

In December 1881, the weekly newspaper *Kłosy* published a short essay entitled ‘Szable Jana Sobieskiego’ (‘Sabres of Jan Sobieski’). Its author, Antoni Dolleczek – an aficionado of historic army and weaponry, a qualified artillery officer of the Austro-Hungarian army – wrote this text in connection with his personal research on the military activities of King John III, particularly during the campaign of 1683.<sup>1</sup> He based his studies on archive materials available to him, mainly from Vienna and Cracow. In Cracow, Dolleczek paid particular attention to the collections of the Princes Czartoryski Museum, where both manuscript materials and museum collections were made available to him. Historic pieces of personal weaponry were an important issue in his work, as evidenced by the fact that he published his essay in the press, additionally supplemented by a valuable illustration of the set of sabres described (Figs 1, 2).<sup>2</sup> In the introduction, Dolleczek wrote:

Żaden prawie z polskich wodzów i królów nie jest tak powszechnie znanym, jak rycerski Jan III Sobieski, oswobodziciel Wiednia. Lecz także po żadnym polskim królu nie znajdujemy tyle pamiątek, tyle przedmiotów, które on posiadał lub przynajmniej których używał. Szczególniej zasługują tu na uwagę szable, co przechowywane w muzeach albo zbiorach osób prywatnych, żywe nam dają świadectwo jego działalności na polu sławy wojennej, dotąd niezgaśniętej w naszej pamięci i chlubą nam serca napelniającej.<sup>3</sup>

The above quotation therefore suggests that, in the author’s opinion, all the memorabilia described in the remainder of the essay unquestionably once belonged to, or were used by King John. In this rather indiscriminate linking of historical objects with famous personalities, which was

## SABRES ASSOCIATED WITH KING JOHN III FROM THE COLLECTION OF PRINCESS IZABELA CZARTORYSKA IN PUŁAWY

DOI: 10.5604/01.3001.0054.6988

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*Wilanów Studies*

vol. XXX, 2023, pp. 101–144

Yearbook, E-ISSN: 2720-0116

- 1 A translation from German of Dolleczek’s paper entitled ‘Sławna bitwa pod Wiedniem dnia 12 września 1683 r. p.’ (‘The Glorious Battle of Vienna of 12 September 1683’) (Kraków, 1883) was published for the bicentenary of the event. To celebrate this anniversary, the author also published two texts: *Die Entsatzschlacht bei Wien 1683* (Wien, 1883); *Die Polnische Armee im XVII Jahrhundert. Ihre Einrichtung, Gliederung und Kampfweise mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der unter dem Befehle des Königs Johannes III. Sobieski bei dem Entsatz von Wien 1683 beteiligt gewesen polnischen Truppen* (Wien, 1883, as a separate imprint from the periodical *Militärische Zeitschrift*). Recognition of the king’s military achievements also resonates in the monograph on the modern history of Austrian military and armaments, where Dolleczek mentioned John III in the context of an argument about the use of lance by the cavalry; see *Monographie der k. u. k. österr.-ung. Blanken und Handfeuer-Waffen, Kriegsmusik, Fahnen und Standarten seit Errichtung des stehenden Heeres bis zur Gegenwart* (Wien, 1896), p. 40.
- 2 An interesting iconographic testimony is also the redrawing of sabres from the Dolleczek’s paper located in: National Archive in Cracow, (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie, hereinafter: ANK), sign. 29/678/12/763, Zbiór Zygmunta Glogera [Ikongrafia. Militaria, mundury, elementy uzbrojenia, sceny batalistyczne z XIII–XIX w.], fol. 1. The weapons are arranged in a different order, on the basis of the hilt type, as it seems.
- 3 A. Dolleczek, ‘Szable Jana Sobieskiego’, *Kłosy. Czasopismo ilustrowane tygodniowe poświęcone literaturze, nauce i sztuce*, vol. 32, 1881, no. 810, p. 3.

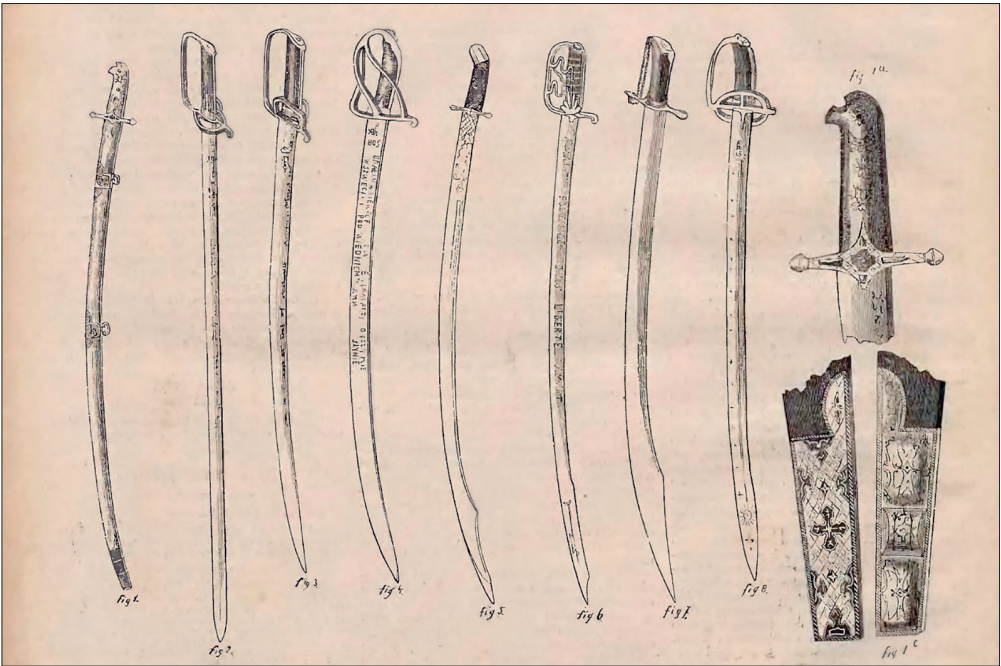


Fig. 1

Chromolithography based on a drawing by Antoni Dolleccek depicting sabres which according to tradition belonged to King John III; illustration for the article ‘Szable Jana Sobieskiego’, *Kłosy*, 1881

