

The *Eastern European History Review* is an international and interdisciplinary annually online and open access peer-reviewed journal about studies on Central and Eastern Europe in the Modern Age (XV–XIX). The Journal is also the expression of the Study Center CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna – Center Study on the Age of Sobieski and Modern Poland) of the University of Tuscia, born in 1997.

It publishes articles with significant approaches and original interpretations in all research fields concerning Central and Eastern Europe, with specific attention to the History Sciences.

The special issue of the *Eastern European History Review* focuses on the fascinating theme of travel in the early modern age (XVI–XVIII centuries), investing it from women's unique and particular point of view. United by their destination – Italy –, their journeys, although driven by different motives and reasons, show women perfectly at ease in travelling, but above all, eager to understand and appropriate the otherness experienced.

From East to West. Women Journeys in Early Modern Period to Italy (XVII–XXVIII centuries), edited by the Polish historian Jarosław Pietrzak, is the result of interdisciplinary historical research interests of CESPoM Study Center.

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Director of EEHR

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FROM EAST TO WEST. WOMEN JOURNEYS

Edited by Jarosław Pietrzak



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FROM EAST TO WEST.
WOMEN JOURNEYS IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD TO
ITALY
(XVII–XVIII CENTURIES)

Edited by
Jarosław Pietrzak



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EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY REVIEW: LA RIVISTA

Il Comitato redazionale e scientifico è lieto di presentare al pubblico la rivista scientifica *Eastern European History Review*.

Con un carattere internazionale e interdisciplinare, una cadenza annuale e una fruibilità *open access* la rivista focalizza i propri interessi sulle dinamiche occorse nell'Europa Orientale durante tutta l'età moderna (XIV-XIX). *Eastern European History Review* è espressione del Centro Studi dell'Università della Tuscia CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna) nato nel 1997 per intuizione del Prof. Gaetano Platania, Direttore Emerito della Rivista.

L'iniziativa editoriale che presentiamo nasce dall'evidente mancanza in Italia di una rivista scientifica relativa alla storia dell'Europa centro-orientale in Età Moderna, nonostante la penisola abbia giocato un ruolo fondamentale per la Storia e la Cultura di una parte integrante del continente, a torto considerata come lontana e periferica.

Consapevoli di questo, il Comitato ha posto quale obiettivo primario della *Eastern European History Review* quello di offrire uno spazio di riflessione e di discussione su temi che appartengono alla storia dell'Europa centro-orientale, e insieme alle relazioni - politiche e culturali - che questa vasta area del Vecchio Continente ha avuto con l'occidente d'Europa, e l'Italia in particolare, incoraggiando il dialogo tra studiosi e esperti di settore, e tra differenti approcci della ricerca scientifica.

Il Comitato Redazionale e Scientifico

EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY REVIEW: THE JOURNAL

The Editorial and Scientific Board are proud delighted to present the *Eastern European History Review* under the aegis of Sette Città Editore.

The *Eastern European History Review* is an international and interdisciplinary annually online and open access peer-reviewed journal about studies on Central and Eastern Europe in the Modern Age (XIV-XIX). The Journal is also the expression of the Study Center CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna – Center Study on the Age of Sobieski and Modern Poland) of the University of Tuscia, born in 1997, from an idea of Prof. Gaetano Platania, today Director Emeritus of this journal.

It publishes articles with significant approaches and original interpretations in all research fields concerning Central and Eastern Europe, with specific attention to the History sciences.

The editorial initiative we present comes from the obvious lack of a journal, in Italy, concerning the history of Central and Eastern Europe during the Modern Age, this despite its fundamental role in the history and culture of that part of the continent, wrongly considered distant and peripheral.

Quite the contrary is true, in fact. Main objective of the journal is to create a space for reflection and discussion on topics pertaining to Central and Eastern Europe, but also relations with Continental Europe, encouraging dialogue between scholars and experts in the field, and between different approaches of scientific research.

The Editorial and Scientific Board

SUMMARY

Jarosław Pietrzak <i>Introduction</i>	9
Patrik Pastrnak <i>The return journeys of the queen-widows: an upside-down ritual or irrelevant pageantry?</i>	13
Alina Kaltachenka <i>Differences between women's and men's travels from the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Early Modern Period to Italy</i>	33
Jarosław Pietrzak <i>Maria Kazimiera d'Arquien Sobieska and her Italian travels from 1699 to 1714</i>	47
Gaetano Platania <i>La Fuga da Innsbruck a Roma di Maria Klementyna Sobieska Stuart</i>	75
Francesca Ceci <i>Memorie dei viaggi di Maria Klementyna Sobieska Stuart da Innsbruck al Lazio settentrionale</i>	103
Małgorzata Ewa Kowalczyk, Dorota Żołądź-Strzelczyk <i>Travels of Polish Aristocratic Women in the Veneto Region in the Age of Enlightenment</i>	123
Katarzyna Jagiełło-Jakubaszek <i>Teofila Morawska and Katarzyna Plater: cultural and social landscape of Italy in the second half of the Eighteenth Century</i>	141
Agata Piotrowska <i>Searching for Home Away from Home: Italy and the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Travel Writing of Waleria Countess Tarnowska and Anna Countess Potocka, 1800s–1820s</i>	153

VARIA SECTION

Matteo Sanfilippo

Ukrainians in Canada: migration and history

177

Bibliocard

Susanna Piselli

I collegi per stranieri a/e Roma nell'età moderna, vol. I: *Cinque-Settecento*,
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197



TRAVELS OF POLISH ARISTOCRATIC WOMEN IN THE VENETO REGION IN THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

ABSTRACT

The heyday of the Polish Enlightenment brought women from the circles of the magnates and wealthy nobility considerable emancipation in matters of travel. Educated noblewomen wanted to go beyond traditional social functions and realise themselves in the public sphere. They began to manage estates and manage family interests, followed the press and literature, established social salons, became involved in political and diplomatic life, mentored artists and scientists, created collections, founded churches, built mansions and increasingly travelled the world. During the Enlightenment, one of the most popular destinations for foreign travel was Italy, one of their destinations being the Veneto. This article analyses the records of journeys to this region by three Polish aristocrats: Anna Paulina née Sapieha Jabłonowska, Teofila Konstancja née Radziwiłł Morawska, and Katarzyna née Sosnowski Platerowa. Their accounts show not only what they saw there, but also how they recounted the observations. It can be seen that they were excellent observers, formed independent judgements. In the pages of their accounts, one can find descriptions of daily life on the road, social life, customs and mentality of the inhabitants of the Veneto region, their entertainments, homes or cuisine.

