

Aleksandra Barwicka-Makula

ORCID: 0000-0001-8053-5694

Paweł Duda

ORCID: 0000-0002-8186-7145

Dariusz Rolnik

ORCID: 0000-0002-7649-3142

Aleksandra Skrzypietz

ORCID: 0000-0003-1504-9950
University of Silesia in Katowice

Introduction

We are pleased to present this new issue of the *Ignatianum Philosophical Yearbook*, largely devoted to diplomacy in the early modern period. The focus is directed both to professional diplomats in the service of European states—ambassadors, envoys extraordinary, residents, and legate secretaries—and to informal emissaries of rulers and members of their information networks. The articles gathered in this volume highlight the role of the diplomatic “actor” or adopt comparative and prosopographical perspectives.

Henryk Litwin demonstrates that the activities of ten successive papal nuncios in their dealings with King Sigismund III must be understood within a complex set of circumstances. Particular attention is paid to the need for papal diplomats to balance not only the shifting dynamics of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth’s internal affairs, the changing configuration of international politics, and the evolving relationship between

the Commonwealth and the Holy See, but also the monarch's personality, his dynastic concerns, and his expectations vis-à-vis the papacy.

The author rightly observes that, in the absence of a permanent ambassador to the Papal States, Sigismund III regarded the nuncios as potential representatives of his interests in Rome. He argues that the character of the relationship between the monarch and the papal diplomat was positively influenced by the nuncio's aristocratic background, diplomatic experience, and standing within the Curia. Factors such as the nuncio's age, his ability to win the favor of Queen Constance, and his ties with influential regalists were likewise of considerable importance. The type of bond forged between the king and the Holy See's permanent representative was reflected in the weekly Sunday audiences, which could take on either a formal or a more familiar character.

Aleksandra Barwicka-Makula introduces the little-known figure of Johann Branner, a courtier in the service of Archduchess Maria of Bavaria. Formally, he served as chamberlain to the widow of Charles of Styria, yet his mistress also employed him in dynastic dealings with Sigismund III and the Bavarian Wittelsbachs. The author examines Branner's mission to Poland in March 1598, which aimed to maintain a correspondence between the Styrian and Polish courts and to preserve close family ties between Maria of Bavaria and Sigismund following the death of his first wife, Anna of Austria, the Archduchess's daughter. The article offers valuable insights into the personnel engaged in diplomatic activity at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Paweł Tyszka examines the functioning of Chancellor and Grand Hetman of the Crown Jan Zamoyski's network of contacts in the Moldavian principality between 1595 and 1605. He argues that Zamoyski succeeded in establishing a permanent diplomatic and intelligence outpost at the court in Suceava/Iași. The dependent hospodar Ieremia Movilă became an intermediary in diplomatic contacts between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Ottoman Empire, and the Crimean Khanate. He also oversaw royal or chancellery envoys traveling on diplomatic missions to Turkey or Crimea. His court functioned as a hub for the exchange of official correspondence along the Warsaw/Zamość-Istanbul/Bakhchisarai route. It was here that Polish representatives conducted negotiations with envoys of the sultan or the khan. The author assesses the informational value of the letters addressed to Jan Zamoyski by Ieremia and Simion Movilă, as well as by Luca Stroic. Of particular note is Stroic's correspondence with Zamoyski, which has hitherto not been subjected to detailed scholarly analysis. In this respect, Paweł Tyszka's article offers a valuable contribution.

Paweł Duda examines the logistical dimension of papal nuncios' missions to the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, focusing on the first half of the seventeenth century. He observes that, despite the existence of established procedures governing the journeys of papal diplomats—such as the prior designation of routes, the arrangement of lodging, and the preparation of letters of recommendation—the stretch of road between Vienna and Krakow, passing through the Moravian–Silesian borderlands and known as the *via ordinaria di Moravia*, was regarded as particularly difficult to traverse. This assessment is corroborated by the dispatches of successive nuncios to the Secretariat of State. The analysis of the correspondence reveals both objective difficulties—such as poor road conditions, inadequate lodging, adverse weather, lurking dangers including a high risk of robbery, and the necessity of traveling amid complex political circumstances or ongoing military operations—and the subjective experiences of the travelers, including fear and fatigue.

