Jan Sobieski to Marie Casimire d'Arquien, July 8, 1671¹

Long before the rise of institutionalized culinary diplomacy and gastrodiploamacy, food and drink played a vital part in diplomatic encounters, whether served during reception banquets, presented as gifts, or distributed as provisions.² François de Callières, who was an envoy of Duke of Savoy Carlo Emanuele II to the Sejm of 1674 that elected Jan Sobieski to the Polish-Lithuanian throne, persuasively advocates for the importance of hosting over an abundant table in *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains* [On the manner of negotiating with sovereigns] (1716):

If he [the ambassador] lives in a democratic state he must attend the Diet and other popular assemblies. He must keep open house and a well-garnished table to attract the deputies, and thus both by his honesty and by his presence gain the ear of the ablest and most authoritative politicians, who may be able to defeat a hostile design or support a favorable one. If people of this kind have a freedom of *entrée* to the ambassador, a good table will greatly assist in the discovery of all that is going on, and the expense laid out upon it is not merely honorable but extraordinarily useful if only the negotiator himself knows how to profit from it. Indeed it is in the nature of things that good cheer is a great conciliator, that it fosters familiarity, and promotes a freedom of exchange between the guests, while the warmth of wine will often lead to the discovery of important secrets.³

¹ “[B]oć to nasze tylko na tym świecie, co zjemy dobrze i smaczno.” Leszek Kukulski, ed., *Jan Sobieski listy do Marysienki*, vol. 2 (Warszawa: Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza Czytelnik, 1973), 74–75.

All quotations, except those from English-language sources and editions, are my own translations.

² Culinary diplomacy refers to “the use of food and cuisine as an instrument to create cross-cultural understanding in the hopes of improving interactions and cooperation” and can have both a public and a government facing aspect (Chapple-Sokol), while gastrodiploamacy is a strategy to create a recognition (nation brand) through promotion of nation’s cuisine to a wide public (Rockower); not to be confused with food diplomacy, which involves food aid during a crisis and is a part of emergency aid and humanitarian diplomacy. More on the topic, see Sam Chapple-Sokol, “Culinary Diplomacy: Breaking Bread to Win Hearts and Minds,” *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 8 (2013): 161–83; Paul S. Rockower, “The State of Gastrodiploamacy,” *Public Diplomacy* 11 (2014): 11–15; Paul S. Rockower, “Recipes for Gastrodiploamacy,” *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 8, no. 3 (2012): 235–46; Charles Spence, “Gastrodiploamacy: Assessing the Role of Food in Decision-Making,” *Flavour* 5, no. 4 (2016), accessed June 30, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13411-016-0050-8>.

³ François de Callières, *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains. De l'utilité des Négociations, du choix des Ambassadeurs et des Envoyez, et des qualitez nécessaires pour réussir dans ces emplois* (Paris: Michel Brunet, 1716). It was also printed in Amsterdam and Brussels and published in English as *The Art of Negotiating with*

This advice is particularly relevant in places such as Poland-Lithuania, where the diet played an important role in decisions related to foreign affairs. However, Callières' writing highlights a broader issue of using food and drink for diplomatic purposes in the early modern period.

This dissertation concerns the social, cultural, and political dimension of eating and drinking in Poland-Lithuania's diplomatic landscape during the reign of Jan III Sobieski and Marie Casimire d'Arquien. It argues that hospitality centered around the table was essential for the practice of early modern diplomacy as it involved a wide range of diplomatic actors: kings and queens, dignitaries, as well as messengers, residents, envoys, ambassadors, and lower-ranking members of their embassies. Food and drink was ubiquitous: handed by the host as customary provision, cooked in the kitchens of ambassadors on their missions abroad, and served during banquets to foreign guests at princely courts. Further, the space around the table provided a platform to leverage various forms of sociability for political ends, project power, and splendor, articulate social standing, bind communities, or establish distinctions. By concentrating on food and drink, this dissertation offers a new perspective on the practice of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy, bringing to view its different facets and relations with different political partners. It examines how embassies dispatched from Poland-Lithuania were received abroad, and how different foreign diplomats were hosted in Poland-Lithuania. But rather than chronicling what was on the plates, I am interested in exploring how the hosts presented themselves through food and drink, and how their efforts were perceived. In what ways were the meals described in words and recorded in images, and what purposes did it serve in a diplomatic context?

Poland-Lithuania in times of the Sobieskis serves as an excellent case both from a diplomatic and culinary point of view. Numerous pieces of evidence underscore the significance of food and drink for the Sobieskis, encompassing both personal enjoyment and public display. Given

Sovereign Princes in the same year. Here citations come from A. F. Whyte's translation *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes* (Boston-New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1919), 118–19.

these circumstances and available source material, such as cookbooks and recipe collections in Polish, it is fair to say that Sobieskis' table reflected changes in taste and culinary preferences of the time and was not neglected in diplomatic settings. No less importantly, the reign of Jan III and Marie Casimire d'Arquien brought significant shifts in Poland-Lithuania's foreign relations, which captured the interest of historians across generations.⁴ Essential contributions on the topic include relations with the Sublime Porte and Muscovy,⁵ the so-called Baltics policy,⁶ relations with Bourbon France,⁷ realignment leading to rapprochement with Habsburg Austria, and relations in the post-Battle of Vienna period.⁸ Furthermore, the involvement of

⁴ Jarosław Stoliczka, "Działania Jana III Sobieskiego w celu wzrostu znaczenia Rzeczypospolitej w Europie w latach 1674–1683," *Studia Środkowoeuropejskie i bałkanistyczne* 25 (2017): 27–42; Zbigniew Wójcik, "Międzynarodowe położenie Rzeczypospolitej," in *Polska XVII wieku. Państwo - społeczeństwo - kultura*, ed. Janusz Tazbir (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1977), 13–55; Zbigniew Wójcik, "Zmiana w układzie sił politycznych w Europie środkowo-wschodniej w drugiej połowie XVII wieku," *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 67, no. 1 (1960): 25–57. For a more general overview see especially Sobieski's biography: Zbigniew Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1994); as well as an intellectual biography Karolina Targosz, *Jan III Sobieski mecenasem nauk i uczonych* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2012). There is also a number of studies focused on specific aspects such as formative years, military, art patronage, or court ceremonial. See for example Dominika Walawender-Musz, ed., *Primus Inter Pares. The First among Equals - the Story of King Jan III*, trans. Justyna Gołabek-Askainen and Katarzyna Krzyżagórska-Pisarek (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2013); Jarosław Pietrzak, "Między ceremoniałem a ludycznością. Codziennosc na dworze Jana III Sobieskiego oczami współczesnych mu pamiętnikarzy i korespondentów," in *Dom, codzienność i święto. Ceremonie i tradycje rodzinne*, *Studia historyczno-antropologiczne*, ed. Bożena Popiołek, Agnieszka Chłosta-Sikorska, and Marcin Gadocha (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, 2018), 56–73.

⁵ Kyril Koczegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680–1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2017); Zbigniew Wójcik, *Rzeczpospolita wobec Turcji i Rosji 1674–1679* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1976); Zbigniew Wójcik, "Rokowania polsko-rosyjskie o 'pokój wieczysty' w Moskwie w roku 1686," in *Z dziejów dyplomacji i polityki polskiej. Studia poświęcone pamięci Edwarda hr. Raczyńskiego Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na wychodźstwie* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1994), 38–55; Henryk Kotarski, "Jan III Sobieski wobec traktatu Gnińskiego z 1678 r.," *Rocznik Naukowo-Dydaktyczny. Prace Historyczne* 109, no. 12 (1987): 175–86; Natalia Królikowska-Jedlińska, "W poszukiwaniu sojuszników? Rola Chanatu Krymskiego i Persji w polityce Jana III Sobieskiego wobec Imperium Osmańskiego (1674–1696)," *Prace Historyczne* 146, no. 2 (2019): 331–45.

⁶ Michał Komarzyński, *Jan III Sobieski a Bałtyk* (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Morskie, 1983); Andrzej Kamiński, "Polityka brandenburska Jana III Sobieskiego," *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne* 146, no. 2 (2019): 307–18.

⁷ Notably, relations with France were largely maintained by Marie Casimire herself or through semi-official channels by her brother-in-law, François Gaston de Béthune. For the later period, the rapprochement and the embassy of Melchior de Polignac, see Aleksandra Skrzypietz, "Between Royal Instruction and Ambassador's Ambition. Melchior de Polignac's Cooperation with Polish Magnates," *Eastern European History Review* 4 (2021): 219–29; Aleksandra Skrzypietz, "Misja Melchiora de Polignac u schyłku panowania Jana III," in *Francuskie zabiegi o koronę polską po śmierci Jana III Sobieskiego* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2009), 21–60; Aleksandra Skrzypietz, "Zabiegi posła francuskiego o odrębny pokój polsko-turecki w latach 1693–1693," *Balkanica Posnaniensia* 13 (2003): 95–100.

⁸ Witold Wasilewski, "Polityka Jana III Sobieskiego w okresie powiedeńskim," *Studia Wilanowskie* 21 (2014): 1–18; Bogusław Dybaś, Alois Woldan, and Anna Ziemska, eds., *Sarmacka pamięć. Wokół bitwy pod Wiedniem* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014); Dariusz Milewski, ed., *Jarzęmko Ligi Świętej? Jan*

Queen Marie Casimire d'Arquien in public affairs, especially in dynastic policy, or her role during Jan III's withdrawal from public life in the twilight of his reign, has been addressed as well.⁹

Also, the diplomacy of this period became a part of comprehensive studies, and some episodes received more detailed analyses.¹⁰ However, less attention has been paid to the practice of diplomacy—investigating not only the objectives but also the dynamics of diplomatic encounters—particularly in an approach encompassing hosting and sending representatives. Serving as a thematic bridge, food and drink enable the exploration of various aspects of diplomacy, including reflection on how the individual decisions of diplomats and the political system of Poland-Lithuania shaped it. Taste and diplomatic hospitality form the conceptual framework that helps to define the relationship between food, drink, and diplomacy.

III Sobieski i Rzeczpospolita w latach 1684-1696 (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2017); Ilona Czamańska, "Oswobodziciel czy najeźdźca? Polityka Jana III wobec państw Mołdawii i Wołoszczyzny," *Roczniki historyczne* 55–56 (1989–1990): 151–77; Michał Komarzyński, "Ostatnia kampania wojenna Jana III (1691)," in *Studia i materiały z czasów Jana III Sobieskiego*, ed. Krystyn Matwijowski (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1992), 103–10; Lajos Hopp, "Sobieski a orientacja profrancuska malkontentów węgierskich," in *Studia z dziejów epoki Jana III Sobieskiego*, ed. Krystyn Matwijowski (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1984), 229–35; Lajos Hopp, "Ruch niepodległościowy szlachty węgierskiej przeciwko Habsburgom a Sobieski," *Sobótka* 2 (1980): 229–35; Teresa Chynczewska-Hennel, ed., *Odsiecz wiedeńska* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2011).

⁹ Michał Komarzyński, *Maria Kazimiera D'Arquien Sobieska, królowa Polski, 1641-1716* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1983); Maciej Serwański, "Rola Marii Kazimiery w stosunkach polsko-francuskich w czasach panowania Jana III Sobieskiego," *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne* 146, no. 2 (2019): 509–16; Bożena Popiołek, "Na dworze Marii Kazimiery," in *Studia i materiały z czasów Jana III Sobieskiego*, ed. Krystyn Matwijowski (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1992), 83–88; Anna Kalinowska and Paweł Tyszka, eds., *Maria Kazimiera Sobieska w kręgu rodziny, polityki i kultury* (Warszawa: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2017).

¹⁰ Zbigniew Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699)," in *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, ed. Zbigniew Wójcik, vol. 2: 1572-1795 (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1982), 163–330; Zbigniew Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w dobie królów elekcyjnych (1572-1699)," in *Historia dyplomacji polskiej X-XX*, ed. Gerard Labuda and Waldemar Michowicz (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2002), 167–213.

Literature review

Taste

Taste is a polysemous term. It may refer to a physiological sense, gustatory perception, aesthetic discrimination, social sensitivity, or be a shorthand for cuisine. The latter use gives an impression that taste is a well-recognized phenomenon, given the abundance of publications employing it in their titles.¹¹ While in reality, literature centering on taste itself—more than its object, that is food and drink—remains more scarce.¹² Addressing the issue, Viktoria von Hoffmann points out the tendency to equate the history of taste with the history of food and drink or cuisine.¹³ As a result, the question of taste often becomes coupled with that of food choices.¹⁴ Instead, in *From Gluttony to Enlightenment*, von Hoffmann uses the framework of

¹¹ For example, Paul H. Freedman, ed., *Food: The History of Taste*, California Studies in Food and Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Susan Pinkard, *A Revolution in Taste. The Rise of French Cuisine, 1650-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Massimo Montanari, *Medieval Tastes: Food, Cooking, and the Table*, Arts and Traditions of the Table: Perspectives on Culinary History (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Jan Łoziński and Maja Łozińska, *Historia polskiego smaku: kuchnia, stół, obyczaje* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2012).

¹² The most relevant literature for this dissertation includes Korsmeyer's work addressing the notion of taste from a perspective of philosophy, von Hoffmann's tracing of the transformation in conceptualizing taste between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, and most recently Janer's critique of the gastronomic notion of taste in the nineteenth century. For a broader context, Bourdieu's seminal analysis of the bourgeois (aesthetic) culture of taste cannot be overlooked. Also noteworthy are Rudolph's study of ancient gustatory taste, the interdisciplinary *The Taste Culture Reader*, and Vercelloni's wide-ranging survey focusing on gastronomy, modern art, and fashion. Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); Viktoria von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment. The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2016); Zilkia Janer, *The Coloniality of Modern Taste: A Critique of Gastronomic Thought* (London-New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2023); Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); Carolyn Korsmeyer, ed., *The Taste Culture Reader. Experiencing Food and Drink* (Oxford-New York: Berg, 2007); Kelli C. Rudolph, *Taste and the Ancient Senses* (London-New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018); Luca Vercelloni, *The Invention of Taste. A Cultural Account of Desire, Delight and Disgust in Fashion, Food and Art*, trans. Kate Singleton (London-New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

¹³ von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment. The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe*, 3, 13–14.

¹⁴ In the 1980s scholarly attention started to shift from primarily socioeconomic and dietary concerns to food choices, giving rise to the cultural food and drink history as a field of study. For a more detailed overview of developments in food and drink history writing, see Peter Scholliers and Kyri W. Claflin, "Introduction: Surveying Global Food Historiography," in *Writing Food History: A Global Perspective*, ed. Peter Scholliers and Kyri W. Claflin (London: Berg, 2013), 1–8; Warren Belasco, "Introduction: Food History as a Field," in *Food in Time and Place. The American Historical Association Companion to Food History*, ed. Paul Freedman, Joyce E Chaplin, and Ken Albala (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 1–18; Anne Murcott, "A Burgeoning Field: Introduction to the Handbook of Food Research," in *The Handbook of Food Research*, ed. Anne Murcott, Warren Belasco, and Peter Jackson (London-New Delhi-New York-Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 1–25; Carol Helstosky, "Introduction: Food and the Historian," in *The Routledge History of Food*, ed. Carol Helstosky

cultural food and drink history together with sensory history to show the transformation of how taste was conceptualized—from gustatory to aesthetic—in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France. She achieves this through analysis of culinary, medical, religious, and philosophical discourses.

In somehow similar vein, Zilkia Janer in *The Coloniality of Modern Taste* convincingly argues that “the meaning of taste comes from how people in each geohistorical location relate it to their larger systems of thought, particularly their notions of subjectivity, knowledge, beauty, health, morality and transcendence.”¹⁵ In other words, because “taste is the result of an experience shaped by the sociocultural context in which it unfolds,”¹⁶ it has a potential to be a focusing lens, offering new insights and understanding of matters that extend beyond the dining table. In Janer’s case, it allows to make a compelling argument on how gastronomy formalized by (mostly) French writers in the nineteenth century has been used to mark colonial distinctions and enforce global power hierarchies.

The approach proposed by Janer and von Hoffman directs attention to a broader context in which food and drink was consumed and valued, treating it as an integral part of a bigger picture.¹⁷ Therefore, in Chapter 1, rather than offering an overview of the cuisine during the

(London-New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), xii–xxxi; Sydney Watts, “Food and the Annales School,” in *The Oxford Handbook on Food History*, ed. Jeffrey M. Pilcher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 3–22; also special issue of *Food and History* 10, no. 2 (2012) including articles covering specific geographical and temporal scopes, including among others Allen J. Grieco and Alban Gautier, “Food and Drink in Medieval and Renaissance Europe: An Overview of the Past Decade (2001-2012),” *Food and History* 10, no. 2 (2012): 73–88; Özge Samancı, “Ten Years in Ottoman-Turkish Food Historiography,” *Food and History* 10, no. 2 (2012): 233–42; Florent Quellier, “L’après Jean-Louis Flandrin, une décennie d’histoire de l’alimentation en France (XVe-XIXe siècles),” *Food and History* 10, no. 2 (2012): 89–102.

¹⁵ Janer, *The Coloniality of Modern Taste: A Critique of Gastronomic Thought*, 2.

¹⁶ Janer, 9.

¹⁷ In general, such an approach is a hallmark of cultural food history. Christopher Kissane’s work is a prime example of “thinking *with* food” (in this case about identity, religion, and community). See Christopher Kissane, “Conclusions: Thinking about Food, Thinking with Food,” in *Food, Religion, and Communities in Early Modern Europe* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 157–62. For an overview of themes and topics that have been examined in a similar way, see, for example, Beat Kümin, ed., *A Cultural History of Food in the Early Modern Age* (London-New York: Bloomsbury, 2012). Another possible way of exploring “attitudes, practices and rituals around food,” or “approaches revolving around food-related practices” is the capacious concept of foodways. However, I find the concept of taste more useful, as it is more closely linked to early modern practice of diplomacy.

reign of the Sobieskis based on recipes and receipts, I explore some of the determinants of broadly understood taste in seventeenth-century Poland-Lithuania. This involves looking into the gustatory perception against the backdrop of religious and dietary prescription as well as social and aesthetic sensibility. By incorporating aspects such as humoral theory, fasting practices, attitudes toward spices and sugar, organization of magnates' kitchens, or setting of a meal, I aim to get a more nuanced view of the characteristics of the Poland-Lithuania case. Such contextual understanding is also indispensable for interpreting diplomatic sources. Without it, mentions of, for example, refusals to eat dairy, complaints about raw dishes or under-seasoned fish, sums spent on gilding sugar sculptures, or desperate efforts to find a confiture maker may seem like mere caprices or extravagances and not meaningful markers of distinction. Ultimately, I am interested in the cognitive aspect of taste as it ties closely with the practice of early modern diplomacy. As Carolyn Korsmayer observes:

Foods are employed in symbolic systems that extend from the ritual ceremonies of religion to the everyday choice of breakfast. Perhaps most obviously, eating is an activity with intense social meaning for communities large and small. A study of taste and its proper activities thus takes us into territory involving perception and cognition, symbolic function and social values.¹⁸

The undervalued referential potential of food and drink is precisely what offers the basis for insightful readings of accounts of diplomatic cross-cultural encounters. What is more, its ubiquity and the place eating and drinking held within hospitality and ceremony allow to bring to the forefront individuals, practices, and processes that are central to better understanding how early modern diplomacy was conducted.

Cf. Benjamin N. Lawrence and Carolyn de la Peña, "Introduction: Foodways, 'Foodism,' or Foodscapes? Navigating the Local/Global and Food/Culture Divides," in *Local Foods Meet Global Foodways. Tasting History*, ed. Carolyn de la Peña and Benjamin N. Lawrence (London-New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2012), 2–14; Arkadiusz Blaszczyk and Stefan Rohdewald, "Introduction: Foodways from Kebab to Čevapčići and Their Significance in the (Post-)Ottoman Europe," in *From Kebab to Čevapčići: Foodways in (Post-)Ottoman Europe*, ed. Arkadiusz Blaszczyk and Stefan Rohdewald (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018), 1–24.

¹⁸ Korsmayer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy*, 4.

In the mid-seventeenth century, the concept of taste took on a figurative meaning beyond its original reference to the physiology and gustatory sensations for good, expressing the ability to evaluate social conduct and, progressively, to judge the quality of arts as well.¹⁹ At the same time, a new culinary model started to gain popularity among European elites, ultimately taking a distinctive shape as so-called *nouvelle cuisine* in the 1730s.²⁰ Simply put, “delicate” and “natural” rather than “complex” and “contrasting” flavors were favored, which resulted, among other things, in replacing most of the imported spices with locally grown herbs such as parsley and thyme, relying on reductions to concentrate the flavors, or using butter more frequently, especially in smooth sauces that gained importance in highlighting (and not altering) the flavor of ingredients in a dish. The changes also included the visual aspect of dishes and plating as well as the way of serving—in particular, moving sweet dishes to one course at the end of a meal. Notably, a certain convergence occurred: politeness and civility, with expected table manners and “culinary refinement,” constituted the core of *bon goût*.²¹

The notion of good taste, an attribute of the *honnête homme* (gentleman, man of manners), evolved in the literature on polite behavior, the same that shaped diplomatic theory.²² In this

¹⁹ Korsmeyer, 41–42; von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment. The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe*, 1–2, 101–36.

²⁰ Literature on the “revolution of taste,” especially centered on the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, is considerable. See, for example, Pinkard, *A Revolution in Taste. The Rise of French Cuisine, 1650–1800*; Barbara Ketcham Wheaton, *Savoring the Past: The French Kitchen and Table from 1300 to 1789* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983); Emma Spary, *Eating the Enlightenment: Food and the Sciences in Paris, 1670–1760* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Jean-Louis Flandrin, “Dietary Choices and Culinary Techniques, 1500–1800,” in *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari, trans. Albert Sonnenfeld (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 403–17; Terence Scully, “Introduction,” in *La Varenne’s Cookery: The French Cook, the French Pastry Chef, the French Confectioner*, ed. and trans. Terence Scully (London: Prospect Books, 2006), 11–126. Florent Quellier’s recent contribution is a concise yet comprehensive discussion of the phenomenon, see his “The Taste of the Bourbon’s Reign and the Fabrication of the Renowned French Cuisine (Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century),” in *Power of Taste. Europe at the Royal Table*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski, Andrzej K. Kuropatnicki, and Fabio Parasecoli (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2020), 55–79.

²¹ von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment. The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe*, 6, 11, 112–13.

²² von Hoffmann, 112; Heidrun R. I. Kugeler, “‘Le Parfait Ambassadeur’. The Theory and Practice of Diplomacy in the Century Following the Peace of Westphalia” (PhD thesis, University of Oxford, 2006), 32–33.

sense, taste is “a term of manners,” describing certain social sensibility.”²³ Rooted in “[Francesco] Guicciardini’s notion of *discrezione*, [Baldassare] Castiglione’s *grazia* and *sprezzatura*, [Giovanni] Della Casa’s *leggiadria*, and [Baltasar] Gracián’s *despejo* and *gusto relevante*,” it referred to an ideal courtier capability of adopting suitable conduct in any given situation.²⁴ Even more was expected from an ideal diplomat: he was to gracefully navigate the society of princes and uphold an impeccable reputation to succeed in negotiation.²⁵

Importantly, in the ideal of *honnête homme* ethics connects with good manners in a way that good taste refers to both the inner qualities as well as the way of perceiving and reacting to the world.²⁶ In this context, the ability to follow directions not to offend the hosts and prevent “affronts or tumults and distastes” given to Voivode Jan Gniński (d. 1685), grand ambassador dispatched from Poland-Lithuania to Istanbul (Constantinople) in 1677, encompassed a broad set of assets within the diplomat’s toolkit, among them the reliance on good taste.²⁷

Hospitality and diplomacy

The conduct of a diplomat and the closely related issue of hospitality, particularly centered around the table, is a recurring theme in treatises on the theory of diplomacy. Jean Hotman in *L’Ambassadeur* (1603) recommends an overall self-restraint while invited to the table because

there is nothing more hurtful of his [ambassador’s] reputation than indiscrete speaking, for there are some seen who at the table and at every word, meddle not only with particular persons, but with the Princes

²³ Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy*, 42.

²⁴ von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment. The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe*, 113.

²⁵ “la réputation d’honnête homme sont aussy nécessaires qu’en aucune autre profession;” “Il [commerce des dames] contribue beacoup dans le monde á la réputation de galante homme qu’en Ambassadeur, comme un autre, doit lascher d’acquérir.” Louis Rousseau de Chamoy, *L’idée du parfait ambassadeur* [1697], ed. M. L. Delavaud (Paris: A. Pedone, 1912), 22; 33. Kugeler, who refers to Chamoy, discusses in detail diplomat’s reputation, courtly behavior, and virtuousness. See Kugeler, “‘Le Parfait Ambassadeur’. The Theory and Practice of Diplomacy in the Century Following the Peace of Westphalia,” 62–68, also Christine Vogel, “Diplomatic Writing as Aristocratic Self-Fashioning: French Ambassadors in Constantinople,” in *Cultures of Diplomacy and Literary Writing in the Early Modern World*, ed. Tracey A. Sowerby and Joanna Craigwood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 190–202.

²⁶ von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment. The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe*, 113.

²⁷ “wielmożny poseł ... w dobrym porządku bez konfuzyi *disciplinatum* zachował *familiam*; nie tylko dlatego, żeby zgorzenia nie dać, ale też żeby żadnej okazji do tumultu albo afrontów i niesmaków nie przydać.” “Instrukcja dana Janowi Gnińskiemu od króla i stanów Rzptej,” in *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego wojewody chełmińskiego do Turcji w latach 1677-1678*, ed. Franciszek Pułaski, Biblioteka Ordynacji Kasińskich (Warszawa: Typis Rubieszewski & Wrotnowski, 1907), 202.

also to whom they are sent: find fault with the form of popular government: laugh openly at the manners of the nation where they are.²⁸

With this negative example, Hotman underscores the importance for an ambassador to maintain a standard of behavior aligned with that expected of *honnête homme*. A similar recommendation, albeit phrased differently, is also found in *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains*, highlighting the long-lasting relevance of such advice. “To maintain the dignity,” according to Callières, “the negotiator must clothe himself in liberality and generosity,” and then

[l]et clean linen and appointments and delicacy reign at his table. Let him frequently give banquets and diversions in honor of the principal persons of the court in which he lives, and even in the honor of the prince himself, if he so cares to take part. Let him also enter into the spirit of the same diversions offered by others, but always in a light, unconstrained, and agreeable manner, and always with an open, good-natured, straightforward air, and with a continual desire to give pleasure to others.²⁹

In this example, the good taste, central to the well-performed duties of a diplomat, is expressed through fine garments, refined meals, and impeccable manners. Moreover, “the expense laid out upon it [a good table] is not merely honorable but extraordinarily useful if only the negotiator himself knows how to profit from it.”³⁰

Krzysztof Warszewicki in *De legato et legatione* (1595) advises that an ambassador extends invitations to banquets for dignitaries and those close to the foreign prince.³¹ Warszewicki adds that such banquets should create a relaxed and confidential atmosphere, however, he cautions against drinking excessively because those who want to take advantage of their guests’

²⁸ Hotman, 46.

²⁹ Callières, *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes*, 24.

³⁰ Callières, *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes*, 119.

³¹ Krzysztof Warszewicki, *De legato et legatione* (Kraków: Officina Lazari, 1595). Third edition, *De legato et legatione liber*, published in 1646 was the most popular, which also demonstrates the long-lasting impact of his work; Polish translation by Jerzy Życki is based on this edition. Krzysztof Warszewicki, *O pośle i poselstwach*, ed. and trans. Jerzy Życki (Warszawa: Nakładem Księgarni F. Hoesicka Drukarnia Współczesna, 1935). For more on Warszewicki’s work and his model of a diplomat, see Stanisław Edward Nahlik, *Narodziny nowożytnej dyplomacji* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1971), 21–22; Urszula Świdarska-Włodarczyk, “Wzorzec dyplomaty przełomu XVI i XVII wieku w świetle staropolskich poradników poselskich,” *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne* 143, no. 3 (2006): 537–55; Urszula Świdarska-Włodarczyk, *Homo nobilis. Wzorzec szlachecka w Rzeczypospolitej XVI i XVII wieku*, (Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2017), 6.29–6.30 ebook.

intoxication and obtain secrets tend to overlook the risk of falling into the same trap themselves.³² Similarly, Hotman sees a great benefit for diplomats to provide “entertainment at the table, which obligeth many people” in order to be well-informed, although he recognizes that information obtained this way is not always truthful.³³

The consensus regarding the advantages and potential pitfalls of diplomatic dining, as well as the importance of commensality for representative purposes, is evident among early modern theorists. Abraham de Wicquefort in *L'Ambassadeur et ses fonctions* (1680/1) downright insists that “[t]he Ambassador Extraordinary cannot well avoid keeping an open Table if he will do Honor to his Master.”³⁴ Also, from the examples he provides throughout, it is clear that Wicquefort sees a table as an essential space of diplomatic interactions, and offerings of drink and foodstuffs (such as wine, meat, or sweetmeats) as customary and in good manners.³⁵

Hospitality centered around food and drink, either in the form of everyday meals or spectacular banquets, played (and continues to play) a role in establishing rapport, delineating communities, expressing and reinforcing social hierarchies. All these aspects are vital for the diplomatic practice, rendering the meal “perhaps the best synecdoche for diplomacy,” showcasing “diplomacy’s character as a social institution.”³⁶

Sharing or offering food and drink is a central component of hospitality in its various forms, whether extended to equals or as a charitable act, including kin, clients, or strangers.³⁷

³² Warszewicki, *O pośle i poselstwach*.

³³ Jean Hotman de Villiers, *L'Ambassadeur* (Paris, 1603). Here cited after the English edition, *The Ambassador* (London: V.S. for James Shaw, 1603), 84.

³⁴ Abraham de Wicquefort, *L'Ambassadeur et ses fonctions* (La Haye: Jean & Daniel Steucker, 1680/1681), vol. 1 and 2. Here cited after the English edition *The Ambassador and His Functions*, trans. by John Digby, (London: for Bernard Linott at the Cross-Keys, 1716), 207.

³⁵ For instance, Wicquefort, *The Ambassador and His Functions*, 155, 128, 169, 199, 208, 292, 465.

³⁶ Iver B. Neuman, “A Sustaining Site: Diplomacy at a Table,” in *Diplomatic Sites: A Critical Enquiry* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 45.

³⁷ Felicity Heal’s work remains one of the few comprehensive studies of early modern hospitality. However, the body of literature has expanded, with notable contributions widening the geographical and temporal scope. See Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Gabriele

Hospitality can also serve public or private purposes and be conditioned by ethical, legal, or commercial considerations.³⁸ In the simplest terms, hospitality is “a way of conceptualizing meetings and confrontations between hosts and many types of guests or migrants.”³⁹ Following this line of argument, diplomatic hospitality concerns—and contributes to the understanding of—interactions involving at least one foreign representative, be it the host or the guest. As early modern authors such as Warszewicki, Hotman, Callières, and Wicquefort show, hospitality was a medium of foreign relations, and a good diplomat had to step into the role of guest as well as the host.

What is more, diplomatic hospitality at that time had two distinct facets: it shaped the daily lives of diplomats abroad and played a major role in ceremonies. Both these aspects are relevant to this dissertation and have been the subject of scholarly attention, to mention only the works of Maria Salomon Arel, Eric Dursteler, Dorotée Goetze, Jan Hennings, Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, Bram van Leuveren, or Laura Mesotten, although the significance of festivals and grand banquets in leveraging hospitality for diplomatic purposes is perhaps a somewhat better-recognized phenomenon in the literature.⁴⁰ Apart from Hennings, who provides a vital context

Jancke, *Gastfreundschaft in der frühneuzeitlichen Gesellschaft: Praktiken, Normen und Perspektiven von Gelehrten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlag, 2013); Sari Nauman et al., eds., *Baltic Hospitality from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century. Receiving Strangers in Northeastern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022); Judith Still, *Enlightenment Hospitality: Cannibals, Harems and Adoption* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2011).

³⁸ Sari Nauman, Wojtek Jezierski, and Leif Runefelt, “Introduction,” in *Baltic Hospitality from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century. Receiving Strangers in Northeastern Europe*, ed. Sari Nauman et al. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 8. The legal aspect is undoubtedly relevant to the early modern concept of hospitality, particularly in theoretical reflections on international relations, which are, however, beyond the scope of this dissertation. For more on this topic, see Georg Cavallar, *The Rights of Strangers. Theories of International Hospitality, the Global Community, and Political Justice since Vitoria* (Aldershot-Burlington: Ashgate, 2002).

³⁹ Nauman, Jezierski, and Runefelt, “Introduction,” 5. For an anthropologically informed perspective, exploring political hospitality (drawing on Kant’s “law of universal hospitality” and Derrida’s reflection on “unconditional hospitality”) and moral hospitality (grounded in legacy of classical antiquity and Abrahamic religions), see Andrew Shryock, “Breaking Hospitality Apart: Bad Hosts, Bad Guests, and the Problem of Sovereignty,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18, no. s1 (2012): 20–33.

⁴⁰ Diplomatic hospitality appears on the margins of works dedicated to grand eating and royal tables, see, for example, Roy Strong, *Feast: A History of Grand Eating* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2002); and Ken Albala, *The Banquet. Dining in the Great Courts of Late Renaissance Europe* (Chicago-Urbana-Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2007); Andrzej K. Kuropatnicki, Fabio Parasecoli, and Jarosław Dumanowski, eds., *Power of Taste. Europe at the Royal Table* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2020); Catherine Arminjon

for discussing food and drink as a part of the ceremonial of receiving diplomats, and Kołodziejczyk, who points to the shifting narratives surrounding the banquets held for the Polish-Lithuanian embassies in Istanbul, Arel's and Goetze's contributions are particularly valuable to my reflection, both thematically and conceptually.

Arel's analysis of receiving foreign diplomats in Muscovy from the mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries explains how the tsars used acts of hospitality to display wealth, power, and legitimacy to both foreign and domestic audiences.⁴¹ In particular, the custom of providing foreign diplomats with lodging and food provisions throughout their stay shaped an image of the tsar as "a great distributor" and "a fountain of bounty."⁴²

The case of Muscovy compared to Poland-Lithuania is an excellent example of how the same practice could be framed in different terms. As I demonstrate in this dissertation, it was not an exclusive characteristic of Muscovite diplomacy to extend such "official and lavish hospitality," to provide the receiving party with lodgings and provisions.⁴³ Rather, it was a pattern of

and Béatrix Saule, eds., *Tables royales et festins de cour en Europe 1661-1789* (Paris: La Documentation française: École du Louvre, 2004); Daniëlle De Vooght, *Royal Taste. Food, Power, and Status at the European Courts after 1789* (Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, 2010). Recently Bram van Leuven presented a more conceptually grounded analysis of diplomatic hospitality, however, not focusing on food and drink in particular, but on a broader festival culture. The literature addressing the questions about the place food and drink in diplomacy remains more modest. See Bram van Leuven, *Early Modern Diplomacy and French Festival Culture in a European Context, 1572-1615* (Leiden: Brill, 2023), especially Chapter 3; Maria Salomon Arel, "Hospitality at the Hands of the Muscovite Tsar: The Welcoming of Foreign Envoys in Early Modern Russia," *The Court Historian* 21, no. 1 (2016): 23-43; Eric Dursteler, "'A Continual Tavern in My House': Food and Diplomacy in Early Modern Constantinople," in *Renaissance Studies* Joseph Connors, ed. Machtelt Israëls and Louise A. Waldman, vol. 2 (Florence: Villa I Tatti, 2013), 166-67; Dorothee Goetze, "Ritualized Hospitality: The Negotiations of the Riga Capitulation and the 'Adventus' of Boris Sheremetev in July 1710," in *Baltic Hospitality from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century. Receiving Strangers in Northeastern Europe*, ed. Sari Nauman et al. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 169-93; Jan Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), especially Chapter 2 and 4; Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, "Polish Embassies in Istanbul or How to Sponge on Your Host without Losing Your Self-Esteem," in *The Illuminated Table, the Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture*, ed. Suraiya Faruqi and Christoph K. Neumann (Würzburg: Ergon in Kommission, 2003), 51-58; Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, "Semiotics of Behavior in Early Modern Diplomacy: Polish Embassies in Istanbul and Bahçesaray," *Journal of Early Modern History* 7, no. 3 (2003): 245-56; Laura Mesotten, "A Taste of Diplomacy: Food Gifts for the Muscovite Embassy in Venice (1582)," *Legatio: The Journal for Renaissance and Early Modern Diplomatic Studies*, no. 1 (2018): 131-63.

⁴¹ Arel, "Hospitality at the Hands of the Muscovite Tsar: The Welcoming of Foreign Envoys in Early Modern Russia."

⁴² Arel, 31.

⁴³ "[T]he surviving record suggest that the Muscovites place a much greater weight on hospitality when receiving diplomats than did most other courts at the time." Fairly, the example of Poland-Lithuania is also mentioned, but it is interpreted within the context of "cultural rivalry." See Arel, 25, 27-28.

hospitality connected with a geohistorical tradition of conducting diplomacy, a pattern that was reciprocatively followed by Poland-Lithuania while engaging with specific partners of specific rank, Muscovy included. Therefore, instead of contributing to the image of the sovereign, covering certain diplomats' expenses in Poland-Lithuania served the purpose of sustaining good neighborly relations by following the established tradition.

While Salomon Arel examines (mostly) cordial receptions of diplomats in Muscovy, Goetze explores hospitality closely tied with hostility.⁴⁴ She focuses on a “ritualized form of hospitality which allowed ... to establish a framework for non-violent communication” during the negotiations and following the entry of Field Marshal Boris Sheremetev into Riga in 1710.⁴⁵ In the treatment of the hostages (accommodation, food, drink, and entertainment), banquets expressed the civility, generosity, and friendly disposition of the enemy-turned-host and were necessary for trust building after the violent siege.⁴⁶ What is more, the festive reception of Sheremetev visibly asserted social hierarchies and new political order afterwards.⁴⁷

Notably, the material dimension of diplomatic hospitality included not only food and drink, but also, for example, textiles, as demonstrated by Giulia Galastro in her discussion of strategies employed by sixteenth-century Genoa.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the ubiquity of food and drink, and the diverse scenarios in which it appeared renders it a particularly useful focal point for delving into early modern diplomatic practice in its fascinating complexity.

⁴⁴ Goetze, “Ritualized Hospitality: The Negotiations of the Riga Capitulation and the ‘Adventus’ of Boris Sheremetev in July 1710.”

⁴⁵ Goetze, 172.

⁴⁶ Goetze, 176–78.

⁴⁷ Goetze, 179–85.

⁴⁸ Giulia Galastro, “Wondrous Welcome. Materiality and Senses in Diplomatic Hospitality in Sixteenth-Century Genoa,” in *Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World c.1410-1800*, ed. Jan Hennings and Tracey A. Sowerby (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 97–113.

Sources

In the following section, I present a broad overview of the sources used in this dissertation, divided into diplomatic and culinary sources. Culinary sources refer to normative culinary texts written in Polish, such as cookbooks and recipe collections. By diplomatic sources I mean various types of documents coming from the institutions responsible for major decisions of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy, and sources documenting the course of embassies sent abroad or the reception of foreign diplomats in Poland-Lithuania. These include diaries and relations of embassies, instructions, Sejm diaries, protocols of Senate councils, correspondence between the king and diplomats, lists of Sejm and court accounts, as well as, for example, relations of events involving diplomats, both printed and remaining in manuscripts. Most of the sources were written in Polish and Latin, which were the two primary languages used in the Polish-Lithuanian political life, but I also integrated some material (mostly relations) in French, Italian, German, and English. Details regarding culinary literature will be discussed in Chapter 1, and diplomatic documentation in Poland-Lithuania will be covered in Chapter 2 and 4. Moreover, specific materials will be introduced in due course as the corpus is pieced from different archival collections as well as published editions and varies from case to case.

Diplomatic sources

It is probable that neither the Crown nor Lithuanian chancelleries saw the emergence of a unit specifically focused on foreign affairs, or as Dorota Gregorowicz puts it: “[a]t least the sources which could document the existence of such cell have not survived to this day.”⁴⁹ Of course, historians constantly grapple with the incompleteness of the source material they are working with. However, those delving into Poland-Lithuanian history on many occasions additionally

⁴⁹ Dorota Gregorowicz, “Diplomacy of the Commonwealth, Diplomacy of the King: The Peculiarity of Foreign Policy Making in the Seventeenth Century Poland-Lithuania,” *Eastern European History Review* 4 (2021): 21.

find themselves reliant solely on transcripts or nineteenth- and early twentieth-century source editions since the original documents no longer exist.⁵⁰ Among them are, for example, materials concerning Voivode Jan Gniński's embassy to Istanbul in 1677 held in destroyed Krasiński and Zamoyski libraries in Warsaw published by Franciszek Pułaski before WWII.⁵¹ Another invaluable format in which historical documents survived is the so-called Teki Naruszewicza (Naruszewicz's files) kept in the Princes Czartoryskis' Library in Cracow. These are more than 200 volumes ordered chronologically containing copies of selected public documents made between 1781 and 1791 under the direction of Adama Naruszewicz, commissioned by King Stanisław II August Poniatowski.⁵² The volumes concerning the reign of the Sobieskis contain—among other things—various legal acts, letters, relations and diaries of embassies, instructions for diplomats, Sejm diaries, senatorial speeches, occasional literature related to Sejms, and handwritten newspapers (*awizy*), mainly in Polish and Latin. I consulted overall twelve volumes (nr 174–184, 191). The most relevant documents appeared to be the copies of Sejm diaries, ambassadors' relations (e.g. Jan Gniński's, Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski's), diaries and relations of embassies (e.g. *Diarium Legationis Moschoviticae AD 1678*, *Diariusz negocjacji Ur. Cypriana Brzostowskiego, Relacya wjazdu do Fontebleau* [Fontainebleau] *Imć Pana Kanclerza W. Koronnego Posła Wielkiego i Extraordinarynego JKM do Króla JMć Francuskiego 1685 roku*), or dispositions regarding the weddings of Prince Jakub Sobieski and Princess Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska. The copy of Sobieski's letter with instructions for the preparation of his daughter's wedding is one of the most relevant finds for this dissertation.⁵³

⁵⁰ This, of course, comes with limitations. For example, in the preface to Jan Sobieski's letters to Marie Casimire, Leszek Kukulski explains that the edition is incomplete mentioning reliance on transcripts of Jerzy Samuel Bandtke (1768–1835), who “as a historian” omitted, among other things, fragments that concern “amorous ecstasies.” Leszek Kukulski, *Jan Sobieski listy do Marysienki*, vol. 1 (Warszawa: Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza Czytelnik, 1973), 19.

⁵¹ Pułaski, *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego wojewody chełmińskiego do Turcji w latach 1677-1678*.

⁵² Stanisław Grzybowski, *Teki Naruszewicza* (Wrocław: Zakład Naukowy im. Ossolińskich, 1960).

⁵³ BCzart, TN 184, nr 119, “Copia Listu JKrMci do Urodzonego Wołczyńskiego, Stolnika Mielnickiego, 1694, 14 Julij,” 273-75.

Many practical aspects of diplomacy in Poland-Lithuania can be explored through the collections housed at the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw. In particular, the treasury archive, Archiwum Skarbowe Koronne, holds valuable records related to hosting incoming missions and the expenses of outgoing embassies. Rachunki Sejmowe (Sejm accounts) are accounts presented by the Crown Treasurer at Sejms, containing sums due for embassies dispatched from Poland-Lithuania and spent on receiving foreign representatives. In comparison, Rachunki królewskie (royal accounts) and Rachunki nadworne (court accounts) were more difficult to work with. The main problem I encountered was a frequent lack of information that would allow me to link documents to specific people or events, which meant that I could only use them to a limited extent. Also, unfortunately, Rachunki poselstw, the series of accounts containing expenses for hosting foreign legations, include only singular documents from the years 1674–1696.

Like the Czartoryskis' Library in Cracow, the archives of magnate families at the Central Archives—the Potockis, Zamoyskis, Branickis, and foremost, the Radziwiłłs—house a wide range of materials (originals or copies) selected by the contemporaries for their importance for the political life of the Commonwealth. Furthermore, these collections include documents related to members of these families who held offices and diplomatic ranks.

I surveyed volumes in the Zamoyskis' and Potockis' collections (Archiwum Zamoyskich, Archiwum Publiczne Potockich), which preserve various political writings for the reign of Jan III Sobieski. This included, for example, Jan Wielopolski's *silva rerum*, containing a detailed description for receiving Muscovite legations from 1674.⁵⁴ However, the collection I relied on the most was the Radziwiłłs' one (Archiwum Warszawskie Radziwiłłów). Section II holds, among other things, the archive of Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł's embassy to the Holy See in

⁵⁴ AGAD, APP, 45/4, *Silva rerum Jana Wielopolskiego, starosty bieckiego*, 47.

1680,⁵⁵ as well as singular documents relating to other embassies, such as the relation of Michał Jerzy Czartoryski and Jan Kazimierz Sapieha's entry to Moscow in 1678.⁵⁶ Apart from that, in the supplement section, I was able to identify a fragment of Gniński's embassy diary describing the reception and banquet in the Topkapı Palace, which was not included in the source edition prepared by Pułaski.⁵⁷ Chapter 4, in particular, is based on findings from the Radziwiłłs' collection.

Finally, diaries that can be characterized as personal—as opposed to, for example, Sejm diaries, which were anonymous and had foremost a reporting function—constitute an important category of sources I used. As these are egodocuments, they offer accounts of events visibly colored by the author's personal experiences and judgments. Three diaries are particularly noteworthy. Bernard Tanner's *Legatio Polono-Lithuanica in Moscoviam* (1689)⁵⁸ and Giovan Battista Fagiuoli's *Memorie e ricordi* share some similarities, a certain travel writing character, in their description of the course of embassies to a distant land: Polish-Lithuanian embassy to Muscovy in 1678, and the papal nuncio Andrea Santacroce's mission to Poland-Lithuania in the years 1690–1691.⁵⁹ In turn, Kazimierz Sarnecki's diary was written from a “local” perspective. He was a courtier, royal secretary, and an agent (or a magnate's resident) of Deputy Chancellor of Lithuania and Sobieski's nephew, Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł, describing current

⁵⁵ AGAD, AR II, ks. 2.

⁵⁶ AGAD, AR II, 1675, *Opis wjazdu posłów Rzeczypospolitej do Moskwy*.

⁵⁷ AGAD, AR II, Supplement, 649 G (I), *Diariusz poselstwa polskiego do Wielkiej Porty 1677 r.*

⁵⁸ Bernard Tanner, *Legatio Polono-Lithuanica in Moscoviam Potentissimi Poloniae Regis ac Reipublicae Mandato & Consensu Anno 1678. feliciter suscepta* (Nuremberg: Johannis Ziegeri, 1689); Bernard Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie do Moskwy szczęśliwie przedsięwzięte, opisane przez naocznego świadka Bernarda Tannera*, ed. Aleksander Strojny, trans. Michał Rzepiela and Aleksander Strojny (Kraków: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Historia Jagiellonica, 2002).

⁵⁹ Fagiuoli was a secretary of the papal nuncio in 1690–1691; Santacroce's mission was longer, lasting until 1696. The manuscript of his diary, in 3 volumes, is held in Biblioteca Riccardiana. The part of his journey to Poland-Lithuania (in volume 2) was translated into Polish. BRicc, 2696, *Memorie e ricordi di quello accaderà alla giornata di ma Gio[van]: Batt[ist]a Fagiuoli*; Giovan Battista Fagiuoli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690–1691)*, ed. Małgorzata Ewa Trzeciak (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2017).

events at Sobieski's court between 1691 and 1696.⁶⁰ Sarnecki's mentions of food and drink, typical of many of the written sources I consulted, are laconic, to say the least. He reported where, when, and with whom Sobieski ate, sometimes stating that the king did so with a good appetite or, on the contrary, that none of the dishes were to his liking on that day. Occasionally, however, Sarnecki would include a more detailed description of a banquet given in honor of a distinguished foreign guest. Knowing the culinary context is essential to reading such descriptions, and particularly to understanding the reasons behind why certain foodstuffs and drinks took the spotlight.

Culinary sources

The most important Old Polish culinary texts are published within the *Monumenta Poloniae Culinaria* series edited by Jarosław Dumanowski.⁶¹ Initiated in 2009 with the publication of Stanisław Czerniecki's *Compendium ferculorum albo zebranie potraw* [*Compendium ferculorum* or the collection of dishes], this series has played a vital role in shaping the landscape of cultural food and drink history in Poland.⁶² It has laid an essential groundwork for fostering research by significantly increasing accessibility to these texts and contextualizing them in extensive introductions.

⁶⁰ Kazimierz Sarnecki, *Pamiętniki z czasów Jana Sobieskiego*, ed. Janusz Woliński, vol. 1 and 2 (Wrocław-Warszawa: Ossolineum-DeAgostini, 2004). The manuscript is held in the Ossoliński National Institute in Wrocław (9765/1) and in the Central Archive of Historical Records in Warsaw (AR V, teka 342, nr 13939).

⁶¹ The series, currently comprising nine volumes, incorporates both manuscript and printed cookbooks, compilations of recipes, a dietary treatise, and a stewardship book. See *Seria wydawnicza "Monumenta Poloniae Culinaria,"* accessed March 20, 2023, https://www.wilanow-palac.pl/seria_wydawnicza_monumenta_poloniae_culinaria.html.

⁶² This is not to say that there was no previous tradition of writing about food and drink in Poland, just to mention Andrzej Wyczański or Maria Dembińska. See Andrzej Wyczański, *Studia nad konsumpcją żywności w Polsce w XVI i pierwszej połowie XVII wieku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1969); Maria Dembińska, *Konsumpcja żywnościowa w Polsce średniowiecznej* (Wrocław-Kraków-Warszawa: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1983); Maria Dembińska, "Zmiany w polskiej kuchni od średniowiecza do końca XVII wieku na tle europejskim. *Compendium ferculorum* z 1682 r.," in *Szkice z dziejów materialnego bytowania społeczeństwa polskiego*, ed. Maria Dembińska, vol. 61, *Studia i Materiały z Historii Kultury Materialnej* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1989), 191–99.

Compared to France, Italy, England, or German-speaking lands, there are relatively few early culinary texts from Poland-Lithuania. *Compendium ferculorum* is the only cookbook printed in the seventeenth century, and until recently, it was considered the oldest surviving one as well. However, a closer examination of *Zbiór dla kuchmistrza tak potraw jako i ciast robienie wypisany roku 1757* [A collection for a master cook, both for the preparation of dishes and pastries, transcribed in the year 1757], a collection of recipes spanning three centuries, revealed that it contains a copy of a presumed lost cookbook dating back to 1580.⁶³ A year after the publication of *Zbiór dla kuchmistrza*, Svitlana Bulatova prepared an edition of another manuscript, which is also held in the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine. *Podrózne potrawy z postem* [Dishes from travels and fast-day recipes] is an anonymous compilation from the mid-seventeenth century, and—as the title suggests—it contains primarily recipes for dishes prepared during fast-days and those collected from travels.⁶⁴ Despite its brevity (only nine pages with a total of 77 recipes), it stands as another invaluable discovery, contributing to our understanding of the culinary practices and attitudes towards food and drink in Poland-Lithuania.⁶⁵ Importantly, *Zbiór dla kuchmistrza* is connected to a noble family from Volhynia, while *Podrózne potrawy z postem* can be associated with Red Ruthenia, which serves as a reminder of the diverse character of the cuisine of Poland-Lithuania, emphasizing that it is more than just a Polish heritage in the present day.⁶⁶

⁶³ Jarosław Dumanowski and Svitlana Bulatova, “Książka kucharska Rozalii Pocięjowej i Ludwiki Honoraty Lubomirskiej,” in *Zbiór dla kuchmistrza tak potraw jako i ciast robienia wypisany roku 1757 dnia 24 lipca*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski and Svitlana Bulatova, (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2021), 66–74.

⁶⁴ Svitlana Bulatova, ed., *Rukopysna Polonica: Podrózne potrawy z postem. Pam’yatka z istoriyi kulinariyi seredyiny XVII stolitya u fondakh Instytutu Rukopysu Natsional’noyi Biblioteky Ukrayiny Imeni V.I. Vernadskoho* (Kyiv: NBUV, 2022).

⁶⁵ On the manuscript’s authorship, datation, and content, see Svitlana Bulatova, “Rukopysna zbirka Podrózne potrawy z postem – oryhyal’ne dzherelo staropol’s’koiyi kultury stolu seredyiny XVII stolitya na zakhidnoukraiyns’kykh zemlyakh,” in *Rukopysna Polonica: Podrózne potrawy z postem. Pam’yatka z istoriyi kulinariyi seredyiny XVII stolitya u fondakh Instytutu Rukopysu Natsional’noyi Biblioteky Ukrayiny Imeni V.I. Vernadskoho*, ed. Svitlana Bulatova (Kyiv: NBUV, 2022), 16–23.

⁶⁶ Dumanowski and Bulatova, “Książka kucharska Rozalii Pocięjowej i Ludwiki Honoraty Lubomirskiej,” 11–61; Bulatova, “Rukopysna zbirka Podrózne potrawy z postem – oryhyal’ne dzherelo staropol’s’koiyi kultury stolu seredyiny XVII stolitya na zakhidnoukraiyns’kykh zemlyakh,” 18–19.

Because they are normative and aspirational, cookbooks and recipe collections lend themselves especially well to mapping discourses on taste, but other sources such as dietary treatises, herbaria, calendars, and agricultural or household handbooks contributed to spreading ideas about taste, although that was not their primary function. Given the dissertation's temporal and thematic scope, I relied especially on three texts: two cookbooks, Czerniecki's *Compendium ferculorum*, the anonymous *Moda bardzo dobra smażenia różnych konfektów i innych słodkości* [Very good fashion of frying various confectionary and different sweets], and popular handbook Jakub Kazimierz Haur's *Skład albo skarbiec znakomitych sekretów oekonomiki ziemiańskiej* [A Repository or treasury of the excellent secrets of landowners' economics].⁶⁷ The authorship, content, and general characteristics of these sources are detailed in Chapter 1.

Outline

This dissertation is structured into two parts. Part one covers the contextual background, both culinary and institutional. Part two builds upon these foundations by offering an in-depth analysis of selected cases.

Chapter 1 seeks to delineate taste in Poland-Lithuania by examining key determinants such as fasting practices, humoral diet, or the use of spices. This chapter offers insights into the evolving cooking practices of the seventeenth century, situating Poland-Lithuania within the context of these changes. In addition, it looks into the characteristics of grand dining to facilitate understanding of descriptions of such occasions in diplomatic accounts.

Chapter 2 focuses on the institutional framework of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy during the Sobieskis' reign. It highlights its characteristic features (such as the understanding of *ius*

⁶⁷ Jakub Kazimierz Haur, *Skład albo skarbiec znakomitych sekretów oekonomiei ziemiańskiej* (Kraków: w drukarni Mikołaja Alexandra Schedla, 1689); second, extended edition: *Skład albo skarbiec znakomitych sekretów oekonomiei ziemiańskiej...ubogacony* (Kraków: w drukarni Mikołaja Alexandra Schedla, 1693). On popularity of Haur's work and its role in spreading the model of an "ideal noble man," see Świdarska-Włodarczyk, *Homo nobilis. Wzorzec szlachecka w Rzeczypospolitej XVI i XVII wieku*, 6.19.

legationis, involvement of the representatives from the Grand Duchy or prerogatives of Grand Hetmans), and discusses the organization and competences of the most relevant institutions. The last section of the chapter is dedicated to the ceremonial and customs surrounding the reception of foreign diplomats in Poland-Lithuania. This serves as a bridge to Chapter 3, which zooms in on diplomatic hospitality in Poland-Lithuania, accentuating the importance of food and drink in the practice of diplomacy from the perspective of both the host and guest.

At the core of this dissertation are cases of embassies dispatched from and received in Poland-Lithuania in Chapter 3 and 4. They illustrate how, depending on a diplomatic partner, the scope and methods of extending hospitality were tailored to align with customs, commensurate with the rank of the guests, and how the underlying political interests at play were reflected on the banquet table. Chapter 3 presents episodes of the missions of the imperial ambassador Hermann Jakob Czernin von Chudenitz, French ambassador Melchior de Polignac, imperial and papal agent Carlo Mauricio Vota, English ambassador Laurence Hyde, and Savoyan envoy François de Callières. In the second part it looks into accounts for food provision and expenses allocated for diplomats coming to Poland-Lithuania from East and South-East, in particular from Muscovy, and Crimean Khanate. Chapter 4 follows three embassies dispatched from Poland-Lithuania at the beginning of Jan III Sobieski's reign: the embassy of Jan Gniński to Istanbul, the embassy of Michał Jerzy Czartoryski and Jan Kazimierz Sapieha to Moscow, and the embassy of Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł to Rome. The analysis of banquets in the context of negotiations allows for determining their function in the diplomatic process and considering the significance of describing such occasions in diplomatic relations.

Including the royal weddings of Prince Jakub's in 1691 and of Princess Teresa Kunegunda's in 1694 held in Warsaw in Chapter 5 sheds light on the interlacing of the sphere of foreign with familial affairs. The character of these occasions, the celebration of Sobieskis' dynastic success, shows the role of arrangements of the banquets in broadcasting splendor and prestige as well

as the prominent positioning of women of different ranks at the table. Most notably, the queen's active involvement and the appointment of ambassadors, thus making their missions official, is compelling evidence of an acceptance of women's participation in matters concerning dynastic alliances.

Consequently, adopting an approach informed by new diplomatic history enables me to paint a more nuanced picture of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy in the seventeenth century, offering an alternative perspective to the narrative focused solely on evaluating the success of foreign missions in political agreements.⁶⁸ Moreover, looking into the political aspects of eating and drinking, this dissertation employs cultural food and drink history, drawing insights from relatively under-researched Polish-Lithuanian examples.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ For the most recent overview of the field, see Dorothée Goetze and Lena Oetzel, "A Diplomat Is a Diplomat Is a Diplomat? On How to Approach Early Modern European Diplomacy in Its Diversity: An Introduction," in *Early Modern European Diplomacy: A Handbook*, ed. Dorothée Goetze and Lena Oetzel (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 1–24; Julia Gebke, "New Diplomatic History and the Multi-Layered Diversity of Early Modern Diplomacy," in *Early Modern European Diplomacy: A Handbook*, ed. Dorothée Goetze and Lena Oetzel (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 27–47.

⁶⁹ For an overview, see, for example, Scholliers and Claflin, "Introduction: Surveying Global Food Historiography," 1–8; Murcott, "A Burgeoning Field: Introduction to the Handbook of Food Research," 1–25; Belasco, "Introduction: Food History as a Field"; Helstosky, "Introduction: Food and the Historian," xii–xxxii.

PART I
FOOD, DRINK, AND DIPLOMACY

CHAPTER 1

TASTES IN POLAND-LITHUANIA

On the occasion of the wedding of Louise Marie de Gonzaga-Nevers (1611–1667) and King Władysław IV Vasa in 1646, the bride came to Poland-Lithuania with a significant entourage.⁷⁰ Among those who accompanied her journey from France was Marie Casimire d’Arquien, the future queen herself, and Jean Le Laboureur (1621–1675), the author of *Relation du voyage de la Reine de Pologne* (1647).⁷¹

Written almost entirely in a high register, the relation celebrates the reception of Louise Marie and Ambassadrice Anne Marie Budes de Guébriant (1651–1674), capturing some striking differences between cooking *à la polonaise* and *à la française* at that time. The first experience of dining in Lębork, hosted by Polish-Lithuanian nobles, reads as follows:

The dressing of the meats was very beautiful and so well arranged, that the Officers do not boast without cause of having worked well; for the order and the manner [of the dishes] was extremely pleasing to the eyes, and truly enticed the appetite. Those who wanted to taste the sauces first, did not return [to them], and in a short time we saw a marvelous temperance generally spread over all Frenchmen and Frenchwomen. It was only the Poles who had a field day, praising the good number of spices, saffron and salt that the cooks had so liberally lavished.⁷²

⁷⁰ Louise Marie’s court played an important role in the rise of the popularity (and unpopularity) of French culture in Poland-Lithuania. The queen’s tactic of encouraging marriages between her ladies-in-waiting and Polish-Lithuanian officials—most notably Marie Casimire with Jan Sobiepan Zamoyski, and later Jan Sobieski—served the purpose of creating a Francophile base to support the royal political plans. See Karolina Targosz, *Uczony dwór Ludwiki Marii (1646-1667): z dziejów polsko-francuskich stosunków naukowych* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2015).

⁷¹ Le Laboureur’s relation consists of three parts: the first covers the journey and reception in Poland-Lithuania, the second titled *Traite du Royaume de Pologne* discusses geography, history, laws, customs, and includes genealogical tables of the kings and princes of Poland and Lithuania, finally the third part follows *Madame la Maréchale de Guébriant* back to France. Jean Le Laboureur, *Relation du voyage de la Reine de Pologne, et du retour de Madame la Maréchale de Guébriant, ambassadrice extraordinaire par La Hongrie, L’Autriche, Styrie...* (Paris: Jean Camusat and Pierre Le Petit, 1647), 134–35.

⁷² “L’apprest des viandes estoit fort beau, & si bien arrangé, que Les Officiers ne se vantoinent pas sans sujet d’avoir bien travaillé ; car l’ordre & la maniere plaisoit extremement aux yeux, & donnoit veritablement appetit. Ceux qui voulurent gouter les premiers aux saulces, n’y retournerent pas, & en peu de temps l’on vit une temperance merveilleuse, respendue generalement sur tous les François & Françoises. Il n’y eut que les Polonois qui s’en donnerent à coeur joye, loüans tout hautement le bon nombre d’espices, de saffran & de sel, que les cuisiniers avoient si liberalment prodigué.” Le Laboureur, *Relation du voyage de la Reine de Pologne*, 134–35.

La Laboureur praises the skills of the kitchen staff responsible for the visual preparation of the dishes, though he and his French companions found them effectively inedible. Further, he also compares the dinner to the Wedding Feast at Cana, as it “never appeared to [him] better represented,” perhaps referring to the constant abundance of food (as it remained untouched), or perhaps to an outdated manner in which it was prepared.⁷³

Two days later in Gdańsk (Danzig), the overall setting of the banquet was also judged with appreciation, but the food was seasoned in the same way as on the first occasion in Łębork:

All the tables were splendidly served ... [The table of Louise Marie] was covered, for ornament, with three pyramids of sugar, painted and gilded.... The Queen did not eat it with better appetite; for everything was prepared *à la Polonoise*, & almost everything was eaten after having been boiled well with the saffron and the spices: there were only two partridges cooked *à la Française* which were for her use.⁷⁴

These two examples—especially the latter with two partridges salvaged for Louise Marie—are often brought up in the literature, and for good reasons, since they wonderfully illustrate a striking difference between Polish and French cooking at that time.⁷⁵ The reason for this difference is the emergence of so-called French *nouvelle cuisine* in the mid-seventeenth century, followed by its slow rise to becoming a dominant cooking model among European elites.⁷⁶

⁷³ “J’eus la curiosité d’y venir à diverses fois; & je puis dire que jamais tableau des nopces de Cana ne me parut mieux représenté, car les plats & les personnes estoient toujours en mesme estat.” Le Laboureur, *Relation du voyage de la Reine de Pologne*, 152–53.

⁷⁴ “Toutes les table furent splendidement servies mais je m’arrestera y seulement à celle de la Royne. Elle estoit couverte pour l’ornement, de trois pyramides de sucre, peintes & dorées, don’t celle du boit d’embas estoit fort haute. Toutes estoient decorées de plusieurs figures d’histoires avec divers meslanges d’aigles blancs & noirs à cause des armes de Pologne & de Mantuë, & de plusieurs divises different. [...] La Royne n’en mangea pas de meilleur appetit; car tout estoit preparé à la Polonoise, & presque tout consommé d’avoir bien boüilly avec le saffran & les espices: il n’y eut que deux perdrix cuittes à la Françoisise qui fussent à son usage.”

Le Laboureur, *Relation du voyage de la Reine de Pologne*, 152–53.

⁷⁵ In particular Jean-Louis Flandrin and Maria Flandrin, “Regards occidentaux sur les banquets de Pologne aux XVIe, XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles,” in *Między polityką a kulturą*, ed. Cezary Kukło (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1999), 308; and Jarosław Dumanowski, “*À la française*, czyli sarmatyzm od kuchni,” in *Człowiek w teatrze świata: studia o historii i kulturze dedykowane Profesorowi Stanisławowi Grzybowskiemu z okazji osiemdziesiątych urodzin*, ed. Bożena Popiołek (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, 2010), 103–12.

⁷⁶ Philippe Meyzie, “Une cuisine d’Europe centrale à la mode française. Mythes et réalités (XVIe-milieu XIXe siècles),” in *Le rayonnement français en Europe centrale*, ed. Olivier Chaline, Jarosław Dumanowski, and Michel Figeac (Maison des Sciences de l’Homme d’Aquitaine, 2009), 181–97; Kilien Stengel and Bruno Laurioux, eds., *Le modèle culinaire français (XVIIe-XXIe siècle)* (Tours: Presses universitaires François-Rabelais de Tours, 2021);

What was new in the “*nouvelle cuisine*”? The main novelty was the reduction in the use of spices, replaced by herbs such as parsley, thyme, tarragon, basil, or bay leaf; adding less and less sugar as a seasoning for meat and fish; as well as making less acidic, smooth sauces based on butter. Additionally, new vegetables and cooking techniques (reduction used in preparing stocks, court bouillons, jus) expanded the culinary repertoire. The change also encompassed the way dishes were served—the separation of sweet and savory included moving sweet dishes to one course at the end of a meal, instead of making them appear at any serving throughout.⁷⁷ This transformation of taste preferences was intellectualized and mirrored the values and aesthetics of the period, favoring the ability to appreciate “delicate” and “natural” rather than complex and contrasting flavors.⁷⁸ For this reason, spices—so lavishly used during the two banquets described by Le Labourer—still stood for wealth and “good taste” in the Polish-Lithuanian culinary vocabulary, but they already poorly translated into French one at that time.⁷⁹

Against this background, this chapter looks into the Polish-Lithuanian culinary model, that is, cuisine with its guiding principles, cooking, and dining practices.⁸⁰ My main aim is to trace notions of taste as defined in culinary literature and to explore how these definitions fit into the broader socio-cultural context, and most importantly, how such notions of taste shaped the practice of diplomacy. To this end, the following sections discuss particularly those aspects of

Quellier, “The Taste of the Bourbon’s Reign and the Fabrication of the Renowned French Cuisine (Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century),” 63–70.

⁷⁷ Flandrin, “Dietary Choices and Culinary Techniques, 1500-1800,” 404–6; Pinkard, *A Revolution in Taste. The Rise of French Cuisine, 1650-1800*, especially 51–151; Quellier, “The Taste of the Bourbon’s Reign and the Fabrication of the Renowned French Cuisine (Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century),” 58–65.

⁷⁸ The ability to recognize “good taste” became a vital attribute of *l’honnête homme*, and then gourmand as well as an art connoisseur in the century to follow. To trace this development, see von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment. The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe*, 6, 11, 112–13. On the intellectualization of French cuisine see, for example, Quellier, “The Taste of the Bourbon’s Reign and the Fabrication of the Renowned French Cuisine (Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century),” 63–78.

⁷⁹ It was not, however, an incident limited to Poland-Lithuania. For example, in Spain spices retained this role of being an indicator of a fine table at that time, which also proved challenging for French travelers. Most famous in this regard is an example of Madame d’Aulnoy. See Jodi Campbell, *At the First Table. Food and Social Identity in Early Modern Spain* (Lincoln-London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 14, 106.

⁸⁰ On the French culinary model (and its reception) see Bruno Laurioux, “Introduction. Pour une histoire du modèle culinaire français,” in *Le modèle culinaire français (XVIIe-XXIe siècle)*, ed. Kilien Stengel and Bruno Laurioux (Tours: Presses universitaires François-Rabelais de Tours, 2021), 9–18.

culinary texts that can help to read the relations of hosting diplomats discussed in the following chapters.

Culinary and guidance literature in Poland-Lithuania

Cookbooks and recipe collections lend themselves especially well to mapping discourses on taste and changes in the culinary model. As normative sources, they contain “ideas and meanings connected with social status and prestige, health, religion, or identity.”⁸¹ These ideas were front and center in the cookbooks’ introductions, but they also can be traced in the catalogue of used ingredients or the very language of cooking direction.

