



IFLA  
2005  
OSLO

## World Library and Information Congress: 71th IFLA General Conference and Council

### "Libraries - A voyage of discovery"

August 14th - 18th 2005, Oslo, Norway

*Conference Programme:*

<http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla71/Programme.htm>

August 4, 2005

**Code Number:** 128-E  
**Meeting:** 102 Library History

#### **The strange life of one of the greatest European libraries of the eighteenth century: the Zaluski collection in Warsaw**

**Maria Witt**

Chargée de cours Université Paris X Nanterre (LLPHi / SPSE)  
Paris, France

*Translated from French  
by Robert O. Steele, volunteer staff member,  
Library of Congress*

#### **Abstract:**

*During the eighteenth century, the French language conquered Poland. This period saw the creation and development of the largest French-language library in the world outside of France, "a giant collection containing 400,000 volumes, consequently one of the two or three most important in Europe."*

*The Zaluski Library, founded by two brothers: Andrzej Stanisław Kostka (1695-1758) and Józef Andrzej (1702-1774), which opened in Warsaw in 1747, was in existence for about 50 years. It was subsequently "transferred" to Saint Petersburg in 1795 as spoils of war, and served as the basis for the Imperial Public Library. Around 50,000 of the Zaluski's books were*

returned by Russia, then by the USSR, over the course of the nineteenth century and between 1923 and 1935, but the Second World War reserved a final tragedy for them.

Because of this strange and tragic fate, it is difficult to reconstruct a complete picture of the Załuski collection and of how the library functioned. Too many documents, letters, archival resources, catalogues, and inventories have been lost forever. Nonetheless, a certain picture can be reconstructed thanks to secondary documents which have preserved information about their contents, among them the documents presented at the 1933 Exposition at the National Library of Warsaw, historical and biographical works published between the two World Wars and the recent research of J. Kozłowski.

## **French-speaking Poland**

During the eighteenth century, the French language finally conquered Poland. Up to that time, the pre-eminent language was Latin, which served as the official language. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the Polish court came under French influence due to the efforts of two women: Marie-Louise de Gonzague, daughter of the Duke de Nevers who married King Ladislas IV in 1645, and her confidante Marie-Casimire d'Arquien (Marysieńka), the daughter of a Nivernais gentleman married to Jean Sobieski. In 1645 all the princes and all the nobles of the Court spoke French more often and more willingly than their own language.

The height of French influence was attained during the reign of Stanislas Auguste Poniatowski (1764-1795), who received his esthetic education in Paris in the salons of Madame Geoffrin. He expressed himself in French better than in Polish, he conducted his correspondence in French, and it was in French that he wrote his *Mémoires*. French became the customary language of Polish society.

An amusing example of this evolution is given by the mixture of languages in two letters of Joseph Załuski. The first, a mixture of Polish and Latin written in Paris at the age of 19: "My tu horas et monumenta mamy disposita i wszelkiej zazywamy applikacja..." and the second, written in Polish and French at the end of his life in Russia: "Jeżlim był zarliwy przy wierze swietej, toc w tym zgrzeszyłem car je n'ai fait que mon devoir d'évêque. Chaque honnête homme fait le devoir de sa charge... ». [*If I was loyal to my holy faith, then I did not sin, for I have only done my duty as a bishop. Every gentleman does the duty of his office...*"]

## **An exceptional library (1747-1795)**

The Załuski library was created by two brothers with an uncommon destiny.

These two ecclesiastical aristocrats, high functionaries of the Church, conceived of an entirely democratic and astonishingly liberal institution. Through their library, an elite knowledge reserved only for initiates was to be accessible to all, with great freedom and without censorship.

The Załuski brothers, Andrzej Stanislaw Kostka (André, 1695-1758) and Józef Andrzej (Joseph, 1702-1774), were book lovers from their earliest youth. Descendants of an old noble Polish family, they received a princely education including among other things a voyage throughout Europe with long sojourns in Rome and Paris. Through their uncle, Bishop of Plock, they were destined for the Church.

## **The Żaluski's Paris and France (1716-1717, 1720-1723)**

During their first journey the two brothers spent almost a year in Paris, from the fall of 1716 to the summer of 1717, under the tutelage of Cardinal Melchior de Polignac, the former French ambassador to Poland. They pursued their studies in dialectic, rhetoric, Roman history, geography, the Bible and, although they were preparing themselves for the priesthood, they had a dancing master. "It is not to dance, but to learn how to bow, according to the fashion here."

From their earliest youth, the brothers collected books: the first inventory that Joseph drew up in 1720, at the age of 18, listed 3000 books. One year later, after the death of their uncle the bishop, they inherited a large and valuable collection of books to which was also added the collection of an ancestor, Primate Olszowski.

From 1720 to 1723, Joseph was again in Paris. He pursued advanced studies at the seminary of St. Sulpice. He spent time at Issy-Les-Moulineaux, visited the Cistercian abbey of Carnoët in Brittany, gave homilies in French at the church of St. Sulpice in Paris, visited la Trappe, spent time with Melchior de Polignac, but at the same time constantly visited libraries and bookstores. He bought books and manuscripts; in libraries, he copied unknown or unpublished sources for the history of Poland.

