

Looking after the former monarch's residence, the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów is also the bearer of the memory of the victor of Vienna. The surviving testimonies of this memory, tangible and intangible, created in the seventeenth century and later, are the subject of research and investigation systematically carried out by the museum staff.¹ Queries are undertaken in Poland and abroad, in museum, archive, library, church and private collections, to increase the knowledge of the Sobieski family's history and iconography.² In parallel, material research and conservation work is being carried out on selected paintings from the museum's collection and in the oldest premises of the palace: the Royal Apartments.³

AN ORIGINAL, A REPLICA OR A COPY – COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE PAINTING TECHNIQUE AND PROVENANCE OF TWO PORTRAITS OF KING JOHN III FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM PALACE AT WILANÓW

1 The literature on the memorabilia related to the Sobieski family (known as the *Sobieszciana*), collected by the owners of the Wilanów palace, is very extensive. See, e.g., W. Fijałkowski, 'Wilanów – laudis et gloriae Joannis III monumentum', in: *Chwała i sława Jana III w sztuce i literaturze XVII–XX w. Katalog Wystawy jubileuszowej z okazji trzzechsetlecia odsieczy wiedeńskiej wrzesień–grudzień 1983*, eds W. Fijałkowski, J. Mieleszko (Warszawa, 1983), p. 41; *Tron pamiątek ku czci „Najjaśniejszego, Niezwyciężonego Jana Sobieskiego Króla Polskiego” w trzzechsetlecie śmierci 1696–1996* (Warszawa, 1996), selected catalogue notes, including *Portret króla Jana III Sobieskiego z synem Jakubem* (cat. no. 4), *Portret królowej Marii Kazimiery Sobieskiej z córką Teresą Kunegundą* (cat. no. 5), ed. B. Kamińska; *Taca ze sceną triumfalnego wyjazdu Jana III i Marii Kazimiery do Krakowa* (cat. no. 108), ed. M. Żukowska; *Zespół sześciu butli puzdrowych w kuferku* (cat. no. 124), ed. B. Szelegejd; *A. Kwiatkowska, Toaletka królowej Marii Kazimiery* (Warszawa, 2008), pp. 38–43; *Ku czci króla Jana III*, intr. and ed. M. Gołąbek (Warszawa, 2008).

2 M. Gołąbek, M. Kunicki-Goldfinger, 'Sobieskiego kręgi pamięci. Dzieła sztuki, miejsca i zwykle pamiątki jako ślady legendy Sobieskiego – rekonesans włoski', in: *Primus inter pares. Pierwszy wśród równych, czyli opowieść o królu Janie III* (Warszawa, 2013), pp. 218–227; Z. Flisowska, 'Dzieła sztuki i pamiątki związane z rodziną Sobieskich – kwerenda włoska', *Studia Wilanowskie*, vol. 25, 2018, pp. 117–122. The extensive search for the project entitled 'The Sobieskis' Votive Offerings' was carried out between 2012 and 2018 by Jerzy Żmudziński. The results of his research and findings were made available in 2022 on the museum's website, in the Passage of Knowledge: wilanow-palac.pl/wota_sobieskich.html.

3 E. Modzelewska, A. Pawlak, A. Selerowicz, W. Skrzeczanowski, J. Marczak, 'Use of the LIBS method in oil paintings examination based on examples of analyses conducted at the Wilanow Palace Museum', *Proceedings of SPIE – The International Society for Optical Engineering*, vol. 8790, 2013; D. Walawender-Musz, A. Pawlak, 'Wszystkie oblicza władcy. Przedsmak syntezy w spojrzeniu wielorakim', *Studia Wilanowskie*, vol. 21, 2014, pp. 133–152; M. Gołąbek, 'Sur deux portraits de Jean III préservés au Château de Versailles. Les chemins de la gloire et de l'iconographie royale', *Annales des Académie Polonaise des Sciences*, vol. 16 (Paris–Varsovie, 2014), pp. 29–47; A. Pawlak, 'La lumière révélatrice. Qu'avons-nous appris sur les portraits du roi Jean III Sobieski grâce aux analyses utilisant le rayonnement optique?', *Annales des Académie Polonaise des Sciences*, vol. 16 (Paris–Varsovie, 2014), pp. 48–62; E. Modzelewska, A. Pawlak, W. Skrzeczanowski, 'Badanie obrazów sztalugowych metodą LIBS z wykorzystaniem

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In the framework of the Museum's purchasing policy, a category of particularly sought-after objects are the *Sobiesciana* in the form of paintings, prints and craftworks. Significant among these are the portraits of the king, the number and variety of which, as well as their geographical range, eloquently show that the demand for images of the victor from under Vienna once was great and versatile indeed. Among the group of works that illustrate Sobieski's own skilful propaganda and image-making policy is the portrait purchased for the museum's collection at the end of 2021, which was given the working title of the 'London portrait' because of the previous place of its storage.

It is a portrait of John III described as the work of an imitator of Jan Tricius, dating to the turn of the seventeenth century. The painting previously belonged to a private person residing in London, and the institution that mediated communication with the museum regarding its acquisition was the Polish Embassy in the UK.⁴ During an exchange of correspondence with an employee of the embassy, basic data was

analizy statystycznej', *Prace Instytutu Elektrotechniki*, vol. Z266, 2014, pp. 63–86; A. Rafalska-Łasocha, W. Łasocha, E. Modzelewska, A. Pawlak, K. Łuberda-Durnaś, 'Badania zapraw i bieli w warstwach malarskich w dziełach artystów dworskich króla Jana III Sobieskiego za pomocą rentgenowskiej dyfraktometrii proszkowej (XRDP)', *Opuscula Musealia*, vol. 23, 2015, pp. 9–20; A. Rafalska-Łasocha, W. Łasocha, A. Pawlak, S. Svorová-Pawelkiewicz, J. Dranka, M. Grzesiak-Nowak, 'Badania μ -XRPD i SEM-EDS pigmentów i zapraw w trzech obrazach z kolekcji Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów', *Opuscula Musealia*, vol. 23, 2015, pp. 33–43; J. Dranka, *Wykorzystanie mikrodryfrakcji rentgenowskiej w badaniach obiektów dziedzictwa kulturowego*, B.Sc thesis, Jagiellonian University (Kraków, 2015); A. Pawlak, W. Skrzeczanowski, K. Czyż, 'LIBS, optical and multivariate analyses of selected 17th-century oil paintings from the Museum of King Jan III's palace at Wilanów', *Lasers in the Conservation of Artworks XI*, eds P. Targowski et al., Proceedings of LACONA XI, 2017, pp. 191–204. In 2022, conservation and restoration work was undertaken on the canvas paintings from the plafond and friezes of the King's Library. This work follows on from the comprehensive restoration of the royal apartments in the main body of the palace. Thanks to the research, it was possible to identify very precisely the technological construction of the tondos *Allegory of Theology* and *Allegory of Philosophy* ascribed to Claude Callot, as well as smaller medallions with portraits of scholars and artists. The works and their results will be discussed in a publication prepared by the Museum. Research was also conducted on the workshop of other painters associated with the court of John III, namely Jan Reisner and Martin Altomonte, see E. Modzelewska, K. Pyzel, 'Jan Reisner i jego „Kazanie Jana Chrzciciela” z kościoła wizytek w Krakowie', *Studia Wilanowskie*, vol. 25, 2018, pp. 177–201; E. Modzelewska, '„Św. Roch odwiedzający chorych” – tajemnice warsztatu malarskiego Martina Altomontego. Badania, technika, analiza porównawcza i konserwacja obrazu', *Studia Wilanowskie*, vol. 27, 2020, pp. 35–59; K. Górecka, J. Szpor, M. Kozarzewski, 'To reach the original: technique and materials of the late 17th-century Italian painter of large-scale battle scenes, Martino Altomonte', in: *Ground Layers in European Painting, 1550–1750* (London, 2021), pp. 55–63. A wealth of comparative material is thus being collected to help identify paintings of undetermined authorship created within the circle of King John's court.

- 4 The Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów would like to thank the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in London, particularly Mrs Clarinda Calma, for aiding the Museum in contacting the owner of the portrait and for supporting the works needed to transport the painting to Poland.



Fig. 1

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (Wil.6312), the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów



Fig. 2

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961), the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów

gathered about the portrait, its previous owner and the circumstances under which he had purchased the painting. From 2002, the portrait belonged to Volodymyr Luciv (1929–2019), a singer and bandura player of Ukrainian origin, settled in the UK since 1948.⁵ The initiative to sell the work to the museum came from the artist's widow, Helen Luciv. According to her information, Volodymyr Luciv cultivated the memory of his homeland, was interested in the common history of Poland and Ukraine, and in his London home collected relevant memorabilia, including Polish, one of which was the portrait of King John III. Luciv had bought it during an auction at Sotheby's in London. The materials sent to the museum with the painting include the auction house's catalogue, which includes a photo of the portrait in question, accompanied by basic data

⁵ Volodymyr Luciv (1929–2019) was born in Nadwórna (today: Nadvirna in the Ivano-Frankivsk oblast of Ukraine). He left his homeland during the Second World War. He soon became interested in playing the bandura and joined Mykola Leontovych's bandura band. He subsequently studied singing at Trinity College of Music in London and at the Conservatory of St Cecilia in Rome. He began his international career in the 1960s, performing under the artistic pseudonym Tino Valdi. During his long career, he was an ambassador of Ukrainian culture, popularising the musical heritage of his homeland around the world. The artist's biographic note provided with the disc *The Winding Path* (2015) states that Luciv was interested in art and was a collector.

and a brief description: 'Follower of Jan Tricius; PORTRAIT OF JOHN SOBIESKI OF POLAND (1629–1696); oil on canvas, in a feigned stone niche [...]'.⁶

The group of eighteen royal portraits held in the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, coming both from the historical collection and from later acquisitions, includes no painting with an iconography similar to the London portrait. During an analysis of the work offered for purchase, a surprising similarity was noted between the London portrait and the so-called "portrait against the background of a battle" (Wil.1961) belonging to the Wilanów collection. Despite significant differences in composition and expression, the king's face in both depictions is almost identical: the manner of depiction, the age of the sitter, the expression of his gaze, the arrangement of the hair and moustache, the drawing of the ear and mouth betray a common source of inspiration. In this context, the London painting is not only another interesting example of the wide reach of the iconography of John III in Europe, but also a source of questions about the source of this striking resemblance.