Of course, recipes and information on diets are to be found not only in cookbooks. Apart from culinary literature in a strict sense, dietary treatises, herbaria, calendars, and agricultural or household handbooks reached a considerable audience, suggesting food and drink choices and preparations, describing medical uses of food but also spreading ideas about taste, although that was not their primary function. Narrative sources such as diaries or letters offer another way to add to the picture. A special category of this type of sources—relations and diaries of embassies—created in the context in which details informing on status mattered a great deal can provide insight into food preparations, serving, or tableware that may otherwise be deemed irrelevant and left out. On the other hand, culinary texts also help to better understand why certain details were included or omitted in banquet descriptions in embassy accounts and diaries. This textual dialogue is facilitated by the fact that diplomatic sources occasionally offer surprisingly detailed accounts of food, drink, and dining practices, while culinary literature contains a surprising number of references to diplomats and diplomacy. An excellent example in this regard is *Compendium ferculorum*.

⁸¹ Marta Sikorska, *Smak i tożsamość. Polska i niemiecka literatura kulinarna w XVII wieku* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2019), 14.

Compendium ferculorum

Stanisław Czerniecki dedicated *Compendium ferculorum albo zebranie potraw* [Compendium ferculorum or the collection of dishes] (1682), the only cookbook printed in Polish in the seventeenth century, to Helena Tekla Lubomirska, Jan III Sobieski's cousin, who belonged to the close circle of Queen Louise Marie.⁸² In the introduction, Czerniecki praises his benefactress, extending the applause to her ancestors. Specifically, he refers to the grand embassy to the Holy See headed by Helena Tekla's father, Jerzy Ossoliński, in 1633. He writes that:

the legation ... which from the Western countries, all and sundry, received great admiration, proclaiming the Lord rich in vast reason as well as the splendor of his court, but also evidently His Grace's table, so both the princes and lords of Rome, would come seduced by their curiosity, be it only to muse at the abundance of courses, and having seen more than they had heard of, would leave astounded. Neither had they been able to comprehend the munificence, so that one of the Roman princes had so put forth: Rome is rejoicing today, having received such an envoy whose mere presence has conferred such splendors on the Roman State.⁸³

As will be discussed in Chapter 5, Ossoliński's embassy set an example Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł intended to follow in 1680, also concerning banqueting. Notably, Czerniecki echoes Callières' recommendations cited in the introduction to keep "a good table" for showcasing splendor, while also identifying it as the main force drawing curious dignitaries of Rome.

Helena Tekla and her husband, Voivode of Kraków Aleksander Michał Lubomirski, at whose court Czerniecki served, were close associates of the king; magnates with considerable

⁸² Targosz, *Uczony dwór Ludwika Marii (1646-1667)*, 349.

⁸³ "legacja, która wszystkiemu zachodniemu państwu wielkiem będąc podziwieniem, ogłosiła w rozum nieprzebranego Pana, jako i splendor dworu, niemniej i apparament stołu Jegomości, że książęta i panowie rzymscy uwiedzeni ciekawością na same tylko obfitych potraw dziwowisko przychodzili, a widząc więcej niż słyszeli, zdumiawszy się odchodzili. Szczodroblewości także nad wszystkimi potrzebnymi do ukontentowania każdego napatrzeć się nie mogli, tak dalece, że jeden z książąt rzymskich rzekł: dziś Rzym szczęśliwy, mając takiego posła, który swą bytnością wszystko Państwo Rzymskie ozdobił." Stanisław Czerniecki, *Compendium ferculorum albo zebranie potraw*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski and Magdalena Spychaj, (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2009), 91. Translation after Stanisław Czerniecki, *Compendium Ferculorum or Collection of Dishes*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski and Magdalena Spychaj, trans. Agnieszka Czuchra and Maciej Czuchra, MPC (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014), 51–52.

resources combined with broad interests in sciences and culture.⁸⁴ It is more than likely that the atmosphere of their court left a mark on *Compendium ferculorum*.⁸⁵

Czerniecki served the Lubomirskis as a *kuchmistrz* (master or chief cook), responsible for supervising the kitchen's organization and preparation of banquets.⁸⁶ Being no doubt proud of his position, he was writing to a professional audience, offering advice on how to run a proper kitchen in a magnate's household. Moreover, Czerniecki was also a pioneer who no less proudly emphasized that no one before him "wanted to show such a necessary thing [that is, a cookbook] to the world" in Polish.⁸⁷ And indeed, Czerniecki's work promoted a type of cuisine that remained attractive for over a century—albeit appealing to different social groups—and had little competition in the Polish language.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Czerniecki not only worked at the Lubomirskis' court, but in 1680s, he also served as an administrator of Jan Wielopolski's estates. Wielopolski, who was Grand Chancellor of the Crown, was married to Marie Casimire's sister, Marie Anne. Jarosław Dumanowski, "Kuchnia w czasach Sobieskiego," in *Księga szafarska dworu Jana III Sobieskiego 1695-1696*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski, Łukasz Próba, and Maciej Truściński (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2013), 8.

⁸⁵ Jarosław Dumanowski, "Compendium ferculorum Stanisława Czernieckiego," in *Compendium ferculorum albo zebranie potraw*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski and Magdalena Spychaj, MPC (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2009), 33–34.

⁸⁶ In the grand household, a master (chief) cook was usually supervised by a steward, sometimes rendered in English chief or household steward (It. *scalco*, Fr. *maître d'hôtel*, Ger. *Hofmeister*), responsible for all employed staff ("all living arrangements," at least in the French case), and all entertainment—not only the kitchen, but their duties were to a large degree intertwined (Tommaso Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table: Cooking and Entertaining from the Golden Age of Naples*, 1 edition [Tempe, Arizona: ACMRS Press, 2014], 1–2; Henry Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks. From Kitchen to Page over Seven Centuries* [Oakland: University of California Press, 2017], 17–18; Terence Scully, "Introduction," in Bartolomeo Scappi, *The Opera of Bartolomeo Scappi (1570): L'arte et prudenza d'un maestro cuoco*, trans. Terence Scully [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008], 5).

Despite having a lot in common, the organization of a princely or noble household and the scope of staff duties slightly varied across locations (and time), which makes the translation of these titles imperfect and often inconsistent (*scalco* being a prime example). In English and French literature, Czerniecki is described as both master cook and *maître d'hôtel*, but his position seems to be close to that of *écuyer de cuisine* (kitchen steward or clerk), a position between *maître d'hôtel* and master cook (that existed in grand households not only in France but also in Italy, for instance), particularly for the connection between the palate and the purse of his employer, highlighted by Czerniecki himself (Scully, "Introduction," in *The Opera*, 3; Terence Scully, "Introduction," in *La Varenne's Cookery: The French Cook, the French Pastry Chef, the French Confectioner*, ed. and trans. Terence Scully [London: Prospect Books, 2006], 19). Czerniecki also states that "*kuchmistrz* means a kitchen teacher," referring to the drive behind writing his cookbook for "*usum publicum*." It was a common intention. Prasmofsky, for example, also presents himself as a master cook and teacher (Marta Sikorska, *Smak i tożsamość*, 51).

⁸⁷ Usefulness is a very traditional trope in early modern cookbooks. In Scappi's *Opera* the publisher and printer address the readers in the following words: "as much utility as pleasure for any man willing to read it and use it as need be in his life... Nothing else, then, Gentlemen, is needed to persuade you to read such a worthy work, since by itself it shows you how very useful its reading will prove to you." Scappi, *The Opera*, 95.

⁸⁸ *Compendium ferculorum*'s popularity lasted for decades. Until 1821 around twenty editions were published with titles adjusted for different audiences. There was no competition in the Polish cookbook market, at least until the

The structure of *Compendium ferculorum* is unique. It is divided into three parts—first for meat dishes, second for fish dishes, and third for dairy dishes, pies, tarts, pies, and cakes—each containing 100 recipes, each followed by the addition of ten recipes, and one “secret,” a culinary showpiece in which the talent of a cook could shine. The first “secret” reveals how to prepare a whole capon in a bottle, the second an entire fish which is fried, boiled, and roasted but not cut, and the last one is a dish, a kind of broth, for “the sick who feel so ill and weakened that they believe any hope of returning to health must be a vain one.”⁸⁹ The first two secrets are true instances of a concept in a culinary form, and the last one pronounces the proximity of food to medicine. In other words, the peak of culinary proficiency was achievable by mastering two prime qualities of food and drink beyond nutrition: its ability to heal and amuse.

The 333 recipes, 30 additions, and three “secrets” are prefaced with the “General Memorial,” in which Czerniecki enumerates produce, utensils, and personnel necessary for a banquet, explains what to pay attention to while preparing it, and provides instructions on the master cook’s ethos and duties.⁹⁰ Such instructions on the professional conduct of a master cook or chief steward are to be found in a number of early modern cookbooks—including Bartolomeo Scappi’s *Opera dell’arte del cucinare* (1570), Robert May’s *The Accomplisht Cook* (1660), Bernhard Buchinger’s *Koch-Buch* (1671), Antonio’s Latini’s *Lo scalco alla moderna* (1692–1694), and François Massialot’s *Le nouveau cuisinier royal et bourgeois* (1722), to name just

publication of Wojciech Wieladko’s translation of Menon’s *Cuisinière bourgeoise* (1746) in 1783. There are also traces of *Compendium ferculorum* attracting attention abroad: Cosimo III Medici was apparently interested in it, and a Russian translation (*Povarennaya kniga*), although remaining only in a manuscript, was made already in the late seventeenth century. Dumanowski, “*Compendium ferculorum* Stanisława Czernieckiego,” 52; H. Leeming, “A 17th-Century Polish Cookery Book and Its Russian Manuscript Translation,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 52, no. 129 (1974): 500–513; Dumanowski, “*Compendium Ferculorum* of 1682,” in Stanisław Czerniecki, *Compendium Ferculorum or the Collection of Dishes*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski and Magdalena Sychaj, trans. Agnieszka Czuchra and Maciej Czuchra, MPC (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014), 30.

⁸⁹ Czerniecki, *Compendium Ferculorum or Collection of Dishes*, 106, 136–37, 167.

⁹⁰ In fact, some of the recipes are not numbered, and when counted, there are more than that. Also, some numbered recipes are variants, not even repeating the procedure but just suggesting a different ingredient in the title. For more about the structure, see Sikorska, *Smak i tożsamość*. 82, 128.

a few. They are a testament to the same pride in perfecting workmanship expressed by Czerniecki.⁹¹

In the section on duties of a master cook, Czerniecki instructs the cook that he has to know his master's taste as well as be able to accommodate his master's guests:

treat and sate French envoys with French dishes, the Germans with German, Italians with Italian, Polish with Polish dishes, and where they know neither pottage nor soup, serve them Polish dishes seasoned with saffron or pepper for their delight.⁹²

Although—as illustrated by Le Laboureur's relation cited in the introduction to this chapter—the outcome of delighting foreign guests with saffron or pepper may be quite different from how it was intended, Czerniecki sees it as a universally sound practice and a hallmark of the Polish way of cooking. And, as I show in the section on Jakub Kazimierz Haur's handbook, he was not the only one to do so.

Czerniecki labels some dishes specifically as Polish (or even Old Polish), but *Compendium ferculorum* also contains recipes with titles indicating that they are Hungarian, Italian, Dutch, French, German, Austrian, or Spanish dishes, potentially making them a fit for respective foreign guests. However, looking at the ingredients used and their preparation, it is questionable whether these dishes would be recognized by those to whom they had been served as courtesies and not simply dishes prepared simply “the Polish way.”⁹³

⁹¹ As Bruno Laurioux argues, the position of a cook was improving significantly since the Middle Ages, partially in connection to seeing cuisine as an art or science. Celebrated cooks often gained titles, like La Varenne or Latini, and some chief stewards were recruited from the aristocracy. Czerniecki's noble status, however, was awarded because of his prior military career. Bruno Laurioux, *Le règne de Taillevent: livres et pratiques culinaires à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1997), 230; Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks. From Kitchen to Page over Seven Centuries*, 17–18, 34–35.

⁹² Czerniecki, *Compendium ferculorum*, 99. This idea of accommodating foreign guests is not new. Similar recommendations are made by, for example, Johann Bockenheim, master cook of Pope Martin V. Ken Albala, ed., “Introduction,” in *A Cultural History of Food in the Renaissance* (Oxford-New York: Bloomsbury, 2012), 12–13.

⁹³ For some examples of similarly puzzling recipes “the Polish way” in German culinary literature, see Marta Sikorska, “Kwestia smaku. Przepisy ‘auf Polonische Art’ w niemieckiej literaturze kulinarnej z XVII i XVIII wieku,” in *Rzeczpospolita w oczach podróżników z Francji i Niemiec*, ed. Anna Mikołajczyk and Włodzimierz Zientara (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014), 147–64.

The problem of national or ethnic denominations in cookbooks is a complex one. Ken Albala notices that unlike medieval cookbooks that contained, to a large extent, multinational recipes (that is, recipes common across Europe), early modern cookbooks “increasingly presented native dishes, along with older favorites, and recipes associated with foreign nations.”⁹⁴ It is ironic, he adds, that many recipes coming from foreign sources were incorporated without attribution or association, while those identified as such often pose a riddle as to what constituted the connection between the food and the referred nation.⁹⁵ A possible explanation is that such national denominations in early modern cookbooks were used to convey a (vague) sense of exoticism, and more often than not expressed (as many other regional, ethnic, and national characteristics) imagined or arbitrary connections to the group of people in question, or as Henry Notaker puts it: they are “a result of chance or misunderstanding and do not represent a long tradition or a particular tradition in the area.”⁹⁶

There are some interesting exceptions in this regard, for example *Podróże z postem*, which contains recipes collected from travels.⁹⁷ However, *Compendium ferculorum* is hardly one of them. For example, three out of five recipes labeled “Hungarian” list parsley and lard (*słonina*); two mentioned parsley, lard, and bread. Additionally, a recipe for “Pike the Hungarian way” reads that “the Hungarians fry bread with lard chopped in cubes, what you can also do, if you want,” suggesting that perhaps the use of bread and lard determined the “Hungarian” character of the dishes.⁹⁸ But, the fourth and fifth recipes—one for a yellow sauce and a dish pairing it with a starlet—require neither lard, bread, nor parsley. Further, a comparison of a recipe for a “Hungarian dish” and “French roulades” shows that they both share several ingredients to the

⁹⁴ Ken Albala, *The Banquet. Dining in the Great Courts of Late Renaissance Europe* (Urbana-Chicago-Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 120.

⁹⁵ Albala, *The Banquet*, 119–21.

⁹⁶ Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks. From Kitchen to Page over Seven Centuries*, 245.

⁹⁷ Bulatova, ed., *Rukopysna Polonica: Podrózne potrawy z postem. Pam'yatka z istoriyi kulinariyi seredyny XVII stolitya u fondakh Instytutu Rukopysu Natsional'noyi Biblioteky Ukrayiny Imeni V.I. Vernadskoho*.

⁹⁸ Czerniecki, *Compendium ferculorum*, 135.

point it is impossible to tell what makes it “Hungarian” or “French,” and distinguishable from “Polish.”

Hungarian dish

Take a capon or a veal, or whatever you fancy, soak it, blanch well, cut into joints, put in a pot, then put some finely sliced **onions** to it, run over with broth, add diced lard liberally, and finely chopped **parsley**. Let it boil, and when nearly ready, pour in the broth, pour in some **wine vinegar**, season with **pepper**, saffron, **ginger**, add sweetening, and **small raisins**. Give it a warm and serve forth.

French roulades

Take a few small pikes, do not scale them, roll the up and put in a kettle. Add a fair quantity of sliced **onions** and **parsley** roots cut lengthwise, pour in water and salt as you think needful. Set it boiling, add some **wine**, and some **good vinegar**, **both kind of raisins**, lime, olives; season with **pepper**, **ginger**, and cinnamon. Give it a boil and serve forth.⁹⁹

In consequence, “courtesy foods,” foods supposed to be a nod to the guests’ cultural background—as it is done today in the sphere of culinary diplomacy—would be, I believe, significantly harder to spot, hence other means, such as allegorical sugar sculptures were more suitable to carry this kind of messages. The possible familiarity of dishes served in Poland-Lithuania to foreigners or familiarity spotted in dishes served to Polish-Lithuanian diplomats abroad had a different source.

Czerniecki praises and favors Polish cuisine relying on saffron and pepper, but upon closer examination, at its core, this cuisine appears to be more eclectic and cosmopolitan, sharing common elements with foreign elite tables, some of them archaic and some new-fashioned. For example, one of the secrets—fish which is fried, boiled, and roasted but not cut—amused already in the fifteenth century, first appearing in Maistre Chiquart’s *Du fait cuisine* (1420), and then in *Kuchenmeisterey* (1487) and *Kuchemaistrey* (1490).¹⁰⁰ Also, the other secret, capon in a bottle, is not Czerniecki’s own creation: it features in François Pierre de La Varenne’s *Le cuisinier François* (1651).¹⁰¹ But there are even more references to French cuisine in

⁹⁹ Czerniecki, *Compendium ferculorum albo zebranie potraw*, 118, 140. Translation after the English edition Stanisław Czerniecki, *Compendium Ferculorum or Collection of Dishes*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski and Magdalena Spychaj, trans. Agnieszka Czuchra and Maciej Czuchra, MPC (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014), 95, 123.

¹⁰⁰ Dumanowski, “*À la française*, czyli sarmatyzm od kuchni,” 109–10.

¹⁰¹ Curiously, it is included in the Chapter for entrées “that can be made in military kitchens or in the field,” and therefore, perhaps, less elaborate than a “regular” banquet showpiece.

Compendium ferculorum, including new terminology (*potaż*, *frykassa*) and techniques (*jus*, *roux*) although not naming it as such.¹⁰²

Further, Jarosław Dumanowski, the editor of the manuscript, also notes that some of the recipes from *Compendium ferculorum* resemble those from Marx Rumpolt's *Ein New Kochbuch* (1581) or Bavor Rodovský z Hustiřan's *Kuchařství* (1591).¹⁰³ To add to possible stylistic (if not textual) connections, I noticed that a recipe for a kind of baked rice pudding found in *Compendium ferculorum* ("Kasza pieczona podobna"), has yet another parallel in Miklós Tótfalusi Kis' *Szakácsmesterségnek könyvecskéje* (1698) ("Pila"). The combination of milk, butter, cinnamon, raisins, and sugar or honey in versions of this particular recipe is not to be found in the most popular cookbooks in France, Italy, or England, although a sort of a sweet rice-based dish variation appears in all of them.¹⁰⁴ It is certainly not enough to claim there is a common regional culinary flavor profile, but the similarities in Czerniecki's and Tótfalusi Kis' cookbooks suggest at least a fertile ground for exploring further parallels and including the (possible) links with Ottoman cuisine, considering the variety of sweet rice dishes to be found in Ottoman sources.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Dumanowski, "À la française, czyli sarmatyzm od kuchni," 108; Sikorska, *Smak i tożsamość. Polska i niemiecka literatura kulinarna w XVII wieku*, 224. For the new culinary techniques see François Pierre La Varenne, *La Varenne's Cookery*, 183.

¹⁰³ Dumanowski, "Compendium Ferculorum of 1682," 41–42.

¹⁰⁴ For example, the rice flour porridge recipe in La Varenne's *Le cuisinier françois* calls for very little milk, salt, egg yolks, and (outside Lent), a little butter and some sugar. May's rice puddings in *Acomplisht Cook* use cinnamon, cream, sugar, and fruits (dates, currants) but also suet or, in the case of the baked one, bone marrow. In Scappi's *Opera* there is a recipe for a *minestra* with rice flour, almonds, almond milk or oil, and sugar meant to be served to the ill, and another one with cinnamon and sugar. In Latini's *Lo scalco alla moderna* there is a recipe for a stew made with rice flour cooked in almond milk, with sugar, diced roasted bread, served with cinnamon on top. Both *Opera* and *Lo scalco alla moderna* include instructions on how to prepare rice fritters, and Latini suggests using saffron and sugar. Cf. La Varenne, *La Varenne's Cookery*, 303–4; Scappi, *The Opera of Bartolomeo Scappi (1570): L'arte et Prudenza d'un Maestro Cuoco*, 221, 568; Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table*, 183, 214; Robert May, *The Accomplisht Cook* (London: Printed for Obadiah Blagrove at the Bear and Star, 1685), accessed March 20, 2023, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/22790/22790-h/cook1.html>.

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, entries for "Pelte," "Aşure," "Sütlü Tatlılar," or "Zerde" in Priscilla Mary Işın, *Sherbet and Spice. The Complete Story of Turkish Sweets and Desserts* (London-New York: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 154–59, 202–31.

Moda bardzo dobra

The second invaluable culinary source in Polish is *Moda bardzo dobra smażenia różnych konfektów i innych słodkości* [Very good fashion of frying various confectionary and different sweets], an anonymous manuscript written around 1686–1688 at the Radziwiłłs' magnate court, most likely connected to Sobieski's sister Katarzyna *secondo voto* Radziwiłł.¹⁰⁶ It has less distinctive structure than *Compendium ferculorum*, nevertheless, it is not simply a collection of recipes added one after the other but a (more or less consistently) organized whole.¹⁰⁷ Like Czerniecki, the author of *Moda bardzo dobra* is writing with a professional reader in mind, but contrary to *Compendium ferculorum*, sugar takes a prominent place, although it is not purely a pastry, pie, and confectionary book, as it also includes meat and fish recipes. The lack of an introduction makes the task of identifying the aesthetic program or determining authorship more challenging but from the grammatical forms and phrases used, it is known that the author was a man, and one familiar with *Ein Koch- Und Artzney-Buch* (1686), the so-called first Austrian cookbook, for parts of *Moda bardzo dobra*, around 51 recipes, mostly for sweet dishes, are borrowed from it.¹⁰⁸ As Marta Sikorska explains, they are not simple translations but rather adaptations, and although not coherent enough to be recognized as made specifically to fit Polish-Lithuanian taste preferences, the choice of recipes informs us what type of dishes were considered especially appealing.¹⁰⁹

It is clear that *Moda bardzo dobra*—similarly to *Compendium ferculorum*—reflects a magnate cuisine based on contrasting, complex, multi-layered flavors and fondness for illusions. It also

¹⁰⁶ Jarosław Dumanowski, "Nowe źródło do dziejów kuchni staropolskiej," in *Moda bardzo dobra smażenia różnych konfektów*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski and Rafał Jankowski, MPC (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2011), 14–20, about the possible authorship 36–40.

¹⁰⁷ Dumanowski, 40–43, 45.

¹⁰⁸ The anonymous, author of *Ein Koch- Und Artzney-Buch* was likely a woman. Sikorska, *Smak i tożsamość*, 66–69, 244.

¹⁰⁹ Sikorska, 244–47, 288–89.

reflects the treating of confectionary as a separate branch of cuisine, and a new way of using sugar: less as a seasoning for all kinds of dishes (including fish and meat ones), and more as the main ingredient in sweet dishes, a preservative for fruits and base for syrups or confitures.¹¹⁰ The confectioner's trade was seen as a new and demanding profession, closely connected to fine arts or science as it required knowledge of sugar clarifying and refining, as well as proficiency in creating particularly visually stunning foodstuffs.¹¹¹

Moda bardzo dobra opens with a recipe for a "Red sugar for sprinkling," followed in the same section with a recipe for "icy pulled smooth sugar from which various figures and ornaments are made." While preparing "red sugar for sprinkling" is fairly easy ("simple sugar" mixed with apothecary dye and a little vodka, then sifted), the process of making "ice pulled smooth sugar" (malleable crystal sugar) was more complicated, calling for a high-quality sugar and special attention not to let it harden in the process. Once cleared, ice-pulled sugar was used to make figures and decorations to be placed on a table.

Sugar sculptures, one of the possible choices of decorative table pieces (*sotleties*, *subtleties*, *trionfi*) or show foods (*Schau-Essen*), could take extravagant forms and considerable sizes.¹¹² Made from an expensive commodity that required time-consuming preparation and considerable skills, such sculptures were meant to please the eyes: although they could be edible, they often were not meant to be digested at all.¹¹³ Creations like that displayed on a table clearly demonstrated opulence and the host's magnificence, but thanks to their figurative forms,

¹¹⁰ Jarosław Dumanowski, *Tatarskie ziele w cukrze czyli staropolskie słodycze* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2013), 52.

¹¹¹ Dumanowski, "Nowe źródło do dziejów kuchni staropolskiej," 54–55.

To be more precise, confectioner's trade seems to be often treated as separate from that of a "confiture maker" (*confiturier*, *konfiturnik*) and a pastry maker (*pâtissier*, *pasztetnik*).

¹¹² Strong, *Feast: A History of Grand Eating*, 195.

¹¹³ The sculptures could have been made not only from sugar or sugar paste but from, for example, ice, butter or honey paste, marzipan. Opting for sugar would be however the most expensive and hence prestigious choice. Tommaso Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table: Cooking and Entertaining from the Golden Age of Naples*, 1 edition (Tempe, Arizona: ACMRS Press, 2014), 89, 118, 121; Henry Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks. From Kitchen to Page over Seven Centuries* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), 267.

they could also convey more direct yet subtle messages.¹¹⁴ Shaped into heraldic motifs and allegories relying on mythological tropes, sugar sculptures frequently appeared on diplomatic banquets, providing yet another refined (*nomen omen*) medium for articulating political statements, as well as entertainment and conversation starter.¹¹⁵

Sugar sculptures were greatly popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Antonio Latini, less laconic than the author of *Moda bardzo dobra*, devoted to them an entire section of his book, *Lo scalco alla moderna* (1692–1694), explaining that such sculptures (triumphs, *trionfi*) are to be placed on a table “when there are house guests, or weddings, or other important circumstances” and explains that “one cannot call a banquet royal unless it is accomplished in all these elements, namely: triumphs, cold dishes, statues, original creations, garnishes, five kitchen services—all distinct and well-ordered with fruits, confectioneries, and candied things.” He specifies that those dishes are called royal not because a monarch is present, “but because they can be garnished and decorated so as to strengthen and amplify the majesty of banquets.”¹¹⁶ Latini also provides examples “to assist beginners” on how a political reference could be articulated using sugar sculptures during such banquets:

In the middle of the table you can make a triumph entirely of sugar, gilded to represent Justice, Piety, and Valor, in such a posture that, each with one hand, they hold aloft a large silver eagle, and in the pedestal of this triumph you can impress in golden letters these words: *May thus the imperial eagle cross the paths of the sun*.¹¹⁷

Although spectacular forms of ephemeral banquet art, *trionfi* were not the only foodstuff that were meant to amuse and amaze. As Latini shows, fruits, confectionary, and various sweetmeats were necessary for a high-status table and they came in a variety of shapes.

¹¹⁴ Joseph Imrode, “Edible Prestige,” in *The Edible Monument. The Art of Food for Festivals*, ed. Marcia Reed (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2015), 103.

¹¹⁵ Imrode, 105; June Di Schino, “‘La Suprema Magnificenza.’ Il convito rinascimentale e l’arte del bel servire,” in *Magnificenze a tavola: le arti del banchetto rinascimentale*, ed. June Di Schino and Marina Cogotti (Roma: De Luca Editori d’arte, 2012), 120.

¹¹⁶ Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table*, 120.

¹¹⁷ Astarita, 121.

Besides the “icy pulled smooth sugar” or sugar paste that could be dyed and put into molds, serving primarily decorative purposes, there are several recipes in *Moda bardzo dobra* playing on deception to create (edible or not) surprises. Among them, the one for a huge, sugar-coated prune stands out as particularly ornate:

Having peeled the plums, pick the stones out of them, except for a few, which you peel only, and leave the stones. Then boil it in clarified sugar ... and when it has boiled well, pour it all out on a thick sieve, so that [the sugar] slowly drips from the plums. When there is not much [of it] left, take one plum, which has a stone in it, and stick it with other plums, which should be only half cut, and have stones taken out of them, so that there will be a large oblong in the shape of a large plum. Then attach under it a twig with a leaf and dry it in a summer oven or a moderately heated room.

Then boil the sugar that dripped from [the plums] through a sieve, and having cooled these plums, dip them in it several times, and always dry them.¹¹⁸

Jarosław Dumanowski points out that the attention to details in this recipe is not connected to the taste of the illusory plum but to its looks, the realism of the final dish. He further explains that for someone used to wrinkled, dark prunes, these glossy, sugar-coated fruits, looking “fresh” beyond the season, must have been a “quite remarkable delicacy.”¹¹⁹ And indeed, it seems to be precisely the case. Keeping the fresh appearance of the fruit was praised by Sobieski himself, who after tasting cherries prepared by Baron, his confiture maker, described the experience in a letter to Marie Casimire in the following words: “[u]nmatched how good [are those] cherries; the fruits could never be so lovely. For the first time ... the likeness of whole cherries is as one had just picked them from a tree.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ “Odluszczywszy ze skórek śliwy, kostki z nich powybijaj, prócz kilku, które obłup tylko, a kostki zostaw. Warz to potem w cukrze klarowanym, nie bardzo uważając ani miary, a gdy podewrzały dobrze, wylej to wszystko na sito gęste, aby wolno ze śliw ociekł. Którego gdy już mało co będzie, weźmij śliwę jedną, w której jest kostka, tę oblepij drugimi, które do pół tylko być rozerznęte mają i kostki z nich wybrane, aże będzie kłęb wielki podługowaty na kształt wielkiej śliwy. Spodkiem potem podetknij gałązkę jaką z liściem i ususz to w piecu jakim letnim albo w izbie miernie napalonej. Przyważ potem ów cukier, który ociekł był z nich przez sito, a przestudziwszy te to śliwy w nim maczaj po kilkakroć, a zawsze osuszaj.”

Jarosław Dumanowski and Rafał Jankowski, eds., *Moda bardzo dobra smażenia różnych konfektów*, MPC (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2011), 94.

¹¹⁹ Dumanowski, “Nowe źródło do dziejów kuchni staropolskiej,” 58–59.

¹²⁰ “Niepodobna, jako dobre wiśnie; rożenki nigdy takie śliczne być nie mogą. Pierwszą także razą tak dobrze zawieziono i tak całe wiśnie oddane, że jakby ich z drzewa dopiero urwał.” Jan Sobieski to Marie Casimire, 28 VII 1675, Leszek Kukliński, ed., *Listy do Marysieńki* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, 1962), 442.

Culinary illusions and surprises were nothing new, but the seventeenth-century diners seem to be particularly fond of those kinds of foods that were hard to obtain as they were neither seasonal nor local.¹²¹ Sometimes also, the host would go to great lengths to run a theme through an entire banquet in an effort to make a statement.

Skład albo skarbiec

A popular handbook author among nobles in Poland-Lithuania in the late seventeenth century was Jakub Kazimierz Haur (1632–1709), who also administered various, vast magnates' estates.¹²² *Skład albo skarbiec znakomitych sekretów oekonomiki ziemiańskiej* [A Repository or treasury of the excellent secrets of landowners' economics] published first in 1689, and then in an extended version in 1693 is the most interesting work of Haur from the perspective of eating and drinking.¹²³ Dedicated to—and valued by—Sobieski, it is more than just a household or agricultural handbook as it includes not only advice on how to properly run a noble estate but also offers anecdotes and knowledge deemed useful or entertaining to a landowner, covering topics such as human anatomy, medicine, foreign customs and fauna, magic, astrology, meteorology, or even aspects of the judiciary system.¹²⁴ In fact, as Joanna Partyka notices, it is a publication close in form and content to both a manuscript genre of *silva rerum* and encyclopedia, making it “a manual, handbook and compendium of knowledge about the world.”¹²⁵

¹²¹ Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table*, 89; Scully, “Introduction,” in *La Varenne's Cookery*, 45.

¹²² Joanna Partyka, “Skład albo skarbiec... Jakuba Kazimierza Haura: sylwa czy encyklopedia?,” *Napis* IV (1998): 37. The popularity of Haur seems to be even greater, as his works, apparently, were also sought after by Muscovite envoys. After Hanna Widacka, “Biblioteka Jana III Sobieskiego: dzieło Haura,” *Pasaż Wiedzy Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie. Silva Rerum*, accessed March 20, 2023, https://www.wilanow-palac.pl/biblioteka_jana_iii_sobieskiego_dzielo_haura.html.

¹²³ Jakub Kazimierz Haur, *Skład albo skarbiec znakomitych sekretów oekonomiei ziemiańskiej* (Kraków: w drukarni Mikołaja Alexandra Schedla, 1689), 517; second, extended edition: *Skład albo skarbiec znakomitych sekretów oekonomiei ziemiańskiej...ubogacony* (Kraków: w drukarni Mikołaja Alexandra Schedla, 1693).

¹²⁴ Targosz, *Jan III Sobieski mecenasem nauk i uczonych*.

¹²⁵ Antoni Podraza classified Haur as strictly an agricultural writer, negatively judging “the encyclopaedical” part of Haur’s work, but as Joanna Partyka argues, this part is precisely what makes it fascinating for someone interested in Old Polish culture. Partyka, “Skład albo skarbiec... Jakuba Kazimierza Haura: sylwa czy encyklopedia?,” 38–39.

The core of *Skład albo skarbiec* discusses “economics,” or “good house governance,” which included foremost crops cultivation, various aspects of husbandry, fishery, gardening, hunting, innkeeping, brewery and distillery operations, as well as marriage and raising children, servants and their labor, or furnishing a chancellery and library.¹²⁶ Similarly to Czerniecki who was aiming to educate a cook in *Compendium ferculorum*, Haur hands out practical tools to his readers, most obviously in the form of a calendar helping to organize the work and take care of one’s health in each season or the appendix containing practical arithmetical tables for accounts management. However, the aspirational character of Czerniecki’s and Haur’s works is evident: they both project a model to be followed, be it an ideal cook or a nobleman.

The last, thirtieth, treaty of *Skład albo skarbiec* covers “Human Everyday Life,” with chapters “On eating various common foods every day,” “Different comments on appetites and information to enjoy,” daily bread, salt, meat, fish, beverages, fruits and desserts (*wety*), meal times, hospitality (“hosting and banqueting friends and guests”), clothes, aiding digestion, sleeping, and choosing a suitable spouse. There, within the chapter on hospitality, Haur included a section “About a Famous Polish Banquet.” It is worth quoting in length:

The tables were covered grandly, densely with domestic homegrown animals and wild game, terrestrial, airborne, and aquatic, prepared in so many ways in broths, roasts, stews, dishes fried with various inventions, with sauces, pies, cakes which were seasoned instead of saffron with first rate safflowers; in sauces cherry juice; in place of almonds and pine nuts various shelled nuts were used, in place of raisins dried cherries and different fruits fried in excellent honey instead of sugar, while instead of lemons, cedars, and limes, excellent apples cut in slices and cubes sweetened with excellent meads instead of Canary wine, instead of pepper and ginger horseradish, charlock mustard, and mustard was added, instead of olives and capers garnished with dried mushrooms, chopped and fresh, instead of wine vinegar a mead vinegar was consumed, and other the like, with various kinds of domestic condiments, richly seasoned to taste; it could not have been better.

As for the drinks, there were various beers from various places, excellent, delicious, and tasty, whatever one wanted to have to his taste, there were beers from Warka, Łowicz, Końskowola, Drzewice, Brzeżyny, Odrzywola, and Gielniów. Excellent meads also, and *lipce*, from various places; in place of Italian wines delicious raspberry meads, there were Polish wines from the Sandomierz Land, added to dishes and for drinking, white and red.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Haur includes even a drawing of a cabinet and list of books that should be in a possession of a nobleman, *Skład albo skarbiec*, 168; 170.

¹²⁷ “Za Króla Polskiego Władysława IV [...] [g]dy Kanclerz Wielki Koronny [Ossoliński], po Domowemu bankietował, albowiem wiedząc iż Królestwo Polskie z łaski Bożej wielką we wszystko mają obfitość, y dostatek, tak dalece, że może się w Bankietach Pańskich, bez wszelkich drogich zapraw, y Condimentów Cudzoziemskich obejść, jakoż na ten pewny dowód y dokument, Ten pomieniy Sławny, y zacny Senator, pokazał tego sposób, y

A great example of gastrodiploacy before gastrodiploacy, the (supposed) banquet to which “deliberately many notable Lords and as many Foreign Envoys” were invited by the Chancellor of the Crown, Jerzy Ossoliński—the same who kept a splendid table during his embassy in Rome in 1633 recalled by Czerniecki—was an extraordinary occasion betraying a conscious effort to use only domestic produce and ingredients.¹²⁸ Ironically, Ossoliński, because of his status, could afford to swap ingredients that were imported yet commonly used in nobles’ kitchens with their cheaper, homegrown, or locally made versions. Notably, the concept of such a banquet could not have been set into motion if there was not a clear idea of how a “Polish banquet” should taste like. The “Polishness” of dishes here seems to be twofold: they were prepared with domestic produce (expressing the abundance of the land, or to push it a bit further: a *terroir*), and they tasted familiar, although the familiar taste was achieved using different means than usual.

For Haur, the ingenuity of Ossoliński’s banquet lay in the fact it was an example of how to “get by without all the expensive seasonings, and Foreign Condiments.”¹²⁹ He names some of them

podał manierę. Umyślnie na to znacznych wiele Panów, y tak wiele Cudzoziemskich Posłów, na ten czas będących, na taki zaprosiwszy Bankiet, na którym, tak wszystkich uraczył, y utraktował, że nie tylko z ukontentowaniem, ale też z podziwieniem było pomienionych Gości.

Zastawiano Pańsko, gęsto, y okryto Stoły nakryte, Swoyską, Domową, y Dziką Zwierzyną, Ziemną, Powietrzną, y Wodną, na tak wiele razy dawania, Rosołami, Pieczystymi, Duszonemi, Smażonemi, z rozmaitymi inuentami Potrawy, z Saporami, Pasztetami, Ciastami, które zaprawiano miasto Szafranu, przedniemi Krokoszami, do Podlewy Wiśniowego Soku zażywano, na miejsce Migdałów, y Pinolow, Orzechami różnymi łupionemi zastypowano, na miejsce Rożenków, suchemi Wiśniami, y inszemi Fruktami, z przednim Miodem miasto Cukru przysmażonemi, zaś miasto Cytryn, Cedrów, y Limonyi, jabłkami przedniemi w talarki, y w kostki krajano, bez Canaru Miodami patocznemi słodzono, miast Pieprzu, y Imbieru, Krzanu, Gorczycy, y Musztardy, dodano, Miasto Oliwek i Kaparów, Grzybami suchemi siekanemi, y świeżemi, okrywano, miasto Winnego Octu, Miodowego zażywano, y inszemi tym podobne swoyskiemi różnymi bogato, y do smaku zaprawiano Condimentami jako lepiej być nie mogło.

Co się zaś tycze do Napojów, były Piwa różne z różnych miejsc, przednie, wystale, y smakowite, jakiego kto tylko chciał do swego mieć smaku, były Wareckie, Łowickie, Końskowolskie, Drzewickie, Brzezińskie, Odrzywolskie, y Gielniowskie. Miody także, y Lipce, z różnych miejsc przednie, miasto Włoskiego Wina Malinki smakowite, było Wino Polskie do jedzenia y picia z Sędomerskiego Kraju, białe y czerwone.

Wety potym stawiano z różnymi Domowemi specjałami, inuentia y rozrządzeniem, co tylko w tym się rodzi, y znajduje Kraju, zgoła było dobrze, udatno, y poważnie. Taką może być umiejętność y Industria przy sposobności, kto chce czego użyć y dokazać.” Haur, *Skład albo skarbiec*, 517.

¹²⁸ “Umyślnie na to znacznych wiele Panów, y tak wiele Cudzoziemskich Posłów, na ten czas będących, na taki zaprosiwszy Bankiet.” Haur, *Skład albo skarbiec*, 517.

¹²⁹ “bez wszelkich drogich zapraw, y Condimentów Cudzoziemskich obejść.” Haur, *Skład albo skarbiec*, 517.

that were substituted (saffron, pepper, ginger, pine nuts, almonds, lemons, limes, sugar, olives, capers, vine vinegar), but a look at a list included in *Compendium ferculorum* gives an even better idea of what kind of spices (*korzenie*) were considered necessary for organizing a banquet in a magnate household:

Spice chests, saffron, fine sugar, pepper, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, mace, nutmeg, cumin, almonds, rice, great raisins, *cybety* [large raisins], small raisins, pistachios, *pinelle* [pine nuts], dates, *bronelle* [large pitted prunes], figs, chestnuts, capers, fresh lemons, limes, olives, lemon juice, oranges, anchovies, Italian pasta, olive oil, wine vinegar, truffles, oysters, *amidam* [starch], *dragant* [glue from the juice of tragacanth], *tornosel* [dyed cloth flakes used to color desserts], musk, white cloth, smoked hams, smoked tongues, brawns, *mortadellas*, *abucht* [smoked beef], confectionary wafers, rose vodka, gold leaf, linen, sugar loaf, mustard, almond oil.¹³⁰

Even if dyes, chests, linens and clothes that are accessories needed for storage, food preparations or serving are discarded, the list contains items that today certainly would not be labeled as spices or condiments. Neither spices nor condiments constituted an unambiguous category, but they had some common denominators: they were (initially) medicinal foods, often of extremely high quality, added in (relatively) small quantities to dishes.¹³¹ What explains the presence of foodstuffs such as rice or smoked hams on the list is their long storage time, high value, and the fairly modest amount in which they were purchased.

But to focus on edible spices, the word *zaprawy* used in Old Polish indicates ‘that what is added to dishes to give better look, taste, consistency,’ while *korzenie* literally means ‘roots,’ referring to the specially valued part of a plant, although a minority of spices were in fact roots.¹³² Other possible designations included Latin *res aromaticae* or *merces aromaticae*, highlighting the olfactory quality of goods classified under this category. In other words, spices could be defined broadly as “items of commerce with a high unit cost (that is, price per pound),” often aromatic,

¹³⁰ Czerniecki, *Compendium Ferculorum or Collection of Dishes*, 56–57.

¹³¹ Ken Albala, *Eating Right in the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 66, 88 and further.

¹³² Bożena Sieradzka-Baziur, ed., “Korzenie,” *Słownik pojęciowy języka staropolskiego*, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://spjs.ijp.pan.pl/haslo/index/4516>; Witold Doroszewski, ed., “Zaprawy,” in *Słownik języka polskiego*, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://sjp.pwn.pl/doroszewski/kredens-I;5443452.html>.

mostly “imported from distant lands.”¹³³ Historically, and from the European point of view, “the implication was that a spice was far less readily obtainable than a herb and far more expensive.”¹³⁴

Many spices had medical as well as culinary use already in Antiquity, and many new spices entered kitchens in Europe via apothecaries, first being used as drugs, later as seasonings, and—in cases of sugar—even as a main ingredient of dishes.¹³⁵ The allure of spices was derived from their rarity, exclusivity, as well as their medicinal properties and connotations with sanctity and the Paradise (at least initially, when their place of origin was more of a mystery).¹³⁶ In cooking, they transformed the taste and color of dishes, made them healthier, and—no less important—showed the affluence of the table.¹³⁷ Spices, although perishable, functioned similarly to fine garments, jewels, works of art or furniture, giving “aspiring household an air of superior refinement and enviable opulence.”¹³⁸ Importantly, “they were objects of desire but not simply frivolous,” for they were “at one and the same time delightful flavors, prestigious commodities, and, in effect, drugs.”¹³⁹

Therefore unsurprisingly, beyond being tokens of conspicuous consumption during typical noble banquets, spices in *Skład albo skarbiec* are listed as ingredients of various remedies. For

¹³³ Saffron, produced also in Europe, was an important exception. Paul H. Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination* (New Heaven-London: Yale University Press, 2008), 8.

¹³⁴ Jack Turner, *Spice: The History of a Temptation* (London: Harper Press, 2004), 13.

¹³⁵ Bruno Laurioux mentions a sort of a “purgatory” for new spices: initially they often served non culinary uses, especially in perfumes or medicines. Bruno Laurioux, “Spices in the Medieval Diet: A New Approach,” *Food and Foodways* 1 (1985): 65.

¹³⁶ “Paradise, in a mingling of the Christian and the exotic, was a fantastic world beyond local everyday life, not quite of this world nor the other, located somewhere in the Orient. Something of this notion survives in the censor-swinging of the Catholic mass.” Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise: A Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1992), 129. Also John Keay, *The Spice Route* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 4; Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination*, 6.12 ebook.

¹³⁷ C. M. Woolgar, “Feasting and Fasting: Food and Taste in Europe in the Middle Ages,” in *Food: The History of Taste*, ed. Paul H. Freedman, California Studies in Food and Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 12.26 ebook.

¹³⁸ Keay, *The Spice Route: A History*, 28–29; Albala, *The Banquet. Dining in the Great Courts of Late Renaissance Europe*, 8.

¹³⁹ Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination*, 6.16, 8.30 ebook.

example, stomach aches could be cured by drinking anise seed vodka with added pepper.¹⁴⁰ Similarly, in *Moda bardzo dobra* sugar, cloves, and nutmeg are considered good for the stomach (as well as the head, lungs, and overall paralysis prevention).¹⁴¹ Further, in order not to disturb digestion Haur recommends avoiding “anger, anxiety, worry” for it would cause “heavy humors, and obtrusive cholera.”¹⁴² Czerniecki echoes this advice by instructing a master cook always to consider the comfort of all guests and household members while preparing the dishes, making sure not to trouble anyone and “add choleric humor.”¹⁴³ Apart from that, to achieve these goals, the master cook also had to pay attention to the season while organizing a banquet. The reasons behind it are better explained in *Skład albo skarbiec*: during the fall, it is preferable to “eat baked and fried foods more often than boiled ones, as well as dry bread or biscuits, especially for those who have a phlegmatic nature; for the frequent eating of such foods relieves unpleasant spitting and dries out excessive phlegm” while in the spring, because “the pores in the human body are opened, like a sponge, and in all parts of the body the arteries with the all the humors are spreading, therefore Nature in Humans is weaker, and therefore eat and drink light food and drinks, and do so moderately.”¹⁴⁴

Humoral theory connects the curative properties of spices and their role in cooking, dietary recommendations crafted for seasons, and the logic behind excluding certain foods from the diet during fasting periods. The following section outlines its most important premises with an

¹⁴⁰ Haur, *Skład albo skarbiec*, 393.

¹⁴¹ *Moda bardzo dobra*, 88.

¹⁴² “po jedzeniu gniewu, turbathey, frasunku, z kąd mnoży się humorów ciężkich, y holery niezbytej.” Haur, *Skład albo skarbiec*, 499.

¹⁴³ “kucharzowi należy myśleć o wygodzie wszystkim gościom i domowym, w potrawach, z ukontentowaniem, starając się o to, żeby żaden podczas dobrej myśli pana nie turbował albo po wesołej myśli, cholerycznego nie dodał humoru.” Czerniecki, *Compendium ferculorum*, 99.

¹⁴⁴ “częściej pieczonych i smażonych potraw aniżeli warzonych zażywać należy, także chleba suchego, abo sucharów, osobliwie kto jest w sobie Natury flegmatycznej; albowiem, takie pokarmów używanie częste y przykre plucia uśmierza, y zbytnią w Człowieku wysusza flegmę, pory w ciele Ludzkim, jako gąbka są otwarte, y po wszystkich częściach ciała arterye z różnością humorów rozchodzą się, dlatego Natura w Ludziach jest słabsza, a przeto pokarmów, y napojów lekkich zażywać, y skromnie się zniemi zachowywać.” Haur, *Skład albo skarbiec*, 501.

aim to understand better medical and religious contexts of eating and drinking in seventeenth-century Poland-Lithuania.

Souls and bodies

Humors

Even though the humoral theory was losing its relevance in the seventeenth century (Sobieski and Helena Tekla Lubomirska expressed a fair dose of skepticism towards it), the examples from *Skład albo skarbiec*, *Compendium ferculorum* or *Moda bardzo dobra* show that, while not always well articulated or comprehensive, it was still connecting medicine and cuisine.¹⁴⁵

Put simply, according to the principles of Hippocratic-Galenic medicine—revived during the Renaissance—there are four humors (or fluids) in the human body: blood, yellow bile (choler), black bile (melancholy), and phlegm. These correspond to four individual complexions (compositions or temperaments): sanguine, choleric, melancholic, phlegmatic; as well as four elements: air, fire, earth, water; four qualities: dryness, heat, moisture, cold; and four seasons: spring, summer, fall, winter.¹⁴⁶ Not only could many factors cause an imbalance of humors (that is, illness), but also the state of ideal equilibrium (that is, perfect health) was extremely rare. The easiest solution to this problem was to prevent or correct the overflow of one of the humors in the body by choosing the right kind of food and drink. For example, in general, someone with a phlegmatic complexion should avoid foods that are humorally moist and cold.

¹⁴⁵ David Gentilcore in his discussion of Renaissance dietetics, pointed to the shift from preventive to therapeutic medicine happening in the seventeenth century, which meant a different approach to diet, however, “humoral notions persisted right into the nineteenth century, even if shorn of explicit references to the underlying system of the humors and seeking to explain the effects of food on the human body in a very different terms.” David Gentilcore, *Food and Health in Early Modern Europe Diet, Medicine and Society, 1450-1800* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 29.

¹⁴⁶ On the Galenic revival and literature about humoral theory see for example Gentilcore, 15ff.

According to humoral dietetics, foodstuffs could be classified according to their “elementary compositions” (or qualities) as cold and dry, cold and moist, hot and moist, or hot and dry on a four-level scale. For example, raw peaches could be described as cold in the second degree and moist in the third; while veal was dry and hot in the first degree. Almost none of the foods was perfectly neutral and therefore required some kind of “correction” with opposites. Spices, among other things, aide this transformation of harmful foods into ones that will not disturb the delicate humoral balance.¹⁴⁷

Avoiding overeating and excluding “warming” foods from the diet in favor of “cooling” ones on Christian fast days was informed by the same logic: heat and moisture in the body increased the propensity to commit sins.¹⁴⁸ Meat, in particular, was seen as “conceptually corrupting because inherently pleasurable, nutritious, and invigorating, and linked directly to the libido.”¹⁴⁹ Fish, an emblematic fast-day food, was also not entirely harmless. Because it was considered to be too moist, phlegm-inducing, and have a consistency that could clog one’s stomach, it had to be cooked and appropriately seasoned, especially attentively during the wet and cold season of Lent.¹⁵⁰

The humors, as Susan Pinkard explains, “constituted an elegant theory of health and disease, satisfying in its symmetry and ability to fully integrate man into the natural world,” additionally providing “physicians a means of uniting empirical observations and the case histories of individual patients ... with a causal framework.”¹⁵¹ What is more, the humoral theory seems to

¹⁴⁷ Pinkard, *A Revolution in Taste. The Rise of French Cuisine, 1650-1800*, 11–12; Woolgar, “Feasting and Fasting: Food and Taste in Europe in the Middle Ages,” 135; Gentilcore, *Food and Health in Early Modern Europe Diet, Medicine and Society, 1450-1800*, 19.

¹⁴⁸ Ken Albala, “Historical Background to Food and Christianity,” in *Food and Faith in Christian Culture*, ed. Ken Albala and Trudy Eden (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 14.

¹⁴⁹ Ken Albala, “The Ideology of Fasting in the Reformation Era,” in *Food and Faith in Christian Culture*, ed. Ken Albala and Trudy Eden (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 42.

¹⁵⁰ Laurioux, “Spices in the Medieval Diet: A New Approach,” 51.

¹⁵¹ Pinkard, *A Revolution in Taste. The Rise of French Cuisine, 1650-1800*, 9.

neatly encompass also Christian fasting prescriptions and connect the prevalence of spices in the cuisines across Europe with their medical importance.

Superficially, it is a convincing explanation, but there are several issues with the relation between humoral theory, fasting rules, and the popularity of spices. First, the differences between the dietary advice and recipes put forward in cookbooks—not to mention actual dishes put in front of diners by the cooks—cannot be ignored. The misalignment between the gustatory preferences and medicinally informed cookery was often addressed by the physicians themselves, suggesting that the cooking fashions often gained the upper hand. Especially refined courtly cookery diverged quite spectacularly from what was medically sound, which on its own was difficult to pin down, considering inconsistent or changing classifications of certain foodstuffs.¹⁵² To complicate things even more, humoral qualities of said foodstuffs also changed once they were processed, depending on modes of preparation or seasoning, and the variables to consider while composing appropriate dishes in the first place included an individual's age, gender, complexion (as in, humoral predominance), occupation and social status, as well as external factors, such as season, weather, or geographical location.¹⁵³ Because of that, despite some shared underlying logic, there were countless versions of “healthy cooking” recommended in dietary treatises over time, many of which contradictory.¹⁵⁴

The difficulty of systematizing humoral qualities of all the foods and drinks, connects with the fact that humoral theory was far too sophisticated to be easily translated into practice. Stanisław Kazimierz Herka's dietary treatise *Bankiet narodowi ludzkiemu* (1660) [Banquet to the human nation] is the most comprehensive effort to catalog humoral qualities of food and drink in Polish. The greater part of Herka's text concerns different meats, fish, fruits, vegetables,

¹⁵² Gentilcore, *Food and Health in Early Modern Europe Diet, Medicine and Society, 1450-1800*, 18.

¹⁵³ Gentilcore, 14–18.

¹⁵⁴ Albala, *Eating Right in the Renaissance*, 253–54, 256.

mushrooms, herbs, spices, nuts, dairy, confections, and drinks (beers, vodkas) together with the ways in which they may be rendered better for one's health. Another earlier work attempting to provide practical directions on humoral diet to Polish readers was Hieronim Olszowski's *Szkola salernitańska* [The Salernitan school], first published in 1637 and reprinted three more times in the seventeenth century. As the title suggests, it was based on *Regimen sanitatis Salernitanum*, a medieval medical poem remaining—due to its rhymed form and brevity—the most popular interpretation of humoral diet for centuries.¹⁵⁵

From the perspective of diplomatic encounters, the two practical remnants of the individualistic approach of Galenic medicine were the belief that food could be both a remedy and a cause of illness, and that different foods and drinks were appropriate for different people. More specifically, one could suffer unpleasant consequences after consuming food and drink unsuitable for their social status or place of origin, the latter being of concern particularly while traveling.¹⁵⁶ For example, pork and beef, considered tough to digest, could be eaten by those working physically, while poultry, delicate and connected with the air element, were a good choice for a noble. Also, Englishmen accustomed to eating beef could do that without causing harm to their health; similarly, linseed oil, that Poles often consumed during fast days, reportedly upset the stomachs of foreigners, even if they came from neighboring lands.

Another important factor to consider while planning a banquet or consuming an everyday meal in seventeenth-century Poland-Lithuania was the liturgical calendar. Religious prescriptions—

¹⁵⁵ Gentilcore, *Food and Health in Early Modern Europe Diet, Medicine and Society, 1450-1800*, 11–12.

¹⁵⁶ On the echoes of the Great Chain of Being concept in dietetics, see, for example, Allen J. Grieco, "Food and Social Classes in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy," in *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari, trans. Albert Sonnenfeld (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 302–12.

informed by the conviction of food's influence on the human body shared with Hippocratic-Galenic medicine—were among the chief organizing principles of early modern diets.¹⁵⁷

Fast

In general, during Lent, pious seventeenth-century Catholics were forbidden to eat meat, eggs, and (in some regions) dairy as well as expected to reduce the number of meals, while on lean days eggs and dairy could be incorporated into their diet. However, the so-called Polish fast (*ieiunium Polonicum*) meant following more strict guidelines than elsewhere in Catholic Europe in the seventeenth century, that is, excluding eggs and dairy (in particular butter) from lean days as well and keeping more fast days in a year. Apart from Lent (*Wielki Post*), days on which fast (*post*) was expected to be observed included Fridays (to honor crucifixion), Saturdays (to honor Virgin Mary), Ember days every quarter of the year (on solstices and equinoxes), as well as Wednesdays (to remind of Judas' betrayal), and eves of most Catholic holidays (including but not limited to Christmas, Epiphany, All Saint's Day, Pentecost, Marian and apostles' days).¹⁵⁸ In practice, however, relying on the case of the Sobieskis' court, it is evident that not all rules were closely followed.¹⁵⁹ For example, Ember days were not strict fast days, and eggs and dairy were consumed on lean days, and particularly, fasting mid-week was considered a "private fast," depending on the level of individual devotion. Still, days on which

¹⁵⁷ Jarosław Dumanowski, "Old Polish Fasting: Discourses and Dietary Practices in the 16th-18th Century," in *Gruppenidentitäten in Ostmitteleuropa: Auf der Suche nach Identität (Geschichte im mitteleuropäischen Kontext)*, ed. Bogusław Dybaś and Jacek Bojarski (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2021), 101.

¹⁵⁸ Dumanowski, "Nowe źródło do dziejów kuchni staropolskiej," 33; Dumanowski, "Old Polish Fasting: Discourses and Dietary Practices in the 16th-18th Century," 96; Albala, "Historical Background to Food and Christianity," 16; Albala, "The Ideology of Fasting in the Reformation Era," 42.

¹⁵⁹ Jarosław Dumanowski, "'Kucharz francuski.' Książka kucharska Jana III Sobieskiego," in *Sarmacka pamięć. Wokół bitwy pod Wiedniem*, ed. Bogusław Dybaś, Alois Woldan, and Anna Ziemlewska (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014), 99; Jarosław Dumanowski, "Kuchnia w czasach Sobieskiego," in *Księga szafarska dworu Jana III Sobieskiego 1695-1696*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski, Łukasz Próba, and Maciej Truściński, MPC (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2013), 34, 41–42.

dietary restrictions applied accounted for a significant portion of the year, astonishing foreigners visiting Poland-Lithuania.¹⁶⁰

Observing certain fasting rules served as an excellent bond of community and a distinct marker of difference.¹⁶¹ In the case of the “Polish fast,” the demarcation line did not simply follow the confessional divide but also differentiated co-religionists coming from different regional traditions. Bernard Tanner, a Catholic member of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy to Muscovy in 1678 who described himself as a “Bohemian from Prague, German courtier of Master Prince Ambassador,” recalled that during a journey, “[a Jewish housekeeper] proposed bread with butter and eggs. Because it was a fast day though, the prince [Czartoryski] as a devout Pole, did not accept this repast and requested me to eat it as I was a foreigner.”¹⁶² Considering Tanner’s complaints about linseed oil, that did not agree with his stomach but was used by Poles on fast days, it must have been a welcome request, one that certainly did not compromise the Bohemian’s devotion: “anywhere I could, I ate dairy according to my native custom, but carefully, not to give ardent Poles an occasion to take offense.”¹⁶³

Tomasz Młodzianowski, a chaplain of Helena Tekla Lubomirska and her husband Aleksander Michał, proves he was well aware of regional differences in fasting practices among Catholics. In one of the sermons in *Kazania i homilie na niedziele doroczne* [Sermons and homilies for Sundays all year round], he discusses in length the fasting practices in Poland, admitting that although they were not grounded in the Holy Scriptures, the importance of adhering to the

¹⁶⁰ Fast days could account for up to a quarter of the calendar year, or by some estimates, even as many as 150 days. Albala, “The Ideology of Fasting in the Reformation Era,” 42.

¹⁶¹ Dumanowski, “Old Polish Fasting: Discourses and Dietary Practices in the 16th-18th Century,” 95–96.

¹⁶² Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 135. The Czartoryskis held an honorary title of Princes of the Holy Roman Empire. Hadrian Kamiński, Marta Wilińska, and Małgorzata Ziemińska, eds., “Czartoryscy,” in *Rody Magnackie Rzeczypospolitej* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2002), 39–64.

¹⁶³ Tanner, 130.

customary rules lay in the fact they were binding “our Polish Church” together.¹⁶⁴ Importantly, Młodzianowski in his complex defense of the “Polish fast,” mentions possible harmful effects of consuming oil or fish, but he does not refer to the humoral qualities of foodstuffs at all. When spices are brought up, it is not for their corrective properties but for taste. Młodzianowski seems frustrated that those not fond of fish but able to afford different fish variates and spices would seek the dispensation since they have “many ways, excellent sauces, seasonings” to make it more appealing.¹⁶⁵

The sheer number of fish-based recipes in Polish-Lithuanian culinary literature—Czerniecki devoted one-third of his cookbook exclusively to fish preparation—is a clear indicator of the influence of religious dietary rules on the character of cuisine. It also speaks to culinary creativity. Efforts to keep a certain degree of luxury of the table all year long and overcome the monotony are also evident in mock foods recipes for, for example, “Partridges and miscellaneous birds from salty fish” from *Compendium ferculorum* in which “birds” were shaped out of a mixture of pike, oil, breadcrumbs, onion, and species, and then had wings of actual birds inserted to sustain the illusion.¹⁶⁶ Such elaborate food effects were, however, less common than variants of recipes that replaced, for example, an animal with almond milk or butter with vegetable oil or were simply fished-based.¹⁶⁷

Also, it should be noted that although fish was not an exclusively fast-day food, because it was food consumed frequently on numerous fast-days, it nevertheless carried certain connotations of restraining rather than celebrating. It is easy to bring examples of banquets being seen as

¹⁶⁴ Tomasz Młodzianowski, *Kazania i Homilie Na Niedziele Doroczne, Także Święta Uroczystsze*, vol. 3 (Poznań: Drukarnia Jezuitów, 1681). For more on Młodzianowski’s text, see Dumanowski, “Old Polish Fasting: Discourses and Dietary Practices in the 16th-18th Century,” 100–101.

¹⁶⁵ “wiele sposobów, wyśmienitych sosów, zapraw.” Młodzianowski, 282.

¹⁶⁶ Czerniecki, *Compendium ferculorum*, 148.

¹⁶⁷ Such illusions and mock-foods, which have a long tradition spanning at least the Middle Ages, were not a Polish-Lithuanian exclusivity, and can be found in cookbooks from Protestant regions. What is more, mock foods and illusions were not limited to fast days but connected with a broader appreciation of culinary illusions, surprise, and efforts to supplement out-of-season foods.

inadequate because they featured dishes considered to be fast-day ones, like in the description of a reception banquet held for the Polish-Lithuanian embassy in Moscow in 1685: “[f]ast-day dishes, cold fish ... carps brought in silver bowls ... After these cold dishes, hot ones; without salt, tasteless, sweet; rarely put on the table, in bowls ... we got up with empty stomachs.”¹⁶⁸ Interestingly, fish served to the Polish-Lithuanian embassy by Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa at his palace in 1678 was seen as perfectly fine as it was prepared in a familiar way (with cinnamon), and it was served along meat (chicken), therefore adding to the overall luxury of the table by offering more choice.¹⁶⁹

Sometimes it is precisely stated that the character of a banquet was influenced by the fasting rules. Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski (d. 1688), grand ambassador to Muscovy in 1679, mentions in his relations that after the first audience with the tsar “a dinner was sent from His Majesty the Tsar’s table.”¹⁷⁰ As it came, it was a fish dinner, because at that time the Tsar was fasting to honor the Most Holy Virgin.” Still, Brzostowski considered it “not very big and not as it used to be,” adding to the usual complaints of being poorly fed and disregarded in Muscovy. Here,

¹⁶⁸ “Wjazd jaśnie wielmożnych: Krzysztofa Grzymułtowskiego wojewody poznańskiego ...; Marcjana Aleksandra s Kozielska Ogińskiego, kanclerza w. ks. lit. ... posłów pełnomocnych do Mokswy do Jana Aleksiejewicza i Piotra Aleksiejewicza braci rodzonych, carów rossyjskich, roku 1686 d. 19 lutego,” in *Źródła do dziejów polski*, ed. Mikołaj Malinowski and Aleksander Przezdziecki, vol. 2, (Wilno: Nakład i druk Józefa Zawadzkiego, 1844), 48.

¹⁶⁹ “Smażoną rybę morską, którą zowią kałkan bo mało co od niego mniejsza, okrągła pod skórą na kształt jaszczura, w który szable oprawują. Item drugą potrawę także kałkan naksztalt żółtej juchy, ale nazbyt gęstą, jak galareta, mięszczo cynamonem posypaną, potym kurcząt pieczonych z powężem.” Franciszek Pułaski, ed., “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” in *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego wojewody chełmińskiego do Turcji w latach 1677-1678*, Biblioteka Ordynacji Kasińskich (Warszawa: Typis Rubieszewski & Wrotnowski, 1907), 140. (D). Because Pułaski put text from the relations of Gniński’s embassy in the main body, and from the diary in the footnotes, citations coming from the relation will be marked with (R), and the ones coming from the diary with (D).

¹⁷⁰ “obiad ze stołu Jego Carskiego Wielicestwa. Jakoż przysłany obiad od ryb, bo w ten czas post Car Jmć do Panny najświętszej odprawował, ale dosyć szczupły y nie po dawnemu.” BCzart, TN 177, nr 314, “Relacja Poselstwa od Króla Jmci Jana III y od Rzeczpospolitej z Sejmu Grodzieńskiego ordynowana przez nas Cypriana Pawła Brzostowskiego Referendarza W. Xięstwa Litewskiego, Oszmiańskiego starostę, jako Posła wielkiego y Jana Gnińskiego Starostę Radzymińskiego jako sekretarza tegoż poselstwa w roku 1679 odprawionego,” 1385. For more about Brzostowski, see Kazimierz Piwarski, “Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski,” in *PSB* (Wrocław-Kraków-Warszawa: PAU-PAN-Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1937).

also the fact the tsar is fasting marks a difference, not a similarity, as he is not following the same liturgical calendar nor observing *ieiunium Polonicum* with its set of customary rules.¹⁷¹

In other words, when the celebration could happen or what food ended on the tables was determined to a considerable degree by the liturgical calendar. Scheduling a banquet on a non-fasting day to showcase a greater variety of dishes—or in exceptional cases, securing a dispensation from the Catholic hierarchy—should be interpreted as another form of distinction, which, of course, was of importance from the perspective of receiving foreign representatives.

Foreigners visiting Poland-Lithuanian in the late seventeenth century, although perhaps astonished by the number of fast days or (depending on their place of origin) the amount of spices used in dishes, would be nevertheless likely to recognize at least some familiar elements while participating in banquets.

Libraries, kitchens, and dining rooms

Among a considerable number of French language books, Sobieski's library in Żółkiew (Жовква, Zhovkva) included La Varenne's *Le cuisinier françois* (1651) as well as Nicolas de Bonnefons' *Le jardinier françois* (1654) [1651].¹⁷² Gardening and cuisine were closely related, allowing for profiting from improved food supplies or "the virtues of Nature," following classical art, and literature.¹⁷³ This link is well pronounced in de Bonnefons' work, a gardening manual that contains recipes for fruit preserves, confitures, jellies and so forth, in which the

¹⁷¹ What is more, fasting could prevent not only appropriate celebration, but even conducting any sort of negotiations with Muscovites. In 1686, supposedly, "they put aside all their *negotia*, and *consumere dies noctesque* in churches keeping *strictissimum ieiunium*." Also, in 1697, Boris Sheremtev refused to meet with his Polish hosts on fast-days. After Dumanowski, "Old Polish Fasting: Discourses and Dietary Practices in the 16th-18th Century," 105–6.

¹⁷² [Jan Tadeusz Lubomirski], *Katalog ksiąg biblioteki najjaśniejszego i najpotężniejszego króla polskiego z Bożej łaski, Jana III, szczęśliwie panującego, spisany w 1689 Roku* (Kraków-Warszawa: Wł. L. Anczyc i Spółka, 1879).

¹⁷³ von Hoffmann, *From Gluttony to Enlightenment. The World of Taste in Early Modern Europe*, 19; Quellier, "The Taste of the Bourbon's Reign and the Fabrication of the Renowned French Cuisine (Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century)," 72–74.

clear view that the simple and natural taste is always the best is well articulated. However, the presence of those two items in Sobieski's library does not necessarily mean that food served at Sobieski's court was prepared following La Varenne's or de Bonnefons' recipes but rather connected with its owner's interest in French culture as such.¹⁷⁴

La Varenne in *Le cuisinier François*—considered to be the first codification of *nouvelle cuisine*—was not inventing an entirely new way of cooking, but describing and organizing the existing practice he was familiar with, “a solid professional repertoire of 1650,” already considered slightly outdated in the 1670s.¹⁷⁵ Those changes in the cooking model and gastronomic taste were not limited just to France, although perhaps the most strikingly visible in the French case considering the gap in culinary text production in the decades before 1651, but can be traced in, for example, Italian or Spanish cookbooks as well.¹⁷⁶

Italian and Spanish cuisines conventionally relied on relatively many local produces, especially vegetables, and in the late sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, there seemed to be growing use of herbs or dairy, as well as quicker adaptation of the American foodstuffs, including vegetables.¹⁷⁷

Tommaso Astarita noticed that Latini's use of herbs, vegetables, local Neapolitan ingredients, as well as “his interest in rationalizing and ordering the service”—despite still relying on spices

¹⁷⁴ There is nothing unusual about its absence from the kitchen inventory. Often, it seems, cookbooks and recipe collections were kept not in the kitchens but in libraries for archival or reference purposes, and not with the cook in mind, but with his superior. As a consequence, a remarkable number of medieval recipe collections survive in pristine manuscript copies that have never been soiled by kitchen grease and probably never passed through a kitchen door. Terence Scully, “Introduction,” in *The Opera of Bartolomeo Scappi (1570)*, 5–6. Katarzyna Kuras gives examples of other owners of La Varenne's cookbook in Poland-Lithuania. See Katarzyna Kuras, “Czy *Le cuisinier françois* zmienił polską kuchnię w czasach nowożytnych? Przyczynek do zagadnienia transferu kulinarnych wzorców,” *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne* 143, no. 3 (2016): 425–27, 438.

