

The Wilanów residence is the seat of the first art museum in the Polish lands. Its owes its establishment to Stanisław Kostka Potocki (1755–1821), who understood the significance of direct contact with the works of great masters to the development of a modern society. Opened to public in 1805, it was meant to play the role of a site of special historical value which supported the process of educating the young generation. The meticulously compiled collections of artworks, preserved to this day despite being significantly depleted as a result of property divisions and the course of history, are under specialist care and continue to deliver important educational values to the visitors.

The Museum participates in numerous research programmes, making use of the state-of-the-art knowledge and innovative technologies. Also, in order to thoroughly understand the process of creation, formation and assessment of its collections, it initiates studies on various areas of activity of Stanisław Kostka Potocki. Potocki's actions were based on his world-view, which had been shaped in the milieu of intellectual magnate circles, as well as by his education in the spirit of the Enlightenment in the country and abroad, his studies on the ancient and modern art undertaken in the course of numerous travels, his awareness of the available literature, including the works of Johann J. Winckelmann (1717–1768), as well as his critical attitude to certain theories acquired during confrontation with the original works of art. Potocki expressed his own thoughts and conclusions in numerous works devoted to the perception and the utilitarian role of art in the formation of the next generations. He left thousands of pages of manuscripts and notes. The preserved handwritten materials are currently held in the Central Archives of Historical Records where they are still being analysed, providing new inspiration for studies.

To make the works of Stanisław Kostka Potocki available to the broadest circles of recipients, also outside of the Polish-language circle, the Museum initiated cooperation with the Winckelmann Society in 2008. The effect of this cooperation is the project 'Johann Joachim Winckelmann i/und Stanisław Kostka Potocki. Nowe badania i dokumenty/Neue Forschungen und Dokumente' which started in 2014. The jointly pursued studies refer to the perception of the works of Winckelmann, and their impact on the growth of art collecting, in Central Europe. They also encompass the collecting activities of Stanisław Kostka Potocki, his literary accomplishments, as well as his involvement in the fields of politics, administration and education.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS IN STUDIES ON THE LIFE AND ACTIONS OF STANISŁAW KOSTKA POTOCKI CARRIED OUT AT THE MUSEUM OF KING JAN III'S PALACE AT WILANÓW ON THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF POTOCKI'S DEATH

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As noted several years ago by Barbara Grochulska (1924–2017), Stanisław Kostka Potocki's literary legacy has not been subjected to a comprehensive treatment, in spite of numerous studies. Professor Tomasz Chachulski, together with a team of historians of literature and Wilanów museologists, put forward the idea of continuing the work in this area and its systematisation. The outcome of several meetings and discussions was a conference summarising the current state of research and interests in this area.¹ It took place on the 195th anniversary of Potocki's death, in December 2016.

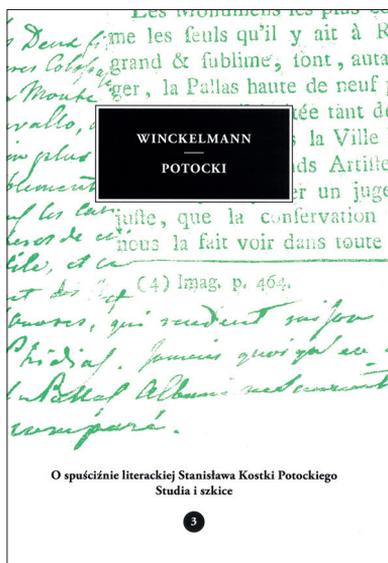


Fig. 1

Cover of the book *O spuściźnie literackiej Stanisława Kostki Potockiego. Studia i szkice*, eds D. Folga-Januszewska, T. Chachulski (Warszawa, 2018)

The result of the conference was a collection titled *O spuściźnie literackiej Stanisława Kostki Potockiego. Studia i szkice* published in 2018 by the Museum of King Jan III's Palace and the publishing house of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw.² It compiles texts presented during the conference, organised in the Wilanów Palace and attended by scholars from the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Polish Society for Eighteenth Century Studies (Fig. 1).

The volume started with a discussion on the state of research on the collecting and publishing activities of the founder of the Wilanów museum. On the 200th anniversary of Stanisław Kostka Potocki's death, we feel it incumbent upon us to summarise the institution's achievements in this respect over the period of past five years.