The exceptional convergence of details of the physiognomy can be taken as a clue when examining the work methods of workshops specialising in portrait painting. The repetition of these elements in a certain group of works may also speak in favour of them being made by the same workshop or a collaborating one at approximately the same time. In this case, the portrait would be the result of work divided into stages, carried out by several artists, one artist would be responsible for the physiognomic likeness, the others would do other parts of the work, and the whole would be derived from the competence of the workshop and the expectations of the recipient. The fundamental question remains whether the two works are linked by the persons of the patrons or creators, or whether they were created independently of each other.

In view of the difficulties with attribution, dating and the often-unknown origin of many royal images that have survived to the present day,⁷ a comparison of two portraits of the ruler with separate compositions but very similar facial features can be an important contribution to research into the iconography of King John III. The London portrait purchased for the museum's collection was included in the plan for material,

6 Sotheby's, *Old master and early British paintings*, Olympia London, 16 April 2022, p. 41, cat. no. 245. An archival page with the portrait of John III put up for auction is available: www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2002/old-master-paintings-and-early-british-paintings-w02803/lot.245.html (accessed 21 April 2023).

7 The problem of the lack of thorough contemporary research into the work of painters working for John III and his court was highlighted by Przemysław Mrozowski, who questioned the validity of intuitive attributions such as, for example, 'a French painter of the seventeenth century'. Cf. P. Mrozowski, 'Ikonomia królowej Marii Kazimiery – wstępny zarys problematyki', in: *Maria Kazimiera Sobieska (1641–1716). W kręgu rodziny, polityki i kultury*, eds A. Kalinowska, P. Tyska (Warszawa, 2016), p. 250, note 7.

iconographic and historical research.⁸ The painting came to the museum at the end of 2021 and was entered in the museum inventory under the number Wil.6312.⁹ In 2022, it was subjected to conservation research, as well as physical and chemical tests which other images of the king and members of his family had already undergone.¹⁰ Iconographic and archival research of both canvases was also initiated at the same time.

The purchased portrait is a bust of the king in an carved oval frame. The sitter's face is shown *en face*, with a slight turn to the left, and the gaze directed straight ahead. The king is dressed in a *karacena* scale armour with pauldrons and a gorget protecting the neck, covered partly by a red mantle (*delia*) lined with dark fur and fastened with an elongated clasp decorated with precious stones. The coat, arranged asymmetrically, reveals the left arm of the sitter, covered by a pauldron in the form of a stylised lion mask with strips of leather (*pteryges*) partially visible. A leather belt with buckle is mounted vertically on the armour next to the pauldron, connecting the breastplate to the back plate. The king is depicted as a man in his prime, with a high forehead and short hair, slightly longer at the back, parted on the right side. Apart from the scale armour, an attribute of the soldier of the "Sarmatian" culture in Poland, no insignia of power are present in the painting to identify the sitter as a king or to suggest the meaning of the portrait. Conspicuous elements of iconography: the scale armour, mantle, rich clasp, pauldrons and strips of the *pteryges* are found in many painted

8 Consideration of the offer took place during the COVID-19 pandemic. The preceding purchase proved to be complicated and time-consuming, and any *in situ* inspection was impossible. In this situation, it was decided to work with a painting conservator working in London, Radosław Chocha. An on-site evaluation of the portrait and consultation with museum staff at all stages of the bid analysis formed the basis for the decision to purchase the painting.

9 *Portrait of Jan III*, inv. no. Wil.6312, portrait, oil on canvas, 75 × 61.1 × 1.6 cm (painting); 105.1 × 89.1 × 9.7 cm (painting in the frame). The previous attribution, which identifies the painting as the work of a follower of Tricius, was maintained, same as dating the work to the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. One of the aims of the ongoing programme of research into royal paintings in the Wilanów collection is to verify the basic data of the portrait.

10 Physical, chemical and conservation research has been carried out since 2011. The following 17 images, of the king and his family members, were studied until 2023: *Portrait of Marie Casimire Sobieska with her Daughter Teresa Kunegunda*, inv. no. Wil.1152; *Portrait of John III Sobieski with his Son Jakub*, inv. no. Wil.1154; *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (replica of the painting Wil.1348), inv. no. Wil.1197; *Portrait of Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska*, inv. no. Wil.1200; *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (the so-called *Portrait [...] in a Laurel Wreath*), inv. no. Wil.1348; *Equestrian Portrait of John III Sobieski*, inv. no. Wil.1685; *Equestrian Portrait of Marie Casimire Sobieska*, inv. no. Wil.1686; *Portrait of Marie Casimire Sobieska with her Children*, inv. no. Wil.1950; *Portrait of John III Sobieski*, attributed to Tricius, inv. no. Wil.1953; *Portrait of Konstanty Władysław Sobieski*, inv. no. Wil.1959; *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle*, inv. no. Wil.1961; *Portrait of John III Sobieski in a Leopard Skin*, inv. no. Wil.6024; *Portrait of John III Sobieski*, inv. no. Wil.6025; *Portrait of Kara Mustafa*, inv. no. Wil.6026; Alexandre-François Desportes (attributed), *Portrait of Henri Albert de la Grange d'Arquien*, inv. no. Wil.6184; *Portrait of John III Sobieski*, inv. no. Wil.6312; the so-called *Private Portrait of John III Sobieski*, late seventeenth century (?), private collection.

and printed portraits of John III. In the classification of portraits of the king given by Janina Ruszczycówna, the components discussed above are found in the first group she indicated and described:¹¹

The king, and previously the hetman, as an ancient hero, in a *karacena* [armour], pauldrons with a gargoyle and other insignia of the armament of the late Roman commander and with accompanying elements of the Polish costume and custom such as the *delia*, the ceremonial mace and the short sabre. This is the most widespread type, examples of it are available from 1673 to the end of [the king's] life, as well as posthumously. This group would include the representation of the king in a bust, full and 3/4 figure as well as equestrian portraits with predominant features of a Roman hero.¹²

It is noteworthy that the author identifies the type of images with the above iconography, which includes the London portrait, as the earliest one, with origins dating back to before the coronation.¹³ As an exemplary image in this series, Ruszczycówna points to the portrait of John III in the collection of the Bayerisches Staatsgemäldesammlungen in Munich,¹⁴ one of the artistically best representations of the king, exuding the strength and vitality of the sitter. Traces of this expression are discernible in the London portrait and other representations close to it, which shall be further discussed below.

In the course of research on the iconography of the purchased portrait, it was possible to select a group of images with a very similar composition and similarly treated details. First of all, it is important to note an engraving by Robert White printed in 1684 in his own engraving workshop operating in London.¹⁵ The engraving, like the painted portrait, shows the king in bust,

11 The effort to classify the king's portraits was undertaken in the early 1980s by Janina Ruszczycówna, see J. Ruszczycówna, 'Ikonomia Jana III Sobieskiego. Wybrane zagadnienia', *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie*, vol. 26, 1982, pp. 209–307. The systematisation of graphic designs was carried out by Hanna, *Jan III Sobieski w grafice XVII i XVIII w.* (Warszawa, 1987); ead., *Lew Lechistanu* (Warszawa, 2010). The portraits of the king, particularly on the occasion of the successive anniversaries of the Battle of Vienna, as well as the studies and exhibition catalogues published at the time, were described by, among others, M. Karpowicz, M. Morka, J.T. Petrus, vol. Pocheć-Perkowska and W. Voisé. The bibliography on the subject is extremely rich, and images of the king created over the centuries are very numerous. Cf., e.g., M. Karpowicz, chapters *Mitologiczne kostiumy Marysieńki* and *Portrety dzieci*, in: id., *Sekretne treści warszawskich zabytków* (Warszawa, 1976), pp. 88–98, 161; id., *Jerzy Eleuter Siemiginowski, malarz polskiego baroku* (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk, 1974); T. Pocheć-Perkowska, *Portrety Jana III Sobieskiego i jego rodziny. Katalog wystawy z okazji 300-lecia Wilanowa* (Warszawa, 1983); J.T. Petrus, 'Nad "Portretami Sobieskich" w związku z katalogiem wilanowskiej wystawy', *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki*, vol. 46, 1984, no. 2–3, pp. 297–310; id., 'O prywatnych portretach Jana III', *Folia Historiae Artium*, vol. 21 1985, pp. 135–143; M. Morka, *Polski nowożytny portret konny i jego europejska geneza* (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków, 1966).

12 Ruszczycówna, *Ikonomia Jana III*, p. 212.

13 Ibid., pp. 233–236.

14 Ibid., p. 236.

15 Widacka, *Lew Lechistanu*, no. 32, pp. 96–97.

enclosed in an oval frame. In the print, the frame is decorated with a finely rendered braid of laurel leaves tied with a ribbon; in the portrait, this motif is considerably simplified. At the bottom, below the frame, there are additional elements: the figure of the king on horseback as the slayer of Turks, placed in a small oval medallion, as well as a signature (in English) identifying the portrayed man as Sobieski and a stone plinth with a branch of leaves and flowers on it. The arrangement of the figure of king inside the frame is essentially analogous to the painted portrait, apart from the obvious differences due to the different technique of execution. The composition of the engraving is not inverted in relation to the painting; this, however, does not resolve the question of the order in which the two works were created. Moreover, in White's other extant drawings and engravings depicting the same sitters, the composition stays the same, without the mirror image.¹⁶ Particularly interesting is the information given in the caption beneath the printed portrait of John III, after a passage identifying the person: 'The most Heroic and Victorious / JOHN the IIIrd KING of POLAND / [...]', the source of the original work is given: '**taken from the Originall** [highlighted by the authors] & Sold by R. White in Bloomsbury Market 1684'. In a note concerning the engraving, Hanna Widacka explains that it is not known which painted original White had used, but as an experienced portraitist he usually relied on his own drawings made *ad vivum*.¹⁷ A review of a number of Robert White's works made available in the British Museum's on-line catalogue makes it clear that making engravings based on the original was not the artist's standard formula.¹⁸ Some engravings of his authorship, however, are clearly annotated '*ad vivum*',¹⁹ suggesting different circumstances for the acquisition of the original image than the phrase 'taken from the Originall'. Nevertheless, the reliability of the engraved portraits produced by White was recognised.²⁰ It can be assumed that the presence

16 E.g. portraits by John Edwards (drawing inv. no. Gg.1.487, prints inv. no. P.7.221 and 1853,0112.2078) and Kenneth Mackenzie (drawing inv. no. Gg.1.480, print inv. no. P.7.41), all available in the British Museum online catalogue: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection> (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).