¹⁷⁵ Scully, “Introduction,” in *La Varenne's Cookery*, 57–58, 61.

¹⁷⁶ Scully, 54; Laurioux, “Introduction. Pour une histoire du modèle culinaire français,” 15.

¹⁷⁷ Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table*, 89; Ken Albala, “Toward a Historical Dialectic of Culinary Styles,” *Historical Research* 87, no. 238 (2014): 585–86; Campbell, *At the First Table. Food and Social Identity in Early Modern Spain*, 109–12.

and other exotic ingredients, mixing sweet and sour flavors or “search for visual and dramatic effect”—indicate “gradual steps away from the traditional approach that had dominated Italian cuisine since the Renaissance.”¹⁷⁸ Even earlier, Bartolomeo Stefani in *L’arte di ben cucinare* (1662) included recipes for dishes in a new, “natural” aesthetic seasoned with rosemary and garlic only, next to the ones combining sugar with herbs and spices.¹⁷⁹

Further, Marta Sikorska in her analysis of the reception of the French ideal of delicate taste in the late seventeenth-century German language cookbooks, points to the coexistence of new and old cooking aesthetics, not without contradictions.¹⁸⁰ A good example of this attitude is Maria Schellhammer’s *Die wohl unterwiesene Köchinn* (1697). In the introduction to the second edition, she specifically explains that the larger number of recipes reflects her willingness to cater to those who like sophisticated as well as pungent dishes.¹⁸¹

Against this background, *Compendium ferculorum* appears to be less puzzling. According to Sikorska, only one-third of meat recipes in *Compendium ferculorum* can be described as “complex, contrasting;” over a dozen as “transitional, homogenous,” and the majority as “delicate,” which shows how the new cooking style was progressively incorporated.¹⁸²

Moda bardzo dobra, with adaptations from *Ein Koch- Und Artzney Buch*, does not diverge greatly from the style of *Compendium ferculorum*.¹⁸³ It combines recipes for dishes full of spices and contrasting flavors, and more delicate ones with new-fashioned ingredients or cooking principles.¹⁸⁴ In other words, seventeenth-century Polish Lithuanian cookbooks seem to be in

¹⁷⁸ Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table*, 195.

¹⁷⁹ Eric Dursteler, “Spice and Taste in the Culinary World of the Early Modern Mediterranean,” in *Silk Roads. From Local Realities to Global Narratives*, ed. Jeffrey D. Lerner and Yaohua Shi (Oxford-Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2020), 101.

¹⁸⁰ Sikorska, *Smak i tożsamość. Polska i niemiecka literatura kulinarna w XVII wieku*, 195–228.

¹⁸¹ Sikorska, 208–10, 72–74.

¹⁸² Sikorska, 221–22.

¹⁸³ Dumanowski, “Nowe źródło do dziejów kuchni staropolskiej,” 38, 48–49.

¹⁸⁴ Sikorska, *Smak i tożsamość. Polska i niemiecka literatura kulinarna w XVII wieku*, 246–47.

line with broader trends, displaying a wide range of connections and parallels with both Central and Western European texts.

Transfers of knowledge and practices contributing to the existence of shared, at least to some extent, cooking styles certainly did not happen only through the circulation of books and are not to be found solely on their pages. Even after the printed cookbooks market emerged, the cook's craft remained to be taught and learned predominantly orally, by observation and repetition.¹⁸⁵ Foreign personnel was employed in kitchens in Poland-Lithuania, often passing their professional skills to local staff. For example, at Lubomirski's court, where Czerniecki worked, there were fourteen Polish, French, and German cooks of different ranks.¹⁸⁶

Many a time the foreignness or "Frenchness" of the cook seemed to be an asset in itself.¹⁸⁷ Besides hiring French confiture makers, Sobieski asked Marie Casimire to look, specifically in Paris, for "a good cook for us ... meanwhile take anyone, as long as [he is] French."¹⁸⁸ With growing demand among the magnates wanting to follow new trends, French diplomats' intermediation in finding cooks, confectioners, and confiture makers was a welcomed favor.¹⁸⁹

Finally, the traces of transfers and borrowings are to be found in the terminology and organization of the meal itself. Italian *credenza*, English sideboard, German *Kredenz*, *buffet* or *dressoir* in French was a piece of large, visible furniture decorating dining rooms, used as a "stage for the formal presentation of many dishes, which would be displayed there before being

¹⁸⁵ Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks*, 31.

¹⁸⁶ Stanisław Czerniecki, *Dwór, wspaniałość, powaga i rządy Jaśnie Oświeconego Księżęcia JM Państwa Rzymskiego [...] Stanisława hrabi na Wiśniczu i Jarosławiu Lubomirskiego* (1697), 11.

¹⁸⁷ "French" was often used to mean "foreign," regardless of actual provenience of a person or object. See Jarosław Dumanowski, "Francuski, czyli niemiecki," in *Świat rzeczy szlachty wielkopolskiej w XVIII wieku* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2006), 141–55.

¹⁸⁸ "o kucharz pisać dobrego dla nas do Paryża, a tymczasem przyjąć jakiegokolwiek, byle Francuza." Jan Sobieski to Marie Casimire, 29 August, 1666, Kukulski, *Jan Sobieski listy do Marysieńki*, 1973, 1:160.

¹⁸⁹ Kuras, "Czy *Le cuisinier françois* zmienił polską kuchnię w czasach nowożytnych? Przyczynek do zagadnienia transferu kulinarnych wzorców," 439–40.

served to the diners at their tables.”¹⁹⁰ In Polish language sources, the word *kredens* could indicate furniture itself, the silverware displayed on it, or the cold course served using the furniture.¹⁹¹ The verb *kredensować* (*credenziere*) could mean both ‘to keep, display on a sideboard,’ or in some contexts also ‘to lead, proceed’—the later meaning likely relates to the Mediaeval practice of tasting the food once it was brought to the dining hall to make sure it is safe to eat by a grand lord.¹⁹² Importantly, apart from aiding the serving of cold food and drink, a *credenza* was used to show expensive tableware, which conveyed the host’s sophistication and wealth.¹⁹³ Among gifts offered by the Polish-Lithuanian embassies, there are “two golden goblets and a large Dutch salt cellar [to put] on a sideboard,” not only subtly expressing friendship and hospitality towards the Moldavian logofat (as salt conventionally connotes it) but also confirming the display function of a *kredens*.¹⁹⁴

Servants in charge of *krednes* (*kredensowi*, *preaffecti ablaci*)—are listed as members of Polish-Lithuanian ambassadorial entourages to Muscovy in 1678 or Istanbul in 1677, indicating their vital role in dining service and separation from the kitchen staff.¹⁹⁵ Clearly, in the seventeenth century, both the *kredens* itself and the practice of using it would hardly be considered particularly foreign to a Polish-Lithuanian noble. What is more, using a sideboard was in fact seen by a member of Jan Gniński’s embassy to Istanbul as a characteristic of dining in Poland-Lithuania, as opposed to the customs he witnessed in the Sublime Porte: “sherbet was given in

¹⁹⁰ Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table*, 24; Andrzej Rottermund, “Dworski stół paradny - sztuka i ceremonial (zarys problematyki),” *Materiały Muzeum Wnętrz Zabytkowych w Pszczynie IV* (1987): 43–44.

¹⁹¹ Witold Doroszewski, ed., “Kredens,” in *Słownik języka polskiego*, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://sjp.pwn.pl/doroszewski/kredens-I;5443452.html>.

¹⁹² Italian name *credenza* may have derived from *credere* ‘to believe.’ Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table*, 23.

¹⁹³ Astarita, 24.

¹⁹⁴ Margaret Visser, “Salt: The Edible Rock,” in *The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*, ed. Carolyn Korsmeyer (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 109. “logofetowi dwa puchary złociste i na kredens solniczkę wielką holenderską.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 11. (D)

¹⁹⁵ A *credenziero*, a member of sideboard staff, was responsible for preparation and presentation of cold dishes that usually began and ended the meal, and appear in-between hot courses to assure smooth service, as well as all equipment for decorating a *credenza* or even making sugar sculptures. The responsibility of preparing sugar sculptures could be also in the domain of pastry chef or a painter employed at a grand household. Albala, *The Banquet. Dining in the Great Courts of Late Renaissance Europe*, 147–48.

small faience, holding them on different [bigger] faience instead of a tray, which we usually have on a sideboard.”¹⁹⁶

Polish-Lithuanian cuisine and dining practices clearly shared a considerable number of features with cuisines across Europe, at least when it came to the elite variant of it. There seems to be, however, also something recognizing about it. For Czerniecki it was particularly the use of saffron and pepper that made dishes “Polish,” for Ossoliński, as referred by Haur, it was the contrasting taste that could be achieved not solely by imported spices but their locally grown substitutes, while for foreigners who visited Poland-Lithuania, it seems to be, again, the rather generous use of spices as well as fasting rules.¹⁹⁷ Neither the use of spices added to achieve contrasting tastes of dishes (especially pairing of sour and sweet or sour and spicy), nor observing fast days were inherently “Polish,” or characteristic exclusively for Poland-Lithuania, but in the seventeenth century, and particularly in the second part of the seventeenth century, the combination of these features could indeed stand out.

Oriental(ized) taste of the Sarmatians?

Returning to the example that opened this chapter, there is no doubt that the dishes served to Louis-Marie and her entourage in Lębork and the in Gdańsk were meant to dazzle and complement the overall splendor of her reception. In Gdańsk, the banquet was held after Louis-Marie’s solemn entry to the city, and Le Laboureur summed up the description of the receiving parade put forward by the Polish-Lithuanian nobles in the following words: “all that the Greeks

¹⁹⁶ “Sorbetu zaś dano w farfurach drobnych, trzymając je na inszych farfurach miałkich miasto tacy, którą zwykle u nas kredensują.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 16. (D)

The Polish verb *kredensować* (*credenziere*) has an unclear meaning. According to Aleksander Brückner, it comes from the Italian *credenza*, *credenziere*, and could refer to the silverware and silverware sideboard, tasting and also leading or preceding. Considering the context, I think the author of the diary uses *kredensować* in a meaning of ‘keep on a sideboard.’ Aleksander Brückner, “Kredens,” in *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego* (Kraków: Nakład i własność Krakowskiej spółki wydawniczej, 1927), 265.

¹⁹⁷ Probably the most quoted in this regard is the diary of Ulrich von Werdum, *Dziennik podróży 1670–1672*, ed. Dariusz Milewski (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2012), 61.

wrote about the wealth and luxury of the ancient Persians, does not equate to what we saw, and what we cannot at present persuade ourselves of having seen.”¹⁹⁸ Even if a fair degree of exaggeration is accounted for, evoking ancient Persians is an interesting trope, likely inspired by the style of garments, horse tacks, and weapons of parading troops. Similar to the reference to the Wedding Feast at Cana brought up on the occasion of the banquet in Lębork, it also seems to point to the contracted historical horizon in *Le Laboureur*’s imagination, not unusual when describing the travels to the East of Seine. And when the banquet in Gdańsk is studied in its wider context, as it was planned, as a crowning event of Louise Marie’s entry to the city, then the generous use of spices, along with gilded pyramids of sugar, golden vermeil plates, crimson satin napkins, and so forth, becomes in a way an extension of, Polish-Lithuanian nobility’s fondness of display worthy of ancient Persians, as seen by *Le Laboureur*.

Le Laboureur does not make an explicit reference to the “oriental” taste of the dishes served by the Poles, instead relies on ancient examples for a rhetorical effect. However, spices sometimes carried this kind of association (“oriental” or even “barbarian”), just like herbs could stand for “civilized” status.¹⁹⁹ For example, a certain L.S.R in the introduction to *L’Art de bien traiter* (1674) criticized the use of spices in contemporary cooking, considering them to make out of food “wretched things which one would put more readily among Arabs and Levantines than in a pure climate such as ours, where cleanliness, refinement, and good taste are matters of utmost concern.”²⁰⁰ But to add a bit more nuance to the picture, spices were not always classed as bad by Frenchmen. Gaspard de Tende (1616–1697), another courtier who traveled with Marie Louise in 1646, in his *Relation historique de la Pologne* (1686), described a proficiency in

¹⁹⁸ “Enfin, tout ce que les Grecs ont escrit de la richesse & de luxe des Perses anciens, n’égal point ce que nous vismes, & ce que nous ne pouvons à present nous persuader d’avoir veu.” *Le Laboureur, Relation du voyage de la Reine de Pologne*, 145.

¹⁹⁹ Quellier, “The Taste of the Bourbon’s Reign and the Fabrication of the Renowned French Cuisine (Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century),” 66.

²⁰⁰ After Dursteler, “Spice and Taste in the Culinary World of the Early Modern Mediterranean,” 105.

preparation of fish, singling it out as the aspect of Polish-Lithuanian cuisine deserving high praise:

Their sauces are also extremely different from ours. They make a yellow one with saffron, a white one with cream, a gray one with onions, and a black one with prune juice, and in all the sauces they put a lot of pepper, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, allspice, nutmeg and sometimes raisins from Corinth. But especially in fish which they accommodate better than the French.²⁰¹

What is more, Sobieski's Irish doctor Bernard O'Connor in his *The history of Poland* (1698) which borrows from de Tende heavily, adds that "[t]heir [Polanders'] Fish Sauces excel both ours and the French."²⁰²

The prominent place of spices in Polish-Lithuanian cuisine shows in both Polish and foreign language sources. Certainly, there was a fondness for exoticism, of rare, imported commodities among the nobles in Poland-Lithuania who spent fortunes on them, but I am yet to find a piece of convincing evidence supporting the claim spices were considered in fact part of not simply the luxurious but "oriental" or "Sarmatian" aura of Polish-Lithuanian nobles' households, specifically by the Polish-Lithuanian nobles themselves.²⁰³ Saffron and pepper—two spices Czerniecki considered to make dishes Polish—were as "Polish" as *credenze* or *kontusz* sashes and carpets wherever they originated from.

²⁰¹ "Leur sauces sont aussi extremement differentes des notres. Ilse en font une jaune avec du safran, une blanche avec de la crème, une grise avec des oignons et une noire avec du jus de pruneaux, et dans toutes les sauces, ils mettent beaucoup de poivre, de cannelle, de gingembre, de clous, de girogles, de muscade et parfois du raisin de Corinthe. Mais sur tout dans le poisson qu'ils accomodent mieux que les François." Gaspard de Tende, *Relation historique de la Pologne* (Paris: Jacques Villery, 1687), 277.

²⁰² Bernard O'Connor, *The History of Poland, in Several Letters to Persons of Quality: Giving an Account of the Antient and Present State of that Kingdom*, vol. 2 (London: printed for Daniel Brown and Abel Roper, 1698), 214

²⁰³ I consider the notion of Sarmatism (still used in scholarship while referring to the aesthetic preferences of Polish-Lithuanian nobility) to have limited explanatory potential. Instead, I believe that the category of taste—in its both gustatory and aesthetic sense—could be used as a more comprehensive analytical framework. Tomasz Grusiecki's recent study engages with this historiographical tradition looking into carpets, maps, fashion, "Ottomanesque costumes" worn by Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors abroad. See Tomasz Grusiecki, *Transcultural Things and the Spectre of Orientalism in Early Modern Poland-Lithuania* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2023), also Adam Jasiński, "A Savage Magnificence: Ottomanizing Fashion and the Politics Of Display In Early Modern East-Central Europe," *Muqarnas* 31 (2014): 173–205. About the ethnogenesis myth and Polish-Lithuanian historical memory, see Joanna Orzeł, *Historia - tradycja - mit w pamięci kulturowej szlachty Rzeczypospolitej XVI-XVIII* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2016).; for discussion on Sarmatism in modern Polish culture, see special issue on the "Sarmatian turn" "Teksty Drugie" 1: Zwrot sarmacki (2015).

The problem of recognizing objects as being simultaneously of foreign provenance and bearing particular local significance was recently addressed by Tomasz Grusiecki using the example of so-called Polish carpets.²⁰⁴ They were sought after, collected and put on display by the Polish-Lithuanian nobility, who “knew that these carpets were Persian or Turkish, and yet they still believed without any seeming contradiction that there was something specifically Polish about them.”²⁰⁵

The Polishness of saffron and pepper seems to be constructed similarly to the Polishness of those carpets, in the sense that they “although made someplace else, were appropriated, integrated, and reinvented as part and parcel of local custom.”²⁰⁶ Also similarly, pepper and saffron were used as a marker of social status, a token of good taste of the Polish-Lithuanian nobility.

Finally, revisiting another earlier example, the instruction for Voivode Jan Gniński, ambassador dispatched to Istanbul in 1677, emphasized the importance of following ceremonial and keeping discipline among the members of the embassy so as not to offend the hosts or give any occasion for “affronts or tumults and distastes.”²⁰⁷ This direction for Gniński testifies not only to the perceived importance and rationality of ceremonial and display—which purpose was clearly intended as “non ad luxum, sed ad decentiam”—but to the fact that the category of taste was at that time used outside of the context of the savoring food and also indeed of concern in the context of diplomacy.

²⁰⁴ Tomasz Grusiecki, “Doublethink: Polish Carpets in Transcultural Contexts,” *The Art Bulletin* 104, no. 3 (2022): 29–54, also Chapter 4 in Grusiecki, *Transcultural Things and the Spectre of Orientalism in Early Modern Poland-Lithuania*.

²⁰⁵ Grusiecki, “Doublethink: Polish Carpets in Transcultural Contexts,” 40.

²⁰⁶ Grusiecki, 30.

²⁰⁷ “wielmożny poseł, którego *apparatus non ad luxum, sed ad decentiam* będzie, *praecavendo* aby *impuberi juventute* się nie okładał, *multis ex rationanibus*, w dobrym porządku bez konfuzji *disciplinatum* zachował *familiam*; nie tylko dlatego, żeby zgorszenia nie dać, ale też żeby żadnej okazji do tumultu albo afrontów i niesmaków nie przydać.” “Instrukcja dana Janowi Gnińskiemu od króla i stanów Rzptej,” in *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego wojewody chełmińskiego do Turcji w latach 1677-1678*, ed. Franciszek Pułaski, Biblioteka Ordynacji Kasińskich (Warszawa: Typis Rubieszewski & Wrotnowski, 1907), 202.

CHAPTER 2

POLISH-LITHUANIAN DIPLOMACY DURING SOBIESKI'S REIGN

Diplomats ate and drank. They brought their own supplies, purchased food and beverages at their own expense abroad, and sometimes were offered provisions by the receiving party. They were served dishes prepared by the cooks who traveled in their entourage or those who worked in the kitchens of foreign dignitaries hosting them. Some received meals from the royal kitchen, papal plate, or Grand Vizier's tray. Diplomats also participated in banquets, some of which were held in their honor. During these events, they were granted the place at the monarch's right, seated at the first table, or offered an adjacent table. Other times, they found themselves among many distinguished guests.

By situating such occasions within a broader framework, it is possible to grasp their political significance, rather than simply collecting descriptions of incidents in which those involved in diplomacy ate and drank. Identifying who made decisions regarding foreign policy, what the customs guiding the reception of foreign missions were, who headed Polish-Lithuanian embassies, how they were financed, and how their progress was reported—all these details may seem secondary, however, they are indispensable for analyzing the role of food and drink in diplomatic practice as well as its function in narrating the events.

Organization

The central place of nobility in Poland-Lithuania's political system defined the form and character of its institutions. Diplomacy was no exception. The conviction that every nobleman

had the right to decide about the matters of *Res Publica* extended to the relations with foreign polities.

The involvement of nobles in the political process resulted in a phenomenon described by Zbigniew Wójcik as the “decentralization of sovereignty.”²⁰⁸ In practice, it meant that determining the direction of foreign policy and control over diplomacy fell to several authorities: the king, senators, and noble deputies—that is, the Sejm (the Polish-Lithuanian Parliament)—as well as hetmans.²⁰⁹ For this reason, looking into the institutional layout and mapping powers of the Sejm, chancellors, marshals, or hetmans helps to understand the character of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy, together with the possibilities and limitations of actors involved in it.²¹⁰

The legal framework

Dorota Gregorowicz notices that “political practice in shaping foreign policy often stood in opposition to the formal legal structure of the Commonwealth.”²¹¹ Perhaps the most apparent example confirming this observation is the resolution “O posłach cudzoziemskich” [On foreign envoys] passed in 1683.²¹² It forbade permanent foreign embassies in Poland-Lithuania and

²⁰⁸ Zbigniew Wójcik, “Dyplomacja Polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” in *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, ed. Zbigniew Wójcik, vol. 2: 1572-1795 (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1982), 242; Andrzej Rachuba, “Osobliwości polskiej dyplomacji w okresie nowożytnym (XVI-XVIII),” in *Cywilizacja europejska. Eseje i szkice z dziejów cywilizacji i dyplomacji*, ed. Maciej Koźmiński (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii PAN, 2010), 227.

²⁰⁹ When referring to Polish-Lithuanian Sejm both diet and parliament are used in translation. Robert Frost offers some interesting remarks on the issue. Robert Frost, “When Is a Parliament Not a Parliament? The Polish-Lithuanian Sejm and Parliamentary Culture,” *Center for Intellectual Culture, University of Oxford* (blog), 1 December 2021, accessed February 20, 2024, <https://intellectualhistory.web.ox.ac.uk/article/when-is-a-parliament-not-a-parliament-the-polish-lithuanian-sejm-and-parliamentary-culture>.

²¹⁰ In particular, the competences of chancellors, marshals, and hetmans concerning diplomacy were not always clearly delineated, leading to potential conflicts due to overlaps, not to mention different agendas of the individuals holding the offices. Waław Zarzycki, *Dyplomacja hetmanów w dawnej Polsce* (Poznań: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1976), 23; Zbigniew Wójcik, “Z dziejów organizacji dyplomacji polskiej w drugiej połowie XVII wieku,” in *Polska służba dyplomatyczna XVI-XVIII wieku*, ed. Zbigniew Wójcik (Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1966), 321–22.

²¹¹ Gregorowicz, “Diplomacy of the Commonwealth, Diplomacy of the King: The Peculiarity of Foreign Policy Making in the Seventeenth Century Poland-Lithuania,” 20.

²¹² Resolutions of the Sejm, called constitutions (*konstytucje sejmowe*), were the supreme source of law in Poland-Lithuania. The resolution “O posłach cudzoziemskich” reads as follows: “Iż najwięcej Państwowi Naszym zależy

specified that any legation should not extend their stay over nine weeks after being granted an audience. The envisaged punishment for non-compliance was losing security guarantees, however—and despite pompously stating “in perpetuum”—it was never enforced. Instead, both the king and foreign diplomats found ways to circumvent it by postponing the date of the first official audience or ignoring the law altogether, despite the voices demanding its enforcement raised during provincial dietines (*sejmiki*).²¹³

In other words, it was hardly an interruption of a common practice. Despite general reluctance to allow prolonged stays and then laws forbidding it, new diplomats often arrived before the end of previous missions and sought to extend their stays under various pretexts, making several foreign missions in Poland-Lithuania *de facto* permanent. Traditionally, the presence of the Brandenburg resident was accepted (at least until Johann von Hoverbeck’s death in 1682), and after joining the Holy League, the presence of allies’ representatives was generally seen as justified. Also, the papal nuncio’s position was special, however it is worth mentioning that he was accredited only at the monarch’s court.²¹⁴

The motivation behind passing the resolution “On foreign envoys” seems to be twofold. First, it was practical: the regulation was used by Sobieski and his supporters in the context of an *ad hoc* political struggle during the Sejm of 1683 when a dethronement conspiracy involving the

in *unione animorum* i zobopólnej wszystkich *civium* konfidencji, którą posłowie cudzoziemscy interesami pryncypałów swoich mieszać zwykli, tedy ... powagą Sejmu terażniejszego, za zgodą wszech stanów, *in perpetuum* postanawiamy, aby pomienieni cudzoziemscy posłowie, ablegaci & *quocumque nomine* nazwani, nie tylko u Dworu Naszego, ale i w Państwach Naszych nie rezydowali. A jeżeby tak podczas Sejmu, jako y między Seymami a Sejmem, legacja jak od któregośkolwiek z postronnych Panów przyszła; tedy przyjeżdżającym przed audiencją trzy niedziel czasu, w Państwach naszych pozwalamy; a potym każdego z Posłów, *in spatio* sześciu niedziel najwięcej, expedyować deklarujemy, y więcej nad ten czas rezydować nie pozwolimy. A po odebraney expedycji, *finibus Regni excedere* powinni, *in spatio* trzech niedziel. W czym jeżeliby woli naszej, y prawu temu ciż Posłowie uczynić dosyć nie chcieli, tedy z niemi *secundum* rygiorem pomienionych Konfederacyi postąpiemy, y już więcej *securitate* charakteru swego *non gaudebunt*.” VL, vol. 5, 322.

²¹³ Anna Kalinowska, ““Ja jednak posła wyprawię...” Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.,” in *My i oni. Społeczeństwo nowożytnej Rzeczypospolitej wobec państwa*, ed. Wojciech Krieger (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii Pan, 2016), 63–64.

²¹⁴ Gregorowicz, “Diplomacy of the Commonwealth, Diplomacy of the King: The Peculiarity of Foreign Policy Making in the Seventeenth Century Poland-Lithuania,” 23.

French ambassador was uncovered. Second, it resulted from an overall negative attitude of Poland-Lithuania's "political nation" (*naród polityczny*)—a community of nobles with shared rights—towards foreign representatives connected with constant suspicion of the king's desire to transform the *monarchia mixta* into an *absolutum dominium*.²¹⁵ This transformation, it was commonly believed, might be facilitated by foreign powers' diplomatic machinations, prone to disturb the otherwise harmonious life in the Commonwealth.

Who in a *monarchia mixta* held legal and political power over the organization of diplomacy: the king, the senators, the Sejm? Apart from the resolution "On foreign envoys," the legal framework guiding diplomatic practice in Poland-Lithuania in the last quarter of the seventeenth century was defined in the Union of Lublin, Henrician articles, and Sobieski's *pacta conventa*. The restrictions of royal prerogatives concerning diplomacy included in these acts were aligned with efforts to mitigate royal power in the name of protecting the privileges of the nobility.

The Union of Lublin (1569), an act that created the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów, Res Publica Utriusque Nationis*), put a certain limitation on royal prerogatives related to entering into agreements with foreign partners and dispatching representatives abroad: the monarch was expected to inform and seek the advice of the two nations before doing so.²¹⁶

The commitment to seek the advice and consent of the Sejm and Senate Council in matters concerning the Commonwealth's foreign affairs and diplomacy was repeated in the Henrician

²¹⁵ The constant suspicion of monarchs' absolutist plans was a leitmotif of the political thought in Poland-Lithuania from the sixteenth throughout the eighteenth century. For more on the issue see, for instance, Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *Dyskurs polityczny Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów. Pojęcia i idee* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2018).

²¹⁶ "Foedera aut pacta, abo znowy, y przymierza z postronnemi narody, wedle spolney zgody Warszawskiey, napotym żadne czynione, ani stanowione żadni też Posłowie w rzeczach ważnych do obcych stron posyłani bydź nie mają, iedno za wiadomością y radą spolną obudwu narodow: a przymierza, abo stanowienia, z którymkolwiek narodem przedtym uczynione, ktoreby były szkodliwe ktorey stronie, dzierzane bydź nie mają." VL, vol. 2, 90.

Articles (1573), testifying to the strengthening position of Poland-Lithuania's collective authorities vis-à-vis an elective monarch:²¹⁷

And in the affairs of the Crown, which concern our person and our majesty, our envoys dispatched to other lands, the envoys received from the others, soldiers to be conscripted or drawn, we and our descendants shall not initiate or advance, without the advice of the Crown Councils of both nations, not intervening in the matters belonging to the Sejm. And those legacies that do not concern the Commonwealth and could be dispatched according to the time and needs; therefore, these we do and will always send with the knowledge of the senators of the Crown Councils of the two nations who live by us.²¹⁸

Prepared during the *interregnum* after Sigismund II August's death and first confirmed by Henry of Valois, the Henrician Articles defined the Commonwealth's political system and guaranteed the nobility the right to retain their privileges. Confirming them was a prerequisite for all the subsequent kings to take the throne. Additionally, every elected king had to swear to uphold *pacta conventa*—personal commitments concerning foremost financial and military matters (usually pertaining to defense and recovery of lost territories), internal politics, and foreign affairs. Importantly, as Anna Kalinowska pointed out, the principle of cooperation with the Sejm and the Senate in foreign affairs was repeated over and over again in *pacta conventa*, which demonstrates the nobles' interest in determining foreign policy and conditioning diplomacy.²¹⁹

Jan III Sobieski in *pacta conventa* (1674) traditionally confirmed to act in agreement with the Senate and the Sejm when entering relations with foreign polities, but he also subscribed to more recent guidelines, introduced only at the election of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki in 1669.

²¹⁷ Dorota Gregorowicz argues that because of the wording used in the acts, particularly in the Henrician Articles, the king's prerogatives were in fact not limited from the legal perspective—the king was expected to seek and follow the advice of the Council, but he was not legally required to do so. See Gregorowicz, "Diplomacy of the Commonwealth, Diplomacy of the King: The Peculiarity of Foreign Policy Making in the Seventeenth Century Poland-Lithuania," 25–26.

²¹⁸ "A w sprawach Koronnych które się dotyczyć osoby naszej y dostojenstwa naszego poselstw do cudzych kraiów wysyłania, y cudzych także poselstw słuchania y odprawowania, woysk iakich abo żołnierzow zbierania abo przyjmowania, My y Potomkowie nasi nic zaczynać y czynić nie mamy, bez rady Rad Koronnych obojga narodu, spraw Seymowi należących niwczym nie wzruszając. A wszakoż te poselstwa ktoreby się Rzeczpospolitey nie dotyczyły, a mogły być wedle ich czasu y potrzeb odprawowane: tedy te mamy i będziemy mogli zawsze odprawować, za wiadomością Panow Rad Koronnych obojga narodu, którzy przy Nas mieszkać będą." VL, vol. 2, 150–51.

²¹⁹ Kalinowska, "“Ja jednak posła wyprawię...” Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.," 52–53.

The instructions for diplomats—chosen only from “*bene possessionatos* of the two nations”—were to be prepared during the Senate Council and read out during the Sejm sessions by the chancellors. Further, upon returning from abroad, Polish-Lithuanian legates had to present a relation of their missions publicly and swear they did not act against their instructions.²²⁰

In Poland-Lithuania diplomacy was seen first and foremost as a means of maintaining good neighborly relations; any activities beyond this aim potentially faced criticism on the part of the nobles. Their involvement at every stage of the diplomatic process was to ensure the best interest of the *Res Publica*.

The role of the Sejm

Major decisions regarding diplomacy had to be undertaken during the General Sejm (*sejm walny*) proceedings. According to the Henrician Articles, the Sejm should be convened not less often than every two years and last six weeks (usually giving 42 days for deliberations).²²¹ Such factors as war or pressing matters of foreign affairs could expedite or delay the setting up of the Sejm date.²²²

Following Sobieski’s Election Sejm in 1674, eleven ordinary Sejms (including a Coronation Sejm) and one extraordinary Sejm were convened. Many were prolonged—the longest in 1681

²²⁰ “Też waruiemy Rzeczposp: iż Posłów w legacyach do postronnych narodow, posyłać inakszych nie będziemy tylko szlachtę *bene possessionatos* z obojga narodow, którym instrukcyje dane *inter Senatus Consulta* pisać, y na Seymach czytać Pieczętarze nasi powinni będą. A powrociwszy z funkcyi swoichm relacye na Seymach *in scripto* oddawać, co ma być w metrykach inserowano, y to wszystko rekwizycją Stanow Rzeczposp: poprzysiądz będą, iako się nic nad instrukcyą z Kancellaryi daną, nie domyślali traktować z Pany postronnemi, do których wyprawieni byli w poselstwach.” VL, vol. 5, 141

²²¹ Robert Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2014), 61–62; Władysław Czapliński, “Sejm w latach 1587-1696,” in *Historia sejmku polskiego*, ed. Jerzy Michalski, vol. I: Do schyłku szlacheckiej Rzeczypospolitej (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1984), 239.

²²² It was not clear, however, whether to count the period of two years from the beginning or the end of the last gathering. Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 34, 73.

lasting for 133 days—and one could not be inaugurated due to the king’s illness.²²³ Of twelve Sejms, six ended without passing resolutions.²²⁴ The table below lists those Sejms:

Table 1. Sejms during Jan III Sobieski’s reign²²⁵

Type	Date	Place	Resolutions
Coronation	2 February – 4 April 1676	Cracow	+
Extraordinary	14 January – 26 April 1677	Warsaw	+
Ordinary	15 December 1678 – 3 April 1679	Grodno	+
Ordinary	14 January – 26 May 1681	Warsaw	-
Ordinary	27 January – 17 April 1683	Warsaw	+
Ordinary	16 February – 30 May 1685	Warsaw	+
Ordinary	27 January – 5 March 1688	Grodno	-
Ordinary	17 December 1688 – 2 April 1689	Warsaw	-
Ordinary	16 January – 6 May 1690	Warsaw	+
Ordinary	31 December 1692 – 11 February 1693	Grodno	-
Ordinary	22 December 1693 (the king did not arrive due to illness)	Warsaw	-
Ordinary	12 January – 19/23 February 1695	Warsaw	-

The General Sejm consisted of two chambers: the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies (or Chamber of Envoys, *izba poselska*); and of three “deliberating estates” (or “parliamentary estates,” *stany sejmujące*): the king, senators, and noble deputies. Senators were high clergy, voivodes, castellans, and ministers (marshals, chancellors, treasurers) nominated by the king for a lifetime tenure, while noble deputies—often coming from lesser nobility—were elected at the pre-Sejm dietines (*sejmiki przedsejmowe*) before each Sejm took place.

²²³ Kołodziej, 61, 81.

²²⁴ All but one sejm without resolutions took place in the latter stages of Sobieski’s reign, in the late 1680s and 1690s, which, in a way, is related to the problem of the weakening authority of the monarch. Jarosław Stoliński, “Rozdawnictwo wakansów przez Jana III jako metoda tworzenia partii dworskiej,” in *Faworycy i opozycjoniści. Król a elity polityczne w Rzeczypospolitej XV–XVIII wieku*, ed. Ryszard Skowron and Mariusz Markiewicz (Kraków: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 2006), 366–69; Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 299–304.

²²⁵ After Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 62.

Participating in the Sejm was an essential stage in a noble's political career, but it also entailed considerable spending and all the inconveniences of traveling to either Cracow (for the Coronation Sejm), Warsaw or Grodno (Гродна, Hrodna).²²⁶ Deputies from more remote provinces, of course, were at a disadvantage, but staying in the city during deliberations stretching over weeks or months was itself remarkably costly. Some dietines—similar to the Crown or Lithuanian treasury paying representatives traveling abroad—paid their elected deputies per diems (around 1500–2000 *złoty*).²²⁷ According to calculations of Robert Kołodziej, this would match the cost of living for one person (a noble deputy) during the Sejm in Warsaw for six weeks.²²⁸ However, the Sejms between 1676 and 1695 usually lasted significantly longer, driving even the wealthiest to source their food outside the city or to stock up well in advance.²²⁹

Limited lodging space and high prices were some of the factors influencing the turnout rate among senators, who, just as high-ranking diplomats, were expected to appear with a sizable entourage, confirming their position.²³⁰ A failure to appear in splendor was criticized not only as a sign of parsimony but also as a sign of the senator's financial problems, which directly affected his image in the political arena.²³¹ Therefore, when senators decided to appear—and spend a considerable amount of money to do so—their entry to the Sejm city was often suitably showy: in 1683, Voivode of Vilnius Kazimierz Sapieha apparently was accompanied by around

²²⁶ According to the resolution from 1673, every third Sejm (with the exception of the Coronation, Election, and Convocation Sejms) should be convened in the Grand Duchy. The first Sejm in Grodno was held in 1678. Kołodziej, 104; Robert Kołodziej, "Parlamentaryzm doby Jana III Sobieskiego," *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne* 146, no. 2 (2019): 384.

²²⁷ Kołodziej, "Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 362–72.

²²⁸ Kołodziej, 133.

²²⁹ Kołodziej, 130–133.

²³⁰ Czapliński, "Sejm w latach 1587-1696," 243; Kołodziej, "Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 110.

²³¹ Janusz S. Dąbrowski, "Wjazdy na sejmy w okresie panowania Jana Kazimierza Wazy," in *Theatrum ceremoniale na dworze książąt i królów polskich*, ed. Ryszard Skowron and Mariusz Markiewicz (Kraków: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 1999), 287.

1500 horsemen, and in 1695 his retinue was greater than “when His Lordship Prince [Jakub] entered at the wedding [with] Her Ladyship Electress.”²³²

The proceedings of the Sejm

There was no single statute regulating parliamentary procedure, but custom was expected to be followed before any deliberation could start.²³³ Conventions included, for example, reading out protocols of the Senate Council meetings (*senatus consulta*).²³⁴ Also, “scripts for the archive” (*skrypta do archiwum, scripta ad archivum*) that were no longer valid could be presented during the inaugural part of the Sejm. *Senatus consulta* summarized Senate Council meetings happening between Sejms, and the scripts consisted of decisions generally related to military and foreign affairs taken during sessions closed to third parties (usually by appointed commissions or Senate Council) and therefore not included in the public Sejm resolutions.²³⁵

The problem of publicness of Sejm procedures was not limited to the presence of three deliberating estates. So-called arbiters (effectively audience members) could be present during the Sejm sessions if the sessions were not made latent, but even when the steps to ensure a level of secrecy were taken, the information traveled fast.²³⁶ The king, in particular, sought to limit

²³² “kiedy królewicz jm [Jakub] do ślubu wjeżdżał na weselu elektorowej jm.” Sarnecki, *Pamiętniki z czasów Jana Sobieskiego*, 1:270–71. For more examples of senatorial entries during Sobieski’s reign, see Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 318–19. For entries during the reign of Jan II Kazimierz Waza, including Sobieski’s after his military victory in 1668, see Dąbrowski, “Wjazdy na sejmy w okresie panowania Jana Kazimierza Wazy,” 288.

²³³ Customarily, the Sejm was inaugurated by a mass, followed the election of a new Chamber of Deputies’ Marshal, verifying the validity of deputies’ mandates, the king’s welcoming ceremony, presentation of the king’s proposals (*propozycja od tronu*), reading out *pacta conventa* (from 1669), nominating to vacant offices, and compiling a list of abuses of power. The exact order of the procedures could vary slightly. Until 1783, it is not clear whether the mass was a ceremonial or legal custom, and whether it inaugurated or preceded the Sejm. See Jan Seredyka, “Nabożeństwa sejmowe w dawnej Polsce,” in *Theatrum ceremoniale na dworze książąt i królów polskich*, ed. Ryszard Skowron and Mariusz Markiewicz (Kraków: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 1999); Czapliński, “Sejm w latach 1587-1696,” 264–65.

²³⁴ During Sobieski’s reign, the minutes of the Senate Council were carefully read at the beginning of the Sejm during a joint latent session. Kołodziej, “Parlamentaryzm doby Jana III Sobieskiego,” 386.

²³⁵ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 212, 477–82.

²³⁶ Rachuba, “Osobliwości polskiej dyplomacji w okresie nowożytnym (XVI-XVIII),” 242.

access to sensitive information—especially concerning military matters and foreign affairs—whereas noble deputies at Sejms and dietines repeatedly demonstrated distrust towards the decision process in which they were not involved, demanding the protocols of the Senate Council to be made public and limit the practice of preparing scripts for the archive.²³⁷

The openness of public life had its supporters as well as opponents. Grand Marshal of the Crown Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski considered senatorial speeches (*wota senatorskie*) to be a waste of time, for they were void of matters of importance due to the fact they were delivered in public.²³⁸ Though, it seems that *wota* were valued for their rhetorical qualities, becoming a separate, widely circulated literary genre.²³⁹ Certainly, they helped to convey a picture of different positions and greater understanding of Poland-Lithuania's interest since senators addressed the subject of foreign policy directions in response to royal proposals in their speeches.²⁴⁰

Senatorial speeches were the last procedural item before separate plenary sessions of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate took place. Still, both chambers remained in contact via delegates and assembled again to conclude the Sejm proceedings or when the presence of all three deliberating estates was required, for instance, during the relations of Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors returning from abroad or audiences of foreign diplomats.²⁴¹

²³⁷ It was believed that arbitrary exercise of power by the Senate Council would inevitably lead to *absolutum dominium*. Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699)," 246–47.

²³⁸ Zbigniew Hundert, "Marszałek wielki koronny Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski wobec sejmu 1683 roku i problemu wojny z Portą Osmańską," *Saeculum Christianum* 25 (2018): 226; Kołodziej, "Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 218.

²³⁹ It happened that good speeches were listened to in "altissimae silentiae" for more than two hours, and some participants of the Sejms attended them for educational purposes, expecting "there will be something to learn." Kołodziej, "Parlamentaryzm doby Jana III Sobieskiego," 387; Robert Kołodziej, "Senat jako stan sejmowy w czasach Jana III Sobieskiego," *Saeculum Christianum* 27 (2020): 124.

²⁴⁰ Krystyn Matwijowski discusses the content of the speeches made at the first Sejms during Sobieski's reign in more detail. See his *Pierwsze sejmy z czasów Jana III Sobieskiego* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1976).

²⁴¹ Kołodziej, "Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 257.

To streamline the Sejm, specific tasks were entrusted to mixed commissions (*deputacje*) consisting of noble deputies and senators (including both Crown and Lithuanian ministers).²⁴² Among other things, commissions dealt with matters concerning foreign relations, such as negotiations with foreign envoys, preparing the content of instructions for Polish-Lithuanian representatives to be sent abroad, and accounting for those who returned from their missions.²⁴³ Further, in some cases—particularly when urgent foreign affairs issues arose—commissions operating outside the Sejm timeframe (*komisje pozasejmowe*) were constituted. For example, commissioners appointed during the Sejms of 1679 and 1690 were supposed to reside beside the king in case further negotiations with the Porte happened.²⁴⁴

Essential parts of the Sejm proceedings were audiences. Details regarding the ceremony of receiving foreign diplomats at the Sejm will be taken up in the following section of this chapter. Here, it should be noted that audiences were regularly granted also to the elected representatives of the Crown and Lithuanian armies (*posłowie wojska*) and, on occasion, even to Polish-Lithuanian diplomats: in 1679 and 1681 Paweł Świdorski, royal resident in Muscovy, asked for reimbursement of overdue money in the Chamber of Deputies.²⁴⁵

Despite the Sejm being the most important institution of the Commonwealth, establishing the exact order of the procedures, the number of participants, or the course of each convention is not always possible. Yet its central role in administering diplomacy at various levels is evident. Another observation emerging from the overview of the Sejm procedures is the corresponding character of Polish-Lithuanian parliamentary and diplomatic practices.

²⁴² Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 246.

²⁴³ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 239, 248–49.

²⁴⁴ Kołodziej, 251–52.

²⁴⁵ Kołodziej, 256, 388–91.

The parliamentary practice shared a number of parallels with the diplomatic one on both linguistic and procedural levels. The most noticeable is a semantic overlap in Polish between *posel* representing a land or group of interest in internal politics (*intra Regnum*) and *posel* representing the king and/or the Commonwealth abroad (*ad exteros*).²⁴⁶ For this reason, depending on the context, *posel* (usually rendered *legatus* in Latin) could describe delegations being a part of Poland-Lithuania's political system, such as noble deputies at General Sejm (e.g. *Lithuania legati, posłowie litewscy, posłowie wołyńscy*), diplomats send abroad (*magnificus legatus, posel wielki*) or received in Poland-Lithuania (*exterorum Principium legati, legato Hungarium, posel bawarski*). Similarly, *poselstwo* or *legacja* could denote, for example, an embassy expedited from or to Poland-Lithuania, a representation of deputies from a land, voivodship, or an army at various levels of the parliamentary system. A special instance worth mentioning is a royal legation (*legacja królewska*), a document sent by the king to the pre-Sejm dietines containing proposals to be discussed during the following General Sejm.²⁴⁷

Nobles gathered at pre-Sejm dieties, apart from responding to royal legations delivered by royal envoys (*posłowie królewscy na sejmiki*), who were equipped with credentials, elected their representatives to the General Sejm. Just as diplomats dispatched abroad, noble deputies elected to Sejm (*posłowie na sejm*) were bound with instructions granting them either full or limited powers to exercise their mandate, and upon returning, they were obliged to give a relation of the proceedings during the relation dietines (*sejmiki relacyjne*).²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ Aleksander Maksymilian Fredro, *Vir consilii monitis ethicorum nec non prudentiae civilis* (Lwów: typis Collegij S.J, 1730), 420–23; Kalinowska, ““Ja jednak posła wyprawię...” Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.,” 54–56; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 262–63.

²⁴⁷ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 45–46.

²⁴⁸ Kołodziej, 329, 349; Czapliński, “Sejm w latach 1587-1696,” 230.

Further, ceremonial connected with holding public offices in Poland-Lithuania—just as diplomatic ones—borrowed from royal celebrations and utilized the same set of elements, albeit carried out in line with personal wealth.²⁴⁹ The senatorial entries during Sejm or celebrations of taking up ministerial offices included grand cavalcades, illumination, and banquets.²⁵⁰ Descriptions of these spectacles were circulated in diaries, correspondence, or newspapers, as well as mentioned in eulogies.²⁵¹ They attest to the attention given to the visual, and theatrical effects, as well as appropriate, elaborated titulature, which is not a surprise considering that the number of seats in the Senate was a marker of family status.²⁵²

The fact that Polish-Lithuanian diplomats, especially of the highest ranks, were chosen from among senators helps to understand how representing the king and the Commonwealth abroad could have been easily considered an extension of public service, including its ceremonial underpinnings. Importantly, they were equipped with instructions drafted by commissions consisting of noble deputies and senators, and upon their return, they were required to report in front of an institution expressing the collective interest of *Res Publica*.

Senators

Matters such as deciding on war and peace as well as sending embassies abroad (especially those of the highest rank) had to be undertaken collectively by all “deliberating estates.” Decisions considered to be of lesser importance or, on the contrary, those demanding a prompt reaction could be decided between the Sejms during a Senate Council meeting (*senatus consilium*) called by the king.²⁵³ What is more, the Senate Council also took over in the event

²⁴⁹ Agnieszka Słaby, “Ceremoniał urzędniczy w życiu szlachty czasów saskich,” *Wschodni Rocznik Humanistyczny* 17, no. 3 (2020): 209–11.

²⁵⁰ Słaby, 213–14.

²⁵¹ Agnieszka Słaby makes an interesting argument that since the officers enjoyed life tenure, *pompa funebris* was in fact also a ceremony connected with holding a public office. Słaby, 209, 218.

²⁵² Słaby, 212, 216.

²⁵³ Jacek Krupa estimates that the Senate Council met 74 times during reign of Sobieski. Jacek Krupa, “Rady senatu za Jana III Sobieskiego (1674-1699),” *Studia Historyczne* 35, no. 2 (1992): 309.

of the Sejm ending without passing the resolutions or when it was not possible to convene the Sejm at all due to, for example, a military threat.²⁵⁴ Importantly, unlike Sejm resolutions, decision undertaken during the Senate Council meetings did not have to be unanimous.²⁵⁵

During the Sejm proceedings, the Senate acted in a double role: as one of the three deliberating estates and as a royal Council.²⁵⁶ The Royal Council was “an emanation of Senate” functioning outside of the Sejm session timeframe, tasked with, most notably, organizing the Senate Council meeting and receiving foreign diplomats.²⁵⁷

Apart from participating in the Council deliberations, senators also performed the duties of residents. In accordance with the Henrician articles, senators residents (*senatorowie rezydenci*) were to constantly reside by the king, offering their advice, guaranteeing evisceration of the Sejm’s resolutions, and keeping royal power in check. They were appointed from among senators each Sejm, changing every half a year.²⁵⁸

In the second part of the seventeenth century, due to the degeneration of parliamentary practice, the role of the Senate (Senate Council and senators residents) in directing diplomacy and foreign affairs became fundamental.²⁵⁹ Senators often had a decisive voice in matters such as conducting negotiations, treaty-making, dispatching Polish-Lithuanian representatives,

²⁵⁴ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 294; Rachuba, “Osobliwości polskiej dyplomacji w okresie nowożytnym (XVI-XVIII),” 233.

²⁵⁵ When the decision was unanimous, it was noted as “*conclusum nemine contradicente*.” Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 248.

²⁵⁶ Kołodziej, “Senat jako stan sejmowy w czasach Jana III Sobieskiego,” 120.

²⁵⁷ Rachuba, “Osobliwości polskiej dyplomacji w okresie nowożytnym (XVI-XVIII),” 232–33; Kołodziej, “Senat jako stan sejmowy w czasach Jana III Sobieskiego,” 120–21.

²⁵⁸ From 1576, 16 senators residents were to be appointed from among senators at each Sejm, four of which were obliged to constantly reside with the king, changing every half a year. In 1641 the number of senators residents was established as seven. VL, vol. 2, 161; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 246.

²⁵⁹ Wójcik, “Z dziejów organizacji dyplomacji polskiej w drugiej połowie XVII wieku,” 267–68; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 246–48.

preparing instructions for them, replying to their inquiries or assigning money for diplomatic purposes.²⁶⁰

Offices entitled to a seat in a Senate were held for life, often by members of prominent families. Cases of resignations or removals from the office were rare, resulting from exceptional transgressions such as Crown Grand Treasurer Jan Andrzej Morsztyn's accusation of participation in the dethronement plot in 1683.²⁶¹

During Sobieski's reign, there were 146 senatorial offices (Catholic archbishops and bishops, voivodes, castellans, marshals, chancellors, and treasurers).²⁶² From among the so-called ministers of a senatorial estate, chancellors and marshals not only enjoyed the greatest emoluments and prestige but they also had particular competencies in the area of diplomacy.

Chancellors

In Poland-Lithuania, two Grand Chancellors—Crown and Lithuanian—held a great seal, and two Deputy Chancellors held a lesser seal. One of the Crown Chancellors was a clergyman (during Sobieski's reign, it was always a deputy chancellor). Formally, all four had identical competencies, that is, Deputy Chancellors were not subordinate to Grand Chancellors. Effectively, there was a territorial split between the Crown and Lithuanian Chancellery. Documents for the Grand Duchy were expected to be sealed by the Lithuanian Chancellors, and customarily, the Lithuanian Chancellery dealt with relations with Muscovy and Courland,

²⁶⁰ Rachuba, "Osobliwości polskiej dyplomacji w okresie nowożytnym (XVI-XVIII)," 228; Wójcik, "Z dziejów organizacji dyplomacji polskiej w drugiej połowie XVII wieku," 264.

²⁶¹ Stefan Ciara, *Senatorowie i dygnitarze koronni w drugiej połowie XVII wieku* (Wrocław-Kraków-Warszawa: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1990), 25–26.

²⁶² There were 145 senators, one less than senatorial offices, since one of the Crown's bishops was always a chancellor. During Sobieski's reign senatorial posts for Livonia (Inflanty) were discontinued. Kołodziej, "Senat jako stan sejmowy w czasach Jana III Sobieskiego," 120; Ciara, *Senatorowie i dygnitarze koronni w drugiej połowie XVII wieku*, 9.

however, not as a “main organizer of these relations.”²⁶³ What is more, while the king was staying on the territory of the Grand Duchy, the Lithuanian Chancellery took over the entirety of the Commonwealth’s affairs.

Most likely, no centralized or specialized unit dedicated to foreign affairs developed within either the Crown or the Lithuanian chancelleries,²⁶⁴ although chancellors were responsible for the whole set of elements concerning contacts with foreign partners. They supervised diplomatic correspondence, formulated instructions for Polish-Lithuanian representatives, and referred the state affairs—including foreign affairs—during Senate Councils.²⁶⁵ Chancellors also received foreign diplomats on behalf of the king at Sejms and, on occasions, headed vital missions or led peace negotiations themselves.²⁶⁶ For instance, in 1679/80 Lithuanian Chancellor Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł (1635–1680) headed the embassy of obedience to Rome; in 1685, Crown Chancellor Jan Wielopolski (1630–1688) was dispatched to France; and in 1686, Lithuanian Chancellor Marcjjan Ogiński (1632–1680) negotiated a peace treaty in Muscovy.²⁶⁷

²⁶³ That being said, it was not a fixed rule. Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 249, 253; Marius Sirutavičius, “Between the East and the West: The Evolution of Diplomacy in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland,” in *Early Modern European Diplomacy: A Handbook*, ed. Dorothee Goetze and Lena Oetzel (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 387.

²⁶⁴ “[a]t least the sources which could document the existence of such a cell have not survived to this day.” Gregorowicz, “Diplomacy of the Commonwealth, Diplomacy of the King: The Peculiarity of Foreign Policy Making in the Seventeenth Century Poland-Lithuania,” 21.

²⁶⁵ Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 249.

²⁶⁶ Wójcik, “Z dziejów organizacji dyplomacji polskiej w drugiej połowie XVII wieku,” 272–73; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 250.

²⁶⁷ Jan Jaroszek, “Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł,” in *iPSB*, Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny, accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/michal-kazimierz-radziwill-h-traby-1635-1680-hetman-polny-litewski>; Andrzej Rachuba, “Marcjan Aleksander Ogiński,” in *iPSB*, Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny, accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/marcjan-aleksander-oginski-1632-1690-kanclerz-wielki-litewski>.

Even though limited by the Senate Council, chancellors had the broadest range of diplomatic competencies performing the function of foreign ministers, overseeing the Commonwealth's foreign affairs, except the areas directly subordinated to kings and hetmans.²⁶⁸

Marshals

Just as chancellors, there were four marshals: Crown Grand Marshal, Crown Court Marshal, and their Lithuanian counterparts. Unlike Deputy Chancellors', Court Marshals' powers came into place only when the Grand Marshals were absent. Similarly, there was a territorial split between them, however, the main difference between the two ministerial offices—marshals and chancellors—was that the former had a spatial limitation. Chancellors could (and often did) send their seals to authenticate documents if necessary, but marshals' powers could be exercised only in the king's presence.²⁶⁹

Grand Marshal's chief responsibilities were to ensure the security and maintain order in the king's place of residence, which effectively made it the most important executive office in the Commonwealth, certainly the one with the broadest range of competencies.²⁷⁰ From the perspective of diplomatic organization, it matters that the Grand Marshal, acting as a master of ceremony, was in charge of everyday court etiquette as well as organizing and supervising the course of special occasions such as the reception of foreign diplomats. The Grand Marshal issued letters of passage (*literae passus*), assigned the place of their stay and lodging, made

²⁶⁸ Zarzycki, *Dyplomacja hetmanów w dawnej Polsce*, 8–14; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 272.

²⁶⁹ The fact that the marshal's mace was ceremonially broken at the king's funeral emphasized this direct link between royal authority and the marshal's office. The mace symbolized royal authority extending, to a certain degree, to the marshal's office. Krzysztof Wiśniewski, *Urząd Marszałkowski koronny w bezkrólewskich XVII-XVIII wieku* (Warszawa: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2015), 197–99, 387.

²⁷⁰ Besides being the head of the Grand Marshal's guard, they were responsible for administering of the court, parliamentary (functioning of the Sejm), and judiciary matters. For organization and administration scheme of the Grand Marshal office, see Wiśniewski, 456.

decisions authorizing audiences and set their times, as well as discussed the ceremonial of reception with foreign representatives.

Was the Grand Marshal responsible for providing the food and drinks for foreign legations? There is no definite answer, as there was no separate central institution dealing with the reception of arriving diplomats. Instead, many actors with overlapping competencies participated in the process. For instance, Marius Sirutavičius points out that it was treasurers (acting on the monarch's instructions) who "received complex tasks when organizing the 'servicing' of foreign diplomatic missions," which included "supplying the traveling embassies with food, fodder, and preparation of accommodation for the entire journey throughout the entire country."²⁷¹ I could find no paper trail documenting such a decision chain, however, the king's disposition indeed played a significant role, especially when receiving higher-ranking diplomats. During Sobieski's reign, this expectation appears to have been particularly relevant in relations with Muscovy. For example, in 1686. Jan (Ignacy) Jeziorkowski, Standard-bearer of Różan, was instructed by the king to spare no expense and prepare everything for the embassy of Boris Sheremetev.²⁷² However, it was not Jeziorkowski who brought the food and drink sent from the royal table, but Grzegorz and Bogusław Ogińscy, young relatives of Chancellor of Lithuania Marcján Ogiński, ambassador to Moscow in 1686.²⁷³

The Grand Marshal was undoubtedly expected to host foreign representatives. For example, in 1693, Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski entertained Karl Ferdinand Waldstein, imperial envoy

²⁷¹ Sirutavičius, "Between the East and the West: The Evolution of Diplomacy in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland," 387.

²⁷² "do przyjmowania i traktowania poselstwa przydany." After Aleksander Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera"* (Lwów: Z drukarni Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich we Lwowie, 1925), 7. Also Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski refers to this practice, or rather expectation for royal dispositions being made in this regard. BCzart, TN 177, nr 314, "Relacja Poselstwa od Króla Jmci Jana III y od Rzeczypospolitej z Sejmu Grodzieńskiego ordynowana przez nas Cypriana Pawła Brzostowskiego Referendarza W. Xięstwa Litewskiego....," 1457.

²⁷³ Koczegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680-1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym*, 570.

extraordinary, at his residency in Jazdów, fulfilling the ministerial duties, given that Lubomirski's pro-French sympathies were well-known.²⁷⁴

Krzysztof Wiśniewski notices that although the competencies of marshals pertaining to managing the mundane and ceremonial aspects of receiving foreign diplomats were rather arduous duties, not offering many opportunities to influence the direction of foreign affairs, the marshal could in fact use his office to do so, albeit to a limited extent.²⁷⁵ Namely, the Grand Marshal was the one who stayed in close contact with foreign representatives on the Polish-Lithuanian territory, regulating their access to the king and regulating the access of others to them. More interestingly, the Grand Marshal could purposefully omit specific details while discussing the ceremony to be followed during the audience or use the ceremony itself for political ends (usually to arouse resentment against a specific diplomat).²⁷⁶ For example, it is not clear whether the Swedish legation at the Election Sejm in 1632 was not informed about the ceremonial in sufficient detail by the Grand Marshal or whether the Swedish representative decided not to tilt his hat when mentioning *Res Publica* during the audience as a response to precedence given to the imperial legation.²⁷⁷ In either case, the Polish-Lithuanian political nation gathered in Wola, near Warsaw, was agitated and remained averse to the Swedish proposals.

Ceremonial for receiving foreign diplomats in Poland-Lithuania was never codified, therefore, in order to establish what was considered appropriate conduct, it is necessary to refer to relations describing specific cases. Marshals themselves collected relations of foreign receptions in so-called marshals' codices (*kodeksy marszałkowskie*) or ceremonial books, which can be

²⁷⁴ Hundert, "Marszałek wielki koronny Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski wobec sejmu 1683 roku i problemu wojny z Portą Osmańską," 230.

²⁷⁵ Wiśniewski, *Urząd Marszałkowski koronny w bezkrólewicach XVII-XVIII wieku*, 224.

²⁷⁶ Wiśniewski, 203, 223.

²⁷⁷ The incident is mentioned by Wiśniewski, 222–23.

considered as a blueprint for the reception of different foreign representatives. Although merely a couple of pages of such relations can be connected to the Grand Marshal of the Crown during the reign of Sobieski, Lubomirski enjoyed considerable personal authority and was regarded as an expert in these matters, being approached with inquiries regarding ceremonial and protocol.²⁷⁸

Like with many institutions in Poland-Lithuania, the effectiveness of the office depended on the individual holding it. Certainly, the institutional layout cannot be disregarded, but the real possibilities of playing a role in the decision-making process become evident only with such “extraconstitutional factors” as authority or personal political influence.²⁷⁹

The king

In the power structure of Poland-Lithuania, the king was only one of the authorities in charge of foreign policy and diplomacy. Formally, royal diplomatic prerogatives were limited, however, as Zbigniew Wójcik emphasized, the actual scope of the monarch’s power depended greatly on his ability to influence senators and ministers and thereby have an impact on the decision of the Sejm or Senate Council.²⁸⁰ In particular, the king’s right to nominate for offices (*ius distributivum*) was used to shape the composition of the Senate and Senate Council. Also, the right to appoint members of Sejm commissions from the Senate could ensure the passing of favorable laws. For example, during the Sejm of 1683, Sobieski’s nominating policy, as well

²⁷⁸ Wiśniewski, 197, 206.

²⁷⁹ Gregorowicz, “Diplomacy of the Commonwealth, Diplomacy of the King: The Peculiarity of Foreign Policy Making in the Seventeenth Century Poland-Lithuania,” 27; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 244.

²⁸⁰ Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 244; Kalinowska, “‘Ja jednak posła wyprawię...’ Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.,” 57–58, 60; Czapliński, “Sejm w latach 1587-1696,” 286.

as control over the commission for examining senators' correspondence with foreign princes, contributed to thwarting the plans of the opposition.²⁸¹

Further, through legations sent during the pre-Sejm campaign and royal proposals presented at the Sejm's inauguration, the king could determine the subject matter to be discussed during the Sejm.²⁸² Apart from the initiative in foreign policy, Sobieski drafted his own projects to be taken into consideration, like in 1679 when he suggested solutions to defense and peace issues with the Porte.²⁸³

Sobieski, who before his coronation held offices of Grand Crown Marshal and Grand Crown Hetman, was well aware of the possibilities and limitations coming with the throne of Poland-Lithuania. The imprecise or vague wording of legal acts left some room for maneuver, but he went a step further. Sobieski's so-called Baltic policy was founded on an attempt to bypass the Sejm and Senate Council entirely. Treaties of Yavoriv (Яворів, Jaworów) (1675) and Gdańsk (1677) with France and Sweden were signed without the consent or knowledge of "the two nations," which is the most striking example of the secret royal diplomacy parallel to that conducted on behalf of the *Res Publica*.²⁸⁴

Hetmans

Crown and Lithuanian Grand Hetmans, deputized by Field Hetmans, were commanders-in-chief of regular troops, but they also had vast diplomatic prerogatives in relations with the Sublime Porte, Crimea Khanate, Danuban Principalities, Muscovy, as well as Sweden and Brandenburg. Hetmanship tended to be granted to members of magnate families who owned

²⁸¹ Kołodziej, "Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 310; Stoliczka, "Rozdawnictwo wakansów przez Jana III jako metoda tworzenia partii dworskiej," 363–65.

²⁸² Kołodziej, "Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 310.

²⁸³ Kołodziej, 306.

²⁸⁴ Gregorowicz, "Diplomacy of the Commonwealth, Diplomacy of the King: The Peculiarity of Foreign Policy Making in the Seventeenth Century Poland-Lithuania," 27; Komarzyński, *Jan III Sobieski a Bałtyk*, 80–118.

their vast estates close to the Eastern and South-Eastern frontiers of Poland-Lithuania, and Field Hetmans were expected to remain in their proximity constantly.²⁸⁵

The growth of the hetman's role in Poland-Lithuania's diplomacy was closely connected with warfare and external threats in the seventeenth century.²⁸⁶ They were entitled to sign treaties in the name of the king and the Commonwealth, send their own representatives, and control the mission sent to the neighboring countries (particularly to the Porte and Khanate). Moreover, hetmans were not only members of Sejm commissions preparing instructions for diplomats but could supplement instructions prepared by the Crown or Lithuanian chancelleries.²⁸⁷

During the period of Sobieski's hetmanship, hetman's diplomacy, with established ranks and extended apparatus, may have even carried "the burden of responsibility for the fate of the state."²⁸⁸ However, there were also many cases of abuses of hetman's power, including entering into secret treaties and deciding matters within the purview of the Sejm contrary to Poland-Lithuania's interest.

The acceptance of a high degree of liberty in maintaining diplomatic relations by hetmans—and more broadly by dignitaries and officials in Poland-Lithuania—connects closely with the understanding of *ius legationis*.

²⁸⁵ Zarzycki, *Dyplomacja hetmanów w dawnej Polsce*, 10.

²⁸⁶ The fact that Jan Zamoyski and Stanisław Żółkiewski were both hetmans and chancellors is not without significance. Also, the growing role of hetmans in diplomacy is sometimes connected with frequent relations with Ottoman officials who saw in hetmans their counterparts, having the right to negotiate. Zarzycki, 20; Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699)," 253.

²⁸⁷ Zarzycki, *Dyplomacja hetmanów w dawnej Polsce*, 32.

²⁸⁸ Notably, the Treaty of Pidhaitsi (Підгайці, Podhajce) of 1667 was concluded in the name of the king and the Commonwealth by Jan Sobieski, then Field Crown Hetman, after defeating Tatar and Cossack forces. Zarzycki, 38–39.

Ius legationis

The right to send and receive diplomatic representatives was shared between the Crown and the Grand Duchy. It was foremost related to the person of the king (at the same time Grand Duke) and deliberating estates, but it also could be exercised by the Primate (during *interregna*), hetmans, princes of dependent territories (Courland), or cities (such as Hanseatic Gdańsk). Theoretically—in some form—it was available to everyone who considered it necessary to act.²⁸⁹ As a result, magnates exploited the vague rules to embark on their own relations with foreign princes, particularly during royal elections but also in parallel to diplomacy administrated by the Senate and king. This “quasi-diplomatic activity” of magnates sometimes led to severe consequences, such as severing relations due to tsar’s titulature used in correspondence with Muscovite diplomats.²⁹⁰

Importantly, the broad interpretation of the right of representation extended to Poland-Lithuania’s foreign partners so that it was granted to, for example, Crimean khans, hospodars of Moldavia, and Walachia, or princes of Transylvania.²⁹¹ The difference lay in the less solemn ceremonial accompanying the reception of their representatives.

The representatives sent from the Cossacks’ army constitute a particular case. Traces of them being regularly received are to be found in the Crown Treasury Archive, and it seems that sometimes they are considered to be legates in diplomatic function, sometimes in internal politics, and sometimes it is not possible to determine their character altogether since the

²⁸⁹ The view seems to be changing in the eighteenth century under the influence of foreign theoretical literature. Nahlik, *Narodziny nowożytnej dyplomacji*, 47; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 258–59; Kalinowska, “‘Ja jednak posła wyprawę...’ Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.,” 55.

²⁹⁰ Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 260; Kalinowska, “‘Ja jednak posła wyprawę...’ Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.,” 55–56.

²⁹¹ Kalinowska, “‘Ja jednak posła wyprawę...’ Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.,” 55; Nahlik, *Narodziny nowożytnej dyplomacji*, 45–47; Zarzycki, *Dyplomacja hetmanów w dawnej Polsce*, 104.

accounts contain spending on both internal and external legations (to the army and provincial dietines), and words *poseł* as well as *legatus* used in the documents could mean both if not specified. Regardless, the understanding of *ius legationis* was not limited to the king himself, resonated well with the language, and seems to be linked to the phenomenon of “decentralization of sovereignty” in Poland-Lithuania.²⁹²

Dispatching the representatives

Ranks

Reflecting the character of the political system, the highest rank diplomats in Poland-Lithuania represented the king and the Republic. Since the Union of Lublin, diplomats could be dispatched from Poland-Lithuania only “with knowledge and joint Council of both nations,”²⁹³ and in most cases, one diplomat represented the king and the Commonwealth, understood implicitly as the Crown and the Grand Duchy together. Customarily, double-headed grand embassies were sent to Muscovy, with one ambassador from the Crown and one from the Grand Duchy, although it happened that as many three ambassadors—two from the Grand Duchy and one from the Crown—were dispatched.²⁹⁴

Posłowie (*principales oratores, legati, legati extraordinarii et plenipotentarii*) were sent to foreign princes to negotiate matters of utmost importance (truces, peace treaties, alliances, and so forth), while commissaries conducted talks with foreign diplomats during an ongoing war or truce. Commissions, unlike embassies, met at the borders and had a reduced ceremonial setting.

²⁹² Nahlik, 47.

²⁹³ VL, vol. 2, 90.