The most famous work left by Stanisław Kostka Potocki was a lecture on the development of the history of art and craft with a strong educational message, published at own expense and titled *O sztuce u dawnych, czyli Winkelman polski* [On the Art of the Ancients, or the Polish Winkelman].³ It is interesting to note that this study, which is written in the Polish language, coincided with the publication of Stanisław Kostka Potocki's *O wymowie i stylu*,⁴ a four-volume treatise on style and elocution, in which he emphasised the importance of using and popularising the vernacular language not only in scientific discourse. It

1 'O spuściźnie literackiej Stanisława Kostki Potockiego' [On the Literary Legacy of Stanisław Kostka Potocki], a conference held on 14 and 15 December 2016, co-organised by the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, the Polish Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, the Department of Enlightenment Literature of the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Faculty of Humanities of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, held at the Wilanów Palace.

2 *O spuściźnie literackiej Stanisława Kostki Potockiego. Studia i szkice*, ed. D. Folga-Januszewska, T. Chachulski (Warszawa, 2018).

3 S.K. Potocki, *O sztuce u dawnych, czyli Winkelman Polski* (Warszawa, 1815).

4 *O wymowie i stylu przez Stanisława hr. Potockiego* (Warszawa, 1815).

should also be remembered that Potocki had worked on the treatise on the history of art written in Polish at least since 1803, when he presented a paper titled *O sztuce u dawnych, czyli Winkelman polski* to the Society of Friends of Sciences, which was later published in print.

In 1815, in the foreword to the four-volume printed edition of *O sztuce u dawnych*, Potocki clarified the scope of his inspiration with the work of Winckelmann by saying:

Thus seeing that no matter which path I choose to follow, I would always follow Winkelman's footsteps and would always abide by his system, and thus I would be forced to mislead the readers in purporting to present somebody else's thoughts as mine, having merely rectified or supplemented them at times, or having changed the words or the order, I arrived at a thought more convenient for a writer of good faith: the thought of communicating the work of Winkelman in a mode described above, i.e. limiting the expressions of excess imagination, clarifying errors and endowing the text with a new order without moving too far away from the route suggested by my predecessor, as far as it can be done without abandoning the track chosen by Winkelman.⁵

The originality of Potocki's work and the validity of its popularisation among the German-speaking audience was highlighted in a positive review in the 'Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung'. The first attempt at making the text available in German translation was made as early as in 1816, when Adam Sagtyński translated Potocki's studies, which go beyond the Winckelmann publication on the Chinese, Chaldean, Persian and Indian art, for the German publisher. Unfortunately, despite the translation being ready, Potocki's work never appeared in print: its publication in Germany proved impossible on account of the time-consuming concurrent edition of Winckelmann's complete works.

Two hundred years later, the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów and the Winckelmann Society made the effort of meeting the postulate of making the study of Potocki available to the German readers. The Vienna edition of Winckelmann's work of 1776, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* was the basis for the edition of *O sztuce u dawnych*.⁶ In 2018, a synoptic translation of Stanisław Kostka Potocki's major work *O sztuce u dawnych, czyli Winkelman polski* was published in a volume from the series 'Johann Joachim Winckelmann i/und Stanisław Kostka Potocki. Nowe badania i dokumenty/Neue Forschungen und Dokumente' (Fig. 2).⁷

5 S.K. Potocki, *O sztuce u dawnych, czyli Winkelman polski*, ed. J.A. Ostrowski, J. Śliwa, (Warszawa–Kraków, 1992), p. 15.

6 M. Kunze wrote about the translations of Winckelmann's works in his study: 'Winckelmanns Übersetzung im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert/Przekłady dzieł Winckelmanna w XVIII i XIX wieku', in: *Johann Joachim Winckelmann i/und Stanisław Kostka Potocki. Mistrzowie i uczniowie/Meister und Schüler* (Mainz–Warszawa, 2016), pp. 109–25.