Andrzej Korytko presents the diplomatic service of members of the moderately wealthy noble Dzierżek family, of the Nieczuja coat of arms, who leveraged their linguistic skills to enter the world of politics. He focuses on their missions to the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate, while also recounting the colorful fates of Krzysztof Dzierżek and his nephews Prandota and Krzysztof the Younger, known as “interpreter of Arabic to His Majesty the King.” Korytko demonstrates that, despite the numerous dangers the Dzierżeks faced during their embassies to Turkey and Crimea, they did not abandon diplomatic service, seeing it as a lucrative occupation.

Sławomir Augustowicz prepared a critical edition of Adam Styla's memorial, preserved in the collections of the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin-Dahlem, concerning the planned Brandenburg embassy to Crimea in 1659. The author provides a comprehensive account of the circumstances surrounding the creation of the document. The mission was intended to secure the release of the inhabitants of the Duchy of Prussia taken captive during the Tatar raid on the region in October 1656. The proposed embassy arose in response to the dispatch of Khan Mehmed IV Giray's representative, Meydan Ghazi Mirza, to Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg. Although there is no source evidence confirming that the Brandenburg mission was actually carried out, the memorial presented constitutes an interesting contribution to our knowledge of diplomatic contacts between the Crimean Khanate and the Prussian Hohenzollern state.

Piotr Kroll analyzes the organization of the Cossack Hetmanate's diplomatic service during the rule of Petro Doroshenko (1665–1676).

He observes that many principles established during the time of Bohdan Khmelnytsky—such as entrusting important missions to individuals of high standing within the Cossack seniority—remained in force. Certain innovations, however, emerged during the period under study, including the institution of residents at the sultan's court. Overall, the diplomatic apparatus was expanded in response to Ukraine's precarious geopolitical situation and the necessity of navigating between stronger neighboring powers. Kroll also provides a detailed characterization of the diplomatic personnel serving Doroshenko, with particular attention to the career of Ostafi Astamata Ginowski.

Aleksandra Skrzypietz examines the activities of French diplomats—Bishop of Marseille Toussaint de Forbin Janson and François, Marquis de Béthune, both extraordinary ambassadors—during the early years of John III Sobieski's reign. The dual representation of Louis XIV at the royal court aimed to bring about a Polish–French treaty directed against Emperor Leopold I of the Habsburgs and his ally, Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg. Although the Sun King's diplomats ultimately succeeded in securing the signing of the alliance at Jaworów, its provisions were never implemented. The author reveals the behind-the-scenes dynamics of the diplomatic game between Versailles and Warsaw, noting that the French diplomats' efforts to achieve the primary objective of their mission were hindered by mutual animosities. Frequent disputes over precedence, fierce competition for the favor of their sovereign, as well as maneuvering to gain personal advantage, distorted their proper assessment of the situation. Bishop of Marseille Toussaint de Forbin Janson sought a cardinal's hat, while François Gaston de Béthune—married to Louise Maria de La Grange d'Arquien and the queen's brother-in-law—aspired to personal advancement and fortune.

Maciej Sawicki offers a biographical sketch and reconstructs the career of Philip Plantamour—a French Huguenot who initially found employment in the English and later the Saxon diplomatic service. For many years, he served as secretary to the English envoy George Stepney in Berlin, sending reports to London with a focus on the political situation of the German states. He also described court ceremonies in the Hohenzollern territories. Drawing on a variety of sources, primarily official documents including newspapers and pamphlets, the author reflects on the informational value of Plantamour's dispatches concerning the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Barbara Krysztopa-Czupryńska examines the issue of professionalism among British diplomats accredited to the Dresden–Warsaw court

of the Wettins in the first half of the eighteenth century. Drawing on the correspondence of the envoys and their reports sent to London, she concludes that most diplomats exhibited a relatively high level of competence necessary for conducting effective policy, including education and proficiency in foreign languages. A notable limitation, however, was their limited knowledge of the Polish language and the constitutional realities of the Commonwealth. Extraordinary envoys dispatched to the Dresden–Warsaw posting were generally not specialists in Central and Eastern European affairs; as a result, their influence on events in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth was modest. Nevertheless, they were able to function effectively as observers and reliable informants for the British government.