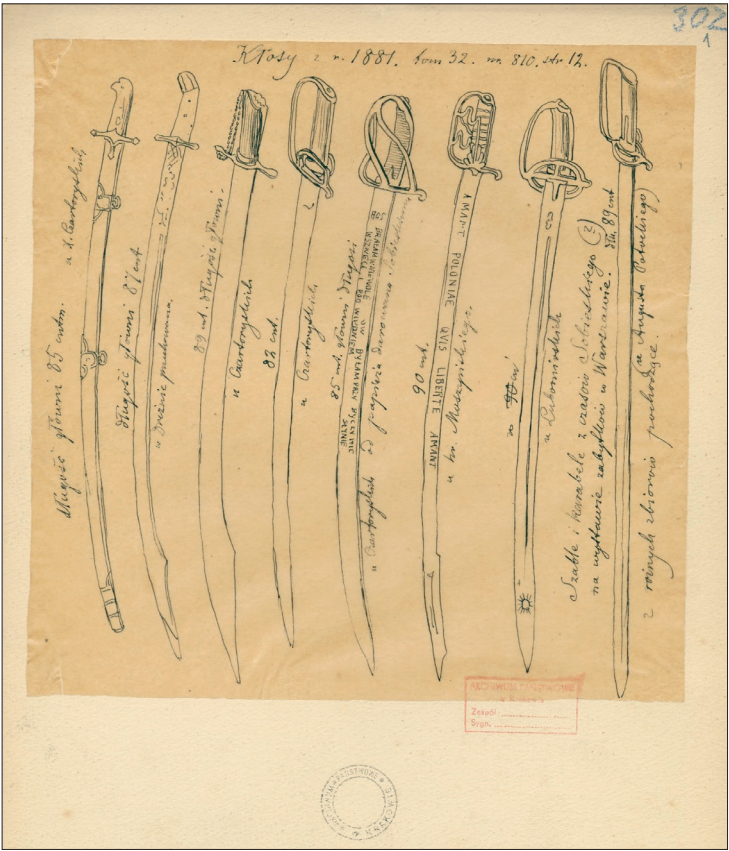


Fig. 2

A sketch of sabres from an article by Antoni Dolleccek; illustration for the article ‘Szable Jana Sobieskiego’, *Kłosy*, 1881

a phenomenon characteristic of the era, it seemed quite natural to invoke works from the Czartoryski collection. In fact, due to the cult that the monarch was held in reverence in the Puławy period, a lot of real and supposed mementos of the king have survived, especially the military ones. Among the ten artefacts cited by Dolleczek as attributed to the king, as many as half came from the Czartoryski collection. Luckily, all of them have survived to this day and can be identified. However, are they indeed sabres that had once belonged to King John III? In the light of contemporary findings, the provenance of at least some of them is inauthentic, fitting into the sentimental narrative context created by Princess Izabela Czartoryska née Flemming. Regarding this group of sabres, Zdzisław Żygulski tersely commented that ‘these specimens are preserved in the present collection as well, but their authenticity is uncertain’.<sup>4</sup> Does this claim apply to all these artefacts? The aim of the present paper is to attempt answering these questions.<sup>5</sup>

The strong emphasis on King John’s momentous achievements in the narrative of the Temple of the Sibyl and the Gothic House is evident both in the texts written in the Puławy circle and in the nature of the objects themselves and the way they were presented. Even the Gothic House, ostensibly dedicated to foreign memorabilia, contained items related to the Sobieski family: an agate bowl with an inscription on the bottom of the foot attesting that it was supposed to have been a gift from Jakub Sobieski to Gaston d’Orléans<sup>6</sup> and a group portrait of the king’s children: Aleksander, Konstanty and Jan, donated by Anna Potocka née Sapieha.<sup>7</sup> For obvious reasons, a much wider range of the Sobieski family memorabilia was housed in the Temple of the Sibyl. There is no need to list them all, as this is not the purpose of this essay; suffice it to mention the most important ones, as they determined the arrangement of the rest of the objects displayed there and undoubtedly influenced the ideological sense of the entire interior of the pantheon. Attempting a descriptive reconstruction of it, Zdzisław Żygulski noted that the main narrative was created by a display situated on an axis delineated between the entrance

4 Z. Żygulski, *Dzieje zbiorów puławskich. Świątynia Sybilli i Dom Gotycki* (Kraków, 2009), p. 277, note 108.

5 A part of the information presented herein develops the findings contained in the unpublished doctoral dissertation entitled *Dzieje kolekcji militariów ze zbiorów Muzeum Książąt Czartoryskich do 1939 roku* (Kraków, 2022), written at the Faculty of History and Cultural Heritage of the Pontifical University of John Paul II under the supervision of Prof. Lucyna Rotter PhD.

6 *Poczet pamiątek zachowanych w Domu Gotyckim w Puławach* (Warszawa, 1828), p. 47, no. 523; The Princes Czartoryski Museum, Branch of the National Museum in Cracow (hereinafter: MNK), inv. no. MNK XIII-918. All inventory numbers cited in the text, unless otherwise noted, refer to objects currently in the collection of the MNK – Czartoryski Museum.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 34, no. 328; inv. no. MNK XII-358.

and the shallow niche opposite.<sup>8</sup> In the very centre, there was a hole in the floor, covered with a grille through which warm air was let in to heat the interior.<sup>9</sup> To regulate its flow, the opening was covered by a circular bronze shield: one of eighteen made to honour distinguished Polish commanders and formations, and the only one to have been placed inside the upper level of the building (all the others adorned the lower section, known as the crypt). The shield thus distinguished, which had a dual function, both practical and symbolic, was dedicated to the memory of John III by including in the centre of the Janina coat of arms the inscription 'SOBIESKI' in capital letters enclosed in decorative wreaths and the date '1683'.<sup>10</sup>

In the immediate vicinity of this shield, probably by the niche itself, on a granite pedestal there stood 'an ebony casket mounted in gold, encrusted with diamonds, with three decks removable from the top'.<sup>11</sup> Due to the Żygulski's publication, this object is more commonly known today as the 'Royal Casket'.<sup>12</sup> It was used to store the real and presumed memorabilia of Polish monarchs, acquired by the owner, who had clearly been inspired by Tadeusz Czacki's 'funerary archaeology'.<sup>13</sup> Corresponding with the casket was a panoply suspended in a niche, concealed behind a purple curtain hung on a gilt spoutoon, the stud of which had an enamelled

8 A Wojtyła, 'Świątynia Sybilli w Puławach. Pierwsze polskie muzeum czy mauzoleum ojczyzny?', in: *Izabela Czartoryska dux femina facti*, ed. G. Bartnik (Lublin, 2021), p. 178, Fig. 2.

9 Z. Żygulski, *Dzieje zbiorów puławskich*, p. 258.

10 N. Koziara, M. Chramiec, 'Opisanie muzeum', in: *Muzeum Książąt Czartoryskich*, eds K. Plonka-Balus, N. Koziara (Kraków, 2019), p. 220. The practical use of the shield is evidenced by the fact that it is fitted with a simple mechanism for opening and locking the central part with the coat of arms, which is hinged like a flap.

11 Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich – Oddział Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie (hereinafter: BCz), sign. Ms 3032, *Poczet pamiątek narodowych zachowanych w Świątyni Sybilli w Puławach przez Elżbietę Xiężnę Czartoryską zebranych*, c. 1828, fol. 23.

12 Z. Żygulski, *Dzieje zbiorów puławskich*, pp. 87–89. The casket was destroyed in October 1939 and most of its contents were looted. Only a few items have survived to the present day, preserved in the collections of the National Museum in Cracow and in the treasury of the Cracow cathedral, including, among others, an amber pendant with a likeness of King Stephen Bathory in profile, regarded as the oldest surviving example of sentimental jewellery, see D. Nowacki, M. Piwocka, *Klejnoty w dawnej Polsce* (Warszawa, 2011), p. 35. These mementos were donated in 1929 by Adam Ludwik Czartoryski, First Ordinate of Sieniawa and Second Ordinate of Gołuchów; R. Skowron, 'O powrót na Wawel królewskich pamiątek ze zbiorów książąt Czartoryskich', *Studia Waweliana*, vol. 11/12, 2003, p. 278. Reproductions and description of the contents of the casket: see E. Czepielowa, Z. Żygulski, 'Losy Szkatuły Królewskiej z puławskiej Świątyni Sybilli', *Cenne, Bezcenne, Utraczone*, no. 2/8, 1998, pp. 14–21.