KEYWORDS: Women's travels, Veneto, XVIII century, Travel accounts, Travel descriptions.

INTRODUCTION

The heyday of the Polish Enlightenment, coinciding with the reign of Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski (1764–1795), brought women from the circles of the magnates and wealthy nobility considerable emancipation in matters of travel¹. This would have been impossible had it not been for the progress made in their education².

1 Małgorzata Ewa Kowalczyk, *Zagraniczne podróże Polek w epoce oświecenia* (Łomianki: Wydawnictwo LTW, 2019).

2 Dorota Żołędź-Strzelczyk, "«Jako rządzić mają rodzice córki swe». Poglądy na wychowanie kobiet w XVI–XVIII w.", in *Rola i miejsce kobiet w edukacji i kulturze polskiej*, eds. Wiesław Jamrożek and Dorota Żołędź-Strzelczyk, t. 1 (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii UAM, 1998) 53–63; Eugenia Podgórska, "Sprawa wychowania kobiet w znaczniejszych czasopismach polskich drugiej połowy XVIII wieku", *Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty*, 4 (1961): 19–33; Mieczysława Mitera-Dobrowolska, "Zainteresowanie Komisji Edukacji Narodowej sprawą wychowania dziewcząt" in Łukasz Kurdybacha and Mieczysława Mitera-Dobrowolska, *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej* (Warszawa: PWN, 1973), 173–89.

It had a significant impact on the broadening of their intellectual horizons, their knowledge of the world, and their ability to draw conclusions, make judgements, and form opinions. Hugo Kołłątaj, a distinguished Polish publicist, historian, and educator, describing the upbringing of women from the upper social strata at the dawn of the Stanislaus era, stated: «Our ladies began to write very beautifully in French and Polish, not only in character but even in style; they took a taste for reading more important works than romances; knowledge of history and geography [...], music, drawing, skill in national dances and all others used in Europe - made up the ordinary education of our ladies»³.

Educated, wealthy noblewomen, convinced of their own capabilities, wanted to go beyond their traditional social functions (wife, mother, housewife⁴) and realise themselves in the broader public sphere. Many of them stepped out of the shadow of men and successfully began to perform, against social and moral constraints, entirely new roles. They began to manage estates and run family interests, follow the press and literature, both domestic and foreign. They established social salons, became involved in political and diplomatic life, mentored artists and scientists, created various collections, founded churches, built mansions, designed gardens and increasingly travelled the world⁵.

3 Hugo Kołłątaj, *Stan oświecenia w Polsce w ostatnich latach panowania Augusta III (1750–1764)*, ed. Jan Hulewicz (Wrocław: ZNiO, 2003), 135–36.

4 Aleksandra Bilewicz, “Wzór kobiety, żony i matki w świetle osiemnastowiecznych kazań”, in Jamrożek and Żołądz-Strzelczyk, *Rola i miejsce kobiet w edukacji*, t. 1, 82–8.

5 Angelika Blinda, *Teofila z Jabłonowskich Sapieżyna (1742–1816). Życie prywatne i działalność publiczna* (Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2023); Bożena Popiołek, “Rola kobiet w kształtowaniu polityki matrymonialnej rodzin szlacheckich w XVII–XVIII wieku”, in *Jednostka, rodzina i struktury społeczne w perspektywie historycznej. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Cezaremu Kukli z okazji 45-lecia pracy naukowej*, eds. Piotr Łozowski and Radosław Ponią (Białystok: Instytut Badań nad Dziedzictwem kulturowym, 2022), 399–411; Dorota Sidorowicz-Mulak, “Księgozbiór Magdaleny Morskiej (1762–1847) w Bibliotece Ossolineum”, *Z Badań nad Książką i Księgozbiorami Historycznymi*, 12 (2018): 123–49; Agnieszka Jakuboszczak, *Sarmacka dama. Barbara Sanguszkowa (1718–1791) i jej salon towarzyski* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2008); Karolina Targosz, “Kolekcjonerki XVIII wieku – Anna Jabłonowska i Teofila Konstancja Morawska i ich zbiory przyrodnicze” in *Kobieta epok dawnych w literaturze, kulturze i społeczeństwie*, eds. Iwona Maciejewska and Krystyna Stasiewicz (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Littera, 2008), 315–17; Alina Aleksandrowicz, *Izabela Czartoryska. Polskość i europejskość* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 1998); Jerzy Skowronek, “Debiuty polityczne kobiet w epoce rozbiorowej i początkach epoki porozbiorowej 1772–1831”, in *Pamiętnik XV Powszechnego Zjazdu Historyków Polskich*, t. 2: *Przemiany społeczne a model rodziny*, ed. Anna Żarnowska (Gdańsk-Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 1995), 29–41; Bożenna Majewska-Maszkowska, *Mecenat artystyczny Izabelli z Czartoryskich Lubomirskiej 1736–1816* (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Polska Akademia Nauk, 1976); Władysław Konopczyński, *Kiedy nami rządziły kobiety* (Londyn: Katolicki Ośrodek Wydawniczy Veritas, 1960).

During the Enlightenment, one of the most popular destinations for foreign travel by Polish women and men was Italy⁶. Generally in the 18th century, the Apennine Peninsula (also known as the Italian Peninsula) was the most frequent destination of peregrinations for European women and men⁷. It was visited to broaden aesthetic and world-view horizons, to satisfy spiritual needs and intellectual aspirations, to improve health, to buy books and works of art, and for the sheer pleasure of sightseeing. Italy was the undisputed centre of culture, science, and art of the Early modern period world. Anyone wishing to reach the sources of European civilisation directed their steps towards the Apennine Peninsula. In the second half of the 18th century, the aristocratic *grand tour* lost its cognitive and educational character in favour of a representative and pleasurable one⁸.