7 Stanisław Kostka Potocki, *Über die Kunst bei den Alten oder polnischer Winckelmann (1815)* und Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums (1776)*,

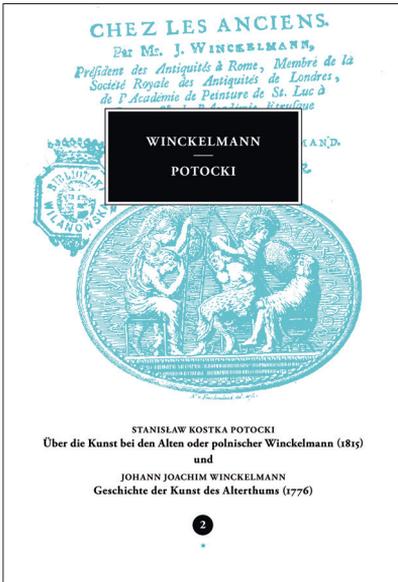


Fig. 2

Cover of the book: Stanisław Kostka Potocki, *Über die Kunst bei den Alten oder polnischer Winckelmann (1815)* und Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums (1776)* (Warszawa–Stendal, 2018)

The translation, compilation and publication of the three-volume work was quite a challenge for the small international team. The publication contains a comparison of the two authors' works, highlighting the supplements added by Potocki to Winckelmann's original text and passages Potocki had consciously omitted. Application of multi-coloured font in the edition made it possible to show the essence of Potocki's work as compared to the work of Winckelmann and emphasised the originality of the Polish author's thoughts. The last part contained the aforementioned nineteenth-century translation by Adam Sagtyński. The edition of the work was one of the most difficult editing enterprises carried out as part of the project. Studies on the significance and impact of Potocki's work continue. The platform for the presentation of the new findings is the Wilanów scientific journal. In volume XXIV of *Wilanów Studies* (2017), Adam Tyszkiewicz dis-

ussed the role of Potocki's endeavours in building the prestige and material heritage of the University of Warsaw. He recalled the initiatives of Potocki as the first minister of the Governmental Commission for Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, as a result of which the Print Room of the University Library was set up, supplemented with works from Potocki's own collections. The author also mentioned Stanisław Kostka Potocki's efforts to procure an invaluable set of plaster casts in the ancient style. Magdalena Kulpa, after an in-depth search query in the Warsaw and national press, presented an essay on the series of events organised after Potocki's death. His sudden demise was widely discussed in the press. Magdalena Kulpa described in detail the official funeral ceremonies and spontaneous actions of the residents of Warsaw who evaded censorship and honoured the deceased, paying homage to that exceptional citizen. The text was illustrated with passages from press materials and official condolences, as well as a description of the funeral mass composed in Potocki's honour and the monuments erected to commemorate him. These tokens are discussed in another paper by Magdalena Kulpa found in the same volume, titled *Pamięci Męża Dostojeństwem i Cnotami w Kraju Znakomitego. Dziewiętnastowieczne pamiątki ku czci śp. Stanisława Kostki Potockiego*. In this essay, the author discussed various social and artistic initiatives, with effects spanning a memorial garden set up in Gucin-Gaj, catafalques, panegyric poems, graphic, sculptural and painting presentations, as well as the already mentioned music composition. It was for the first time that the period of mourning after Stanisław Kostka Potocki's death was

transl. I. Leitl, E. Hofstetter, eds D. Folga-Januszewska, M. Kunze, J. Paprocka-Gajek (Warszawa, 2018).

discussed in such detail in scholarly literature; a number of forgotten facts was brought forward, highlighting the respect that the ousted dignitary enjoyed in society. To his contemporaries, the time of mourning was an opportunity for summing up the unique virtues and accomplishments of Count Potocki, especially in the field of politics and education. Studies on Potocki's manuscripts, carried out for a number of years, have expanded the knowledge on the causes and the mode of selection and presentation of collections in the museum established by Potocki. In volume XXVI of the Wilanów journal, in a paper titled *Lubomirscy i Stanisław Kostka Potocki w Wiedniu. Miejsca spotkań i kolekcje sztuki*, Dorota Folga-Januszewska remarked on the impact of the Vienna milieu on the formation of Potocki's taste during his frequent visits to his mother-in-law, Princess Izabela [Elżbieta] Lubomirska née Czartoryska, in her Vienna residence. The princess, who by then had been collecting works of art for a number of years, took the advice of her knowledgeable son-in-law during subsequent purchases; this impacted the creation of one of the most interesting collections of modern and ancient art in the city. Furthermore, the count's frequent visits to Vienna allowed him to learn the model of common education introduced in the Habsburg monarchy by Empress Maria Theresa. This knowledge bore fruit when Potocki served as the President of the Council of State and the minister of the Governmental Commission for Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment.