13 E. Danowska, 'O Tadeuszu Czackim i Izabeli Czartoryskiej połączonych pasją poszukiwania narodowych pamiątek', in: *Izabela Czartoryska dux femina facti*, p. 99.

inscription: *Zagwożdżona Przyjaźń* ('Spiked Friendship').<sup>14</sup> It has rightly been pointed out that there was a deeper symbolic reason for arranging the space in this way: the curtain covering the *sacrum* refers to the Jerusalem Temple, and the casket standing in front of it acts as the Ark of the Covenant.<sup>15</sup> This is a telling transfer of sacred values transformed in support of national and patriotic ideas. Thus, the most important artefacts held in the Temple of Remembrance were memorabilia extolling the glorious past. Recently, during her in-depth study of the accounts and reflections in memoirs, diaries and diaries of visitors to the site during the years of its prosperity, Grażyna Bartnik made an apt observation: 'The newcomers usually mention those memorabilia that are associated with the country's most glorious past: not only figures of individuals, but also events and battles associated with them. The most recognised are therefore the prophetic shield of John III Sobieski, the swords of Ladislaus Jagiello and Vytautas, or the sarcophagus with relics of Boleslaus I the Brave.'<sup>16</sup> To this, an emphatically confirming quote from Łukasz Gołębiowski should be added: '[...] Wprost wnijścia zasłona z ponsowego axamitu, z bogatą frędzlą, snąc kryje świętości świętościów'.<sup>17</sup>

What memorabilia exactly constituted the royal panoply? The already mentioned prophetic shield of King John was its centrepiece and dominant feature,<sup>18</sup> although it should be added that we do not have any sources

14 Z. Żygulski, *Dzieje zbiorów puławskich*, p. 86; BCz, sign. Ms 3226, [F. Kozłowski], *Regestr pamiątek polskich złożonych w Świątyni Pamięci Puławskiej*, before 1827, fol. 2. According to other catalogues, the inscription read: 'Friendships' or 'Friendship'; cf. *ibid.*, sign. Ms 3036, *Inwentarz Świątyni Sybilli w Puławach w miesiącu lipcu r. 1815 spisany*, fol. 3; *ibid.*, sign. Ms 12147, *Inwentarz Świątyni Sybilli w Puławach w miesiącu lipcu 1815o roku spisany, w Paryżu w sierpniu 1849 roku przepisany z dodaniem Skazówek, Osób i Rzeczy*, fol. 3, no. 21.

15 H. Jurkowska, *Pamięć sentymentalna. Praktyki pamięci w kręgu Towarzystwa Warszawskiego Przyjaciół Nauk i w Puławach Izabeli Czartoryskiej* (Warszawa, 2014), pp. 393–394, after Wojtyła, 'Świątynia Sybilli', p. 179; G. Bartnik, 'Izabeli Czartoryskiej „obraz przeszłości, który by przemawiał do duszy” (ojczyzna i historia w puławskim muzeum w świetle pamiątek i wspomnień XIX-wiecznych zwiedzających)', in: *Izabela Czartoryska dux femina facti*, p. 207; also further bibliographical references in the titles cited.

16 Bartnik, 'Izabeli Czartoryskiej „obraz przeszłości”'.

17 BCz, sign. Ms 2928, [Ł. Gołębiowski], *Opisanie pamiątek polskich w Świątyni Sybilli w Puławach*, fol. 6r.

18 Jurkowska, *Pamięć sentymentalna*, p. 393. Since the end of the nineteenth century, the prophetic shield has been the subject of an extensive literature, of which the most recent notes and publications worth mentioning are K. Czyżewski, 'Marsowe echa w krakowskiej katedrze', in: *Na znak świętego zwycięstwa. W sześćsetną rocznicę bitwy pod Grunwaldem. Katalog wystawy 15 lipca–30 września 2010. Zamek Królewski na Wawelu Państwowe Zbiory Sztuki*, vol. 1: *Studia*, ed. D. Nowacki (Kraków, 2010), pp. 75–79; Z. Żygulski, 'The Prophetic Shield of John III Sobieski and the Edict of Milan', *Artibus et Historiae*, vol. 35, 2014, pp. 305–326; T. Kusion, *Katalog Zbrojowni Muzeum Książąt Czartoryskich* (Kraków, 2019), pp. 66–69. The shield owned by Jakub Sobieski passed into the possession of Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł 'Rybeńko' and was



telling us what the panoply looked like or any broader descriptions of the militaria that comprised it. From the account of Waleria Tarnowska – one of the first persons to visit the Puławy temple, as early as 1807 – it only appears that weapons of the kings Stephen Bathory and John III were hung above (*au dessus*) the prophetic shield.<sup>19</sup> A list of objects constituting the panoply is given by virtually all the inventories. Unfortunately, the content of these registers is very scant. The most complete descriptions are found in a list written around 1828 by the librarian Franciszek Kozłowski,<sup>20</sup> who, writing from life, listed as follows (Fig. 3):

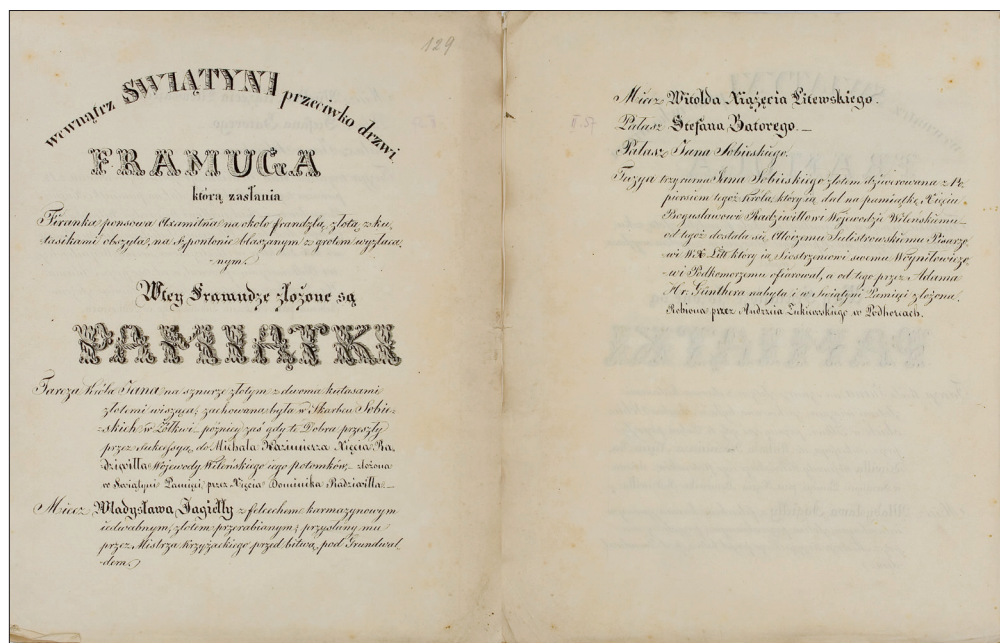
Wewnątrz Świątyni przeciwko drzwi. Framuga, którą zasłania [szponton]. W tej framudze złożone są pamiątki:

Tarcza Króla Jana na sznurze złotym z dwoma kutasami złotymi wisząca; zachowana była w Skarbcu Sobieskich w Żółkwi, później zaś, gdy te dobra przeszły sukcesją do Michała Kazimierza Księcia Radziwiłła Wojewody Wileńskiego [i] jego potomków; złożona w Świątyni Pamięci przez Księcia Dominika Radziwiłła.