The belief that it was worthwhile to be in Italy if only because that was where others were, began to take hold. It became fashionable to chase tourist dreams⁹. Alojzy Sajkowski pointed out, «Polish women's trips to Italy, quite sporadic in the 16th century, not at all numerous in the 17th century, became quite a normal phenomenon in the 18th century»¹⁰.

The Veneto was rarely a primary destination for Polish aristocratic women during the Enlightenment. This region, which included Venice, Padua, Vicenza and Verona, was only a stage, albeit a very important one, on the route to Rome. Indeed, the most popular route from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to the capital of the Papal States led via Vienna to Venice and then via Padua, Vicenza and Verona to Bologna. From there, one could follow one of two routes to the Tiber: via Florence and Viterbo, or via Ancona and Loreto. Travellers who, on their way to the Eternal City, were unable for various reasons to stop for a while in Veneto, did so, as it were, obligatorily on their return journey. Increasingly, they also poured their impressions, thoughts and experiences onto paper, which was an important element of the art of wandering in the Age of Enlightenment¹¹. Thanks to the archives (or their remains) of individual magnate families that have survived to this day, it is possible to reconstruct the course of these voyages. For the ladies left behind not only diaries and memoirs, but also correspondence.

The aim of this article is to analyse the travel records of three Polish aristocrats travelling in the Veneto region during the Age of Enlightenment: Duchess Anna Paulina née Sapieha Jabłonowska [1728–1800], Duchess Teofila Konstancja

6 Małgorzata Ewa Kowalczyk, *Obraz Włoch w polskim piśnictwie geograficznym i podróżniczym osiemnastego wieku* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2005), 55-90.

7 Attilio Brilli, *Il viaggio in Italia. Storia di una grande tradizione culturale* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2006), 43-54.

8 Marek Bratuń, "Ars apodemika. Narodziny – rozwój – zmierzch" in *Wędrować, pielgrzymować, być turystą. Travel in cultural discourses*, ed. Piotr Kowalski (Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2003), 72-4.

9 Kowalczyk, *Zagraniczne podróże Polek*, 25-150.

10 Alojzy Sajkowski, *Włoskie przygody Polaków. Wiek XVI-XVIII* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1973), 204.

11 Kowalczyk, *Obraz Włoch*, 55-61.

née Radziwiłł Morawska [1738–1807] and Countess Katarzyna née Sosnowski Platerowa [c. 1748–1832]. We will first present the profiles of our heroines in order of seniority, and then focus on their travel accounts using a comparative approach. We will be interested not only in how the Polish female travellers, belonging to the highest social circles, travelled through the Veneto region and what they saw there, but also in how they recounted the observations they made during their voyages, and whether common features can be discerned in all three accounts in this respect.

PROFILES OF FEMALE TRAVELLERS

Women of the Polish aristocracy brought up in the spirit of the Enlightenment differed from earlier generations of women not only in their particular predilection for trips abroad but also in the way they poured their travel insights onto paper. Their notes moved away from previous rhetorical conventions, becoming «no longer so much an orderly, functional record of facts and data, but as a terrain of free thought, an impressional expression of individual observations»¹². Many of them explicitly declared that they wrote down their impressions and experiences from their stay abroad exclusively for their own memory and for the circle of their closest relatives. This limited intended audience determined, as it were, the unpublished, manuscript existence of their accounts in advance. The ones analysed in this article were also not published during the authors' lifetime. The diaries of the Italian journeys of Teofila Konstancja née Radziwiłł Morawska and Katarzyna née Sosnowski Platerowa were not published in print until the 21st century, while the notes of Anna Paulina née Sapieha Jabłonowska are still in manuscripts.

The fact that all three travellers had in common is that they had received a thorough education during their childhood and youth, including through self-education, and were passionate individuals who openly expressed their opinions on a variety of subjects. Moreover, the three accounts analysed here were written over a period of sixteen years (1769–1785), making the authors we have chosen a fairly homogeneous group, but at the same time diverse in terms of age, life experiences and travel motivations.

Anna Paulina née Sapieha Jabłonowska, was the daughter of Karolina Teresa Radziwiłł and Kazimierz Karol Sapieha, general of the Lithuanian artillery. In 1750, she was married to Jan Kajetan Jabłonowski, starosta of Chehryn and then voivode of Braclaw. The newlyweds soon left for a honeymoon in Europe, from which they did not return until 1755. She devoted her time not only to leisure and socialising but also to studying and deepening her economic and management interests, which went hand in hand with her love of nature. These bore fruit in the form of collections that Jabłonowska gathered over the years in Siemiatycze. It is most likely that she brought the first specimens to her natural history cabinet from her honeymoon, during which she became acquainted with the naturalist collections fashionable in Enlightenment Europe¹³.

12 Magdalena Partyka, *Przemiany podmiotu mówczego w oświeceniowym dzienniku podróży (1764–1795)* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2021), 210.

13 Karolina Targosz, "Kolekcjonerki XVIII wieku – Anna Jabłonowska i Teofila Konstancja Morawska i ich zbiory przyrodnicze", in *Kobieta epok dawnych w literaturze, kulturze i społeczeństwie*, eds. Iwona Maciejewska and Krystyna

Jabłonowska travelled abroad again in October 1769, shortly after she withdrew from active work in the Bar Confederation. She did not return to her homeland until two years later, in October 1771. Many details of her European travels are provided by letters which she wrote quite systematically to her cordial friend Anna née Trembiński Szeptycka, chatelaine of Przemyśl. They are stored in the V. Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine, in the Jabłonowskis of Bursztyn Archive¹⁴. It is worth noting that Jabłonowska confided in a friend about keeping a diary shortly after leaving the country. Specifically for her, she had the parts already written, copied, and sent to Poland. In a letter dated October 22, 1769, Jabłonowska communicated to Szeptycka: «You have, my dear friend, a diary of my journey, I will send you from every place similar»¹⁵. The fate of the diary copy, like the original, is unfortunately unknown. We should add that Jabłonowska passed through the Veneto region twice. The first time on her way to Rome in 1769, and the second time in 1770, going from Rome to Venice for the Ascension celebrations, and from there on to Paris.