17 The author concludes her discussion with the following words: 'It is difficult to say whether this was also the case here'; see Widacka, *Lew Lechistanu*, p. 96.

18 He appears, among others, in portrait engravings by Paul Chamberlin ('from an Original Drawing', inv. no. 1872.1012.4387) or Titus Oates ('This is the true Originall taken from the Life done for HEN: BROME and RIC: CHISWELL. All others are Counterfeit', inv. no. P.5.206). Both of the prints indicated were printed in other engraving workshops, not by White. Available in the British Museum online catalogue: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection> (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).

19 The engravings are signed alternatively: 'R. White ad vivum delin. et sculp.' or 'R. White ad vivum sculp.' or 'R. White ad vivum'; review based on engravings available on the British Museum website: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection> (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).

20 Already in the year of the artist's death, the engraver and antiquarian George Vertue expressed a very complimentary opinion of his skill in this regard: 'He ought to be

of a second scene, showing Sobieski on horseback, at the bottom of the engraving was intended to emphasise the authenticity and up-to-datedness of the image of the monarch, whose name became famous after the 1683 victory at Vienna. In the extensive graphic production following the victory, including as a response to interest in one of its main protagonists, many of the images of John III were made with a considerable degree of conventionality and over-interpretation. White's engraving stands out against their background for the congruence of both facial features (the distinctive moustache and hairstyle) and costume, corresponding to the convention adopted by the king for his official and widespread (as indicated by Ruszczycówna) portraits. The question regarding the 'Originall' mentioned in the caption of the printed portrait remains unanswered. It seems most likely that the engraving was produced on the basis of a painted image having the status of a faithful portrait of the king, which came to London through diplomatic exchange.²¹ It may be of some significance for the consideration of the iconographic sources of the objects in question that the engraved portrait of John III's successor, Augustus II, made by White on the basis of the same plate, has no annotation stating that an original image had been used.²² We therefore accept as a hypothesis that the portrait purchased by the Wilanów Museum belongs to a type of the royal image that appeared in the British Isles through an official exchange between the courts of Warsaw and London and had the status of a credible likeness of the king. If, additionally, we consider the interest in the person of John III Sobieski in the British Isles, evidence of which was preserved not only in the London press but also in private correspondence and literary works, our London portrait can be assumed to be a particularly interesting research object.²³

remembered as a singular artist in his way, having so vast a genius in drawing and engraving a face, and make the picture so like the original', see A. Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain 1603–1689*, exhibition catalogue, London, British Museum, 8 June – 20 September 1998 (London, 1998), p. 203. The positive assessment of the reliability of White's engraved portraits was also maintained later, cf. '[...] his success in taking likenesses procured him great reputation, indeed his drawings were much superior to any done at this time', see 'Robert White', in: *Calcographia: the Printsellers chronicle and collectors guide to the knowledge and value of engraved British portraits by James Caulfield* (London, 1814), p. 62; 'A large proportion of them [plates] were executed ad vivum, the rest from pictures by Lely, Kneller, Riley, Beale, and others, and they have always been greatly valued for their accuracy and likeness'. Cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sidney Lee, vol. 61: *Whitchord–Williams* (London, 1900), p. 73, after archive.org/details/dictionaryofnati61stepuoft/page/72/mode/2up (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).

- 21 European courts exchanged gifts between themselves in the form of portraits of crowned persons. It is known that the effigies of Jan III reached Florence, among other places, by way of official exchange, where they are still to be found today.
- 22 E. Łomnicka-Żakowska, *Graficzne portrety Augusta II i Augusta III Wettynów w zbiorach Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* (Warszawa, 1997), no. 19, pp. 72–73.
- 23 Cf. M. Mirecka, "Monarchy as it should be"? *British perceptions of Poland–Lithuania in the long seventeenth century*, doctoral dissertation, University of St Andrews (St Andrews, 2014), pp. 218–219, after research-repository.standrews.ac.uk/bitstream/han-



Fig. 3

Robert White, *John III Sobieski*, 1684, National Museum in Cracow, Czartoryski Museum Branch, Print Room



Fig. 4

Paul van Somer (Somerens) II, *John III Sobieski*, ca. 1684, British Museum

White's work is distinguished by the medallion below the portrait's frame, depicting the king against the backdrop of the battle as the slayer of Turks, which is absent from other English prints. If it is assumed that the portrait's manner itself draws on iconography considered by Ruszczyćówna to have been early, this medallion could be an updating motif, and given the year of the engraving's publication, 1684, the battle depicted would probably refer to the relief of Vienna.

A mention should be made of other printed likenesses of John III produced by London engravers drawing on the same source as White, which differ in some respects from the print discussed above. This group includes four printed portraits of John III, the first two of which show the greatest

dle/10023/6044/MartynaMireckaPhDThesis.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y (accessed 20 Feb. 2023); A. Kalinowska, M. Mirecka, 'Bohater czy malkontent? Odbiór Jana Sobieskiego w Wielkiej Brytanii w świetle „London Gazette”, 1665–1674', in: *Marszałek i hetman koronny Jan Sobieski*, ed. D. Milewski (Warszawa, 2014), pp. 295–315; H. Osiecka-Samsonowicz, 'O pierwszym pomniku hetmana Jana Sobieskiego', in: *Jan III Sobieski. Historia, dziedzictwo, pamięć*, eds B. Dybaś, A. Ziemiańska (Warszawa, 2022), pp. 181–200.

similarities. These are the engraving next to the title page of a text published in London in 1684 entitled *Scanderbeg redivivus. An historical account of the life & actions of the most victorious prince John III K. of Poland, containing an exact and succinct series of affairs from his cradle, to the present day*. The author of the king's likeness was Frederick Hendrik van Hove, who had a print from his plate made in the engraving workshop of Thomas Malthus in London, a publisher of this volume.²⁴ Similarly to White's engraving, the portrait is set in a decorated oval frame, but the floral ornamentation is treated much more sparingly. Instead, the schematically rendered leaves enclosing the frame at the top and the bottom are similar to those seen in the painted portrait. The second image, probably engraved around 1684 in the workshop of Paul van Somer (Somerer) II (?–1694), also in an oval shape, has no decorative frame or additional elements such as the equestrian image of the king in a medallion and the plinth, and it bears only a text identifying the portrayed monarch.²⁵ The next two examples remain in close relation to White's work, but are distinguished by headgear being added to the depiction of the king. The prints were made in ca. 1680 (?) by an anonymous engraver in the London engraving workshops of Edward Cooper (active 1682–1725), and François Place (1643–1728); after 1683, the composition is reversed with respect to the other representations. Both prints are accompanied by brief comments concerning the designs on the basis of which they were made, on the engraving printed at Cooper's: 'Taken from the Originall sent to y^e Duchess of Mazareene / Sold by E. Cooper at y^e 3 Pidgeons in / Bedford Street',²⁶ and on the print made at Place's: 'After the latest originall'.²⁷ In the context of the considerations regarding the original for the London portrait, the annotation next to the first of the engravings is interesting. The aforementioned 'Duchess of Mazareene' is certainly Hortensia Mancini, niece of Cardinal Jules Mazarin, who arrived in London in 1675 and soon became an official

24 *Rzeczpospolita w dobie Jana III*. Catalogue of the exhibition held by the Royal Castle, Central Archives of Historical Records and National Library, September–October 1983 (Warszawa, 1983), cat. no. 549, p. 207, Fig. 118; Widacka, *Lew Lechistanu*, no. 29, pp. 90–91. On the pedestal under the portrait, an inscription printed from a plate: 'The most Heroick and Victorious / IOHN the III.^d KING of POLAND etc. / London printed for vol. Malthus at y^e sun. In y^e. poul. / F.H. van Hove sculp.'

25 H. Widacka, *Jan III Sobieski*, p. 119, no. 112, fig. on p. 98. For data on the artist, see A. Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain*, p. 231. Under the portrait, an inscription printed from a plate: 'Joannes III King of Poland, Great / Duke of Lithuania, Ukraina etc. / P.V. Somer. Sc.'

26 Widacka, *Lew Lechistanu*, no. 11, pp. 54–55. Cf. Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain 1603–1689*, pp. 277–278.

27 Widacka, *Lew Lechistanu*, no. 23, pp. 78–79. Mirecka considers this copy to be by John Smith (1652–1743), see Mirecka, 'Monarchy as it should be'?, p. 220, Fig. 4.3. For data on Smith, see Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain*, p. 239.

mistress to King Charles II Stuart.²⁸ The prints listed are not all portraits of King John III that came off the printing presses in the capital of England. The above group is completed by two more images, published by Hanna Widacka, which in terms of the manner of representing the king, draw on other originals. These are a depiction of John III appearing on a tableau with portraits of the defenders of Vienna and a portrait of the king by Richard Thomson printed in his own engraving workshop in London.²⁹

Regarding the paintings where the representation of the sitter is similar to the London portrait, it has been possible to acquire more knowledge of four works to date. These are two images from the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw,³⁰ a portrait in a private collection and a painting belonging to the National Museum in Cracow (later work, executed in the nineteenth century).³¹ The first of the portraits held by the National Museum in Warsaw (inv. no. MP 4996 MNW) faithfully repeats the composition of the London painting, but is characterised by craftsmanship of a weaker quality. The image-building elements are painted in strong and flat areas of colour; the shapes are not very dimensional and are rendered schematically. Particularly glaring is the manner of depicting the face, especially the deeply and contoured features. The second portrait (inv. no. MP 4990 MNW³²) seems even weaker from the artistic perspective, which may be the result of later, not always successful interventions and extensive damage to the original paint layer. It shows some deviations from the 'canonical' version of the London images, which include the portrait purchased by the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, a print by White and the painting from the National Museum in Warsaw (inv. no. MP 4996 MNW). The differences

28 At this point it is worth mentioning that the king of England, a long-time admirer of Hortensia Mancini, was Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska's godfather. During her baptism on 19 July 1676, he was represented by the voivode of Ruthenia Stanisław Jabłonowski, see A. Skrzypietz, *Królewscy synowie – Jakub, Aleksander i Konstanty Sobiescy* (Katowice, 2011), p. 41. The engraving may therefore have been modelled on a painting sent as a diplomatic gift.