Miecz Władysława Jagiełły z felcechem karmazynowym jedwabnym, złotem przerabianym; przysłany mu przez Mistrza Krzyżackiego przed bitwą pod Grunwaldem.<sup>21</sup>

held in Nieśwież (Nyasvitz). It remained in the hands of the Radziwiłłs until 1805, when Adam Kazimierz's ward, Dominik Radziwiłł, bequeathed it to Izabela Czartoryska along with several other mementoes, including the stirrup of Kara Mustafa sent to Queen Maria Casimire, then residing in Cracow, along with a letter announcing the Vienna victory; Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw (AGAD), Archiwum Radziwiłłów, sign. XXVI/725, *Z Xięgi Skrabowej pod Tytułem Rzeczy Starożytnych w Składzie Grünegewelbe zwanym naydłuższych się. Wypis*; M. Kossowski, 'Order Janina ze skarbcza radziwiłłowskiego w Nieświeżu', *Kronika Zamkowa*, vol. 2, 2000, p. 21.

- 19 Jagiellonian Library, sign. Przyb. Rkp. 112/52, [Waleria ze Stroynowskich Tarnowska], *Mon Journal. Volume I*, 1804–1810, p. 233. The author would like to thank the translator of Countess Tarnowska's diaries, Ms Monika Chwałek-Oczkowska, for the advice.
- 20 BCz, sign. Ms 3032, *Poczet pamiątek narodowych*, pp. 129–130. All other inventories of the Temple of the Sibyl contain similar or more limited descriptions. Franciszek Kozłowski (1787–1862/1863) was an archivist in Puławy, where he originally worked under the supervision of Łukasz Gołębiowski, and later also collaborated with Karol Sienkiewicz and Karol Druziewicz. Together with them, he participated in the evacuation of the collection from Puławy in 1831; H. Mącznik, *Puławski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 1: A–K (Lublin, 1994), pp. 238–239 (with the date of death given as after 1830). According to Druziewicz's notation (in: BCz, sign. Ms 3226, [F. Kozłowski], *Regestr pamiątek*, fol. Ir) Kozłowski was to become guardian of the Temple of the Sibyl after Franciszek Gniewkowski. For this reason, he probably drew up new inventories, updated and more precise than the previous ones, which were planned to be published in a printed version. However, these plans were irretrievably thwarted by the outbreak of the November Uprising and the end of the Czartoryskis' residence in Puławy.
- 21 This probably refers to an Italian rapier from the second half of the sixteenth century, still in the museum's collection, MNK, inv. no. MNK XIV-14; see T. Kusion, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, pp. 42–43. Żygulski mistakenly believed that the panoply included a seventeenth-century Turkish estoc, which in the early nineteenth century was also attributed to King Jagiello; Z. Żygulski, *Dzieje zbiorów puławskich*, p. 86, 277, note 107. However, this estoc was stored in one of the mahogany cabinets flanking the main axis of the exhibition; see e.g. BCz, sign. Ms 3036, *Inwentarz Świątyni Sybilli*, p. 19.



Miecz Witolda Książęcia Litewskiego.<sup>22</sup>

Pałasz Stefana Batorego.<sup>23</sup>

Pałasz Jana Sobieskiego.

Fuzja trzyrurna Jana Sobieskiego złotem dziwerowana z popiersiem tegoż króla, który ją dał na pamiątkę Księciu Bogusławowi Radziwiłłowi Wojewodzie Wileńskiemu, od tego dostała się Alojzemu Sulistrowskiemu Pisarzowi Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego, który ją siostrzeńcowi swemu Wojniłowiczowi Podkomorzemu ofiarował, a od tego przez Adama Hr. Günthera nabyta i w Świątyni Pamięci złożona. Robiona przez Andrzeja Żukiewskiego w Podhorcech.<sup>24</sup>

Fig. 3

Description of the monuments forming the royal panoply in the Temple of the Sibyl in Puławy in the manuscript by Franciszek Kozłowski, c. 1828, BCZ

The extensive excerpt from the manuscript as quoted above makes it possible to identify the shield and the rifle with a relative certainty; the latter, as it entered the Puławy collection late, has until now not been considered in historiography as a part of the royal panoply. This issue is not central to the topic and must therefore be the subject of a separate

- 22 This is an early modern executioner's sword, which is still preserved in the collection, inv. no. MNK XIV-15; see T. Kusion, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, pp. 46–47.
- 23 Traditionally, the person of the monarch is associated with the sabre with a half-locked, gilded hilt, on which an identification ring with an inscription 'Stefan Batory's' has survived; see *ibid.*, pp. 49–50. Its origin has not been established.
- 24 The rifle is still in the museum's collection, inv. no. MNK XIV-76; see *ibid.*, pp. 63–64 (with earlier literature). The weapon is signed with the name of the gunsmith Andrzej Żukiewski from Podhorce, active until about 1740; W. Kwaśniewicz, *Encyklopedia dawnej broni i uzbrojenia ochronnego* (Warszawa, 2022), p. 624 (the author incorrectly states that the collection of the MNK holds two rifles made by Żukiewski). It cannot therefore be a memento of the king.

study.<sup>25</sup> Returning to the main theme of this essay, it seems reasonable to ask whether the ‘pałasz Jana Sobieskiego’ is identifiable, and if so, has it survived to the present day? Furthermore, did it indeed belong to the monarch? In order to resolve these issues, it will be necessary to use a deductive method based on sources from 1815–1831 and later, dating from the time after the Czartoryski Museum in Cracow came into being.

For the first time in the post-Puławy period, the militaria were listed comprehensively in 1877 during the inventorying of the princes’ collection in Cracow, then being reassembled. For this task, the museum’s founder Władysław Czartoryski appointed Leon Bentkowski, who, having held the position of curator since 1872, began to compile a series of inventories corresponding to the new division of the collections according to their type, helped in that by his young assistant and future successor Bolesław Biskupski.<sup>26</sup> In addition to the sections that had been distinguished over the years, such as the section of ancient art, called *starożytności zagraniczne* (‘foreign antiquities’), and the archaeological collection from Polish territories, the family heirlooms, the paintings, miniatures etc., Bentkowski also isolated the Armoury, to which he attributed historic weaponry dating from the late Middle Ages and the early modern era. The curator began writing its inventory as early as 1877, giving this section number II.<sup>27</sup> Such early establishment of the Armoury was due to the fact that the three corner rooms of the south-east wing (i.e. from the façade and Pijarska Street) of the Klasztornek building, which was the central edifice of the museum complex, had been arranged and made available to the public before the actual opening of the entire exhibition. The Armoury, therefore, formed the first part of the museum exhibition in general. In identifying and describing the artefacts in the inventory, Bentkowski clearly relied on documents and copies of the Puławy catalogues. He was also aided by Karol Druziewicz, administrator of the Sieniawa library, who remembered the heyday of the Temple of the Sibyl and the Gothic House.<sup>28</sup> Finally, he used the identification signatures

25 The author of the present paper gave a presentation on the subject this rifle entitled *Wątki myśliwskie w ekspozycji Zbrojowni Muzeum Książąt Czartoryskich*, delivered at the conference ‘W kręgu arystokratycznych siedzib myśliwskich’ organised by the Castle Museum in Pszczyna on 7 and 8 October 2021. The text of the presentation is to be published shortly.