²⁹⁴ Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 270; Henryk Wisner, “Dyplomacja polska w latach 1572-1648,” in *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, ed. Józef Andrzej Gierowski et al., vol. 2: 1572-1795 (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1982), 134.

Most notably, due to circumstances in which the commission functioned, the role of the host was unfilled, and the hospitality element of diplomatic encounters—such as banquets or food provisions—was omitted.

In relations with Muscovy, the Sublime Porte, and Crimean Khanate *posłowie* and *komisarze* were often described as *wielcy* (grand) which seems to be motivated by the willingness to confirm the prestige of delegated Polish-Lithuanian diplomats since grand ambassador was not a separate rank, but an equivalent within the highest tier.²⁹⁵

Another particular feature that should be noted is connected with the language of diplomatic exchange. While Latin was the working language in relations with the Porte, Polish played this role in relations with Muscovy. However, one notices the existence of a certain sociolect in Polish language documents prepared for the eyes of Muscovite counterparts and internal use as well: negotiations are called *rozhowory*, letters a *hramoty*, and the tsar and the king are referred to as *gosudar* or *hospodar*—all lexical borrowings. This phenomenon can be interpreted as one of the shreds of evidence for the considerable agility of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy, showing a range of practices reserved for relations with specific foreign partners, going beyond typical reciprocity.²⁹⁶

The second highest rank in Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy was a royal *poseł* or *posłannik* (*ablegatus*). He could not enter into agreements or sign treaties since he was not equipped with the credential letter and plenipotentiary powers from the Republic (that is, the Sejm and Senate), but the king's instruction alone (or "information" which was a document of a lesser weight).

²⁹⁵ The same practice seems to be followed by, for example, the imperial diplomacy. Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699)," 264; Nahlik, *Narodziny nowożytnej dyplomacji*, 117.

²⁹⁶ Aleksander Czołowski, discussing a rota (text of the oath) prepared by the embassy of Krzysztof Grzymułtowski and Marcejan Ogiński to Muscovy in 1686, points out that it was "linguistically adapted to the concept of Muscovite diplomacy." For example, the rota refers to Jan III as "wielki hospodar," it also mentions "królewskie wielichestwo." Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 19.

Apart from envoys, the king could also dispatch residents, for which he did not need to seek the consent of the Senate. In Western and South-Western Europe (The Hague or Rome, for instance), a royal resident's function was close to that of an agent, as he mainly tended to the king's private matters. In contrast, those residents sent to Moscow and Istanbul were entrusted with a broader range of tasks. Because the latter were also paid from the public treasury and dealt with matters falling within Poland-Lithuania's foreign affairs, it is not always easy to determine whether a royal resident represented the king only or the king and the Commonwealth, however unofficially.²⁹⁷

A notable expansion of the institution of (royal) residents—in practice an essential part of the unofficial policy of the kings—can be noted during Sobieski's reign, including Jerzy Dominik Dowmont's, and Paweł Świdorski's posts in Moscow, Daniel Salomon's in Hamburg, Jan Kazimierz Denhoff's in Rome, Samuel Proski's in Istanbul and then later in Vienna.²⁹⁸ Anna Kalinowska suggests that the growing acceptance of this form of diplomacy was due to the fact that its advantages were, to a certain degree, recognized by Poland-Lithuania's political nation. No less significant seems to be the efforts to limit the king's discretion in this matter by demanding greater involvement in supervising residents' activities.²⁹⁹

The reluctance to establish permanent embassies stemmed partly from the tendency to mitigate royal powers, since residents were initially financed and appointed by the king. However, there were other factors in play as well. For example, in 1623, Krzysztof Serebkowicz declined the

²⁹⁷ Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699)," 272–73; Kalinowska, "'Ja jednak posła wyprawię...' Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.," 65.

²⁹⁸ Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699)," 270–72; Kalinowska, "'Ja jednak posła wyprawię...' Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.," 68–69. See also biograms: Kazimierz Piwarski, "Jerzy Dominik Dowmont," in *PSB* (Wrocław-Kraków-Warszawa: PAU-PAN-Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1939–1946); Andrzej Rachuba, "Paweł Świdorski," in *PSB* (Wrocław-Kraków-Warszawa: PAU-PAN-Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 2016); Adam Przyboś, "Samuel Proski," in *iPSB* Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny, accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/samuel-proski-z-kosieczyna-h-samson>.

²⁹⁹ Kalinowska, "'Ja jednak posła wyprawię...' Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.," 66–68.

Grand Vizier's request to remain as a resident in Istanbul, explaining that it would be not only a practice against the established custom but also a practice that would diminish the prestige of Poland-Lithuania:

it is a waste to talk about it which has never been the case and will not be now, we stick to the old customs ... For if you place us equally with the foreign legates, you do us harm, for they rather live at in the Porte for their trade and commerce, and not for any legation.³⁰⁰

Further reservations connected with the treatment a resident would have to endure during his mission. Besides the humiliation of having to follow ceremonial while engaging with the Ottoman officials and dignitaries, matters of safety and personal integrity of a diplomat were of concern.

In general, the diplomatic ranks and hierarchy of embassies in Poland-Lithuania corresponded to the broader European trends, though retaining characteristic features resulting from the specificity of Poland-Lithuania's political system. Apart from diplomats representing the king and/or the Commonwealth, some ranks, such as hetman's residents, had no equivalents.

Hetman's residents—often numbering two—were sent to Istanbul, Iași, Bucharest, or Bakhchysarai (Bağçasaray, Бахчисарай), as well as to Cossack hetmans and tsar's army, usually staying for the period of two years or longer.³⁰¹ Unlike the residents of the king and/or *Res Publica*, they were received with lesser honors and were not entitled to customary food and drink provisions.³⁰²

Apart from residents, hetmans could also appoint legates and commissaries (*posłowie i komisarze hetmańscy*), agents, colonel commissaries (*komisarze pulkownicy*), or ablegates

³⁰⁰ "szkoda o tym mówić, czego nie bywało nigdy y teraz nie będzie, my się trzymamy starych zwyczajów. ... Bo jeśli nas kładziecie z Posłami Cudzoziemskimi równo, krzywdę nam czynicie, gdyż oni raczej dla handlów y kupiectwa swego u Porty mieszkają, a nie dla żadnego poselstwa." AGAD, LL 30, "Relacja Krzysztofa Serebkowica Posłannika JKM do Porty Tureckiej," 45v. Quoted also by Wisner, "Dyplomacja polska w latach 1572-1648," 142.

³⁰¹ Zarzycki, *Dyplomacja hetmanów w dawnej Polsce*, 79–80.

³⁰² Zarzycki, 79–80, 82.

(*posłańcy*), not to mention relying on a number of lower rank functionaries such as couriers and translators.³⁰³

Hetman diplomacy complemented that administrated by the king and Senate. Sobieski—perhaps due to his own experience as a hetman—was keenly interested in its efficient operations: in the letter to Field Crown Hetman Dymitr Jerzy Wiśniowiecki from 1675, he recommended that two “capable and reasonable” residents be dispatched to Grigory Grigoryevich Romodanovsky, commander of the Muscovite army, and to Ivan Samoylovych, the Hetman of Left-bank Ukraine, “so that they could reliably warn us about everything and keep the correspondence in order.”³⁰⁴

A special case connecting hetman diplomacy with the ceremonial of receiving foreign representatives in Poland-Lithuania was the rank of *przystaw* (*przystawowie* in plural). Particularly in relations with Muscovy, the Sublime Porte, and the Crimean Khanate, incoming embassies were escorted from and to Poland-Lithuania’s border by them.³⁰⁵ According to Wacław Zarzycki, at least at the beginning of the eighteenth century, one *przystaw* (superintendent) seems to be appointed by the hetman, usually from officers subordinate to him, and one *przystaw* (*provisor, dispensator*) responsible for the finance side of the journey was delegated by a treasurer.³⁰⁶ However, just like the challenge of identifying those responsible for providing food and drink for foreign representatives—and it is precisely diplomats to whom *przystawowie* were appointed—the order of command is difficult to trace in this case as well. The lists of Sejm accounts sometimes name only one *przystaw*. For example, the accounts from

³⁰³ For more details on hetman’s diplomatic organization and ranks, see Zarzycki, 72–73.

³⁰⁴ “Więc że na listy spuszczać się późno, zdałoby nam się, abyś WW dwóch towarzystwa sprawnych i rozumnych na rezydencję, tak do Romadanowskiego, jako z osobna i do Samojłowicza wyprawił, by nas rzetelnie o wszystkich przestrzegać mogli i korespondencji między WW a hetmanami tamecznymi pilnowali.” Sobieski to Dymitr Wiśniowiecki, 10 July, 1675, after Zarzycki, 82.

³⁰⁵ Ambassadors representing different European princes were met by Polish-Lithuanian dignitaries, especially when arriving on a special mission, like for example imperial ambassador Karl Ferdinand Waldstein in 1691.

³⁰⁶ Zarzycki, *Dyplomacja hetmanów w dawnej Polsce*, 85.

1688 mention a *przystaw* appointed for Muscovite legates, specifying he was a royal courtier (*dworzanin JKM*), which could also suggest Sobieski himself was involved in the process.³⁰⁷

Documentation

It was assumed that the highest-ranking diplomats in Poland-Lithuania should be chosen during the Sejm. A good illustration of this practice is a mention from protocols of the Senate Council meetings taking place in 1677, explaining a delay in dispatching a grand embassy to Muscovy, explicitly mentioning as one of the reasons that it would be more appropriate to wait for the General Sejm to be in session to appoint an embassy from there.³⁰⁸

The set of documents for diplomats send abroad was prepared by the chancellery and consisted of instruction—or instructions if the king added a separate one—credential letter and plenipotentiary powers from the king, credential letter and plenipotentiary powers from the Senate, and a royal passport (*literae passus*). In practice, credential letters explaining the reasons for sending the legation and plenipotentiary powers describing the scope of the legate's authorization were often issued in the name of the king and *Res Publica* together. Also, supplementary instruction from hetmans could be prepared for legation dispatched to Poland-Lithuania's Eastern or South-Eastern neighbors.

The instructions, drafted by appointed Sejm commissions or Senate Councils, tend to be quite detailed, sometimes consisting of the speech a diplomat would give during his audience. From 1668, diplomats returning from their missions—particularly (grand) ambassadors—were obliged to present relations and swear that they did not act against their instructions. In the

³⁰⁷ AGAD, ASK II, 71, *Porachowanie skarbowe p. Zamoyskiego podskarbiego W.M. z sukcesorami p. Plaskowskiego pisarza starszego skarbu Rzplitej Kor[onnego]*, 22.

³⁰⁸ BCzart, 1696 IV, *Za panowania Jana III, Augustów i Stanisława Augusta senatus consilia*, 7-8.

absence of the head of the embassy, caused by a grave illness or death, the secretary stepped in.³⁰⁹

Abroad, secretaries of the embassy (*secretarii legationis*) were responsible for, among other things, the first contact with the foreign court, presenting the credential letters, editing and revising agreements. They were always among the members of embassies negotiating or confirming treaties and often authored relations.

These ambassadorial relations were usually prepared based on the general diary of the embassy, written regularly, containing more details, and—if possible—regularly sent back to Poland-Lithuania to the king and senators to keep them informed. General diaries of the embassy were public documents that should be distinguished from diaries written by a member of the embassy (sometimes having more of a travel writing character) or descriptions of solemn entry, reception audience, and following banquet (usually highly conventional), which were meant for circulation among a wider (often foreign) public. Each of these types of sources is central to my dissertation. They all originated in a context where the expression of status and splendor conveyed through the material setting of a diplomatic encounter held significant importance, nonetheless, each has its specificity. Diaries and relations of embassies serve as the primary narrative sources for retrieving details on food and drink offered to Polish-Lithuanian diplomats during their missions abroad. And it is clear that food and drink was considered worthy of reporting, sometimes with surprising particularity. However, to understand the purpose of including such details and find the key to interpreting them, it is vital to understand the character of these documents.

³⁰⁹ Relations of Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł embassy to Rome, as well as Krzysztof Grzymułtowski and Marcin Ogiński's embassy to Moscow at the Sejms of 1681 and 1689 were delivered by the secretaries, Marcin Oborski and Władysław Przyjemski respectively. Kołodziej, "*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 270.

From the 1670s onwards—due to the requirement for ambassadors to publicly (at Sejm or Senate Council) present the relation from their missions, which was included in Wiśniowiecki's and Sobieski's *pacta conventa*—it is possible to trace significant changes in the form and content of diaries and relations of embassies. These changes are perhaps most visible in the example of general diaries and relations of the Polish-Lithuanian grand embassies sent to the Sublime Porte. Basically, the accounts from before 1677 (that is, before Voivode Jan Gninski's embassy) were mostly a case of what Tetiana Grygorieva calls “imagined diplomacy,” with Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors following “stable (although unrealistic) storylines in their accounts, creating an impression of authenticity and telling the reader how they should imagine ambassadorial performance in Istanbul.”³¹⁰ The storylines, sometimes in verse, included claims that the ambassadors, for example, greeted the sultan by nodding or talked freely with him during the audience. And when it came to food and drink, it was judged tasteless, offered at an inappropriate time, and served on the floor. The diary of Wojciech Miaskowski's embassy in 1640 contains an extensive catalog of these tropes:

We were all ordered to sit for a banquet and eat ... Yet we did not want to eat because it was very early ... [w]e had to not scorn their humanity and imperial hospitality, eat whatever, even if nothing was tasty. These dishes were at this banquet: 1. Entire chicken fried in borsch, 2. Chickens baked the other way, 3. Mutton for broth, 4. Sweet yellow rice, 5. Rice groats. [Only] these five dishes [were put] on the table, or rather on the floor, although on the platters, but it is all the same. ... We barely stepped away from [our] places, the chaush, janissaries immediately [came] after our unfinished dishes, pushing each other, so their caps were falling into the soup and groats, like dogs or worse, they grabbed [the food]. It was like when the common hounds are released after sighthounds.³¹¹

³¹⁰ Tetiana Grygorieva, “Imagined Diplomacy: Ottoman Palace Ceremonial Translated and Edited by Polish Lithuanian Ambassadors,” *Archivum Ottomanicum* 35 (2018): 65.

³¹¹ “Kazano nam do owego bankietu wszystkim nam sieć i jeść naszej wszystkiej czeladzi. Choć się nam nie chciało jeść, bo bardzo rano, ledwo godzina na dzień była, a jeszcze w dzień niedzielny. Musieliśmy ich ludzkością i cesarską nie gardzić, jeść cokolwiek choć nic smacznego nie było. Takie potrawy tego bankietu były: 1. Kury całkiem w barszczy smażone, 2. Kury drugie pieczone, 3. Baranina do rosółu, 4. Ryż żółto z cukrem słodko, 5. Ryżowa kasza. Te pięć potraw na całym stole, abo raczej ziemi wszystko były, choć na różnych półmiskach, ale toż jedno wszystko. Po tym bankiecie chcieliśmy zaraz wstać razem wszyscy, ale nas pasza jeden przestrzegł mówiąc: ‘Po jednemu wstawajcie, bo wam janczarowie pobryzgają suknie.’ My po jednemu wstawając ledwośmy ustąpili z miejsca, zaraz czausowie, janczarowie po półmiskach, cośmy nie dojedli, jeden drugiego pchali, aż czapki im i zawoje w polewkę, w kaszę wpadywały, jak psi i gorzej rwali. Właśnie to było, jako kiedy ogarów do tłuszczy po chartach wpuszczą.” Adam Przyboś, ed., “Diariusz drogi tureckiej,” in *Wielka legacja Wojciecha Miaskowskiego do Turcji w 1640 r.* (Warszawa-Kraków: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1985), 145.

Notably, Gniński, whose embassy to Istanbul will be discussed in the following chapters, remarked on the low informative quality of his predecessors' reports.³¹²

Financing

The embassies dispatched to Muscovy, the Sublime Porte, and Rome during Sobieski's reign were the most expensive in Polish-Lithuanian history. While the embassies to the Porte and Muscovy were sent to negotiate peace treaties with tremendous consequences for Poland-Lithuania foreign policy, the embassy to Rome was an embassy of obedience,³¹³ and therefore had foremost a prestigious goal. In all cases, considerable spending was devoted to representative purposes, as the rationality of ceremonial and display in diplomacy was clearly understood. Gniński's instruction stated it being "non ad luxum, sed ad decentiam," and later, the voivode refused to send ahead the carriages with goods taken for the way, explaining that would turn him from the ambassador to a mere resident.³¹⁴

There seems to be an overall understanding of spending money for representation purposes, although there was repeated criticism of funding legations with money intended for the army.³¹⁵ The main problem was, however, the lack of a fixed fund for diplomacy.

Because of constant deficiency in the treasury, Polish-Lithuanian diplomats often received only assurance from the king and/or Senate before their missions, having to put their own money upfront. An assurance for Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł from Sobieski, dated from the Sejm of

³¹²AGAD, AR II, Supplement, 649 G (I), *Diariusz poselstwa polskiego do Wielkiej Porty 1677 r.*

³¹³ Geoff R. Berridge and Lorna Lloyd, "Embassy of Obedience," in *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy* (Houndmills-New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 134–35.

³¹⁴ "Odpowiedziałem, że ciężarów przed sobą wyprawić nie myślę ani mogę, bo bym się z posła wielkiego w rezydenta obróci." "Relacja poselska i dyariusz," 164. (R)

³¹⁵ Kalinowska, "Ja jednak posła wyprawię..." *Spółeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.*, 71; Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699)," 303–9.

1678/1679, is an excellent example of this practice, additionally highlighting the reputation of the Commonwealth being at stake. It reads as follows:

When, in accordance with the previous Sejm's resolution, we appointed the Honorable Prince Michał Radziwiłł, Deputy Chancellor and Field Hetman of Lithuania, for a legation to the Holy Father, the Christian Emperor, Venetian Republic, and Duke of Florence, for which the Crown Treasury *ad prasens* could not cover the costs, only for the sum of ten thousand red *złoty*, which is one hundred thousand in *moneta currentis*, and with the Honorable Prince Deputy Chancellor it was agreed [to pay him] two times one hundred thousand; therefore, the remaining sum of eighty thousand *złoty* may be taken by the said Honorable Deputy Chancellor from the sums *pro Rep[ublica]* or if this does not happen, we assure the said Honorable Deputy Chancellor that during the next Sejm, God willing, we will ask the estates of the Commonwealth to compensate the said sum of eighty thousand, which is currently missing ... on account of Treasury deficiency [and is thus unavailable] to further the Commonwealth's reputation. Which for greater significance, we sign with our hand and order to be sealed.³¹⁶

Importantly, the Sejm accounts regularly list entries for diplomacy, confirming that the diplomats were eventually reimbursed, even though many a time years after the missions, and sometimes only partially in relation to their actual spending: Gniński was compensated with amount of 170 000 *złoty* (*bona moneta*) in 1678/9, and 120 000 *złoty* eventually were paid for the Radziwiłł's embassy in 1681.³¹⁷

Representatives from the Grand Duchy to Muscovy were directed to the Lithuanian Treasurer to collect monies allocated for their missions.³¹⁸ Unfortunately, the Lithuanian records survived

³¹⁶ "Gdy stosując się do uchwały Seymu przeszłego użyliśmy Wielmożnego Xięcia Michała Radziwiłła Podkanclerzego y Hetmana Polnego WXL na Legati do Oyca Świętego Cesarza Jmci Chrześcianańskiego, Rzptej Weneckiej, y Xcia Jmci Florenckiego, na które względem kosztu zdobyć się Skarb Koronny *ad prasens* nie mógł, tylko na sumę dziesięciu tysięcy czerwonych złotych, która wynosi sto dwadzieścia tysięcy złotych *moneta currentis*, a z Wielmożnym Xciem Podkanclerzem na dwa kroć sto tysięcy *contentum*; tedy *restantem* osiemdziesiąt tysięcy złotych sumę albo pomienionemu Wielmożnemu Podkanclerzemu z sum *pro Rep.* uproszonych wziąć sobie wolno będzie, a bo jeśliby do tego nie przyszło, asecurujemy pomienionego Wielmożnego Podkanclerzego, że się na przyszłym da Bóg Seymie u Stanów Rzptej starać będziemy, aby pomieniona osiemdziesiąt tysięcy *summa*, którego do dwa kroć stu tysięcy *ad prasens ob defectum* Skarbu nie dobiera do dalszego Rzptej respectu kompensowana była. Co dla lepszej wagi ręką swą podpisujemy, y pieczęć przycisnąć rozkazujemy." AGAD, AR II, Suplement, 649 M, *Konsens Króla Jana III Sobieskiego, aby Michał Radziwiłł podkanclerzy litewski pobrał ze skarbu koronnego sumę, którą musiał wydać na odprawienie swej legacji.*

³¹⁷ Wójcik, "Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699)," 304–5. *Bona moneta* (or *złoty*) was worth around 52–55 *groszy*. During the Sobieski's reign a barrel of "Warsaw beer" (*piwo warszawskie*) cost on average between 90 and 135 *groszy*. After Władysław Adameczyk, *Ceny w Warszawie w XVI i XVII wieku* (Lwów-Warszawa: skład główny Kasa im. J. Mianowskiego, Instytut Popierania Polskiej Twórczości Naukowej, 1938), 21ff. According to calculations by Robert Kołodziej, the cost of living for a noble deputy during the Sejm in Warsaw for six weeks was around 1500–2000 *złoty*. See his "Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot". *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2014), 133.

³¹⁸ In their instructions, legates chosen for embassies to Muscovy are directed to the Lithuanian Treasurer. Wójcik, "Z dziejów organizacji dyplomacji polskiej w drugiej połowie XVII wieku," 288.

only in a few fragments, making it impossible to see a more complete picture. However, it is known that for the embassy to Muscovy in 1685, Voivode Marcjan Ogiński received 176 994 *złoty*. In comparison, Voivode Michał Czarторыski, grand ambassador to Muscovy from the Crown in 1678, received 100 000 *złoty*.³¹⁹

(Grand) embassies required considerably higher expenditures than commissions. Although the latter operated for a significant stretch of time, they did not go hand in hand with an elaborate ceremonial. Certain sums were also allocated for residents. Świdorski, for his stay in Moscow, received 21 800 *złoty* (from the Lithuanian treasury), Dowmont 12 000 *złoty* yearly. Further, Proski was paid 48 500 *złoty* for his mission in Istanbul, and while in Vienna, he was given a salary for four and a half years equal to 120 000 *złoty*.³²⁰

Apart from spending on embassies sent from Poland-Lithuania, the Crown treasury bore the expenses for the provisions for foreign legates. The receipts for expenses incurred in hosting “Muscovite, Turkish, Persian, Multan, Moldavian, Wallachian, Cossack, and Tatar” diplomats—as they are often referred to in the list of Sejm accounts—not only provide a glimpse into the daily operations, more mundane side of diplomatic practice, but also, they seem to be in many cases the only trace of envoys and messengers arriving to Poland-Lithuania from East and South-East.³²¹ Their significance will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

³¹⁹ Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 305.

³²⁰ Wójcik, 306.

³²¹ The list of Sejm accounts sometimes include these expenses under simply “provisions for different foreign envoys and their usual *Contentatie*” (“Na Prowizje różnych Posłów Cudzoziemskich y ich zwyczajne *Contentatie*”), but more often they specify from where the envoys came from, with just a slight variation (“Na Prowizje różnych Posłów Moskiewskich, Perskich, Tureckich, Tatarskich, Wołoskich, Multańskich, Kozackich y ich zwyczajne *Contentatie*,” “Na prowizje różnych Posłów Moskiewskich, Kozackich, Tureckich, Tatarskich y ich zwyczajne *Contentatie*,” “Na prowizje różnych Posłów Cudzoziemskich to jest Moskiewskich, Węgierskich, Wołoskich, Multańskich, Kozackich, Tureckich, Tatarskich y ich zwyczajne *Contentatie*”). Cf. AGAD, ASK II, 64, *Rachunki generalne sejmowe na sejm walny grodzieński pro die 12 Decembris w roku 1678 złożone*, 113; 66, *Rachunki generalne sejmowe anno 1683*, 22; 68, *Rachunki sejmowe na sejm 1685*, 20; 71, *Porachowanie skarbowe p. Zamoyskiego podskarbiego W.M. z sukcesorami p. Plaskowskiego pisarza starszego skarbu Rzplitej*

Receiving foreign representatives

Major decisions regarding diplomacy had to be undertaken during the Sejm, which prompted foreign princes to ensure their representatives regularly showed up in Warsaw, Grodno, or Cracow.³²² Sometimes, the fact that an embassy was expected could even influence the Sejm date—in 1678, an argument used for favoring an earlier date was the anticipated arrival of tsar’s representatives.³²³

Foreign diplomats were received at Sejms by the king, in the presence of senators or senators and noble deputies, or during the Senate Council meetings between Sejms.³²⁴ Although exceptions to the rule may be noted, in general, public audience refer to the ones held during the Sejm.³²⁵

In the typical sequence of foreign representative reception, the first step was to notify the Grand Marshal while approaching Poland-Lithuania and request the passport, which was then issued by the Crown Chancellery, or for the representatives of the tsar, the Lithuanian Chancellery.³²⁶

Kor[onnego], 21. Importantly, these provisions were different from so-called gifts for Tatars (*upominki Tatarskie*), which were sums of money regularly “gifted” to Crimean Khans in order to avoid Tatar raids in Ruthenia. For more on this topic, see Zbigniew Wójcik, “Aspekty finansowania przymierza polsko-tatarskiego 1654-1666,” in *O naprawę Rzeczypospolitej XVII-XVIII. Studia ofiarowane Władysławowi Czaplińskiemu w sześćdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Józef Andrzej Gierowski and Władysław Czapliński (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1965), 137–53; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 307.

³²² Kalinowska, “‘Ja jednak posła wyprawię...’ Społeczeństwo szlacheckie a dyplomacja w XVII w.,” 57.

³²³ Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 33.

³²⁴ Rachuba, “Osobliwości polskiej dyplomacji w okresie nowożytnym (XVI-XVIII),” 228.

³²⁵ Ryszard Skowron, “Ceremoniał przyjęcia ambasadora hiszpańskiego Francisca de Mendozy na warszawskim dworze Wazów w roku 1597,” *Kronika Zamkowa - Roczniki* 70, no. 4 (2017): 32–33.

³²⁶ This account of foreign representatives reception is based on works of Krzysztof Wiśniewski, Jerzy Gierowski, and Robert Kołodziej, and supplemented by archival materials, foremost AGAD, AKP, 387, *Zbiór opisanie ceremoniałów używanych podczas audiencji posłów zagranicznych w Polsce tudzież i polskich posłów zagranicznych ab AD 1670 ad 1775*; AGAD, APP, 45/4, “Sposób przyjmowania Posłów Wielkich Moskiewskich,” in *Silva rerum Jana Wielopolskiego, starosty bieckiego*, 442–45; BPAUiPAN, 335, *Ceremoniał na przyjmowaniu y audiencjach posłów postronnych w Królestwie Polskim praktykowany*; A. Wiśniewski, *Urząd Marszałkowski koronny w bezkrólestwach XVII-XVIII wieku*, 200–207; Józef Andrzej Gierowski, “Dyplomacja polska doby saskiej (1699-1763),” in *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, ed. Józef Andrzej Gierowski et al., vol. 2: 1572-1795 (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1982), 439–43; Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 256–57, 269–70.

Grand embassies arriving from Muscovy, the Sublime Porte, and the Crimean Khanate were escorted from the borders by *przystawowie* and received food and drink provisions.

The Grand Marshal usually designated the place of stay and loggings for the incoming diplomats and was the one handling the initial contact. He inquired about the character of the embassy, set up the date for the reception audience, and discussed its ceremonial. The right to a solemn entry was granted to (grand) ambassadors (*posłowie, posłowie wielcy*), representatives of kings, electors, and some republics (Venice) before the public audience. For them, the Grand Marshal arranged an appropriate assist consisting most often of the private units of the senators who were present. Those representing lesser princes were not entitled to the solemn entry, and the ceremonial setting of their reception was more modest. Nevertheless, they had the right to either public or private audiences.

On the day of the audience, a royal carriage was sent for the embassy to their loggings, or if the embassy was staying outside the city, half a mile from it. Generally, the carriages of those of the lowest rank opened the cavalcade, followed by the carriages of other diplomats, if they were present, then the Grand Marshal's carriage preceding the royal carriage with the foreign representative, who was granted the audience. After him, lower-ranking members of the embassy, and delegated senators at the end. Grand ambassadors representing the sultan instead of the carriage were sent horses in richly decorated tacks, which were gifted to them.

Upon arrival at the royal residency, the diplomat was welcomed in the courtyard, next to the entrance, then in the subsequent rooms by court and land officers, dignitaries, and ministers in the ascending rank order as he approached the room in which the audience took place (usually, the Senatorial Room at the royal castle in Warsaw). In the last antechamber, the diplomat was greeted by a couple of senators, including the marshal and chancellor.

Although I could not confirm it for the reign of Sobieski, in the eighteenth century, legates from the Sublime Porte were received firstly in the apartments of a chancellor, where they were

regaled with confitures and coffee. Also, the entire audience ended with refreshments provided by the chancellor or different ministers.³²⁷ Similarly, coffee and sweets were offered also during the audiences with hetmans: in this way, Ottoman diplomats were hosted in Lviv by Grand Crown Hetman Adam Mikołaj Sieniawski in 1713.³²⁸ The fact that specifically coffee and sweets were chosen is fascinating, as it extends not only a gesture of hospitality by offering refreshments but also mirrors almost exactly the same type of food and drink the Polish-Lithuanian representatives were served on their embassies to the sultan.

During the audience, the Grand Marshal (who could be replaced by a chancellor) guided through the following points of the audience, gesturing what is expected from the diplomat, except from the end of the audience, often signaled by the king.

The primary purpose of the public audience was the presentation of credential letters, of which one should be addressed to the king (*Serenisimo et Potentissimo*), one to the Senate (*Illustrimis et Excelentissimis Regni Poloniae Senatoribus*), one to the noble deputies (*Illustribus, Magnificis ac Generosis Regni Poloniae Equestris Ordinis Palatinatum Terrarumque Nuntiis*).

As for the details regarding the audience, they seem to vary slightly, not necessarily in accordance with the rank of the diplomat and the prince he represented. For example, in some relations, the king and senator welcomed the arriving guest standing, allowing the foreign representative to follow suit, while the noble deputies stood for the entire time. The credential letters could be given in the king's or chancellor's hands, while the king was still standing under the canopy, or to the Grand Marshal. In some relations, it is the chancellor who reads the letters, in some, it was done in turns by the chancellor, the highest-ranking senator present, and the Marshal of the Chamber of Deputies. It seems like most often (although it depended on the

³²⁷ Gierowski, "Dyplomacja polska doby saskiej (1699-1763)," 442.

³²⁸ BCzart, TSz 494 IV, *Akta za panowania Augusta II Tureckie w 1713*, vol. 2, nr 4, "Audiencja posłów Tureckich... 20 Marii 1713," 13-16; nr 7, "Powtórna audiencja posłanników Tureckich we Lwowie 30 Marii 1713," 28. Zarzycki refers to other examples, some of which, however, I was not able to find in the sources. See his *Dyplomacja hetmanów w dawnej Polsce*, 108.

represented prince), the king, senators and the diplomat had their heads covered, and uncovered it while monarchs or the Commonwealth was mentioned.³²⁹

Once the audience had finished, the diplomat was escorted to the carriage in the same order as during the arrival. Depending on his rank and the foreign prince he represented, he may have been sent food and drink from the royal kitchen or invited to a banquet held in his honor. Then, in the days following the audience, he was expected to pay official visits to the Grand Marshal, other ministers, and senators.³³⁰

The following chapter focuses on such occasions. Building on an understanding of the context, both culinary and organizational, it takes a closer look at particular cases of hospitality within the institutional framework in Poland-Lithuania, where responsibility for entertaining foreign diplomats was decentralized—much like foreign affairs itself—and not a monopoly of a sovereign.

³²⁹ At times, certain confusions occurred. The papal nuncio's secretary, Giovan Battista Fagiouli, mentions that during Andrea Santacroce's private audience, Sobieski welcomed the nuncio making a couple of steps towards him, with his headgear laying on a stool next to a saber, and then while seated and permitting the nuncio to take his place Sobieski "should have (as it is customary) allowed him [the nuncio] to cover his head, but because [the king] himself was without a headgear, he made it impossible for the Monsignor to cover his head, which was incomprehensible to him." Fagiouli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690–1691)*, 88–89.

³³⁰ During the Election Sejms, foreign diplomats, except for the nuncio, were forbidden to stay in the city, however the rule was repeatedly disregarded. Wiśniewski, *Urząd Marszałkowski koronny w bezkrólewicach XVII-XVIII wieku*, 208.

PART II

DIPLOMATS AT THE TABLE

CHAPTER 3

DIPLOMATIC HOSPITALITY

The main focus of Stanisław Kazimierz Herka's dietary treatise *Bankiet narodowi ludzkiemu* (1660) [Banquet to the human nation] is the humoral qualities of food and drink, but in the chapter titled *Bankietowe ceremonie* [Banquet ceremonies] food and drink take a second place. What comes to the fore is the social interaction centered around the table, mediated by what the participants ate and drank, involving responsibilities shared among the guest and the host. Herka gives advice on how to dress for a banquet to be respected (handsomely), how to engage in a conversation in order to gain fame (better to be silent intelligently than to speak foolishly), and how to react when one is offered a lesser seat, missing a dish, or is not toasted to (one should not get disturbed and take offense).³³¹ In turn, the host's duty was to show respect towards their guests and entertain them "accordingly to their honor and humor."³³²

Such conventions and table manners were not suspended during the banquets involving diplomats. However, the diplomatic facet of those occasions introduced an extra layer of ceremonial structure, giving far more consequential meanings to the signs of respect, arrangements of seats at the table, number and quality of dishes, or raising of toasts. What is more, while hospitality generally facilitated relations with external parties, in a diplomatic context, ritualized form of hospitality played a significant role in establishing "frameworks for non-violent communication" and arranging rapprochement of adversaries within the context of

³³¹ Stanisław Kazimierz Hercius [Herka], *Bankiet narodowi ludzkiemu od Monarchy Niebieskiego zaraz przy stworzeniu świata z różnych ziół, zbóż, owoców, Bydląt, zwierzyn, ptastwa, ryb, etc. Zgotowany* (Kraków: Lenczewski Bertutowicz Stanisław – Wdowa i Dziedzice, 1660), here chapter XVI, 65–7.

³³² "Gospodarska powinność mieć respekt na osoby y częstować ich według honoru y humoru." Hercius, *Bankiet narodowi ludzkiemu*, 65.

a social event.³³³ Perhaps one of the best examples of this is the act of dining at a shared table or being provided from a prince's kitchen at the beginning of a peace treaty negotiation, which carried symbolic weight, testifying to former opponents now becoming associates.

The act of offering food and drink to foreign diplomats served different purposes. In general, the objective was to assert friendliness and civility, display the host's generosity, and convey the guest's and host's status. The sheer extent of the hospitality offered varied according to the diplomat's rank, whether their reception was intended to be public or private, or where they were from and which power they represented. For example, those representing lesser princes were not entitled to the solemn entry and the following banquet at all, as the ceremonial setting of their reception was more modest. But even when an ambassador was received, a private character of their reception could be favored in order to avoid expenses. This solution seems to be considered in the case of particularly numerous entourages and legations with chiefly prestigious objectives, such as Chancellor Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł's reception in Venice in 1680 or Count Törrig's in Warsaw in 1694, both covered in more detail in the following chapters. Notably, asserting or waiving certain ceremonial aspects of the reception could compromise the rank of a legation and influence the effectiveness of the negotiations. In 1679, Grand Referendary of Lithuania (*referendarz wielki litewski*) Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski was instructed to request a private audience "sine solemnitatibus" with Tsar Feodor III instead of a public one in order not to attract the attention of the Sublime Porte to the negotiations.³³⁴ However, the host proceeded with a public audience, followed by a banquet, customarily granted to Polish-Lithuanian grand ambassadors arriving in Muscovy. Brzostowski then

³³³ Goetze, "Ritualized Hospitality: The Negotiations of the Riga Capitulation and the 'Adventus' of Boris Sheremetev in July 1710," 172.

³³⁴ "prosząc, abyśmy byli przyjęci *sine solemnitatibus* jako w dziełach tajnych od W.K.M do Cara Jmci posłani;" "stosują się do Instrukcji W.K.M. nie potrzebowali tych ceremonii, żeby się to nasze nie ogłosiło Poselstwo." BCzart, TN 177, nr 314, "Relacja Poselstwa od Króla Jmci Jana III y od Rzeczypospolitej z Sejmu Grodzieńskiego ordynowana przez nas Cypriana Pawła Brzostowskiego Referendarza W. Xięstwa Litewskiego....," 1379, 1380; Wójcik, *Rzeczypospolita Wobec Turcji i Rosji 1674-1679*, 197.

insisted on all the ceremonial elements befitting his embassy, including the farewell banquet, “our ordinary tsarist banquet.”³³⁵ At times, however, a banquet table could also provide a space for interactions that otherwise would be problematic due to the delicate issue of status recognition, all under the pretense of a social event.³³⁶

Drawing on examples of mostly embassies arriving in Poland-Lithuania, this chapter delves into the practice of diplomatic hospitality. It focuses on its functional aspects and practical considerations, emphasizing how the organizational framework of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy influenced the reception of foreign diplomats. Additionally, it illustrates how foreign diplomats themselves could leverage hospitality. Given the range of Poland-Lithuania’s partners coming from different traditions of conducting diplomacy and various forms of hospitality expected by and from them, the chapter shows how the scope and methods of extending hospitality were tailored to align with customs, commensurate with the rank of the guests, and the particular occasions on which they were received.

Distinguished guests

Grand public banquets were one of the most splendid aspects of ceremonies at court, be it dynastic weddings, anniversaries, observation of religious holidays, or diplomatic receptions. But such banquets also structured diplomatic encounters at the highest level. Following the solemn entry and reception audience, typically involving the presentation of letters of credentials, the reception banquet marked the initial step towards making the relationship

³³⁵ “bankiet zwyczajny Carski.” BCzart, TN 177, nr 314, “Relacja Poselstwa od Króla Jmci Jana III y od Rzeczypospolitej z Sejmu Grodzieńskiego ordynowana przez nas Cypriana Pawła Brzostowskiego Referendarza W. Xięstwa Litewskiego...,” 1455.

³³⁶ For instance, this was the case at a costume ball which Leopold I and Peter I attended dressed as an “innkeeper” and “peasant.” For the circumstances of this occasion, see Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725*, 171–77. Another such example is a baptism celebration attended by Peter I, August II, and Ferenc II Rákóczi as godfathers. Ewelina Sikora, “Elżbieta Sieniawska jako pośredniczka dyplomatyczna podczas powstania Franciszka II Rakoczego w latach 1701-1711,” in *Działalność Elżbiety Sieniawskiej. Polityka - gospodarka - kultura.*, ed. Bożena Popiołek (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2020), 182–83.

official. Conversely, the farewell audience and banquet signified its official conclusion.³³⁷ For this reason, banquets could be scheduled to, for example, speed up or delay diplomats' departure. Voivode Krzysztof Grzymułtowski (1620–1687) in his relation of the grand embassy to Muscovy sent in 1686, mentions that Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors were informed by the *pristavy* that the “tsar’s banquet” will be sent the following day, which “we wanted to avoid by all means,” knowing it was a definitive signal for their expected leave.³³⁸ By contrast, in 1679, Brzostowski requested to be sent “our customary tsar’s banquet” before leaving Moscow, to which he was to receive a response explaining that firstly, the tsar was fasting, and secondly, that Muscovite diplomats had not been appropriately celebrated with a banquet when they last visited Warsaw. Brzostowski replied that it was because Sobieski was occupied partaking in the Sejm proceedings “day and night,” making it difficult to “pay respect and *hospitalitatem*,” nevertheless, Brzostowski assured that Feodor III’s representatives were compensated with money for two banquets (6 000 *złoty*), and left to Moscow “content.”³³⁹

Brzostowski’s remark suggests that not only was it difficult to ensure a hospitable reception of the Muscovite representatives due to Sobieski’s time-consuming involvement in the Sejm

³³⁷ It is important to note that this does not mean that the negotiations started only with the presentation of credentials and reception banquet or that they were not ongoing after the farewell audience and banquet. However, the sequence of reception and farewell audiences, followed by banquets, indicated the official (or public) phase of negotiations. Witnessed by a wider public, these ceremonies, of which the banquet was an integral part, were crucial as they “gave every diplomatic relationship its place in the established political order.” Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725*, 171.

³³⁸ “ofiarowali nam przystawowie na dzień jutrzejszy bankiet carski, którego chcieliśmy wszystkimi siłami uniknąć; ale nam powiedziano, żeby to była wielka bezczesć carska; reflektowawszy się przytem, że pisma na oddanie Zasoża niemamy i insze okoliczności, przyszło akceptować bankiet.” “Zdanie sprawy przed królem Janem III z poselstwa do Moskwy, zaczętego w roku 1685 a skończonego dnia trzeciego maja 1686 przez Krzysztofa Grzymułtowskiego, wojewodę poznańskiego,” in *Źródła do dziejów polski*, vol. 2, 26. See also his biogram Janusz Woliński, “Krzysztof Grzymułtowski,” in *iPSB*, Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny, accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/krzysztof-grzymultowski-h-nieczuja>.

³³⁹ “Przypomnieliśmy nasz bankiet zwyczajny Carski. *Responsum*: Car Jmć teraz z postem, wybaczcie mu, wszak y u was nasi bankietu nie mieli. Na co *solutum*, że na ów czas W.K.Mość byłeś zabawny Sejmem, dzień y noc siedząc, trudno było cześć wyświadczyć, y *hospitalitatem*, jednak ukontentowani Posłowie za ten bankiet, *responsum*: doniesiemy to Carowi Jmci;” “*Deduximus* informacją autentyczną Jmć Pana Podskarbiego, że wzięli [posłowie Moskiewscy] za piętnaści niedziel trzydzieści tysięcy, za podwody dziesięć tysięcy, za 2 bankiety sześć tysięcy...” BCzart, TN 177, nr 314, “Relacja Poselstwa od Króla Jmci Jana III y od Rzeczypospolitej z Sejmu Grodzieńskiego ordynowana przez nas Cypriana Pawła Brzostowskiego Referendarza W. Xięstwa Litewskiego....” 1455, 1456–57.

proceeding, but also that the king himself was expected to make disposition regarding sending them food and drink. Additional challenges posed by the fact that the reception of foreign diplomats happened during the Sejms included soaring food and drink prices and problems finding suitable accommodations due to the influx of senators and noble deputies to Warsaw or Grodno.³⁴⁰ On the other hand, the Sejms provided an opportunity to employ hospitality for political ends, or in other words—relying once again on the words of Callières—to “gain the ear of the ablest and most authoritative politicians, who may be able to defeat a hostile design or support a favorable one.”³⁴¹ Count Hermann Jakob Czernin von Chudenitz’s embassy in 1685 is one such case.

Banquet table for Czernin

Before Czernin arrived in Warsaw, he made the necessary arrangements to represent the emperor properly. As Jiří Kubeš explains, being an imperial ambassador to Poland-Lithuania was a “politically responsible and ceremonially demanding function,” requiring personal wealth and proficiency in navigating court society.³⁴² Czernin, coming from a prominent noble family, was well-suited for this role, while his secretary, Johann Eberhard von Hövel, contributed expertise drawn from his previous experience in Poland-Lithuania.³⁴³

Von Hövel arrived in Warsaw in mid-January 1685, joining imperial resident Georg von Schiemunsky.³⁴⁴ They both worked towards securing appropriate dwellings accommodating and

³⁴⁰ The situation was particularly bad in Grodno where there were even less suitable dwellings available than in Warsaw. Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 133–40.

³⁴¹ Callières, *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes* (Boston-New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1919), 118.

³⁴² Jiří Kubeš, “Hermann Jakob Czernin von Chudenitz’ Diplomatic Mission in Warsaw in 1695. A Contribution towards the Travel Arrangements of Imperial Diplomats,” *Theatrum Historiae* 19 (2016): 183–84.

³⁴³ Von Hövel was a secretary of Christoph Wenzel von Nostitz in 1693, accompanying him to the Sejm in Grodno. Martin Bakeš, “Kryštof Václav z Nostic a jeho diplomatická cesta na území Polsko-litevské unie v roce 1693,” *Východočeský sborník historický* 24 (2013): 107.

³⁴⁴ In the seventeenth century, the emperor had a resident in Poland-Lithuania, but he also sent extraordinary ambassadors for the duration of the Sejm or to carry out a specific task (e.g. negotiation of a marriage contract). Often ambassadors to Poland-Lithuania were chosen from the Czech and Silesian nobility, including (before Czernin) Count Christoph Leopold von Schaffgotsch in 1674, Count Franz Sigmund von Thun in 1691, Count

assuring the everyday functioning of an embassy consisting of at least eighty-six people, including an “*Oberkoch*” Joseph (ranked as an “*Oberoficier*”), “*Zuckerbacher*” (“*Loquay*”), and in the kitchen proper (“*Kuchel*”) “*Kellermeister*” Barthl, “*Kuchelschreiber*” Joseph, “*Einkäufer*” Paul, “*Koch*” Türck, “*Hausknecht*” Tieroller, two anonymous “*Kuchenjunge*,” as well as Maria, Liesl, and Pischlin listed as “*Menscher*.”³⁴⁵ Already, in December 1694, Schiemunsky wrote to Czernin informing him that he had booked the same palace that was used by Count Georg Adam von Martinitz, imperial ambassador in 1693/1694, accompanied by ninety people, praising its excellent location in a vicinity of the royal castle and residences of sympathizing magnates.³⁴⁶ Nonetheless, Czernin was not satisfied. Tellingly, after familiarizing himself with the floor plan, he deemed the dining room too small to fit a table for twenty people comfortably.³⁴⁷ Von Hövel tried to persuade Czernin, explaining that all other suitable palaces were taken due to arriving Sejm participants, the booked palace was already heated, assuring him that the table could be fitted in the dining room, and finally, pointing out that the magnates are also staying in the city, not the suburbs.³⁴⁸ Eventually, a different, more spacious palace was found, located at Krakowskie Przedmieście, less than a kilometer away from the royal castle. The palace, a propriety of Voivode Ernest Denhoff, was commissioned before 1693, and although it was still not finished, renting it cost Czernin a small fortune.³⁴⁹

Christoph Wenzel von Nostitz in 1693, and Count Georg Adam von Martinitz in 1693/1694. Kubeš, “Hermann Jakob Czernin von Chudenitz’ Diplomatic Mission in Warsaw in 1695. A Contribution towards the Travel Arrangements of Imperial Diplomats,” 175. For more on imperial diplomats in Poland-Lithuania see also Martin Bakeš, “Kryštof Václav z Nostic a jeho diplomatická cesta na území Polsko-litevské unie v roce 1693,” 99–119; and Monika Hrušková, “Každodenní život císařských vyslanců v Polsku v druhé polovině 17. století” (MA thesis, České Budějovice, Jihočeská Univerzita v Českých Budějovicích, 2012).

³⁴⁵ For a full list of Czernin’s embassy personnel see Kubeš, “Hermann Jakob Czernin von Chudenitz’ Diplomatic Mission in Warsaw in 1695. A Contribution towards the Travel Arrangements of Imperial Diplomats,” 189–189.

³⁴⁶ Kubeš, 190.

³⁴⁷ Kubeš, 190.

³⁴⁸ Kubeš, 191.

³⁴⁹ Kubeš, 193.

Today, the Potocki Palace (Pałac Potockich), named after its later owners, is the seat of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. For more on the history of the palace, see Tadeusz S. Jaroszewski, Edmund Kupiecki, *Księga pałaców Warszawy* (Warszawa: Interpress, 1985), 107.

The palace and composition of Czernin's embassy corresponded with the rank of his mission, assuring the stately character of his entry (by the presence of guards, hajduks, drummer, trumpeters), and a fitting welcome for his guests. What is more, Czernin's requirements regarding the floorplan (the first floor of Denhoff's palace was similar to that of Hofburg), appointing a Marshal (whose duty was to aid during official visits), drafting house rules (restricting access to antechambers, audience room, and *retirada* to specific groups of people), or borrowing furnishings (tapestries, canopy) for the audience room from the imperial warehouse—as Kubeš details—were intended to emulate the emperor's court as well.³⁵⁰

The fact that Czernin paid much attention to the dining room and the size of the table it was supposed to accommodate testifies once more to the importance of sociability around the table embedded in the practice of diplomacy and the double role of a guest/host taken up by foreign representatives away on their missions. Nevertheless, despite great efforts, Czernin faced difficulties convincing Jan III to increase his involvement in the Holy League.³⁵¹ Notably, shortly after his departure, the royal couple attended a banquet held by the French ambassador Melchior de Polignac.³⁵²

Wild goose for Polignac, soup for Vota

At that time of Czernin's mission, Polignac was in favor with the Sobieskis and was housed at the Royal Castle “in the lodgings at [Castle's] galleries,” which gave him a considerable advantage that did not go unnoticed in Vienna.³⁵³ He was also the only diplomat—apart from

³⁵⁰ Kubeš, 188–93.

Giulia Galastro highlights the wide use of furnishing and textiles for communicating status and royalty. See Galastro, “Wondrous Welcome. Materiality and Senses in Diplomatic Hospitality in Sixteenth-Century Genoa,” especially 104–109.

³⁵¹ For the summary of the course of Czernin's embassy and its outcomes, see Kubeš, “Hermann Jakob Czernin von Chudenitz' Diplomatic Mission in Warsaw in 1695. A Contribution towards the Travel Arrangements of Imperial Diplomats,” 178–82.

³⁵² Kubeš, 183.

³⁵³ “Oddawszy wprzód ten honor jmp. posłowi cesarskiemu ... [wojewoda wileński] do Zamku przyjechał; tam oddawszy wizytę drugą jmp. posłowi francuskiemu w stancyjej jego na gankach będącej.” Kazimierz Sarnecki,

Carlo Maurizio Vota, Jan III's confessor and an agent in the service of the pope and emperor—provided from the royal kitchen, at least between August 5, 1695, and January 31, 1696, according to *Księga szafarska*.³⁵⁴ This steward's book lists a wild goose procured for Polignac on September 24, 1695, and seven occasions between November 18 and December 17 on which Vota received different meats.³⁵⁵ This does not, however, exclude the fact they could have dined with the royals on other days as well. For instance, produce for Marie Casimire is primarily recorded on Fridays and Saturdays, while on different days, it is probable that she had dinner with Jan III.³⁵⁶ Moreover, the presence of meats offered for Vota on fasting days and its designated purpose for a soup (*polewka*), implies that he could have been experiencing health issues.³⁵⁷ Wild goose intended for Polignac (a clergyman just like Vota) during Ember days suggests it could also have been a dietary exemption motivated by health considerations. Another possibility is that, as foreigners, they were exempt from observing the stricter fasting rules.

Vota and Polignac, both praised for their learning and brilliance by their contemporaries, were Sobieski's favorite dispute partners, who spent a considerable amount of time by the king's side.³⁵⁸ On January 29, 1694, to bring one of many examples:

Pamiętniki z czasów Jana Sobieskiego, ed. Janusz Woliński, vol. 1 (Wrocław-Warszawa: Ossolineum-DeAgostini, 2004), 285. Kubeš quotes also the letter from Karl Maximilian Lažanský von Buková to Christoph Wenzel von Nostitz, which reads that “herr gr. Czernin in Pohlen noch viel ungelegenheiten ausstehen dörrfte, zumahlen der frantzösische gesandte bey dem könig einlogiret.” Kubeš, “Hermann Jakob Czernin von Chudenitz’ Diplomatic Mission in Warsaw in 1695. A Contribution towards the Travel Arrangements of Imperial Diplomats,” 197. Regarding Polignac's mission to Poland, see also Aleksandra Skrzypietz, “Misja Melchiora de Polignac u schyłku panowania Jana III,” in *Francukie zabiegi o koronę polską po śmierci Jana III Sobieskiego* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2009), 30–59; Michał Komarzyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d’Arquien-Sobieska* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1995), 177–80.

³⁵⁴ Jarosław Dumanowski, Łukasz Próba, and Maciej Truściński, eds., *Księga szafarska dworu Jana III Sobieskiego 1695-1696* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2013). On the source see the introduction to the volume by Łukasz Próba and Maciej Truściński, “Księga szafarska dworu Jana III Sobieskiego - charakterystyka ogólna,” 45–51.

³⁵⁵ Dumanowski, Próba, and Truściński, *Księga szafarska dworu Jana III Sobieskiego 1695-1696*, 107.

³⁵⁶ Próba and Truściński, “Księga szafarska dworu Jana III Sobieskiego - charakterystyka ogólna,” 46.

³⁵⁷ Jarosław Dumanowski, “Kuchnia w czasach Sobieskiego,” in *Księga szafarska dworu Jana III Sobieskiego 1695-1696*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski, Łukasz Próba, and Maciej Truściński (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2013), 39–40.

³⁵⁸ Targosz, *Jan III Sobieski mecenasem nauk i uczonych*, 44–47.

with good appetite and good humor, dressed, His Majesty the King dined at the public table with Her Majesty the Queen and His Excellency the Ambassador [Polignac], during which His Eminence Father Vota and His Excellency the Ambassador had their discussions in French, delighting the King, especially when they were arguing with each other.³⁵⁹

Księga szafarska, which lists products dispensed from the kitchen for dishes served at the tables of the king, queen, princes (Konstanty and Aleksander), court attendants, and servants during a brief period, offers only a glimpse into the workings of the royal kitchen; at the time when king's health was deteriorating, often keeping him from more active involvement in public and social life.³⁶⁰ Despite those limitations, it provides indispensable material for comparison with cookbooks, showing the influence of the liturgical calendar on the meals consumed at the Sobieskis' court. Moreover, it meticulously records the type of meals and places where they were consumed.

Between August 5, 1695, and January 31, 1696, the meals prepared in the royal kitchen were primarily served in the Wilanów Palace (60 days altogether, most often both midday and evening meals) and the Royal Castle.³⁶¹ Before 1695—apart from Warsaw and residences around the city—the royal couple spent time also further away from the capital, in their estates in Pielaszkowice, Zhovkva, and Yavoriv, as well as in Lviv or Gdańsk, to name just a few frequented places.³⁶²

Magnates and foreign diplomats occasionally complained about the necessity to travel many miles following the Sobieskis' court. Some locations further away from the capital were clearly

³⁵⁹ “Z dobrym apetytem, przy dobrej fantazyjej, ubrany król JM jadł obiad u stołu publicznego z królową JM i JMP posłem, podczas którego po francusku z JM ks. Votą [i] JMP posłem dyskursy swoje mieli i nim króla cieszyli, a najbardziej w ten czas, kiedy się z sobą wadzili, którym umyślnie sam król jm. takowe kwestyje zawsze zadawa, że się z sobą czasem poswarzą.” Sarnecki, *Pamiętniki z czasów Jana Sobieskiego*, 1:130–31.

³⁶⁰ On the “regency” of Marie Casimire, see Chapter V in Komarzyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d'Arquien-Sobieska*.

³⁶¹ For summary of all the places mentioned in the steward's book, see Próba and Truściński, “Księga szafarska dworu Jana III Sobieskiego - charakterystyka ogólna,” 50–52.

³⁶² The Sobieskis' also stayed for longer periods in Gdańsk, especially at the beginning of their reign in 1677 and 1678. About their stay, see Komarzyński, *Jan III Sobieski a Bałtyk*, 31–41.

chosen for strategic purposes. For example, secret treaties with France and Sweden were signed in Yavoriv (1675) and Gdańsk (1677).³⁶³

Seat of honor for Hyde

It was also through Gdansk that many diplomats arrived in Poland-Lithuania. One of them was English ambassador Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, whom Marie Casimire received in August of 1676. Hyde and de Béthune, then French ambassador, were to represent Charles II and Maria Theresa, chosen as godparents for Princess Teresa Kunegunda, but the baptism was rushed, and they did not make it in time.³⁶⁴ After presenting the gifts for Princess Sobieska in Gdańsk, the English ambassador traveled to Warsaw and then to Ruthenia to see Jan III, who was at that time leading a military campaign against the Sublime Porte.³⁶⁵

In Warsaw, Hyde was welcomed by Jan Wielopolski, then Crown Pantler (*stolnik koronny*), who tried to accommodate the ambassador as best he could in a city from which the court and most magnates had left. As Hyde notes in his diary, “he [Wielopolski] was afraid I was but melancholy [sic] here, that I had nothing to divert me: in the mean time if I would care to go any where he would go with me to show me, or if I would go see any of the ladies.”³⁶⁶ The ambassador chose to do the latter, and the next day Hyde and Wielopolski paid a visit to Katarzyna Franciszka Denhoff *née* von Bessen, wife of Crown Chamberlain (*podkomorzy*

³⁶³ Komaszyński, 22–50; Stolicki, “Działania Jana III Sobieskiego w celu wzrostu znaczenia Rzeczypospolitej w Europie w latach 1674–1683,” 29–35; Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 185–86.

³⁶⁴ As per the doctors’ recommendations, Marie Casimire intended to go to Bourbon in France for a therapeutic treatment with her two daughters. However, Jan III opposed the travel plans until the princesses were baptized, which expedited the ceremony. Princess Teresa Kunegunda Karolina Kazimiera Sobieska received her first name after her godmother, Queen of France Maria Theresa, and the third in honor of her godfather, King of England, Scotland and Ireland Charles II. Michał Komaszyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1982), 8–9.

³⁶⁵ For more on Hyde’s legation, see Edward Alfred Mierzwa, *Anglia a Polska w epoce Jana III Sobieskiego* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1988), 191–204, here 193.

³⁶⁶ “Diary of the Hon. Laurence Hyde of the Particular Occurrences During His Embassy to John Sobieski, King of Poland, in 1676,” in *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon and of His Brother Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester with the Diary of Lord Clarendon from 1687 to 1690 Containing Minute Particulars of the Events Attending the Revolution and the Diary of Lord Rochester During His Embassy to Poland in 1676*, vol. 1, ed. S. W. Singer (London: Henry Colburn, 1828), 590.

koronny), who proved to be an excellent discussion partner, “a woman of good sense; *et connoist son monde* very well, ... knowing every thing in the court and in the town.”³⁶⁷

Apart from Katarzyna Franciszka Denhoff, and her husband Teodor (who, unlike his wife, needed an interpreter), Hyde also met, among others, with Grand Crown Treasurer Jan Andrzej Morsztyn and his wife Catharina *née* Gordon de Huntly, referendary (most likely Jan Dobrogost Krasiński, Crown Referendary [*referendarz koronny*]), French ambassador Béthune and his wife Marie Louise *née* d’Arquien, as well as Muscovite resident Vasilii Mikhailovich Tiapkin.³⁶⁸

Hyde remarks that the referendary excused himself for not coming earlier, as he had been in Warsaw for a couple of days already, but “he had so much business with the gentlemen of the country, which ... always ended in drinking.” The ambassador judged the referendary to be “very civil,” but excused himself from a dinner invitation “for fear of ending with him as his countrymen had done.”³⁶⁹ Another of Hyde’s concerns while exercising hospitality was, unsurprisingly, precedence. Initially, he was reluctant to see Tiapkin “by reason of the difficulties I knew there used to be between Envoys and Ambassadors about the hand,” but his reservations turned out to be unfounded, as the Muscovite resident “yielded the hand without disputing it.”³⁷⁰

The problem with seating order was raised again when Hyde was invited to dinner by Sobieski when he reached his military camp near Lviv, in Zhuravne (Журавно, Żurawno). The ambassador was there *incognito*, “as a private man,” for he was yet to have his reception audience, and was seated on the fourth place after Béthune (on the king’s right), Deputy

³⁶⁷ “Diary of the Hon. Laurence Hyde,” 590.

³⁶⁸ Tiapkin was the first Muscovite resident in Poland-Lithuania performing his role since 1673. Daniel C. Waugh, “What the Posol’skii Prikaz Really Knew: Intelligencers, Secret Agents and Their Reports,” in *Travelling Chronicles: News and Newspapers from the Early Modern Period to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Christine Watson, Paul Goring, and Siv Gøril Brandtzæg (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 146.

³⁶⁹ “Diary of the Hon. Laurence Hyde,” 592.

³⁷⁰ “Diary of the Hon. Laurence Hyde,” 595.

Lithuanian Chancellor and Field Lithuanian Hetman Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł, and Count de Maligny, Marie Casimire's brother.³⁷¹

Finally, on November 8, Hyde was granted a public audience with Jan III in Zhovkva, and took the seat of honor on the king's right hand during the banquet held in his honor. Johann Christian Lünig's description of the event in *Theatrum Ceremoniale* suggests that it was adequately festive as evidenced by its duration (four hours), quality of wine served (finest), and accompaniment of music (performed by all sorts of instruments, including trumpets and drums). All these details were repeated by Hyde in his report to Joseph Williamson, Secretary of State for the Northern Department.³⁷² The privilege of seating to the right of the host was one of the signs of honor that "distinguished an ambassador from lesser diplomats (envoys, residents, agents, etc.) and thereby created his rank," which explains why Hyde wished to avoid hosting Tiapkin, and only after the reception audience, as officially accredited ambassador, he was seated at Sobieski's right.³⁷³

Drink for Callières

The Polish–Ottoman War (1672–1676), which ended with the signing of the Treaty in Zhuravne on October 17, 1676, was the main reason for postponing the coronation of Sobieski, elected in 1674.³⁷⁴ The Coronation Sejm, in accordance with tradition, took place in Kraków after the funerals of Jan II Kazimierz Vasa and Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki and the coronation of Jan

³⁷¹ "Diary of the Hon. Laurence Hyde," 619–20.

³⁷² "Das Banquet war Königlich und über alle massen töstlich, woben die vortrefflichste und niedlichste Weine nicht gespahret wurden, selbiges währette ben die 4. Stunden, und wurden allerhand musicalische Instrumenten, samt den Trompeten und heer-Paucten luftig gehoret." Johann Christian Lünig, *Theatrum Ceremoniale Historico-Politicum, Oder Historisch- und Politischer Schau-Platz Aller Ceremonien, Welche bey Päbst- und Käyser-, auch Königlichen Wahlen und Crönungen ... Ingleichen bey Grosser Herren und dero Gesandten Einholungen ... beobachtet werden*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1719), 640; Mierzwa, *Anglia a Polska w epoce Jana III Sobieskiego*, 202–3. What is more, in the report referred to by Mierzwa, Hyde considered his audience one of his greatest life achievements.

³⁷³ Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725*, 94.

³⁷⁴ More on Sobieski's Coronation Sejm, see Jarosław Stoliczka, ed., *Diariusz sejm koronacyjnego Jana III Sobieskiego w 1676 roku* (Historia Iagiellonica, 2019), XIII–XV; Matwijowski, *Pierwsze sejmy z czasów Jana III Sobieskiego*, 38–149.

III and Marie Casimire in the Wawel Cathedral. The presence of foreign representatives during the ceremonies and Sejm proceedings was relatively small.³⁷⁵ According to the Sejm diaries, audiences were granted to Tiapkin, hospodar's envoy, and Swedish ambassador Andres Lilienhök.³⁷⁶ Since the "Persian envoy" or "Persian ambassador" (*poseł perski*) received on the same day as Tiapkin, was most likely Bogdan Gurdziecki returning from his mission to Isfahan, Lilienhök was the only one entitled to the solemn entry and a reception banquet.³⁷⁷ Unfortunately, the diary merely states that he was escorted to an inn in Jan III's carriage, preceded by a cavalcade of a dozen senators' carriages.³⁷⁸

Election Sejms attracted far greater attention from the foreign princes. In 1674, in Warsaw, representatives of neighboring countries and much more distant ones were found, all equally interested in the outcome of the election. Among them were papal nuncio Francesco Buonvisi, imperial ambassador Christoph Leopold Schaffgotsch, French ambassador Toussaint Forbin de Janson, Spanish ambassador Pedro de Ronquillo Briceño, Brandenburg envoy Johann von Hoverbeck, as well as François de Callières.

Callières was sent to Poland-Lithuania as an envoy of Carlo Emanuele II, Duke of Savoy.³⁷⁹ In his relation, alongside accounts of his travels to and from Warsaw and the progress of his

³⁷⁵ French ambassador, Toussaint Forbin de Janson, was most likely the only diplomat participating in Sobieski's entrance to Kraków at the end of January; one of the Sejm diaries mentions also papal nuncio Martelli. Matwijowski, *Pierwsze sejmy z czasów Jana III Sobieskiego*, 88.

³⁷⁶ Stolicki, *Diariusz sejm koronacyjnego Jana III Sobieskiego w 1676 roku*, 78, 82, 101.

³⁷⁷ Gurdziecki was sent to Persia in 1668, during the reign of Jan II Kazimierz Vasa. In 1676, he was sent to the Safavid's court again. Rudi Matthee, "Gurdziecki, Bogdan," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 2012, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/gurdziecki>; Stolicki, *Diariusz sejm koronacyjnego Jana III Sobieskiego w 1676 roku*, 78.

³⁷⁸ "Po odprawionej audiencji odprowadzony do gospody tenże jm. pan poseł szwedzki z jm. marszałkiem koronnym w tejże Króla Jmci karocy, przed którą kilkanaście karet senatorskich w kawalkacie *procedebant*." After Lilienhök's audience, Sobieski presided over in court and left "by candlelight," which does not settle whether the Crown Marshal (a different version of a diary reads the Crown Sword-bearer instead) banqueted with the ambassador at the inn, the banquet happened late with the king, or perhaps Lilienhök was compensated like the Muscovite representatives mentioned by Brzostowski. Stolicki, *Diariusz sejm koronacyjnego Jana III Sobieskiego w 1676 roku*, 83.

³⁷⁹ Callières traveled to Poland-Lithuania three times: in 1670, 1674, and 1682. On his missions in Poland-Lithuania, see Piotr Ugniewski, "A French diplomat's account of Jan Sobieski's election as the king of Poland," in *Primus inter pares. The first among equals - the story of King Jan III*, ed. Dominika Walawender-Musz and

mission—aimed at securing support for the election of Carlo Emanuele II's cousin, Louis Thomas, Count of Soissons—Callières also offers a comprehensive description of the Polish-Lithuanian political system and its institutions, including the progress of the Sejm in session, as well as the structure of the army.³⁸⁰ Unsurprisingly, much space in the text is devoted to the reception of foreign representatives and negotiations. In this context, food and drink is mentioned twice: once as a general observation of how negotiations are handled in Poland-Lithuania, and once as Callières' own experience of banqueting with the king.

Newly elected Sobieski invited all present foreign ambassadors and senators for a solemn banquet, during which Callières was offered the cup from which the king drunk his health:

the King, having hosted a grand meal on the day of St. John [May 24], which was his name day, to which he invited all the ambassadors and senators, also honored me with an invitation and had me dine at his table and he raised a toast to my health and then sent me a drink in the same cup from which he had drunk.³⁸¹

Raising toasts or sharing the same glass conveyed equality and respect for the other party, connecting them through participation in the ritual. It is not clear whether Callières kept the cup, but a description of a ceremonial for receiving ambassadors from Muscovy in Poland-Lithuania written down in 1674 in Wielopolski's *Silva rerum*, mentions precisely what kind of cups were used to drink to the tsar's health, specifying that they were made out of gold, costing 100 red *złoty* and afterward offered as gifts (smaller and cheaper were given to lesser representatives (*posłowie młodzi*)).³⁸² Nevertheless, the description provided by Callières was to convince his employer and the addresses of his relation, Carlo Emanuele II, that he—despite

Katarzyna Krzyżagórska-Pisarek, trans. Justyna Gołabek-Askainen and Katarzyna Krzyżagórska-Pisarek (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2013), 67–73; Michał Kulecki, “François de Callières i jego podróż do Polski na elekcję Jana III Sobieskiego w roku 1674,” *Miscellanea Historico-Archivistica* 17 (2011): 125–34.

³⁸⁰ François de Callières, *Mon voyage en Pologne en l'année 1674*, ed. Monika Matwiejczuk and Piotr Ugniewski (Warszawa - Paris: Polska Akademia Nauk, 2009).

³⁸¹ “Le Roy ayant donné un grand repas le jour de la St Jean qui était se fête auquel il invita tous les ambassadeurs et sénateurs, il me fit aussi l'honneur de m'y inviter et de me faire manger à sa table et but à ma santé ensuite de que il m'envoya à boire dans la même coupe où il avait bu.” Callières, 35.

³⁸² AGAD, APP, 45/4, “Sposób przyjmowania Posłów Wielkich Moskiewskich,” in *Silva rerum Jana Wielopolskiego, starosty bieckiego*, 442–45.

failing to bring the election of Count of Soissons forward—the House of Savoy received all due esteem thanks to his efforts. The banquet table was the perfect venue for such a display.