Adam Perlakowski examines the diplomatic responses to a political scandal involving the Prussian forces' abduction of Aleksander Józef Sułkowski, a former favorite of the ruler of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and Saxony, Augustus III Wettin. Sułkowski, the former prime minister, was subsequently imprisoned in the fortress of Głogów for over a year. His captivity, as a prince of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, coincided with the Seven Years' War, in which the opposing sides were Empress Maria Theresa of Austria and King Frederick II of Prussia. The Habsburg diplomacy was thus invested in securing the prince's release, cooperating on this matter with the French diplomatic service. However, the interventions of Sternberg, supported by François Michel Durand de Distroff, extraordinary envoy of Louis XV, met with complete inaction from Augustus III. The author considers the reasons behind the Polish king and Saxon elector's indifferent stance toward their former ally.

Dariusz Rolnik offers a detailed analysis of the correspondence of Augustyn Deboli, envoy of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth in Saint Petersburg, addressed to King Stanisław August Poniatowski and Ignacy Potocki. According to the author, these letters contained not only accurate assessments of the domestic situation and the international position of the Commonwealth during the Great Sejm (1788–1792) but also pointed warnings directed to the members of the ruling elite. The Polish diplomat urged internal unity, cautioned against underestimating Russia's potential, and warned against overestimating prospective allies. He advocated for comprehensive reforms of the state, to be implemented without unnecessary delay, recognizing that the favorable circumstances arising from Russia's engagement in war with the Ottoman Empire would not last long and would not recur in the near future. The article also provides an evaluation of Deboli's abilities as a diplomat.

Dominika Rychel-Mantur examines the perspective of the Napoleonic resident Jean-Charles Serra regarding the financial state of the Duchy of Warsaw in 1808. The analysis is based on the diplomat's official correspondence, both published and manuscript sources. Serry's dispatches did not provide a reliable reflection of the Duchy's financial situation and did not present the actions of the state administration—namely, the Minister of Revenue and Treasury and the Council of State—impartially; rather, they served the ambassador as a tool of self-promotion. Consequently, the article offers an insightful contribution, shedding light on the workings of budgetary decision-making, the functioning of the French residency in the Duchy of Warsaw, and Serry's personal ambitions.

In the first article of the *Varia* section, Fr. Jan Szczepaniak presents the history of the Latin-rite Catholic Church in the Kyiv archdeaconry between 1798 and 1830. Drawing on extensive archival material, he describes the deanery and parish structures as well as the development of the network of churches. The analysis demonstrates that, despite restrictions imposed by the Russian authorities, the Latin Church in the Kyiv governorate experienced dynamic growth, with its administrative organization and pastoral infrastructure significantly strengthened during this period.

In the second article, Tomasz Śmigła examines the role of modern digital tools in the work of historians and cultural scholars, emphasizing their importance as a complement to traditional humanistic methods. The author proposes his own model for classifying these tools into three categories: automation, aggregation, and augmentation. The application of this framework is illustrated through the edition of the seventeenth-century manuscripts *Historiae Sinarum Imperii* by Tomasz Dunin Szpot, S.J., employing tools such as Transkribus and Classical Text Editor. The analysis also considers the specific nature of the sources—Latin manuscripts—and the technical limitations arising from them.

The issue concludes with reviews of two works: Jakub Śliwak's review of the Polish edition of Onora O'Neill's, *A Philosopher Looks at Digital Communication* (*Okiem filozofa. Komunikacja cyfrowa*, translated by Joanna Frydrych. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2024), and Wojciech Arndt's review of the volume *Etyka współczesna*, ed. Anna Bugajska and Piotr Świercz, in the series *Słowniki Społeczne*, ed. Wit Pasierbek and Bogdan Szlachta, vol. XV (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ignatianum w Krakowie, 2024).