26 J. Pezda, ‘Kustosz Bentkowski’, in: *Europa Środkowa, Balkany i Polacy. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Antoniemu Cetnarowiczowi*, eds J. Pezda, S. Pijaj (Kraków, 2017), pp. 573–577; L. Stefański, ‘Leon Jarosław Bentkowski (1823–1889) – rolnik z Ziemi Dobrzyńskiej kustosz Muzeum Książąt Czartoryskich’, *Rocznik Dobrzyński*, vol. 12, 2019, pp. 173–174.

27 BCz, sign. Ms 12774, [L. Bentkowski, A. Smoleński, S. Komornicki], *Katalog Zbrojowni w zbiorach XX. Czartoryskich, 1877–1938*, pp. 1–2.

28 Karol Druziewicz (1795–1879) was born in the Dłużek estate, which belonged to the Czartoryski family, with whom he became associated from 1814. He was initially employed at the chancellery of Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, and later at the Puławy library, where he worked under, respectively, Łukasz Gołębiowski and Karol Sienkiewicz. With the latter, he participated in the evacuation of the collection in 1831. Due to the tsarist repressions,



found on at least some of the artefacts, a part of which survives today in the form of wooden plaques painted in gold or steel and silver rings, some of which are gilt. It must be added that militaria that got dispersed during the November Uprising were a type of historic artefact that was particularly difficult to secure and hide. Firstly, the weapons could potentially be used against the authorities and were therefore subject to requisitions by the tsarist gendarmerie and police services, who, in such cases, generally did not accept arguments that some of the nobility's private domestic arsenals were devoid of utilitarian or combat value.<sup>29</sup> Secondly, the main material for weaponry is iron, which is susceptible to weather conditions and corrodes easily; hence hiding weapons in wall or earth caches required special protection against moisture. This condition was impossible to fulfil in the case of the hasty evacuation of the Puławy collection. This was the case with a huge number of sabres and backswords, which shortly after the uprising were walled up in the wall of the palace in Klemensów, belonging to the Zamoyski family.<sup>30</sup> Over the years, the memory of the deposit faded and it was not rediscovered until the building's renovation more than thirty years later.<sup>31</sup> The condition of the discovered artefacts is therefore easy to imagine. Particularly affected were the blades; suffice it to say that their central sections were often so badly damaged that nineteenth-century restorers had to join them together with steel plates. Many ornamental decorations and

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he could not remain in the Kingdom of Poland, so he moved with his family to Sieniawa in Galicia at the invitation of Prince Czartoryski. There he was given the position of administrator of the library with which he was connected virtually for the rest of his life. His great merit was to engage in the restitution of the Puławy collections; he travelled to the Kingdom of Poland several times to search for the artefacts; see K. Buczek, 'Druziewicz Karol (1800–1879)', in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 5 (Kraków, 1939–1946), p. 401 (with an erroneous date of birth: 1800); H. Mącznik, *Puławski słownik biograficzny*, pp. 107–108; J. Nowak, 'Karola Druziewicza podróże biblioteczne po Kongresówce i Galicji w latach 1860–1879', *Przegląd Humanistyczny*, vol. 38, no 3, 1994, pp. 89–97.

- 29 That is how the gendarmerie looted several weapons, including the Teutonic Order's swords identified as those offered to Ladislaus Jagiello at Grunwald, which had been hidden in the vicarage in Włostowice; see BCz, sign. Ms 12236, file 'Włostowice', *Pamiętki pochodzące z Puław, a znalezione przy spisaniu Inwentarza po X. Dobrzyńskim Proboszczu we Włostowicach, zmarłym w roku 1853. dnia 3. Lipca i odebrane z upoważnienia Kancelarii Centralnej Hrabów Zamojskich w Warszawie*, in: *Dowody pochodzenia obiektów muzealnych i bibliotecznych ułożone według miejscowości, w których były przechowywane zbiory puławskie po ewakuacji w 1831 roku, 1830–1878*; a passage quoted by Z. Żygulski, *Dzieje zbiorów*, pp. 306–307.
- 30 *Spis zostawionych rzeczy AC w Klemensowie 3 Czerwca 1832; Kopia wierzytelna spisu przez śp. Cypryńskiego – sprzętów w Klemensowie deponowanych, a tam odtransportowanych, ratując od zaboru Moskiewskiego w latach 1831–1832 itd. przez Druziewicza z Puław z palacu... na wierzchniej karcie napisano ołówkiem własną ręką JOej Księżnej Anny Sapieżny tak: Sprzęty Klemensowskie opisane przez Cypryńskiego roku 1841 niespełna*, in: BCz, sign. Ms 12236, file 'Klemensów', *Dowody pochodzenia*.
- 31 J. Pezda, 'Przeszłość przyszłości. Historia zbiorów rodzinnych opowiedziana przez Władysława Czartoryskiego', *Rocznik Biblioteki Naukowej PAU i PAN w Krakowie*, vol. 58, 2013, pp. 123–124.

inscriptions, signs and craftsmen's guilds marks, which are valuable from the point of view of provenance research, also disappeared. These were the difficulties faced by Bentkowski when he began his works on the inventory.

The curator linked the following sabres to King John:

Poz. 17: Szabla z czasów Jana III, klinga z napisem, wizerunkiem i herbem złotem nabijanymi, bez pochwy. [...]

Poz. 23: Szabla prosta z portretem złotym Jana III i napisem; w czarnej pochwie. [...]

Poz. 25: Szabla Jana III przysłana przez Innocentego Papieża; bez pochwy. [...]

Poz. 28: Szabla ofiarowana do Loreto przez Jana III, rękojeść jaspisowa, okucie srebrne złożone, z kamieniami, pochwa zielona axamitna. [...]

Poz. 33: Szabla z żelazną gardą, bez pochwy, po Janie III. [...]

Poz. 34: Szabla Jana III w pochwie skórzanej i okuciu pozłocistym.<sup>32</sup>

The cited catalogue entries will be linked to specific objects on the basis of a further in-depth analysis of inventories of the Temple of the Sibyl, which list all the sabres associated with John III. Their descriptions are somewhat more extensive than the laconically mentioned 'backsword' from the royal panoply. They were all stored, together with the rest of the weapons, in the first compartment of the mahogany wardrobe located to the right of the niche: 'standing by the Casket facing the exit'.<sup>33</sup> The first to be mentioned was 'Pałasz w czarnych pochwach z żelaznym okowem, rękojeść z jaszczuru białego; należał do Jana 3go Sobieskiego' ('A backsword in black scabbard with iron fitting, hilt of white shagreen; belonged to John III Sobieski').<sup>34</sup> Two other inventories additionally report that the blade was decorated with an inscription: 'Dextera Ioannis vicit a[pu]d Viennam [AD] 1683'.<sup>35</sup> Franciszek Kozłowski was the only person to mention the provenance of the sabre: it was said to have been donated by Stanisław Dunin-Wąsowicz, who acquired it from the Morsztyn family.<sup>36</sup> The above information makes it possible to link

32 BCz, sign. 12774 Rkps, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, p. 4–6. All of the above-mentioned item numbers correspond to contemporary inventory numbers, so whenever they are quoted in the following text, the citation of this manuscript was deliberately omitted.