Also, Callières' general comment regarding the reception of the ambassadors at the Election Sejm draws attention to the importance of a shared meal. He notes that after the audience, the foreign ambassador goes back to his loggings with the same escort he arrived with, where

he receives after compliments from all the lords and gentlemen who come to see him, ... and afterward he hosts several magnificent meals for them with a great abundance of Hungarian wine, which is a necessary expense in this country to acquire friends.³⁸³

This remark of the significance of wine in dealing with magnates in Poland-Lithuania resonates well with Hyde's diary, and more specifically with the referendary's fatigue caused by conducting business with his compatriots ending in drinking, and confirms that wine—Hungarian wine specifically—was a status drink and its abundance determined the splendor of the occasion.³⁸⁴

Food provisions and expenses

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Sejm account lists detail the funds allocated for residents, envoys, ambassadors, or commissionaires dispatched from Poland-Lithuania, and spending for hosting foreign representatives, however, not all of them. One of the hallmarks of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy was the frequent alternation between two modes of hospitality employed depending on a partner of exchange. The responsibility for providing for ambassadors, envoys, and messengers coming from Muscovy, Sublime Porte, Crimean

³⁸³ “il reçoit après les compliments de tous les seigneurs et gentilshommes qui le viennent voir entre lequel il donne la main chez lui à tous les sénateurs et la prend sur tous ceux qui ne le sont pas et leur donne ensuite plusieurs repas magnifiques avec grande profusion de vin de Hongrie, ce qui est une dépense nécessaire en ce pays-là pour s'y acquérir des amis.” Callières, *Mon voyage en Pologne en l'année 1674*, 14.

³⁸⁴ Hungarian wine was not only popular among Polish-Lithuanian nobles, but it also gained a status of “Polish” wine, similarly to saffron and pepper. On the changing taste preferences and perception of the Hungarian and French wines in Poland-Lithuania connected with broader cultural changes, see Dorota Dias-Lewandowska, *Historia kulturowa wina francuskiego w Polsce od połowy XVII do początku XIX wieku* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014).

Khanate, Danubian Principalities, Safavid Persia, as well as Cossacks rested with the Polish-Lithuanian treasury, and the same was expected in reciprocity.³⁸⁵

The Sejm accounts include lumps sums for hosting “Muscovite, Turkish, Persian, Multan, Moldavian, Wallachian, Cossack, and Tatar” diplomats, sometimes mention names but rarely provide specific information about the arrival or departure dates or the exact purposes for which the money was spent, apart from stating it was allocated for “provisions” (*pro wizję*), “provisions and discharge” (*pro wizję i odprawę*), or for the escort to/from the borders (*przystaw*), with few exceptions. For instance, the Coronation Sejm accounts from 1676 read that “for two banquets and a gift for Vasilii Tiapkin Muscovite Resident with a *przystaw* from the Senate council” over 1827,15 in *currenti moneta* was spent.³⁸⁶

Comparing the entries in Sejm accounts is challenging due to the non-uniformity of the records, which list two types of currencies, various purposes, and rarely a time frame, but the variations in spending were primarily dependent on the diplomat’s rank. To illustrate it with some (however flawed) examples, the Coronation Sejm accounts mention 160 in *bona moneta* (*złoty*), and 1468 in *currenti* spent for “provision, discharge, banquets, and a gift” for a Muscovite legate (*posłannik*) but over 9000 in *bona moneta* and 300 in *currenti* for ambassadors (*posłowie*

³⁸⁵ By the late sixteenth century, in Poland-Lithuania only legations coming from the East and Southeast of Eurasia were accommodated from the treasury. Conversely, Polish-Lithuanian legations were also afforded similar hospitality. However, it is important to note, that the practice of reciprocal providing for foreign legation was common. For example, although in Western Europe diplomats were typically provided for only the first couple of days after their arrival, Muscovite embassies were usually supplied throughout their stay, mirroring the treatment representatives of Western European princes received in Muscovy. Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725*, 103–4; for the Polish-Lithuanian example, see Nahlik, *Narodziny nowożytnej dyplomacji*, 93–94.

³⁸⁶ “Na dwa Bankiety y Upominek dla Wasila Tiapki Residenta Moskiewskiego z Przystawem *ex Senatus consilio*.” AGAD, ASK II, 63, *Rachunki generalne sejmowe anno 1676*, 236. *Currenti moneta* (or *tymf*) in the Sobieski’s reign was equal to 30–33 groszy; *bona moneta* (or *złoty*) to around 52–55 groszy. Władysław Adamczyk, *Ceny w Warszawie w XVI i XVII wieku* (Lwów-Warszawa: skład główny Kasa im. J. Mianowskiego, Instytut Popierania Polskiej Twórczości Naukowej, 1938), 21–27,

wielcy).³⁸⁷ Similarly, receiving a Tatar ambassador (*poseł wielki*) cost the treasury 15710 in *currenti moneta*, while a Tatar envoy (*poseł*) only 872,15.³⁸⁸

Although banquets are occasionally mentioned explicitly, the character of the Sejm accounts does not allow for a comprehensive analysis of these expenditures. Unfortunately, these records also cannot be supplemented with materials from the collection of legations accounts (*Rachunki poselstw*) in the Crown Treasury archive held in the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, as only singular documents from the reign of Sobieski have survived. However, among the lists of court accounts, there are receipts breaking down the expenses for provisions. Not all of them are dated or list names; some just list daily allowance, but at times, more detailed documents come across. For instance, when a Tatar envoy (*poseł tatarski*) arrived in Yavoriv in 1682, he was provided mutton, bread, beer, vodka, and mead or honey (*miód*), with an annotation indicating it was for three days.³⁸⁹ Two years later, a Tatar envoy hosted in Yavoriv received meat, bread, beer, vodka, mead, butter, salt, and pepper (also intended for three days) again.³⁹⁰ Similarly, when food and drink given to the Cossacks is mentioned, it is bread, mutton, beer, and vodka.³⁹¹ Unfortunately, there are not enough records naming specific food and drink—more details are given when gifting garments and fabric, also customarily expected—but certain foodstuffs seem recurring. Additionally, items such as oats, hay, wood, and candles are included, which confirms provisions were basic supplies of food, fuel, and fodder for horses.

Against this background, two documents stand out. One is a receipt from June 30, 1680, with foodstuffs intended for an anonymous Turkish legate, including bread, onions, entire mutton,

³⁸⁷ “Na Prowizią, Odprawę, Bankiety y Upominek Iemieliiana Posłanika Moskiewskiego;” “Na Prowizią, Odprawę, Bankiety y Upominki Wasila Siemianowica y Iwana Iwanowicza Posłów Wielkich Moskiewsk[ich].” AGAD, ASK II, 63, *Rachunki generalne sejmowe anno 1676*, 231.

³⁸⁸ “Na Prowizią, odprawę y Contentatją Weliszach Beia Posła W[ielkiego] Tatarskiego,” “Na Prowizią, Odzianie y Odprawę Amzet Murze Posła Tatarskiego.” AGAD, ASK II, 63, *Rachunki generalne sejmowe anno 1676*, 234; 231.

³⁸⁹ AGAD, ASK III, 7/1, 496.

³⁹⁰ AGAD, ASK III, 7/1, 573.

³⁹¹ For example, AGAD, ASK III, 7/1, 819, 821–22.

salt, vinegar, pepper, butter, beer, vodka—what seems to be an ordinary provision—as well as rice, olive oil, cloves, and wine.³⁹² Even more expensive and variable items were intended for Muscovite legate and resident in August 1690. The receipt, signed by Jan III Sobieski's hand, lists bread, four types of meat (mutton, ox, geese, and hens), two bowls of sweets, two barrels of beer, a barrel of mead, two pots (*garncze*) of *petercyment* (type of sweet, spiced wine), two pots of Hungarian wine, three pots of “dyed” vodka,³⁹³ three pots of anise vodka, and “glass for these liquors.”³⁹⁴ More expensive than an ox (50), or an entire barrel of mead (50) were the sweets costing 60. The Sejm accounts from 1692 include provisions for hosting Ivan Mikhailovich Volkov, Muscovite legate and resident, staying in Warsaw during the 1690 Sejm, and then following Sobieski to Lviv.³⁹⁵ Interestingly, the sum spent on one of the four “ordinary banquets” (255,18 in *bona moneta*) matches exactly the receipt from the court accounts.

Despite the limitation of using both Sejm and court accounts for investigating diplomatic hospitality, they often appear to be the sole evidence of lower-ranking diplomats arriving in Poland-Lithuania from the Eastern and South-Eastern neighbors, testifying to the intensity and range of Poland-Lithuania's foreign relations. The narrative sources also show this mundane side of diplomacy. Often in the form of complaints about the quality or insufficiency of food and drink provisions, particularly from legates sent to Muscovy or passing through the Ottoman tributary states. One such example comes from the general diary of Voivode Jan Gninski's embassy.

³⁹² The receipt reads “poseł turecki,” however, the Sejm accounts from 1681 list provision and discharge for a “posłannik turecki” in the amount of 1460,55 in *bona moneta* and 15 in *currenti*. The receipt is for 55,15, with the most expensive item being 2 pots (*garncze*) of wine costing 12. Cf AGAD, ASK II, 65, *Rachunki generalne sejmowe anno 1681*, 54; AGAD, ASK III, 7/1, 459.

³⁹³ Dyed vodka or *alkiermes* vodka was made with syrup from Polish cochineals which gave it a red hue. Zuzanna Krótki, “Alkohol w leksyce staro- i średniopolskiej,” *Prace Językoznawcze* 18, no. 2 (2016): 91.

³⁹⁴ AGAD, ASK III, 7/2, 969.

³⁹⁵ AGAD, ASK II, 73, *Rachunki generalne sejmowe na sejm pro die 3 Decembris w roku 1692 podane*, 19–20.

After over a month of travel, Gniński and his entourage were welcomed at the river Prut by the Moldavian master of the pantry (*stolnik ziemi wołoskiej* in the Polish sources), and the notary of land assize (*pisarz ziemski*), who carried with them food supplies for the embassy and its escort (*przystaw*), the janissary Agha. The supplies are described as “very poor,”³⁹⁶ filling the janissary Agha with anger, as the quality of food was not only unsatisfying for him personally but also potentially poorly reflected on the hospitality (and prosperity) of the hospodar, the Principality, and by the extension of the Porte.³⁹⁷ This link between prosperity and hospitality was not limited to the “performance” of tributary states alone: a somewhat similar situation occurred upon the embassy’s arrival in Istanbul when water shortcomings caused a great embarrassment to the Ottoman official (*kihaya*) witnessing it.³⁹⁸ But regarding the food provision offered on the road, it is also worth considering their symbolic value, that is, its usefulness in marking the host domain. In an even more straightforward example, Serasker Ibrahim Pasha sent ahead mutton, bread, cucumbers, cherries, sherbet, and ice along with a running order of food provisions for the following stages of the journey, in this way extending the hospitality beyond the reception in the military camp near the Danube, north-west of Babadag.

Such provisions were a part of a ritual that “provided the structure for the diplomat’s interactions with his host from the frontier to the capital,” reflecting the sovereign’s grandeur more and more as the diplomat advanced toward the center of power.³⁹⁹ Jan Hennings’

³⁹⁶ Scarce provisions provided by the Principality were apparently repeatedly reported by Polish-Lithuanian embassies. “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 8 (D); Michał Wasiucionek, “Ceremoniał i polityka. Intrydy posłów polskich w Jassach w XVII wieku. Zarys problematyki”, *Ceremonial and Politics. Polish Deputies Inauguration in Iași in the 17th c.*, *Wschodni Rocznik Humanistyczny* 7 (November 2010): 58.

³⁹⁷ The general diary of Gniński’s embassy records that the master of the pantry confessed while showing his bruises, that he no longer wished to live in Moldavia. For Polish-Lithuanian nobles, who enjoyed personal inviolability, such punishment was rather unthinkable as such, but the diary notes that the master of the pantry was prior to his current office a *logofăt* (*logofeta*), “in our language a chancellor,” adding a comparison that unmistakably testifies to the bleak state of the Principality, perhaps more striking than the mention of duty to pay tribute and bearing the presence of stationing Ottoman troupes whom Moldavians “cannot comfort.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 9. (D)

³⁹⁸ “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 29. (D)

³⁹⁹ Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725*, 66.

observation, made about Muscovy, holds relevance in the context of the Ottoman Empire as well.⁴⁰⁰ However, while appearing as a generous host was certainly a consideration in Poland-Lithuania, it seems that, at least in the case of food provisions and expenses for foreign representatives covered by the Crown treasury, the main concern was following the custom and principle of reciprocity. This is not to say that food and drink was not used by the Sobieskis to craft their image; quite the contrary, as Chapter 5 focusing on the celebration of royal weddings demonstrates.

Diplomacy in Poland-Lithuania was shaped by its political system, with the Sejm as its central institution, which influenced how foreign representatives were received. The selected cases examined in this chapter serve as illustrative examples, offering insights into how hospitality was employed for diplomatic purposes within this organizational framework. The existence of two patterns of hospitality, each with different reciprocal obligations, was not a unique feature of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy, however, the fact during the reign of Jan III most important diplomatic partners expected varying extents of hospitality makes it more apparent.

Examining instances where diplomats were hosted in comparison helps differentiate customary forms of hospitality from those extended as gestures of courtesy. Investigating specific banquets within a broader context helps to understand their function in diplomatic negotiations and grasp the political interests at play, filtered through their descriptions.

⁴⁰⁰ Arel, “Hospitality at the Hands of the Muscovite Tsar: The Welcoming of Foreign Envoys in Early Modern Russia,” 23–43; Hedda Reindl-Kiel, “Audiences, Banquets, Garments and Kisses. Encounters with the Ottoman Sultan in the 17th Century,” in *The Ceremonial of Audience. Transcultural Approaches*, ed. Eva Orthmann and Anna Kollatz (Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2019), 169–208.

CHAPTER 4

EMBASSIES FROM POLAND-LITHUANIA: ISTANBUL, MOSCOW, ROME

On June 5, 1677, the French “La Gazette” reported on the Sejm held in Warsaw between January 14 and April 26, 1677, informing its readers that an envoy had been sent to Moscow, and ambassadors to Istanbul and Rome had been nominated.⁴⁰¹ The three embassies were of immense importance for Polish-Lithuanian foreign relations for different reasons, and it is no wonder that the Sejm resolutions attracted attention abroad, particularly in France, since Louis XIV had great interest in the peace between Poland-Lithuania and its Eastern and Southern neighbors.

Later, “La Gazette” published descriptions of the solemn entries of all three embassies, albeit with varied levels of accuracy and details. For example, the arrival of the Polish-Lithuanian legation to Moscow is kept in an overly optimistic tone, noting the splendor of welcome and tsar’s subjects raising to the occasion, but it mentions only one ambassador instead of two—one from the Crown and one from the Grand Duchy.⁴⁰² The report of the Polish-Lithuanian ambassador’s entry to Rome is written in a rather indifferent manner. It does, however, make a

⁴⁰¹ “De Varsovie, le 7 May,” *La Gazette*, no. 52 (1677): 441.

⁴⁰² “L’Ambassadeur de Pologne est arrivé ici avec une nombreuse suite de Cavalerie. Le Czar a fait faire de grands préparatifs pour son entrée publique: & il a mesme ordonné aux Principaux de cette Cour d’y paroistre avec tout l’éclat qui leur sera possible. Cela marque le dessein qu’a ce Prince de vivre en bonne intelligence avec le Roy de Pologne. On dit que cet Ambassadeur est chargé de demander la restitution de Smolensko: & on croit qu’elle luy sera accordée, pour faciliter le succez de Negotiations qu’on a commencées près de Sa M. Polonoise.” “De Moscow, le 16 Avril 1678,” *La Gazette*, no. 56 (1678): 473.

mention of refreshments sent from the pope after the reception audience.⁴⁰³ In comparison, the embassy to Istanbul was covered with far greater attention and enthusiasm.

Profiting from access to information through the French embassy in the Ottoman capital, the relation in “La Gazette” meticulously chronicled the journey of the Polish-Lithuanian ambassador from Warsaw, as well as his entry to Istanbul, and reception audience, highlighting some of the most spectacular aspects of the legation, including the banquet held after the audience with Mehmed IV in the Topkapı Palace:

They served a dinner following the custom. There were three Tables. The First Vizier & the Ambassador were alone at the first. Two sons of the Ambassador, & the Secretary of the Ambassador placed at the second. The Commander of the Hussars, the Majordomo & another Officer at the third. The Sultan saw them dining through window blinds.⁴⁰⁴

Characteristically, the banquet description does not mention any food or drinks served, but focuses on the seating order, resembling the solemn entry to Istanbul, swapping the enumeration of parade participants for the diners sitting at the tables. Nina Lamal and Klaas van Gelder point out that entries like these ones reported in “La Gazette” were part of symbolic communication, inviting numerous interpretations.⁴⁰⁵ The fact that mentions of refreshments or banquets were included in descriptions of entries shows that they were not only considered an integral part of receiving the embassy but also carried symbolical weight.

⁴⁰³ “Le 28 du mois dernier, le Prince Michel Radzevill Ambassadeur d’Obédience du Roy de Pologne fit ici son entrée publique avec un cortège de cinquante carrosses à six chevaux. Il estoit dans celui du Cardinal Cibo accompagné du Cardinal Vidoni Protecteur de Pologne, précédé de ses trompettes & de cent trente hommes à cheval dont 60 portoient des armes, quoy que ce ne soit pas la coûtume. Le Cardinal Vidoni le conduist à l’audience du Papa, a qui il fit présent d’un service d’Autel & d’un horloge, le tout d’ambre & grand Prix. Sa Sainteté luy fit porter le soir quantité de rafraichissements.” “De Rome, le 3 Aout 1680,” *La Gazette*, no. 74 (1680): 466.

⁴⁰⁴ “On servit à diner süivante la coustume. Il y avoit trois Tables. Le Premier Visir & l’Ambassadeur furent seuls à la première. Les deux Fils de l’Ambassadeur, & le Secrétaire de l’Ambassadeur se placèrent à la seconde. Le Commandant des Houssards, le Major-Dome, & un autre Officier estoyent à la troisième. Le Grand Seigneur les veid diner d’une fenetre jalousée. A la fortie de Table, l’Anbassadeur, selon ce qui se pratique chez les Turck, pria le Premier Visir de luy procurer l’Audience de Sa Hautesse: & ce Premier Ministre chargea de la supplication, un Capigi Bacchi pour la porter au Sultan.” “L’Entrée du Palatine de Culm Ambassadeur Extraordinaire de Pologne en la ville de Constantinople: Avec les Particularitez de l’audience qu’il a eüe du Grand Seigneur, & ce qui s’est passé en son voyage,” *La Gazette*, no. 113 (1677): 962–63.

⁴⁰⁵ Nina Lamal and Klaas van Gelder, “Addressing Audiences Abroad: Cultural and Public Diplomacy in Seventeenth-Century Europe,” *The Seventeenth Century* 36, no. 3 (2021): 367.

Publication of such news and relations was part of a strategy that sought to influence domestic and foreign audiences.⁴⁰⁶ Importantly, diplomats “not only needed to excel at negotiating and communicating with ministers, secretaries, and fellow diplomats, but also had to communicate effectively with a broader audience in the host country.”⁴⁰⁷ Therefore, this chapter, relying on different types of relations and diaries, examines not only the conduct of embassies but also reflects on the ways they were reported. I follow three embassies sent from Poland-Lithuania at the beginning of Jan III Sobieski’s reign: the embassy of Voivode of Chełmno Jan Gniński (c. 1620–1685) to the Sublime Porte in 1677, the embassy of Voivode of Wołyń (Volhynia) Michał Jerzy Czartoryski (1621–1691) and Voivode of Połock (Polatsk) Jan Kazimierz Sapieha (c. 1642–1720) to Muscovy in 1678, and the embassy of Deputy Chancellor of Lithuania Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł (1635–1680) to Rome in 1679. To highlight various uses of food and drink, the significance of eating and drinking in diplomatic practice, and its function in narrating the events, I allow myself to consider a wide range of contexts in which food and drink appears. This way, I believe, it is possible to better grasp the meanings of all the descriptions of offered refreshments, public and private banquets, dining rooms, tables, and chairs, seating order, table settings and decorations, toasts, food presentations and preparations, number of dishes, and (on occasion) their taste.

Vodka and confitures in Iași, sherbet and coffee in Istanbul

The embassy headed by Voivode of Chełmno Jan Gniński to the Sublime Porte in 1677 was the first grand embassy dispatched after Sobieski’s coronation.⁴⁰⁸ Leaving Poland-Lithuania in

⁴⁰⁶ Lamal and van Gelder, 379.

⁴⁰⁷ Lamal and van Gelder, 368.

⁴⁰⁸ The adjective grand (*wielkie*) was used in connection with the Ottoman Empire, Muscovy, and the Crimean Khanate to emphasize the prestige of an embassy. The grand ambassador (*poseł wielki*) was not a separate rank, but an equivalent within the highest tier. The same practice has been followed, for example, by the imperial diplomacy while dispatching legations to the sultan. Wójcik, “Dyplomacja polska w okresie wojen drugiej połowy XVII wieku (1648-1699),” 264; Nahlik, *Narodziny nowożytnej dyplomacji*, 117.

May, the embassy consisted of around 450 people, 650 horses, 100 carriages and carts.⁴⁰⁹ The size of Polish-Lithuanian embassies to Istanbul (or, more precisely, the burden of accommodating them) repeatedly inspired anecdotes of Grand Viziers inquiring whether the Poles came to conquer their capital or raid the treasury.⁴¹⁰ Indeed, the embassy called for a great sum of money to be spent on ritualized hospitality, however, contrary to the Grand Viziers' opinion, it was not coming exclusively from the Porte's coffers.

Grand embassy of 1677

The Truce of Zhuravne from 1676 opened up a chance to secure Poland-Lithuania's South-Eastern and Eastern border by bringing closer the prospect of ending the war with the Porte and providing an advantage in negotiations with Muscovy. Although territorial losses in favor of Istanbul were hardly acceptable for Poland-Lithuania's nobles, particularly from the South-Eastern provinces, the terms of the treaty were, to use words of Sobieski, "not disgraceful for the Polish Nation."⁴¹¹

Following the decision of the Sejm of 1677, Gniński, one of the most active and skilled diplomats in Poland-Lithuania, was appointed grand ambassador to Istanbul.⁴¹² In his mission—concluding a peace with the Porte—he was accompanied by the Starost of Chełmno Michał

⁴⁰⁹ Andrzej Przyboś and Roman Żelewski, *Dyplomaci w dawnych czasach. Relacje staropolskie z XVI-XVIII stulecia*, (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1959), 374.

⁴¹⁰ Kołodziejczyk, "Polish Embassies in Istanbul or How to Sponge on Your Host without Losing Your Self-Esteem," 51–52.

⁴¹¹ "Narodowi Polskiemu *non indecorae*." After Kotarski, "Jan III Sobieski wobec traktatu Gnińskiego z 1678 r.," 178.

The pursuit of concluding a lasting peace with the sultan met with disapproval, especially from nuncio Martelli and the Brandenburg resident Johann von Hoverbeck, who liaised with Sobieski's opponents. The other issue was the role of so-called *egzulants* from Podolia in influencing political life. See Jarosław Stoliczka, *Egzulanci podolscy (1672-1699). Znaczenie uchodźców z Podola w życiu politycznym Rzeczypospolitej* (Kraków: Nakładem Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1994).

⁴¹² Gniński was an ambassador to Paris in 1654 (sent for the future Queen Louise Marie Gonzague), the first commissioner during negotiations with Muscovy in 1670–1671, negotiator in Oliwa in 1660, and grand ambassador to Moscow in 1672. For more on his diplomatic activity, see Przyboś and Żelewski, *Dyplomaci w dawnych czasach. Relacje staropolskie z XVI-XVIII stulecia*, 372–73; Wójcik, *Rzeczpospolita wobec Turcji i Rosji 1674-1679*, 105–10; Adam Przyboś, "Jan Gniński (zm. 1685)," in *PSB* (Wrocław-Kraków-Warszawa: PAU-PAN-Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1958–1969).

Florian Rzewuski, secretary of the embassy; Remigiusz Dzierżek, translator and Sobieski's courtier coming from a family of renown orientalists; Jan jr and Władysław Gniński, the ambassador's sons; and his nephew, Samuel Proski, a resident in Istanbul soon after.

The Polish-Lithuanian estates instructed the ambassador to demand the return of Podolia and Ukraine, the release of hostages from Lviv and prisoners taken in Kamianets-Podilskyi (Кам'янець-Подільський, Kamieniec Podolski), as well as to seek restitution of the Holy Sepulchre and the Calvary in Jerusalem to the Franciscan Order.⁴¹³ Apart from defining political and prestigious objectives (the latter being matters concerning the Holy Land), the instruction also emphasized the importance of following the ceremonial and keeping discipline among the members of the embassy not to offend the host.⁴¹⁴

Gniński's secret instruction expressly obliged him to frequently send the news in order to keep the king and *Res Publica* informed and hence in a good position to react.⁴¹⁵ Judging from the references in his relation, he took this task seriously, regularly sending back fragments of the general diary.⁴¹⁶ Those two sources—Gniński's relation given during the Sejm in February 1679 in Grodno and the general diary of the embassy—brought a new quality to how negotiating with the Porte was narrated.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹³ Gniński received three instructions altogether: one from the king and estates, the second from the king, and a secret one, signed and sealed by Deputy Chancellor of the Crown.

⁴¹⁴ "wielmożny poseł, którego *apparatus non ad luxum, sed ad decentiam* będzie, *praecavendo* aby *impueri juventute* się nie okładał, *multis ex rationanibus*, w dobrym porządku bez konfuzji *disciplinam* zachował *familiam*; nie tylko dlatego, żeby zgorszenia nie dać, ale też żeby żadnej okazji do tumultu albo afrontów i niesmaków nie przydać." "Instrukcja dana Janowi Gnińskiemu od króla i stanów Rzptej," in *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego wojewody chełmińskiego do Turcji w latach 1677-1678*, ed. Franciszek Pułaski, Biblioteka Ordynacji Kasińskich (Warszawa: Typis Rubieszewski & Wrotnowski, 1907), 202.

⁴¹⁵ "Instrukcyja Sekretna," in *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego*, 206.

⁴¹⁶ For example: "as it is already in the general diary described and reported" ("jak to się już w generalnym diariuszu opisało i doniosło."), "Relacya poselska i dyariusz," *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego*, 103. (R)

⁴¹⁷ See Michał Wasiucionek, "Hermeneutics of Ceremonial Lore: Glimpses of the Idealized Diplomatic Protocol as Revealed in the Polish-Lithuanian Diplomatic Accounts (1677-1763)," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 35 (2018): 135–53; Grygorieva, "Imagined Diplomacy: Ottoman Palace Ceremonial Translated and Edited by Polish Lithuanian Ambassadors," 63–82.

Before departing from Poland-Lithuania, at least some embassy members studied accounts of previous Polish-Lithuanian legations to Istanbul and complained about their reliability in the general diary.⁴¹⁸ Unlike his predecessors, Gniński and the authors of the general diary chose a somewhat more moderate tone, refraining from expressing contempt to recompense humiliations and failures, which can be connected with a different approach to report-writing prompted by Sobieski's *pacta conventa*.⁴¹⁹ Also, the experience of finding the previous accounts practically useless could have been an incentive to provide more informative material for future ambassadors.

Gniński's relation and the general diary were both deposited in no longer existing libraries in Warsaw, Krasieński and Zamoyski Library, respectively, but by happy chance were prepared for publication by Franciszek Pułaski before WWII. Apart from the original of a relation containing Gniński's corrections, there are known transcripts prepared in his chancellery to be sent to senators as well.⁴²⁰ Similarly, the general diary was meant for a wider public: five copies are known, and one of them contained marginalia likely added by Sobieski himself.⁴²¹ In the most complete manuscript from Gniński's private archive from the Zamoyski Library, Pułaski

⁴¹⁸ "i jakolwiek przeróżnych poselstw w diariuszach o tym czytamy, *salva venia* pletli; jako i inszych *vanitates* siła pisali, do których tu ani podobieństwo." AGAD, AR II, Supplement, 649 G (I), *Diariusz poselstwa polskiego do Wielkiej Porty 1677 r.*, 15.

⁴¹⁹ Michał Wasiucionek brings up the fragments of Gniński's audience with the sultan (the alleged exchange with Mehmed IV) as a proof he is still following this old narrative strategy. However, Hedda Reindl-Kiel points out that in 1676 a new ceremonial rule book was commissioned by Kara Mustafa, and "if we believe the chronicles of the seventeenth century, sultans would now speak during the audiences." See Reindl-Kiel, "Audiences, Banquets, Garments and Kisses. Encounters with the Ottoman Sultan in the 17th Century," 174–75; Wasiucionek, "Hermeneutics of Ceremonial Lore: Glimpses of the Idealized Diplomatic Protocol as Revealed in the Polish-Lithuanian Diplomatic Accounts (1677-1763)," 148.

⁴²⁰ Pułaski identified eight copies made in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Franciszek Pułaski, "Przedmowa," in *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego wojewody chełmińskiego do Turcji w latach 1677-1678*, ed. Franciszek Pułaski, Biblioteka Ordynacji Krasieńskich (Warszawa: Typis Rubieszewski & Wrotnowski, 1907), XLV.

⁴²¹ Pułaski, "Przedmowa," XLVIII–XLIX, L.

distinguished four different hands, among them the one belonging to Samuel Proski, likely the redactor of the entire diary and the only author who could be identified by name.⁴²²

None of the copies of the diary of the embassy is complete, and the most unfortunate gap in the edition prepared by Pułaski falls in September 1677 when the audience with the sultan and the reception banquet happened. Fortunately, the fragment of the diary describing events between August 23 and September 14, including the audience and banquet in the Topkapı Palace, is preserved in the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, however—to my best knowledge—it was not identified as such in the literature so far.⁴²³

Compared to Gniński's relation, the diary lacks most of the self-staging filter and rhetoric qualities. Instead, it pays more attention to the material surroundings, and unlike the relation given *post factum* at the Sejm, it preserves more images informed by the first impression. Those impressions are especially interesting accounting for the fact that the embassy was received by the Ottoman officials and tributaries while progressing towards the capital, from the borderlands and provinces to the imperial center, facing more and more troubles advancing Polish-Lithuanian interest.

“The hospodar appeared politely, cheerfully, with manners”⁴²⁴

Traditionally, grand ambassadors from Poland-Lithuania *en route* to the capital of the Ottoman Empire were received by the Moldavian hospodars. For hospodars, at that time tributaries of

⁴²² Ten books cover the period from 8 May, 1677 (departure from Warsaw) until 12 June, 1678 (Proski's departure for Chyhyryn with the Ottoman troops), with missing parts between 12 and 25 September, 29 November and 5 December, 1677, and 13 April, 1678. Pułaski identified the hands as the same one that prepared a draft of Gniński's relation (in book I, book II, books V-VII, IX-X), two hands known from documents coming from Gniński's chancellery (in book II, beginning of book III, books IV-VIII), and finally a hand of Samuel Proski (book VIII-X, and corrections throughout), probably the redactor of the entire diary. Pułaski, LI-LII, XLIX.

⁴²³ AGAD, AR II, Suplement, 649 G (I), *Diariusz poselstwa polskiego do Wielkiej Porty 1677 r.*

⁴²⁴ “Po tej audiencji bankiet bardzo solenny trwał aż do samego wieczora; grzecznie, wesoło, obyczajnie stawiał się hospodar jmść. Samym wieczorem powracał p. poseł kareta.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” in *Źródła do poselstwa Jana Gnińskiego*, 10–11. (D)

the Porte, grand embassies from Poland-Lithuania were one of few occasions on which they could participate in “grand” politics, though only in a prestige dimension.⁴²⁵ The encounter had little impact on the outcome of the embassy—as political room for maneuver of Iași was delimited from Istanbul—but the ceremonial arrangements gave away the hospodar’s attitude towards Poland-Lithuania informed by its current perceived standing in the region.⁴²⁶ The repertoire of gestures signaling a favorable disposition towards the king and *Res Publica*’s legation consisted of elements such as meeting the embassy ahead and escorting it to the campsite, gathering numerous military escorts, and arranging the musical setting during the greeting.⁴²⁷ Gift exchange, refreshments offered before the audience, and a banquet following it carried the message further.

On June 26, a mile from Iași, Gniński was greeted by Miron Costin, chancellor, and half a mile further by Antonie Ruset, the hospodar himself. Gniński mentions that although he looked “unkempt, rather reserved,” the hospodar welcomed him in a manner “restoring the honor of grand ambassadors.”⁴²⁸ These two features—unkemptness and politeness—seem to be the key characteristics noted by the Poles in Moldavia, quite a stark contrast with the double act of lavishness and rudeness of the officials of the Porte remarked later on. Clearly, in the eyes of

⁴²⁵ Wasiucioneck, “Ceremoniał i polityka. Intrady posłów polskich w Jassach w XVII wieku. Zarys problematyki,” 110.

⁴²⁶ Wasiucioneck, 110.

⁴²⁷ Especially the practice of the hospodars to ride up to the Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors and then escort them to their tent site caused controversy before and after 1677. In 1667, Franciszek Kazimierz Wysocki, the secretary of an embassy, argued that welcoming the Polish-Lithuanian ambassador in person was the hospodar’s obligation, confirmed at the time when Moldavia was a Polish fief. The choice of this particular argument is peculiar considering the then status of Moldavia as an Ottoman tributary. However, the fact that the practice was occasionally resumed (like in 1677), suggests that the ceremonial in relations between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Principality of Moldavia was not a simple expression of legal status, but was first and foremost an indicator of the Principality’s attitude towards Poland-Lithuania, choosing from the customary catalogue of solutions according to needs. For more on the topic, see Wasiucioneck, “Ceremoniał i polityka. Intrady posłów polskich w Jassach w XVII wieku. Zarys problematyki,” 65–66. In 1677, it also had another practical dimension: the general diary mentions a request coming from the Moldavian dignitaries to use this occasion to talk freely, with no Turkish ears around.

⁴²⁸ There is a discrepancy between the general diary and Gniński’s relation as to whether the ambassador and the hospodar shook their right hands or not. Nonetheless, it seems that no significant conflicts over the ceremonial had to be resolved; there is no mention of ceremonial arrangements negotiated in advance. “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 10. (R)

the embassy members, the Principality was less prosperous than their *Res Publica*, although that did not contradict the opinion of its civility proved by the behavior of the hospodar and his companions—they were *honnêtes hommes*.

The day after the embassy's arrival in Iași, Gniński was invited to meet Ruset in his castle. On the way to the audience, the entourage was greeted by “people of different estates” who “brought berries, flowers, different music.”⁴²⁹ Upon reaching the castle, the guests from Poland-Lithuania were guided through two dining chambers, with “walls very old-fashioned,” then through a small hall to enter a room

where under a window an un-raised table on a divan was covered with confitures, most of them fried in honey, and four flasks of vodka, and four small empty glasses. The ambassador was seated at the table by [the hospodar] himself, who sat next to him, as the host in the corner, regaling [the ambassador] with confitures in the Turkish fashion, offering also vodka, poured from one flask into two glasses. The cupbearer drank from one glass, handed the second to the ambassador, from which he drunk, and passed it to the hospodar. After that [the ambassador] asked for an audience.⁴³⁰

Offerings of the confitures in this setting are judged as “Turkish fashion,” accentuating the Principality's proximity to the Porte. Interestingly, the custom of serving confitures before an audience—and not doing that on a low table placed on a carpet—was labeled as Turkish. In this case it seems that the comparison is made not to exaggerate the Otherness of the host, but rather to place the custom within a context familiar to the king and senators, who were the addressees of the diary.

Later, describing a meal sent from the Serasker's kitchen, an Ottoman dignitary, the author of the diary uses appropriate terms to refer to a strikingly similar setting. In what seems to be an attempt to satisfy curiosity for the exotic and posing as a well-informed participant of the events

⁴²⁹ “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 10. (D)

⁴³⁰ “Prowadzony przez dwie izbie stołowe na filarach środkiem sklepione. Mury nader staroświeckie ... Tandem weszliśmy prze sień małą do pokoju sklepionego wielkimi kwadratami, błękitno malowanemi na kształt cegiełek holenderskich ulepionego gdzie pod oknem stół na dywanie niepodniesiony, zastawiony był konfiturami, najwięcej w miodzie smażonemi, i cztery flaszki gorzałki i cztery drobne, próżne kieliszki. Pana posła za stół posadziwszy sam [hospodar] wedle niego, jako gospodarz siadł w rogu hospodar jmsć z turecka konfiturami częstując, poczęstował i wódką, której z jednej flaszki nalano dwa kieliszki. Z jednego kieliszka napił się podczaszy, drugi p. posłowi podał, której skosztowawszy, oddał p. posła hospodarowi jmsci. Potem prosił o audeincyją.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 10–11. (D)

to his readers he mentions, for example, “a round skin was placed, *sufra* (*sofra*) in Turkish ... On this skin, a square stool was placed, three-quarters high, on it then a round whitewashed copper plate of two cubits of diameter, *saḥan* in Turkish.”⁴³¹ Given only a few details, it is not sure how similar or different those two sets of objects were, but it is possible that it was rather the distance traveled by the embassy or perhaps the richness of the items that informed its “Turkishness.”

Leaving some (perceived) differences and (unnoticed) similarities of foodstuffs and objects accompanying served food aside—in addition to its relative modesty considering honey was a less prestigious ingredient than sugar—the most significant distinction between the refreshments offered in the Principality and the Porte lied in the choice of drinks. In Moldavia, vodka paired in the setting of hosting an ambassador with sweet confitures makes for an interesting blend of customs, a peculiar variation on a hospitality routine known from the Ottoman example, that is, offering coffee often accompanied by sherbet before commencing the talks.⁴³²

In the seventeenth century, customarily prepared for social gatherings and family celebrations, both coffee and sherbet beckoned goodwill.⁴³³ Coffee offered to guests set the atmosphere of conviviality, while the sweetness of sherbet implied opulence and benevolence, an incentive to

⁴³¹ “i naprzód na owym dywanie położona skóra okrągła po turecku *sufra* ... Na owej skórze postawiony stół kwadratowy, trzy ćwierci wysoki, na nim dopiero blacha pobielana, miedziana, okrągła na dwa łokcie dyamentu, po turecku *saḥan*, z brzegami, na palec podniesionemi, na którą kłaść trzeba kości i fragmenta potraw. Na niej tedy stawiono w środku pojedynkiem potraw, ciepłe na półmiskach na kształt jazdów głębokich z brzegami ledwo na palec szerokimi, takież głębokimi wierzchami pobielanemi przykryte.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 16. (D) *Sofra* or *sufra* was groundcover or a tray, made out of leather, carpet, fabric, copper or wood. For examples of dining arrangements using *sofra*, see Priscilla Mary Işın, *Bountiful Empire. A History of Ottoman Cuisine* (London: Reaktion Books, 2018), 200–201.

⁴³² Apparently, an older version of the custom was to offer a cake or sherbet, and from the second half of the seventeenth century, coffee as well. Maria Pia Pedani, “The Sultan and the Venetian Bailo: Ceremonial Diplomatic Protocol in Istanbul,” in *Diplomatisches Zeremoniell in Europa Und Im Mittleren Osten in Der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Paul Niederkorn, Ralp Kauz, and Giorgio Rota (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 290.

⁴³³ Işın, *Bountiful Empire. A History of Ottoman Cuisine*, 174–75, 183–84.

“use only sweet words.”⁴³⁴ Considering flavorings and aromatics added to both drinks as well as the vessels and utensils used for serving it could easily carry the message of luxury as well.⁴³⁵

Whether the “warming up” qualities of vodka, picked over wine on the occasion of Gniński’s audience with Ruset, were to replicate the sensation of coffee drinking is impossible to establish given the available evidence, nevertheless, the choice seems to testify to widely shared fondness to contrasting taste at that time. And while coffee, sherbet, and alcohol (mainly wine) functioned as social, celebratory status drinks in the Ottoman and European contexts, respectively, the way they were consumed—particularly during receptions of diplomats—created a slightly different setting.

Although inquiries about the health of the monarch and high officials in Poland-Lithuania (specifically hetmans who were involved in negotiations with the Porte and Khanate) are made by Ottoman dignitaries, raising toasts or sharing of the same glass conveyed equality and respect for the other party, bonding through the participation in the ritual.⁴³⁶ Coffee and sherbet were repeatedly offered to Gniński as a token of friendly disposition and hospitality, but not always consumed by the host, adding an asymmetry. Even more importantly, unlike the prince to whose health a toast is made (or who was present himself, as it was the case with Ruset), the person of a sultan was not invoked during the receptions or banquets in this way mirroring his withdrawal from direct interaction with diplomats.⁴³⁷ Overall, it is a small detail that nonetheless

⁴³⁴ In the simplest version, sherbet was made by mixing water with a sweetener (honey, molasses), and with sugar, added fruit juices (pomegranate, lemon, fig, tamarind, bitter orange, cherry, apple, quince, mulberry, peach, apricot, grape, rhubarb), rose water, flowers (lilies, violets, myrtles), spices and aromatics (musk, ambergris) on the higher end. Işın, 173–74.

⁴³⁵ Coffee was not a cheap drink on its own, but adding spices (cardamom, cloves, star anise), aromatics (ambergris) or flowers (jasmine, orange) made it even more expensive. Işın, 189.

⁴³⁶ On the topic of toast as a literary genre and acts of speech see, for example, Jolanta Lubocha-Kruglik, “O gatunku toastu: aspekt lingwistyczny i kulturowy,” *Lingwistyka Stosowana* 9 (2014): 59–67; on toast and politics (loyal-healthing ritual) in England, see Angela McShane, “Material Culture and Political Drinking in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Past and Present* 222, Supplement: Cultures of Intoxication (2009): 248–76.

⁴³⁷ Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (New York, N.Y. : Cambridge, Mass: Architectural History Foundation ; MIT Press, 1991), 15–22.

shows that the practices surrounding food and drink did not function in a vacuum but were in accordance with the symbolic language of political interaction.

In Iași, Gniński and Ruset shared a glass in a gesture that symbolically leveled up their position, demonstrating mutual respect and sincerity. The cupbearer was not using the same vessel, yet he drank from the same flask before the ambassador and hospodar followed suit. Tasting the drink before serving it to the hospodar and ambassador was one of the duties the cupbearer performed at the hospodar's table, proving that it was safe to drink.⁴³⁸ The lack of comment in the Polish sources may perhaps suggests that distrust and fear of being poisoned was not an immediate concern, at least for the members of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy, or on the contrary, that the procedure was expected for this very reason. Nevertheless, the fact that it was reported in detail implies it was seen as charged with meaning or at least curious.

While the author of the diary describes the drinking ritual in detail, Gniński in his relation explicitly confirms that the hospodar declared sympathies towards the Commonwealth and offered honest information during the audience, drawing a link between the alcohol consumption and sincerity.⁴³⁹ The banquet that followed is judged to be “exceptionally solemn,” but apart from the tone of the event, not much else is known about its course or the food and drink served. Perhaps, unlike the refreshment offering in the form of “Turkish” confitures and drinking ritual, it was similar enough to what the Poles consider to qualify as a solemnity.

⁴³⁸ The High Cupbearer (*marele ceasnic/paharnic, supremus pincerna*) was responsible not only for the safety of drinks but also for the procurement of drinks for the hospodar's cellar and the management of vineyards. Maria Magdalena Szekély, “Food and Culinary Practices in 17th-Century Moldavia: Tastes, Techniques, Choices,” in *Earthly Delights: Economies and Cultures of Food in Ottoman and Danubian Europe, c. 1500-1900*, ed. Violeta Barbu and Angela Jianu (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 182.

⁴³⁹ The talks were centered on the security of the diplomatic correspondence, the restitutions of worship sites, and Polish captives, that is, topics auxiliary to the peace negotiations.

“From delicious Polish dishes there was almost no difference”⁴⁴⁰

Besides the banquet held for Gniński after the audience with the sultan, discussed in the following section, three other meals described in the Polish sources stand out. Two of them were offered during his journey, still at the provincial part of the empire near the Danube, by Serasker Ibrahim Pasha, the other already on the Bosphorus, by Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha.

The banquet at Serasker’s was the first occasion on which Gniński was celebrated by a high official of the Porte—before this point, he had met with the pasha of Kamianets and Janissary Agha, both instances were lacking such ceremonial underpinnings. The weight of the event is expressed by the preparation undertaken, emphasizing that the procession formed by the Polish-Lithuanian embassy for the entry to the camp was more exquisite than previously in Kamianets or Iași.

On July 6, the embassy reached Serasker’s camp. The diary mentions that Gniński still felt obliged to offer a meal prepared by his cooks to the escort (*przystawy*) but instead he was sent 18 dishes (*potraw*) from Ibrahim Pasha’s kitchen shortly after the arrival.⁴⁴¹ The description focuses on the table setting, gives detail of eating manners, and dining sequence. In other words, it records novelty and the material context in which the food is served. And unlike in the description of serving refreshments in hospodar’s castle in Iași, on this occasion, proper foreign

⁴⁴⁰ “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 18. (D)

⁴⁴¹ Until the nineteenth century, a formal meal was arranged by services, not courses in the modern sense. A service (so-called service *à la française*) consisted of a selection of dishes, from which guests could choose according to their preferences. For a concise explanation of serving styles, see Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, “Towards a Structured Approach to Reading Historic Cookbooks,” *M/C Journal* 16, no. 3, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://www.journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/view/649>.

terms such as *sofra* (floor spread or dinner mat), *sahan* (tray placed on a stool), and *peşkir* (napkin) are used.⁴⁴²

The attention to such detail had a practical purpose, for the generosity of Gniński's reception reflected on his status. It is also fair to assume that describing textiles used during dining ("to every person ... a circle made from Persian textile ... *peskir* in Turkish, was given instead of serviette and two big cloths"), and minute records of tableware ("deep platters in the shape of ices [fish] with a rim wide barely for a finger, such deep, covered with whitewashed lids") stemmed from status concerns mixed with curiosity, displayed at least at the initial stages of the mission.⁴⁴³ The comparisons to known foodstuffs and customs ("flatbread instead of bread; such as common people in Sweden use and in Austria" "fragrant vodka for hands ... called by the Italians *aqua di Nampha*") placed the meal in a familiar cultural orbit.⁴⁴⁴ What is more, the remark on the proper way to discard bones and leftovers ("whitewashed plate, copper, round, two elbows in diameter, *sahan* in Turkish, with the rim raised one finger high, on which one needs to put bones and remains of dishes") points to the standard of appropriateness in this situation, which the members of the embassy aspired to follow.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴² *Sahan* was sometimes described also as a copper pan. Hedda Reindl-Kiel, "The Must-Haves of a Grand Vizier. Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha's Luxury Assets," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 106 (2016): 186.

⁴⁴³ The tableware, especially Chinese porcelain and silver trays, was also praised by members of later embassies, including Franciszek Gościecki, the author of the diary of Stanisław Chomentowski's embassy, who was otherwise dismissive towards the food served by the Ottomans. Kołodziejczyk, "Polish Embassies in Istanbul or How to Sponge on Your Host without Losing Your Self-Esteem," 56.

⁴⁴⁴ "półmiskach na kształt jazdów głębokich z brzegami ledwo na palec szerokiemi, takież głębokiemi wierzchami pobielanemi przykryte;" "podpłomyk miasto chleba; takież też własnie we Szwecji zaywają ludzie prości i po austriach." "Relacya poselska i dyariusz," 15–16. (D)

⁴⁴⁵ "blacha pobielana, miedziana, okrągła na dwa łokcie dyametru, po turecku sahan, z brzegami, na palec podniesionemi, na którą kłaść trzeba kości i fragmenta potraw." "Relacya poselska i dyariusz," 16. (D)

Unfortunately, it is not possible to say how these table manners was communicated to the members of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy, whether it was explained to them by someone from Serasker's camp, or perhaps someone who possessed the knowledge of cultural know-how (translator Dzierżek?), or maybe deduced, but clearly it was considered valuable enough to be written down. It also contributed to the impression of the refined table manners of the Ottomans.

On the next day, once gifts had been sent to Ibrahim Pasha, an invite for the banquet arrived. On this occasion, the Serasker “a beautiful person of 67 years but with not much of grey [hair]” was dressed in a red *delia* coat lined with sables which looked (and was seen as) identical to the one worn by Gniński.⁴⁴⁶ Then, after exchanging politeness and Ibrahim Pasha’s inquiry about the health of the king and hetmans, coffee, “vodka for hands,” and “smoke” were brought and (at his own request) Gniński was invited to a “more secret divan” with his translator, mister Dzierżek, to talk about confidential matters regarding a future peace treaty.⁴⁴⁷ Later, an identical serving of coffee marked the end of the talks.

The banquet was served afterward. The Serasker, Gniński, and his secretary, Michał Florian Rzewuski, were catered for in the “more secret divan” on a thick cotton *sofra* embroidered in flowers and shiny with gold. At the same time, the ambassador’s sons and courtiers feasted “in the first divan,” and separately, as many as 200 dishes were served to “the youth,” *hajduks*, and dragoons outside.

To begin the meal, in front of each of the three most distinguished guests, three faience dishes were put: first with cooked chicory “instead of salat,” second with chopped cucumbers, and third with soured milk, which was “like *kanpust* in Poland.”⁴⁴⁸ Apart from this opening cold course, little is known about what else was brought from the Serasker’s kitchen beyond the impression it made on the ones who tasted it. Apparently, not only was Ibrahim Pasha’s attire a mirror reflection of Gniński’s, but also the food he served struck familiar notes as it tasted so good that “from delicious Polish dishes there was almost no difference or in some very

⁴⁴⁶ Apparently, it was not the only time such sartorial coincidence happened: “w delii purpurowej, sobolami podszytej, w takiej w jakiej też i p. poseł był co się i w Kamieńcu trafiło i dzieje się *casu czy consulto*.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 17. (D)

⁴⁴⁷ Discussed matters included “Ukraine, Chyhryn, neighbors, Dnieper and [Petro] Doroshenko.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 18. (D)

⁴⁴⁸ Such side dishes seem to be customary. For example, salad, caviar, bottarga, olives, and cheese was placed in the same fashion on Adile Sultan’s table. Işın, *Bountiful Empire. A History of Ottoman Cuisine*, 84.

small,”⁴⁴⁹ while the pastries were “outstandingly good as even in French ones flakes could not be thinner.”⁴⁵⁰ Choosing Poland and France as the benchmark of good cooking confirms the ideal of Polish-Lithuanian cuisine known from the seventeenth-century cookbooks as well as the culinary mastery of the Ottoman hosts.

Judging from the arrangement of the meal (mode of serving, first cold course, serving of sherbet and coffee, and so on), the similarity of dishes was likely not a result of Ibrahim Pasha’s gesture towards the Polish-Lithuanian embassy to prepare the food in a manner familiar for his guests’ palate. It seems to be rather a shared taste between the Ottoman officials and Polish-Lithuanian representatives.

For the author of the diary, the novelty was not so much the food itself (as it was easily comparable to the known fare) but how it was served: not using a *credenza*, bringing the dishes one after the other, then taking it back after a short time, no longer than “two prayers.”⁴⁵¹ This mode of serving dishes one by one instead than placing various plates on a table simultaneously (so-called *service à la française* labeled as “Polish way” in the diary of the embassy), was a feature of formal Ottoman dining.⁴⁵² It ultimately achieved the same effect of showcasing the numerosity of dishes offered to the diners but by different means. Instead of showing an

⁴⁴⁹ “smakiem arcy-dobrym, że żadnej od wyśmienitych polskich potraw nie masz prawie dyferencyi, albo w niektórych bardzo mała.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 18. (D)

⁴⁵⁰ “Trzech tylko do stołu siedziało: Seraskier, p. poseł i p. sekretarz. Przed każdym z nich na deku przed potrawami położono trzy farfury, w jednej cykoria warzona zamiast sałaty, w drugiej krajane ogórki, w trzeciej najgłębszej mleko zsiadłe jako w Polsce kanpust. Po jednej potrawie stawiano, których było 18, takich absolutnie jako wczoraj ochędożone wydanych, smakiem arcy-dobrym, że żadnej od wyśmienitych polskich potraw nie masz prawie dyferencyi, albo w niektórych bardzo mała. Ciasta arcydobre jako w francuskich listeczki nie mogą być cieńsze, zgoła niespodziewanie *policies*. Przytem sorbety różne dawano, potem wszystkim kawę, na ręce wody, z różnej każdej osobie nalewki, potem znowu wódkę na ręce i trzeci raz okurzano.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 18. (D)

⁴⁵¹ “Niebawiła jednak żadna potrawa nad dwa pacierze, zaraz ją zabierano, a przed drugich na inszy stół, już z polska nagotowany stawiano.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 16. (D)

⁴⁵² The so-called *service à la française* was the dining standard across the continent at that time, later replaced by *service à la russe* in which dishes are put in front of the diners. For more about the changing modes of service see Jean-Louis Flandrin, *Arranging the Meal: A History of Table Service in France*, trans. Julie E. Johnson, Antonio Roder, and Sylvie Roder, California Studies in Food and Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

overwhelming variety of each serving, it created the impression of a never-ending stream of food coming from the kitchen.⁴⁵³

Gniński, performing a role of a polite guest, asked twice if he was not troubling Ibrahim Pasha; the Serasker, perfectly playing the role of a generous host, was to assure that he would be glad if the ambassador would stay for a couple of days and engage in a conversation, being curious about customs of different nations known to the Voivode. What is more, if only he could be in Istanbul, he would arrange conversation and entertainment that would please Gniński.

As it turned out, apart from the magnificence of the sultan's and vizier's palaces, the embassy experienced considerable problems not only going forward with negotiations but with their lodgings, provisions, and illness decimating the ranks. Also, Ibrahim Pasha's extraordinary friendliness towards the embassy remained unmatched, and the optimism of the first stages of the mission was quickly fading away.

“12 dishes ... far inferior to Seraskier's banquet”⁴⁵⁴

Gniński's reception audience in the Topkapı Palace happened on September 14, 1677, 35 days after the embassy entered Istanbul and 29 days after the reception with the Grand Vizier. The timing of the audience with the sultan was far from incidental. The ambassador was supposed to witness the distribution of the payments to the janissaries and palace's servants, a ceremony showing not only Mehmed IV's generosity but imperial grandiosity, meant to impress by the number of disciplined individuals dressed, paid, and then fed by the sultan.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵³ Işın, *Bountiful Empire. A History of Ottoman Cuisine*, 28–29.

⁴⁵⁴ “12 potraw ... daleko od Seraskiera bankietu podlejszych.” AGAD, AR II, Supplement, 649 G (I), *Diariusz poselstwa polskiego do Wielkiej Porty 1677 r.*, 10.

⁴⁵⁵ Reindl-Kiel, “Audiences, Banquets, Garments and Kisses. Encounters with the Ottoman Sultan in the 17th Century,” 173, 201, 197. For more about the role of supplying food from imperial kitchen to the subjects, and meaning of food in Ottoman court ceremonies, see Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, xvi, 72; Hedda Reindl-Kiel, “The Chickens of Paradise Official Meals in the Mid-Seventeenth Century Ottoman Palace,” in *The Illuminated Table, The Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture*, ed. Suraiya

Customarily, before meetings with the sultan diplomats were offered robes of honor as well as a meal.⁴⁵⁶ In this context, food, drink, and robes fulfilled a similar function: “Ottomanizing” the foreigners before they could appear before the authorities, “symbolically integrating these individuals into the household of the sultan,” as Hedda Reindl-Kiel puts it.⁴⁵⁷ The quality of the garments’ fabric (and the fact they were garments, and not uncut material in the first place) as well as the invitation to eat at the same table with the Grand Vizier (and not outside) was itself a sign of distinction and confirmation of one’s rank within the empire’s hierarchies.⁴⁵⁸ The banquet held for Gniński happened before the reception audience with Mehmed IV, and in the same room where the salaries were distributed, becoming in a way an extension of the ceremony, and not a marker elevating the status of the occasion as it was the case with reception banquets in, for example, Moscow or Rome.

After the janissaries were paid:

A banquet for 5 tables according to the custom of this nation was given. I was sitting with the vizier, my secretary and my sons with kubbe-viziers. On the second hand with Rumelia’s and Anatolia’s highest judges [were] my hussar lieutenant and castellans with treasurer and separately with the fifth vizier, various different courtiers sitting in five-six by one table, all together nearly twenty people. For the other courtiers and youth on the side, under the gallery dishes were also set but on the ground and [put] only on a mat woven from rice stalks; when invited, they looked at it and did not want to eat and turned back, so dragoons and servants got their banquet.⁴⁵⁹

Gniński, in a manner characteristic of banquet descriptions, focuses on spatial ordering, barely mentioning the food. Just as during the banquet at Serasker’s before, inclusiveness and spatial

Faroghi and Christoph K. Neumann (Würzburg: Ergon in Kommission, 2003), 59; Özge Samancı, “Hosting a Feast for Foreign Guests in the Ottoman Palace,” in *The Power of Taste. Europe at the Royal Table*, ed. Jarosław Dumanowski, Andrzej K. Kuropatnicki, and Fabio Parasecoli (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2020), 180–82.

⁴⁵⁶ Reindl-Kiel, “Audiences, Banquets, Garments and Kisses. Encounters with the Ottoman Sultan in the 17th Century,” 195.

⁴⁵⁷ Reindl-Kiel, 202.

⁴⁵⁸ Reindl-Kiel, 190–91.

⁴⁵⁹ “Bankiet dany na 5 stołów *pro mores* tego narodu. Jam siedział z wezyrem, z kubbe-wezyrami jm. pan sekretarz i moi synowie. Z drugiej ręki z Rumelskim i Anatolskim najwyższymi sędziami jm. pan porucznik mój husarski i ichm. panowie kasztelanicy z podskarbin i z osobna z piątym wezyrem, różni insi dworzanie po pięciu, po sześciu do stolika, wszystkich blisko dwudziestu osób. Dla inszych zaś dworzan i młodzi w boku pod gankiem zastawiono także potrawy, ale że na ziemi i tylko na ryżowych rogożach zaproszeni – obaczywszy, jeść nie chcieli i wrócili się, i tak draganom i pacholkom dostał się bankiet.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 38. (R)

ordering on such occasion was the most noticeable manifestation of hierarchies and power. Gniński and Rzewuski, the secretary of the embassy, were sitting at the same table with Kara Mustafa, and were eating from the Grand Vizier's tray.⁴⁶⁰ High officials, both Ottoman and Polish-Lithuanian, were seated together at tables around, while those lowest in the hierarchy among the members of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy were served food separately, on the side, and not on tables "half an ell tall," which added a vertical distinction as well. The refusal to eat food placed "on the ground" is the only instance of the embassy members turning down food offered by their Ottoman hosts. The fact that it is put on a rice stalk mat and not on a *sofra* made of more precious material is here, I believe, more significant than the fact the food was not placed on a table of any sort.⁴⁶¹

Another detail that needs to be considered is that the banquet happened before the audience, during which the ambassador and his company could be forced to abide to a protocol considered as demeaning.⁴⁶² Dariusz Kołodziejczyk cites examples of diplomats coping with this humiliation by excessive drinking or rendering their reports of the events.⁴⁶³ Hence, reactions to food and drink served in the sultan's palace, regardless of its actual taste and presentation, have to be taken with a grain of salt, as possible means of compensation and demonstrating diplomats' superiority. Although Gniński appears rather tactful and reserved in describing the banquet—his only complaint seems to be that the payments to sultan's men "for honors" were

⁴⁶⁰ From Mehmed II's reign onwards, the Grand Vizier acted as host in the sultan's palace at official banquets. Reindl-Kiel, "Audiences, Banquets, Garments and Kisses. Encounters with the Ottoman Sultan in the 17th Century," 180–81; Işın, *Bountiful Empire. A History of Ottoman Cuisine*, 79.

⁴⁶¹ Two details in particular support my assumption. First, the dragoons and servants, that is, the ones who were lower in the hierarchy than the courtiers and youth, had no reservations. Second, there is no indication in the entire relation and general diary that the members of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy had any difficulty accepting the dining arrangement (that is, meal put on a *sofra* and *sahan*, "unraised table"); on the contrary, the wording points to their appreciation of the richness and decorativeness of the pieces that made it up.

⁴⁶² Certain gestures of humiliation were intended for the domestic audiences, performed in front of oblivious ambassadors. It is also important to mention that forcing diplomats to prostrate in front of a sultan, so often mentioned, was in fact not a rule. For example, in 1667 Mehmed IV punished doormen for making the Polish-Lithuanian envoy kiss the floor during the audience. Reindl-Kiel, "Audiences, Banquets, Garments and Kisses. Encounters with the Ottoman Sultan in the 17th Century," 179–80, 200–2001.

⁴⁶³ Kołodziejczyk, "Polish Embassies in Istanbul or How to Sponge on Your Host without Losing Your Self-Esteem," 54ff.

exceeding the value of caftans he received⁴⁶⁴—it is possible that the treatment of foreign legations in the Topkapı Palace caused unusual agitation among those accompanying him which resulted in their refusal to eat offered food.

The description of the banquet from the general diary of the embassy, curiously does not mention the incident at all. It does, however, provide a couple of other details omitted by Gniński:

After this ceremony [of paying the janissaries] two long narrow ordinary carpets were brought, and lied in front of this bench were the viziers and judges were sitting. Next to it, tables ... elbow wide, one and half elbow high or small tables held together by boards from the bottom [were put] around, on which silver *sufra*s four fingers in depth were placed, one in front of the [Grand] Vizier one and the second [in front of] Viziers.⁴⁶⁵ ... On them cut flatbreads instead of bread were put, a wooden spoon for the [Grand] Vizier, and a second for M. Ambassador, two faience dishes in front of each, in one cooked chicory instead of salat, and in the other capers, and after that 12 dishes were put, most of them roasted, far inferior to the Serasker's banquet, all lasted less than half an hour. Even the covers instead of napkins, and handkerchiefs for wiping worse than before.

Once during the dinner, they gave Sherbet, water for hands after the dinner, and before the dinner ordinary simple cotton short hand towels for drying.⁴⁶⁶

The number of courses, together with the inclusion of special ingredients, could be interpreted as another visible indicator of the guests and meal status (a lesser number of dishes would have been expected, for example, at a private celebration involving lower-ranking diplomats). In this context, the number of dishes served to Gniński before the audience were reflections of the faded prestige of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy in 1677. In comparison, Wojciech Miaskowski

⁴⁶⁴ “A ręka, o mój Boże, ustawała nie rzekąc szkatuła, opłacając honory owym ludziom cesarskim, którzy na audyencyą i z audyencyej prowadzili.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 38. (R)

⁴⁶⁵ It seems that the author of the diary may have confused *sufra* with *saħan*, which were terms otherwise consequently used in the diary.

⁴⁶⁶ “Po tej ceremoniej [zapłaty janczarom] przyniesiono kobierczyków dwa długich wąskich zwykłych starych, y przed wszystką ową ławą, gdzie wezyrowie y sędziowie siedzieli rozciągniono. Postawiono przy tym w osm grani na łokieć szerokie na półtora łockia wysokie stoły czy stoliki drewniane w około od spodu deskami zawarte, na których przed wezyrem jedną przed wezyrami drugą pokładzono sufry srebrne na cztery palce głębokie ... Placki rozrzynane na nich miasto chleba położono, wezyrowi łyżkę y P. Posłowi drugą drewniane, po dwie farfurze przed każdym w jednej Cykoria warzona miasto sałaty, a w drugiej kapary a po tym pojedynkiem 12 potraw stawiano najwięcej pieczonych, daleko od Seraskiera bankietu podniejszych, co wszystko nie trwało pół godziny. Nawet okrycia miasto serwet, y chustek do wcierania podniejszych niż kędy.

Raz przez obiad dano Sorbetu, wody na ręce po obiedzie, jako y przed obidem do wcierania ordynaryne proste kosmate krótkie ręczniki.” AGAD, AR II, Supplement, 649 G (I), *Diariusz poselstwa polskiego do Wielkiej Porty 1677 r.*, 10.

at his reception in 1640 was offered 20 dishes,⁴⁶⁷ and Voivode Rafał Leszczyński as many as 27 in 1700.⁴⁶⁸ Still, I would be hesitant to read too much into the number of dishes alone, as there are many variables to consider, and it did not seem to be such a pressing matter for the contemporaries once the threshold of perceived appropriateness was met. True, the number of dishes is routinely recorded, but it is important to have in mind a certain tension between exercising lavish hospitality, avoiding accusations of reprehensible stinginess, and communicating the relative status of the guest during diplomatic reception such as the one with the sultan.⁴⁶⁹

Apart from how much was served, what was served and how it was presented was essential. Roasted dishes, for example, were considered to be generally on the upper end in both Polish-Lithuanian and Ottoman contexts, but it is impossible to say much more about this particular occasion due to the curtness of the diary's author. He notes that both Gniński and Kara Mustafa were the only ones given spoons, just like during the banquet at Ibrahim Pasha's military camp, however, the quality of both food and napkins was perceived as inadequate. Considering the opportunity to display power to foreigners, it is hard to believe that attention was not paid to the accessories accompanying the meal or that the quality of dishes served would be significantly worse than the dishes served by the Serasker in the military camp before as well as by the Grand Vizier at his palace a couple of months later. Perhaps, again, the context of the meal was to blame for its recollection in the diary, not the cooks who actually prepared the food.

⁴⁶⁷ Kołodziejczyk, "Polish Embassies in Istanbul or How to Sponge on Your Host without Losing Your Self-Esteem," 55.

⁴⁶⁸ In general, in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the number of dishes seems to vary from 17 to as many as 50 (served to an Indian ambassador in 1722), the "polite standard" for the reception banquet being around 21-26 dishes. Reindl-Kiel, "Audiences, Banquets, Garments and Kisses. Encounters with the Ottoman Sultan in the 17th Century," 181-82.

⁴⁶⁹ The Ottoman Book of Ceremonies, as referred by Hedda Reindl-Kiel, states that "when an envoy comes, ... plenty of food is cooked." Reindl-Kiel, 180, footnote 54.

Besides Gniński's relation, the general diary of the embassy, and a report from "La Gazette" quoted at the beginning of the chapter, there is another interesting set of sources depicting Voivode's audience with the sultan, including the banquet.

A series of four gouaches, most likely commissioned by the French ambassador in Istanbul, François Charles Ollier, Marquis de Noitel, shows the ceremony of paying the janissaries, the banquet held in honor of Gniński in Topkapı (Fig. 1), his audience with Mehmed IV, and the farewell audience with the Grand Vizier (Fig. 4).



Figure 1. Jan Gniński's embassy to Istanbul: Banquet in honor of Jan Gniński, gouache by Pierre Paul Sevin, 1679, The Czartoryski Museum in Kraków, XV Rr. 1988

The scene captured on the gauche by Pierre Paul Sevin is akin to both Gniński's relation, the diary of the embassy, and an account from "La Gazette," but there are noticeable differences between all four sources.⁴⁷⁰ Regardless, Sevin pictures quite a dynamic scene, with people standing next to the ambassador and Grand Vizier engaged in discussion. Some elements of the scene—such as the position of the ambassador turning his back to the viewer, sitting vis-à-vis Grand Vizier, the latticed window through which the scene could have been observed by the sultan or the arrangement of the tables itself—appear on a number of illustrations, created before and after Gniński's legation (Figs. 2 and 3).⁴⁷¹



Figure 2. *Thus the Viziers Entertain the Imperial Envoys (or Ambassadors) at Dinner in the Divan, or Place of Council, on Behalf of the Sultan*, gouache by Franz Hörmann or Hans Gemminger, 1628-29, *Türkenmuseum Die Osmanen in Niederösterreich*, OSM 03.21

⁴⁷⁰ For instance, Gniński mentions five tables for the most distinguished guests, the same number can be seen on Sevin's gauche, but "La Gazette" writes only about three. Further, according to Gniński, he sat at one table with the Grand Vizier, "La Gazette" places the secretary with the ambassador's sons at the second table, however, it omits Cubbe-Viziers, mentioned by Gniński. What is more, the number of those seated at the two tables to the right and left from Kara Mustafa and the ambassador at Sevin's gauche matches neither Gniński's relation nor the report from "La Gazette." Finally, the benches, tables, and carpets described in the general diary of Gniński's embassy are missing from Sevin's composition.

⁴⁷¹ For more about the convention of depicting diplomatic scenes in the sultan's palace, see Frédéric Hitzel, "Les ambassades occidentales à Constantinople et la diffusion d'une certaine image de l'Orient," *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 1 (2010): 277–92.



