

Apprenticeship and Journeyman Years

Let there be war, so that I may distinguish myself in it.

Diary, 15 April 1809



1 The Fist, Rod, and Cane, or Education

In accordance with aristocratic custom, young Athanasius began his education at home in Chobienice, under the supervision of a private tutor.¹ His first teacher was Fr. Marcin Pluciński, a violent and unpleasant man ('a tall and strong man with an irascible temperament, who taught us by the rod and cane'), although, as Raczyński later acknowledged, he was well-versed in history, geography and especially Latin. Indeed, his qualifications must have been strong, or at least sufficient – and in early nineteenth-century Poland, it was not at all easy to find a good private tutor in the provinces – since it was decided that he would live with Edward and Athanasius and continue their education at their father's palace in Rogalin. Providing the boys with a comprehensive, high-quality education was a matter of particular interest to Philip Raczyński. He himself took an active part in the boys' education and favoured didactic methods like those used by Father Pluciński: 'the fist, rod, and cane' (it is worth noting, however, that the direct involvement of a father in the upbringing of his sons – though this was encouraged by progressive pedagogical thinkers – was by no means common in Polish aristocratic circles in the

1 On home schooling in Polish manor houses in the nineteenth century, see: Adam Winiarz, "Polskie rodziny arystokratyczne i szlacheckie w XVIII i XIX wieku jako środowiska wychowawcze," in Juliusz Jundziłł, ed., *Wychowanie w rodzinie od starożytności po wiek XX* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Uczelnianej Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, 1994), 241–255; (1795–1918), in Krzysztof Jakubiak, Adam Winiarz, eds., *Nauczanie domowe dzieci polskich od XVIII do XX wieku. Zbiór studiów* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Akademii Bydgoskiej im. Kazimierza Wielkiego, 2004), 111–151; Krystyna Wróbel-Lipowa, "Nauka domowa możnowładztwa i ziemiaństwa polskiego w XIX w.," in Krzysztof Jakubiak, Adam Winiarz, eds., *Nauczanie domowe dzieci polskich od XVIII do XX wieku. Zbiór studiów* (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Akademii Bydgoskiej im. Kazimierza Wielkiego, 2004), 152–165; Anna Pachocka, *Dzieciństwo we dworze szlacheckim w I połowie XIX wieku* (Kraków: Avalon, 2009), 103–150.

early nineteenth century).² Other members of the palace household were also involved in the boys' education. These included both the leader of the estate's musical ensemble, Antoni Wajnert, a former court musician to the last King of Poland, Stanisław August, as well as a composer and talented flautist, who was brought to Rogalin to help in the education of the young Raczyński boys,³ and Johann Gommert, a member of the Rogalin Palace orchestra. In his memoirs, Athanasius describes this stage of his education as follows:

At eight o'clock in the morning, my lessons began with Father Pluciński – Latin, German, French (of which he had a poor knowledge), history, geography, and domestic law. These lessons lasted until ten o'clock. We rarely made it through them without a beating. Most often, these involved close-fisted blows to the neck, while at other times he [Father Pluciński] pulled my hair savagely, and then, in either case, he would proceed to use a cane, with which he beat me with ruthlessly. I had bruises all over my body, but I didn't dare show them to my father. He would have forbidden him, I think, to beat me with a cane and to punch me with his fist, but he would have accepted the use of a rod in their place, which I feared even more. I endured this treatment without complaint, but it filled my young heart with hatred and aversion toward the man who caused me such suffering. At ten o'clock there were violin lessons. I learned to play quite well, and they cost me no more than a few light raps over the knuckles. At eleven o'clock, I went to my father to read and translate Metastasio or Guarini. During these lessons, I usually knelt by my father's side, and whenever he deemed it necessary, he would pinch or pull my ear sharply. My ear sometimes bled for the sake of my education. Finally, the hour approached for my riding lessons, then dancing lessons, and the reading of religious texts aloud. Afterwards, there were marching drills under the watchful eye of my father, who had a fondness for all things military, and, in the afternoon, lessons with Father Pluciński, which were conducted much like those in the morning. Lastly, there were piano lessons.