33 BCz, sign. Ms 3036, *Inwentarz Świątyni Sybilli*, p. 19.

34 Ibid., p. 20 (the remaining sabres also mentioned here). BCz, sign. Ms 3226, *Regestr pamiątek polskich*, p. 82, no. 243.

35 BCz, sign. Ms 12146, *Historyczne opisanie Świątyni Sybilli w Puławach*, 1825, p. 186: „Dextera Ioannis, vicit ad Viennam, AD 1683”; cf. BCz, sign. Ms 3032, *Poczet pamiątek narodowych*, p. 91. In this case, Kozłowski used the capitalised notation. The inscription reads: 'Prawica Jana zwyciężyła pod Wiedniem' ('John's right hand was victorious at Vienna').

36 Ibid. Stanisław Dunin Wąsowicz (1785–1864) began his military career in the army of the Duchy of Warsaw, starting in the war of 1809, when he became aide to Wincenty Krasiński. Steadily climbing up the career ladder, he was given the position of interpreter and ordnance officer to Napoleon himself during the Russian campaign. In addition to the sabre, he also donated to Puławy a cap of the Orthodox archdeacon, preserved to this day, allegedly used by the Emperor himself when he crossed the Berezina; *Poczet*

the description to a *janówka* sabre extant in the present collection, the blade of which, although heavily damaged by corrosion, bears large portions of a gilt inscription running perpendicularly along the prominent back of the blade, which corresponds to the description (Fig. 4a, 4b).<sup>37</sup> The inscription is located on the outer surface of the blade, which also features a well-preserved bust of the monarch shown in profile. On the inner surface, there is a small Janina coat

of arms under an open crown or diadem surmounted by three florets, placed analogously to the bust.<sup>38</sup> It should be noted, however, that the sabre briefly described here has a hilt that differs from the one described in the sources: instead of white shagreen, the grip cladding is made of black, lacquered leather incised in a dense grid. The pommel cap is missing. The curved crossguard, is typical for sabres dating from the second half or even the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The scabbard noted in the inventories has not survived.

The second of the aforementioned weapons attributed to John III is 'A backsword in black scabbards, gilt silver mounts [i.e. fittings], sent to John the Third from Pope Innocent'.<sup>39</sup> In this case, the identification raises no doubts, as *Historyczne opisanie Świątyni Sybilli w Puławach* contains a rather detailed description of the blade, which sounds like a continuation of the passage quoted above: '[...] z popiersiem Papieża, i napisem wokoło: Ego Innocenti XI. do tibi Joanni Sobieski, gladium, cum benedictione, na boku: Electo Polonia[e]; z drugiej strony tiara, i krzyż troisty'.<sup>40</sup> The sabre has survived in good condition to this day, although without the scabbard.<sup>41</sup> Interestingly, the beautifully gilt hilt



Fig. 4a–b

A sabre associated with King John III according to the Puławy tradition;  
(a) outer surface of the blade;  
(b) inner surface of the blade,  
MNK Princes Czartoryski Museum

*pamiątek zachowanych*, p. 59, no. 637; B. Gembarzewski, *Katalog Wystawy Napoleńskiej (Doby Księstwa Warszawskiego). Otwartej w gmachu Muzeum Narodowego i Muzeum Wojska w Warszawie, dn. 5 maja r. 1921* (Warszawa, 1921), p. 27, no. 161; T. Kusion, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, p. 299–300.

37 MNK, inv. no. MNK XIV-17; A. Dolleczek, *Szable Jana Sobieskiego*, p. 12, Fig. 3. An object hitherto unpublished in the literature. A note and photographs of the sabre were recently made available in the MNK digital catalogue of the collection: [zbiory.mnk.pl/pl/wyniki-wyszukiwania/katalog/27029](http://zbiory.mnk.pl/pl/wyniki-wyszukiwania/katalog/27029) (accessed 19 Feb. 2023).

38 The form may possibly evoke associations with a canopy or tent. The simplicity of the shot, however, does not allow the figure to be clearly defined.

39 BCz, sign. Ms 3226, *Regestr pamiątek polskich*, p. 82, no. 245.

40 BCz, sign. Ms 12146, *Historyczne opisanie*, p. 186.

41 MNK, inv. no. MNK XIV-25; A. Dolleczek, *Szable Jana Sobieskiego*, p. 12, Fig. 8; see T. Kusion, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, p. 60–61, with earlier literature.

ornamented with blackened floral motifs has facings covered with a pale-grey shagreen, which would match the description of the sabre mentioned earlier. This could indicate that the weapon, damaged by years of concealment after 1831, was improperly assembled. A Puławy description of the hilt of the sabre given to the king by the pope would be decisive in this matter; unfortunately it is currently unknown.

The original appearance was certainly strongly interfered with in the case of another sabre, which was a gift that Sobieski – then still a hetman – made to Loreto as a votive offering after the Chocim victory.<sup>42</sup> However, this object fell victim to German looting in October 1939, when a cache of the most valuable museum objects was found in the outbuildings of the palace in Sieniawa.<sup>43</sup> As a consequence of this event, only the following elements of the object have survived: a crossguard (missing a single stone in the front quillon), a piece of the tip of the blade, and the scabbard (broken at a height corresponding to the length of the surviving fragment of the blade). Regarding its original appearance, the inventories state: ‘Szabla w czarnych pochwach, oprawa srebrna, rękojeść i skuwki jaspisem wysadzane; ta była do Loreto dana przez Jana III.’<sup>44</sup> The scabbard was therefore originally covered with black leather; as demonstrated by countless examples in many museums, this was a fairly common custom in the case of Polish early-modern weapons. The extant covering, however, is made of light green velvet, which is unusual and essentially finds no analogy. This is because it is the result of secondary interference, which must have been done in 1877 at the latest; the inventory of the Armoury compiled in that year by the curator Leon Bentkowski contains a description of the sabre with an annotation about the covering being made of precisely such velvet.<sup>45</sup> The original leather covering was probably significantly damaged and had to be replaced. The change in the ornamentation of this piece is not confirmed in any way, but in the museum archives there is information about similar procedures in relation

42 MNK, inv. no. MNK XIV-28; A. Dolleczek, *Szable Jana Sobieskiego*, p. 12, Fig. 1; see T. Kusion, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, pp. 58–59. According to a well-established tradition, repeated, by the way, after *Historyczne opisanie* (BCz, sign. Ms 12146, p. 186), the sabre was donated to the collection by Tadeusz Kościuszko.

43 Archiwum MNK 81, file ‘Zbiory Czarotoryskich’, Wywiad z p. Zofią Schmidt (Szmit), b. pracownicą Muzeum Czarotoryskich w sprawie grabieży obiektów muzealnych dokonanej przez żołnierzy hitlerowskich w Sieniawie w czasie kampanii wrześniowej w r. 1939, 4 VIII 1965. The fortunes of the museum in the first months of the war is described by e.g. M. Rostworowski, *Gry o Damę* (Kraków, 1994), pp. 81–85; R. Kudelski, *Tajemnice nazistowskiej grabieży polskich zbiorów sztuki* (Warszawa, 2004), p. 92–98.