Teofila Konstancja née Radziwiłł Morawska was the daughter of Franciszka Urszula née Wiśniowiecki and Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł ‘Rybeńka’, Grand Hetman of Lithuania and voivode of Vilnius. Little is known about her childhood. It is likely that the main content of her education was religious and moral upbringing, learning good manners, dance, music, drawing, foreign languages, and perhaps also history, geography, and mathematics. Even in her youth, she was an energetic and determined person. She enjoyed hunting, horse riding, and she was excellent with firearms. In 1764, she married Ignacy Feliks Morawski, an officer in the Radziwiłł court militia.

Morawska travelled abroad in 1773 to see her brothers in exile - Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł ‘Panie Kochanku’, voivode of Vilnius, and Maciej Radziwiłł, castellan of Vilnius. This was the primary, though not the only, reason for her journey. She was also strongly motivated to leave the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth by a desire to get to know different countries. We should add that before reaching Italy, she visited Germany, Switzerland and France. Morawska left a *Diary of a European Journey in 1773-1774*, which is kept in the Library of Vilnius University and runs to 183 pages. It was published in 2002¹⁶. Morawska wrote down her impressions of her travels regularly, supplementing her notes - perhaps on her return home - with the most general information taken from guidebooks and geographical compendia. Her notes in many places have the character of a diary. She visited the Veneto twice. The first time was in February 1774, together with a large retinue of her brother Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł’s “Panie Kochanku”. She soon set off for Rome. She returned to Venice in May. On 18 June, in turn, she travelled to Padua, from where she reached Vienna via Verona and then Trento and Innsbruck.

Stasiewicz (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Littera, 2008), 315-18.

14 LNNBU, fond 145, part II, n. 21, *Listy A. Szeptyckiej pisane do nieustalonych osób podczas pobytu za granicą (1769-1772)*.

15 LNNBU, fond 145, part II, n. 21, *Listy*, 5v.

16 Teofila Konstancja z Radziwiłłów Morawska, *Diariusz podróży europejskiej 1773-1774*, ed. Bogdan Rok (Wrocław: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2002).

Katarzyna née Sosnowski Platerowa, daughter of Tekla Despot-Zenowicz and Józef Sosnowski, Field Hetman of Lithuania and later voivode of Polotsk, was an accomplished traveller. Her parents ensured that she received a careful education¹⁷. This included religious and moral upbringing, learning foreign languages (especially French), as well as history, geography, mathematics and drawing, music and dance. Together with her sister Ludwika, Catherine translated the work of the Swiss agronomist Hans Kaspar Hirzel into Polish. This translation appeared in print in Warsaw in 1770 with an introductory word by Professor Ignacy Nagurczewski, poet, translator of ancient works, literary historian and lecturer at the Corps of Cadets, who spoke highly of the language of the translation. The publication brought the sisters the fame of savants. In the same year that the book appeared in print, Katarzyna Sosnowska married Józef Wincenty Plater [1745-1806], a Lithuanian field writer and later castellan of Troki.

Her journey to Italy, undertaken in the summer of 1785, was motivated by her curiosity about the world, fuelled by her reading of travel literature, and even more by the stories of friends and acquaintances who had already travelled around the Apennine Peninsula. The Manuscripts Department of the National Institute Library named after the Ossolińskis in Wrocław holds the second volume of her diary from 1785-1786, which describes her stay in Italy. The booklet consists of 141 pages, 33 of which are unsigned. The fate of volume one is unfortunately unknown. The diary appeared in print in 2013¹⁸. Platerowa arrived in Venice on 13 September 1785 and spent more than ten days there. They left the Queen of the Adriatic on 24 September, travelling to Padua and from there – via Vicenza, Verona and then Bologna and Loreto – to Rome. The diary breaks off with a description of the journey to Naples. respect.

DAILY LIFE ON THE MOVE

During the Age of Enlightenment, women from the upper classes never travelled abroad alone, and rarely only in the company of servants. Morawska explicitly wrote that a trip abroad «to a dame alone would seem to be impossible»¹⁹. As a rule, ladies travelled in a group of several people, consisting of members of closer or more distant family, lady companions, servants, and sometimes additional friends. Aristocratic women, who did not mind the expense, would take a large group of various servants abroad. This was in good taste and a sign of a refined lifestyle. However, it cost dearly. After all, people not only had to be fed and cared for but often paid extra money. A great deal of common sense was shown by our heroines in

17 Dorota Żołądz-Strzelczyk, “Co ma czynić chrześcijańska panienka? – Wskazówki wychowawcze dla dziewcząt z XVIII stulecia” in *Scientia magnam laetitiam parat. Studia z historii kultury, społeczeństwa i polityki ofiarowane Profesorowi Kazimierzowi Maliszewskiemu*, eds. Adam Kucharski, Agnieszka Laddach and Wojciech Piasek (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu, 2020), 233-46.

18 Katarzyna z Sosnowskich Platerowa, *Moja podróż do Włoch. Dziennik z lat 1785–1786*, eds. Małgorzata Ewa Kowalczyk and Anna Pikor-Półtorak (Łomianki: Wydawnictwo LTW, 2013).

19 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 37-38.

this respect. Morawska wrote in her diary about her travelling company: «We could all fit on one carriage. I didn't want to imitate those abroad who, exhausting their own possessions, enrich other people's countries»²⁰. Her inseparable companion on her travels was her sister-in-law Marianna Morawska. Platerowa, in turn, was accompanied by her husband, her thirteen-year-old daughter Cecylia, a certain Dąbrowska – lady companion – and several servants. Jabłonowska also travelled among a small number of people.

The Polish aristocrats travelled through the Veneto region using mostly a network of postal facilities²¹. It is noteworthy that they only hired horses at the post offices and the carriages were their property. On their way from one village to the next, they also encountered the usual inns where they could change draft animals. Ladies were also keen to use inland waterways. The network of canals and regulated rivers provided the fastest and most convenient connection between Venice and Padua, as well as Venice and Bologna. The barge on the Brenna was sailed by both Platerowa and Morawska.