It was undoubtedly an ambitious and comprehensive programme, relatively modern in its content and very similar in quality to that found in those homes

2 Anna Pachocka, *Dzieciństwo we dworze szlacheckim*, 47–49.

3 This information can be found in biographical notes on Wajnert written shortly after his death in 1850; See: Kazimierz Władysław Wójcicki, *Cmentarz Powązkowski pod Warszawą*, vol. 1 (Warszawa: S. Orgelbrand, 1855), 214–217; Maurycy Karasowski, *Rys historyczny opery polskiej poprzedzony szczegółowym poglądem na dzieje dramatycznej powszechnej* (Warszawa: M. Glücksberg, 1859), 201–203.

of the Polish aristocracy and landed gentry where education was valued.⁴ However, at no time, not even after many years had passed, did Athanasius ever describe his education at home as a positive experience. He considered the educational methods used to have been not only unpleasant but in his case also ineffective.⁵ In general, he did not have a high opinion of his own intellectual abilities and claimed that the pressure he felt from his father prevented even those abilities he possessed from fully developing:

I was endowed with a weak memory, so I made little progress in the learning of languages and history. Moreover, fear stifled my mental faculties. I was not a diligent student. I couldn't remember things and learned very little. At the age of 15, I wasn't very advanced. In general, my intellectual development progressed very slowly, so I was told over and over again that it was my destiny to be an idiot all my life. In the end, I became convinced of this.' Although corporal punishment's effectiveness had been questioned in pedagogical writings since the Enlightenment, it remained a frequently practiced educational 'tool' in the early nineteenth century.⁶

If Athanasius, who knew the realities of his day, was so adamant in his criticism of these violent teaching practices, they must have exceeded what was generally accepted even in those times. While Athanasius' memory or intellectual capabilities may not have been outstanding, he was endowed with something that he was as yet unable to recognize, a talent that would become a major asset: a keen eye and intuition in artistic matters that rarely failed him.

4 Adam Winiarz, "Nauczanie domowe dzieci polskich w dobie niewoli narodowej," 126–132; Krystyna Wróbel-Lipowa, "Nauka domowa możnowładztwa i ziemiaństwa polskiego w XIX w.," 153–156.

5 Whether due to a lack of talent, his own negligence, or the misconduct of his teachers, Raczyński made substantially less progress in his education than expected. A letter from Kazimierz from late 1806 confirms this. In it the grandfather writes to his grandson: 'You yourself know how much time you need to learn French, German, History and Geography well, and without these you cannot be useful to your country or yourself. Ce n'est pas votre faute, mon cher Athanase, que vous êtes encore trop arrièrè, en tout ce qu'il vous faut savoir, j'en conviens, il faut donc tacher a présent, work on what you are behind in;' from a letter from Kazimierz Raczyński to Athanasius of 10 December 1806, in: BR, Poznań, ms 1996, p. 72.

6 Irena Szybiak, "O rodzicielskich zaletach i wadach w oświeceniowej polskiej publicystyce edukacyjnej," in Krzysztof Jakubiak, Adam Winiarz, eds., *Nauczanie domowe dzieci polskich od XVIII do XX wieku. Zbiór studiów* (see note 1), 35–45, esp. 41; Anna Pachocka, *Dzieciństwo w dworze szlacheckim*, 143–145.

The humiliations Raczyński suffered as a boy would leave their mark on his future life. The recollections of them returned later during his bouts of depression. They also provided an explanation for some of his actions. In an entry in his diary dated 17 May 1836, written during a painful period when he was experiencing the collapse of his political career and family life, he wrote: 'When I was fourteen, I was often told that I was an ass. I blushed every time I saw this animal.' The unpleasant experiences Raczyński suffered during his childhood and youth seem to have been essential sources of some of his character traits. They had the positive effect of awakening his ambition and determination to pursue his goals. But they also led him to be extreme in his self-criticism.

After the death of Philip Raczyński in 1804, Edward and Athanasius were placed in the care of their grandfather Kazimierz. Following the last wishes of their father that the money from the lease of the family's landed estates be used for the 'education and upbringing of my sons,' the boys were sent away to begin their studies.⁷ This period can be reconstructed only cursorily. On 30 July 1804, Athanasius was enrolled in the Faculty of Law of the University of Frankfurt (Oder). A year later, on 8 June 1805, he passed his final exams.⁸ He then went with his brother to Berlin to continue his studies. During this time, he was placed under the care of Fr. Bernard Perreau, an Alsatian and one of the many clergymen who had fled post-revolutionary France and settled in the Prussian capital. He had been appointed as the boys' tutor by Philip and also had the trust of their grandfather.⁹ Kazimierz followed grandchildren's education closely from Warsaw, seeing to it that they were fully engaged in their studies. In a letter from February 1805, he wrote to Athanasius: 'As for the desire you expressed to come to Warsaw, this likewise cannot be fulfilled. In spite of the winter break, there is plenty to learn, during this time as well, even if no lessons are being held; for example, working on your French, improving your spelling, pronunciation, and style, it's better to put this time to use rather than spending it idly.'¹⁰ While in Berlin, Athanasius received support and backing

7 Such a condition was included by Philip Raczyński in his will of 21 August 1802. More precise instructions 'on how their [i.e. Edward's and Athanasius'] education shall be completed' were to be included in a codicil to the will, but were never written down. A copy of the will in Polish and German, prepared in January 1805, can be found in: APP, Majątek Rogalin, 58, pp. 21–45.