44 BCz, sign. Ms 3226, *Regestr pamiątek polskich*, p. 83, no. 248. In the days of the Cracow museum, confirmation of the object’s presence was added in pencil next to the description by an annotation ‘present’.

45 BCz, sign. Ms 12774, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, p. 5, no. 28.

to other artefacts.<sup>46</sup> After this secondary redesign, a chromolithographic image of the weapon, albeit highly simplified, was published by Józef Łoski, who juxtaposed it with the ‘papal sabre’.<sup>47</sup> There is also a well-known photograph taken in 1883 by Ignacy Krieger, where the Loreto *karabela* sabre is shown between two other sabres from the Czartoryski collection (Fig. 5).<sup>48</sup> Considering that only fragments of this sabre are extant, these iconographic sources are particularly valuable.



Fig. 5

Another sabre is laconically and quite typically described in some of the records: ‘Pałasz w czarnych pochwach, w okuciu żelaznym, niegdyś należał do Jana III’.<sup>49</sup> To recognise this object, it is once again best to refer to *Poczet pamiątek* by the meticulous Franciszek Kozłowski, who wrote that this was not a backsword, but a sabre, and that it was decorated with the bust of the king along with the inscription: ‘[...] JOANNES III SALVATOR EUROPAE’ inlaid in gold.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, unlike the other documents, Kozłowski did not repeat the remark that this had supposedly been a weapon that once belonged to the monarch himself. Probably not knowing the exact provenance, he merely recorded: ‘dawna Polska’ (‘ancient Poland’). Only one of the sabres from the contemporary collection corresponds to the cited description: it is a typical Polish sabre

Photograph by Ignacy Krieger from 1883 depicting three sabres traditionally associated with King Jan III; from top: a sabre from the royal panoply, a sabre presented by John Sobieski, then Grand Hetman of the Crown, as a votive offering to Loreto after the Chocim victory, a sabre that was a gift from Pope Innocent XI to John III, MNK Princes Czartoryski Museum

46 A new covering made of crimson velvet was given to the sabre by Grand Crown Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński; it was made for the cost of 80 kreutzers. Its reception was recorded on 8 October 1877; see BCz, sign. Ms 12344, [L. Bentkowski], *Dziennik czynności Zarządu Zbiorów XX. Czartoryskich, 1878–1884*, p. 46 (no. 1236).

47 J. Łoski, *Jan Sobieski. Jego rodzina, towarzysze broni i współczesne zabytki*, Warszawa 1883, p. 70.

48 Quite a large number of positives has survived in the museum collections; the Museum of Cracow, for example, has as many as three with sign. MHK-2909/K, MHK-3781/K, MHK-4176/K. Underneath these photographs, there is a somewhat misleading caption, according to which the first sabre from the top is supposed to be the one from Loreto. Reproduction from the collection of the Princes Czartoryski Museum bearing sign. R. f. IV. 631 has identification numbers written in pencil in the upper right-hand corner, consistent with the Armoury’s inventory compiled by Bentkowski in 1877. They are preceded by the Roman numeral II, which corresponds to the number of the section, the Armoury. The numbers are given in ascending order and therefore not in accordance with the order of the artefacts presented.

49 BCz, sign. Ms 3226, *Regestr pamiątek polskich*, p. 84, no. 256.

50 BCz, sign. Ms 3032, *Poczet pamiątek narodowych*, p. 93. A slightly different inscription is noted in: *ibid.*, sign. Ms 12146, *Historyczne opisanie*, p. 186: ‘[...] Ioan III. Rex Poloniae Salvator Europa’.



with a closed hilt mounted at a later date and with a thumb ring;<sup>51</sup> the form of the hilt enforces the dating of this weapon to the last decades of the eighteenth century. The grip, almost identical to that of the first sabre described, is covered in black lacquered leather. It can therefore be assumed that the settings for both blades were made at the same time. The blade itself is badly damaged as a result of prolonged corrosion, which has gouged longitudinal holes in the fuller in two places. Remnants of gilt decoration on the outer surface of the blade make it impossible to assess their original appearance. Most likely, the bust of the monarch was similar or the same as that on the first of these sabres. The inscription in this case ran parallel to the blade; only a fragment of it is legible today: '[...]ALVATOR EUROP[...]'.

The last weapon in question is described by all sources in way similar to the above: 'Szabla w czarnych pochwach, oków żelazny i rapcie jedwabne żółte, ta od czasu Jana III'.<sup>52</sup> In this case, the author of the inventory was more conservative, writing that this was a weapon used during the king's reign, rather than, as with the others, that it had been his property. To link the written sources with the artefact, we should once again use the priceless descriptions of the archivist Kozłowski, who wrote as follows: 'Na główni popiersie Jana III i rok 1682 [sic!] z napisem: *Żem płatała Mahomeckie szyszaki [i] karwasze / Utrzymałam z honorem Świętą Wiarę naszą / I niejednej pod Wiedniem dokazałam sztuki / Przeto mnie konserwować będą wnuków wnuki*'.<sup>53</sup> A sabre with such an inscription survives in a relatively good condition in the present collection.<sup>54</sup> The blade, with its slight curvature and centred tip, resembles a backsword. The four-verse text runs parallel to the blade on the outer surface of the blade, while the bust with the royal titles is located on the inner one, perpendicular to the edge and the back of the blade. The simple likeness, in profile, is very similar to that on the first sabre. Although some sources give the date 1683<sup>55</sup> in the description of this weapon, Kozłowski is indeed correct: for unknown reasons, it

51 MNK, inv. no. MNK XIV-33. The artefact has not yet been mentioned in the literature. Note in the digital catalogue of the MNK collection: <https://zbiory.mnk.pl/pl/wyniki-wyszukiwania/katalog/38655> (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).

52 BCz, sign. Ms 3226, *Regestr pamiątek polskich...*, p. 84, no. 258. In the first inventory of 1815, the mention of the presence of the sword belt was added in pencil, which may indicate that it was added at a later date, before subsequent versions of the registers began to be written, i.e. before c.1826–1827.

53 BCz, sign. Ms 3032, *Poczet pamiątek narodowych*, p. 91.

54 MNK, inv. no. MNK XIV-23/1-2; A. Dolleczek, *Szable Jana Sobieskiego*, p. 12, Fig. 2. The reproduction of the arms was published by Z. Żygulski, *Odsiecz wiedeńska 1683* (Kraków, 1988), p. 153, Fig. 23.

55 BCz, sign. Ms 12146, *Historyczne opisanie*, p. 188; cf. *ibid.*, sign. Ms 2928, *Opisanie pamiątek polskich*, fol. 66r. In both documents, the rhyming phrase was used by the authors to derive the bravery and 'spirit of chivalry' that the good example of the hero king was supposed to inspire.

is a year earlier. The scabbard of this sabre is extant; it is made of wooden splints covered with black leather and devoid of any decoration. The fittings are made of steel. The straight-ended chape has an opening in it. The mouthpiece is cut into four symmetrically arranged teeth. There is no locket. The covering is made of black leather in the same style as in the previously described scabbards.