It must be remembered that the fourth public library in Paris, "the Caroline," library of the priests of the Christian Doctrine, was opened just before his arrival in Paris, on November 24, 1718, according to the bequest of a doctor of theology at the University of Paris, Miron.

## **Return to Poland (1723-1736)**

Named Bishop of Plock, Joseph considered founding a public library in his episcopal palace, but finally in 1723 the two brothers decided to combine their own collections with those they had inherited from their ancestors in order to open a public library in Warsaw.

According to the Leipzig newspaper in 1728, Żaluski already owned 8000 volumes from all over Europe and planned the publication of a complete bibliography of Polish and foreign writers who had written about the history of Poland.

Thus in 1732, Joseph in *Programma Literarium* announced his plan to open a public library, and also presented a vast publishing program based on his collections, calling on all persons interested in collecting documents and preparing bibliographies and other reference sources. The political upheaval in Europe after the death of King August the Strong (August II) in 1733 would make this project unrealizable and delay the creation of the public library for 20 years.

## **Lorraine (1736-1742)**

In the struggle over the succession to the Polish throne, France supported as its candidate Stanislas Leszczyński, who for eight years had been father-in-law to the king of France. Eventually it was the son of August II who would seize the crown of Poland with the support of Russia and Austria.

Bishop Żaluski, francophone, francophile, and partisan of Leszczyński, decided to leave Poland in 1736 to go the court of his king in exile in Lunéville. His library at that time was already famous. Polish scholars begged him at his departure to leave it in the country at the

service of science.

In Lunéville from 1736 on, he thus began to complete his collection. He frequently went to Paris and Versailles and visited libraries.

According to a list he drew up himself, Załuski made the acquaintance in Paris of 180 men of letters, learned men, bibliophiles, collectors and booksellers and visited numerous libraries, “more than in any other city.” Several authors offered him their works for his library. Certain books given to him by Jean Paul Bignon, librarian of the Royal Library, have been preserved up to the present. In exchange, the Bishop offered gifts of Polish books: to Buffon, he sent *Auctuarium historiae naturalis*, to Gabriel François Coyer, he gave books and sources for his research on Jan III Sobieski. To the famous heraldry specialist d’Hozier he offered the family tree of the Ossoliński princes. Réaumur, the famous inventor of the thermometer, received from Załuski collections of Polish observations of grasshoppers for his work in progress. The passion for books led the bishop sometimes to the limits of the acceptable. He did not hesitate to exchange books with Pierre-Jacob Sepher, the owner of an excellent collection of books “which questioned the faith, dubious, paradoxical, fanatical, condemned to the pyre.”

At least five books from the library of the Abbey of St. Germain des Prés fell into the *escarcelle* [a monk’s leather purse] of the Załuski Library, as did at least one from the Dominican establishment on the rue St. Jacques; numerous books come from the library of the Jesuits at the Collège Louis le Grand, from the canons of the Church of St. Geneviève, from the Royal Library, from the Sorbonne, from the Congregation of St. Sulpice, in short from all the libraries of Paris.

In Lorraine, Załuski maintained relations with all the important abbeys, colleges, and learned men around Lunéville. At the time of his stay in Lunéville, Antoine Lancelot, his friend and partner in bibliophilic exchanges, drew up the inventory of the archives of Lorraine at the request of Louis XV. Stanislas Leszczyński, who founded a public library open every day (1750), certainly discussed his project with his friend the bishop. Their ideas on this subject, about which they were passionate, were not always the same. Disagreements sprang up. It was during one of these estrangements that the bishop decided to return to Poland. That was in 1742. Several years later, his collections were also sent home from Lunéville: “several thousand volumes packed in 84 crates.”

At the library of Nancy was left only “the small Załuski collection.” The bishop offered certain of his volumes to the Academy of Nancy in order to be admitted as a foreign associate in 1756, on the request of the King. It should be remembered that the academy founded by Stanislas was a French language academy; “which was not a given in a duchy where part of the population spoke a German dialect. During the life of Stanislas, all written and oral communication was in French, with the sole exception of a text in Latin by the famous astronomer Father Boscovitch. The idea was to prepare the return of Lorraine to France.” (\*)

The mobility of the itinerant bishop can be astonishing: at a time when each voyage involved laborious preparation and fatigue, he traveled everywhere in Europe: Italy, Germany, Austria, Holland and Russia found themselves in his path. He was a member of scholarly societies in Italy (Rome, Florence, Bologna) and Germany (Leipzig, Berlin, Grifie, Jena); he belonged to the academies of St. Petersburg, Nancy, Stockholm and Olomouc (Olomuniec). But his attempts to obtain a chair in the French Academy were unsuccessful.

His personal contacts were a very small part of his activities as a librarian: booksellers affiliated as his agents were in all the large and not-so-large cities of Europe.

## Poland and Warsaw

The elder brother of Joseph, André, also collected books from his youth. It was said that even while hunting he was inseparable from his books. When he became a bishop at the age of 28, he gathered his books in his immense episcopal palace at Pułtusk.

Before his departure for Europe in 1736, Joseph prepared his future library, concerned about the fate of his books stored in inappropriate places and inaccessible to researchers. (Remember his *Programma Literarium* of 1732 mentioned above). Around 1734 the brothers sent their collections to the cloister of the Carmelites in Warsaw where some of the books scattered in the cells were eaten by rats.