29 See Widacka, *Lew Lechistanu*, cat. no. 144, p. 332–333, cat. no. 89, pp. 212–213.

30 Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski, the King of Poland* (MP 4996 MNW), oval in a rectangle, copy, eighteenth century, Poland, size 75 × 65 cm; Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (MP 4990 MNW), Polish painter, copy, after 1675, 79 × 65 cm.

31 *Portrait of John III Sobieski*, 75 × 61 cm, Cracow, 1834–1839 (?). The author of the painting is Rafał Hadziewicz (1803–1886). The portrait is on loan from the National Museum in Kielce and is on display at the National Museum in Cracow. On the museum's website, a note about the painting states that it comes from the collection of Stanisław Ursyn Rusiecki: <https://zbiory.mnk.pl/pl/wyniki-wyszukiwania/katalog/342278> (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).

32 The portrait is on loan from the National Museum in Warsaw held by the Royal Castle in Warsaw. It is on display in the Crown Prince Apartments, in a group of Sobieski family portraits.



Fig. 5

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski, the King of Poland*, eighteenth century (MP 4996 MNW), National Museum in Warsaw.



Fig. 6

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski*, ca. 1710, the Pininski Foundation Liechtenstein

the arrangement of the outer garment, and the slightly different treatment of the hairstyle and facial features. However, it is certainly based on the same pattern as the other images in question. Both portraits are mentioned by Janina Ruszczyćówna in her study on the iconography of John III. One of them is mentioned there only in the context of comparing the similarity of the king's features to another portrait from the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw (inv. no. MP 130 766 MNW). Ruszczyćówna also cites information that before the painting entered the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw, it had been purchased by its previous owner in Sweden.³³ The second portrait only appears in the illustrative material accompanying the article.

The third royal portrait of the London type known to date³⁴ is a painting from a private collection, purchased by the present owner at an auction

33 Ruszczyćówna, *Ikongrafia Jana III*, p. 264. It is worth noting that the author describes the portrait inv. no. MNW 735 531 (currently inv. no. MP 4996 MNW), while the photo which is supposed to match the description shows another portrait: inv. no. MP 4990 MNW. According to the current data obtained from the National Museum in Warsaw, the painting which, according to the former owner's account, was purchased in Sweden, is the one with no. inv. MP 4996 MNW, the first of those described above.

34 Further enquiries are ongoing. Our search encompasses, among others, collections in Great Britain.

in Ireland. In terms of composition, this work is very similar to the one acquired by the Wilanów Museum; analogies can be seen especially in the manner of representing the sitter, particularly the face. A different treatment was given to the lower part of the *delia* mantle, the outer garment, which is not lined with fur but shown like an edge turned inside out. The brooch was also rendered differently: in the portrait from the private collection, it is an elongated, narrow band inlaid with stones, reaching up to the neck. The method of painting is different as well. The fourth painting was also painted according to a common pattern, but much later, by Rafał Hadziewicz (1803–1886).³⁵ It should therefore be seen as an interesting addition to the other three paintings probably created in the era of John III or shortly thereafter (by mid-eighteenth century). Two of these were at least temporarily abroad, in Sweden and Ireland, which is worth juxtaposing with the fact that the portrait purchased came from London, where a series of engravings with a similar iconographic formula were produced in the seventeenth century.

Also acquired in London was the aforementioned *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961), acquired for the Wilanów collection in 1967 from a private owner.³⁶ The portrait shows the king down to his knees, facing $\frac{3}{4}$ to the left, with his head turned slightly to the right. The king's figure is curved into an S-shape in the Mannerist mode. The ruler is dressed in a Polish outfit: a golden, patterned *żupan* fastened with a row of double buttons. A red *delia* with a black fur collar fastened with a rich oblong clasp is draped over his shoulders. The upper part of the armour gorget is visible around the neck, as in the image of the king from the London portrait. In his right hand, the king holds a ceremonial mace leaning against his hip. With his left hand, supported at his side, he holds up the edges of a richly draped *delia*. The king's head in both portraits has an identical arrangement, which may indicate that the makers of both images used the same pattern or that both portraits derive from the same workshop. The analogous shapes of different parts of the face, including the mouth and moustache, the hairstyle, the lights in the pupils of the eyes, are also

35 An object note is available in the digital catalogue of the collections of the National Museum in Cracow, zbiory.mnk.pl/en/wyniki-wyrokowania/katalog/342278 (accessed 20 Feb. 2023). The composition is not enclosed in an oval, but fills the entire space of the canvas, so that it shows elements that are missing in other paintings (the lower, braided parts of the strips of *pteryges*).

36 The portrait was published in, among others, exhibition catalogues: T. Pocheć-Perkowska, *Portrety Jana III Sobieskiego i jego rodziny. Katalog wystawy z okazji 300-lecia Wilanowa* (Warszawa, 1983), cat. no. 5, p. 32; *Chwała i sława Jana III w sztuce i literaturze XVII–XX w. Katalog Wystawy jubileuszowej z okazji trzechsetlecia odsieczy wiedeńskiej wrzesień–grudzień 1983*, eds W. Fijałkowski, J. Mieleszko (Warszawa, 1983), cat. no. 3, pp. 129–130; *Dary i zakupy Muzeum w Wilanowie 1962–1992* (Warszawa, 1992); *Malarstwo, Portrety Jana III i jego rodziny*, no. 2.

comparable. The two paintings, however, differ in the clothing of the sitter and in the context. In the background of the portrait that has been owned by the Wilanów museum since 1967, scenes of the ongoing battle are depicted on both sides of the figure. On the left, there is a skirmish of the cavalry, on the right, the ramparts and church towers of the besieged city. The background is greyish blue, clouded over the king's head. As in the London portrait, the royal insignia are also absent, the only elements defining the figure are the mace – a mark of the military commander – and the battle, referring to the function and deeds of the sitter. Researchers studying this painting speculated that the portrait may have been painted before Sobieski's election. No graphic pattern that repeats the composition described above has been found so far; certain motifs can only be pointed to as possible inspirations.

The painting was purchased for the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw in early May 1967 and was intended for the Wilanów Palace, then a branch of the National Museum.³⁷ After the separation of the institutions in 1995, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* remained in the Wilanów collection. The enquiry established that the painting was purchased for the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw from the well-known writer and antiquarian Aleksander Janta Polczyński (1908–1974), who had emigrated from Poland after the Second World War, and negotiations on the matter had been ongoing since 1966.³⁸ In the minutes of the museum's purchasing committee, the canvas was described as 'a portrait by an unspecified painter, probably created in the seventeenth century, a layout hitherto unseen and unknown in printmaking. In the background, views of the fighting beneath an unspecified town. The painting had undergone conservation, repainting visible especially in the attire part, overall condition good'.³⁹ After the purchase, the painting went to the conservation workshop of the Museum at Wilanów, the branch of the National Museum in Warsaw.⁴⁰ The description of the painting's condition drawn up prior to the conservation work does not indicate whether at the time of acquisition the painting had been relined, i.e. reinforced from behind with a new layer of canvas. that the only record is as follows: 'All edges of painting

37 National Museum in Warsaw Archive, sign. 1641. The authors would like to thank Dr Monika Myszor-Cieciela, the head of the Archive, and Mr Michał Przygoda, plenipotentiary of the Director of the National Museum in Warsaw for provenance research, for their assistance in conducting the archival search.

38 National Library (Biblioteka Narodowa, hereinafter: BN), Aleksander Janta-Polczyński Archive, sign. BN Rps 12830 III, vol. 2, fols 122, 124, 158, 197; sign. BN Rps 12831 III, vol. 1, fol. 155.

39 National Museum in Warsaw Archive, Protokół Komisji Zakupów 1967.

40 Archives of the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, Dokumentacja konserwatorska 967/k, 1968 (mps).

are sealed with paper [...]. The reverse bears numerous patches pasted on with wax and some probably with glue'. A black and white photo showing the back of the painting stretched on the loom shows the edges sealed with paper and the patches protecting the damaged areas of the canvas. At the bottom right of the canvas there is the inventory number MNW232649 MN. The same number is seen on the lower bar of the loom, while the number 630KN appears on its upper bar. From the description, it appears that the painting had already undergone conservation treatment before it arrived to the Wilanów studio.

A preliminary archive search revealed that the number 630KN had been assigned by the Christie's auction house. The painting was offered at auction in London in 1954 as *Portrait of Tamerlane the Great*, but was not sold at the time, after which it was returned to its owner.⁴¹ For reasons of data protection, it is currently not possible to obtain information on the name of the seller; nor do we have any photos from this period. According to material in the archives of Aleksander Janta-Polczyński handed over to the National Library, it appears that the painting belonged, at least from 1956, to the well-known pre-war weapons expert and collector Antoni Maryanowski, who at this date deposited the portrait with other works of art with the Kosciuszko Foundation in New York and then sold it to Janta in 1965.⁴² Both collectors lived outside Poland after the Second World War and were involved in the preservation of Polish heritage and the search for Polonica.⁴³ In 1962, Antoni Maryanowski made an offer to sell the portrait addressed to Jerzy Szablowski, director of the State Art Collections in the Wawel Royal Castle in

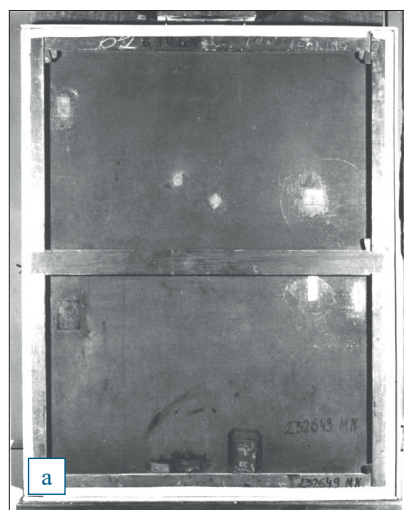


Fig. 7a-b

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961); (a) reverse of the painting before conservation in 1968; (b) obverse of the painting before conservation in 1968, Archives of the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów

41 Information given to us by an employee of the auction house's archive Mr. Derek Järmai.

42 BN, Aleksander Janta-Polczyński Archive, sign. Rps BN 12830 III, fol. 175, list of paintings dated 25 July 1956, item 22 is: painting 'Jan III Sobieski'; fol. 174 [n.d.] item 5: 'Portret Jana III Sobieskiego' listed as a deposit in the Kosciuszko Foundation in New York; fol. 173, list of paintings dated 30 July 1956, item 5: 'Portret Jana III Sobieskiego, oil, late seventeenth century', listed as a deposit in the Kosciuszko Foundation, New York. The sale of the portrait to Alexander Janta was documented by a receipt issued on 17 November 1965, cf. *ibidem*, fol. 188.