A separate issue is the management of time on the road. It was usually spent contemplating the beauties of the passing landscape, chatting with fellow travellers, playing games and reading. Morawska explicitly admitted: «We entertained ourselves in various ways playing with instruments, books and shooting»²². Platerowa, on the other hand, passed the time learning Italian. «Thanks to what I learnt during the trip from my grammar book and dictionary, I managed to sustain conversation better than I could have expected» - she noted in her diary²³. Speaking Italian was helpful for socialising, making everyday life easier when travelling and shopping.

An important part of the traveller's daily routine was the inn, where meals were eaten, strength regenerated and sleep taken. «This part of the country was more densely populated; we did not encounter any inn in which there were not at least a few people», – wrote Platerowa about the Veneto²⁴. During the Age of Enlightenment, wandering through the region along the main routes, one encountered little trouble finding an inn. For Polish aristocrats who travelled through the Veneto in autumn or winter, the biggest problem was the cold prevailing in the inns. Jabłonowska, who travelled in December, lamented to a friend by letter: «It was so cold that I have never experienced anything like it in my life»²⁵. Platerowa, in turn, noted in October: «The mornings and evenings are extremely frosty. This is a warning sign that we will not protect ourselves from the cold. However, this does not prevent all the doors and windows in the taverns from being wide open. It is true that during the day the sun heats up a lot. Only then is it pleasant when the doors and windows are open»²⁶.

20 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 32.

21 Lech Zimowski, *Geneza i rozwój komunikacji pocztowej na ziemiach polskich* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Komunikacji i Łączności, 1972).

22 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 119.

23 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 61.

24 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 65

25 LNNBU, fond 145, part II, n. 21, *Listy*, 11.

26 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 105.

In large urban centres, inns were located just around the corners, in and around the city centre. Finding a vacant room “on the spot” was usually not a problem. «In Padua we stayed late at night in an inn on the outskirts», wrote Morawska.²⁷ Platerowa in turn stayed in Padua at the “Under the Golden Eagle” inn, located near the Basilica of St. Anthony²⁸, and in Verona at the “Due Torri” inn, located near the famous Juliet balcony, the Piazza Brà and the Roman theatre - Arena di Verona²⁹. Once in Venice, the ladies usually chose to rent accommodation just off the Grand Canal, near the Rialto Bridge. Morawska stayed in the inn “Under the Three Kings”, Platerowa in the inn belonging to Dan Pertillo. She met his brother in San Daniele and it was he who recommended the “Al Leon Bianco” inn to her. The flat she rented was very much to her liking. It consisted of an entrance hall, a large guest room, a bedroom, a study and three small rooms. «Each room was equipped with the most necessary furniture», she said with satisfaction³⁰. She and her husband were accommodated in the bedroom, Cecylia was placed in the study, Dąbrowska in one of the rooms and servants in the other two. Adjacent to the bedroom was a large balcony, which offered a magnificent view of the Canal Grande. Platerowa liked to spend her free moments on it, watching the barges and gondolas sailing along the canal.

SOCIAL LIFE

Undoubtedly, the basic and most important element of the travels of Polish aristocrats in Veneto was participation in social life. Nothing illustrates this better than a letter Jabłonowska wrote to a warm friend: «In all the towns, my good friend, to which I arrive, I enter in a similar manner, for they announce here when I arrive and when I leave. In several cities, as soon as I arrived, there was a crowd of people waiting for me. I am obliged to receive visits from the high nobility, who spend every so often evenings called here conversations, and foreign ministers dinners. During daytime I am obliged to devote myself to the ladies who give concerts or some other entertainment around the city. Thus, from eleven in the morning until midnight I have not a moment to myself»³¹. The most popular means of conveying information were newspapers, correspondence, and tickets – a shortened form of letter – which were used to send single messages quickly. The European social elite usually had a constant supply of information from several sources simultaneously. For their own purposes, they also consciously created a network of informants – often enormously extensive, so that no news of social life escaped their attention³². Giovanni dall'Oglio, a famous cellist and Polish diplomatic agent in Venice, always

27 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 133.

28 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 93.

29 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 104.

30 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 70.

31 LNNBU, fond 145, part II, n. 21, *Listy*, 28v-9.

32 Wojciech Jurkiewicz, *Korespondencja elit Polski stanisławowskiej. Analiza wybranych kręgów korespondencyjnych* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Uczelniane WSP w Bydgoszczy, 1992).

knew well when to expect the arrival of aristocrats from the Vistula³³. Platerowa met him shortly after her arrival in Venice, receiving detailed information about other aristocrats staying in the city at the time³⁴.

The Polish travellers also often socialised in cafés, of which there was no shortage in the region. They were happy to stop in them when taking a break from their journey. Thus Platerowa met Mrs. Breuner, the wife of the Austrian minister in Venice, in a café on the road from Conegliano to Treviso³⁵. The acquaintance led to close contacts with Mrs. Krüdener, the wife of the Russian minister in Venice³⁶. The Platers often met the Breuner and Krüdener on social grounds. Both ministers also invited them to their country estates. They went to Mira, a village belonging to the Russian minister, on 19 September 1785, and three days later to Marocco, the property of the Austrian minister³⁷. Platerowa and Morawska also noted that in Venice itself, the preferred place to socialise was the *casini*, located in St. Mark's Square. Morawska noted that «only those presented find themselves there»³⁸. In her diary, Platerowa explained that these were places «where women organise meetings, on the assumption that it is more comfortable than at home. All their friends can come there without any special invitation»³⁹. One such place was run by Ms. Breuner. «It consisted of two nicely decorated rooms, although small and low. The view from them over the square was very charming», reported Plater⁴⁰. Sipping coffee, chocolate, or a drink made from water and lemon juice, social news was passed around, people talked about fashion, travel, art, theatre, and music. It was very common to go straight from the *casino* to a concert or theatre performance. Our heroines led a lively social life in Veneto. They moved in the circles of the international aristocracy, among which there were many Poles. Morawska and Platerowa meticulously recorded their meetings with compatriots in their diaries. When Morawska arrived in Venice in February, she found General Nieborski and his wife, Miss Rozalia Wisłocka, who was in the service of Mrs Nieborska, Ensign Jan Czarnomski, Canon of Livonia Jaszewski and Bernard Niegolewski, Abbot of

33 François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1861), 416.

34 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 71-2.