On April 7, 1736, André bought the Daniłowiczowski Palace in the center of Warsaw as a possible site for his future library. While his brother Joseph was staying in Europe, André received the library of the deceased Jean III Sobieski (800 volumes) who had bequeathed it to him in 1740. This collection became the principal treasure of his library; it included several books inherited from the kings Sigismund August, King Batory, Sigismund III, and Ladislas IV.

The preparation for the opening of the library would last ten years, at first because of construction in the Palace which was intended to receive the collections; in 1744 Joseph devised and founded the “Society of Readers” (Towarzystwo Czytelnicze) whose purpose was the purchase and reading of books. After being chosen by its members, the books were to be donated to the library.

In 1745, the brothers used the press (*Kurier Polski [Polish News]*) to call on printers to give them new works so that they could establish a national library. This appeal was renewed twice in the same newspaper.

### “CIVIUM IN USUS”

Finally the library “CIVIUM IN USUS” – “FOR THE USE OF CITIZENS” was inaugurated on August 8, 1747, although construction would still continue for 15 years. At the opening, there were about 180,000 volumes. (\*)

At the entrance of the Palace, over the doorway, were the following inscriptions: “Adolescentibus illicium” (an attraction for the young), “Senibus subsidium” (an aid to the old), “Studiosis negotium” (a mission for the curious), “Occupatis diverticulum” (a diversion for workers), “Otiosis spectaculum” (a spectacle for the idle), and “Conditori gloriosum monumentum” (a glorious monument for its founder). Under these inscriptions was the coat of arms of Junosza de Zaluski with the motto “Sic vos, non vobis.”

It was planned to be open “Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, morning and evening.” From its opening in 1746, the library had internal rules instituted by André. Certain rules had, in addition to their role in the codification of principles, a didactic role: they taught appropriate behavior in a public library.

The Zaluski Library was a lending library: it permitted patrons to consult the collection on site or to borrow books, in the capital as well as in the provinces, which was extraordinary for that time (the ancestor of today’s interlibrary loan).

## **The Daniłowiczowski Palace and its collections**

From this time forward, the Daniłowiczowski Palace became an obligatory place to visit for any cultivated foreigner visiting Poland in the last years of the monarchy. The detailed descriptions that they left witness their admiration for the collection and the organization of the library.

It was a large and ancient palace, with an elongated quadrangular floor plan, and it was embellished with statues. “The interior,” says Jacques Bernouilli in his description of his trip to Poland in 1778, (\*) “is a great labyrinth of rooms full of books, some two hundred thousand. The largest room, sumptuously decorated, contains numerous French works, and the others are exceptional either because of their bindings or the numerous engravings they contain. That room, long, beautiful and with very high ceilings, is also decorated by numerous statues that the eminent Załuski brothers have commissioned in memory of the worthiest and most noble men of their country... The Latin books on the third floor also occupy a very large room, completely full of shelves; next to it there are several more rooms completely crowded with books. In the attic are placed the duplicates of the Polish books; I doubt however that all the duplicates are stored there, for sometimes the founders of the library have acquired five, six, or even seven copies of these ‘rare works.’”

### **Acquisitions**

The Załuski collection was put together in the same spirit as the information for the Great Encyclopedia: a representation of the totality of human knowledge. Załuski wanted to bring together all written texts for “only posterity will be able to judge the usefulness of certain manuscripts or printed works.” Using the press, from 1745 on he requested printers to send him their books “even the most slender, because what will not serve one, can be useful to another.”

The brothers were the first to set themselves the goal of collecting all Polish printed works. It was an enormous task, given that printers in Poland became active by 1473 (among the first in Europe, three years after Paris). From that date on the production of printed works continued to increase. And nonetheless, the Polish collections of the Załuski Library in 1740 were already so rich that the bibliophile bishop sought only authors who were “forgotten, unknown, or lost.”

It is known that the Załuski Library contained small-format books and pamphlets, which was rare since librarians of former times disdained these types of documents. The two brothers never agreed: the elder reproached his younger brother a penchant for loose pamphlets and small books “worthy of bric-à-brac.” In their place, he wanted to see in the library “autores classicos et in biblioteca pernecessarios [classical authors and those thoroughly necessary for a library].”

Printers, scholarly societies, or individual authors responded willingly to the appeals of the Załuskis who continued to search through Polish and foreign libraries and follow auctions, buying personal collections at the death of scholars. In the collections of the National Library in Warsaw are found for example the catalog of the public sale of the Mylius firm in Berlin (1767), carefully annotated by Załuski, and the bill for some sixty books.

When the acquisition of a book was not possible, Joseph Załuski ordered a copy of the document which was then done at his request. (The magnates employed “scriptores” – whenever the demand for a document was rare, it was more profitable to re-write the book than to publish a

few copies).

At the end of its existence, the library had doubled its collection and counted more than 400,000 volumes. The collections moved to St. Petersburg were counted twice (by Bogdanov in 1796 and Antonovskij in 1806) and reflect these statistics.