43 Maryanowski and Janta made their acquaintance in the early 1950s, cf. BN, Aleksander Janta-Polczyński Archive, sign. Rps 12830 III, vol. 2, fol. 163, letter from Antoni Maryanowski to Aleksander Janta dated 15 April 1953.



Fig. 8

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961), photograph of the painting from correspondence between J. Szablowski and A. Maryanowski in 1962, Archives of the Wawel Royal Castle



Fig. 9

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961), photograph of the painting during conservation, from the conservation documentation of 1968, MNW Archive.

Cracow.⁴⁴ The correspondence was accompanied by a photo, which is now the earliest known reproduction of the work.⁴⁵ The same photographic material was used as an illustration in the tenth volume of the series *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, published in Rome in 1964 and signed as follows: ‘Jan Sobieski (unknown author). Property of Antoni Maryanowski, Newark, USA’.⁴⁶ In a letter to Aleksander Janta, Antoni Maryanowski described the painting as a portrait painted from nature, ‘probably by Jan Aleksander Tricius’.⁴⁷

During the conservation carried out in 1968, the composition in the background on the left, in the vegetation section, between the edge of the painting and the king’s forearm, was modified as a result of the removal of

44 Archives of the Wawel Royal Castle, sign. AZK PZS-II-127/1, fol. 4r-v. The authors would like to thank Ms Diana Błońska, Head of the Archives, for carrying out the initial search.

45 Ibid., fig. after fol. 4, with description on the reverse: ‘Portret olejny / rozmiar: 125×100 centym. / z lewej strony bitwa pod Chocimiem, z prawej Wiedeń’ [Portrait in oil / size: 125×100 centim. / to the left, Battle of Chocim, to the right, Vienna].

46 *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, 10, *Repertorium rerum Polonicarum ex Archivis Orsini in Archivis Capitolinis Romae III pars*, coll. W. Wyhowska de Andreis, Romae 1964, pp. [343], Tab. I.

47 BN, Aleksander Janta-Polczyński Archive, sign. Rps 12830 III, vol. I, k. 167, letter from Antoni Maryanowski to Aleksander Janta dated 3 Jan. 1965.

varnish and repainting. The leaf found here was replaced with other floral motifs. This change was not recorded in the conservation documentation, but can be seen by comparing the 1962 and 1968 photographs (taken before conservation and during the final phase of work) with the contemporary photo. Other details of the image also changed. It can be seen that after conservation, the points of light in the eyes of the portrayed person (the so-called catchlights) ended up in a different place, the shape of the model's right eye was also different, the light in the part of the clouds overhead was arranged differently, and the drawing of the fur on the collar was blurred.

In the conservation documentation, the course of the work is presented as follows:

[...] darkened varnish was removed, retouches/repaints/ mainly in the part with the red garment / were removed with spir[it], neut[ralized with] turp[entine]. After stippling and drying, the painting was varnished again with mast[ic] varnish. Defects were puttied/painting was varnished/stippled with oil paints + varnish thin[ned with] turp[entine].⁴⁸

Although there is no mention of the removal of repaints in parts other than 'the red garment, we can surmise that during the 1968 conservation, those parts of the composition in the background that were considered to be of a later date than the original work were removed along with the varnish. This is when, as we presume, the original catchlights in the eyes were exposed. They are also observed in the same places in a portrait purchased in London.

Physical and chemical research was first undertaken in 2011, when micro-samples were taken from several sites for preliminary analyses. The aim was to establish the stratigraphy and make a basic identification of the composition of the primer and paint layers.⁴⁹ The research was revisited in November 2021 when the museum purchased the London portrait

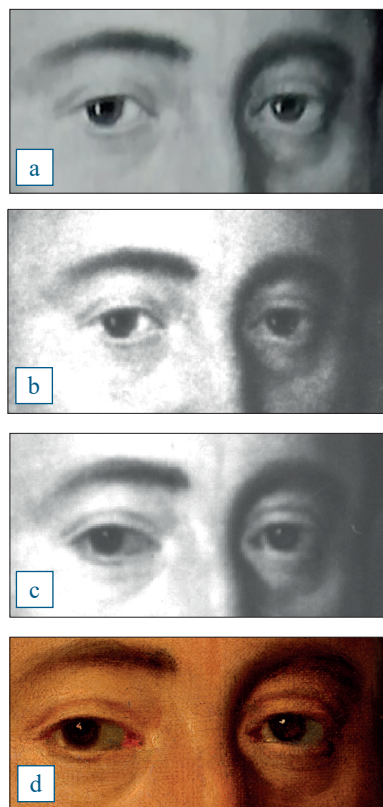


Fig. 10a-d

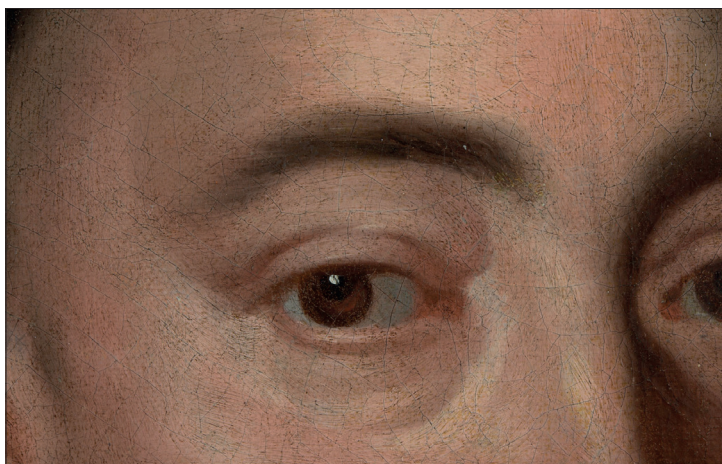
Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961): (a) catchlights in the eyes in the painting before the sale, archival photograph, Archives of Wawel Royal Castle, detail of Fig. 8; (b) catchlights in the eyes in the painting before conservation, photograph from the conservation documentation of 1968, detail of Fig. 7; (c) catchlights in the eyes in the painting after conservation, photo from the conservation documentation of 1968; (d) catchlights in the eyes in the painting, photograph from 2021, detail of Fig. 2

48 Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, sign. 967/k, *Dokumentacja konserwatorska*, 1968. The type of varnish and oil paints is provided on pp. 6–7.

49 In 2011 research was carried out by the EAZ laboratory – Sylwia Svorová-Pawelkiewicz, Artur Borkowski. The following instrumental methods were applied on the collected micro-samples: observations under a stereoscopic microscope and a biological microscope for transmitted light, polarised light and dark field; analysis of the binders based on characteristic reactions with NaOH and ninhydrin; stratigraphic micro-sections were performed. A study of the elements involved in the composition of pigments and primer fillers using a scanning electron microscope coupled to the electron microprobe with EDS analysis (SEM-EDS) was carried out by Marek Wróbel in the Laboratory of the Department of Engineering Geology at the Department of Geology of the University of Warsaw.

Fig. 11

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (Wil.6312), catchlights in the king's eyes in the portrait bought from Volodymyr Luciv's collection, photograph from 2022, detail of Fig. 2



of the king. Due to the remarkable facial similarities in the two portraits, provenance and material research was undertaken on both paintings. Non-destructive testing was then carried out by imaging using ultraviolet (UV),⁵⁰ infrared (IR),⁵¹ X-ray⁵² and visible light (VIS).⁵³ *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* was additionally provided with high-resolution photographic documentation⁵⁴ and documentation using reflection transformation imaging (RTI).⁵⁵

Subsequently, both paintings were analysed as part of a research project led by the E-RIHS consortium: 'An original, a replica or a copy – comparative study of the painting technique and provenance of two portraits of King John III as a contribution to the recognition of the fate of Polish heritage abroad'.⁵⁶

During the course of the project, samples taken in 2011 from *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* were reused. Additional

50 The fluorescence of the image surface, excited by ultraviolet radiation, was observed and photographed (Agnieszka Indyk).

51 Infrared reflectography was performed to assess the underlying layers (Agnieszka Indyk).

52 X-rays were performed (Roman Stasiuk).

53 Photo by Agnieszka Indyk.

54 This refers to the gigapixel technique, which results in macro photography that covers the entire surface of the image, not just a selected section.

55 High-resolution photos and documentation with the application of the reflectance transformation imaging method (hereinafter: RTI) performed by Eryk Bunsch and Kamil Radomski (Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów). The RTI method allows an in-depth analysis of the image surface and its texture by showing how the object's surface reacts to changing lighting conditions.

56 The results were obtained as part of the competition for access to the MOLAB PL/FIXLAB PL research infrastructure and the project of the Polish consortium E-RIHS.pl, co-financed by the National Institute of Museums and Collections Protection. The E-RIHS coordinator and scientific manager of the project was Prof. Piotr Targowski PhD, the manager on behalf of the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów was Agnieszka Pawlak.

micro-samples were also taken from both paintings to determine the arrangement of the technological layers (UV-VIS microscopy).⁵⁷ Analyses of chemical elements contained in the pigments used in the preparation of paints and primer fillers (SEM-EDS, LA-ICP-MS) were performed.⁵⁸ The distribution of elements in both paintings was determined (macro-XRF).⁵⁹ Based on the results of the research, comparative analyses were made of the two paintings.⁶⁰

Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle (Wil.1961)

is painted in oil.⁶¹ A grid of old cracks characteristic of historic oil painting can be seen throughout, fading in places under later repaints. The painting in the parts of the garments and background is painted *alla prima*, with a sweeping gesture, without delicate chiaroscuro transitions. The ornament on the *żupan* is treated flatly, almost sketchily. The lights on the folds of the red draped *delia* are applied in the impasto technique, in many places with 'raw' white, with dynamic, decisive brushstrokes. The face is painted in the glaze technique, smoothly, in a less sweeping manner, although in the areas of the lights the brushstroke is clearly

57 As part of the research project led by the E-RIHS consortium, VIS-UV microscopy was used; moreover, the stratigraphic micro-sections and optical coherence tomography (hereinafter: OCT) were analysed for the analysis of near-surface layers, mainly varnishes; the measurements were carried out by Magdalena Iwanicka PhD, DSc at the Interdisciplinary Centre for Modern Technologies at the Nicolaus Copernicus University and the Department of Conservation and Restoration of Painting and Polychrome Sculpture of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Nicolaus Copernicus University.