35 She was probably Maria Josefa wife of Karl Borromeus graf von Breuner von Enkevoirth.

36 Beate Barbara Juliane von Krüdener (née von Vietinghoff) wife of Burckhard Alexis Constantin Baron von Krüdener, diplomat, from 1784 ambassador to Venice appointed by Catherine II, writer. Magdalena Dąbrowska, "Beate Barbara Juliane von Krüdener o podróżach i w podróżach po Europie", *Studia Rossica Gedanensia*, 9 (2022): 40-52.

37 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 66-7.

38 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 125.

39 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 69.

40 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 75.

Jędrzejów⁴¹. When she visited the city for the second time in May, she met some Poles who had come to Venice especially to see the ceremony of the wedding with the sea. Duke Kazimierz Nestor Sapieha came from Turin, and Michał Przeździecki and Duke Lubomirski from Rome⁴². In turn, Platerowa ran into Duchess Izabella Lubomirska née Czartoryska, in Venice, who was accompanied by, among others, her son-in-law Stanisław Kostka Potocki, Miss Teresa Godlewska – socialite, eight-year-old Henryk Lubomirski – the Duchess's beloved pupil, who was Platerowa's nephew, and his tutor, Father Scipione Piattoli⁴³. As soon as Catherine learned of the Duchess's stay in Venice, she immediately paid her a visit. She did so in an unconventional way, by dressing up in the costume worn by Venetian ladies, called a *cendaletto*. It consisted of a huge black veil attached to the hair and a black skirt worn over the clothes. Thus dressed, she entered the Duchess's flat, speaking in Italian. With no small amount of satisfaction, she noted in her diary: «She complimented me greatly, looking forward to such an acquaintance, asked me to sit down, and apologised for not speaking Italian. I managed to completely fool her»⁴⁴. Lubomirska only recognised Platerowa when she began to speak French and removed the black veil from her hair.

IMAGE OF CITIES

During the Age of Enlightenment, Venice, Padua, Verona, and Vicenza were at the top of the list of the most visited cities in the Veneto region⁴⁵. The crowds of foreigners flocked, of course, mainly to Venice to admire its unique natural setting, its numerous monuments of art and architecture, and finally to enjoy the city's unique atmosphere. Its first sight made an impressive impression on the travellers. Morawska noted in her diary: «Driving up to the city our eyes were entertained by the most beautiful sight. Venice – a beautiful and large city, it seems almost floating on the sea»⁴⁶. Platerowa, who arrived in Venice late in the evening, regretted that she could not enjoy the sights. In the pages of her diary she recorded: «From what we could see in the moonlight, on one side, in the distance – we could see mountains, on the other – a multitude of islands, while in the depths was Venice, delightful and vast»⁴⁷.

41 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 126-27.

42 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 202.

43 Bożenna Majewska-Maszkowska, *Mecenat artystyczny Izabelli z Czartoryskich Lubomirskiej (1736-1816)* (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1976), 52.

44 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 72.

45 Alberto Tenenti, *Venezia e il Veneto nelle pagine dei viaggiatori stranieri (1650-1790)* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza Editore, 1985); Bronisław Biliński, "Viaggiatori polacchi a Venezia nei secoli XVII-XIX" in *Venezia e la Polonia nei secoli dal XVII al XIX*, ed. Luigi Cini (Venezia-Roma: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1968), 341-417.

46 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 119.

47 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 68.

Gondolas were the main means of transport in the city. The ladies used them willingly and often when going for a walk. «I quickly got dressed to go for a ride. The gondolier sailed along the various canals to show us the city», reported Platerowa on 14 September 1785⁴⁸. An unforgettable experience was a cruise along the Canal Grande, where magnificent palaces and majestic churches form a unique architectural complex. The alternative to the gondola was, of course, one's own feet. Several hundred bridges were built over the canals to facilitate walking. According to Morawska, however, walking in the city was hampered by «very narrow streets, between others it is difficult for two people to pass each other»⁴⁹. Among the Venetian bridges, the most admired by the Polish aristocrats was the Rialto Bridge, linking the banks of the Canal Grande. It was the first object Platerowa went to after arriving in the city. In her diary she noted: «It seemed to us that we found ourselves in a great hall with a marble floor. On two sides strongly lit shops. We walked for more than an hour between them until we reached St. Mark's Square. It was huge and in the form of a rectangle»⁵⁰. In Piazza San Marco, to which the Piazzetta leading to the lagoon is adjacent, the political, cultural, and social life of the city was concentrated. All state ceremonies and religious ceremonies took place there. For many centuries, the authorities of the Republic placed emphasis on the architectural design of the square; as a result, it became the ornament not only of Venice but of all Italy. Morawska and Platerowa meticulously described the buildings of the square: St. Mark's Basilica, the Doge's Palace, the Library, the Old and New Procuration, the Clock Tower and the St. Mark's Bell Tower, which was the tallest building in the city. From its top, one could enjoy the magnificent panorama of Venice and, on particularly sunny days, even see the Alps. Both ladies took the trouble to climb the Bell Tower. Among the sites «worthy of admiration», a special place was occupied by the glass manufactory, located on the island of Murano in the Venetian lagoon. The Polish women aristocrats did not fail to sail to the island to observe the process of making various glass objects⁵¹.

Among the canon of excursion attractions was a visit to the arsenal – the great state shipyard of Venice, where warships and merchant ships had been built since the Middle Ages. The arsenal was the great pride of the Venetians and an object of admiration for visitors. Our heroines were most impressed by the *Bucentaur*, the Venetian dockyard's parade galley used to celebrate the Venetian Republic's ritual marriage to the sea. The ceremony was held annually on Ascension Day. In case of inclement weather, it was postponed from day to day. Jabłonowska, in a letter - written on 26 May 1770 – conveyed the following news to Szeptycka: «I came down here, my good friend, for the Ascension period through curiosity. Thursday's foggy time has postponed the ceremony until tomorrow»⁵². Four years after Jabłonowska,

48 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 71.

