

## INTRODUCTION

The present volume of *Wiek Oświecenia* is the result of collaboration between scholars from two academic societies: Società Italiana di Studi sul Secolo Diciottesimo (Italian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies) and the Polish Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies. Its primary aim is to offer a broad panorama of research on the eighteenth century conducted in Italy and Poland, highlighting both the richness and diversity of research topics as well as methodological approaches.

We envisioned this issue of our journal as a meeting ground for scholars from both countries, representing different disciplines, methodological frameworks, and research interests. In a sense, it pays homage to the eighteenth-century ideal of the *république des lettres*, which championed the free exchange of ideas among intellectuals. To best reflect the actual state of research in both countries, we deliberately refrained from defining a specific theme for this volume. Instead, we allowed contributors to select topics that genuinely represent their ongoing inquiries. The result is a collection of works addressing a wide array of subjects – some with a more strictly historiographical approach, others adopting a detailed historical perspective through case studies.

The contributions in this volume span political history, the history of ideas, philological inquiries, broadly defined cultural history, and even the history of cuisine. They not only illustrate diverse research problems but also showcase different methodological approaches and, most importantly, various perspectives on the eighteenth century. This volume does not aim to provide an exhaustive picture; rather, it marks specific points on the map of eighteenth-century studies in both countries. Nonetheless, this preliminary survey demonstrates the vitality and significance of contemporary scholarly investigations in Italy and Poland.

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