

MONOGRAPH

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Customs and Culture in Poland under the Last Saxon King. The major texts of *Opis obyczajów za panowania Augusta III* by father Jędrzej Kitowicz, 1728-1804

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Jędrzej Kitowicz was a parish priest in central Poland with a military and worldly past. In his later years, after putting the affairs of his parish in order, he composed a colorful chronicle of all aspects and walks of life under King August III. He seems to have written mostly from memory, creating in the process the most complete record that exists of society in eighteenth-century Poland. A man with omnivorous tastes, a keen sense of observation, and a wry—at times bawdy—sense of humor, Kitowicz's realistic and robust literary technique has been compared in its earthiness and evocativeness to Flemish genre painting. A noteworthy example of eighteenth-century writing and narrative talent, his *Opis* reveals an astounding visual memory and a modern ethnographer's eye for material culture.

The present book consists of fifty-one chapters, including all of the most celebrated ones, from Father Kitowicz's *Opis*, complete with a comprehensive introduction. Topics include religious beliefs, customs and institutions, child-rearing, education, the judiciary and the military. Particularly vivid are the descriptions of the lives of the nobility, ranging from cooking through men's and women's wear to household entertainments and drinking habits. A commentary by the editor introduces each chapter.

From the publisher's website: <http://ceupress.com/book/customs-and-culture-polan...>

Table of Contents

Preface.

## Glossary of Commonly Used Terms

Jędrzej Kitowicz: To the Reader

### I. Religious Beliefs and Institutions of Piety

1. Religious Denominations in Poland
2. On Piety
3. The Hospital of the Baby Jesus
4. The Maiden Canonesses

### II. Religious Customs and Ceremonies

5. Manger Scenes
6. Floral Sunday
7. Ash Wednesday. Dark Matins
8. The Passion Service and the Flagellants
9. Easter Processions and the Entombment Ceremony
10. The Resurrection Procession and Corpus Christi Procession
11. Easter Monday and St. John's Eve

### III. Child-Rearing and Early Education

12. Child-Rearing
13. The Education of Children Past the Age of Seven
14. Public Schools
15. On Student Privileges
16. How Dąbrowski Lost His Head

### IV. Legislature and the Judiciary

17. On the Sejms
18. Eating and Drinking at the Sejmiks. Vetting Delegates
19. The Marshal's Courts
20. On Torture
21. The Crown Tribunals
22. The Singlesticks Circle
23. Deputival Honors and Parades
24. The Conclusion of the Tribunals
25. The Radom Commission

### V. The Military

26. The Crown Foot Guard
27. The Company Circle
28. The Company Deputation for Tax Collection
29. The March of the Hussar and Armored Companies
30. Foreign-Style Regiments

31. The Hetmans
32. The Sich and the Haidamaks
33. On Orders

#### VI. Lives and Entertainments of the Nobility

34. Old-Fashioned Cookery
35. New-Fashioned Cookery
36. Noble Tables and Banquets
37. On the Potato
38. Of Beds and Bedding
39. On Noble Palaces and Homes
40. On Costume or Dress
41. Women's Wear: Headgear, Mantles, and Hoop Skirts
42. Of Snuff and Snuff Boxes
43. Of Bags and Watches, Rings and Pins
44. Household Entertainments
45. Of Carnivals and Kuligs
46. Masked Balls
47. Of Drinks and Drinking
48. On the More Famous Drunkards
49. Of Carriages and Conveyances
50. Public Convocations

#### VII. Peasant Life

51. On Peasant Customs

Appendix: Reading Kitowicz in Context

Appendix: List of Texts Not Included