Figure 3. Reception of the French Ambassador, Viscount d'Andrezel, by Sultan Ahmed III, October 17, 1724, in Constantinople. The dinner is offered by Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha, painting by Jean Baptiste Vanmour (1671–1737), Museum of Fine Arts in Bordeaux

Despite Sevin's rather austere interior, lacking the richly adorned carpets or wall decorations, all three banquet illustrations (Figs. 1–3) communicate hierarchies, unmistakably marking the center of the scene. All three also differentiate between the sultan's subjects and foreign diplomats by portraying them in different garments and headgear, although the contrast between the members of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy and their hosts seems to be the least striking. Significantly, as it is often the case with banquet relations and depictions, the food itself is implied, highly schematic and undistinguishable.

Another of Sevin's gouache in the series (Fig. 4) pictures the farewell reception of Gniński. Here, the offering of coffee placed in the center seems to influence spatial ordering differently, becoming a center of gravity and drawing people closer.



Figure 4. Jan Gniński's embassy to Istanbul: Farewell audience at Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa, gouache by Pierre Paul Sevin, 1679, The Czartoryski Museum in Kraków, XV Rr. 1988

Although the convention of diplomatic scenes, such as those painted by Sevin, is realistic, it does not mean they faithfully depict reality.⁴⁷² Instead, these scenes are rendered for diplomatic purposes by implying analogy, omitting certain details, or choosing particular scenes.⁴⁷³ For example, in the gouache picturing the reception with Mehmed IV, a member of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy is shown being held for prostrations, while Gniński is standing aside, therefore spared the humiliation. And while it is noteworthy that two out of Sevin's four gouaches (Fig. 1 and 4) depict the ambassador engaged in eating or drinking, it is important to

⁴⁷² During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, diplomatic scenes underwent a standardization that can be associated with a growing body of literature on the "ideal ambassador." Since it was likely Marquis Noitel who commissioned the gouaches, it is worth considering that the depictions of Gniński's reception and farewell may in fact serve more Noitel, who acted as an intermediary facilitating relations between Poland-Lithuania and the Porte, rather than Gniński, who was painted as an ambassador during the ceremonies. Noitel, as Christine Vogel shows, was actively shaping his image as a skilled diplomat, relying on displays of *honnêteté* and *civilité*. Elisabeth Natour, "Art and Diplomacy," in *Early Modern European Diplomacy: A Handbook*, ed. Dorothee Goetze and Lena Oetzel (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 136; Vogel, "Diplomatic Writing as Aristocratic Self-Fashioning: French Ambassadors in Constantinople", especially 201.

⁴⁷³ Natour, "Art and Diplomacy," 136; Anthony Colantuono, "The Mute Diplomat: Theorizing the Role of Images in Seventeenth-Century Political Negotiations," in *The Diplomacy of Art: Artistic Creation and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Italy*, ed. Elisabeth Cropper (Milano: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 2000).

recognize that these are “static” images, but not in the sense of composition itself. Unlike an “actual encounter that usually required a great deal of improvisation and tailored departure from expected protocols,” they present “an imagined ideal of obscuring the instability of the performance where real bodies interacted with one another and intended goals were not always achieved.”⁴⁷⁴

According to the general diary of the embassy and Gniński’s relation, the farewell audience did not take place in Istanbul but in the tents near (if I identified it correctly) Dobrich (Hacıoğlu Pazarcık), under far less celebratory circumstances.⁴⁷⁵ Despite this, Sevin’s imaginary scene seems to capture well the atmosphere of Grand Vizier’s hospitality, however, extended on a different occasion.

“I have a patio near the Golden Horn, I will be glad to be with you there all day”⁴⁷⁶

In April 1678, after eight months in Istanbul, Gniński was invited to banquet with Kara Mustafa at his palace on the Bosphorus.⁴⁷⁷ The invitation came after a somewhat heated exchange at the Divan during which Gniński protested the treaty handed to him, saying he did not see it before nor agreed to conclude it.⁴⁷⁸ Notably, the banquet—although described as “public” (*publiczny*) in the Polish sources—was not a part of an official ceremonial, contrary to the reception audience with the Grand Vizier which was accompanied only by refreshments in the form of sherbet and coffee.⁴⁷⁹ Unlike the banquet at the sultan’s palace, which was a marker for the

⁴⁷⁴ Nancy Um and Leah R. Clark, “Introduction. The Art of Embassy: Situating Objects and Images in the Early Modern Diplomatic Encounter,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 20 (2016): 15, 17.

⁴⁷⁵ The source reads “Bazardżyk” or “Bazarcik.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 189-191.

⁴⁷⁶ “Wezyr na to: Mam wirydarz nad Słodką Wodą, tam ci będę rad na cały dzień gdyć dam znać.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 137. (R)

⁴⁷⁷ The Polish source reads “nad Słodkimi Wodami” (Sweet Waters). It may have been the Bahariye Taşlık Burnu in Eyüp or Tırnakçı Yalısı in Kuruçeşme. Reindl-Kiel, “The Must-Haves of a Grand Vizier. Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha’s Luxury Assets,” 191.

⁴⁷⁸ “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 132ff. (R)

⁴⁷⁹ The grand vizierial reception was a necessary step in the process of gaining recognition by foreign embassies upon their arrival in Istanbul, “a pillar in a bipartite diplomatic introduction,” as it is aptly formulated by Mahmut Halef Cevrioğlu. Its main purpose was to arrange details for an audience with the sultan with whom diplomats

extraordinariness of the audience and a venue for manifesting imperial splendor, the purpose of the banquet held by Kara Mustafa at his palace seems to have been an attempt to ease the tension accumulated during the negotiation and reaching an agreement.

Kara Mustafa Pasha in his palace served twelve dishes to Gniński and his companions, six less than Ibrahim Pasha, but as many as the Polish-Lithuanian ambassador was offered in Topkapı. As mentioned above, apart from the number of dishes, the quality of ingredients used mattered greatly. And while looking at the dishes coming from Kara Mustafa's kitchens for Gniński, it is clear that there was an overlap with the catalog of dishes known to be prepared in the sultan's palace kitchen:

first in the small faience salat and capers in front of each person, after that dishes brought one by one: Fried saltwater fish [Black Sea turbot] called *kalkan* ... for the second dish also *kalkan*, resembling yellow sauce, but very thick, like jelly, the flesh sprinkled with cinnamon, after that roasted chickens ... Rice, different cakes, groats in thick milk... not leaving it in front of us for longer than a time of a prayer. Instead of dessert [*wety*] together were put pears, dried cherries, pistachios, peas floating in different sorbets, in addition sherbet for drinking was served.⁴⁸⁰

Typically, among the courses served to foreign representatives, the most luxurious of foods can be found: roasted and boiled meats (usually chickens, pigeons, mutton, and fish) accompanied by a variety of rice dishes (savory and sweet), fruits (both fresh and dried), and sweets (especially those containing sugar instead of honey). Poultry (especially chicken) was the most sought-after type of meat, associated with food found in paradise.⁴⁸¹ Fish served along meats to

could not communicate directly. In the seventeenth century, the pattern of the audience seems to have been well-established: among fixed items on the agenda were inquiries about the ambassador's health and voyage, handing in the letters of credentials, and exchanging of gifts. No topic of political consequence was mentioned, also no banquet followed. Mahmut Halef Cevrioğlu, "Grand Vizieral Reception Ceremonies of European Ambassadors in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century," *Legatio*, no. 4 (2020): 126–27.

⁴⁸⁰ "naprzód na maleńkich farfurach salaty I kapary przed każdego z osób rozstawiono, potym po jednej potrawie noszono: Smażoną rybę morską, którą zowią *kalkan* bo mało co od niego mniejsza, okrągła pod skórą na kształt jaszczura, w który szablę oprawują. Item drugą potrawę także *kalkan* nakształt żółtej juchy, ale nazbyt gęstą, jak galareta, miąższo cynamonem posypaną, potym kurcząt pieczonych z powężem, które ówże, co do stołu podawał miasto krajczego poszarpał w rękę i tak wszystko co dano podobnego rozbierał. Ryżę ciasta różne, kasze w mleku gęstym, dwanaście wszystkiego potraw, nad pacierz żadnej potrawy dłużej przed nami nie bawiąc ... miasto wetów razem zastawiono gruszki, wiśnie suche, pistacje, groch w różnych sorbetach pływające, nadto zaraz pić sorbetu podano." "Relacya poselska i dyariusz," 140. (D)

⁴⁸¹ Reindl-Kiel, "The Chickens of Paradise Official Meals in the Mid-Seventeenth Century Ottoman Palace," 85–88; Pedani, "The Sultan and the Venetian Bailo: Ceremonial Diplomatic Protocol in Istanbul," 292–93.

Gniński, similarly to the way it may have been served in Poland-Lithuania, added to the overall luxury of the table by offering more choice.⁴⁸² Interestingly, fish dishes seem to be overrepresented during diplomatic banquets, especially those honoring non-Muslim diplomats.⁴⁸³ This practice could have been informed—as suggested by Hedda Reindl-Kiel in her analysis of seventeenth-century sultanic audiences—by the Ottoman (mis)reading of Christian tradition.⁴⁸⁴ The customary pairing of fish (and other types of seafood) with alcohol sold in Istanbul’s taverns could only strengthen this connotation.⁴⁸⁵ Regardless, in the Polish sources, fish served by the Ottomans does not seem to be connected with fasting as it was, for example, in Moscow. Perhaps the use of spices sufficiently elevated the dish in the eyes of Gniński and his companions, making it food appropriate on such occasions as a banquet at the Grand Vizier’s. The spices used in the Ottoman cuisine—especially cinnamon, saffron, ginger, pepper, and cloves—were familiar to the Poles and appreciated as a sign of high-status kitchen.⁴⁸⁶ Recipes that call for cinnamon to season fish can be found, for example, in Czerniecki’s *Compendium ferculorum*.⁴⁸⁷

The foods and drinks offered by Kara Mustafa were first-rate, invoking luxury and prestige. It also seems that the choice of setting and sequencing of the event signaled amicability and gentleness non-verbally.

Upon arrival at the Grand Vizier’s palace, Gniński and his companions were greeted in a hall with floor lined with white marble and walls “gilded with a beautiful pattern,” where sprays of water coming from a fountain located at the center, under a dome, cooled “several dozens of

⁴⁸² Reindl-Kiel, “The Chickens of Paradise Official Meals in the Mid-Seventeenth Century Ottoman Palace,” 85.

⁴⁸³ Reindl-Kiel, “Audiences, Banquets, Garments and Kisses. Encounters with the Ottoman Sultan in the 17th Century,” 186.

⁴⁸⁴ Reindl-Kiel, 183–84, 186.

⁴⁸⁵ Işın, *Bountiful Empire. A History of Ottoman Cuisine*, 199.

⁴⁸⁶ Işın, 29.

⁴⁸⁷ For example, “Salmon the royal way,” “Grey fish the royal way,” or “Sturgeon.” Czerniecki, *Compendium ferculorum albo zebranie potraw*, 133, 134.

baskets with various flowers and oranges, lemons, pomegranates, dates, apples, pears, chestnuts.”⁴⁸⁸ The fruits placed around the fountain, although kept fresh and cool by the rill, and definitely edible, seem to be there not to be consumed but displayed, harmonizing with the hall’s décor and contributing to the overall paradisaal impression where food is available at one’s fingertips.⁴⁸⁹ There, right next to the fountain, the first exchange happened (courteous inquiry about health, followed by “a discourse on Moscow”), after which the Grand Vizier invited the ambassador for a stroll in the garden that ended in a bower at the waterfront where they enjoyed a fruit course with coffee and a drink made of figs for “fortifying the stomach.”⁴⁹⁰ This change of location, entering the garden that offered a soothing scenery, and refreshments with a variety of fruits (“fruits, oranges, skinned pomegranates, grapes, well preserved, pears, apples, chestnuts”), followed by music provided an intermission, a tension relieving pause. After the music, mostly lighter subjects were brought up, such as, for example, climate. The more conversational tone of the second round of talks, playing well together with the sweetness and simplicity of the fruits on offer (since they were not cooked in any way) was a result of abiding

⁴⁸⁸ “Przyjęto nas w pałacu blisko Słodkiej Wody ... naprzeciwko e diametro pałacu cesarskiego do Sali najmniej 40 łokci długiej, szerokiej 20, pięknym wzorem wyłożonej, z boków od ścian na 4 łokcie. Słupy także złociste, które wierzch trzymają, w którego środku podłużna kopuła, a pod nią fontanna najmniej 30 strumieniami, ale cienkich jak piórko, wodę do góry na łokci sześć wyrzucająca. Także z boku na kamień biały, w karpioną łuskę robiony, wodę służem lejąca. Trzecia w ogrodzie, szesnastą strumieni w małą sadzawkę kamienną płynąca, przy której dywan wysłany złotogłowem poduszkami pod namiotem płaskim, jedwabnym. Na tej Sali dwa dywany jeszcze bogatszymi poduszkami wysłane. Naokoło fontanny kilkadziesiąt koszyków stał z różnymi kwiatami i pomarańczami, cytrynami, pomagranatami, daktylami, jabłkami, kuskami, kasztanami, które chłodził deszcz z owych strumieni spadający. Wszystka sala w wielkie podłużne kwadraty białym marmurem położona.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 139. (D)

⁴⁸⁹ As Marcia Reed puts it: “festive times give people permission to be extravagant, to imagine a paradise on earth where there is everything we ever wanted to eat and drink.” Marcia Reed, “Food, Memory, and Taste,” in *The Edible Monument. The Art of Food for Festivals*, ed. Marcia Reed (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2015), 12.

⁴⁹⁰ “W boku altany nad wodą pałac nie mały do grania dziurkami, które jednak na ówczas nie mogło być, iż ziemia podmokła. W kwaterę sufrę atlasową karmazynową, bogato haftowaną rozpostarliśmy, stolik na trzy ćwierci wysoki i nad to nie szerszy, o ósm grani perłową macicą postawiono. Na nim dek srebrny okrągły, w dymentrze na siedm wierci szeroki, na pięć calów głęboki z brzegami okrągłymi, na wałyszki zawinionymi, w kwiaty, miejscami złociste, a pod nim przystaweczki z nożami. Zastawiono go fruktami, pomarańczami i pomagranatami, oprawionymi z skórek, gronami winnemi, dobrze przechowanemi, gruszkami, jabłkami, kasztanami. Kawy wprzód dawszy, a po fruktach z pigw likworu dla umocnienia jako mówili żołądka, wódki przy tym na ręce pachnącej i kadzenia dano. Muzyka zagrała ... Trwało to wszystko godzinę, to jest do wtorej z południa.” “Relacya poselska i dyariusz,” 140. (D)

by rules of the Ottoman etiquette, prohibiting touching serious discussion topics over a meal, limiting conversation to weather or curiosities.⁴⁹¹

The clear separation of eating and talking, “business” and “hospitality” tones, structured the audience, providing a space for retreat. Apparently, it also caused frustration among some European diplomats who perceived mealtimes to be a suitable venue for negotiating—in 1671 Noitel’s attempt to bring political affairs over a table were met with disapproval.⁴⁹²

The banquet held back at the marble-laid hall with a fountain was the penultimate item in the program, directly preceding the discussion of the most controversial issue (peace treaty’s articles), in a way pairing the most substantial meal with a most consequential talk.

The banquet at Serasker’s, in many ways, resembled the banquet held at the Grand Vizier’s palace at Golden Horn Bay. The apparent difference was the splendor, as the first banquet was held in a military camp, and political weight, as the Grand Vizier occupied a vital role in the imperial decision-making mechanism.⁴⁹³ Nevertheless, both occasions—banquets at Serasker’s and Grand Vizier’s—played on various tropes of amicability and equality, providing a staggering contrast for the reception in the Topkapı Palace. In other words, comparing those occasions shows how the act of offering similar (if not the same) food and drink could have been wrapped in different symbolic meanings depending on the setting and surroundings in which it happened. In any cases, it was a vital component accompanying negotiations.

Overall, the Ottoman eating and drinking customs were approached by the members of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy without much exoticization or contempt stemming from perceived cultural superiority. Instead, despite some differences—for example, in the way of serving

⁴⁹¹ Pedani, “The Sultan and the Venetian Bailo: Ceremonial Diplomatic Protocol in Istanbul,” 292.

⁴⁹² Pedani, 293.

⁴⁹³ Cevrioğlu, “Grand Vizieral Reception Ceremonies of European Ambassadors in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century,” 125–26.

dishes—the taste of dishes was considered familiar, just as the dress or weapons of their hosts. The otherness of the Ottomans was based on the fact that they failed to follow established rules of diplomacy while engaging in negotiations or alternated lavish hospitality and outward hostility towards their guests. “Diplomatic (in)hospitality,” to borrow a term from Bram van Leuveren, was a strategy to achieve political ends “by granting tokens of hospitality to one party, but conspicuously withholding those from the other.”⁴⁹⁴ In the case of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy to Istanbul, both actions were aimed at one party: Gniński was celebrated with banquets, but he also experienced severe problems with lodging his entourage, and was denied a farewell audience for days and days, which emphasized his reliance on the sultan’s grace. The reasons for perceiving a reception as inhospitable could vary and may not necessarily stem from the host’s intention alone. Sometimes gestures intended as hospitable might be deemed insufficient, such as when dishes served during a banquet were considered more suitable for fasting days.

Feasting and fasting in Muscovy⁴⁹⁵

The embassy headed by Czartoryski and Sapieha in 1678 was the first sent from Poland-Lithuania to Muscovy during Sobieski’s reign. Compared to the commissions for negotiating treaties that met at the Polish-Lithuanian–Muscovy border where there was purportedly no apparent host, the grand embassy required a different repertoire of means to communicate the ranks of ambassadors, respect for the host, and mutual intelligibility.

⁴⁹⁴ van Leuveren, *Early Modern Diplomacy and French Festival Culture in a European Context, 1572–1615*, 133.

⁴⁹⁵ An earlier version of this section (pp. 150–165) was published as “Feasting and Fasting in Moscow: Peace Negotiations between Poland-Lithuania and Muscovy 1678 as Seen through Eating and Drinking Customs,” *Eastern European History Review* 4 (2021): 147–58.

Grand embassy of 1678

Jan III Sobieski's initial foreign policy priority, at least as projected by the king, was to secure Poland-Lithuania's south-eastern and eastern border. While the peace with the Sublime Porte had opponents among the nobles, the peace with Muscovy was considered by the majority of the "political nation" to be the desired solution.⁴⁹⁶ The Truce of Zhuravne was signed with the Porte in 1676, a year before Gniński departed to negotiate a peace treaty. Preparations to send the grand embassy to Muscovy were undertaken at the same time.⁴⁹⁷

Poland-Lithuania's relations with Muscovy at the beginning of Sobieski's reign were oriented foremost on reconciliation following the war of 1654–1667, heightened in the years preceding the expiration of the thirteen-year-long truce established in Andrusovo (Андрусово, Andruszowo).⁴⁹⁸ The grand embassy of 1678, however modest in the outcomes, was a milestone in this process: it marked the new course in Polish-Lithuanian relations with Muscovy under the new king.⁴⁹⁹

Especially during the first years of Sobieski's reign, relations with the Porte were crucial for shaping Poland-Lithuania's overall foreign policy orientation, making it nearly impossible to disregard "the Turkish background" of exchanges between Warsaw and Moscow.⁵⁰⁰ For this

⁴⁹⁶ Krystyn Matwijowski, *Pierwsze sejmy z czasów Jana III Sobieskiego* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1976), 62–66, 107–8, 178–82.

⁴⁹⁷ Matwijowski, 159.

⁴⁹⁸ Zbigniew Wójcik, *Traktat andruszowski 1667 roku i jego geneza* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1959).

⁴⁹⁹ As a result of strenuous back and forth negotiation, the Treaty of Perpetual Peace was eventually concluded in 1686, binding Muscovy and Poland-Lithuania in a long-sought alliance against the Porte. The treaty met with widespread opposition in Poland-Lithuania and is considered as a capitulation of Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy to Muscovy. Zbigniew Wójcik, "Rokowania polsko-rosyjskie o 'pokój wieczysty' w Moskwie w roku 1686," in *Z dziejów dyplomacji i polityki polskiej. Studia poświęcone pamięci Edwarda hr. Raczyńskiego Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na wychodźstwie*, ed. Henryk Bułhak (Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1994), 51. Kirill Kochegarov, *Rech' Pospolitaya i Rossiya v 1680–1686 godakh. Zaklyucheniye dogovora o Vechnom mire* (Moskva: INDRIK, 2008). Here citation refer to the Polish edition: Kirył Kochegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680–1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2017), especially 591–99.

⁵⁰⁰ Zbigniew Wójcik, *Rzeczpospolita wobec Turcji i Rosji 1674-1679* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1976), 3.

reason, the starting point for negotiation in 1678 was rather low: Polish-Lithuanian nobles intended to remind about the commitments from Andrusovo in the face of lack of the support of Muscovy's troops in the fight with the Porte, and the truce concluded in Zhuravne raised concerns in Muscovy over a possible alliance being forged against it.⁵⁰¹ Nevertheless, both parties were willing to enter, as it turned out, challenging and arduous negotiations.

The grand embassy left Poland-Lithuania in February 1678, delayed because of concerns over the tsar's reaction to "current transaction with the Porte," the fact that there was no one from the Crown willing to set out to Muscovy, and that it was deemed more appropriate to wait for the Sejm to be in session to appoint an embassy from there.⁵⁰² Double-headed embassies were customary in relations with Muscovy, naturally stemming from the Lithuanian nobility's greater interest in maintaining good-neighborly relations.⁵⁰³ Eventually, Voivode of Wołyń (Volhynia) Michał Jerzy Czartoryski became an ambassador from the Crown, joining Voivode of Połock (Polatsk) Jan Kazimierz Sapieha from the Grand Duchy, and a veteran of negotiations with Muscovy Hieronim Komar, acting as a secretary.⁵⁰⁴

There are, to my knowledge, at least three accounts of the embassy from the Polish-Lithuanian side in the archives in Poland accessible today. Regardless of their length, all three pay attention to food and drink. For instance, *Opis wjazdu*, a description of the solemn entry to Moscow,

⁵⁰¹ Wójcik, 79–80, 83–84.

⁵⁰² BCzart, 1696 IV, *Za panowania Jana III, Augustów i Stanisława Augusta senatus consilia*, 7–8.

"nie tylko z Korony nikt się podjąć poselstwa do Moskwy nie chce ale ut Consent RzP sine discrimine jako Car Jem Tranzakcją terażniejszą z Portą przyjmą i woisko swoje do Dniepra obruci," 8.

⁵⁰³ Apart from the right of representation, the Grand Duchy's involvement included chancellery work and partaking in embassies' costs. Another explanation of appointing two or in some cases three ambassadors (two from the Grand Duchy and one from the Crown) was reciprocity. Grand embassies from Muscovy were headed by three or more ambassadors. Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725*, 103.

⁵⁰⁴ Aleksander Strojny, "Wstęp," in *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 31–33. See also biograms in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*: Zbigniew Wójcik, "Hieronim Komar," in *PSB* (Wrocław-Kraków-Warszawa: PAU-PAN-Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1967–1968); Kazimierz Piwarski, "Michał Jerzy Czartoryski," in *PSB* (Wrocław-Kraków-Warszawa: PAU-PAN-Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1938); Andrzej Rachuba, "Kazimierz Jan Sapieha," in *iPSB*, Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny, accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/kazimierz-jan-pawel-sapieha-zm-1720-hetman-wielki-litewski>.

informs about wine, mead, and beer provided to the embassy.⁵⁰⁵ *Diarium Legationis Moschoviticae AD 1678* names the type of wine used for toasting to the monarchs' health: "we have eaten and drunk lot of Apulian Romania ... in a toast to tsar's and our majesty's health."⁵⁰⁶ Finally, Bernard Tanner in *Legatio Polono-Lithuanica in Moscoviam* (1689) mentions as many as five types of wine offered to the Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors in order of its taste and price—Rhine, Moselle, *petercymment* (type of sweet wine from Spain), Romania, and another unspecified Spanish wine.⁵⁰⁷ What is more, Tanner notes that the most prominent drink on that occasion was vodka (*wińco gosudarskie* or "princely wine") served first, from a gilded cup and traditionally associated with the tsar.⁵⁰⁸

Establishing what wine was drunk by the Polish-Lithuanian embassy members in 1678 is challenging due to the discrepancy of the sources, likely stemming from the inconsistency and vagueness of categorizing wines at that time.⁵⁰⁹ However, from the perspective of the practice of diplomacy, it matters more that these were all imported wines, which makes them status drinks: it was expensive, hard-to-reach because of the modes of transportation and the frequency in which they went bad.⁵¹⁰

In the most detailed out of three accounts, Tanner devotes an entire chapter to the "Moscow feast," as well as the celebration of the tsar's birthday, a peculiar deception involving a feast

⁵⁰⁵ AGAD, AR II, 1675, *Opis wjazdu posłów Rzeczypospolitej do Moskwy*, 3–4.

⁵⁰⁶ BCzart, TN 176, nr 166, "Diarium Legationis Moschoviticae AD 1678," 738.

⁵⁰⁷ Bernard Tanner, *Legatio Polono-Lithuanica in Moscoviam Potentissimi Poloniae Regis ac Reipublicae Mandato & Consensu Anno 1678. feliciter suscepta* (Nuremberg: Sumptibus Johannis Ziegeri, 1689). Citations refer to the Polish edition, Bernard Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie do Moskwy szczęśliwie przedsięwzięte, opisane przez naocznego świadka Bernarda Tannera*, ed. Aleksander Strojny, trans. Michał Rzepiela and Aleksander Strojny (Kraków: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Historia Jagiellonica, 2002), here 164.

⁵⁰⁸ Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 179.

⁵⁰⁹ To complicate it even more, a member of Polish-Lithuanian embassy to Muscovy in 1686 writes that "[we] drank to the health of monarchs with Romanija as they call petercymment." "Wjazd jaśnie wielmożnych: Krzysztofa Grzymułtowskiego wojewody poznańskiego ...; Marcjana Aleksandra s Kozielska Ogińskiego, kanclerza w. ks. lit. ... posłów pełnomocnych do Mokwy do Jana Aleksiejewicza i Piotra Aleksiejewicza braci rodzonej, carów rosyjskich, roku 1686 d. 19 lutego," in *Źródła do dziejów polski*, vol. 2, 48.

⁵¹⁰ Dorota Dias-Lewandowska, *Historia kulturowa wina francuskiego w Polsce od połowy XVII do początku XIX wieku* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014), 24–26.

organized by the Polish-Lithuanian embassy, the farewell banquet, and also gives glimpses of everyday meals.⁵¹¹ Besides recalling those details, the value of this source lies in the perspective of his descriptions. Although he travels to Moscow in Czartoryski's entourage, he is a foreigner who observes both the Crown and Grand Duchy representations with an outsider's eyes. Tanner writes about himself: "Bohemian from Prague, German courtier of Master Prince Ambassador,"⁵¹² displaying early modern aptitude to layer one's self-identification.⁵¹³ Significantly, the axis on which he draws the line between familiar/foreign seems to be tinted with confessional shades. He is a Catholic, which seems to serve as a criterion for recognizing the Poles, Lithuanians, and himself as "we," in opposition to the schismatic Muscovites, protestant Germans, or Jews whom he encountered during his travel. However, sometimes he was also painfully being reminded of differences between him and his co-religionists: Tanner was the one who was handed food (bread with butter and eggs) brought to Czartoryski by a Jewish housekeeper; food that Czartoryski refused to eat as he observed the "Polish fast."⁵¹⁴

Over 750 people traveled in Czartoryski's entourage only, with the entourage of the Sapieha the embassy consisted of about 1500 people.⁵¹⁵ Tanner, of a middling social standing, was responsible for food distribution and during the travel to Muscovy for supervision over the

⁵¹¹ I deliberately focus not on Muscovite dining customs, not even the Polish-Lithuanian perception of the banquets served in Moscow, but rather on Tanner's description of it. For an overview on food and drink in Russia, with more focus on later periods see, for example, Alison K. Smith, *Cabbage and Caviar. A History of Food in Russia* (London: Reaktion Books, 2021); Musya Glants and Joyce Toomre, eds., *Food in Russian History and Culture* (Bloomington-Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997). For information on the Muscovite customs, including those relating to grand dining see, for example, Martin Russel, *The Tsar's Happy Occasion: Ritual and Dynasty in the Weddings of Russia's Rulers, 1495-1745* (Ithaca: Northern Illinois University Press, 2021); Marshall T. Poe et al., eds., *Everyday Life in Russian History. Quotidian Studies in Honor of Daniel Kaiser* (Bloomington: Slavica, 2010).

⁵¹² Title page of *Legatio Polono-Lithuanica* reads: "Boemo Pragense, Dn. Legati Principis Camerario Germanico."

⁵¹³ Following Lucien Febvre, Daniel Riches aptly explains the significance for diplomacy of being at ease with such imprecisions that facilitated movement across borders, including state and "national"/linguistic ones. For historians that means a need to reconsider inflexible modern categories when approaching early modern diplomacy. Daniel Riches, *Protestant Cosmopolitanism and Diplomatic Culture: Brandenburg-Swedish Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2013), 16–17.

⁵¹⁴ "[a Jewish housekeeper] proposed bread with butter and eggs. Because it was a fast day though, the prince [Czartoryski] as a devout Pole, did not accept this repast and requested me to eat it as I was a foreigner." Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 135.

⁵¹⁵ Strojny, "Wstęp," 34.

linen. He traveled among common courtiers (*ministrii ordinarii*), after the capelan, commander of the hussars, Polish noblemen, hussar officers, chief courtiers (*aulae primarii ministrii*), and before Polish valets, other courtiers, and artisans.⁵¹⁶ Thanks to Tanner, who records members of the embassy of lower ranks who were often invisible when the account was prepared by someone close to the embassy's head, it is known that Czartoryski traveled with a master cook, a certain Goliński (a nobleman and a chief courtier), court purveyor Szymon Wielkowolski (common courtier), baker Kazimierz, and a *credenziero* (*praefectus abaci, kredensowy*) called Klemens (both of them counted among artisans (*mechanici*); as well as anonymous cooks).

Not much is known about Sapieha's courtiers and personnel, at least not from Tanner's account. Since the two ambassadors were Voivodes coming from magnate families and they did not always travel together, Sapieha's entourage must have mirrored that of the ambassador from the Crown, and while staying at the ambassadorial court their courtiers and servants did not seem to isolate from the rest—Tanner mentions that the master cooks were working together in the kitchen.⁵¹⁷

The hierarchy among Czartoryski's courtiers was not only marked by their place in a cortege: the closest to the ambassador from the Crown, called a "company" (*towarzystwo*), dined together with him,⁵¹⁸ and among the *hajduks*⁵¹⁹ the most trustworthy were allowed to serve at his table.⁵²⁰ By contrast, the least reliable among them were, according to Tanner, constantly drunk.

⁵¹⁶ Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 122–23.

⁵¹⁷ Tanner, 202.

⁵¹⁸ Tanner, 122.

⁵¹⁹ *Hajduk* was an infantryman in the Polish-Lithuanian army, organized following the Hungarian model or a servant of a magnate's court dressed in a Hungarian way. In Czartoryski's entourage they were responsible for the safety of both people and goods.

⁵²⁰ Tanner, 125.

Drunkenness is an exploited trope in travel literature, especially the farther East one goes, and the *Legatio Polono-Lithuanica* is no exception.⁵²¹ Alcohol abuse by some *hajduks* is judged more as a character flaw, while drunkenness is more of an inherent trait of Muscovites, who “lived to drink.”⁵²² In Tanner’s account, drunkenness was connected with unreliability and inconstancy, vices he attached to Muscovites without exceptions, but there was another side to alcohol consumption as well. Drinking together during festivities promoted sociability and was a means to gain trust.⁵²³ Therefore, reception banquets for foreign embassies were an occasion to prepare the ground for the incoming negotiations.

Moscow banquet

The spectacular entry of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy to Moscow, preceded by two days of preparation, happened on May 17. The first audience with Tsar Feodor III took place three days later. The banquet promised by the tsar at the audience’s end was sent almost immediately. Tanner mentions four carriages with food and kitchen equipment arriving shortly after the embassy reached their court, followed by a number of wardens who carried

amphoras, cups and huge, richly gilded and silver-plated jars of various types and trimmings, which they say, came to the possession of the Grand Duke [tsar] as gifts from the envoys of various rulers. We all thought they contained excellent liquors, but as soon as we discovered that they were completely empty,

⁵²¹ Tanner was not alone in his opinions about the drinking habits in Muscovy. Thomas Smith wrote that “[d]runkenness is rather here a custome than a vice.” After M. S. Anderson, “English Views of Russia in the 17th Century,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 33 (1954): 146. In general, drunkenness was one of the leitmotifs of the North/East travel throughout the ages. For example, for Fichte staying in Poland-Lithuania in 1791 it was the Poles who were “always drunk.” Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 342. See also Dorota Dias-Lewandowska, “Polskie picie oczami Niemców i Francuzów: zmiana czy długie trwanie?,” in *Rzeczpospolita w oczach podróżników z Francji i Niemiec*, ed. Anna Mikołajczyk and Włodzimierz Zientara (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2014).

⁵²² Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 158.

⁵²³ Dias-Lewandowska, “Polskie picie oczami Niemców i Francuzów: zmiana czy długie trwanie?,” 140. On drinking as sociable and diplomatic practice during Peter I reign, see Igor Feduykin, Robert Collis, and Ernest A. Zitser, “Drinking Diplomacy: The St. Petersburg ‘Ordre Des Antisobres’ and Fraternal Culture among European Envoys in Early Imperial Russia,” *The International History Review* 42, no. 1 (2020): 60–76.

then we realized that they were carried through the city for a show to emphasize respect for the ambassadors.⁵²⁴

Although the guests from Poland-Lithuania seem disappointed by the fact that the vessels did not contain liquors, they seem to understand and appreciate the intention behind this parade, suggesting that oddities were quite easily accepted when they fit into the members of the embassy's idea of what is appropriate.

As Tanner notes, after the equipment, the cooks and master cooks arrived with an iron grate for reheating the dishes, for they were prepared almost entirely in the tsar's kitchen. The ambassadorial court was equipped with a kitchen, however, on this occasion, the food needed not to be simply a provision.

The first significant discrepancy in eating customs was related to how the table was prepared. The tsar's servant put a tablecloth covering only the head of the table intended for Czartoryski and Sapieha. When Nikita Semyonovich Urusov, acting as Feodor III's representative during the banquet, turned to the ambassadors to ask them to invite the rest of the embassy to join at the table, Czartoryski was to answer that "Polish nobles are not used to eat at a table that is not laid with the cloth."⁵²⁵ Urusov quickly explained that he now knew Polish customs well enough and sent for a tablecloth to the tsar's palace. Only after the entire table was covered with cloth the rest joined the table.

Ceremonial conflicts were not uncommon; the embassy of 1678 already had to resolve a dispute over precedence during the entry to Moscow.⁵²⁶ However, the incident with the tablecloth is not a "typical" violation of the ceremony in which the *maiestas* of the king and *Res Publica* were

⁵²⁴ "amfory, kubki i wielkie bogato pozłacane oraz posrebrzane, różnego kunsztu i wykończenia dzbany, które, jak twierdzą, trafiły do Wielkiego Księcia jako dary od posłów różnych władców. Wszyscy myśleliśmy, że znajdują się w nich znakomite trunki, ale gdy tylko odkryliśmy, że są zupełnie puste, wówczas zrozumieliśmy, że niesione je przez miasto na pokaz, dla podkreślenia szacunku dla posłów." Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 177.

⁵²⁵ Tanner, 179.

⁵²⁶ Tanner, 166–67.

at stake since it was not affecting the ambassadors directly. Especially Czartoryski's reply (whether authentic or fictitious) seems to point to something else: the equality of Polish-Lithuanian nobility, at least *de iure*, who enjoyed as an estate all the privileges that in Muscovy are reserved for the few. In this context, Urusov's excuse about insufficient knowledge of Polish customs extends beyond table manners.

Besides the cloth, silver cutlery and sculptures were put on the table. The sculptures reproduced towers, walls, "and other things," with two-headed eagles on top.⁵²⁷ Such sculptures—although for a more awe-inspiring effect should be made out of sugar rather than flour mixed with linseed oil like in this case—provided an excellent opportunity to make a statement at the dinner. Here, an emblem of the tsar unmistakably reminded the guests who the host was.

Tanner mentions plenty of food, 200 raw dishes, and warm dishes, reserved for the ambassadors. Nonetheless, Czartoryski and Sapieha ate them reluctantly because "apparently, for the unaccustomed Polish palate, the dishes were prepared with ingredients not exquisite enough."⁵²⁸ Tanner was of the opinion that, in general, the Poles are more "magnanimous," "dignified," and "noble" when it comes to their physical appearance and character, so it is not a surprise they also have, in his opinion, more sophisticated palates.⁵²⁹ In *Legatio Polono-Lithuanica*, Muscovites are portrayed as uncultivated, cruel, fickle schismatics of superficial faith; their eating and drinking habits—involving abuse of alcohol, consuming raw or even spoiled meats, and common fish—resonate perfectly with vices attached to them.

Overall, the main problem with the feast prepared for the Polish-Lithuanian embassy in 1678 was that "there was plenty of food, but everything was made only of fish, which not only was

⁵²⁷ Tanner, 178.

⁵²⁸ Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 177.

⁵²⁹ Tanner, 166–67.

impossible to eat, but even difficult to look at.”⁵³⁰ Tanner even adds a description of the dishes, insisting that they looked better than they tasted (as if his reader might have mistaken them with the elaborate food illusions prepared for fast-days in Poland-Lithuania):

Muscovites have saltwater fish in abundance, and therefore certainly not to get overwhelmed by the costs, we were always offered fish. Some of the fish, called beluga because of their white flesh, are compared in size to an ox. It was from these fish, cut into pieces, that all the variety of dishes was prepared ... Meat of this species produces a sticky juice or liquid that thickens easily. From this pulp, which takes any shape given to it by the fingers of a cook, geese, turkeys, chickens, and other creatures were formed. When they were placed in front of us, it was better to look at than eat them.⁵³¹

Czartoryski’s courtier seems to have some appreciation for the illusion, but he judges the fish was served out of stinginess, undermining the efforts to showcase the variety of dishes expected on such occasions.

Failed expectations of what classified as celebratory food, especially in opposition to fast-day food for Poles and Lithuanians, informed the unfavorable opinion on the dishes, and by extension, the Muscovites. Another description of the feast, held on Tsar Feodor III’s birthday, indicates why the dishes offered to the Polish-Lithuanian embassy were considered inferior, precisely mentioning their fast-day character: “we are counting that for it was Monday, they will feed us at least meat. But on seeing almost raw fast-day dishes, although in the number of 200, seasoned mostly with linseed oil, our hopes were gone.”⁵³² Tanner goes even further, believing such raw dishes were suited more for cannibals.⁵³³

Raw as well as bland foods, or more broadly food not appropriate for the occasion, seem to serve as a shorthand for incivility, an allegation made by members of the Polish-Lithuanian

⁵³⁰ Tanner, 178.

⁵³¹ “Moskowici mają morskiej ryby w obfitości i dlatego zapewne, aby nie popaść w koszty zawsze częstowano nas u nich rybą. Niektóre z ryb z powodu białego mięsa nazywane przez nich bielczą wielkością przypominają wołu. To właśnie z tych ryb posiekanych na kawałki przygotowano całą tę rozmaitość potraw, którymi nas później uraczono. Mięso tego gatunku wydziela kleisty sok czy też płyn, który łatwo gęstnieje. Z takiej właśnie masy, która przybiera dowolne kształty nadane jej przez palce kucharza, uformowano gęsi, indyki, kury i inne tego rodzaju stworzenia. Gdy je przed nami postawiono, chętniej się na nie patrzyło, niż się je spożywało.” Tanner, 178.

⁵³² Tanner, 202.

⁵³³ Tanner, 202–203.

legation to Muscovy repeatedly. For example, a member of the grand embassy of 1686 noted that during the reception banquet, they were served “fast-day dishes, dishes cold from fish mashed in the form of geese, turkeys, breams, carps. ... After these cold dishes, hot ones; without salt, tasteless, sweet.”⁵³⁴ At the same time, however, one of the ambassadors, Voivode Krzysztof Grzymułtowski, in his relation given at the Senate council in Lviv in 1686, assured that “[i]mediately after the audience, the banquet quite splendid, [served] according to their [Muscovite] custom.”⁵³⁵ Moreover, Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski, ambassador in 1679, although often complaining about the insufficient amount of food provided, judged the fish he tasted in Muscovy to be “fragrant.”⁵³⁶

Also, Tanner is not entirely dismissive of food and drinks consumed in Moscow, not sparing praise when his expectations about what food and drink are appropriate were met. During the reception banquet especially two dishes attracted his attention:

on another bowl there was another wonder: various fruits cooked in sugar and flavored with aromatic spices unknown to us, all prepared so elaborately that they resembled a folded red cloth. There was even quite a serious dispute among the courtiers who stood nearby as to whether it was a cloth or food. Also, I cannot omit the pumpkins cut in half, cooked in what I believe was sugar and pepper, sweeter than you might imagine.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁴ “Przynoszono na misach srebrnych postne, zimne od ryb na kształt tłuczeńców formą gęsi, indyków, leszczów, karpów robione potrawy ... Potrawy po owych zimnych gorące, bez soli, bez smaku, słodkie, zrzadka missami na stół stawiano; tak godzin dwie do ciemnego wieczora przesiedziwszy, odeszliśmy i wstaliśmy z czczemi żołądkami.” “Wjazd jaśnie wielmożnych: Krzysztofa Grzymułtowskiego wojewody poznańskiego ...; Marcjana Aleksandra s Kozielska Ogińskiego, kanclerza w. ks. lit. ... posłów pełnomocnych do Moskwy do Jana Aleksiejewicza i Piotra Aleksiejewicza braci rodzonych, carów rossyjskich, roku 1686 d. 19 lutego,” in *Źródła do dziejów polski*, vol. 2, 48.

⁵³⁵ “Zaraz po audiencji, bankiet dość wspaniały według ich zwyczaju.” “Zdanie sprawy przed królem Janem III s poselstwa do Moskwy, zaczętego w roku 1685 a skończonego dnia trzeciego maja 1686 przez Krzysztofa Grzymułtowskiego, wojewodę poznańskiego,” in *Źródła do dziejów polski*, vol. 2, 5.

⁵³⁶ “Po obiedzie naszym z zamku przysłany nam bankiet wyśmienity z ryb pachnących, Dołhorukiego synowie częstowali.” BCzart, TN 177, nr 314, “Relacja Poselstwa od Króla Jmci Jana III y od Rzeczypospolitej z Sejmu Grodzieńskiego ordynowana przez nas Cypriana Pawła Brzostowskiego Referendarza W. Xięstwa Litewskiego...,” 1456. Also during his earlier legation in 1670, he judged the fish to be “beautiful” (“ryb pięknych podano”). Oss, 6246/I, *Diariusz poselstwa do Moskwy w 1670 roku*, 34.

⁵³⁷ “A na innej misie było jeszcze jedno cudo: masa przeróżnych owoców ugotowanych w cukrze i przyprawionych nieznanymi nam wonnymi korzeniami, wszystko przyrządzone tak kunsztownie, że do złudzenia przypominało złożone czerwone sukno. Pomiędzy dworzanami, którzy stali w pobliżu, rozgorzał nawet całkiem poważny spór, czy jest to sukno czy potrawa. Nie można też pominąć rozciętych na połowę dyń, ugotowanych, jak mi się wydaje w cukrze i pieprzu, które były słodsze niż można przypuszczać.” Tanner, 178.

Sugar in the late seventeenth century was still an expensive commodity. Here, they are additionally prepared in a way that seems to resonate well with the baroque aesthetic of illusion and surprise, discussed in more detail in Chapter 1. Apart from the entertainment value and appreciation for the cooks' (or rather confectioners') skills, the use of sugar and aromatic spices indicated the tsar's wealth and generosity, unlike the fish in abundance at his disposal.

Urusov providently made sure there were no complaints about the insufficient amount of drinks. "Knowing well Poles are keen on vodka," he ordered to put a barrel in the middle of the ambassadorial court.⁵³⁸ One member of the embassy, a *hajduk* called Strzyga, particularly proved him right, drinking so much that it caused the unfortunate servant to internally burst into flames and blow out puffs of black smoke.⁵³⁹

Another incident involving alcohol at the feast, although definitely less spectacular, was framed as proof of greed. Apparently, some Muscovite servants, "thinking more about their profit than about the ambassadors' satisfaction"⁵⁴⁰ adulterated drinks, hoping they could keep the finer wines for themselves. Their deception was discovered as the guests spit the drinks or poured them on the ground. The incident is as much illustrative for what Tanner thinks of Muscovites as of Poles and Lithuanians, who could not be tricked into drinking adulterated wines because they could distinguish bad ones from good ones—in other words, demonstrating their good taste. And as time showed, they also could not be tricked during the following negotiations. Moreover, they were, in fact, the ones who managed to outwit Muscovites.

⁵³⁸ Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 180.

⁵³⁹ Tanner, 180.

⁵⁴⁰ Tanner, 180.

Deception feast

Until the first audience with the tsar, the ambassadors could not meet anyone but the appointed *pristavy*.⁵⁴¹ After the entry to the capital, the audience with the tsar, and the reception banquet, the negotiation entered into a more mundane phase. Czartoryski, Sapieha, and Komar were meeting with members of the council over and over again, working on the details of a future treaty.⁵⁴²

The talks were dragging on, threats to break off negotiations were repeated. One particular instance in which Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors resorted to deception to break the deadlock is fascinating. According to Tanner, on July 5, the disagreement over the return of Smolensk, Kyiv, and the starosty of Velizh turned into a heated exchange. Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors threatened that Sobieski might want to recapture those territories with armed forces if the agreement was not met. The tsar replied that he as well may send an envoy to the Porte to enter an alliance against Poland-Lithuania, and should Czartoryski prove too stubborn, he could be taken as a hostage until the agreement with the sultan was sealed.⁵⁴³ The ambassadors did not take this escalation lightly and, as Tanner reports, gathered their closest aides and came up with a solution:

to suppress the fear, the trumpeters and drummers were placed at the top of the palace, so that their joyful notes could flow from there ... Additionally, wine was served generously. At that time, none of us knew what this extraordinary outburst of joy meant, so it seemed strange to us.⁵⁴⁴

After a few hours of this concert, *pristavy* came to inquire about the reason for such unusual joy. Received by Czartoryski and Sapieha, they were offered to toast to the tsar's health with big, gilded cups, which they "could not refuse," not to offend the tsar. The ambassadors then

⁵⁴¹ Jerzy Wojciechowski, "Opinie o ceremoniale dyplomatycznym w Rosji na podstawie relacji uczestników poselstw Rzeczypospolitej w drugiej połowie XVII wieku," *Wiek Stary i Nowy* 14, no. 19 (2019): 74.

⁵⁴² Tanner counted 32 conferences between the May 23, and August 17. More on the negotiation, see Wójcik, *Rzeczpospolita wobec Turcji i Rosji 1674–1679*, 154.

⁵⁴³ Tanner, *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie*, 204.

⁵⁴⁴ Tanner, 204.

explained they were bidding farewell to Muscovy, intending to leave soon, and Czartoryski was relishing his last moments of freedom before being taken into custody.

The loud celebration supposedly continued long until midnight. The day after, the ambassadors were invited to meet with the council again and went there “still intoxicated with wine.”⁵⁴⁵ Although the feast put on for the show did not resolve the impasse entirely, it took four more meetings and an ostensible preparation of the carriages for departure to reach a provisory agreement (setting financial compensation for disputed territories), it was nevertheless presented by Tanner as a tool of diplomacy and a turning point, as well as proof of “Lithuanian-Polish genius.”⁵⁴⁶

Tanner’s diary has an overly optimistic tone. The outcomes of the embassy headed to Muscovy by Czartoryski and Sapieha in 1678 were hardly spectacular, yet still favorable for Poland-Lithuania: the truce was prolonged, the border was slightly corrected, and 200 000 rubles (1 000 000 *złoty*) financial compensation was granted.⁵⁴⁷ Many issues were left unresolved and put aside for later commissions and grand embassies to come—it took eight more years to reach a “perpetual peace.”⁵⁴⁸

Finally, there is a problem with Tanner’s trustworthiness and, more broadly, the literary convention his diary is embedded in.⁵⁴⁹ Diaries of embassies and relations of Polish-Lithuanian high-ranking diplomats—in particular those who were frequently engaging in relations with

⁵⁴⁵ Tanner, 206.

⁵⁴⁶ Tanner, 204.

⁵⁴⁷ Wójcik, *Rzeczpospolita wobec Turcji i Rosji 1674–1679*, 163.

⁵⁴⁸ About the negotiation and ratification of the treaty see Koczegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680–1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym*, 387–483, 527–88.

⁵⁴⁹ For a comprehensive study on European accounts of Muscovy, see Marshall T. Poe, “A People Born to Slavery.” *Russia in Early Modern European Ethnography, 1476–1748* (London-Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), as well as Jan Hennings, “Textual Ambassador and Ambassadorial Texts. Literary Representations and Diplomatic Practice in George Turberville’s and Thomas Randolph’s Accounts of Russia (1568–9),” in *Cultures of Diplomacy and Literary Writing in the Early Modern World*, ed. Tracey A. Sowerby and Joanna Craigwood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Muscovy—were centered on the content of negotiations and ceremonial surrounding them, therefore, they were self-referential and somewhat generic.⁵⁵⁰ When more details regarding food and drink are included, it seems to be mainly done to comment on the reciprocal obligation or highlight the hardship of the negotiator's task by mentioning, for example, the quality of the banquet sent from the tsar's kitchen or insufficient provisions. Moreover, embassies to Muscovy were dispatched regularly, and in the seventeenth century, it appeared as far more familiar territory than the Ottoman Empire, described in the diary of Gniński's embassy with a fair degree of curiosity. Tanner's diary is closer to an account of travel. It showcases a notable level of originality, however, it also follows a trail of many authors who traveled to Muscovy as members of embassies, and is not free from stereotypes.⁵⁵¹ That includes a catalog of common tropes in images of Muscovites' cruelty, rudeness, fear of tyrannical tsar, superficial faith, as well as drunkenness and eating habits involving consuming raw or spoiled meats.

Did Czartoryski and Sapieha wait for the tablecloth to be put on a table during the reception banquet? Did Strzyga self-combust after consuming too much vodka? Did the "deception feast" happen and could it impact the negotiation? While all these questions are valid, it is more important for this dissertation that these episodes were included in narrating the embassy. Tanner's relation brilliantly reflects on its course from a unique perspective. It looks at Polish-

⁵⁵⁰ Hennings, "Textual Ambassador and Ambassadorial Texts. Literary Representations and Diplomatic Practice in George Turberville's and Thomas Randolph's Accounts of Russia (1568-9)," 188. One such example is the documents of Cyprian Paweł Brzostowski. Cf. BCzart, 2114, *Materiały Brzostowskie do komisji 1674*; TN 177, nr 314, "Relacja Poselstwa od Króla Jmci Jana III y od Rzeczypospolitej z Sejmu Grodzieńskiego ordynowana przez nas Cypriana Pawła Brzostowskiego Referendarza W. Xięstwa Litewskiego..."; TN 177, nr 137, "Dyariusz negocjacji Ur[odzonego] Cypriana Brzostowskiego Referendarza wielkiego Xięstwa Litewskiego, Posła wielkiego odprawionego w Moskwie, z Panami Moskiewskimi do tego dzieła wyznaczonemi," Oss, 6246/I, *Diariusz poselstwa do Moskwy w 1670 roku*.

⁵⁵¹ Just to mention Sigmund von Herberstein, Adam Olearius, Andreas Rhode, Augstyn von Mayerberg, Jacob Reutenfels, Samuel Collins, Charles Howard, Earl of Carlisle, or George Turberville. Aleksander Strojny, "Wstęp," in *Poselstwo polsko-litewskie do Moskwy szczęśliwie przedsięwzięte, opisane przez naocznego świadka Bernarda Tannera*, ed. Aleksander Strojny, trans. Michał Rzepiela and Aleksander Strojny (Kraków: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Historia Jagiellonica, 2002), 65, 75; Hennings, "Textual Ambassador and Ambassadorial Texts. Literary Representations and Diplomatic Practice in George Turberville's and Thomas Randolph's Accounts of Russia (1568-9)," 175–89; Poe, "A People Born to Slavery." *Russia in Early Modern European Ethnography, 1476–1748*, especially Chapter 2 and 4.

Lithuanian diplomats from an outsider's perspective, one that includes lower-ranking members of embassy, and it differs from diaries and relations of embassies that were meant for the king and senators. Distancing himself from Muscovites seems to be Tanner's primarily aim, for which eating and drinking customs were a convenient (and visceral) device, one that has been used since antiquity to designate barbarity.⁵⁵² Importantly, how Muscovites ate and drank, what food and drink they served to their guests was not described in isolation but connected with their overall characteristic, ultimately determining what kind of diplomatic partners they were.

Tanner provides fascinating material for inquiry on the role of food and drink as a binder of the community that met at one table, and a distinct marker of difference: religious, ethnic, and social. In different settings, however, including descriptions of food and drink was tuned to serve other primary purposes—communicating splendor and magnificence.

Wine fountain and camels in Rome

The most ostentatious and expensive Polish-Lithuanian embassies were dispatched in the seventeenth century. The reasons for that perhaps could be traced to a fondness of alluring spectacle, but the ancient inspiration that fueled the socio-political program of Polish-Lithuanian nobility played a role in that as well. The other factor that should not be overlooked was the status of those missions. The embassy of obedience headed by Deputy Chancellor of Lithuania Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł in 1679 can be seen as an example of a spectacular manifestation of splendor, a manifestation put on display to achieve particular ends.

⁵⁵² Arkadiusz Blaszczyk, "Food and the Supernatural: How Shared Perceptions of the Tatars Impacted the Diplomatic Relations between the Ottoman Empire and Poland-Lithuania (Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries)," in *From Kebab to Čevapčići: Foodways in (Post-)Ottoman Europe*, ed. Arkadiusz Blaszczyk and Stefan Rohdewald (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018), 43.

The so-called embassy of obedience (*legatio obedientia, poselstwo z obediencją*) was a particular case of high-status diplomatic mission, combining religious and political purposes.⁵⁵³ It was sent to a newly elected pope, from a monarch ascending to the throne, or from a new territory to declare obedience to papal authority.⁵⁵⁴ Accepting the declaration by the pope meant recognition of the sovereign's rights, which could be of significance on the international stage.⁵⁵⁵

The extraordinary character of the embassy of obedience was marked by the fact it was received at the public consistory (council of cardinals) after a solemn entry to the city. The entry to Rome was a distinction worthy of all the effort, a privilege enjoyed only by legates who came with matters regarding crusades, peace between Christian rulers, or obedience. But even in those cases, the permission was not always granted, and—as in the case of Radziwiłł—had to be negotiated.⁵⁵⁶

Accompanied by extensive ceremonial, the embassy of obedience was an occasion to showcase the splendor and prestige of the sender in front of a prominent audience, and therefore its success should be measured foremost by the mastery of communicating those traits.⁵⁵⁷ Voivode of Łęczyca Stanisław Miński, who headed the embassy of obedience to Clemens VIII in 1593, explained the need to set off to Rome precisely in terms of signaling the grandeur: “I see it too,

⁵⁵³ Marian Banaszak, “Uroczyste składanie obediencji papieżom,” *Studia Theologica Varsaviensia* 10, no. 2 (1972): 151, 153; Geoff R. Berridge and Lorna Lloyd, “Embassy of Obedience,” in *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy* (Houndmills-New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 134–35.

⁵⁵⁴ Tomasz Makowski, *Poselstwo Jerzego Ossolińskiego do Rzymu w roku 1633* (Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa, 1996), 7.

⁵⁵⁵ Banaszak, “Uroczyste składanie obediencji papieżom,” 150.

⁵⁵⁶ Dominika Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2009), 15.

⁵⁵⁷ Banaszak, “Uroczyste składanie obediencji papieżom,” 151.

that since for a long time the king's and Commonwealth's majesty has needed it, I cannot do otherwise but in God's name get ready to go on this journey."⁵⁵⁸

Embassy of 1679

The organization of the embassy of obedience tended to be time-consuming. The main reason for that was the difficulty of finding a candidate who was ready to incur a substantial financial burden and be able to complete a superb retinue. Refusals to take on the task that most likely would lead to grave debts were not uncommon.⁵⁵⁹

In the seventeenth century, embassies of obedience seemed to be treated by monarchs less as an obligation and more as an opportunity for gaining visibility and seeking favors from the pope. Jan III Sobieski attached all the greater importance to dispatching his legate as neither Jan II Kazimierz Vasa nor Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki sent theirs to the Holy See during their reigns.⁵⁶⁰ Considering the success of Grand Crown Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński's embassy of obedience in 1633—which has become a model manifestation of power and splendor of the Commonwealth—it is fair to connect Sobieski's decision with the willingness to strengthen royal authority.⁵⁶¹ After all, before the election in 1674, he was one of many magnates in Poland-Lithuania. Securing the support for the war with the Porte surely became a more urgent matter after Gniński's return from his mission to Istanbul.

⁵⁵⁸ "a iż też to widzę, że dawno tego potrzebowało pańskie i Rzeczpospolitej dostojeństwo, nie mogę inczej, jon się już w imię Boże gotować w tę drogę." After Leszek Jarmiński, "Trudne starania o wysłanie posła Zygmunta III Wazy z obediencją do papieża Klemensa VIII," *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* XLI (1997): 173.

⁵⁵⁹ On average, in the sixteenth century it took one and a half year to dispatch an embassy of obedience from Poland-Lithuania. Most of the refusals were due to financial reasons. It is estimated that Radziwiłł's embassy cost a whopping 625 000 złoty, of which only 120 000 came from the Crown treasury, and most of it was refunded only after the mission. Makowski, *Poselstwo Jerzego Ossolińskiego do Rzymu w roku 1633*, 19; Jarmiński, "Trudne starania o wysłanie posła Zygmunta III Wazy z obediencją do papieża Klemensa VIII," 174.; Jan Jaroszuk, "Poselstwo z obediencją Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła do Rzymu w latach 1679-1680," *Miscellanea Historico-Archivistica* 3 (1987): 111; Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 64–65.

⁵⁶⁰ Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 75; Jaroszuk, "Poselstwo z obediencją Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła do Rzymu w latach 1679-1680," 105–7.

⁵⁶¹ Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 75–76; Jaroszuk, "Poselstwo z obediencją Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła do Rzymu w latach 1679-1680," 107.

Radziwiłł's main task was to pay homage at Innocent XI's feet in Sobieski's name, declare the Commonwealth's readiness to wage war against the Ottoman Empire, and ask for subsidies to support this cause. Additionally, matters of royal patronage law (*ius patronato regio*) in Poland-Lithuania were to be brought up.⁵⁶² Further, on the way to and back from Rome—in Vienna, Venice and Florence—Sobieski's legate was to seek a broader alliance for the war. Radziwiłł, at least on paper, was a suitable fit for the mission: a Chancellor with experience accumulated by participating in Poland-Lithuania's political life, both in its substantive and ceremonial aspects, being the king's confidant and brother-in-law.⁵⁶³

In April 1679, Sobieski's *legatus extraordinarius* set off with around 300 people in his entourage, both clergy and laymen, including Starosta of Liw Marcin Oborski, canon of Warmia Stanisław Konstanty Kowalski acting as Radziwiłł's Court Marshal, and Samuel Jan Korycki, Radziwiłł's secretary (*pisarz pokojowy*).⁵⁶⁴ Oborski was later replaced in his secretarial duties by Ignacy Gniński, abbot of the Cistercians in Koronowo, who was already in Rome at the time and entrusted with the task of gaining backing for the matter of *ius patronato regio*.⁵⁶⁵

The embassy reached Vienna only on July 17, 1679, and made the solemn entry six days after. The entry, a proper rehearsal before reaching Rome, was apparently "held ... with great pomp and with the participation of a crowd, as it was publicly communicated."⁵⁶⁶ According to one of the accounts of the event, translated from French and kept in the Radziwiłł's family archive,

⁵⁶² Since the instruction is not known and Sobieski maintained regular correspondence with Radziwiłł, Jan Jaroszek suggests that it may never have existed. Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 44.

⁵⁶³ In 1677, Primate Andrzej Olszowski had initially volunteered to take on the mission, however, he did not undertake any preparatory steps. Jaroszek, "Poselstwo z obediencją Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła do Rzymu w latach 1679-1680," 109.

⁵⁶⁴ Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 81; Jaroszek, "Poselstwo z obediencją Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła do Rzymu w latach 1679-1680," 111–12. Plenipotentiary powers signed by Jan III Sobieski read "Legatum Nostrum Extraordinarium." AGAD, AR XI, 108, 138.

⁵⁶⁵ Jaroszek, "Poselstwo z obediencją Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła do Rzymu w latach 1679-1680," 112.

⁵⁶⁶ Francesco Buonavisi, nuncio in Vienna, in a letter to Alderano Cybo, the Secretary of State of Pope Innocent XI, after Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 83.

the crowd in Vienna could witness—among other things—thirteen Turkish horses in tacks richly decorated in “golden, silver and studded with gems,” six camels covered in crimson velvet led by grooms in crimson silk garments, “Four Persians ... with raised staffs and Persian turbans,” and a company of hussars “with a banner and peculiar army music.”⁵⁶⁷

The following talks with Leopold I were not going well for Radziwiłł, primarily because Sobieski’s intentions to engage in the war against the Porte, especially in alliance with Muscovy, were questioned.⁵⁶⁸ The plague outbreak prevented any further persuasion, and as a result before the hasty departure from Vienna the only outcome of the talks was the emperor’s declaration of help in the event of Porte’s attack on the Commonwealth. No binding agreement could be concluded.

The quarantine requirement prevented Radziwiłł and his depleted retinue (around 100 people turned back) from continuing the journey southward.⁵⁶⁹ And even after undergoing the prescribed quarantine, the permission to enter Venetian territory as well as crossing *Patrimonium Sancti Petri* was declined. Officially, the reason was the precaution not to spread the epidemy, but Sobieski suspected that Venetians were withholding the embassy “out of obvious spite to please the Porte” (later shifting the blame to the hostility of the Roman Curia, not entirely unjustifiably).⁵⁷⁰ According to Francesco Martelli, nuncio at Sobieski’s court, the size of the Polish-Lithuanian embassy was a factor in itself as well.⁵⁷¹ Perhaps indeed, the burden of hosting hundreds of people, providing them with lodgings and food supplies, was at

⁵⁶⁷ AGAD, AR XI, 108, “Explicacja z Francuskiego na Polski wjazdu J. Xcia Jm Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła Het. Polnego y Podkanclerzego W. X. Lit. Expediowanego w Wiedniu podczas poselstwa,” 152–153.

⁵⁶⁸ Sobieski to Radziwiłł, June, 19 1680: “Bóg nam zaś świadkiem, ale i tak jakąśmy Posłom Moskiewskim dali *exquitia* pokaże światu żeśmy szczerze i Wojny przeciwko Nieprzyjacielowi Krzyża Św. i *coniunctiey* z Moskwą życzyli na długie nie biorąc *deliberatie*, ale owszem przynagając o *commissiā* z Mediatorami.”

⁵⁶⁹ The first stop was in Villach, where the authorities forbade further movement for fear of losing the opportunity to trade with Venice. The ambassador was quarantined in Tarvisio, with part of the retinue, while the rest, including horses, camels, carriages were likely in nearby Plocken-Pass. Jaroszuk, “Poselstwo z obediencją Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła do Rzymu w latach 1679-1680,” 113.

⁵⁷⁰ “z oczywistej złości dla przypodobania się Porcie.” Jaroszuk, 114–15.

⁵⁷¹ Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 86.

least an indirect cause of reluctance to allow Radziwiłł passage and then his solemn entry and audience in the full ceremonial display.

Importantly, due to Radziwiłł's lack of progress stretching for months and a Senate council meeting to decide on the matters of the war with the Porte planned for January 8, 1680, Sobieski decided to reach out to Pietro Vidoni, Cardinal Protector of Poland, asking for a papal declaration to provide subsidies.⁵⁷² In December 1679, Vidoni passed Innocent XI's decision to grant 500 000 *in bona moneta* to Poland-Lithuania.⁵⁷³

As Jan Jaroszuk convincingly argues, the fact that Sobieski had agreed with the Holy See on the issue of financial support for the war by correspondence and bypassing his legate meant that the Roman Curia was, in reality, willing to negotiate but reluctant to receive Radziwiłł in Rome.⁵⁷⁴ Furthermore, Sobieski's insistence on the continuation of the embassy after securing the subsidies—and against the directions coming from the Crown Chancellery and senators—proves the purpose of the embassy was not—or was not only—finding allies for the war with the Porte. Both Sobieski and Radziwiłł were aware that calling the embassy back would strain royal authority and prestige.⁵⁷⁵ In this perspective, insistence on continuing to travel with the sizable entourage, despite adding a significant delay, should be regarded not as pointless stubbornness or vanity but as a necessity dictated by the embassy's objective.

Finally, in April 1680, Radziwiłł obtained permission to move forward with his entourage.⁵⁷⁶

Then, following only a private entry to Venice and private audience with the doge and the

⁵⁷² Jaroszuk, "Poselstwo z obediencją Michała Kazimierza Radziwiłła do Rzymu w latach 1679-1680," 114.

⁵⁷³ Jaroszuk, 115.

⁵⁷⁴ Jaroszuk, 115.

⁵⁷⁵ Jaroszuk, 116.

⁵⁷⁶ During the audience with the doge, Radziwiłł secured a permission for the majority of the retinue to be quarantined in the Venetian lazaret. Jaroszuk, 118.

council, he reached Rome by the end of May, over a year after departure from Poland-Lithuania.⁵⁷⁷

Prince Radziwiłł's entry to Rome

While in Rome waiting for the date of the solemn entry and public audience to be set, Sobieski's legate met with the pope in private audiences and made visits to the cardinals. No less importantly, he was waiting for the remaining embassy members to arrive, filling the gaps in his entourage, and making necessary arrangements to appear in full splendor.

The solemn entry was eventually scheduled for August 4, 1680, the day of Saint Dominic, falling on Sunday, ensuring a considerable crowd on the streets. One of the accounts of the entry explains well in the opening who constituted the envisaged audience for Radziwiłł's—and by extension Sobieski's—spectacle: "Rome, Italy, Europe, and the whole world, hear the resounding and festive sound of the expedition of an extraordinary Legation."⁵⁷⁸

Apart from the relation authored by "Petrus Desebestanis civis Romanus" from which the above quote comes from, Radziwiłł's entry was also described in the anonymous *Memoria delle comparse*, and printed work *Copia di lettera scritta da NN*.⁵⁷⁹ *Copia di lettera* was published already in 1680, while *Memorie delle comparse* must have been written after 1683 as it contains references to the Battle of Vienna. The relation of Desebastianis is even later, dated 1687. *Copia*

⁵⁷⁷ Jaroszek, 117; Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 89.

⁵⁷⁸ "Roma, Italia, Europa, el Mondo tutto, senti già il risuono sì Festoso della spedizione di una straordinaria Legazione per le Corti più principali di Europe, dá farsi del Potentissimo Regno di Polonia." AGAD, AR II, 1751, *Opisanie wjazdu do Rzymu poselstwa Michała II Kazimierza Radziwiłła*, 2.

⁵⁷⁹ AGAD, AR II, 1751, *Opisanie wjazdu do Rzymu poselstwa Michała II Kazimierza Radziwiłła*, 2; BCzart, 2863 II, *Memoria delle comparse e trattamento ricevuto in Roma dal duca di Radziwiłł ultimo Ambasciatore pubblico della Corona di Polonia sotto il Pontificato d'Innocenzo XI*; *Copia di lettera scritta da NN nella quale si legge la relatione distinta dell'Ingresso, Caualcate, e Ceremonie fatte in questa Città di Roma nell'occasione della venuta del Signor Duca Radziwiłł Ambasciatore d'obbedienza appresso la Santità di N. Sig. PP Innocentio XI l'anno MDCLXXX* (Roma: Per Michel Ercole, 1680). Apart from these relations, Radziwiłł's embassy is also mentioned in diaries of Carlo Cartari, quoted, for example, by Gaetano Platania. See his "Michał Radziwiłł's Obedience Embassy in the Rome of Pope Innocent XI Odescalchi. Between Diplomacy and Ceremonial," *Eastern European History Review* 4 (2021): 159–69.

di lettera, although not always providing the most details, is all the more interesting as it was likely commissioned by the ambassador himself. Of course, it is not to say that by virtue of being the earliest relation, *Copia di lettera* is the most accurate or “truthful.” Relations of entries (or, more broadly, festival books) were never disinterested chronicles of the event.⁵⁸⁰ The value of *Copia di lettera* lies precisely in interventions in the text made “according to the fantasy of his lordship the Prince [Radziwiłł],” showing how he wanted the occasion to be seen, while the value of the two later relations stems from the inclusions of new details, tellingly many of them pertaining to the material setting of the event.