In a book commemorating the 200th anniversary of the count's death, Mikołaj Getka-Kenig attempted to present Potocki's accomplishments from the perspective of a historian, focusing primarily on the assessment of his political actions, engagements and career choices. The book is titled *Stanisław Kostka Potocki. Studium magnackiej kariery w dobie upadku i „wskrzeszenia” Polski* and was published by the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów in cooperation with the Museum of the University of Warsaw (Fig. 3).⁸

Dorota Folga-Januszewska explored one of the watershed moments in the collecting activities of Stanisław Kostka Potocki, namely the journey to Italy in the autumn of 1779, which he described in a diary.⁹ The manuscript contains the count's account of a journey he had made in

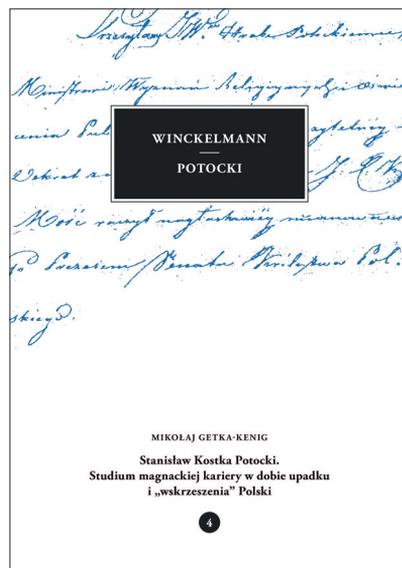


Fig. 3

Cover of the book: M. Getka-Kenig, *Stanisław Kostka Potocki. Studium magnackiej kariery w dobie upadku i „wskrzeszenia” Polski* (Warszawa, 2021)

8 M. Getka-Kenig, *Stanisław Kostka Potocki. Studium magnackiej kariery w dobie upadku i „wskrzeszenia” Polski* (Warszawa, 2021).

9 Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, Public Archive of the Potockis, 245. The critical edition together with the translation is scheduled to be published by the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów at the end of 2025, editing and critical compilation by D. Folga-Januszewska, translation by S. Schabowski.

the company of his wife Aleksandra née Lubomirska, her sister Elżbieta and a Jesuit Grzegorz Piramowicz. An in-depth academic analysis has brought to light Potocki's hitherto unknown contacts and collecting inspirations during that journey. The scheduled edition of the diary is to comprise a copy of the account in French with a translation into Polish and an extensive academic study. In the volume devoted to Stanisław Kostka Potocki's literary heritage, Dorota Folga-Januszewska discussed the initial results of the research work and the challenges it posed.¹⁰

As part of the aforementioned project, editions of Stanisław Kostka Potocki's letters to his wife Aleksandra Potocka née Lubomirska written between 1791–1808 and letters of Aleksandra to her husband from 1792–93 are also planned to be published. They are undoubtedly an important source of information about the context of collecting processes, as well as the facts and political determinants affecting art collectors and thus the shape of their collections. Jakub Bajer presented the related research issues extensively in the post-conference publication *O spuściźnie literackiej Stanisława Kostki Potockiego*.¹¹



Fig. 4

Cover of the exhibition catalogue: D. Folga-Januszewska, A. Kwiatkowska, E. Modzelewska, I. Szmelter, A. Woźniak-Wieczorek, *Leonardiana w kolekcjach polskich. Co jest czym: oryginał, replika, kopia* (Warszawa, 2019)

In parallel, the Museum carries out a programme pertaining to Stanisław Kostka Potocki's art collecting interests, encompassing in-depth studies, monographic publications and exhibitions devoted to the most valuable elements of his collections. The state of knowledge about individual groups of exhibits or brilliant works purchased for the collection by Potocki was ushered by an exhibition from a series 'What is What? An Original, a Replica, a Copy'. The first exhibition, titled 'Leonardiana in Polish Collections', was organised on the 500th death anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci, but unfortunately closed shortly after the opening due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The exhibition, available only on-line, was accompanied by a catalogue published in a series devoted to the major works from the Wilanów collection.¹² It compiled the most important

research findings about the history of the presence of an intriguing work in the collection — the painting *Salvator Mundi* purchased by Stanisław

10 D. Folga-Januszewska, 'Dziennik podróży do Italii Stanisława Kostki Potockiego (1799) i jego planowana publikacja', in: *O spuściźnie literackiej Stanisława Kostki Potockiego*, pp. 27–36.