### **Disciplines and their classification**

Joseph presented the library's collection through the principal disciplines such as theology, philosophy, scholastics and history. Law and medicine were not his principal preoccupation. But Olenin, director of the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg, described the library at Warsaw as "absolutely encyclopedic" and possessing books of all disciplines, human sciences, and arts. The most numerous was the theology collection, then history and literature.

According to several sources it is known that the books were classified first by language, then by theme, next by format and finally by alphabetical order. The principles of thematic classification established by Joseph well before the library's opening remained in effect until 1787. Then this thematic classification was replaced by the systematic classification of Konopczyński which identified five areas of knowledge: Religion, Thought, Memory, Imagination, Language.(\*). This classification scheme would last only seven years.

### **Preservation**

The sources contain some information about the preservation of the collection. To preserve it against rats, the books were put in trunks and a cat was bought; it was allowed to circulate freely in the Palace thanks to openings specially devised. To avoid dust, special slipcovers were put on the globes. During the renovation of the building, André asked his brother Joseph to demolish the adjoining storage building, so that "the sun and wind might circulate around the library." He also asked him to avoid putting books against the walls until they were completely dry. After the death of the Zaluski, in order to reduce the humidity, it was decided to put crushed stone under the floor. In the courtyard, there was a canopy under which dusty books were shaken and damp ones were dried. "Rotten or worm-eaten books" which threatened to infect the others were buried (burning them was too dangerous and could cause a fire), or isolated far from the others.

### **Catalogues and processing**

The document collections of the library were described in numerous catalogues, manuscripts and printed works. During the eighteenth century, nearly one hundred manuscript catalogues of the collection were produced. At the beginning of the 1760s, when there were already more than 50, a list was drawn up that was later included under the title "Cataloghi Bibliothecae meae inservientes [Catalogues used in my library]" in the *Bibliographie Zalusiana* of Janocki (1763-1766). The list was soon out of date since new catalogues were continually elaborated. In addition to catalogues, throughout the life of the library guides or selected lists of the collections of books were devised, beginning with *Titles of the Public Library of Zaluski* and *Encyclopedic Library of the Best Authors in Each Subject*."

In the library, processing was mainly the responsibility of Joseph Zaluski who, book in hand, made decisions about classification, adding letters and numbers to the title pages. These

symbols were a sort of shelf number which allowed the arrangement of the books in a given order as well as their retrieval from the shelf.

Załoski analyzed the documents carefully: on the title page, he underlined the elements necessary for cataloguing: name of the author, title and date of the work; if these data were lacking, he added his own title based on the provenance of the document. He thus engaged in a real effort of bibliographic control and, when necessary, completed the record with a commentary, with missing first name, title of nobility or profession (*dignité*), membership in a religious order, nationality, etc. Very often, especially for Polish documents, he expanded or identified pseudonyms, cryptonyms, or anonymous authors.

Sometimes, especially for precious manuscripts, he added a note of evaluation. In the same way rare and precious books were indicated by stars or by the expressions “*liber rarus* [rare book],” “*perrarus* [very rare],” or “*rarissimus* [extremely rare].”

### **Bibliographic and reference services**

An information service for researchers in foreign countries was available through the publications of the library (for example bio-bibliographic dictionaries of Polish scholars) or through answers to oral or written questions – a true reference service.

Numerous periodicals (mostly German such as *Neue Zeitungen von Gelehrten Sachen* [=New Journals on Scholarly Subjects], *Pommerische Nachrichten von Gelehrten Sachen* [=Pomeranian Reports on Learned Subjects], *Critische Nachrichten* [= Critical Reports], *Nouvelle Bibliothèque Germanique* [= New Germanic Library], and *Schlesische Privilegierte Zeitung* [= Schlesian Privileged Journal]) published reports on the Załoski Library and science in Poland. The idea of this service is linked to the contacts Załoski established in Lorraine, notably Jacques Perard (who stayed in Szczecin in 1742) with whom he corresponded regularly until the Seven Years' War, sending him information about the intellectual life of the Republic.

Regular information about new works in the *Kurier Polski* [= Polish News] filled the role of a current Polish bibliography. Books sent to the Załoski were the object of criticism in the periodicals associated with the library. This initiative was conceived as “auto-transmissible”: The information on new works was to encourage publishers and authors to give spontaneously copies of their works to the Załoskis (what one could call today the phenomenon of synergy). New works came from publishers in all the cities of Poland: Wilno, Lwów, Lublin, Poczajów, Supraśl, Zamość, Poznań, Kalisz etc., from learned societies. Numerous writers from the Załoski circle donated part of their collections (such as Radziwill, Czartoryski, Sapieha, Antonina Zamoyska, the Jesuits of Lithuania, the Carmelites of Cracovia, etc.).

Załoski himself served as intermediary for the Polish bibliophiles for foreign acquisitions, since under the Saxon kings, bookstores did not reliably provide that service.

### **Collections of objects**

The library also possessed various curiosities. First off, the building of the Załoski Library is known to the inhabitants of Warsaw as “the House of Kings” (*Dom pod Królami*) because of the busts of the sovereigns of Poland which decorate its facade. André Załoski bought them in 1746 from the widow of the palatine of Lublin, Stanisław Chomentowski.