Surviving documents of Radziwiłł’s embassy include an account of expenses issued by Giovanni Giacomo Komarek listing such services as printing (and reprinting) one thousand copies of “Relation of the entry, Cavalcade and ceremonies done by the Most Serene Duke Radzivilio in this City of Rome,” detailing the cost for composition, circulation, paper, and ink.⁵⁸¹ Komarek signed the account as a printer (*stampatore*), and his name also appears in the dedication (to Cardinal Vidoni) in *Copia di lettera*, which allows drawing a connection between this specific print and Sobieski’s representative.

Radziwiłł made a proper effort to make his presence in Rome memorable and disseminate this impression further using relations, such as the one put together (and then reprinted) by Komarek.⁵⁸² The entry started with the gathering at Piazza Colonna, where the embassy was staying, then proceeded to Porta del Popolo. After the welcoming by the pope’s representative, the cavalcade was formed at the Piazza del Popolo, setting off for a festive ride, a long route

⁵⁸⁰ About the festival book as a genre see for example Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, “The Early Modern Festival Book: Function and Form,” in *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, J.R. Mulryne, and Margaret Shewring, vol. 1 (Aldershot: MHRA-Ashgate, 2004), 3–18.

⁵⁸¹ AGAD, AR II, ks. 2, “Conto della spese fatta stampare e ristampare la Relatione della entrata, Cavalcata e ceremonie fatte dalle Serenissimo Duca Radzivilio in questa Città di Roma,” 304,

⁵⁸² “co wjazd księcia jegomości do Rzymu drukował kontentacyja, że kilka razy przedrukować musiał według fantazyjy księcia Jegomości.” AGAD, AR II, ks. 2, “Rachunki wydatków moich w Rzymie podczas Ambasady Jaśnie Oświeconego,” 141.

through the city (Via Borghese, Campo Marzio, Monte Citorio, tre Cannelle, Quirinale (Monte Cavallo),⁵⁸³ ending at Piazza Colonna, at Radziwiłł's lodgings.⁵⁸⁴

The passage of the procession through Piazza del Popolo in the presence of a curious audience—the “whole world,” that is, the cardinals, nobles, representatives of foreign princes, and, of course, the curious people of Rome—was captured not only in writing but also on the painting (most likely) created a few years after the event took place, between 1685 and 1693, by Niccolò Viviani Codazzi and (most likely) Pieter van Bloemen (Fig. 5).⁵⁸⁵

On the painting, at the beginning of the cavalcade, on the right side, one can see three camels (and a monkey riding on one of them) (Fig. 7), followed by prancing horses in richly decorated shabracks (saddlecloths) led by grooms. Radziwiłł, the ambassador, is presented in the center of the painting (Fig. 6), heralded by the drummers and trumpeters, slightly to the left from the obelisk, on horseback, wearing a red coat with ermine fur (signaling his princely status) put on a golden garment, and headgear with impressive egret.⁵⁸⁶ After him proceed the nobles in characteristic Polish-Lithuanian dresses, winged hussars, the papal Swiss Guard, and at the very end, prelates, as well as guard units in red, modeled after janissaries.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸³ *Copia di lettera scritta da NN*, 12.

⁵⁸⁴ For details on the route of solemn entries into Rome see for example AGAD, AR II, 1751, *Opisanie wjazdu do Rzymu poselstwa Michała II Kazimierza Radziwiła*, 5–6; Makowski, *Poselstwo Jerzego Ossolińskiego do Rzymu w roku 1633*, 34; Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 69.

⁵⁸⁵ Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 103.

⁵⁸⁶ The Radziwiłłs held an honorary title of Princes of the Holy Roman Empire. Hadrian Kamiński, Marta Wilińska, and Małgorzata Ziemińska, eds., “Radziwiłłowie,” in *Rody Magnackie Rzeczypospolitej* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2002), 189–214.

⁵⁸⁷ Apart from displaying social and political order, such processions were also complicated from the logistic perspective. As J.R. Mulryne argues, this logistic component of festivals was an equally important link between ceremony and power. J.R. Mulryne, “The Power of Ceremony,” in *Occasions of State. Early Modern European Festivals and the Negotiation of Power*, ed. J.R. Mulryne et al. (New York: Routledge, 2019), 10.17 ebook.



Figure 5. Entry of Prince Michał Radziwiłł to Rome, oil on canvas by Pieter van Bloemen? (1657-1720), Niccolò Viviani Codazzi (1648-1693), Museum of King Jan III's Palace in Wilanów, Wil. 1041



Figure 6. Detail depicting the ambassador in cavalcade (on the left)



Figure 7. Detail depicting the camels

Written relations name the most distinguished participants of the entry, including Cardinal Cybo and Vidoni, and confirm a number of details painted by Codazzi and van Bloemen, such as the nobles in Polish costumes, hussars, and of course, horses and camels (Fig. 7). Considering that the parade through the city took hours, it certainly gave sufficient time to marvel.

According to Miński's experience described in *Sposób odprawowania poselstwa, ceremonii zachowania posłowi z obediencją od KJM do Rzymu* (1596), after the entry:

[i]t is not customary [for the ambassador] to have anyone keep him for dinner, nor to be bothered by the others with visits, for he must also rest himself ... The custom is to give cold food only to the Swiss in Tinell downstairs [marshal's table], such as pies, brawns, *prosciutto*, and other things and drink a barrel of wine, in addition commonly 400 *scudi* separately for trumpeters, drummers, officials *del Capitolo* ... The same day having rested, when they are gone, the ambassador can inspect the order of his household and equipment [*sprzęt*] and cellar, which in time needs to be supplied before the arrival; and the organization of the house has to be introduced, so that ordinary expenditure would follow a regular rhythm, like in the clock, with only extraordinary expenses made for a special occasion.⁵⁸⁸

This very practical description gives a sneak peek into the mundane level of organization of the embassy, highlighting the obligations to personnel usually seen in the background or consisting of "the crowd" accompanying the ambassador. Importantly, these obligations included food and drink provisions.

Further, the recommendation to check the cellar supply points to the importance of the smooth running of the household and the readiness to host guests during the embassy, since "the ambassador's table has to be always good and identical, because he does not know what people will be sitting at his table."⁵⁸⁹ Considering the accounts of Radziwiłł's embassy, it seems that

⁵⁸⁸ "nie jest obyczaj aby miał kogo na obiad zatrzymować ani go też molestują onego dnia *visitami*, bo i odpocząć sobie musi, i jest zabawka owych kazać odprawować, co prowadzili. Bo samym Szwajcarom tego dnia jest obyczaj dać jeść w Tinellu [stół marszałkowski] na dole rzeczy zimnych, jako pasztetów, salsiconów, persutów [*prosciutto*] i innych rzeczy i wypija beczkę wina, do tego 400 scutów pospolicie z osobna trębaczom, bębniom, *officialom del Capitolo* wedla discretiei tego kto będzie odprawował. Tego dnia odpoczowszy może wieczorem poseł, kiedy się rozejdą oglądać wszystek porządek domu swego i sprzęt i piwnicę, która w czas opatrzyć przed przyjazdem potrzeba i zatem dom w pewną ordynatią wprawić, aby już ordinario rozchód jednako szedł, jako zegar, aby tylko *extraordinarios sumptus* czynić wedle *occasiei*" Stanisław Miński, "Sposób odprawowania poselstwa," in *Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum*, ed. Józef Korzeniowski, vol. 13 (Kraków: Wydawnictwa Komisji Hist. Akademii Umiejętności, 1889), 451.

⁵⁸⁹ "Stół poselski ma być dobry i jednaki zawsze, bo nie wie jakie ludzie będzie miał u niego." Miński, 458.

both providing for the personnel and keeping a certain level hospitality centered around the table was of the utmost concern.

The second cavalcade, although slightly less ostentatious, was formed to assist Radziwiłł's arrival to the public audience with the pope during which the oath of obedience was to be declared.⁵⁹⁰ As Miński mentions, the need to rest was a perfect justification for why the reception audiences did not take place straight after the entry, but usually a couple of days after. To mark the solemnity of the occasion, it happened at the public consistory and was followed by the banquet.

Papal banquet

Although almost one hundred years before the banquet to honor Radziwiłł was held, Miński in his work, emphasizes a couple of elements that did not lose their ceremonial importance.⁵⁹¹ They concern seating arrangements, the choreography of handwashing, toasting, and consuming food and drink.

The status of the diners—the pope and the ambassador—was conveyed by the roles taken during the handwashing ritual and the spatial differentiation achieved by the type and placement of the furniture. After the ambassador handed the towel to the pope, they sat on different kinds of chairs and at separate tables, yet placed in close proximity. This gap was then breached by the offerings of food directly from the papal table, and raising the toasts (the latter only mentioned in relations from the 1680 banquet). In both cases, the ambassador was served by papal officers, but his own cupbearer was handing him the drinks.

⁵⁹⁰ Usually the obedience audience was held two to three days after the solemn entry, and the dinner was an integral part of the celebration. Miński, "Sposób odprawowania poselstwa," 451; Makowski, *Poselstwo Jerzego Ossolińskiego do Rzymu w roku 1633*, 37, 40.

⁵⁹¹ Miński includes an entire section about the papal banquet ("O zostaniu tego dnia na obiedzie u Papieża"). Miński, "Sposób odprawowania poselstwa," 453.

As it is conventional, the written relations of the banquet for Sobieski's legate are not giving much information about the food and drink itself, apart from assuring readers that there was an abundance of it according to the custom, focusing on the setting and the specific status elements. In this case, the details meticulously recorded were the toast (and the glassware), offerings of food from the papal plate, and the table decorations.

During the banquet hosted by Innocent XI in 1680, the pope sat under the canopy, on a chair upholstered in velvet, placed on a platform, while the ambassador was offered a chair with an armrest, at a table placed directly on the floor, but next to the papal one. The tables were laden with food and decorated with "Triumphs, & adorned with very fine Cloth, which with fine folds showed the Coat of Arms of His Holiness, & that of the Prince surrounded by florals of the same material."⁵⁹² *Memorie delle comparse* specifically mentioned that these were made from batiste (cambric) with such mastery that Radziwiłł wished to take them back to Poland for the king.⁵⁹³

The ambassador was handed drinks by his own cupbearer, and every time the pope drank, everyone kneeled down. Toasts were made to Radziwiłł's and Sobieski's health—Innocent XI drank them from a crystal cup. What is more, the ambassador was shown "utmost cordiality" by being offered twice food from the papal table, which he received "uncovering his head which he also did in the act of utmost reverence whenever the Pontiff drank."⁵⁹⁴ The meal was further

⁵⁹² "le tavole copiose." BCzart, 2863 II, *Memorie delle comparse e trattamento ricevuto in Roma dal duca di Razivilla*, 31; "la Tavola di Sua Beatitudine postà sotto Baldachino poco disiante da quella allestita in luogo più basso per la Persona del Signor Ambasciatore ricolme di Trionfi, & adornamenti di sottilissime Tele, che con finissime piegature esprimevano le Armi di Sua Santità, & quella del signor Duca contornata di fiorami della materia medesima." *Copia di lettera scritta da NN*, 15.

⁵⁹³ What is more, the relation mentions precisely who was responsible for the folded cloth: "con industria da Flipppo Sekor Jedeico uno degli ufficiali del Papa." BCzart, 2863 II, *Memorie delle comparse e trattamento ricevuto in Roma dal duca di Razivilla*, 35.

⁵⁹⁴ "e gli furono usati tratti di somma cordialità da Nostro Signore, attesoche fù regalato due volte con vivande della propria Tavola, le quali erano ricevute dal Signor Ambasciatore, scoprendosi il Capo, il che anche feceua con atto di somma riverenza ogni volta, che il Pontefice beueua, che più volte fece dire al Sig. Ambasciatore, ch'egli beueua à lode del Ré di Polonia." *Copia di lettera scritta da NN*, 15.

aggrandized by music played on “various instruments,”⁵⁹⁵ and accompanied by a conversation in Italian.

At the same time, eighty lower-ranking members of the embassy, the *famiglia*, were hosted in different rooms on the ground floor, while the trumpeters, soldiers, and guards (altogether 200 people) in the Quirinal gardens, where they were served “good dinner of cold meats, and gourmet wines” and in addition to food and drink, they enjoyed “the coolness of various Fountains, which in that place are seen,” likely welcomed in that time of the year.⁵⁹⁶

The way in which tables were set for the ambassador’s retinue highlighted the hierarchies, giving more prominence to the fact that Radziwiłł was admitted to dine right next to the pope. At the same time, it functioned as the extension of the papal banquet table. On this occasion, however, at least symbolically, the invitation to join the banquet was extended even further. People of Rome were not only spectators of the cavalcades but also participants of the celebrations encouraged to drink from a fountain put up by Radziwiłł in a gesture of grand hospitality. The wine was (apparently) pouring from the fountain set close to the ambassador’s lodgings at Piazza Colona the entire day, adding up to 17 *scudi* and 50 *baiocchi*, according to the list of expenses made by Korycki, Radziwiłł’s secretary.⁵⁹⁷ One of the relations, *Memorie delle comparse*, describes it in detail, even specifying the type of wine used for this purpose:

from the rustic-style fountain, supported by two horses with decorated heads, wine from Languedoc began to flow abundantly in five streams, one flowed from the top ..., two more from the shell, and the other two from the horses’ mouths.⁵⁹⁸

The considerable noise made by the ones who enjoyed the fountain merged with music, fireworks bangs, and smoke, resulting in what must have been a truly multisensory

⁵⁹⁵ “numeroso concerto di vari instrumenti.” *Copia di lettera scritta da NN*, 15

⁵⁹⁶ “la delicia douitosa de’ cibi il fresco di varie Fontane, ch’in quel luogho si mirano.” *Copia di lettera scritta da NN*, 16; “buona Cena di Carni fredele, e vini galati.” AGAD, AR II, 1751, *Opisanie wjazdu do Rzymu poselstwa Michała II Kazimierza Radziwiła*, 16.

⁵⁹⁷ AGAD, AR II, ks. 2, “Rachunki wydatkow moich w Rzymie podczas Ambasady Jaśnie Oświeconego,” 136.

⁵⁹⁸ BCzart, 2863 II, *Memorie delle comparse e trattamento ricevuto in Roma dal duca di Razivilla*, 38–9.

experience.⁵⁹⁹ If one is to believe the relation, it was a great success: the show evoked “applause of all Rome to the Glories of Poland.”⁶⁰⁰

All those elements accompanying Radziwiłł’s public audience—the entry involving camels and horses in richly decorated tacks, garments of guards and servants, papal banquet, wine fountain set for the people of Rome, music, and the fireworks—complement each other in a display of splendor as elements of an intricate yet consistent iconographic program.

The Sarmatian in Rome?

Material culture, broadly speaking, was an indispensable tool for showcasing splendor, both during Radziwiłł’s entry to Rome and his continued stay in the Eternal City. The receipts compiled by Korycki contain traces of expenses of the embassy and, more specifically, for running the ambassador’s household. These include payments made to, for example, a carpenter, painter, tailor, or goldsmith. The goldsmith not only did unspecified work in the palace but also fixed the silverware and “gilded Triumphs and pies and various things for a Banquet.”⁶⁰¹

Some of the expenses can be linked to the organization of festive celebrations: “for glassware for a banquet,” “for glassware for a banquet in the garden,” likely also those “for four Roman musicians who sang during a dinner,” “for a *credenziero* (*credencierz*) returned what he spent,”

⁵⁹⁹ “si vidde consorsa tutta Roma per godere le Machine de' fuochi aritificiali, e l'iluminatione di Torcie accese architettate su le facciate dello stesso Palazzo, che no posso descriuerui, perche atteso lo strepito, che faceuà la Plebe per una Fontana di Vino, che tutto il giorno versò, il concerto della Musica composto dalle più delicate voci di Roma, il suono ben regolato di Trombe, Timballi, e Piffari, il rimbombo de'fuochi d'artificio, e del fumo, che ingonbrava l'ambiente dell'aria, non mi lasciano campo di poterui ad una ad una distinguere tutte queste materie.” *Copia di lettera scritta da NN*, 16.

⁶⁰⁰ “applauso di tutta Roma alle Glorie della Polonia.” BCzart, 2863 II, *Memorie delle comparse e trattamento ricevuto in Roma dal duca di Razivilla*, 40.

⁶⁰¹ “na Bankiet złocił Trionf y pasztety y różne rzeczy.” AGAD, AR II, ks. 2, “Rachunki wydatków moich w Rzymie podczas Ambasady Jaśnie Oświeconego,” 134.

“for *credenziero*’s helper for three months,” or “for a receipt from the confectioner which was written for 56 *scudi*, I spot falsehood, gave only 18 *scudi*.”⁶⁰²

Apart from the *credenziero* and his helper Korycki distinguishes in the accounts also a master cook (*kuchmistrz*), French cook (*kucharz Francuz*), Italian cook (*Włoch kucharz*), Italian cellarer (*piwniczny Włoch*), two Italian kitchen helpers (*pomocnicy dwaj kuchenni Włosi*), and a dispenser or steward (*szafarz*) called Giorlamo. Furthermore, a recurring item in the account is “for the kitchen” or “kitchen distribution” for Mister Hołownia (perhaps a court purveyor or a butler), often explicitly indicating that it was a specific period—mostly one or two days—and amounted to 20–24 or 50 *scudi* respectively, making it not a small portion of the embassy’s overall expenses.⁶⁰³

The accounts list specific food and drink items only on extraordinary occasions—such as the wine for the fountain or chocolate purchased for Radziwiłł—not allowing to establish what was served to the ambassador’s guests, however, a couple of general observations can be made.

Radziwiłł clearly expressed interest in kitchen matters as the cooks were appointed according to his will.⁶⁰⁴ The fact that the personnel consisted of a French cook and several Italian personnel suggests an effort to appeal to the taste of guests that may appear at the ambassador’s table, adopting a similar attitude advised by Czerniecki in the introduction to *Compendium ferculorum*.

Czerniecki also mentions Ossoliński’s embassy to the Holy See in 1633 and, more precisely, the significance of his table for contributing to the overall splendor of his court and gaining the

⁶⁰² “szkło stołowe na bankiet,” “za szkło do stołu podczas bankietu w ogrodzie” likely also “Muzykom 4 rzymskim co śpiewali do obiadu.” AGAD, AR II, ks. 2, “Rachunki wydatków moich w Rzymie podczas Ambasady Jaśnie Oświeconego,” 132, 137, 141.

⁶⁰³ For comparison, the payment for three months for a *credenziero*’s helper was equal to 16 *scudi* and 50 *baiocchi*. AGAD, AR II, ks. 2, “Rachunki wydatków moich w Rzymie podczas Ambasady Jaśnie Oświeconego,” 136.

⁶⁰⁴ AGAD, AR II, ks. 2, “Rachunki wydatków moich w Rzymie podczas Ambasady Jaśnie Oświeconego,” 143.

attention of Roman dignitaries.⁶⁰⁵ Even having such incomplete evidence as Korycki's receipts and relations of the entry, it seems that Radziwiłł did not pass on the occasion to showcase the magnificence, relying on food and drink as a medium, presenting himself as worldly and sophisticated.

Overall, Ossoliński's embassy was a blueprint for Radziwiłł. Thanks to the visual sources, it is most noticeable in the entry to Rome itself, captured on a series of six etchings by Stefano della Bella and featuring camels, prancing horses, and a crowd of people dressed in an array of wonderfully decorated garments.⁶⁰⁶



Figure 8. Entrance of the Polish Legation into Rome, etching by Stefano della Bella, 1633, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1971.521.2(72-a)



Figure 9. Entrance of the Polish Legation into Rome, etching by Stefano della Bella, 1633, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1971.521.2(72-b)

⁶⁰⁵ Czerniecki, *Compendium ferculorum albo zebranie potraw*, 91.

⁶⁰⁶ For more on the etchings and their context see Chapter 3 in Grusiecki, *Transcultural Things and the Spectre of Orientalism in Early Modern Poland-Lithuania*.

In both cases—the embassy of Ossoliński in 1633 and that of Radziwiłł in 1680—the choice of the elements showcased during the entries to Rome was dictated by convention, namely that of a triumph, and not a manifestation of alleged Polish-Lithuanian “oriental air,” or “Sarmatian fantasy” enforced by such extravaganzas as the wine fountain or gilded triumphs put on banquet tables.⁶⁰⁷

Early modern solemn entries were modelled after antique triumphs, with the aim to glorify special occasions (coronations, weddings, victories, legations, or Sejms in Poland-Lithuania) and provide a fabulous spectacle. The conditions of holding a classical triumph—the highest military distinction—were strictly defined and the triumph itself was organized according to a specific scheme.⁶⁰⁸ Later triumphs were characterized by a more liberal character and even greater theatricalization, yet still using a set of components with recognizable provenance such as arcs, columns, chariots and carriages, stylized armor, or exotic animals employed for both foreign and domestic audiences in Poland-Lithuania, as exemplified by Sobieski’s entry to Gdańsk in 1677 which also featured camels.⁶⁰⁹ No less importantly, banquets as well as wine fountains or fireworks were indispensable parts of such celebrations.⁶¹⁰

In this context, the wine fountain, camels, and trained horses opening Radziwiłł’s cavalcade were not so much an accessory in self-Orientalization, but rather self-aggrandizement and

⁶⁰⁷ On the validity of “Orientalism” for studying Polish-Lithuanian culture see recent study by Tomasz Grusiecki, especially Chapter 3 that discusses Ossoliński’s embassy. Grusiecki, *Transcultural Things and the Spectre of Orientalism in Early Modern Poland-Lithuania*, 101–46.

⁶⁰⁸ Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 17.

⁶⁰⁹ Sobieski’s cavalcade in Gdańsk has been captured in prints in Latin, Polish, and German. Anonymous *Kurtzer Bericht von Königl. Majestat in Polen angestellten Reiss in Preussen und darauff in die Stadt Dantzig gehaltenem Einzuge* contains three engravings of the royal retinue by P. Bock. See Alicja Kurkowa, “Ilustracje gdańskich druków okolicznościowych, poświęconych panowaniu Jana III Sobieskiego (1674-1696),” https://www.wilanow-palac.pl/ilustracje_gdanskich_drukow_okolicznosciowych_poswieconych_panowaniu_jana_iii_sobieskiego__1696.html; Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 23–32.

⁶¹⁰ Karin Friedrich, “Royal Entries into Cracow, Warsaw and Danzig: Festival Culture and the Role of the Cities in Poland-Lithuania,” in *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, Margaret Shewring, and J.R. Mulryne, vol. 1 (Aldershot: MHRA-Ashgate, 2004), 390; Walawender-Musz, *Entrata księcia Radziwiłła do Rzymu czyli triumf po Polsku*, 20.

erudite antiquation, similar to the presence of military units and guards or the orchestra.⁶¹¹ The Flaminio Obelisk at Piazza del Popolo (depicted on the painting by Codazzi and van Bloemen) perfectly complemented the scenography. Against this background, conspicuous consumption and grand hospitality were indispensable in showcasing Sobieski's and Poland-Lithuania's splendor, feeding on classical tropes and stretching the connection between the Commonwealth and republican Rome.

The aim of this chapter was to explore the multiple uses of food and drink in diplomatic practice and their significance in narrating events. It focused on three embassies, each with a unique set of sources, offering a window into different aspects of diplomatic encounters. The diary and relation of Gniński's embassy were formally required documents meant for the king and senators. The authors paid great attention to the process and content of negotiations, including its ceremonial setting. There is a significant difference between the function of banquets within a diplomatic process and their presentation in those documents. The most striking contrast can be seen between the banquet held in Topkapı Palace—which was part of a sultanic audience ceremonial—and the one at the Grand Vizier's—which was extended as a courtesy to alleviate tension accumulated during negotiations.

Tanner's diary provides an interesting outsider's perspective. It is also written in a convention closer to a travel account. Comparing Tanner's descriptions with those from Gniński's embassy diary, it becomes evident that noticing foreignness and constructing Otherness were based on different narrative strategies driven by different intentions. In Gniński's embassy diary, the difference between the Ottoman diplomatic partner is not based on eating and drinking customs

⁶¹¹ Grusiecki, *Transcultural Things and the Spectre of Orientalism in Early Modern Poland-Lithuania*, 136.

or material culture in general. Rather, a number of parallels with Poland-Lithuania are noted in this regard. However, in *Legatio Polono-Lithuanica*, food and drink is deliberately used to broaden the cultural distance between the members of the embassy and the Muscovites.

There is no surviving diary or relation of Radziwiłł's embassy (he died in Italy during his mission), and it appears that the communication between the ambassador and the king and senators was carried through letters. Instead, there are three descriptions of his solemn entry into Rome, followed by the papal banquet and entertainment for the people of Rome. All three were written in Italian and intended primarily for a foreign audience. Moreover, the list of accounts and payments for kitchen staff gives a glimpse into how the advice given to ambassadors to keep a "good table" and accommodate the taste of foreign dignitaries abroad was attempted in practice. All the emphasis on pageantry and displays of splendor—including lavish dining setups and gestures of grand hospitality—adhered to a convention and followed an example set by previous ambassadors like Ossoliński. Notably, it aligned with the embassy of obedience's main objective. This observation can be extended to recognize that food and drink was an integral component of diplomatic (in)hospitality, tailored for specific occasions, and utilized as an instrument of persuasion, whether in the process of negotiations or in the reporting thereof. To offer meaningful insights based on descriptions of food and drink, it is necessary to adequately position such occasions in broader political, institutional, and culinary contexts. The next chapter shifts the focus from embassies sent abroad to examine one of the most spectacular celebrations held in Poland-Lithuania: dynastic unions.

CHAPTER 5

CELEBRATING ROYAL WEDDINGS IN POLAND-LITHUANIA

In 1691, Jakub Ludwik Sobieski (1667–1737) married Hedwig Elisabeth of Neuburg (1673–1722). The marriage of the eldest son of Jan III and Marie Casimire with the princess palatine significantly increased the genealogical capital of the Sobieskis, making them relatives of rulers in Austria, Portugal, Spain, and Parma.⁶¹² Three years later, the wedding of Princess Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska (1676–1730) and Elector of Bavaria Maximilian II Emanuel (1662–1726)—apart from strengthening the connections with the House of Wittelsbach—added a closer colligation with the Bourbons to the Sobieskis’ family tree.⁶¹³ Such excellent unions called for appropriate broadcasting of splendor and prestige.⁶¹⁴ Both weddings (by proxy in the case of Teresa Kunegunda) were held with great pomp in Warsaw.⁶¹⁵

⁶¹² Hedwig Elisabeth was the youngest daughter of Elector Palatine Philipp Wilhelm (1615–1690) and Landgravine Elisabeth Amalie of Hesse-Darmstadt (1635–1709), sister of Empress Eleonor Magdalene, Queen of Portugal Maria Sofia, Queen of Spain Maria Anna, and Duchess of Parma Dorothea Sophie. The House of Neuburg (Palatinate-Neuburg or Pfalz-Neuburg), a branch of the Wittelsbach family, owned its rise to a certain deficit of princesses of higher rank of marriageable age in the second part of seventeenth century. See Rocío Martínez López, “Consequences of the Dynastic Crises of the Seventeenth Century in the Matrimonial Market and Their Influence in the European International Policy: The Case of Maria Anna of Neuburg (1667-1740),” in *Gender and Diplomacy. Women and Men in European Embassies from the 15th to the 18th Century*, ed. Laura Oliván Santaliestra, Roberta Anderson, and Suna Suner (Wien: Hollitzer Verlag, 2021), 149–96, here 152; and Josef Johannes Schmid, “Beau-père de l’Europe: les princesses dans la politique familiale et dynastique de Philippe-Guillaume de Neubourg,” *Dix-septième siècle* 243 (2009): 267–79.

⁶¹³ Hedwig Elisabeth and Maximilian II Emanuel descended from Louis II Wittelsbach (1253–1294). Maternal grandmother of Maximilian II Emanuel was Christine Marie of France (1606–1663), daughter of King Henri IV, sister of Louis XIII.

⁶¹⁴ The Sobieskis were royals in an elective monarchy, where showcasing their dynastic ambitions domestically inevitably led to accusations of seeking *election vivente rege* and *absolutum dominium* in Poland-Lithuania. In this context, the wedding festivities were intended foremost to affirm the Sobieskis’ status among the European society of princes. The relatives of the bride were seen as potential supporters of Prince Sobieski during an *interregnum*. Martin Russel, while discussing royal weddings in Muscovy, a distinctly different context, shows how such ceremonies and their descriptions serve to display (and consolidate) the power of the tsar and the dynasty. See Russel, *The Tsar’s Happy Occasion: Ritual and Dynasty in the Weddings of Russia’s Rulers, 1495-1745*.

⁶¹⁵ As J.R. Mulryne argues, ceremony was next to war one of the ways of exercising power available to the early modern state. In this context, lavish hospitality became an expression of power itself. Mulryne, “The Power of Ceremony,” 10.3 ebook.

To better understand the extent of Sobieskis' dynastic success at the time of the weddings of Jakub and Teresa Kunegunda, it is worth remembering that their rise to the highest echelons in Poland-Lithuania was relatively recent.⁶¹⁶ Jan III's grandfather, Marek Sobieski (c. 1550–1605), was the first in the family to hold a senatorial seat.⁶¹⁷ While the victory in the Battle of Khotyn (Хотин, Chocim) in 1673 increased the then-hetman Jan Sobieski's popularity to the level that elevated him to the throne, the Battle of Vienna in 1683 brought him the title of *Fidei Defensor* and wide recognition abroad; he was still a king in an elective monarchy where the prospects for his heirs remained uncertain.

In Poland-Lithuania, princes were forbidden to hold any offices, which prevented them from enlisting political clientele and forming their own circle.⁶¹⁸ Therefore, given the challenges in securing a territorial acquisition that, once conquered, could establish Sobieskis' hereditary principality (Silesia, Prussia, or Moldavia), marriage seemed to be the most reliable way to aid Jakub's election.⁶¹⁹ However, finding a suitable match for Prince Sobieski proved a daunting task.

⁶¹⁶ James Watkins, albeit referring to an earlier timeframe, noticed that dynastic marriages “heightened the prestige and strength of individual monarchs” but it also made any gains “increasingly dependent on their cooperative relationship with other monarchs.” Capitalizing on such connections was certainly an issue that the Sobieskis faced. James Watkins, *After Lavinia. A Literary History of Premodern Marriage Diplomacy* (London-Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017), 55.

⁶¹⁷ Among the signs of his rise in status were Marek Sobieski's marriages. His second wife, Katarzyna Tęczyńska came from one of the most prominent magnate families. Hadrian Kamiński, Marta Wilińska, and Małgorzata Ziemińska, eds., “Sobiescy,” in *Rody Magnackie Rzeczypospolitej* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2002), 243–45.

⁶¹⁸ What is more, Jakub's princely status was questioned since he was born before his father's election. Aleksandra Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2011), 36, 114.

⁶¹⁹ Previously, the Vasas, unable to establish the practice of election *vivente rege*, also considered the creation of a hereditary principality in Silesia (which could be joined to the Commonwealth) as a valuable asset in the election. The dynastic plans of the Sobieskis informed the so-called Baltics policy as well as the relations with the Danubian principalities. At least in the case of Brandenburg, the interest of the Sobieskis overlapped with that of Poland-Lithuania. Skrzypietz, 108–12; Stolicki, “Działania Jana III Sobieskiego w celu wzrostu znaczenia Rzeczypospolitej w Europie w latach 1674–1683,” 28; Wasilewski, “Polityka Jana III Sobieskiego w okresie powiedeńskim,” 12–17.

Dynastic marriage was a tool of diplomacy.⁶²⁰ For years, the prospect of marriage—especially for the eldest son of Jan III and Marie Casimire—seemed to be nothing more than a vision strategically employed by imperial and French diplomats, in particular, to maintain the Sobieskis’ cooperation with either the Habsburgs or the Bourbons.⁶²¹ Eventually, as the political landscape shifted, the arrangements for Jakub’s and later Teresa Kunegunda’s weddings could be finalized favorably for the Sobieskis.

Prince Jakub Sobieski’s wedding, 1691

In 1677, Marie Casimire envisaged a marriage of her eldest son with Ludwika Karolina Radziwiłł (1667–1695), an heiress of a considerable fortune, including vast estates in Lithuania.⁶²² However, already in 1680, she got engaged with Margrave of Brandenburg Ludwig Leopold, son of Elector Friedrich Wilhelm Hohenzollern. The engagement, quickly followed by the wedding, was not coordinated properly with her appointed caretakers, the Radziwiłłs, let alone the Sobieskis. Based on these circumstances, the proposal to strip Ludwika Karolina of her dowry and inheritance gained ground: being an orphan, she was required to obtain royal approval before marrying a foreigner, and in accordance with the Statutes of Lithuania, by

⁶²⁰ Watkins argues in his study that dynastic marriage lost its prestige and effectiveness as a diplomatic tool in the seventeenth century. However, the case of the Sobieskis appears to contradict this observation. While it is true that the capitalization on these marriages was an issue later, the prestige associated with allying with the House of Wittlesbach, as well as the diplomatic success achieved in orchestrating the weddings of Jakub and Teresa Kunegunda cannot be overlooked. Watkins, *After Lavinia. A Literary History of Premodern Marriage Diplomacy*, especially Chapter 5 and 6.

⁶²¹ The names of potential candidates for Jakub Sobieski’s bride were brought up during subsequent political negotiations by foreign diplomats well aware how much especially Marie Casimire cared about honors for her family. The list included, among others, Infanta Isabel Luísa of Portugal, Archduchess Maria Antonia of Austria, Violante Beatrice of Bavaria, and Elisabeth Charlotte d’Orléans. Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 115–17, 121, 143; Komarzyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d’Arquien-Sobieska*, 143, 167–68.

⁶²² In the spring of 1677, Marie Casimire conducted secret negotiations in this regard. Michał Komarzyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d’Arquien-Sobieska* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1995), 142.

Ludwika Karolina was a daughter of Bogusław Radziwiłł (1620–1669) and Anna Maria Radziwiłł (1640–1667), heiress of fabulously wealthy Janusz Radziwiłł (1612–1655) of Biržai-Dubingiai line. Her paternal grandmother was Princess of Brandenburg Elisabeth Sophia Hohenzollern (1589–1629). For a list of her estates in 1690 see Elżbieta Biegańska, “Spór o Ludwikę Karolinę Radziwiłłównę,” *Białostocczyzna* 4, no. 48 (1997): 11–12; and for a wider context of the conflict over her inheritance see Jerzy Lesiński, “Spory o dobra neuburskie,” *Miscellanea Historico-Archivistica* 6 (1996): 102–17.

getting married without the consent of her relatives, she renounced her inheritance rights.⁶²³ The issue, instrumentalized by Sobieskis' opponents, was on the agenda of the Sejm of 1681, triggering the intervention of the elector's envoys to dissolve the Sejm.⁶²⁴ Eventually, the dispute was settled in 1683 with 40 000 thalers and a promise in writing to Jan III that Ludwig Leopold would not be a candidate for the Polish-Lithuanian throne.⁶²⁵ As Andrzej Kamieński noticed, the passive attitude of the Brandenburg diplomats during the Sejm of 1683, part of a correlated transaction between Jan III and Friedrich Wilhelm, contributed to the success of allying with Leopold I, at that time sought by Sobieski.⁶²⁶

Not long after, in 1687, Ludwika Karolina became a widow. Among candidates for her hand were Karl Philipp Wittelsbach, son of Elector Palatine Philipp Wilhelm of Neuburg, and Jakub Sobieski. Prince Sobieski's efforts were supported by Duke of Courland Friedrich Kettler as well as French ambassadors in Berlin, François de Pas de Feuquières, Count of Rebenac, and later by Jules de Gravel, Marquis de Marly.⁶²⁷

In July 1688, Jakub Sobieski arrived in Berlin *incognito*, where he was hosted by de Gravel. After exchanging rings and portraits with Ludwika Karolina, he returned to Poland-Lithuania to make preparations for the wedding, which was scheduled for the fall of that year. However,

⁶²³ Reference was made to the provision from the Statutes of Lithuania which reads: "the young lady that remained an orphan without a father and mother, getting married without the consent of her brothers, uncles, or close relatives, and renounces any share in dowry and all forms of inheritance." Biegańska, "Spór o Ludwikę Karolinę Radziwiłłównę," 6; for more on prenuptial agreements, taking into account specificities of the Grand Duchy, see Joanna Kuchta, "Instytucja małżeństwa w świetle intercyz przedślubnych w okresie staropolskim," *Annales Academiae Paedagogicae Cracoviensis* 43, no. 6 (2007): 65–75.

⁶²⁴ The Sejm was dissolved after the intervention of elector's representatives who paid noble envoys, Andrzej Przyjemski and Stanisław Kazmierz Dąbrowski. Tadeusz Wasilewski, "Ludwika Karolina (z Domu Radziwiłł)," in *Internetowy Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (Warszawa: Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny), accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/ludwika-karolina-z-domu-radziwill>; Lesiński, "Spory o dobra neuburskie," 98–99; Biegańska, "Spór o Ludwikę Karolinę Radziwiłłównę," 6.

⁶²⁵ Brandenburg resident in Poland-Lithuania, Johann Hoverbeck, attempted to assure Marie Casimire that the elector meant no harm, as he was convinced Jakub was about to marry the archduchess. Biegańska, "Spór o Ludwikę Karolinę Radziwiłłównę," 6–7; Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 119.

⁶²⁶ Kamieński, "Polityka brandenburska Jana III Sobieskiego," 314.

⁶²⁷ Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 156; Wasilewski, "Ludwika Karolina (z Domu Radziwiłł)"; Biegańska, "Spór o Ludwikę Karolinę Radziwiłłównę," 8.

despite the engagement with Sobieski—and a written promise to keep word at the risk of losing her estates in Poland-Lithuania—next month at the imperial embassy’s house, Ludwika Karolina married Karl Philipp Wittelsbach.⁶²⁸

The Sobieskis were outraged. In legations sent out before the Sejm of 1688/1689, Jan III successfully tried to win the support of the nobility by citing the insult suffered by the royal family as a result of Ludwika Karolina’s broken promise.⁶²⁹ In the pre-Sejm instructions and during the Sejm, proposals were made to strip Ludwika Karolina of her estates in favor of the royal family and to seek satisfaction on behalf of Prince Sobieski.⁶³⁰ The conflict between the court circles and the opposition, led by the Sapiehas, grew so intense that it reached the point of drawing sabers.⁶³¹

At the core of the conflict, apart from damage to Sobieskis’ honor, was Ludwika Karolina’s inheritance. Had it fallen in the Sobieskis’ hands, it would have strengthened their position in Lithuania vis-à-vis the magnates and become a valuable means of supporting Jakub Sobieski’s election. Although it may seem trivial, it was not simply an internal struggle over wealth and political influence between the Sobieskis and the opposition but a conflict with potential repercussions for Poland-Lithuania’s foreign policy. The breach of the promise given to Jakub

⁶²⁸ Since Karl Philipp and Ludwika Karolina were to meet secretly under the roof of imperial representatives, it was believed that Empress Eleonore Magdalene of Neuburg, sister of Ludwika Karolina’s second husband, was behind the intrigue. Gianluigi Piccinardi, the empress’ agent was to reach out to Ludwika Karolina during her stay in Berlin. Lesiński, 99–100; Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 159. For more on the contract (including its wording) see Lesiński, “Spory o dobra neuburskie,” 100 and “Kopja skryptu Xiężniczki Radziwiłłówny margrabiny Brandenburskiej, danego Królewicowi Jego Mości Jakubowi Sobieskiemu, jako za nikogo innego za mąż nie pójdzie, tylko za niego,” in *Źródła do dziejów Polski*, ed. August Bielowski, and Aleksander Przezdziecki, vol.1. (Wilno: Nakład i druk Józefa Zawadzkiego, 1843), 169.

⁶²⁹ Jarosław Stoliczka, “Konflikt Jana III z opozycją magnacką w latach 1688-1689. Czy Sobieski mógł i powinien rozprawić się opozycją in *Jarzmo Ligi Świętej? Jan III Sobieski i Rzeczpospolita w latach 1684-1696*, ed. Dariusz Milewski (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2017), 70; Komarzyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d’Arquien-Sobieska*, 167; Biegańska, “Spór o Ludwikę Karolinę Radziwiłłównę,” 10.

⁶³⁰ Stoliczka, “Konflikt Jana III z opozycją magnacką w latach 1688-1689. Czy Sobieski mógł i powinien rozprawić się opozycją?,” 70–73.

⁶³¹ The Crown Tribunal approved the transfer of Ludwika Karolina’s estates to Sobieski, however it was not enforced. Transferring Ludwika Karolina’s estates (or the right to administer them) to the Sobieskis or the Radziwiłłs of the Nesvizh line (the king’s relatives) directly affected the Sapiehas, who were entrusted with its administration, not to mention the emperor’s brother-in-law, Karl Philipp. Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 160–61; Kołodziej, “*Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot*”. *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, 302.

by Ludwika Karolina was widely seen as an affront to the royal family and, by extension, to the Commonwealth. The involvement of imperial diplomats in the intrigue, paired with the support magnates forming anti-royal opposition received from Vienna, triggered Sobieski's serious reconsideration of further participation in the Holy League.⁶³²

A project of a marriage between the Sobieski and Wittelsbach family was attributed, among others, to Giacomo Cantelmi, papal nuncio in Warsaw, Johann Christoph Zierowsky, imperial envoy in Warsaw, Francesco Buonvisi, papal Nuncio in Vienna, Jan Stanisław Zbąski, Polish-Lithuanian envoy extraordinary in Vienna, or even Empress Eleonore Magdalene.⁶³³ In any case, the idea was to appease the anger of the Sobieskis, to restore their honor, to forge closer bonds between Jan III and Leopold I, and therefore not allow for a dissolution of the Holy League. Additionally, such a marriage averted the threat of revising the ownership of Ludwika Karolina's estates.⁶³⁴

Indeed, as Michał Komarzyński argues convincingly, the wedding of Prince Jakub was a driving force behind a rapprochement between Warsaw and Vienna in 1690 and 1691, similar to the one that occurred in 1683. However, a crucial difference was leaving the door for cooperation with Versailles open.⁶³⁵ Unlike Marie Casimire, who perceived the marriage as an opportunity to elevate her family's status, Jan III appeared to have harbored resentment towards the emperor for a longer time.⁶³⁶

⁶³² Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 160–65; Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski*, 444–45.

⁶³³ Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski*, 444; Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 167; Komarzyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 19.

⁶³⁴ Stolicki, "Konflikt Jana III z opozycją magnacką w latach 1688-1689. Czy Sobieski mógł i powinien rozprawić się opozycją?," 75.

⁶³⁵ Komarzyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d'Arquien-Sobieska*, 170.

⁶³⁶ Komarzyński, 170–71. The involvement of Marie Casimire in planning marriages of her children is yet another example confirming that marriage diplomacy was certainly "one of the most important ways in which royal woman shaped European geopolitics." Silvia Z. Mitchell, "Marriage Plots: Royal Women, Marriage Diplomacy and International Politics at the Spanish, French, and Imperial Courts, 1665-1679," in *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500*, ed. Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James (London-New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 87.

Finally, at the end of 1690, after over a year of negotiations, a prenuptial agreement was signed: Jakub Sobieski was to marry Hedwig Elisabeth, daughter of Elector Palatine Philipp Wilhelm and Landgravine Elisabeth Amalie of Hesse-Darmstadt, sister of Empress Eleonore Magdalene and Karl Philipp, second husband of Ludwika Karolina *née* Radziwiłł.⁶³⁷

Before the wedding

In February 1691, after a wedding by proxy held in the Palatinate, Hedwig Elisabeth departed to Poland-Lithuania, accompanied, among others, by baroness Zwiëffel in the rank of ambassador.⁶³⁸ Jakub Sobieski officially welcomed his bride in Kępno, near the borders of Silesia.⁶³⁹ There, for his merits in the Battle of Vienna, he was also decorated with the Golden Fleece Order, and later that day, a banquet was held as well. The relation authored by Bishop Andrzej Załuski, the participant of the banquet, focuses on the hierarchical arrangements—the seating order, particularly at the first table and those who served it—but describes the food as just progressively more delicious without giving further details:

Late that day, they dined; the seating arrangement at the table was as follows: on the right side, the fiancée [Hedwig Elisabeth] and the wife of the ambassador, and on the left side, Prince Jakub, the ambassador [Karl Ferdinand von Waldstein], the voivodess [Anna Leszczyńska *née* Jabłonowska] and other ladies from the fiancée's court; after the ambassadress [*posłowa*]⁶⁴⁰ on the right side, sat the bishops of Poznań and Łuck; the voivodes of Poznań, Łęczyca, and Chełmno ... At the prince's table, Mr. Waslewski and Mr. Kaszewski served and also distributed the dishes; Mr. Druzbic served the ladies. Mr. Makowiecki supervised and pointed out the order of increasingly delicious dishes, moderating his voice in such a way as not to offend the hearing ... There was also another table set for the wives of the Chamberlain of the

⁶³⁷ In January 1689, the empress, sister of a future bride, sent a letter to Marie Casimire informing her about dispatching Karl Ferdinand von Waldstein to discuss matters relating to the marriage. Later, the imperial resident in Warsaw, Georg von Schiemunsky, was entrusted with the task of conducting the negotiations. The resistance of the opposition—this time supported from Versailles—to Prince Jakub's new matrimonial prospects was significant, which informed the decision to handle the matter privately. The talks were dragging on, mainly due to difficulties in agreeing on the sum of money to be paid by each sides. Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 167, 170–71.

⁶³⁸ Giovan Battista Fagioli, secretary of the papal nuncio in Warsaw, notes the ambassadress' name as "Tzweifel," and mentions that she was appointed by Hedwig Elisabeth's mother, Electress Palatine Elisabeth Amalie. Bishop Andrzej Załuski in his relation calls baroness "Cwibel," and claims that she was "by an unprecedented custom declared an ambassadress [*posłową*] by the bishop of Poznań," which indeed would seem highly unusual. Skrzypietz, 181; Fagioli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690–1691)*, 131; Aleksander Wejnert, ed., "Opis historyczny zaślubin królewicza Jakuba Sobieskiego," *Biblioteka Warszawska* IV (1851): 149–50.

⁶³⁹ Their first encounter happened a couple of days earlier, when Jakub Sobieski *incognito* presented the gifts to the countess palatine. Wejnert, ed., "Opis historyczny zaślubin królewicza Jakuba Sobieskiego," 146.

⁶⁴⁰ It is not entirely clear if *posłowa* refers here to Waldstein's wife or baroness Zwiëffel. Baroness Zwiëffel, in the rank of ambassador, could have been included among the "other ladies from the fiancée's court," and therefore omitted by Załuski from the enumeration, since he claims she received the rank from the bishop of Poznań.

Crown and Wieluń, as well as the Carver, Cup Bearer, and the Crown Master Cook [Franciszek Gałęcki].⁶⁴¹

It is noteworthy that in his relation, Załuski details the specific duties of certain individuals, namely Waslewski and Kaszewski, who were responsible for bringing and serving the dishes; Druzbic, who served the ladies; and Makowiecki, who supervised and guided the order of the plates. It is likely that these were nobles paying compliments in this manner during the banquet and that perhaps Makowski was the master cook, but it is not possible to determine given the limited information. The latter was nevertheless praised for tactfully performing duties; however, an instance of violation of table etiquette also occurred: “it happened that some people were impolite in demanding that the fiancés’ hands be offered for kissing over the table; and when this request was denied, they started to get offended and express themselves in a less respectable way.”⁶⁴²

Finally, in this short relation, one can also notice the prominent positioning of women of different ranks at the table, something possible due to the character of the occasion on which the sphere of politics—involving foreign representatives and Polish-Lithuanian senators—is closely intertwined with familial affairs. Such a scenario was even more pronounced during the grand wedding banquets held in Warsaw, providing an ideal backdrop for both displays of dynastic ambitions and conflict over precedence, particularly among the royal sisters.

⁶⁴¹ “Późno w tym dniu obiadowano; porządek osób u stołu był następujący; po prawej ręce narzeczona i małżonka posła, po lewej królewicz Jakub, poseł, generałowa wojewodzina i inne damy z dworu narzeczonej; za posłową po prawej stronie biskupi: poznański i łucki; wojewodowie; poznański, łączycki i chełmiński; kasztelanowie: sieradzki, wieluński i w. i. Ban Wrocławia gubernator Czech, zasiadał przy stole w pośrodku sanatorów, zaś hrabiego Bana gubernatora Śląska umieszczono naprzeciwko dam dworskich i innych zagranicznych osób, które towarzyszyły księżnie; na końcu stołu siedziała reszta gości, o ile miejsca wystarczyło. Przy stole królewicza usługiwali pp. Waslewki i Kaszewski, którzy zarazem potrawy roznosili; damom usługiwali p. Druzbic; p. Makowiecki zaś nadzór miał i wskazywał porządek potraw coraz smakowitszych, tak głos miarkując, iż nim nie obrażał słuchu ... Był także zastawiony i drugi stół przy którym siedzieli: podkomorzyne koronna i wieluńska; krajczy, podczaszy i kuchmistrz koronni.” Wejnert, ed., “Opis historyczny zaślubin,” 148.

⁶⁴² “zdarzyło się, że niektórzy byli niegrzeczni w domaganiu się, ażeby ręce narzeczonych do ucałowania, im przez stół były podawane; co gdy odmówiono zaczęto się obrażać i mniej przyzwoicie wyrażać.” Wejnert, ed., “Opis historyczny zaślubin,” 148.

Wedding festivities

The wedding of Jakub Sobieski and Hedwig Elisabeth of Neuburg took place on March 25, 1691, preceded by a solemn entry into the capital and followed by a banquet and dances that lasted until late in the night. Since it was Lent, a dispensation was granted by the papal nuncio in Warsaw, Andrea Santacroce, and therefore, it was possible—to use the words of the nuncio’s own secretary, Giovan Battista Fagiuoli—to eat as if it is a carnival.⁶⁴³ From the relations of the wedding, it is evident that a variety of visual, verbal, and material means was used to celebrate a grand triumph of the Sobieski family and that the arrangement of the banquet was no exception.⁶⁴⁴ The underlying message—the magnificence of the new-found kinship—was implied by the overall splendor of the banquet, but it was communicated more directly as well. Perhaps the clearest example is the inscription on one of the sugar sculptures adorning banquet tables reading “Femme bonne voaut une Corone” (good Wife worth a Crown), matching the images of the newlyweds’ distinguished (and crowned) relatives—including Emperor Leopold I, King of the Romans Joseph I, King of Portugal Pedro II, King of Poland Jan III, King of Spain Charles II, Duke of Parma Odoardo Farnese and their spouses Empress Eleonor Magdalene, Queen of Portugal Maria Sofia, Queen of Spain Maria Anna, Queen of Poland Marie Casimire, and Duchess of Parma Dorothea Sophie—put on the triumphal arch spanning the road leading to the church.⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴³ Fagiuoli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690–1691)*, 133.

⁶⁴⁴ All the elements of the wedding ceremony were tied together to the common theme, presented using artistic, technical, and culinary means. Or, as Laura Mason puts it, “in the wedding ceremony various semiotic languages are present: the verbal “text,” in both its relatively fixed liturgical aspect and relatively fluid celebratory aspect, and the “scenography” of spatial organization, movement, colour and plastic form.” See her “Introduction,” in *Food and the Rites of Passage*, ed. Laura Mason (London: Prospect Books, 2002), 16, and Rottermund, “Dworski stół paradny - sztuka i ceremoniał (zarys problematyki),” 50.

⁶⁴⁵ APWr, Akta majątku Schaffgotschów, Zamek 1251, *Relatio compendiosa Serenissima Domina Hedvigis Elisabetha Amalia Comitiss Palatina Rheni Bavariae et Ducis Serenissimi Principis Jacobi Ludovici Fili Serenissimi Regis Poloniarum Neosponsa de Ingressu eius a Radzieiowice Varsaviam Anno 1691 Mense Martio*, 6, 9-15a; Wejnert, ed., “Opis historyczny zaślubin,” 156.

The sugar sculptures (*trionfi, pyramides, Pyramiden*) were apparently the most impressive part of the banquet, a true status symbol, described in Fagiuoli's diary, in an anonymous *Relatio compendiosa*, and a printed *Ausführliche Relation*, although in varying detail.⁶⁴⁶ For example, *Relatio compendiosa* reads that the pyramids were made of sugar and fruits, and quotes the inscriptions on one of them, which evoked love, unity, and prosperity in addition to the abovementioned royal ambitions.⁶⁴⁷ *Ausführliche Relation* reports the sculptures were splendid and of a considerable size, while Fagiuoli specifies there were twelve sculptures five cubits high, and plenty of smaller ones changed with every course.⁶⁴⁸ What is more, he considers it to be noteworthy that the triumphs, both large and small, were completely different during the banquet held on the second day (March 26, 1691), and then on the third day (March 27) they were again changed and made anew—a piece of information noted in *Ausführliche Relation* and *Relatio compendiosa* as well. Those changes of sugar sculptures can be read as an expression of ostentatiousness since sugar was an expensive commodity and making sculptures required hiring highly skilled professionals, but the author of *Relatio compendiosa* reveals the reaction of the guest, suggesting that the novelty of sculptures provided proper entertainment.⁶⁴⁹

Each of the three relations mentions that all banquets held on three consecutive days were equally lavish, Fagiuoli adds the wine served along dishes cost 18 000 thalers alone. However, it was not opulence alone that contributed to the splendor of the festivities. *Relatio compendiosa* reads that the tables were laden with the finest dishes.⁶⁵⁰ Nuncio's secretary marvelled that during the banquet on March 25, tables were continuously set with various new dishes for over

⁶⁴⁶ *Ausführliche Relation des prächtigen Einzugs des Prinzen Iacobi mit der Prinzessin Hedvigis Amaelia von Neuburg am 25. März 1691 in Warschau*, [1691].

⁶⁴⁷ APWr, Akta majątku Schaffgotschów, Zamek 1251, *Relatio compendiosa*, 6, 6a.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ausführliche Relation*, 2v; Fagiuoli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690–1691)*, 133–35.

⁶⁴⁹ APWr, Akta majątku Schaffgotschów, Zamek 1251, *Relatio compendiosa*, 7.

⁶⁵⁰ APWr, Akta majątku Schaffgotschów, Zamek 1251, *Relatio compendiosa*, 5a.

six hours, and adding to its grandeur was a concert performed by a double choir of Italian and French music delighting the guests.⁶⁵¹

The image emerging from the descriptions is that of a stream of novel dishes appearing, which, apart from ensuring that no one left the table with an empty stomach, most likely served the purpose of keeping guests in awe, much like the sculptures decorating the table changed with every course. No less significantly, the taste of the dishes was superior as well. The term “delicate,” one that starts appearing in cookbooks to describe a new way of cooking, is evoked.⁶⁵² Moreover, the fact that the taste of dishes harmonized with the (French and Italian) music in a truly multisensory experience indicates the banquet was in good taste.

Consuming alcohol, even in excess, did not counter the overall refinement atmosphere. It testified to the hosts’ generosity, who incurred considerable cost to provide all the wine and added to the meal’s splendor.⁶⁵³ Fagioli comments that the nuncio did not dance, as it was not appropriate for clergy to do so, but he did partake in drinking: Andrea Santacroce watched the dances of the royal family, then he “left furtively barely alive and heavily inebriated, and he went to sleep.”⁶⁵⁴ Fagioli adds, so there is no doubt about the proper conduct of the nuncio, that his exit “without much ceremonies” was graceful as he did not disrupt the dancing. The reason behind the nuncio’s inebriation was likely the necessity to adhere to etiquette requirements and engage in the numerous toasts raised during the event.⁶⁵⁵

Conventionally, only specific status elements are mentioned—such as sugar sculptures, lavishness of dishes, and abundance of wine—and at the core of each of the relations of Prince

⁶⁵¹ Fagioli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690–1691)*, 133; BRicc, 2696, *Memorie e ricordi di quello accaderà alla giornata di ma Gio[van]: Batt[ist]a Fagioli*, 165.

⁶⁵² Apart from terms such as “magnificenza,” “grandiosa,” and so forth, Fagioli writes “le tavole di sempre nuovi imbatimenti, alla delicatezza de qualità si aggiungeva il diletto.” BRicc, 2696, *Memorie e ricordi di quello accaderà alla giornata di ma Gio[van]: Batt[ist]a Fagioli*, 165.

⁶⁵³ When describing the banquet held on July 25, 1690, Fagioli explicitly connects the considerable amount of wine served with the splendor of the occasion. Fagioli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690–1691)*, 99.

⁶⁵⁴ Fagioli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690–1691)*, 133.

⁶⁵⁵ As it was the case during previous banquets held by the royal family in Warsaw. Fagioli, 99.

Sobieski's wedding was the spatial ordering and seating order, or more precise, the hierarchies that this said order conveyed.

There were five tables altogether, but only the first table, placed close to the entrance, was elevated. Jan III Sobieski and Marie Casimire sat in the middle, "under a costly canopy with massive golden embroidery," a gift from the Venetian ambassador Angelo Morosini.⁶⁵⁶ On the king's right sat the newlyweds, Hedwig Elisabeth of Neuburg and Jakub Sobieski, and on the queen's left, princess and princes Sobieski, Teresa Kunegunda, Aleksander, and Konstanty. At the opposite short sides of the table sat the papal nuncio, Andrea Santacroce, and the Neuburg ambassadress, Baroness Zwiëffel. The second table, placed on the right side of the first one, was intended for the senators' wives and court ladies; and the third, placed on the left, was for senators and foreign representatives.⁶⁵⁷

There is some confusion regarding the presence of foreign representatives during the banquet on the first day, apart from Andrea Santacroce and Baroness Zwiëffel sitting with the royal family. *Relatio compediosa* reads that there were "no foreign ministers that day" ("Exterorum ministrorum nemo hac die erat"), followed by information that the Venetian and imperial residents were present, although the latter arrived late and left early. The banquet was held at a late hour—the cavalcade started in the afternoon due to rain, took a long time, and reached the church for the ceremony at dusk—which may explain the absence of some of the diplomats during this part of the wedding celebration. Another explanation could be the willingness to avoid participating in a precedence conflict involving the royal family, as discussed in the following section. Diplomats appeared, however, in a greater number in the following days, which is noted in *Ausführliche Relation* and *Relatio compediosa*; *Relatio compediosa* mentions imperial ambassador Philip von Thun, the Brandenburg envoy, imperial resident Zierowski, and

⁶⁵⁶ Fagiuoli, 133.

⁶⁵⁷ APWr, Akta majątku Schaffgotschów, Zamek 1251, *Relatio compediosa*, 6.

Venetian resident (Girolamo Alberti, not mentioned by name) sitting in this exact order among senators.⁶⁵⁸

Since it was Prince Sobieski's wedding, no diplomats were seated in close proximity to the king—occupying a position that was a hierarchical point of reference—as they would be at their reception banquet. Two notable exceptions at the royal table were the papal nuncio and the ambassadrice of Neuburg. Traditionally, in Poland-Lithuania, nuncios were given precedence; additionally, the presence of Santacroce signified the papal blessing for the union, while the place of Baroness Zwieffel resulted from the very character of her mission.

The seating order at the first table and its further disseminated descriptions or illustrations, particularly in this case, legitimized the royal children's status.⁶⁵⁹ To offer a more comprehensive view, helping to decipher “codes of interactions that were planned and their spatial particularities,” *Ausführliche Relation* and Fagioli's diary contain schematic drawings of the seating order of the first table.⁶⁶⁰

Ihro Königl. Hoheit Prinz Jacob	Die Durchl. Prinzessin von Neuburg	Ihr. Maj. der König	Ihr. Maj. die Königin	Königl. Prinz- essin	Prinz Alexander	Prinz Constantin
Herr Nuntius Apostolicus						Frau Neuburg: Ambassad: Amönsfeld:

Figure 10. Seating order at the first table during Jakub Sobieski's wedding from *Ausführliche Relation des prächtigen Einzugs des Prinzen Iacobi mit der Prinzessin Hedvigis Amaelia von Neuburg am 25. März 1691 in Warschau, [1691]*

⁶⁵⁸ Johann von Hoverbeck is named Brandenburg resident, however, he died in 1682. APWr, Akta majątku Schaffgotschów, Zamek 1251, *Relatio compediosa*, 7.

⁶⁵⁹ Joanna Kodzik, *Ceremoniał polskiego dworu królewskiego w XVII wieku z perspektywy niemieckich uczonych* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2015), 137.

⁶⁶⁰ Um and Clark, “Introduction. The Art of Embassy: Situating Objects and Images in the Early Modern Diplomatic Encounter,” 17. See also the analysis of a chart showing the seating order during the costume ball attended by Leopold I and Peter I in Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725*, 171–77.

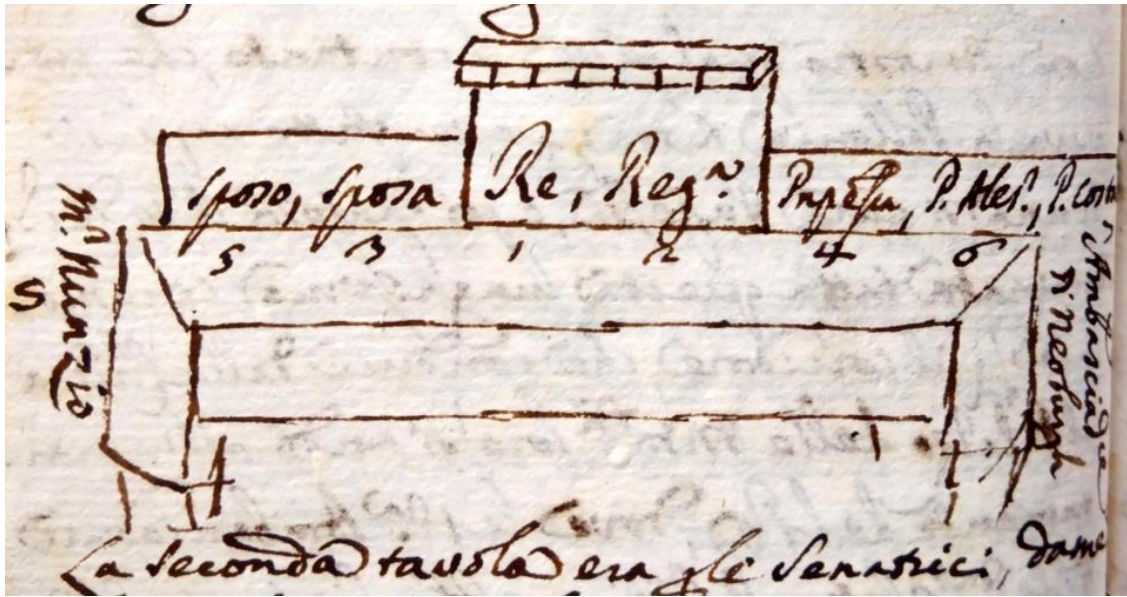


Figure 11. Seating order at the first table during Jakub Sobieski's wedding from the diary of Giovan Battista Fagioli

Although these two sketches convey the same information as a textual description, they also transmit, albeit still imperfectly, the spatial dimension, bringing to mind the comparison between the royal table and the stage.⁶⁶¹ Fagioli's drawing additionally includes more details, such as the canopy or the numbers.

An even better example of such numbering practice can be seen in the painting titled *Uczta w Jaworowie* [Banquet in Yavoriv] by Frans Geffels (Fig. 12).⁶⁶² It depicts a celebration held on July 6, 1684, in the gardens of the Sobieskis' residency in Yavoriv (Яворів, Jaworów) for the first anniversary of the Battle of Vienna. The numbered seats and the list of names included beneath the table, beneath the representation of a garden, seem to point to the primary interest when reproducing an image of a banquet, and that was not food and drink itself. The same holds for many written sources describing banquets at that time, including the three relations of Prince Jakub Sobieski's wedding quoted above.

⁶⁶¹ *Relatio compediosa* reads: "Huius partis medium mensa non nisi ad inferuiendum Incifori Regni relictum fuit, ut fercula apponerentur, et liber in totum Conclauē pateretā spectus." APWr, Akta majątku Schaffgotschów, Zamek 1251, *Relatio compediosa*, 5a.

⁶⁶² For more about the painting, including the attributed authorship see Jerzy Żmudziński, "Uczta w Jaworowie," in *Święto Baroku. Sztuka w służbie prymasa Michała Stefana Radziejewskiego (1645-1705). Katalog wystawy*, ed. Jerzy Żmudziński (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2009), 76-77.



Figure 12. Banquet in Yavoriv (Jaworów) by Frans Geffels, National Museum in Wrocław, nr. VIII-201

The painting was most likely commissioned by Angelo Morosini, the Venetian ambassador (nr 24), or perhaps Niccolò Gavani (Gaveni) (nr 7), the secretary of the embassy and Venetian senator, which would explain their more distinctive features.⁶⁶³ Unlike the Venetians, most guests are depicted schematically, the notable exception being Jan III, whose image became rather widely known in Europe after 1683. On the painting, the seat numbers, unlike in Fagiuoli's drawing, do not match the exact order of precedence (as it alternates king's right and left sides: nr 2, nr 26, nr 3, nr 25, and so forth), but they help to identify the participants of the banquet.⁶⁶⁴ On king's right sat imperial ambassador Karl Ferdinand von Waldstein (nr 2), Michał Stefan Radziejowski, Bishop of Warmia and Deputy Crown Chancellor (nr 3), Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski, Grand Crown Marshal (nr 4). Seats on the king's left were occupied successively by Prince Jakub Sobieski (nr 26), Queen Marie Casimire (nr 25), and the Venetian Ambassador. The women on the right side of the painting are Elżbieta Lubomirska *née* Denhoff (nr 23), wife of the Grand Crown Marshal (nr 4), Urszula *née* Denhoff (nr 22), wife of Marcin Kątski, Voivode of Kyiv and Crown General of Artillery, Marianna *née* Kazanowska (nr 21), wife of Stanisław Jan Jabłonowski, Grand Crown Hetman (nr 5), Anna *née* Chodkiewicz (nr 20), wife of Jerzy Jan Mniszech, Voivode of Volhynia (nr 12), Anna *née* Jabłonowska (nr 19), wife of Rafał Leszczyński, then Crown Standard-bearer, and Jadwiga Teresa *née* Jabłonowska (nr 18), wife of Jan Bonawentura Krasiński, Crown Referendary (nr 14). At the table, there are also lower-ranking members of the Venetian embassy (nr 9, 11, 13, and 15), Wallachian envoys (nr 16 and nr 17), Marquis François Gaston de Béthune (nr 6), and Poland-Lithuania's senators, including Feliks Kazimierz Potocki, Voivode of Kraków (nr 8), and Kazimierz Jan Sapieha Voivode of Vilius (nr 10). Tellingly, Sapieha, who was also Grand Lithuanian Hetman, did not

⁶⁶³ Żmudziński, 76; see also Hanna Widacka, "Uczta w Jaworowie," *Pasaż Wiedzy Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie. Silva Rerum*, accessed July 30, 2023, https://www.wilanow-palac.pl/uczta_w_jaworowie.html.

⁶⁶⁴ Piotr Łukasiewicz identified by name those guests who were listed only by abbreviated titles (most of the Polish-Lithuanian dignitaries and their wives). After Żmudziński, "Uczta w Jaworowie," 76.

participate in the Battle of Vienna like Jabłonowski, which explains his relatively remote seat, symbolically speaking.⁶⁶⁵

A couple of reflections arise from comparing the visual representations and textual relations of the anniversary of the Battle of Vienna in 1684 and the wedding of Prince Jakub Sobieski in 1691. First, the specificities of food served during banquets were incidental or implied. In Fagiuoli's diary, the taste of the dishes is rated as exquisite, in *Relatio compediosa* the dishes are described as "the finest," and in both cases served in copious amounts, while on Geffels' painting, the plates making up the course are plenty (28), but hardly distinguishable from each other (Figs. 13 and 14). Apart from fruit plates (pears and figs?) (Figs. 17 and 18), only two other dishes show more recognizable features, such as the one that looks like it came out of a mold and seems to have a shine (perhaps being a jelly?) (Fig. 15), and the one consisting of elaborate tiers (Fig. 16). Given the schematic and simplified nature, it is impossible to say anything about dishes and their components.