49 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 120.

50 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 68-9.

51 Małgorzata Ewa Kowalczyk, «Polki w Wenecji w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku. Zapiski z podróży Teofili z Radziwiłłów Morawskiej i Katarzyny z Sosnowskich Platerowej», *Italica Wratislaviensia*, 5 (2014): 317-37.

52 LNNBU, fond 145, part II, n. 21, *Listy*, 26.

the Feast of the Ascension was attended by Morawska, who recorded in her diary: «This is one celebration of the most magnificent Venice. Many foreigners came to this one»⁵³. Accompanied by senators, representatives of the Venetian nobility and clergy, and foreign diplomats, the Doge sailed into the open sea in *Bucentaur* and threw a golden ring into the water, thus sealing the Venetian Republic's alliance with the sea. The galleys were accompanied by countless lavishly decorated barges and gondolas. The ceremonies of ritual marriage to the sea initiated a several-day fair in Venice and various games.

Polish women aristocrats visited Padua with great interest. They described the city – once famous for its university, which attracted crowds of students from various European countries⁵⁴ – positively, in contrast to the male representatives of the Polish nobility travelling during the Enlightenment⁵⁵. «Padua is a large and rather unattractive city. The people care little for appearances, the place and location are cheerful» wrote Morawska⁵⁶. The Basilica of St. Anthony made a big impression on our heroines. They praised the numerous and rich votive offerings in the chapel with the saint's relics. They were also charmed by the frescoes adorning the shrine, although they could not write anything specific about them. They did, however, note that the basilica contains commemorative plaques and tombstones of Poles who studied in Padua⁵⁷. Morawska was additionally enthralled by the Basilica of St. Justina, which houses the oldest mementoes of Christianity, as well as the relics of St. Justina, the first patron saint of the city, and St. Luke the Evangelist, and St. Matthias the Apostle⁵⁸. Platerowa, in turn, was under the charm of Prato Della Valle. In the pages of her diary she noted: «It was a beautiful plain through which ran a river canal with four nice bridges. On either side of the canal were stone statues of persons of particular merit to the university»⁵⁹. Unfortunately, they wrote nothing about the university itself, which leads us to assume that they did not visit the walls of Padua University.

A must-see for Polish women aristocrats, travelling through the Veneto region, was Vicenza. The city owed its fame to the architectural designs of Andrea Palladio, the Renaissance master who built most of the residences of the local aristocracy. Platerowa was astonished to discover that most of the houses, designed by the

53 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 202.

54 Henryk Barycz, *Archiwum Nacji Polskiej w Uniwersytecie Padewskim*, vol. 1: *Metryka Nacji Polskiej w Uniwersytecie Padewskim (1592–1745)* (Wrocław-Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1971).

55 Justyna Łukaszewicz, “La Padova di August Fryderyk Moszyński”, *Italica Wratislaviensia*, 12/1 (2021): 127-31; Małgorzata Ewa Kowalczyk, “Le lettere di Tomasz Kajetan Węgierski scritte durante il viaggio del 1779 attraverso il Veneto”, *Italica Wratislaviensia*, 12/2 (2021): 69-85.

56 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 133.

57 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 93; Morawska, *Diariusz*, 134.

58 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 134.

59 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 97.

eminent 16th century architect and architectural theorist, had a magnificent façade and a majestic entrance leading to filthy rooms. About the famous Villa Alemrico-Capra, called “La Rotonda”, built near the city to Palladio’s design, she wrote: «The interior was so dirty and unpleasant that we can hardly imagine that the Italians do not have the right taste and feeling to harmonise with their beautiful architecture»⁶⁰. The ladies also spent their stay in Vicenza visiting the Olympic Theatre, the esplanade known as Campo Marzio, as well as the famous shrine of the Virgin Mary known as Madonna del Monte, located on the edge of the city⁶¹.

The Polish women travellers were very impressed by Verona, charmingly located on the Adige River. The ladies came to the city, made famous by Shakespeare, to visit - as Platerowa expressed it - «the most beautiful places»⁶². These included the Cathedral of Santa Maria Matricolare, the Church of San Giorgio in Badia, the Pellegrini Family Chapel at the Church of San Bernardino, the Borsari Gate, the Piazza Bra, the Giusti Gardens, and, above all, the amphitheatre. Morawska stated in her diary on 22 June 1774: «Verona brings the most foreigners to the amphitheatre»⁶³. The work of ancient architecture was appreciated for its size and state of preservation, often being compared to the Roman Colosseum⁶⁴.

THE INHABITANTS OF VENETO AND THEIR CUSTOMS

According to the Polish women aristocrats, the inhabitants of the Veneto region were polite, friendly, open, kind and very helpful. They were willing to open the doors of their homes to show the travellers how they lived and, on occasion, treat them to coffee or lunch. While passing through Conegliano, Platerowa became interested in a certain high castle. She wanted to see the panoramic view of the town and the surrounding area from its windows. The owner willingly invited her inside and even provided a telescope through which the Polish woman could see Treviso, Mestre, and even Venice⁶⁵. Platerowa visited many houses during her stay in Veneto. In the pages of her diary she stated: «Large rooms, but all not very comfortable and – as everywhere here - horribly ugly furniture»⁶⁶. According to her, Italians living in the region lacked a sense of taste in their furnishings. «They don’t even suspect that such a sense of taste can exist!» – she wrote ironically⁶⁷. Nor did she have a good opinion of the local aristocrats. After some socialising, she noted in her diary: «The women here are very limited though. Some of them told me about the intrigues of

60 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 96.

61 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 216-18.

62 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 102.

63 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 219.

64 Małgorzata Wrześniak, “Verona dei viaggiatori polacchi (XVII–XIX secolo)”, *Italica Wratislaviensia*, 12/1 (2021): 141-60.