58 The E- RIHS consortium also used: a) the scanning electron microscopy with energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (hereinafter: SEM-EDS); measurements were carried out by B. Łydzba-Kopczyńska PhD and Wojciech Gil PhD at the Faculty of Chemistry of the University of Wrocław; b) laser ablation inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (hereinafter: LA-ICP-MS); measurements were carried out by B. Wagner PhD DSc, Faculty of Chemistry of the University of Warsaw – Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Archeometric Research, Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences.

59 As part of the research project led by the E-RIHS consortium, full-surface scanning of the paintings was also performed with the use of the large-format X-ray fluorescence scanner M6 Jet Stream-macro-XRF (hereinafter: macro-XRF); measurements were carried out by Prof. Piotr Targowski PhD in the Interdisciplinary Centre for Emerging Technologies of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.

60 The interpretation of the results was carried out on the basis of the provided test reports from the 2011 (EAZ Laboratory) and 2022 (E-RIHS) tests by Prof. Piotr Targowski PhD, Magdalena Iwanicka PhD DSc, Barbara Łydzba-Kopczyńska PhD, Barbara Wagner PhD DSc, Sylwia Svorová-Pawelkowicz and Agnieszka Pawlak. The authors of the article would like to take this opportunity to thank the researchers very much for all their help and commitment.

61 The oil technique is initially confirmed by research carried out in 2011 by Sylvia Svorová-Pawelkowicz. A binder analysis was then performed based on the sensitivity of the sample to 4M NaOH. To identify albumens, the reaction was carried out with a 1 percent alcoholic solution of ninhydrin. In the sample, an oil, wax or resin binder was detected in the paint and primer layer. No albumen was detected. However, this research should be confirmed by other methods, which was not carried out in 2022.

visible. In the shadows, the painter used delicate transitions using a technique of layering paint: 'wet-in-wet'.

The original backing of the painting is a canvas made of linen yarn in plain weave, probably woven by hand. A beaten weaving edge is preserved on the left. The painting was not trimmed, as evidenced by the preserved original lists and the characteristic deformations of the canvas fabric along the edges of the painting caused by tension. These deformations emerge because in places where the fabric had been nailed to the frame the fibres are more stretched and tighter, and where there is no tension, they are looser, causing the canvas to form an 'S' shape parallel to the edge. The original lists are damaged, ragged, with visible holes, traces of transferring the painting from another loom.

The canvas was probably re-pasted with glutin glue before painting; this was the usual practice of painters. The layer of isolation (re-pasting) is visible on the stratigraphic micro-sections. The primer is applied in a single layer to the pasted canvas. The primer, presumably oil-based, is coloured, in a light tone: cool beige with a violet-pink tinge. On stratigraphic sections it is revealed as pink. Scrutinising the surface of the painting, it can be seen that along the edges, up to a width of about 1 cm, the primer is not covered by the paint layer, which enables to determine its colour. The observation that originally the painting may have been stretched on a slightly smaller loom, hence the unpainted primer margin, is thus confirmed. This may also indicate that the painter painted the image on a canvas stretched over a support frame, and that he stretched the painting onto the target loom after it had been painted.

During conservation in 1968, after purchase for the museum's collection, the original canvas was repaired, the old patches were removed, and the canvas was re-lined with new linen canvas;⁶² the painting was cleaned of yellowed varnish and old repaints and retouches, and stretched onto a new loom. The previous one with the auction number applied from a stencil to the top bar was unfortunately not retained. The defects were filled in and oil and resin paints were used for retouching.⁶³ The face was protected with a mastic resin-based varnish. The painting has been preserved in fairly good condition, apart from the uneven sheen of the varnish and the tarnishing of some of the retouched areas.

X-rays and IR reflectographs reveal repainting in the parts of the fur collar and the sky around the king's head and at the bottom in the area of the mantle. Minor retouches, dating from the time of the last conservation in 1968, are visible on the hands, the face, at the bottom on the draped mantle, and in the background. The UV-induced luminescence photo does not reveal repainting in areas that were altered after the last conservation

⁶² The doubling binder was a wax-resin compound.

⁶³ Winsor & Newton.

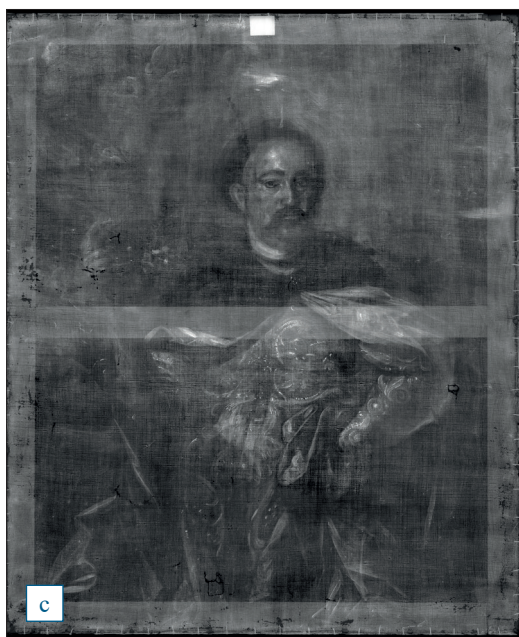


Fig. 12a-d

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961);

(a) face in UV-induced luminescence;

(b) face in IR light;

(c) X-ray, probably author's alteration of the collar arrangement on the right-hand side of the painting;

(d) reverse of the painting

(parts of the vegetation on the left and the catchlights in the eyes). Retouches are visible in the pupil area, but not in the white catchlights. It seems likely that the vegetation in the background and the catchlights in the eyes visible in the black-and-white archival photos were repaints. It is surprising that their removal was not mentioned in the conservation documentation. Variations in the collar arrangement and mantle folds visible on the X-ray may be authorial repaints. It would be possible to resolve these issues during renewed conservation work.

Analysis of the elements comprising the technological layers of the painting shows that the primer consists of a mixture of lead white, calcium carbonate (probably chalk), umber, ochre, aluminosilicate and bone black. Prussian blue was found in some primer samples. In the blue parts of the sky, umber, ochre, bone black and Prussian blue were identified in addition to lead white and calcium carbonate. Research revealed that Prussian blue is present in all technological layers and therefore does not come from repainting.⁶⁴ Its presence is confirmed by microscopic observations, including studies of pigment particles under transmitted light.⁶⁵ Copper pigments were identified in some parts of the blue sky, which could indicate the use of azurite in addition to Prussian blue. Copper pigments are also present in parts of the background painted in browns and greens, including parts of the vegetation. They occur there in mixtures with umber and iron pigments.⁶⁶ The red *delia* is painted with iron pigments (red ochre) mixed with lead white in the parts of the lights and, possibly, with red lead. To break up the colour in the shadows, umber and bone black were added. The red mantle was probably painted in the glazing technique with organic red based on calcium carbonate (probably chalk). This is indicated by observations of the distribution of calcium carbonate on the macro-XRF maps. The artist painted complexion using a mixture of lead white, iron-based pigment reds and possibly red lead. He used cinnabar to paint the mouth and the corners of the eyes and the banners in the battle scene on the left-hand side of the painting, as well as the flashes of cannon shots on the right-hand side. The colour of the golden *župan* was achieved by mixing lead white with ochre (iron yellows) and umber, possibly also adding red lead. Grains of quartz (silicon) were also identified in the SEM-EDS study. Grains of sand (quartz)

64 B. Łydzba-Kopczyńska, *Raport. Analiza wyników badań z zastosowaniem SEM-EDS* (Wrocław 2022), (mps), Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów.

65 Laboratorium EAZ, Sylwia Svorová-Pawełkowicz, *Raport. Badanie pigmentów i stratygrafii obrazów z Wilanowa – Wil. 1961, Portret Króla Jana III Sobieskiego na tle bitwy, nieznanymi malarz polski, 2. połowa XVII w.* (Warszawa, 2011), pp. 49–56, (mps), Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów.

66 At this stage, it was not possible to identify the copper pigments. They may come from the original layers, but may also have been introduced as a result of repainting in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries.

are usually identified in red ochres.⁶⁷ Zirconium (Zr) detected in a sample of red from the mantle⁶⁸ confirms the addition of sand in the paint. The identification of trace amounts of zirconium in all four samples was also confirmed by the LA-ICP-MS studies.⁶⁹ Zirconium is a component of magmatic and metamorphic rocks present in gravels and sands.

Most of the pigments identified in the original layers, apart from Prussian blue, are of non-dating nature. Iron pigments, aluminosilicates, vegetable and bone black, and lead white were used by painters from the Middle Ages through to the twentieth century.

Identified elements, such as barium, zinc, chromium, cobalt or cadmium, found in pigments obtained only from the end of the nineteenth century onwards (zinc white, cadmium red, chromium yellow), overlap with areas of retouching and repainting.

Prussian blue, in turn, is present in all technological layers of the painting.

This would indicate that the painting was created in the first decade of the eighteenth century at the earliest.⁷⁰ In the paint layer, studies by SEM-EDS and macro XRF methods did not identify pigments such as smalt, tin-lead yellow or antimony yellow (Neapolitan yellow), characteristic of seventeenth-century painting.⁷¹ However, the LA-ICP-MS method reveals the presence of antimony (Sb) correlated with lead (Pb) in all samples, taken both from the reds and from the blues. This phenomenon can be explained by impurities in the lead ore that was used to make the paint. Lead deposits occurring to this day in the Silesian Uplands and the Cracow-Częstochowa Uplands contain, in addition to lead (ca 86.6%), admixtures of silver, zinc, iron, copper and precisely the antimony.⁷² This is an interesting clue worthy of further research; perhaps it could lead to the origin of the lead ore that was used to make

67 K. Groen, *Paintings in the Laboratory: Scientific Examination for Art History and Conservation* (London, 2014), p. 37. Thanks to extensive research on Rembrandt's work by the Rembrandt Research Project, scientists identified the 'quartz grounds (primers)' characteristic of his workshop, composed in 50–60% of quartz. As a result of SEM-EDX, these primers were found to contain Si, Al, K, Fe and admixtures of Mg, Ca, sometimes Na, P, Ti and magnesium oxides. These are usually components of clays clustered around quartz grains. See K. Groen, 'Grounds in Rembrandt's workshop and in paintings by his contemporaries', in: E. van de Wetering, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* (Dordrecht, 2005), pp. 325–327, pure.uva.nl/ws/files/1576812/88973_the-sis_klein_incl.pdf (accessed 24 Aug. 2023).