Thanks to the above-presented comparison of source data with artefacts dating from the Puławy period, it now becomes possible, by a method of elimination, to determine which of the sabres associated with the monarch was part of the royal panoply, which was the most important element of the entire arrangement. It has already been mentioned that references to the sabre in each of the inventories are consistently laconic, they are limited to the statement: 'John Sobieski's backsword'. Only the *Historyczne opisanie Świątyni Sybilli* provides the detail that the weapon had been a gift from the Morsztyn family.<sup>56</sup> The issue of its identification posed difficulties for museum professionals still in the nineteenth century. This is evidenced by a pencil note in one of the copies of the 1815 inventory, made in Paris in 1849.<sup>57</sup> A note in the margin stated that the weapon was present in the collection, and the number II.33, which was considered appropriate, was given. This number corresponds to a sabre with the inscription '[...] JOANNES III SALVATOR EUROPAE', according to the numbering in the 1877 inventory of the Armoury.<sup>58</sup> However, the author of the note must have encountered a problem, as he decided to add: 'or maybe 228 or 230?'. These numbers, however, refer to the numbering of the 1849 list.<sup>59</sup> This, therefore, indicates that ultimately the description was not linked to an actual object. This issue has not been resolved by modern researchers either.

There is every indication that the object from the royal panoply is a sabre hitherto not mentioned in the scholarly literature, whose only mark indicating that it was associated with Sobieski at Puławy is a gilt ring with an engraved signature: 'King John's' (Fig. 6a, 6b).<sup>60</sup> This ring was threaded on a chain connecting the pommel cap to the front quillon of the crossguard on the massive hilt, the latter also gilt in its entirety. The blade itself is unusually wide (4.8 cm at the base) and long (87 cm),

56 BCz, sign. Ms 12146, *Historyczne opisanie*, p. 186. This reference could suggest that the weapons entered the Temple of the Sibyl collection from the Morsztyn family analogously, i.e. through the hands of Stanisław Dunin-Wąsowicz. However, the lack of sufficient data makes it impossible to confirm this hypothesis.

57 BCz, sign. Ms 12147, *Inwentarz Świątyni Sybilli*, p. 5, no. 51bis.

58 BCz, sign. Ms 12774, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, p. 6, no. 33.

59 The analysis of all the sources indicates that no. 228 refers to the note attributed to the 'Salvator Europae' sabre cited by the author (inv. no. MNK XIV-33), while 230 is proper for the weapon with a four-line sentence (inv. no. MNK XIV-23/1-2).

60 MNK, inv. no. MNK XIV-34/1-2. See the digital catalogue of the MNK collection: [zbiory.mnk.pl/en/wyniki-wyrokania/katalog/39212](https://zbiory.mnk.pl/en/wyniki-wyrokania/katalog/39212) (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).



Fig. 6a–b

A sabre with scabbard once belonging to the royal panoply in the Temple of the Sibyl, associated with King John III according to the Puławy tradition; (a) outer surface of the blade; (b) inner surface of the blade, MNK Princes Czartoryski Museum

and is devoid of any markings or decoration. The only and, it must be stressed, rather modest decoration consists of engraved palmettes and floral scrolls on the gilt fittings of the scabbard. Ornaments characteristic of the Rococo style make us date this weapon generally to the middle or the third quarter of the eighteenth century. This, of course, excludes it from the group of objects left behind by King John III, although it by no means depreciates its significance for the culture-generating role of a memento it served in the Puławy national pantheon. This sabre was also held in high esteem in later times, as evidenced by its presence in the Krieger's photograph in the company of two other very noble heirlooms (Fig. 5). Antoni Dolleccek did not forget it either in his study drawing published in *Kłosy*.<sup>61</sup> Yet even he had doubts about the authenticity of the memento, as he wrote:

<sup>61</sup> A. Dolleccek, *Szable Jana Sobieskiego*, p. 12, Fig. 7.

[...] this sabre, the so-called scimitar (Fig. 7) of Polish construction, from the Czartoryski collection, is attributed [underline M.Ch.] also to King Sobieski. The blade is quite plain, 89 cm long, and weakly curved; it has a 13 cm long, massive hilt with two [sic!] silver chains linking it to the ends of the crossguard. The scabbard is now of black leather, finished with gilt brass.<sup>62</sup>

Moreover, the inauthenticity of this sabre was also indirectly established by Stanisław Świerz, who had been hired by the museum to write a new catalogue of the Armoury between 1913 and 1914,<sup>63</sup> which he ultimately failed to complete, leaving the work in manuscript. This catalogue, although it was still known in the post-war era,<sup>64</sup> is now considered lost and its content is only partially known, as fragments were noted on the inventory sheets of the Armoury's artefacts. It is precisely such a note on the card that suggests that Świerz dated the sabre broadly to the eighteenth century and stated that it was only attributed to the king.<sup>65</sup>

Among the remaining sabres traditionally associated with King John III, as many as three (apart from the 'Chocim' and 'papal' sabres, which appear to have indeed been owned by him) belong to the group of the so-called *janówka* sabres, i.e. sabres decorated with images, signs and texts of a propagandistic nature, intended to express the nobility's approval of the ruler's policies and military achievements. As noted by Włodzimierz Kwaśniewicz, arms bearing the monarch's image were held in high esteem even after his death and may have been a symbol of the olden glory of the Commonwealth.<sup>66</sup> The king's great fame in the last decades of the eighteenth century was widely reflected – beyond the Czartoryski circle, it suffices to recall how much his memory was respected in the policies of Stanislaus Augustus and the Radziwiłłs, as clearly evidenced by their establishing a famous panoply consisting of family heirlooms, displayed in the parish church in Nieśwież (today: Nyasvizh) to mark the centenary of the Vienna triumph.<sup>67</sup> With such strong sentiments towards the person of the warrior king, it seems natural for soldiers to wish to possess weapons decorated with his image or texts referring to great triumphs. This seems to be the reason

62 Ibid., p. 3.

63 BCz, sign. Ms 12349, *Dyrekcja Muzeum. Księga czynności 1919–30. Sprawozdania 1930–1939*, p. 169; cf. *ibid.*, sign. Ms 12774, *Katalog Zbrojowni*, p. 2.

64 Its presence in the museum's archive was confirmed by Z. Żygulski, 'Zbrojownia Czartoryskich', *Muzealnictwo wojskowe*, vol. 1, 1959, p. 95, note 11.

65 According to the inventory card of a sabre from the collection of the Princes Czartoryski Museum with inv. no. MNK XIV-34/1-2, drawn up by Stefan Komornicki in the 1930s.

66 W. Kwaśniewicz, *Dzieje szabli w Polsce* (Warszawa, 1999), p. 103.

67 *Gazeta Warszawska*, vol. 85, 1783; *Odsiecz wiedeńska 1683. Wystawa jubileuszowa w Zamku Królewskim na Wawelu w trzechsetlecie bitwy. Tło historyczne i materiały źródłowe*, vol. 1, eds A. Franaszek, K. Kuczman (Kraków, 1990), p. 13–14; I. Burnatowa, 'Płaszcz Kawalera Orderu Św. Ducha ofiarowany królowi Janowi III Sobieskiemu', *Studia do Dziejów Wawelu*, vol. 5, 1991, p. 348.

for the presence of a relatively large group of *janówka* sabres with settings dating from the late eighteenth century in the Temple of the Sibyl; this was probably a weapon still in use, seen on the battlefields in 1792, 1794 and in Napoleonic times, where it had both symbolic and commemorative functions. In conclusion, although as many as four of the six sabres once regarded as having been owned by John III are unquestionably not mementoes of the king, their great importance for the formation of a national consciousness in a sentimental spirit deserves recognition.

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