Details from the Banquet in Yavoriv (food)

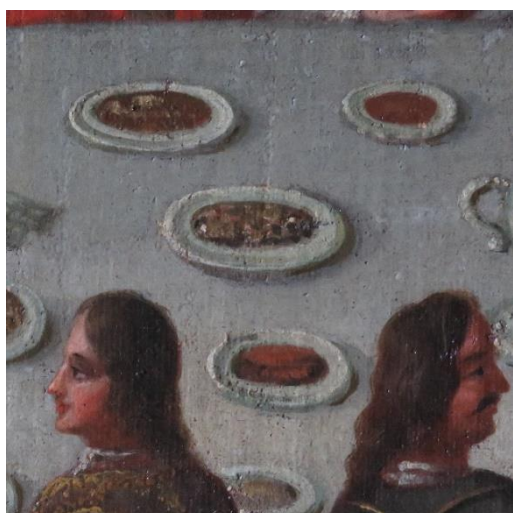


Figure 13



Figure 14

⁶⁶⁵ Voivodes of Vilnius were entitled to a higher ranked place in the senate than voivodes of Ruthenia, the senatorial seat held by Jabłonowski at that time. Andrzej Rachuba, "Kazimierz Jan Sapieha," *iPSB*, Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny, accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/kazimierz-jan-pawel-sapieha-zm-1720-hetman-wielki-litewski>.



Figure 15



Figure 16

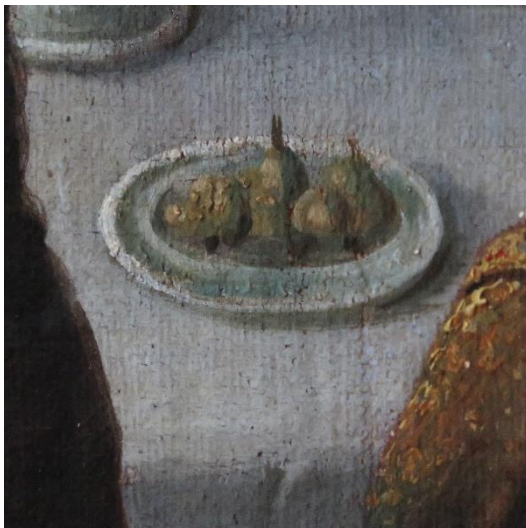


Figure 17



Figure 18

Details from the Banquet in Yavoriv (decorations)



Figure 19



Figure 20

The elements that stand out are tableware and decorations: the fountain surrounded by swans (Fig. 19), two vases, jugs, and eagles (Fig. 20). They are forms of *trionfi*, and due to the rank of the event, they would likely be silver or made out of sugar (in some form).⁶⁶⁶ The fountain fits in the location of the banquet held in the gardens of the royal residency in Yavoriv, and the convention in which table decorations were inspired by garden architecture.⁶⁶⁷ While the eagles were popular heraldic motifs and were often chosen for occasions such as hosting foreign representatives—for instance, they were selected for the reception banquet for Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł in Rome in 1680—as suggested by Antonio Latini in *Lo scalco alla moderna* discussed in Chapter 1.⁶⁶⁸ Additionally, an illustration from the 1694 edition of *Lo scalco alla moderna* (Fig. 21) shows an example of a banquet table setting, including an elaborate decoration with a centerpiece and symmetrically placed eagles, resembling the table setting on the *Banquet in Yavoriv*, at least in principle:



Figure 21. Banquet table setting from Antonio Latini's *Lo scalco alla moderna* (1694)

⁶⁶⁶ Andrzej Rottermund discussed the “triumphal” and “commemorative” vessels in more detail. See “Dworski stół paradny - sztuka i ceremoniał (zarys problematyki),” 54–56.

⁶⁶⁷ Table decorations were often inspired by garden architecture. Rottermund, 66.

⁶⁶⁸ “In the middle of the table you can make a triumph entirely of sugar, gilded to represent Justice, Piety, and Valor, in such a posture that, each with one hand, they hold aloft a large silver eagle, and in the pedestal of this triumph you can impress in golden letters these words: May thus the imperial eagle cross the paths of the sun.” Astarita, *The Italian Baroque Table*, 121.

Despite its schematic character, Geffels' painting remains unique for Poland-Lithuania in the context of royal iconography.⁶⁶⁹ To the best of my knowledge, it is also the only known representation of a set banquet table from the reign of Jan III. Although it is only an imagination of the banquet in Yavoriv, it does show the table decorated and arranged following a well-established convention, so-called *service à la française*, with a layout of numerous symmetrically placed dishes constituting a course.⁶⁷⁰ In other words, the Sobieskis' table was indicative of their refinement and worldliness, while the distinguished guests they entertained at this table exemplified their political standing.

In the picture (Fig. 12), Jan III is surrounded by his family, diplomats, Poland-Lithuania's dignitaries, and their wives, in the center of a microcosmos that was the royal court, at the moment celebrating a grand military victory and a political alliance.⁶⁷¹ The banquet was an occasion to legitimize the status of Prince Jakub Sobieski and demonstrate his commitment to the Holy League. Jakub's participation in the campaign of 1683 was supposed to serve the purpose of his debut on the European stage and was an excellent opportunity for him to gain a nimbus of military glory, the same that elevated his father to the throne.⁶⁷² A year later, in Yavoriv, Jakub was seated on his father's left hand, yielding only to the imperial ambassador, a demonstration of his status. This becomes particularly significant considering the prior incident where Prince Sobieski was overlooked by Leopold I during their in-person meeting following the Battle of Vienna.⁶⁷³

⁶⁶⁹ Żmudziński, "Uczta w Jaworowie," 76.

⁶⁷⁰ Flandrin, *Arranging the Meal: A History of Table Service in France*, 72–89.

⁶⁷¹ Joanna Kodzik explains that the system of court society was constructed by the interactions between those present during ceremonial (the king, royal family, courtiers, nobles, foreign envoys), all of them "subjected to compulsory symbolic communication." Kodzik, *Ceremoniał polskiego dworu królewskiego w XVII wieku z perspektywy niemieckich uczonych*, 119.

⁶⁷² Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 123–24.

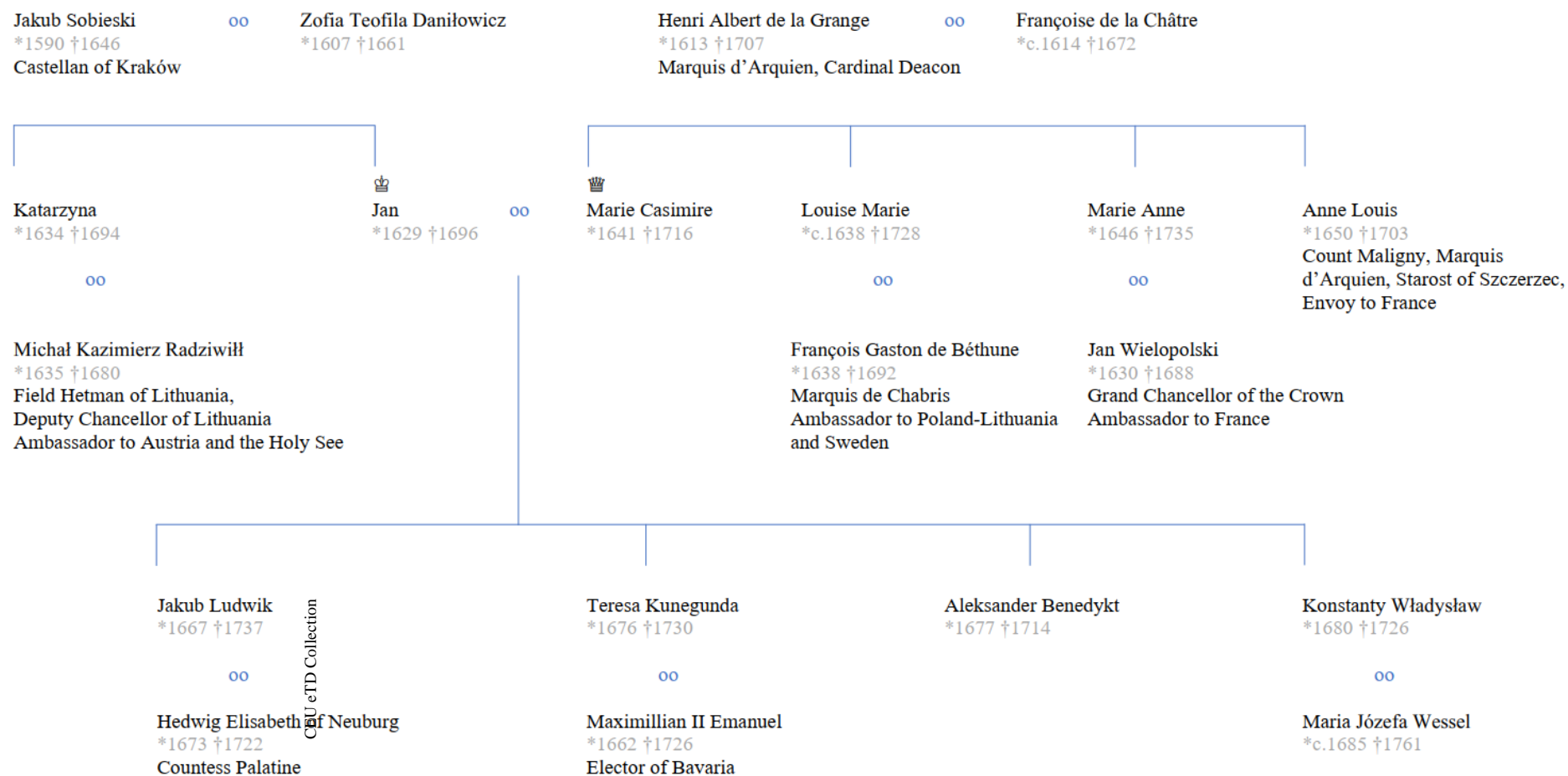
⁶⁷³ Both Jan III and Marie Casimire were deeply offended, taking the incident as ingratitude. Komarzyński, *Maria Kazimiera D'Arquien Sobieska, królowa Polski, 1641-1716*, 120–21.

The scene being staged in a garden, at the banquet table, paints a different picture than, for example, a conventional battlefield scene would. Notably, the special context of an anniversary banquet allowed the inclusion of women. The office of their husbands determined their place—in Geffels’ painting, they are relegated solely to the left side, mirroring the placement of their husbands. But it was not only women whose place reflected their ties formed by marriage. François Gaston de Béthune (nr 5) was seated in a prestigious spot because he was Marie Casimire’s brother-in-law (he is listed, in an abbreviated form, as “Cognato della Regina”) (see Table 2). After 1683 (expulsion of Nicolas Louis de L’Hospital, Marquis de Vitry) until 1692 (arrival of Robert Le Roux, Vidame d’Esneval), there was no high-ranking accredited representative of Louis XIV in Poland-Lithuania.⁶⁷⁴ Marquis de Béthune, who served as ambassador between 1676 and 1680, later navigated the court in his capacity of royal brother-in-law, truly masterfully striking a delicate balance between the unofficial and official spheres, at least until 1691 when he was asked to leave Poland-Lithuania due to his maneuverings against Jakub Sobieski marriage to Hedwig Elisabeth of Neuburg, correctly seeing in this marriage a sign of rapprochement with the emperor.⁶⁷⁵ For this reason, he was absent during the wedding festivities in 1691. However, his wife Louise Marie de Béthune attended the celebrations, although she refrained from participating in the wedding banquet due to the conflict over precedence.

⁶⁷⁴ In 1689, there were, for example, two French agents in Poland-Lithuanian, du Teil and Gravelle, who worked in cooperation with Béthune. Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski*, 446.

⁶⁷⁵ Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 181.

Table 2. The Sobieskis' family tree



Marie Casimire's sisters—*Madame la Chancelière* Marie Anne Wielopolska and Marquise Louise Marie de Béthune—and the king's sister Katarzyna Radziwiłł were involved in a series of quarrels over the seating order since as long as 1676.⁶⁷⁶ However, these disputes were not merely personal but shaped by the context of Poland-Lithuania's political life with its egalitarian, republican rhetoric. Following that scheme, the precedence among royal sisters was established on the basis of their husbands' place in the Senate. Therefore, the primacy was due to Marie Anne (married to Grand Chancellor of the Crown Jan Wielopolski), then to Katarzyna (married to Deputy Chancellor of Lithuania Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł). The status of Louise Marie was more ambiguous since she was married to (the former) French ambassador to the Sobieskis' court.⁶⁷⁷ While the queen wished to secure the precedence of her sisters, Marie Anne and Louise Marie, before Katarzyna, Katarzyna was often granted precedence as the king's sister.

The conflict seems to have another dimension that can be read as an extension of either a pro-Habsburg or pro-Burbon course at the Sobieskis' court. Katarzyna repeatedly received imperial ambassadors, and evidence suggests she was occasionally acting as an intermediary.⁶⁷⁸ Jarosław Pietrzak notices that Béthune rightly recognized that showing special favors to Katarzyna was

⁶⁷⁶ The conflict is analyzed in more detail by Jarosław Pietrzak in "Czy skandal? Dzieje pewnego konfliktu na dworze Jana III Sobieskiego w latach 1691-1692," ed. Bożena Płonka-Syroka et al., *Skandal w kulturze europejskiej i amerykańskiej* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2013), 81–95.

⁶⁷⁷ Pietrzak, 85.

Béthune proved to be a keen observer of the precedence rule involving women of high status in Poland-Lithuania: "[p]remièrement, Monsier, en Pologne plus que partout ailleurs, les femmes suivent le rang de leur marys, de sorte que la dernière Starostine passe tous les jours devant des femmes nées Princesses, sy leurs marys n'ont des charges plus considérables. En manière que c'est la dignité que donne le rang et non point le sand, de sorte que Madame la Princesse de Radzivill n'estant femme que du Vice Chancelier de Lithuanie, toutes les Sénatrices ont le pas devant elle, et, par là sy ma femme avoit cédé à cette Princesse sur laquelle les Sénatrices ont le rang, ells se seroient sans doute faicte une pretention de ne plus céder aux Ambassadrices." Béthune to Louis XIV, 25 August, 1679. Kazimierz Waliszewski, ed., *Archiwum spraw zagranicznych francuskich do dziejów Jana Trzeciego*, vol. 2: 1677-1679 (Kraków: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności Krakowskiej, 1881), 276.

⁶⁷⁸ Pietrzak, "Czy skandal? Dzieje pewnego konfliktu na dworze Jana III Sobieskiego w latach 1691-1692," 93–94. Jan III to Marie Casimire, 17 September, 1683: "Niech się księżna jejmość gotuje bardzo wstydzić za p. Zierowskiego i jego ablegatów. Powiedzieć jej, że tu wszystką okolicę wypalono i Faworyty i Laxenburg." Kukulski, *Jan Sobieski listy do Marysienki*, 1973, 2:226–27.

related to attempts to maintain good relations with Vienna.⁶⁷⁹ In his reports sent to France, the ambassador considered it a dangerous precedent.⁶⁸⁰

The banquets, including one held in honor of Andrea Santacroce in 1690, served as the primary site of the quarrel, leading to the absence of royal sisters, among others, during the wedding banquet in 1691. As Fagiuoli reports:

[n]oteworthy is the fact that Cardinal Radziejowski, the Queen's Father, and her sisters did not participate in this feast due to precedence issues. Prince Jakub refuses to yield to the Cardinals, the Nuncio does not want to give priority to the Marquis d'Arquien, the Queen's Father, considering him a common nobleman, and the ladies of the Kingdom do not want to yield to the Queen's sisters, considering them equals.⁶⁸¹

The fact that the family closest to the throne chose not to attend the wedding banquet rather than give up their seats shows the significance of the table in reflecting and reinforcing hierarchies. Sure, there were other ways in which those hierarchies were established and validated, one of them being the place taken in the carriages train. Yet, during Prince Jakub Sobieski's wedding, the banquet emerged as the most problematic setting, magnifying the tensions surrounding status and precedence. The next occasion for a grand celebration of such caliber, which was also marked by such conflicts, arose a couple of years later with the wedding of Jakub's sister, Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska.

⁶⁷⁹ Pietrzak, 86.

"Que l'on ordonne de plus audit grand Trésorier de faire des instances sur un règlement pour que Madame la Princesse de Radzivill precede les Ambassadeurs et Ambassadrices de France dans tout les lieux où ilz se trouveront et un autre sur le tiltre de Majesté pour laquel le Prince de Radzivill a fait de fortes sollicitations á Vienne," Béthune to Pomponne, 6 September, 1679. *Archiwum spraw zagranicznych francuskich do dziejów Jana Trzeciego*, 2: 1677-1679, 283-84.

⁶⁸⁰ "L'advis que Vous nous donnés du reffus qui a esté facit á Vienne au Prince de Radzivil d'accorder le tiltre de Majesté au Roy de Pologne peut server extremement pour responder aux instances qui pourroient ester faictes icy á l'advenir sur cette affaire, et l'expédient que vous proposes de se remettre á ce que fera le Nonce est trez-bon pour esluder la demande de la Princesse de Radzivil pour la préséance sur les ambassadrices," Béthune to Pomponne, 9 November, 1679. *Archiwum spraw zagranicznych francuskich do dziejów Jana Trzeciego*, 2: 1677-1679, 307.

⁶⁸¹ "Godne uwagi, że w tej uczcie nie uczestniczyli Kardynał Radziejowski, Ojciec Królowej ani jej siostry z powodu precedencji, albowiem Królewicz Jakub nie chce ustępować Kardynałom, Nuncjusz nie chce dać pierwszeństwa Markizowi d'Arquien Ojcu królowej, mając go za zwykłego szlachcica, a damy Królestwa nie chcą ustępować siostrze królowej, uważając je za osoby równe sobie." Fagiuoli, *Diariusz podróży do Polski (1690-1691)*, 132.

Princess Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska's wedding by proxy, 1694

The marriage proposals presented for Teresa Kunegunda, much like her eldest brother's case, were subject to the maneuvers of Leopold I's and Louis XIV's diplomats. A variety of potential suitors were put forth for Princess Sobieska's hand, including King of the Romans Joseph I, Philippe of Lorraine, Philippe, Duke of Chartres, and Louis, Le Grand Dauphin.⁶⁸² With a new turn towards the Baltic orchestrated by Béthune (French ambassador in Sweden since 1692) and Marie Casimire, the ideas of marrying Teresa Kunegunda to Prince Frederick Oldenburg, son of Christian V of Denmark, or later to Prince Carl Wittelsbach, son of Carl XI of Sweden came to the fore.⁶⁸³ Nevertheless, no concrete undertaking ever materialized concerning these potential marriages.

At the beginning of 1693, Jakub Sobieski became an ardent advocate of the recently widowed Elector of Bavaria, Maximilian II Emanuel, as a suitable match for his sister.⁶⁸⁴ Marie Casimire believed this marriage would be exceptionally advantageous, bringing her family closer to the Bourbons, and actively sought it for her daughter.⁶⁸⁵ Fortunately, on a list of suitable princesses compiled for the elector, Teresa Kunegunda ranked high, despite being the daughter of an elected king.⁶⁸⁶ In her favor was her Catholicism, considerable dowry, and the fact that allying

⁶⁸² Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 166; Komaszyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 19–21.

⁶⁸³ Jarosław Pietrzak, "Służba dyplomatyczna kobiet w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Inspiracje francuskie w Rzeczypospolitej," *Sprawy międzynarodowe* 75, no. 1 (2022): 211; Komaszyński, *Jan III Sobieski a Bałtyk*, 119–57; Komaszyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 21–22.

⁶⁸⁴ As in the case of Jakub Sobieski's marriage, there are many who were credited with the idea, including the imperial ambassador in Warsaw, Christoph Wenzel von Nostitz, and Bishop of Płock Andrzej Załuski. Most likely it was Jakub, who knew Maximilian II Emmanuel from the 1683 campaign, inspired by his wife's relatives to suggest the idea to Marie Casimire. He was eager to travel to Vienna to ask the emperor for intermediation. Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 209–10; Komaszyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 23.

⁶⁸⁵ Komaszyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d'Arquien-Sobieska*, 188; Komaszyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 23–24.

⁶⁸⁶ Apparently, Madrid advocated for Princess Sobieska (Queen Maria Anna was sister of Hedwig Elisabeth, Jakub Sobieski's wife), and Maximilian II Emmanuel reckoned with their opinion. Komaszyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 25.

with the House of Sobieski was viewed with friendly neutrality by both the Habsburgs and the Bourbons.⁶⁸⁷

In the Fall of 1693, Chevalier Dulac, a confidant of Maximilian II Emmanuel, came to Poland-Lithuania to see Teresa Kunegunda.⁶⁸⁸ He was received in the royal residence in Zhovkva, where he talked with Teresa Kunegunda and observed “the princess’ face and dance manners, which he liked very much.”⁶⁸⁹ In April 1694, Bavarian legate (*poseł*) Baron Marx Christoph Mayr arrived to negotiate the marriage contract.⁶⁹⁰ Despite some back and forth, the financial obligations of both sides were settled remarkably quickly, and the marriage contract was signed on May 20, 1693.⁶⁹¹ A day after the signing, a banquet was held in honor of Mayr, described by Kazimierz Sarnecki, a nobleman at Sobieskis’ court.⁶⁹² Initially, the plan was to set the tables on a nearby hill of Horaj, one of Jan III’s favorite leisure spots overgrown with vines. Sarnecki remarks that the kitchen and the tents were ready, but due to the weather, it was decided to move it indoors to the Zhovkva castle. During the banquet, Jan III and Marie Casimire were sitting under a canopy. At one side of the same long table were the most prominent attendees: Teresa Kunegunda, her brothers, Konstanty and Aleksander, French

⁶⁸⁷ Marie Casimire was initially concerned about the reaction of Versailles, since Maximilian II Emmanuel was a member of the Grand Alliance (League of Augsburg). However, Louis XVI’s diplomats saw the elector’s marriage to Princess Sobieska as an opportunity for rapprochement and assured the queen that it would please their king who would not neglect to facilitate it by secret means. Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 209–10, 212–13; Komarzyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d’Arquien-Sobieska*, 188–89; Komarzyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 23–31.

⁶⁸⁸ Apparently, beauty was an important factor playing in favor of Teresa Kunegunda. Maximilian II Emanuel expressed dissatisfaction with the appearance of his first wife and was equally unimpressed by the Hanoverian Princesses after seeing them in Antwerp. Komarzyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 25–26.

⁶⁸⁹ “Na tych tanach był nieznaczny od ks. bawarskiego kawaler, przypatrując się królowie jm. twarzy i obyczajom taneczny, które bardzo mu się podobały.” Sarnecki, *Pamiętniki z czasów Jana Sobieskiego*, 1:77–78.

⁶⁹⁰ Aleksandra Skrzypietz notes that because Mayr was hosted in Zhovkva, a private royal residency, the occasion was less a “state affair” than a private or familial one. Aleksandra Skrzypietz, “‘Stoły zaś wszystkie okrągłe porobić kazano.’ Okoliczności prowadzenia rozmów o małżeństwo Teresy Kunegundy Sobieskiej w świetle przekazów Kazimierza Sarneckiego,” in *Verba volant, scripta manent. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana profesorowi Zbigniewowi Anusikowi w sześćdziesiątą piątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Małgorzata Karkocha and Piotr Robak (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2022), 504.

⁶⁹¹ Komarzyński, *Piękna królowa Maria Kazmiera d’Arquien-Sobieska*, 186–87; Komarzyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 27–29; Skrzypietz, *Królewscy Synowie - Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy*, 209–10, 212–1.

⁶⁹² Sarnecki, *Pamiętniki z czasów Jana Sobieskiego*, 1:196–98.

ambassador Melchior Polignac, Mayr, Bishop Załuski, and senators— Castellan of Kraków Stanisław Jabłonowski, Voivode of Kraków Szczęsny Potocki, Voivode of Mazovia Franciszek Wessel, and Castellan of Gdańsk Marcin Borowski. On the other side of the first table, the queen's brother Anne Louis d'Arquien, Voivodess of Kyiv Urszula Kątska, Teresa Kunegunda's governess, and the Venetian resident were seated. It appears that the mention of food, offered in proportion to the importance of the guests and accompanied by an abundance of wine, was sufficient to convey status and excellence. Sarnecki writes that "food was served according to the proportions of the mentioned tables, wine was given in abundance to encourage drinking, especially by the [Bavarian] ambassador and his companions; so they had enough because they were well taken care of, and the ambassador went to sleep inebriated."⁶⁹³

From Sarnecki's diary, it is evident that Jan III and Marie Casimire cared greatly about making an impression on Mayr. The king chose precious gifts (saber, Turkish saddle, horse tack laid with pearls, rubies, and turquoise), the queen ordered refurbishing of the rooms, and new liveries for servants, "all for receiving the ambassador of the prince of Bavaria."⁶⁹⁴ Hosting Mayr, which included a series of banquets and everyday meals, was a chance to display Sobieskis' refinement and status, and it can be seen as a persuasive device: conviviality served the purpose of presenting Princess Sobieska as an ideal candidate for the role of the electress. It also facilitated diplomatic meetings between the French and Bavarian representatives. The latter was to turn to Marie Casimire, requesting her intercession with Louis XIV to spare Maximilian II Emmanuel's estates in the coming war, which offered a convenient opening.⁶⁹⁵ Mayr, despite being favorable to Polignac's proposal of changing alliances, hesitated to present it directly to the elector. Instead, he suggested that Bishop Załuski accompany Teresa

⁶⁹³ "jeść dano według proporcyjej promienionych stołów, wina sieła bardzo, aby się popili, osobliwie poseł z ludźmi swemi; jakoż zadosyć mieli, bo ich dobrze przypilnowano, i poseł sam nietrzeźwo poszedł spać." Sarnecki, 1:197.

⁶⁹⁴ Sarnecki, 1:168–69.

⁶⁹⁵ Komarzyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 31.

Kunegunda to Brussels to discuss this matter with Maximilian Emmanuel.⁶⁹⁶ Before her departure, a wedding by proxy took place in Warsaw.

Wedding festivities

Teresa Kunegunda's wedding by proxy in Warsaw was held on August 15, 1694. The anonymous diary from the wedding is brief and rather conventional. The most interesting thing about it is that it includes considerations regarding the character of a diplomat and the cost it entailed. It reads that Maximilian II Emanuel's ambassador, count Törrig, who was replacing the initially appointed grand ambassador Max Ferdinand Graf von Preysing, presented credentials to Marie Casimire and senators "sine omni caractere" (in an unofficial character) as they were issued for the absent grand ambassador. The author of the diary considers the situation as "only some *innocens casus*," and mentions that some thought it fortunate as it saved expenses on both sides.⁶⁹⁷ Apart from the credentials, Törrig handed the plenipotentiary from Maximilian II Emanuel to Jakub Sobieski to act as his proxy, which was read out before the ceremony by Cardinal Radziejowski.

Prince Sobieski represented the elector during the church ceremony as well as the banquet, during which tables were "very beautiful and excellently set." Apart from this laconic reassurance of the splendor of the event, the diary includes a significantly more detailed description of the seating and serving order:

At the royal table, the sequence of seated person was as follows: on the right hand of his majesty the king, sat Countess Electress [Teresa Kunegunda], his lordship the prince [Jakub Sobieski] *repraesentator electoris*, after him priest nuncio [Andrea Santacroce], on the left hand [of the king] her majesty the queen, their lordships young princes [Konstanty and Aleksander], at the end of the table master French ambassador [Melchior Polignac]. The Master of the Pantry and Carver of the Crown served at the table,

⁶⁹⁶ Komaszyński, 31.

⁶⁹⁷ "Listy te abo kredensy, które oddał [Törring], służyły osobie promienionego posła Preysinga. Z okazji którego absencji jeżeli tu jest różnych interpretacji, w rzeczy jednak samej niemasz, tylko *innocens* jakiś *casus*. Jedni go mieć chcą, żeby się godziło mniejszym kosztem z obu stron, drudzy, że pomieniony Preysing, nie chciał takiego charakteru, którego nie mógł zażyć, ponieważ plenipotencja *ad contrahendum matrimonium* służyła królewiczowi jm. starszemu, którą ten kawaler przyniósł z sobą *in omni solenni forma*, wespół i z pierścieniem ślubnym." BCzart, TN 184, nr 147, "Dyjariusz wesela Królowny Jej Mości Polskiej 15 Augusti 1694 odpowiadającego się usque ad diem 18 przez trzy dni w Warszawie," 353. The diary was edited and published as an annex to Teresa Kunegunda's biography. See Komaszyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 157–61.

putting dishes in front of the royal couple ... Dishes were carried from the kitchen to the royal table by Lubomirski, Crown Steward himself ... with the Crown Master of the Kitchen Szczuka. Lithuanian Cupbearer Kryspin served his majesty the king.⁶⁹⁸

Joanna Kodzik points out that being admitted to the royal table was a sign of favor, fostering loyalty among the nobles. Additionally, the participation of dignitaries in serving the king (and the royal family on this occasion) also confirmed the monarch's prestige and status, which directly reflected the status of his children.⁶⁹⁹

The relations of the Teresa Kunagunda *per procura* wedding in 1694 were printed by Johann Christian Lünig in *Theatrum Ceremoniale Historico-Politicum*, as well as *Theatrum Europaeum* and "La Gazette."⁷⁰⁰ However, the most fascinating document concerning the wedding, at least from the food and drink perspective, is a letter with instructions for its preparations. Compared to the above relations, which closely adhere to principles of genre, it is a true treasure trove, giving a glimpse into what kind of food, drink, and decorations were considered necessary to obtain and could have ended up on the wedding table. What is even more, the document in question is a copy of a letter written by Jan III Sobieski himself, and it survived because it was chosen to be included in a collection of public documents in the second half of the eighteenth century.⁷⁰¹ The level of detail tells a ton of Sobieski's genuine interest in matters relating to eating and drinking and properly setting the table.

⁶⁹⁸ "Prędko potym poszli na ucztę, gdzie stoły bardzo pięknie i wyśmienicie zastawiono było. U królewskiego stołu ta *series* siedzących osób była: na prawej ręce króla jm. księżna jm. elektorowa, królewicz jm. *repraesentator electoris*, po nim jm. książdz nuncjusz, na lewej ręce królowa jm., królewiczowie ichm. młodzi, u koniec stołu jm. pan poseł francuski. Służyli do stołu jm. pan krajczy koronny z jm. panem stolnikiem koronnym, zastawiający potrawy przed państwo jm. pan starosta krakowski, państwu młodemu jm. pan Butler, na drugim końcu stołu. Potrawy od samej kuchni jm. pan podstoli koronny Lubomirski z łaską wespół z jm. panem kuchmistrem koronnym Szczuką do stołu pańskiego prowadzili. Jm. pan podczaszy W.Ks.Lit. Kryspin podawał królowi jm." BCzart, TN 184, nr 147, "Dyjariusz wesela Królowny Jej Mości Polskiej 15 Augusti 1694 odprawującego się usque ad diem 18 przez trzy dni w Warszawie," 356–57.

⁶⁹⁹ Kodzik, *Ceremoniał polskiego dworu królewskiego w XVII wieku z perspektywy niemieckich uczonych*, 121, 137–38.

⁷⁰⁰ Kodzik, 137; Komarzyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 33. *Theatrum Europeum*, vol. 14: 1691-1695 (Johann Görllin: Frankfurt am Man, 1702), 681-683; *La Gazette*, no. 38 (1694): 445.

⁷⁰¹ The original letter was kept in the Żałoski Library which was looted following the Kościuszko uprising in 1794. The copy of Sobieski's letter was made to be included in Teki Naruszewicza (Naruszewicz's files).

The letter was written on July 14, 1694—a month before the wedding—and is addressed to Jan Wołczyński, Pantler of Mielnik (*stolnik mielnicki*). It starts with a reprimand, setting the tone of urgency: “we often warn and remind that in such urgent matters [wedding preparation], there is no need to write to anyone else, only to ourselves, as those whom it is customary to write to are not always by our side.”⁷⁰²

Among urgent matters referred to by Sobieski are the table decoration and tableware, purchases of foodstuffs and wine, as well as setting up a wine fountain and roasts for the people. The letter contains digressions (“We are just recalling that...”), suggesting that it is, in a way, a record of a stream of thoughts, an enumeration of all the issues requiring attention before the wedding. Sobieski is not only giving dispositions on what kind of produce has to be purchased but also where and when specific tasks must be taken care of. Most notably, the meats would get spoiled if kept for long during warm days in August and therefore had to be brought just before the wedding; at present, it was essential to feed the oxen well.⁷⁰³ The abbot of Oliwa had already bought “several dozen pounds of Genoa pies” in Gdańsk, but wines (Italian, French as well as lemon, cherry, and raspberry), “Prussian specialties” (including ham) had to be yet procured. Also, as many lemons, oranges, and other fruits as possible had to be ordered “in various Gardens, whenever they could be at that time,” so the Italian *credenziero* (“Włoch Kredencyrz”) could make ice creams. Additionally, the *credenziero*’s expertise extended to making “very good juices,” which were to be served alongside fruits in ice-made vessels, a task entrusted to a certain Szwauer.⁷⁰⁴

⁷⁰² BCZart, TN 184, nr 119, “Copia Listu JKrMci do Urodzonego Wołczyńskiego, Stolnika Mielnickiego, 1694, 14 Julij,” 273-75.

⁷⁰³ “Co do mięsnych rzeczy, te się Konserwować podczas dni Augustowych nie będą mogły, zaczyno dopiero je przed samym Aktem sposobić będzie trzeba, Woły tylko mieć karmne dobrze.” BCZart, TN 184, nr 119, “Copia Listu JKrMci do Urodzonego Wołczyńskiego, Stolnika Mielnickiego, 1694, 14 Julij,” 274.

⁷⁰⁴ “I to przypomnieć Urodzonemu Stolnikowi Wyszogrodzkiemu aby Szwauer wyrobił z Lodu kilka Czar wielkich albo Waz lub Tac na owoce także i naczynie mniejszych na różne Soki które Włoch Kredencysz Nasz robi bardzo dobrze.” BCZart, TN 184, nr 119, “Copia Listu JKrMci do Urodzonego Wołczyńskiego, Stolnika Mielnickiego, 1694, 14 Julij,” 274. Fruits, especially served cold, were considered sophisticated. Secretary of the

Credenzieri were, together with the Pantler of Wyszogród (*stolnik wyszogrodzki*), and the Pantler of Mielnik, also responsible for table decorations. These consisted of small “Table Machines” for desserts (*wety*), a grand silver “Table Machine” (pyramid with fountain), silver decorations with baskets “of exquisite Augsburg craftsmanship, one of which is already in the Treasury in Warsaw, and the other we will bring with ourselves.”⁷⁰⁵ Sobieski instructs to renovate the silver “Machine,” and take whatever is in the treasury that could be used because, apparently, the wooden pyramids became too ordinary.⁷⁰⁶ More specifically, the king envisaged the first table to be decorated with two small “Table Machines” for desserts—one at each end, and different in the three days of banquets (altogether six)—in the middle a big silver fountain and two silver decorations with baskets.

Finally, the entertainment for those not admitted to the royal table at the castle had to be provided as well, if only for the sake of following conveniences:

and one should think about it, imitating the Mad World, to roast two or three whole Oxen, stuffed with Geese, Chickens, and other birds for the *propter Populum*, and Fountains, one filled with Hungarian, the second with French wine.⁷⁰⁷

Although it is impossible to say what was ultimately served during Teresa Kunegunda’s wedding, several elements included in Jan III’s letter to Wołczyński are repeated in the diary and relations. Apparently, the cups were filled with the finest wines, and a “magnificent royal

nuncio, Tomasso Talenti, describes them served during a banquet Andrea Santacroce attended in Wilanów: “e doppo essersi trattenuto longo tempo nel Giardino fù invitato dalla M[aestà] del Rè ad una lautissima collatione, abondante di qualsivoglia cosa più rara, im particolare di fruti d’ogni sorte gelati, e di rinfreschi, e tutto quel tempo la regia Cappella non manco di dare il solito divertimento.” After Anna Sylwia Czyż, “Nuncjusz w Wilanowie, czyli dyplomatyczno-ceremonialny epizod z życia Marii Kazimierzy z Archiwum Florenckiego,” in *Maria Kazimiera Sobieska (1641-1716). W kręgu rodziny, polityki i kultury*, ed. Anna Kalinowska and Paweł Tyszka, *Studia i Materiały* (Warszawa: Arx Regia - Wydawnictwo Zamku Królewskiego w Warszawie, 2015), 204..

⁷⁰⁵ “srebrne Sztuki, z koszykami srebrnymi plecionymi pięknej Auszpurskiej roboty, które jedne już są w Skarbcu Warszawskim a drugie przywieziemy z sobą.” BCZart, TN 184, nr 119, “Copia Listu JKrMci do Urodzonego Wołczyńskiego, Stolnika Mielnickiego, 1694, 14 Julij,” 273.

⁷⁰⁶ “tudzież Wierność twoja i Kredencyrzom to powyjmować zawczasu, bo te drewniane Piramidy już bardzo spowszedniały.” BCZart, TN 184, nr 119, “Copia Listu JKrMci do Urodzonego Wołczyńskiego, Stolnika Mielnickiego, 1694, 14 Julij,” 274.

⁷⁰⁷ “i o tym trzeba pomyśleć Szalonego Świata naśladować żeby Wołów dwa albo trzy całkiem upiec, Gęsiemi, Kurami i innym Ptactwem nadziać *propter Populum*, a Fontanny jedna Węgierskim, druga Francuskim Winem nedane były.” BCZart, TN 184, nr 119, “Copia Listu JKrMci do Urodzonego Wołczyńskiego, Stolnika Mielnickiego, 1694, 14 Julij,” 275.

dessert” was served at the end of the banquet. Moreover, three fountains flowed with Hungarian wine, and as many as five oxen were roasted for the public feast; the third fountain was furnished by the city of Warsaw.⁷⁰⁸

Teresa Kunegunda left Warsaw for Brussels on November 14, 1694. In her entourage traveled Bishop Załuski entrusted, after Mayr’s suggestion, with the task of discussing an alliance with France, and Teresa Słuszkowa *née* Gosiewska, appointed governess and ambassadress extraordinary (*posłowa ekstraordynaryjna*).⁷⁰⁹ The exact nature of her mission remains unclear. Jarosław Pietrzak suggests that the ambassadress was likely sent only to confirm the fulfillment of the newlyweds’ duties, however, due to a conflict with Spanish aristocrats unwilling to grant her precedence, she did not reach Brussels.⁷¹⁰ However incidental, the appointment of Teresa Słuszkowa—and before her Anne Marie Budes de Guébriant or Baroness Zwiëffel—as an ambassadress, and therefore making her mission official, testifies to a somehow higher acceptance of women’s involvement in matters of dynastic marriages.⁷¹¹ An acceptance that included not only queens.

⁷⁰⁸ Komaszyński, *Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, 36; *Theatrum Europeum*, vol. 14: 1691-1695 (Johann Görlin: Frankfurt am Man, 1702), 681-83.

⁷⁰⁹ Pietrzak, “Służba dyplomatyczna kobiet w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Inspiracje francuskie w Rzeczpospolitej,” 215; Andrzej Rachuba, “Sapieżyna (z Domu Gosiewska, l.v. Słuszczyzna) Teresa,” in *Internetowy PSB* (Warszawa: Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny), accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/teresa-sapieżyna-z-domu-gosiewska-lv-słuszczyzna-zm-1708>.

⁷¹⁰ The basis of the conflict was apparently the fact that Teresa Słuszkowa was appointed ambassadress to the elector who was only serving as regent, bypassing the king of Spain. Pietrzak, “Służba dyplomatyczna kobiet w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Inspiracje francuskie w Rzeczpospolitej,” 216–18.

⁷¹¹ Pietrzak, “Służba dyplomatyczna kobiet w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Inspiracje francuskie w Rzeczpospolitej,” 220. There is a vast literature discussing women involvement in diplomacy in premodern Europe. For changing concept of ambassadress and views on ambassador’s wife, working-couple, and the range of informal tasks see, for example, Laura Oliván Santaliestra, “Who Was the Embajadora? Concept, Treatises and Examples (1580-1674),” in *Gender and Diplomacy. Women and Men in European Embassies from the 15th to the 18th Century*, ed. Laura Oliván Santaliestra, Roberta Anderson, and Suna Suner (Wien: Hollitzer Verlag, 2021), 199–215; Florian Kühnel, “‘Minister-like Cleverness, Understanding, and Influence on Affairs’: Ambassadors in Everyday Business and Courtly Ceremonies at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century,” in *Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World c. 1410–1800*, ed. Jan Hennings and Tracey A. Sowerby (New York: Routledge, 2017), 130–46; also contributions to Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James, eds., *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500* (London-New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016). For a brief overview see Carolyn James, “Women and Diplomacy in the Early Modern Period,” in *Early Modern European Diplomacy: A Handbook*, ed. Dorothee Goetze and Lena Oetzel (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2024), 541–58.

During a royal wedding, taste was a nexus between consumption and diplomacy, playing a vital role in the interplay of food, drink, and power. As Fabio Parasecoli explains, “material culture, practices and discourses make taste a formidable instrument of power, differentiating and reinforcing stratification among social and economic groups, as well as cultural communities.”⁷¹² Spectacles such as the weddings of Prince Jakub and Princess Teresa Kunegunda involved “a component of taste that has to be performed to impress and to convey both aesthetic authority and cultural refinement.”⁷¹³ The spatial arrangement at a wedding banquet was tailored to the occasion celebrating a union, reflecting political relations and ambition. Notably, women were given a position in the foreground in this setting.

The Sobieskis were royals in an elective monarchy, but they aspired to establish a dynasty. Wedding banquets held in Warsaw in 1691 and 1694 showcased their refinement, affirming their place among the society of princes and emphasizing their newly formed connections with the House of Wittelsbach.

⁷¹² Fabio Parasecoli, “The Power of Taste,” in *The Power of Taste. Europe at the Royal Table*, ed. Fabio Parasecoli, Andrzej K. Kuropatnicki, and Jarosław Dumanowski (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2020), 205.

⁷¹³ Parasecoli, 211.

EPILOGUE: READING AN EMBASSY THROUGH FOOD AND DRINK

This dissertation examined diplomacy specifically from the perspective of Poland-Lithuania during the reign of Jan III Sobieski and Marie Casimire d'Arquien, a fascinating moment in both culinary and diplomatic history. The aim was to explore the practice of diplomacy comprehensively, moving past a relatively narrow focus on bilateral relations or alliances and instead considering various aspects and actors. Taste and diplomatic hospitality framed the relationship between food, drink, and diplomacy, and using these categories in historical analysis helps to establish connections between practices previously discussed in isolation.

The case of Poland-Lithuania—because of its geographical location and the array of diplomatic partners—highlighted the existence of two patterns of hospitality, each with different reciprocal obligations. It showed that hospitality (and inhospitality) was inherent in the organization of diplomacy, providing a structure for the official part of the negotiations, meeting customary expectations by different diplomatic partners. Moreover, taken together, the case studies in this dissertation demonstrate how tokens of hospitality, such as food and drink, were used to amplify or de-emphasize political objectives.

Meaningful interpretations of food and drink descriptions in diplomatic scenarios require attentive contextualization. To achieve this, I will revisit the main individual arguments presented throughout the dissertation, not merely summarizing them but exemplifying their significance through another episode. It follows three embassies dispatched from Poland-Lithuania at the beginning of Jan III's reign and Prince Jakub's wedding, which are discussed in detail in Chapter 4 and 5, respectively.

Embassy of 1686

On October 6, 1686, a Muscovite embassy headed by Boris Sheremetev, Governor of Vyatka, arrived in Lviv for the ratification of a peace treaty that had been negotiated with the Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors in Moscow, Krzysztof Grzymułtowski, Voivode of Poznań, and Marcin Ogiński, Grand Chancellor of Lithuania, in spring of the same year.⁷¹⁴ In October, the representatives of the tsars, Ivan V and Peter I, were received only by the burghers of Lviv and kept waiting for a reception audience until December, to their considerable dissatisfaction.⁷¹⁵ This delay can be attributed to several reasons. First, Jan III did not reach the town yet as he had just returned from a military campaign in Moldavia. Although the campaign tied some of the Ottoman forces and made it easier for the Holy League to retake Buda, it turned out to be a fiasco from Poland-Lithuania's perspective.⁷¹⁶ Adding to the serious internal problems within the Commonwealth, financial subsidies from Rome were withheld, and a request for military reinforcements directed to Leopold I remained unanswered.⁷¹⁷ What is more, the passive stance of Muscovy towards the Crimean Khanate, the Sublime Porte's tributary, cast doubt on the

⁷¹⁴ The main goal of the embassy was to see the fastest possible ratification of the treaty. Sheremetev was accompanied by Ivan Chadayev, Protasij Nikiforow, and Ivan Volkov. A grand embassy dispatched from Muscovy typically had three or more ambassadors appointed, who had different responsibilities. The first ambassador, Sheremetev in this case, was of very high social standing and dealt with ceremonial duties. Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe: Ritual and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1648-1725*, 103. For more details on the context and course of the talks of the Polish-Lithuanian legation in Muscovy and the following Muscovite legation in Poland-Lithuania in 1686 see Koczegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680-1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym*, in particular Chapter 6 and 8.

⁷¹⁵ Koczegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680-1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym*, 487–523; Czamańska, "Oswobodziciel czy najeźdźca? Polityka Jana III wobec hospodarstw Mołdawii i Wołoszczyzny," 169–70.

⁷¹⁶ On the campaign and its influence on the relation with Muscovy, see Chapter 7 in Koczegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680-1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym*, 487–523; on the course of the campaign and the involvement of royal units see Zbigniew Hundert, "Komputowe oddziały rodziny królewskiej w kampanii mołdawskiej 1686 roku w świetle rozkazów sprawozdania sejmowego hetmana wielkiego koronnego Stanisława Jana Jabłonowskiego," in *Jarzmo Ligi Świętej? Jan III Sobieski i Rzeczpospolita w latach 1684-1696*, ed. Dariusz Milewski (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2017), 161–86; and for more on Sobieski's policy towards Principality of Moldavia see Ilona Czamańska, "Oswobodziciel czy najeźdźca? Polityka Jana III wobec hospodarstw Mołdawii i Wołoszczyzny," *Roczniki historyczne* 55–56 (1989–1990): 151–77, also Zbigniew Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1994), 380–4.

⁷¹⁷ Koczegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680-1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym*, 489–90.

foundations of the agreement reached in May, thus raising questions about the rationale for the alliance bought at a high cost.⁷¹⁸

Far-reaching concessions to Muscovy were an intermediate result of Poland-Lithuania's involvement in the war with the Ottoman Empire, following Jan Gniński's unsuccessful attempt to renegotiate the terms of the Treaty of Zhuravne (1676).⁷¹⁹ Although securing the eastern border of the Commonwealth was anticipated, in particular by the Lithuanian nobility, the resulting treaty was a set-back compared to the extension of the truce negotiated by Michał Jerzy Czartoryski and Jan Kazimierz Sapieha in 1678, discussed in Chapter 4.⁷²⁰ In short, the Treaty of Perpetual Peace of 1686 sanctioned Muscovy's territorial possession, including the Smolensk voivodship, Left-Bank Ukraine, and Kyiv.⁷²¹ Subsequently, the parties entered into an offensive alliance against the Crimean Khanate and the Porte, pleading to engage in peace talks only alongside Poland-Lithuania's allies from the Holy League. Notably, Muscovy committed to closing the routes of Tatar rides and launch a military campaign in Crimea.⁷²²

Besides the reluctance to ratify a treaty in Poland-Lithuania and a military campaign in progress, the delay in receiving Sheremetev's embassy needs to be attributed to the political process as well—the king could not act on his own in matters regarding alliances, war or peace on behalf of the Commonwealth. The senate council, comprising around thirty senators,

⁷¹⁸ Koczegarow, 522–23.

⁷¹⁹ Grzymułtowski had already made such a diagnosis at one of the Senate Council meetings in 1686, as pointed out by Zbigniew Wójcik. See his "Epilog traktatu Grzymułtowskiego w roku 1686," in *Trudne stulecia. Studia z dziejów XVII i XVIII ofiarowane Profesorowi Jerzemu Michalskiemu w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Łukasz Kądziera, Wojciech Kriegseisen, and Zofia Zielińska (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, 1944), 43.

⁷²⁰ There was a concern (at least among the Crown's nobles) about raising Lithuanian separatism. Wójcik, 33–34, 37; Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 13.

⁷²¹ The article guaranteeing freedom of worship for the Orthodox Church in Poland-Lithuania also provided that the Orthodox bishops in there were to be subordinate to the Metropolitan of Kyiv. Also Catholics in Muscovy were allowed to practice their faith within the confines of their homes, however, due to the lack of a Catholic hierarchy in Muscovy, this article was significantly more favorable to the tsar as it provided a gateway to interference in Poland-Lithuania's internal affairs, which was already recognized at that time. Wójcik, "Epilog traktatu Grzymułtowskiego w roku 1686," 38.

⁷²² The two-month long negotiation and all of the provisions are discussed in detail in Koczegarow, *Rzeczpospolita a Rosja w latach 1680-1686. Zawarcie traktatu o pokoju wieczystym*, 387–483. For the summary, see 478–80.

including both Crown and Lithuanian Chancellors, Jan Wielopolski and Marcejan Ogiński, gathered in Lviv only on December 6.⁷²³ It was also the first time Prince Jakub Sobieski, who fought in the Moldavian campaign, participated in the meeting alongside his father. The anonymous letter to Giovanni Carlo Matesilani, Sobieski's resident at the Holy See, states that "there was great joy for the father and son quietly thus called to the succession of the throne," which was later met with criticism betraying a clear expression of Sobieski's dynastic ambitions.⁷²⁴ The prince sat alongside his father also during the reception audience and at the banquet table, occupying a place of honor before the Muscovite ambassadors.

At the initial senate council meeting, Grzymułtowski presented the relation of the Polish-Lithuanian legation, focusing on the difficulties of conducting the talks in Moscow. And even though the voivode committed to be brief ("having very briefly collected the content of what happened in the capital"), he mentioned the reception and farewell banquets, judging the first one to be "quite magnificent according to their custom," and described attempts to avoid receiving the later as it would mean the negotiations, at least officially, were concluded.⁷²⁵

⁷²³ The exact number of senators attending is not clear, oscillating between 27 and 30. Koczegarow, 567–68; Wójcik, "Epilog traktatu Grzymułtowskiego w roku 1686," 39–42; Erazm Rykaczewski, ed., *Relacje nuncjuszów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, vol. 2 (Poznań-Berlin: Księgarnie B. Behra, 1864), 453. BCzart, 1696 IV, *Za panowania Jana III, Augustów i Stanisława Augusta senatus consilia*, 33, AGAD, APP, 47/1, "Senatus Consilium," in *Zbiór pism politycznych do Historii Panowania Jana III Króla Polskiego Służących. Cześć pierwsza*, 425–28.

⁷²⁴ "wielka stąd była radość ojca i syna cicho niejako tym sposobem powołanego do następstwa tronu," Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjuszów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:453. Matesilani is sometimes referred to as a "Polish" resident, for example by the editors of the relations of nuncios. However, in publications he is described as "Residente della Sacra Maestà del Ré di Polonia," "Residente di S. M." See for example a title page of Stanisław Wojeński, *Compendiosa e veridica relazione di quanto ha operato nella scorsa campagna l'armata del re di Polonia a pro della Santa Lega contro quelle de' Turchi e Tartari nella Podolia* (Bologna: per Giacomo Monti, 1685). On the course of the Senate Council and inclusion of Jakub Sobieski see Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski*, 384; Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 11.

⁷²⁵ "bardzo krótko zebrawszy treść to co się na stolicy działo opiewam gdyż nauczyłem się z doświadczenia: że zawsze niemiłe są długie rozmowy," "Zaraz po audyencji bankiet dość wspinały według ich zwyczaju." Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 11–12; Wójcik, "Epilog traktatu Grzymułtowskiego w roku 1686," 41. For the full text of Grzymułtowski's relation see "Zdanie sprawy przed królem Janem III s poselstwa do Moskwy, zaczętego w roku 1685 a skończonego dnia trzeciego maja 1686 przez Krzysztofa Grzymułtowskiego, wojewodę poznańskiego," in *Źródła do dziejów polski*, vol. 2, here cited pages 3 and 5.

After a discussion—that also included a consideration of whether the ambassadors had gone beyond their instructions during the negotiations in Moscow—the senators eventually agreed that “yielding to an unpleasant necessity and difficult circumstances,” the king “must make the oath publicly,” and the reception audience of the tsars’ representatives was set for December 12.⁷²⁶

The ceremonial of receiving the Muscovite embassy was intended to mirror the ceremonial of receiving Polish-Lithuanian embassies in Moscow. According to the relation meant for Matesilani, the Muscovite ambassadors were “treated in the same manner as ours [Polish-Lithuanian] were in Moscow.”⁷²⁷ Importantly, Sobieski was keen to welcome the tsars’ representatives with respect, considering the reception a means of winning them over “so that they would persuade their tsars to take effective action in the war against Turks and Tatars.”⁷²⁸ According to the list of Sejm accounts from 1688, the cost of receiving Sheremetev’s embassy amounted to 113 584 in *bona moneta*, which was almost 50% of all expenses for foreign legates incurred by the Crown treasury since the previous Sejm in 1685.⁷²⁹ If one is to believe the relation, it was money well spent as the tsars’ representatives were “very content” with how they were received and entertained throughout their entire stay.⁷³⁰ The explicit mention of the kings’ willingness to host Sheremetev’s embassy, and the considerable expenses incurred by the

⁷²⁶ “ulegając przykrej potrzebie i ciężkim okolicznościom,” BCzart, 1696 IV, *Za panowania Jana III, Augustów i Stanisława Augusta senatus consilia*, 33, “przysięgę musi wykonać publiczną,” APP, 47/1, “Senatus Consilium,” in *Zbiór pism politycznych do Historii Panowania Jana III Króla Polskiego Służących. Część pierwsza*, 425. The question of treaty ratification and the reception of the Muscovite embassy was not the only one discussed at the council. In addition, the issues of the Hetman of Zaporozhye Ivan Samoylovych or the convening of the Sejm were raised. Notably, the treaty was formally not ratified by the Sejm during Jan III’s reign.

⁷²⁷ “traktowani zupełnie tak jak nasi byli w Moskwie,” Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjuszów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:455.

⁷²⁸ “wszystko to czynił król dla ich zjednania, i żeby skłonili swych carów do skutecznego działania w wojnie przeciw Turkom i Tatarom.” Rykaczewski, 2:457.

⁷²⁹ AGAD, ASK II, 71, *Porachowanie skarbowe p. Zamoyskiego podskarbiego W.M. z sukcesorami p. Plaskowskiego pisarza starszego skarbu Rzplitej Kor[onnego]*, 21-22; 70, *Supplement rachunków generalnych skarbowych na sejmie anno 1688 produkowanych*, 12.

⁷³⁰ “byli bardzo kontenci i z największym odjechali zadowoleniem ze sposobu jakim byli przyjęci i podejmowani przez cały czas swego pobytu.” Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjuszów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:457.

Crown treasury point to the importance of hospitality in diplomatic practice, which is the overarching theme of this dissertation.

The embassy was lodged in a palace on the outskirts of Lviv, which belonged to Adam Mikołaj Sieniawski, then Ruthenian *starost*.⁷³¹ The reception audience, as well as talks and banquets, were held in the royal townhouse (the Korniakt Palace) located on Market Square. Before Sobieskis' arrival at Lviv, the townhouse had to be adapted to accommodate such a considerable number of guests: adjacent buildings were rented, and doors were made through the dividing walls so that all were connected.⁷³² What is more, decorations, costly furniture, dishes, carpets, and trophies won at the Battle of Vienna were brought from palaces in Zhovkva and Yavoriv.⁷³³ The place where the Muscovite embassy was to be received was prepared to convey a political message, showcasing the host's magnificence and military strength. Arranging such spaces was essential for upholding the reputation of diplomats abroad, particularly when they were not provided lodgings by the receiving party. As mentioned in Chapter 3, during his mission to Poland-Lithuania in 1685, Herman Jakob Czernin von Chudentiz rented a palace at Krakowskie Przedmieście, because of its floor plan and a room suitable to fit a large banquet table. In addition, the palace was furnished with items borrowed from the imperial warehouse in an attempt to emulate the court of Leopold I.

On the day of the reception audience, a royal carriage was sent for the Muscovite ambassadors, and a cavalcade of several hundred walked through town. According to "La Gazette," the entourage of the tsars' representative comprised "six hundred horses and fifteen hundred footmen," which was undoubtedly a considerable number.⁷³⁴ However, it matched senatorial

⁷³¹ Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 8.

⁷³² Czołowski, 9–10.

⁷³³ Czołowski, 10.

⁷³⁴ six cent chevaux & de quinze cents hommes de pied." "La Gazette," no. 52 (1686): 665. (six hundred horses and fifteen hundred footmen). It would be indeed a considerable number, however, not significantly different from the numerosity of embassies dispatched from Poland-Lithuania to Muscovy.

entourages arriving to the Sejm, and did not differ significantly from the size of embassies dispatched from Poland-Lithuania to Muscovy.

Although the reception was held in the royal townhouse in Lviv, and not in the castle in Warsaw during a Sejm, the audience followed—except for the presence of Prince Sobieski—a well-rehearsed scenario described in Chapter 2. Upon arrival, the Muscovite ambassadors were escorted to the audience hall by both Crown and Lithuanian Chancellors, Wielopolski and Ogiński.⁷³⁵ Then, the ambassadors kissed the king's hand, offered bows to Prince Jakub and ensembled senators, and presented their credentials and gifts.⁷³⁶ Wielopolski replied in the king's name to the tsars' representatives. After the audience, they retired to their lodgings.⁷³⁷ Shortly after, by the royal order, they were sent food and drink, and, in particular, sweets and spices.⁷³⁸ As shown in previous chapters, this was the same practice the Polish-Lithuanian embassies would expect before partaking in official negotiations in Moscow.

On December 21, a day before Sobieski's oath to the treaty, a banquet was held in honor of the Muscovite ambassadors. In the biggest hall of the royal townhouse:

The king with Prince Jakub sat at the table under a canopy adorned with precious stones worth over a million. To the right, there was a table for the ambassadors, where sixty prominent Muscovite nobles belonging to the delegation were also seated. Across from them, a table was set for the Polish senators. In other rooms, [Muscovite] courtiers and people of lower rank, numbering several hundred, dined.⁷³⁹

⁷³⁵ Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 10.

⁷³⁶ Mostly furs, fabrics, sabers, also "peculiar fish teeth." Czołowski, 16; Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjusów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:454.

⁷³⁷ Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 13–16; Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjusów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:454–55.

⁷³⁸ Czołowski refers here to a manuscript in his private collection. Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 16.

⁷³⁹ "Król z królewiczem Jakóbem siedział przy stole pod baldachinem ozdobionym drogimi kamieniami na przeszło million wartości. Po prawej stronie był stół dla posłów, u którego siedziało także sześciudziesiąt przedniejszej szlachty moskiewskiej należącej do poselstwa. Naprzeciwko zastawiono stół dla senatorów polskich. W innych pokojach jedli dworzanie poselscy i ludzie niższego rzędu, których do kilki set naliczono. Trwała uczta aż do północy wśród wesołości i ukontentowania gości, i umyślnie wybrano na nią sobotę, żeby lepiej okazać wspaniałość tego dworu w rozlicznych i najradszych ryb gatunkach. Zwyczajem jest u Polaków i Moskalów składać broń w pierwszej sali, gdy jedni lub drudzy mają stanąć przed oblicznością panujących, ale król uwolnił ich od tego obowiązku przez wzgląd że oręż bardzo dobrze wygląda przy boku ludzi, którzy tylko

The separation of the tsars' representatives at a different table, rather than alongside Sobieski, can be explained by the fact that Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors in Moscow were not allowed to share a table with the tsars.⁷⁴⁰ For the same reason, to mark the public and official character of the occasion, exceptionally, no women were at the table—not Marie Casimire, Teresa Kunegunda, or the wives of senators—despite their presence in Lviv.⁷⁴¹ Nevertheless, the ambassadors were entertained over the course of two months by the royal family and dignitaries, attending banquets during which they socialized with men and women. Among the most festive occasions was a New Year celebration hosted by Jakub Sobieski⁷⁴² and a wedding of Marie Casimire's lady-in-waiting.⁷⁴³ In other words, the character of the banquet held on December 21 was guided by diplomatic consideration. It was organized to serve diplomatic purposes: it was meant to honor the guests, following the blueprint of reciprocity, and to broadcast reconciliation between Poland-Lithuania and Muscovy. In such a context, the table was a site of diplomacy—a location for diplomatic interactions—where sharing a meal indicated the former enemies had become allies. The royal weddings banquets examined in Chapter 5, while having a very different dynamic, followed a similar logic. Then, the objective of the occasion dictated a prominent place of women at the high table.

co zawarli przymierze przeciw niewiernym, i pozwolił posłom moskiewskim znajdować się z bronią na ucztach i na posłuchaniu." Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjuszów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:455.

⁷⁴⁰ This rather convincing interpretation is suggested by Aleksander Czołowski. See his *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 17.

⁷⁴¹ Although Marie Casimire did not attend the mentioned banquet, she graciously received Sheremetev and Chaadayev's embassy during an audience, seated on a throne and accompanied by more than eighty ladies-in-waiting. This gesture, similar to the inclusion of Jakub Sobieski in the senate council meeting, was met with criticism as the queen was perceived to be infringing upon the right to participate in an official political process and working towards the establishment of a hereditary monarchy. Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjuszów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:456; Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 21.

⁷⁴² Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 21.

⁷⁴³ Interestingly, during the wedding Sheremetev "gained widespread praise for his lightness and gracefulness in dancing," which can be seen as a proof of his gentlemanly qualities worthy of a diplomat. Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjuszów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:457; Czołowski, *Łzy króla Jana III. Epizod z przeszłości kamienicy królewskiej we Lwowie. Odbitka z "Księgi pamiątkowej ku czci Oswalda Balzera,"* 22.

Furthermore, on December 21, a recognized ceremonial similarity—appearing at the audience and banquet unarmed—was used to amplify a political message appropriate in the circumstances of peacemaking, according to the anonymous author of the relation for Matesilani:

It is a custom among Poles and Muscovites to lay down their weapons in the first room when either party is to appear before the rulers, but the king exempted them from this duty, because the arms look very good beside those who have just formed an alliance against the unbelievers, and he allowed the Muscovite ambassadors to appear with their weapons at the feast and the audience.⁷⁴⁴

The feast lasted until midnight “amidst merriment and contentment.” It is fascinating that “deliberately, Saturday was chosen for it [the feast] to better showcase the splendor of this court with various and rare species of fish.”⁷⁴⁵ Firstly, serving various and rare fish species is directly connected with the splendor of the Sobieskis’ court. Further, organizing a banquet on fast-days was usually avoided, but here the limitations of the so-called Polish fast (*ieiunium Polonicum*) and following dietary prescriptions were clearly seen as a possibility to show mastery in preparing fish: this was a skill praised by foreigners traveling to Poland-Lithuania, for example, by Gaspar de Tende in his *Relation historique de la Pologne* (1686) discussed in Chapter 1. Although the banquet description does not provide much more information on the food, looking into 100 recipes for fish dishes from *Compendium ferculorum*, many of them relying on elaborate illusions achieved with the help of spices, can give an idea of the kind of dishes served to Sheremetev’s embassy.

Considering the fact that Polish-Lithuanian ambassadors were often served fish in Moscow—which was sometimes described as under-seasoned or lacking variety—could this effort to demonstrate culinary refinement in fish dishes be seen as a nudge aimed at the Muscovite representatives?⁷⁴⁶ While it may be tempting to read this episode as such, such interpretations

⁷⁴⁴ Rykaczewski, *Relacje nuncjusów apostolskich i innych osób w Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, 2:455.

⁷⁴⁵ Rykaczewski, 2:455.

⁷⁴⁶ For examples refer to Chapter 4, specifically Tanner’s diary, and the description of the reception banquet following the entry of Grzymułtowski and Ogiński.

have little basis in the sources. Identifying the actors' intentions, and whether these were clear for the guests, is virtually impossible based on available source materials. Putting forth figurative table decorations to honor the guest and the occasion, for instance, during the papal banquet held for Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł in 1681 or the wedding of Prince Sobieski in 1691 discussed in Chapter 4 and 5, are more obvious examples of using foodstuffs to deliver a message. In general, as explicitly stated in descriptions of banquets, expensive ingredients, skillful preparations of dishes, and decorations were meant to convey the splendor of the host, to honor and amuse the guests. As a whole, they were also expressions of specific taste sensibilities.

Diplomatic accounts of banquets followed convention. And while the descriptions of grand eating may often not specify the exact dishes, it was not due to a perceived insignificance of food and drink. Far from it, food and drink had an important place in nonverbal communication, serving specific occasions. During banquets, the abundance and variety of offerings spoke volumes, but there were also certain foodstuffs and drinks that stood for wealth, refinement, and power.

One of the few documents in the collection of legations accounts (*Rachunki poselstw*), that can be connected with the Sobieski's reign—and in particular with the Muscovite embassy in 1686—is a receipt for “various sweets as a treat for Their Excellencies Muscovite Ambassadors” bought in a shop of a certain Barbara Złotorowiczowa.⁷⁴⁷ Apart from actual sweets (candied pies, perfumed cakes, confitures, marzipans, different confectionery, sugar), it also lists sweet wines (*kanar sekt*, *petercymment*), liquors (*alkiermes* vodka made with syrup from Polish cochineals used to make crimson dye), and imported goods such as lemons, capers or olive oil. In addition, the receipt lists papers for plates, torches, and ice sugar—the latter was

⁷⁴⁷ AGAD, ASK 2, 22, “Regestr Słodkości różnych na Tractamenta IchMP.P.Posłów Moskiewskich,” in *Rachunki z podejmowania poselstw obcych 1545-1793*, 47.

likely a high-quality malleable crystal sugar intended for table decorations, as described in the recipe for “ice pulled smooth sugar” in *Moda bardzo dobra*.⁷⁴⁸ It is not possible to determine with certainty whether the items detailed on the receipt from Złotorowiczowa’s shop were sent to the tsars’ representatives by Sobieski’s order right after the reception audience or served during the banquet held on December 21. Nevertheless, the purchase of these items specifically “as a treat for Their Excellencies Muscovite Ambassadors,” once again underscores the importance of hospitality and attention to food and drink in diplomatic practice. As Callières argued in his diplomatic handbook, “the expense laid out upon it [a good table] is not merely honorable but extraordinarily useful if only the negotiator himself knows how to profit from it.”⁷⁴⁹

The dining table was an essential site of diplomacy, which was recognized by the contemporaries in the works of Callières as well as Warszewicki, Hotman, and Wicquefort, but also, as I showed in this dissertation, in diaries of embassies, relations of diplomats’ missions, or even receipts for hosting foreign representatives and local dignitaries abroad. Although the meals themselves were ephemeral and perishable, traces they left in sources invite reflection on the role of material culture in ceremonies, diplomats’ everyday experience, self-fashioning, and symbolic communication.

Having good taste was a desired attribute among diplomats, food and drink was one of the tools at their disposal. In writings, it could become a discursive device for portraying the diplomatic counterpart, highlighting their generosity and politeness, or contrasting uncivil customs and table manners. A well-set table conveyed the refinement and splendor of the host and served as

⁷⁴⁸ Dumanowski and Jankowski, *Moda bardzo dobra smażenia różnych konfektów*, 86.

⁷⁴⁹ Callières, *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes*, trans. A. F. Whyte (Boston-New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1919), 118–19.

a platform for deploying social interactions toward political goals while also making the distinction between familiar and foreign readily apparent.

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Metryka Koronna

Księgi Poselskie (*Libri Legationum*, LL)

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Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (AWr)

Akta majątku Schaffgotschów

Zamek 1251

Relatio compendiosa Serenissima Domina Hedvigis Elisabetha Amalia Comitissae Palatinae Rheni Bavariae et Ducis Serenissimi Principis Jacobi Ludovici Fidei Serenissimi Regis Poloniae Neosponsa de Ingressu eius a Radzieiowice Varsaviam Anno 1691 Mense Martio

Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich (BCzart), Cracow

Teki Naruszewicza (TN)

176, 177, 184

Teki Szackiego (TSz)

494 IV, *Akta za panowania Augusta II Tureckiego w 1713*

1696 IV, *Za panowania Jana III, Augustów i Stanisława Augusta senatus consilia*

2114, *Materiały Brzostowskiego do komisji 1674*

2863 II, *Memoria delle comparse e trattamento ricevuto in Roma dal duca di Razivilla ultimo Ambasciatore pubblico della Corona di Polonia sotto il Pontificato d'Innocenzo XI*

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