68 Łydzba-Kopczyńska, *Raport. Analiza wyników badań*, sample 1(1), point 14, p. 6 (mps).

69 B. Wagner, *Raport z badania szlifów metodą LA-ICP-MS* (Warszawa, 2022), p. 5 (mps), Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów.

70 J. Kirby, D. Saunders, 'Fading and colour changes of Prussian blue: Methods of manufacture and the influence of extenders', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, vol. 25, 2005, p. 73.

71 Chemical formula of the Neapolitan yellow: $\text{Pb}(\text{SbO}_3)_2$ or $\text{Pb}(\text{SbO}_4)_2$.

72 metale.pl/wiedza2/olow/krotki-rys-historeczny?_locale=en (accessed 6 June 2023). The authors would like to thank Barbara Wagner PhD DSc from the University of

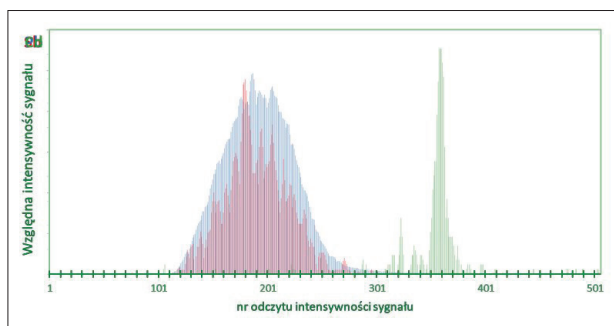


Fig. 13

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961); analysis of sample no. 1 from the red used to paint the mantle by LA-ICP-MS – a graph indicating the correlation of antimony with lead, with it being clear that both elements are in a layer that does not overlap with the cadmium red from the repaint, and are therefore under the repaint layer.

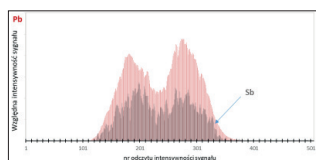


Fig. 14

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961); analysis of sample no. 2 of the sky blue by LA-ICP-MS – the graph, like graph 13 above, shows how antimony and lead co-occur in the same layers, which may indicate antimony contamination of the lead white.

the paint.⁷³ The antimony revealed in the samples does not appear to indicate the presence of Neapolitan yellow. The LA-ICP-MS method is much more sensitive than SEM-EDS or XRF studies and detects even trace amounts of elements present in a sample. If yellow paint containing antimony yellow had been used, it should have been

identified by SEM-EDS and XRF studies. Hence the belief that the antimony revealed by LA-ICP-MS is a lead ore contaminant.

Ambiguous areas visible both in the maps of the distribution of individual elements and in the IR photograph in the form of shading and vertical blurring could indicate that the image has an as yet unrecognised history. It should be covered with further physico-chemical studies.

Portrait of John III Sobieski (Wil.6312) is probably painted in oil-and-resin technique⁷⁴ on red-brown primer. The painting is relined with new canvas, probably with the use of animal glue or paste as the binding medium. The original lists of the painting have not survived and were cut off during the relining. The edges of the canvas were sealed with paper, making it difficult to observe and determine whether the painting was punched onto a new loom since the relining. The nails are iron and partially rusted. The surviving loom is not original; it may have been replaced at the turn of the nineteenth century when the relining was made. Due to the absence of the lists, it is impossible to determine whether the primer overlapped them and if it did, then to what extent.

In the shadow sections, the portrait is painted in the glazing technique, in a thin layer using ground colour. Lights are created with the impasto technique by applying more paint. In the past, the painting underwent conservation treatment at twice. It is covered with several layers of secondary varnish with a greenish luminescence visible under UV light. Retouches are found both on the varnish and underneath its layers. It is likely that the painting underwent fragmentary cleaning prior to its

Warsaw for her help in interpreting the results and for leading the way in explaining the observed phenomenon.

73 An interesting study of the lead white isotope ratios contained in the painting materials in the context of detecting the deposits from which they may have originated was conducted by Ewa Doleżyńska-Sewerniak and Jakub Karasiński. Cf. E. Doleżyńska-Sewerniak, J. Karasiński, 'Badania stosunków izotopowych ołowiu w próbkach bieli ołowiowej z obrazów Szymona Czechowicza (1698–1775)', in: *Wokół zagadnień warsztatu artysty: malarza, rzeźbiarza, architekta*, vol. 2 (Toruń, 2021), pp. 155–169.

74 What has so far only been found by observation and conservation research; the analysis of the binders should be carried out in the course of further research.

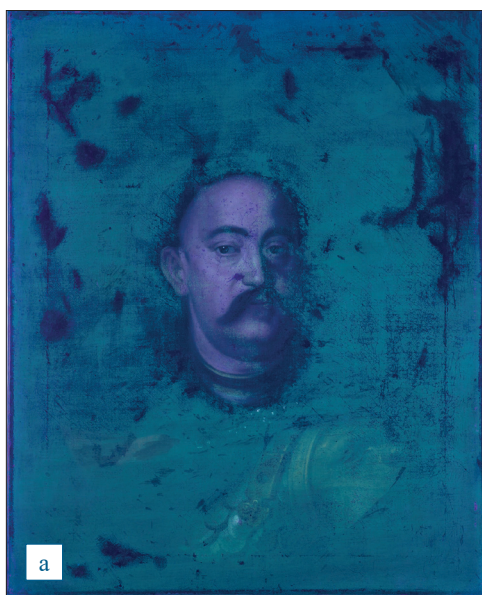


Fig. 15a-b

sale in 2002. The varnish was then removed from parts of the face. The dark areas of the background remained covered with a thick layer of varnish that has since yellowed. This makes it impossible to discern in detail the extent of actual retouching or repainting. Due to the poor state of preservation of the paint layer, the painting required comprehensive conservation and restoration work, which are ongoing.

Stratigraphic analysis indicates that the coloured primer was laid in two layers, applied one after the other using the ‘wet-in-wet’ technique.⁷⁵ The primer is probably emulsion or oil (no analysis of the binders was carried out), consisting of lead white mixed with aluminosilicates (clay), ochre (iron reds and yellows – iron oxides), with an admixture of umber and calcium carbonate (probably chalk).

In the layers of colour, the painter used the basic colour palette characteristic of seventeenth-century painting. He painted the king’s complexion with a mixture of lead white, iron red, cinnabar and probably lead red. He also used cinnabar to paint the lips, the corners of the eyes and the red *delia*. The gilt parts of the armour are painted with tin/lead yellow and iron yellow, while the grey scales of the *karacena* breastplate are made with smalt in a mixture with lead white, ochre and iron pigments (aluminosilicates), umber, animal black, calcium carbonate. The distribution of copper in the macro-XRF maps coincides with the luminescence of the varnish visible in the UV image, so it is possible that it was added as a siccative to the varnish, and may also be contained in the glazing paints in the dark parts of, among others, the hair.

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (Wil.6312); (a) face of the painting – UV-induced fluorescence, thick layer of varnish visible, probably damar varnish and numerous retouches from at least two conservation procedures; (b) face of the painting – IR photography, numerous damages to paint layer visible, brush duct and probably repainting around the head

⁷⁵ This means that the top layer was applied without waiting for the bottom layer to dry thoroughly.

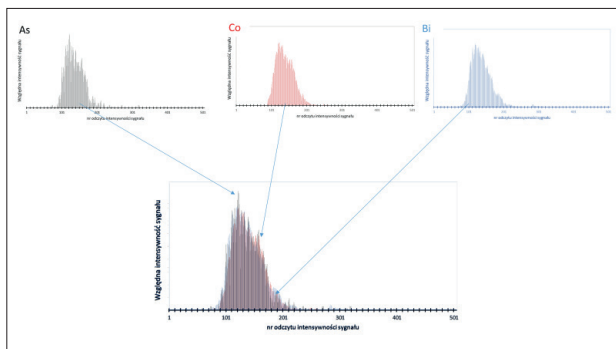


Fig. 16a-f

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (Wil.6312);

(a) reverse of the framed painting, visible traces of paper glued to the slats of the loom, originally used to seal the reverse, below the crossbar there is a linen patch, probably obscuring the damage to the relining canvas;

(b-f) fragments of the reverse with inscriptions and stickers on the slats of the loom



Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (Wil.6312); analysis of sample no. 1 from a section depicting armour, performed with the use of LA-ICP-MS – the graph shows how arsenic, bismuth and cobalt co-occur in the same layer, which may indicate the type of cobalt ore from which the paint was produced

Interesting results confirming and clarifying the analyses performed with macro-XRF and SEM-EDS were obtained as a result of the LA-ICP-MS studies. They have shown that smalt used in the paint layers has admixtures of bismuth (Bi) and arsenic (As), which is not only a confirmation of its presence, but may also be an indication of its origin.⁷⁶ The researchers found that the composition of the cobalt ores of the ore deposits in the Ore Mountains and the Iżera Mountains is similar and is characterised by the presence of bismuth (Bi) and arsenic (As) in addition to cobalt (Co) and nickel (Ni). Nickel as a component of the cobalt ore smaltite $(\text{Co,Fe,Ni})\text{As}_2$ was identified by macro-XRF and overlaps with cobalt (Co) imaging. In contrast, the graphs of arsenic, cobalt and bismuth obtained by LA-ICP-MS overlap, indicating the co-occurrence of these elements in a single layer.

It is intriguing to note that also in this painting, the presence of antimony in correlation with lead was identified by the LA-ICP-MS method, while, as in the case of the *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle*, no antimony was detected by the SEM-EDS and XRF methods. This is an interesting observation that requires further research. The question arises as to whether the lead white used in both portraits came from similar lead ores.