The gallery of sculptures and paintings were found in an annex constructed specially for this purpose. Other busts of kings and dignitaries of the Polish kingdom were housed there. In



addition, numerous busts and sculptures in relief as well as medallions of scholars decorated the principal reading room.

The *cabinet d'estampes* contained a large collection of engravings, mostly works of the principal European engravers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, more than 40,000 engravings of which only 13,500 were returned to Poland before the Second World War. This collection, as well as the collection of medals, was begun in 1731 with purchases made in Leipzig. One year afterwards Załuski writes in his *Programma Litterarium*: "I am collecting medals as well as 'kopersztychy' [engravings] that are Polish or connected with Poland."

As for maps, it was Bruzen de la Martinière, an inhabitant of the Hague, who gave Załuski the collecting bug. Załuski decided to buy in Amsterdam 60 giant maps that he planned to hang on the walls of his apartment. Załuski assembled an impressive collection of maps of Poland, "both ancient and geographic," ("tam veteris quam geographicarum"). The geographic collection was to serve in the elaboration of the *Maximum Lexicon Universale Historico-Polonicum* [= Great Universal Dictionary of the History of Poland], a work planned as early as 1732. It was intended to include among others the chapter "Topographium, veterem et recentiorum, Provinciarum, regionum Urbium, Oppidorum, montium, fluviorum et aliorum locorum insignium veteros sarmatiae et moderna Poloniae cum adjecta, situs, longitudinis, distantiae et qualitatis locorum specificatione "[= *Topography, ancient and more recent, of provinces, urban regions, towns, mountains, rivers, and other significant places of ancient Sarmatia and modern Poland, together with locations, longitudes, distances and descriptions of places]*" Lastly, Załuski prepared the work entitled *Polska w obszernych swoich wiadomościach skrócona* [= Brief Description of Poland, in Several Volumes], of which the first part is "Topographic and civil description of Poland" (in Polish: "Opisanie Polski topograficzne i cywilne"), including the study of the maps of Poland, ancient Polish topographic places, rivers, bodies of water, and mountains.

As if these collections were not sufficient, the Załuski also housed a natural history museum with its herbaria and "other things from the mineral, animal and vegetable kingdoms [in Latin]," and mathematical instruments – geometric, physical, and astronomical. Collected principally by André, these objects did not have the approval of Joseph who tried to reclaim the rooms where the collection was housed to use them for books. The instruments were much appreciated as teaching tools; in 1752 it was suggested that they be used at the school for military engineers.

From the time when the Palace was purchased, André Załuski planned to install "ad instar observatorii [some sort of observatories]" in the attic, and on June 6, 1761 "well-born ladies and noblemen" were able to observe the passage of Venus across the sun guided by the Jesuit Father Luskin, trained in astronomy in Vienna and the owner of precision astronomical instruments bought in Paris.

## Personnel

When the Załuski brothers began organizing their public library, they had at their disposal the model of foreign libraries and numerous manuals. This is why one finds in the organization of jobs, the rules for the duties of librarians, as well as in the required levels of competence, principles valid in other European libraries.

In his letters to Joseph, his elder brother André recommended several times (1748-1754)

that the positions should be occupied by three librarians (“bibliotekariusz”) and two “adjutants [assistants].” The manager of the library was called a “Prefect”; this position existed from 1751. Previously the directors of the library had the title “Secretary” or “referendarz koronny” (representative of the crown). Later, after the death of Joseph (1774), the directors were called “curators.”

In 1746, when the library already owned 180,000 volumes, the personnel proved insufficient; the processing backlog was accumulating, given the rapid growth of the collection, the most rapid among the great European libraries. In comparison, the imperial library of Vienna, with a smaller collection than the Załuski, employed in 1774 fourteen librarians. In the best case in Warsaw there were seven librarians.

The polyglot Joseph possessed an uncommon memory. He said: “I know ten languages, Latin, Polish, French, Italian, German ..., I understand all English, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and Czech books. A certain foreign emissary has thus said of me: ‘Monsignor Załuski could be the interpreter of the Tower of Babel.’” To this list should be added Greek and Hebrew. As far as the library personnel, the Załuskis were very demanding but at the same time made sure that their personnel perfected their knowledge abroad. Familiarity with languages, knowledge of several disciplines and classical literature, poetry writing, musical and artistic culture (notably in painting), a good memory, professional knowledge, an open mind, ability to perfect professional skills, such were the principal qualities required.

The most important among them was Janocki who had spent 40 years at the library; Joseph had brought him from Dresden in 1745. In 1751 André had financed a sojourn in Dresden for him “that he might be a perfect librarian.” It was Janocki who wrote the biography of Joseph Załuski and who published several bibliographic works based on the library’s collection.

### **The death of Joseph Załuski in 1774 and the Library from 1774-1795**

In October 1767 Nicolas Repnin, the Russian ambassador to Poland, unhappy with the opposition and their anti-Russian tendencies, had several members of the Senate removed, among them Joseph Załuski. The latter was imprisoned from 1767 to 1773, and died the following year in Warsaw.