11 J. Bajer, 'Listy Stanisława Kostki Potockiego do żony Aleksandry z lat 1791–1808', in: *O spuściźnie literackiej Stanisława Kostki Potockiego*, pp. 213–18.

12 D. Folga-Januszewska, A. Kwiatkowska, E. Modzelewska, I. Szmelter, A. Woźniak-Wieczorek, *Leonardiana w kolekcjach polskich. Co jest czym: oryginał, replika, kopia* (Warszawa, 2019); in English: *Leonardiana in Polish Collections*, e-book (Warsaw, 2019).

Kostka Potocki as Leonardo's work. The publication contains reports from the in-depth conservation work carried out on the painting (Fig. 4). The next volumes are going to be similar, combining accounts from archival and comparative studies with reports from, and results of, material and technological research, as well as artistic assessment of particular works. In the future, studies on the functioning of original works, replicas or studio copies painted by Rubens and Poussin which belonged to the Wilanów collection of Stanisław Kostka Potocki are also going to be prepared.

Long-term studies on the authenticity and the fate of one of most precious paintings in the Wilanów collection, *Portrait of Stanisław Kostka Potocki* by Jacques-Louis David, were crowned with the publication of another volume.¹³ Studies carried out during conservation work lasting several months revealed a number of unknown details and confirmed some bold research assumptions. The resultant volume presents the current state of knowledge and studies on the work, its versions and numerous copies (Fig. 5).

The substantive profile of the permanent and temporary exhibitions in the interiors of the Wilanów Palace is planned to change as a result of the scheduled conservation and modernisation works. Its objective is to bring forward the Enlightenment idea of collecting initiated by Stanisław Kostka Potocki and continued by the subsequent owners of Wilanów, who expanded the collection. The new gallery space will be arranged after the completion of the ongoing renovation works. In 2022, a part of the exhibition at the first floor of the palace will be opened to the public, presenting the collecting accomplishments of the third generation of the Potocki family to own Wilanów, i.e. the grandson of Stanisław Kostka, August Potocki, and his wife Aleksandra Potocka née Potocka.

At the present moment, the primary mission of the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów is to promote knowledge of the person and the accomplishments of its founder, Stanisław Kostka Potocki, and his descendants, as well as to highlight the educational character of his collecting initiative. Making works of art collected over the period of more than two hundred years available to the public in a friendly and intriguing mode is convergent with the concept of the former owners of Wilanów. The goal that was guiding them, namely to shape the people's patriotic and civil stance through art, has not lost its validity today.

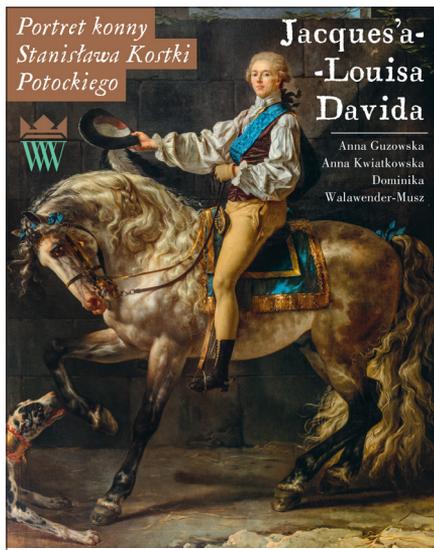


Fig. 5

Cover of the book: A. Guzowska, A. Kwiatkowska, D. Walawender-Musz, *Portret konny Stanisława Kostki Potockiego Jacques'a-Louisa Davida* (Warszawa, 2021)

13 A. Guzowska, A. Kwiatkowska, D. Walawender-Musz, *Portret konny Stanisława Kostki Potockiego Jacques'a-Louisa Davida* (Warszawa, 2021).

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