Conclusions

Research into the provenance of the two portraits in question leads to the conclusion that the surprising parallels in the depiction of the royal image apply to a larger group of works, including a number of engravings. All of the prints similar to the painted representations of the king were produced in the circle of London engravers in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Their source, according to inscriptions found on prints made at the studios owned by Robert White and Edward Cooper, were unidentified paintings that had probably found their way to England through diplomatic exchange, as suggested by the signature on an engraving from the latter studio. The relatively large number of similar graphic representations preserved in

⁷⁶ S. Svorová-Pawelkiewicz, M. Witkowski, 'Smalta – produkcja i handel w świetle badań archiwalnych i fizykochemicznych', in: *Wokół zagadnień warsztatu artysty*, pp. 141–153.

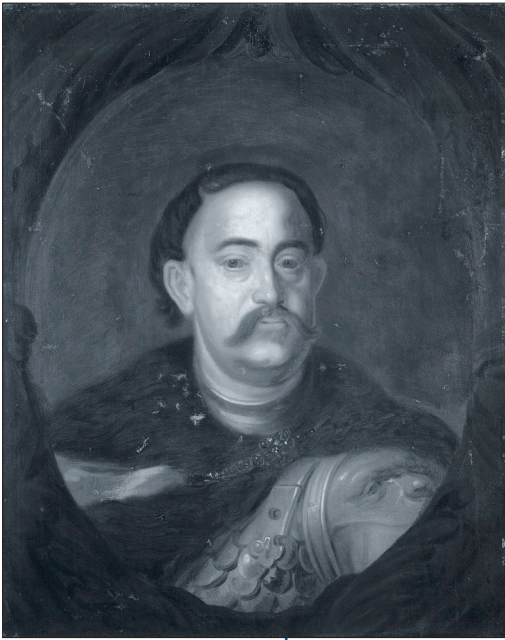


Fig. 18

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961), Hg distribution map, extract. Analysis of the results of large-format X-ray fluorescence (macro-XRF) scanner studies

England testifies to the popularity of the figure of John III, especially after the victory at Vienna in 1683.⁷⁷ In the literary sources from the period of the reign of Charles II Stuart, John III was identified – through his deeds and costume of a Sarmatian warrior – with the new incarnation of the Christian commander, the Albanian Gjergj Kastrioti, known as Skanderbeg, who fought against the Ottoman Empire. The fact that both paintings from the collection of the Wilanów Palace museum were acquired in London, and that the painting closest to the portrait in the oval to come from a private collection was purchased in Ireland, is certainly a justification for further research into the iconography of John III in the British Isles.

A comparison of the painting technique of the two works makes it possible to conclude that despite the use of the same iconographic pattern to

paint the face of King John III, the paintings were created in different workshops and most likely at different times. Although the composition of the primer in both portraits is similar – based on lead white, iron pigments, aluminosilicates and the addition of calcium carbonate – the colour and method of development is different. The London portrait (Wil.6312) shows two layers of dark reddish-brown primer, while the *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle* (Wil.1961) is painted on coloured but lighter grey-pink primer with a cool tone, applied in a single layer. The London portrait may have been painted in the seventeenth century. This is indicated by the set of pigments used by the artist. This image is the work of a skilled craftsman painter. To paint it, he used a palette of pigments typical of seventeenth-century studios. He painted the reds with cinnabar, the yellow parts with tin/lead yellow, and in the greys, he used smalt, mixing it with bone black, umber and yellow ochres. The manner in which pigments are used, recurring in this type of workshop portraits of John Sobieski reproduced in numerous copies, is striking. A very similar distribution of cinnabar and tin/lead yellow was identified in two other paintings probably created after 1684, after the relief of Vienna, namely, the portraits of the king in a laurel wreath kept in the collection of the Wilanów Palace museum.⁷⁸ However,

77 B. Klimaszewski, 'Jan III Sobieski w literaturze polskiej i zachodnioeuropejskiej XVII i XVIII wieku', *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*, vol. 651, *Prace Historycznoliterackie*, no. 48 (Kraków, 1983), p. 99–113.

78 The portraits in question, Wil.1348 and Wil.1197, depict the king wearing a laurel wreath; in their case, tin/lead yellow (Pb_2SnO_4 , type I) was detected in the area of yellow impastos on the armour and cinnabar in the reds of the mouth and the brooch. Cf. Walawender-Musz,

Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle (Wil.1961), although similarly painted in the area of the face, differs in the set of pigments used in the remaining area.

The absence of tin/lead yellow is notable, as is the absence of smalt. Cinnabar was identified only in spots in the areas of the mouth, eyes and red pennants in the background. The use of Prussian blue would indicate a date for the painting after 1704, when this pigment was created, quite by chance, in the laboratory by Jacob Diesbach, a Berlin-based paint manufacturer. The method of production was patented and published only in 1724, but examples of its use were recorded in paintings produced before that date. This pigment was identified, for example, in Pieter van der Werff's 1709 work *The Entombment of Christ*,⁷⁹ in Antoine Watteau's works from between 1715 and 1719,⁸⁰ or in the painting *Saint Roch Visiting the Sick* by Martin Altomonte from 1719.⁸¹

What is intriguing, however, is that the way the face is painted and the distribution of pigments, particularly cinnabar, on the face is very similar in both portraits, although it is clear that the painter of London portrait had used considerably more cinnabar (HgS) when painting the complexion. In both images, the mouth and corners of the eyes are painted with the use of cinnabar. Cinnabar⁸² was used to paint the lips in both portraits of the king in a laurel wreath.



Fig. 19

Anonymous, *Portrait of John III Sobieski* (Wil.6312), Hg distribution map, extract. Analysis of the results of large-format X-ray fluorescence (macro-XRF) scanner studies

Pawlak, *Wszystkie oblicza władcy*; W. Skrzeczanowski, *Sprawozdanie z pracy badawczej pt. „wykonanie badań pigmentów użytych w dziełach sztuki metodą LIBS”*, część I (Warszawa, 2012), pp. 7–22 (mps), Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów; A. Rafalska-Łasocha, *Raport. Analiza dyfrakcyjna próbek pobranych z dwóch obrazów olejnych portretów króla Jana III Sobieskiego, wykonana na zlecenie Muzeum Pałacu w Wilanowie* (Kraków, 2013), pp. 7, 16 (mps), Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów; S. Svorová-Pawelkiewicz, *Raport. Badanie pigmentów i stratygrafii obrazów z Wilanowa* (Warszawa, 2011), pp. 28–48 (mps), Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów.

79 E. Szmit-Naud, 'Mieszczaniny z błękitem pruskim – zagrożenia trwałości barw zielonych i błękitnozielonych warstw malarskich w malarstwie i konserwacji', *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici. Zabytkoznawstwo i Konserwatorstwo*, vol. 47, 2016, p. 302.

80 J. Kirby, 'Fading and colour change of Prussian blue: Occurrences and early reports', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, vol. 14, 1993, p. 63.

81 Modzelewska, „Św. Roch odwiedzający chorych”, pp. 43–46.

82 In a deliberate simplification, I use the name cinnabar (HgS), although, in all the paintings under discussion, we are probably dealing with its synthetic form, or vermilion, rather than with the ground mineral.

It was a way of painting according to centuries-old traditions and recipes contained in ancient painting treatises. Already the monk Theophilus active at the turn of the eleventh century wrote ‘about the first pink colour’: ‘The usual flesh colour – *membrana* – should be mixed with a small amount of cinnabar and a little bit of red lead; in this way the colour called pink – *rosa* – is obtained. It can be used to lightly colour the upper and lower jaw, lips and chin, neck and forehead wrinkles [...]’.⁸³ Theodore Turquet de Mayerne (1573–1655), in turn, in his treatise on painting *Lost Secrets of Flemish Painting* stated: ‘Few colours are needed for a painter to paint in oil, & a mixture of those few makes & produces all the others.’ Having said that, he enumerated ‘lead white. Black. [...] lacquer. vermilion.⁸⁴ [...] yellow ochre’ and some eleven more pigments.⁸⁵

In the case of the *Portrait of John III Sobieski on the Background of a Battle*, the phenomena observed on macro-XRF maps, UV photographs, IR reflectography and X-ray (X-ray) photography – the darkening and uneven distribution of various pigments on the surface, such as manganese or iron in the background – could not be fully understood or explained. A comparison of archival photos and observations of the painting in visible light, as well as the analysis of the stratigraphic micro-sections, also lead to the assumption that the painting may have been repainted several times in some parts, possibly by the author. Also, it cannot be ruled out that it was painted in two stages: the face was created first, and decades (or slightly less) later the painting was completed by another artist, or it was painted by two painters from the outset. In the part of the costume and background, it is painted in multiple layers with flair, quick brushstrokes, almost sketchy in some places (e.g. the patterned *żupan*), while the face is treated more traditionally and in a manner remarkably similar to the London portrait. Another puzzling element of the portrait against the background of the battle is the gorget of the armour painted around the king’s neck, while no other elements of protective armour are present in the outfit, and only the Polish costume is visible, consisting of the *żupan* and the *delia*. This could indicate that the painting was created in two stages. This issue has not been cleared up so far; it would

83 Teofil Prezbyter, *Diversarum Artium Schemata, Średniowieczny zbiór przepisów o sztukach rozmaitych*, trans. and ed. S. Kobielus (Kraków, 1998), book I, p. 7.

84 Vermilion – HgS – mercury sulphide chemically equivalent to cinnabar. Due to its rather high price, the pigment prepared synthetically was often adulterated with additives of minium.

85 ‘Peu de Couleurs sont necessaires à vn peintre pour peindre à huile, & le meslange de ces peu fait & compose toutes les aultres. blanc de plomb. Noir. [...] lacque. vermillon. [...] ocre Jaune’; cf. T. Turquet de Mayerne, *Sir Theodore de Mayerne, Pictoria, sculptoria et quae subalternarum artium (the ‘Mayerne manuscript’), 1620–1646* [Mayerne Manuscript Ms. Sloane 2052, f. 4], artechne.hum.uu.nl/node/95220 (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).

be advisable to continue the relevant investigations, not only material studies but also archival research, outside Poland.

The authors of this publication would like to thank all persons involved in carrying out the physical and chemical studies of the paintings and in obtaining information on the portraits described herein.

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