Despite his imprisonment, for some years Załuski was exceptionally intellectually active in the publication of literary and scientific works: the history of his family, bibliographies and encyclopedias, but also poems, dramas and autobiographical narratives. From Kaluga in Russia, he continued to manage “his” library: among his cares were daily problems, roof repairs, cataloguing, the work and behavior of the librarians. One of them was strongly reprimanded by Załuski for his abuse of alcohol and forcefully urged to devote more effort to helping develop the catalogue. Załuski especially advised concern with fire prevention: “fire, fire, the pumps should always be ready and in good working condition.” He also watched over the completion of projects begun before his imprisonment. In his letters he requested that all the bills of the book agents and foreign bookstores be paid – those in Amsterdam, Berlin, Leipzig, Wrocław. (\*)

In his letter addressed to King Stanislas in August of January 1774, Załuski defended the idea of founding an academy. At the same time he declared himself ready to donate the collections of his library, which had meanwhile been passed on to the Jesuits for a public use, to the academy in perpetuity. After his death the library, by public demand, came under the personal protection of the king. Stanislas August gave the position of director to Count Ignacy

Potocki, as well as the Komisja Edukacji Narodowej [National Education Commission]. In fact, the library from that time on was under the authority of that national institution.

### **Influence of the library**

Up to our time, the role that the Załuski Library played in Polish cultural and scientific life has been underestimated. It created a true intellectual milieu by attracting not only the learned but also all those interested in the history of Poland, its literature and its culture.

Thanks to numerous emissaries and foreign correspondents, the library created real scientific networks. The information agency of Antoine Ignace Gibes, founded in the 1740s, was in operation until 1756. Gibes received scientific news which was edited afterwards in Warsaw, then transmitted by post horse to the provinces; he exchanged publications and even money. This is why Załuski entrusted to him the administration of the Association of Scholars, a society whose task was to send for “interesting works published abroad.” The bookseller Michel Gröll had a card catalogue (“kantor”) of addresses and sales firms, the reviews *Extraordinary News of Warsaw* (*Warszawskie Ekstraordynaryjne Wiadomości*), *Polish News* (in French) and bookselling agencies not only in Poland but abroad. In 1764 Załuski entrusted Gröll with the auction at the library.

The idea of a public library accessible to all was propagated throughout Poland by the Załuskis. Numerous private collections owned by magnates were made public by the second half of the eighteenth century (Radziwiłł, Sapieha). In 1754 Sierakowski gave to the Jesuit college in Przemyśl his own library, financed the construction of the library building and the post of a librarian with the condition that it be open to the public. In 1781 King Stanislas Auguste decided to make his collection of books accessible to the Republic. In 1790, a decree of the Komisja Edukacji Narodowej stipulated that the libraries of the national schools of Cracow and Wilno be open to the public. One year later that same KEN spoke of the necessity of creating public libraries in the cities. In addition, numerous ecclesiastical and academic libraries and archive collections belonging to magnates imitated the functioning and arrangement of the Załuski library.

The learned of Załuski’s circle, through their publications, requests for documentation, and the library’s collections helped the spread of the modernization of education. The schools organized their own collections and used the collection of the Załuski: mathematical and physical instruments, globes, etc. Numerous school manuals were based on the library’s sources.

For some twenty years the library was the center of culture and scientific thought in the liberal spirit. After the death of André the Jesuits took over the administration and control of the library. With their arrival Joseph began to exclude some troublesome documents.

In his research, Kozłowski presents an impressive list of the Library’s activities which had an impact on the development of science in Poland. It suffices to emphasize the initiation of the depository copy, of a national bibliography, of published catalogues of printed works and manuscripts, as well as the Library’s activities in publishing and printing and documentary research for Polish and foreign patrons.

### **The Dispersion of the collection**

While the Załuski brothers were still alive, some books were given away or sold at

auction, with their consent. In the 50 years of its existence, the library lost several volumes destroyed by humidity or stolen. These losses can be evaluated at some 15,000 to 20,000 volumes.

**What became of that collection, its sad fate, was in total contradiction with the will of Joseph Załuski: “I forbid the division, sale, or dispersion... of my library.”**

The Załuski library, “transferred” to St. Petersburg as spoils of war, served as the basis for the Imperial Public Library (opened in 1814). During successive moves, many books were destroyed or lost. According to the historian Joachim Lelewel the Załuski’s books “could be bought at Grodno by the basket” (korzec=60 volumes). It seems that 30,000 volumes were saved from pillaging by scholars (Tadeusz Czacki, Joachim Chreptowicz).

In the same way in St. Petersburg the Załuski’s books disappeared or were dispersed. Several thousand rotted in caves. Many were sold at auction: others were scattered in other Russian libraries.

Some parts of the Załuski collection came back to Poland on three separate dates: 1842, 1863, and after the peace treaty with the Soviets between 1923 and 1935, after Poland had regained its independence at the end of the First World War.

It is difficult to estimate precisely the number of volumes which were returned since these restitutions also included documents whose provenance were other Polish collections. According to Kozłowski about 50,000 of the Załuski’s books were returned in all. (\*) After the twentieth century restitution, books from the Załuski library formed the nucleus of the Polish National Library founded by presidential decree on February 24, 1928.