65 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 65.

66 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 84.

67 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 77.

other ladies, as if that could interest me»⁶⁸.

In Veneto, and especially in its capital, the institution of the *cavaliere servente*, also known as the *cicisbeo* – a young man serving a woman with the permission of her husband – attracted the interest of the female travellers from across the Vistula. Of course, this applied only to wealthy women belonging to the higher social strata. This peculiar custom was widely reported in 1785 in the pages of the *Magazyn Warszawski*⁶⁹. The duties of the *cicisbeo*, who was often a priest or religious⁷⁰, included assisting the lady in waking up in the morning, giving her chocolate in bed, preparing her slippers, and often helping her get dressed. When she left the house, he had to keep her company. «It would be an unacceptable transgression of common custom if her own husband led her by the hand. Everywhere, therefore, in companies, in church, at the theatre, at balls, she has her *cicisbeo* by her side, as if he were chained to her», I read in *Magazyn Warszawski* [...] ⁷¹. According to Platerowa, these were generally men who were quite sullen⁷².

Travelling through the Veneto, Polish aristocrats were surprised by the culinary customs there. Morawska complained that «Italian dishes were uncommonly very unpleasant»⁷³. A peculiarity of Old Polish cuisine was the sharp, sour and salty taste of food. Large quantities of vinegar, horseradish, salt, garlic, onions and various spices were therefore commonly consumed. There was also a taste for spicy pickles – pickled cucumbers, cabbage, beetroot, as well as flour dishes – bread, kluski, łazanki, and pierogi. A lot of dairy products and various groats were also consumed, as well as very large amounts of meat. As a rule, fatty and hearty meals were considered good food⁷⁴. Italian cuisine, on the other hand, was dominated by light dishes, today we would say dietetic. Dishes were mainly based on fish, seafood, poultry, cheese, pasta and vegetables, subtly seasoned with fresh herbs and oil. There were also thick soups. Fruit was a constant feature of the table: grapes, peaches, oranges, lemons, figs. Not surprisingly, the first days on the Mediterranean diet were the most difficult for our heroines⁷⁵. Platerowa wrote disapprovingly about the dinners served in the inns of the Veneto: «They serve rice or pasta in the soup, making it so thick that

68 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 78.

69 “Magazyn Warszawski, pięknych nauk, kunsztów i różnych wiadomości dawnych, i nowych, dla zabawy, i pożytku osób obiej płci, wszelkiego stanu, i smaku” (1785), 83.

70 Kazimierz Chłędowski, *Rokoko we Włoszech* (Warszawa: PIW 1959), 57.

71 “Warsaw Magazine”, 83.

72 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 77.

73 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 126.

74 Zbigniew Kuchowicz, *Człowiek polskiego baroku* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1992), 22-39; Maria Bogucka, *Między obyczajem a prawem. Kultura Sarmatyzmu w Polsce XVI–XVIII wieku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Nerito, 2013), 179-93.

75 Małgorzata Ewa Kowalczyk, “Kuchnia włoska w relacjach polskich podróżników XVIII wieku”, in *Życie codzienne na dawnych ziemiach pruskich. Dziedzictwo kulinarne*, ed. Stanisław Achremczyk (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Miejski Ośrodek Kultury w Olsztynie, 2007) 68-76.

there is hardly any broth in it. The second course is usually veal or chicken, coming from the soup and served separately. Polenta is a typical dish in Venice, made from corn. It is not something special for me»⁷⁶. According to her, 'sea spiders', i.e. boiled crabs watered with oil and lemon juice, were unpalatable, and snails were cooked so 'bizarrely' that they were not fit to eat. Polish aristocrats also complained about the quality of bread. Jabłowska wrote in a letter to a friend: «Bread's terrible, hard as stone», «bread such that it and the hungriest cannot eat it»⁷⁷. As a rule, ladies opted to buy from German bakeries. Platerowa noted in her diary: «Fortunately, we were able to find a German bakery in Venice which had a slightly better reputation - but to us the bread coming from it seemed completely average anyway»⁷⁸. The Polish women were also surprised by the custom of drinking coffee without milk and lemonade straight from the bottle.

SUMMARY

137

An analysis of surviving source documents relating to voyages in the Veneto region during the Age of Enlightenment, coming directly from three Polish women aristocrats, allows us to conclude that they were excellent observers. The ladies formed independent judgements, did not use a purely reporting form, and did not blindly rely on the opinions contained in guidebooks. Their notes contain individual accounts, reflecting personal interests and views. There are no dry descriptions of works of art and architecture, enumerations of inscriptions, gravestones or specimens collected in natural history cabinets. Instead, in the pages of their accounts one can find very interesting, often in the form of anecdotes, descriptions of everyday life on the journey, social life, customs and mentality of the inhabitants of the Veneto region, their entertainments, their homes, or their cuisine.

It is also worth noting that the Polish women took advantage of their stay in Venice, Padua, Vicenza or Verona to seek acquisitions for their home collections. Indeed, the 18th century saw the intensive development of collecting throughout Europe. The passion for collecting can be seen in many Polish travellers, who wrote explicitly in the pages of their accounts about collecting various souvenirs from the areas they passed through. Our heroines did not fail to mention it either. Jabłowska was interested in natural specimens, Platerowa in Venetian coins, and Morawska in "various peculiarities". Jabłowska and Morawska created natural history cabinets in their estates. They bought exhibits for it, received them as gifts, and often collected them with their own hands. During her stay in Venice in March 1774, after an excursion to the Lido, Morawska noted in her diary: «On the seashores we found various beautiful shells peculiar in color. These greatly enlarged my natural history collection, which I had already begun collecting in Paris, and before that in Gdańsk. I even tried to buy models of gondolas as well as various Venetian ships»⁷⁹.

76 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 94.

77 LNNBU, fond 145, part II, n. 21, *Listy*, 11r-v.

78 Platerowa, *Moja podróż*, 94.

79 Morawska, *Diariusz*, 133.

ABBREVIATION

LNNBU: Lviv National Scientific Library of Ukraine named after V. Stefanyk

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