The Nazi aberration caused around sixteen million volumes to disappear in Poland: 70 to 80% of libraries were carefully burned by the Brandkommandos, soldiers of fire whose mission and specialty were to burn Warsaw. In October 1944, the Krasieński library thus disappeared with all the books and manuscripts from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, together with the Rapperswil collection, with its considerable holdings on the history of the country that emigres had laboriously accumulated in Switzerland until the independence of Poland in 1918 had allowed them to install it in their own country. (\*\*)

The collection of the Załuski library restituted by the Soviets suffered the same fate at the end of the Second World War. Some 170,000 volumes of the National Library were moved by the order and under the protection of German officers to a “safe place,” but the Nazi troops burned them after the Insurrection of Warsaw, in October 1944. Thus, unfortunately, the restituted portion of the Załuski collection burned almost entirely.

Certain treasures were miraculously spared (an example of a saved treasure – “Rocznik Świętokrzyski [= *Świętokrzyski Annual*”). From time to time, documents from the Załuski Library, “Zalusiana,” appear in auctions.

### **Sources of reconstruction**

Because of the consequences of this strange and tragic fate, it is difficult to reconstruct a complete picture of the Załuski collection and the functioning of the library. Too many documents, letters, archival sources, catalogues and inventories have been lost forever. Nonetheless a partial picture can be reconstructed thanks to secondary documents which have preserved the information originally found in the primary sources, among them the documents

presented at the 1933 exposition at the National Library in Warsaw, and historical and biographical works published between the two World Wars.

However, several letters of Joseph Załuski remain of which only a small part have been published. Jan Kozłowski, the Polish historian of science and libraries, did remarkable research on the Załuski Library and at the time [the 1980s] made reference to 8500 letters still preserved in Warsaw. Letters addressed to Załuski often bear annotations which permit a glimpse of his dialogue and his reactions “in the heat of the moment,” even if his responses are rarer today than letters addressed to him. A book by Kozłowski using numerous sources scattered throughout Poland and the rest of Europe has been announced for publication by the National Library in Warsaw.

*Special thanks to Jan Kozłowski and Halina Tchórzewska-Kabata for information and documents.*

## Notes

### La Lorraine (1763-1742)

(\*) Załuski's stay in Lunéville: P. Boyé. *La cour polonaise de Lunéville (1737-1766)* [=The Polish Court of Lunéville (1737-1766)]. Nancy: 1926 ; Same author. *Le petit fonds Załuski de La Bibliothèque publique de Nancy* [=The small Załuski collection in the Nancy Public Library]. *Bulletin of the Archeological Society of Lorraine*. 1920 ; Maria Manteufflowa. *Księgozbiór Józefa Załuskiego w Lotaryngii i jego droga do Polski* [=The Library of Joseph Załuski in Lorraine and Poland], *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej* [Annual of the National Library] 1966; Stefan Gaber. *Polacy na dworze Stanisława Leszczyńskiego w Lunéville w latach 1737-1766* [=Poles at the castle of Stanislaw Leszczyński in Lunéville in the years 1737-1766]. Częstochowa:1998. (References from Jan Kozłowski).

### Poland and Warsaw

(\*) Information about the opening of the library In: Radliński, Jakub Paweł. *Corona urbis and orbis, gloria and gemma Regni Poloniae universitatis scientiarum, publica, amplissima, & celeberrima Bibliotheca Załusciana ... illustrata* [Crown of the city and the globe, glory and jewel of the kingdom of Poland, the public, most distinguished, most celebrated Załuski Library of all the sciences... illustrated] ... Cracovia: 1748. Copy preserved in the National Library of Warsaw.

### The Daniłowiczowski Palace and its collections

(\*) Bernouilli, Johann. *Reisen durch Brandenburg, Pommern, Preusses, Curland, Russland und Poland in der Jahren 1777 und 1778* [Travels through Brandenburg, Pomerania, Prussia, Curland, Russia, and Poland in the years 1777 and 1778]. Leipzig: 1779-1780. Published in Polish In: : *Polska stanisławowska w oczach cudzoziemców.* [=Poland in the time of Stanislas in the eyes of foreigners.] Ed. Waclaw Zawadzki. Warszawa, 1963.

### Disciplines and their classification

(\*) Konopczyński's classification (1787-) at the Załuski Library

(Source: Kozłowski, after Łodyński and Polska Stanisławowska)

Religion	Thought	Memory	Imagination	Language
Bible Biblical commentary Holy Fathers Councils Theologians Prophets Ascetics Preachers Rites	Physics Metaphysics Ethics Logic Politics Droit Mathematics Medecine Mechanics Military architecture Economics Astronomy	Sciences associated with history:  Chronology Genealogy Geography Numismatics Heraldry  History:  Kings States Peoples Scholars	Poetry Painting and sculpture Civil architecture Mythology Music	Grammar Rhetoric Poetics Eloquence Letters Lexicography Discourse Criticism

### **The Death of Joseph Załuski in 1774 and the Library 1774-1795**

(\*) Source: Załuski's letters from Kaluga, analyzed by S. Roszak. *Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Narodowej* [= Information Bulletin of the National Library]. 1997, no. 4.

### **Dispersion of the collection**

(\*) Before the end of the Załuski, its collection of manuscripts was estimated at 15000, 18000, and even 20000 volumes and contained many treasures. After the underhanded transactions of the First World War, Poland would eventually receive only 11,000 volumes in of the 15,000 first claimed. Since the manuscripts of the Załuski remaining in St. Petersburg can be identified by the letter "Z" that Russian librarians included in the call number, researchers have recently found 200 manuscripts, among them 100 French ones: mostly illuminated manuscripts, also listed in the catalogue of Gustave Bertrand: « Catalogue des manuscrits français à la Bibliothèque de Saint Petersburg » [= *Catalogue of the French manuscripts in the S. Petersburg Library*] (*Revue des Sociétés Savantes*. Novembre - Décembre 1873).. The catalogues of the manuscripts are currently being restored by the Manuscript Department of the National Library of Warsaw.

(\*\*) Polastron, Lucien. *Livres en feu. Histoire de la destruction sans fin des bibliothèques.* [= *Books on fire: History of the endless destruction of libraries*]. Paris 2004. p. 223-224.

### **Selected References.**

Załuski Library

Chronological references: "Kalendarium dziejów Biblioteki Załuskich [= *Historical calendar of the Załuski Library*]". *Biuletyn. Informacyjny Biblioteki Narodowej*. 1997, no. 4, p. 3-4.

Kozłowski, Jan. *Skice o dziejach Biblioteki Załuskich [= Sketches on the history of the Załuski Library]*. Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1986.

Kozłowski, Jan. *Mater et Magistra. Biblioteka Załuskich w latach 1742-1774 [= Mother and Mistress: The Załuski Library in the years 1742-1774 ]* (provisional title, forthcoming).

250. rocznica otwarcia w Warszawie Biblioteki Załuskich [= *250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inauguration of the Załuski Library*]. Special issue. *Biuletyn. Informacyjny Narodowej*. 1997, no. 4. 41 p. Numerous bibliographic references in each article.

*Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej* 33/34 [= *National Library Annual*]. Warsaw 2001.

Biblioteka Załuskich. *Corona urbis et orbis [= The Załuski Library: Crown of the city and of the globe]*. Published on the occasion of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inauguration of the Załuski Library. National Library of Warsaw. Warszawa, 1997.

Biblioteka publiczna Załuskich [= *The Załuski Public Library*] (1747-1794)]. In: *Bibliographia literatury polskiej "Nowy Korbut"* [The "Nowy Korbut" Bibliography of Polish Literature]. Vol. 4. Oświecenie [= *The Enlightenment*]. Warszawa, 1966. p. 99-102, 524; continued in vol. 6, cz 2, 1972, p. 22-23.

## **History of Libraries in Poland**

Bieńkowska, Barbara and Chamerska, Halina. *Tysiąc lat książki i bibliotek w Polsce [= A Thousand years of books and libraries in Poland]*. Wrocław 1992.

Kosmanowa, Bogumiła. "Przegląd badań nad historią bibliotek w Polsce [= *Overview of research about the history of Poland*]". *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej* 1980, p. 47-78, sum., 118 ref. bibliogr.

Kubow, Stefan. "Publications on the history of books and libraries in Poland, 1981-1988". *Libraries and Culture*. 1990 (25), no. 1, p. 48-72.

Kubow, Stefan. "Projects and results in library history research performed in Poland." Paper presented at the 50<sup>th</sup> IFLA Conference, Nairobi, 1984.

Paszkievicz, Urszula. *Bibliografia inwentarzy i katalogów księgozbiorów polskich i założonych w Polsce do 1939 [= Bibliography of catalogues and inventories of Polish libraries before 1939]*. Warszawa, 1990, 2 vol. (286, 204 p.). Contains: Institutional libraries; Public libraries.

## Some Statistics

### Collections of printed works and manuscripts in the Żaluski Library by language (after Kozłowski)

#### Printed Works

Latin	39%
French	28%
German	18%
Italian	6%
English	2%
Greek	3%
Polish	2%
Flemish	1%
Spanish	1%

#### Manuscripts

Latin	> 50%
German	> 10%
French	> 10%
Multilingual	> 10%
Polish	ca. 10%
Italian	ca. 2.5%
Other	ca. 1.5%

### Manuscripts by discipline

(According to the classification of the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, after Kozłowski)

Theology	34.9%	Classics	0.5%
History	11.3%	Natural history	0.4%
Law	9.7%	Physics	0.3%
Philosophy	8.1%	Calligraphy	0.2%
Polygraphy	7.5%	Liberal arts	0.1%
Poetry	6.4%		
Rhetoric	5.0%		
Medicine	3.9%		
History of literature	3.8%		
Mathematics	3.5%		
Music	1.8%		
Linguistics	1.5%		
Chemistry	0.6%		
Technology	0.5%		

### Overview of the current state of the Żaluski collections in Polish libraries

#### Printed works

§	12,000 - Library of the University of Warsaw
§	7,000-8,000 - National Library

Isolated printed works in the majority of large public or private libraries, for example

§	Public, Seminary (Warsaw)
§	Jagiellońska Library (Cracow)



§ Ossolineum, Library of the University of Wrocław (Wrocław)

Manuscripts

§ 2000 - National Library of Warsaw

§ 46 AGAD

Isolated manuscripts in these libraries:

§ Czartoryski, Jagiellońska (Cracow), Ossolineum (Wrocław)

Correspondence

§ 8,500 letters of Joseph Zaluski (from the period 1724-1773) - National Library