8 Documents on the matter: APP, Majątek Rogalin, 55, p. 2 and 3.

9 For more on Fr. Perreau see: Jacques Leviste, "Le testament de l'abbé Perreau," *Bulletin de la Société des Sciences Historiques et Naturelles de l'Yonne*, Années 1965 et 1966 (1967): 33–48.

10 Letter from Kazimierz Raczyński to Athanasius of 26 February, in: BR, Poznań, ms 1996, p. 58.

from Marianna Ożarowska, the widow of the Piotr Ożarowski, who was executed in Warsaw in 1794.

In the summer of 1806, several months after receiving the advice cited above from his grandfather, Athanasius left for Dresden to continue his studies, this time under the patronage of Princess Magdalena Lubomirska. In the Saxon capital, he studied outside an institutional setting under the guidance of a new tutor named Bordiga, who had received very detailed instructions on how the programme of study should be organized:

Every day Mr. Athanasius will be obliged to wake up at six o'clock in the morning, and, after saying his morning prayers and eating breakfast, from seven to eleven o'clock in the morning, he will attend lessons prepared by Mr. Bordiga, reading and memorizing the material in the assigned subjects. In the afternoon from three to six o'clock, further time will be spent studying and reading books selected by Mr. Bordiga. [...] The most necessary subjects for Athanasius are the German and French languages, history, and geography. Having studied these [subjects] for two years in Frankfurt and Berlin, as well as a few years at home, considerable progress should be made in them. So in these two languages, his attainments should be excellent, not only in terms of sentence construction but also in terms of pronunciation and style, it would be most useful for him to practice translating from one language to the other. Moreover, he should possess an exact knowledge of not only general history but also the history of particular states, as well as of geography. In addition to his lessons, he should read books related to the study of these subjects during his free time.¹¹

Political events forced Athanasius to leave Dresden in October 1806 and travel with his teacher Mr. Bordiga to Kraków. This date – which we could consider to be symbolic – marked the beginning of a new period in Raczyński's life. It was a period of growing maturity and growing independence, a time spent seeking adventure, consciously forming his identity, engaging in chaotic actions, and composing a life programme.

11 Instruction for Mr. Athanasius of 12 July 1806, in: BR, Poznań, ms 1996, p. 67.

2 'A Model Young Pole'

Who was Athanasius at that time? In his own words (as he stated a few years later), he was a 'model young Pole,' who, while not especially eager to work, was nevertheless enthusiastic about the national cause. 'My mind was uneasy, and the rebirth of Poland had awakened my 18-year-old imagination' (Fig. 11). The events taking place in the Prussian Partition following the entry of French troops in November 1806 inspired him to adopt a strong patriotic stance.¹² He was also influenced by the example of his older brother, who was fighting under Napoleon, and also by the patriotism of the youth of Galicja, many of whom, upon learning of Jan Henryk Dąbrowski and Józef Wybicki's call for Poles to take up arms and fight at Napoleon's side 'under the flag of their Homeland,' were overcome, as Leon Dembowski later recalled, by 'a sense of consternation, astonishment and a feverish desire for action.'¹³ Young men from the landed gentry crossed the border illegally to enlist in the Polish legions under Napoleon, eager for adventure and a chance to fulfill their patriotic duty.¹⁴ As with other young recruits, the motives that induced them to take part in the war, alongside a fascination with Napoleon, included dreams of heroic action, longing for recognition, a desire to taste personal freedom and to free themselves from the restrictive conventions of social and family life.¹⁵

Athanasius was also inspired to take action by a meeting with the somewhat older Stanisław Czapski, the son of the Voivode of Chełmno and heir to the renowned family tradition of good citizenship. He had lately arrived in Kraków from Paris ('whence,' according to Raczyński, 'he brought fashionable clothes and recollections of whores and rodents') and later served as a Colonel in the army of the Duchy of Warsaw. According to the account in his diary, encouraged and accompanied by Czapski, Raczyński fled in January 1807 from Bordiga's care, purchased a horse, and set off towards the Prussian border. After spending a few days at Czapski's estate in Gąszcz, north-east of Bydgoszcz, he joined a volunteer cavalry unit commanded by General Michał Sokolnicki. After several skirmishes with Prussian forces, the unit moved north, first to Słupsk (which

12 After victories at Jena and Auerstedt (14 October 1806) and the taking of Berlin (27 October 1806), Napoleon's army entered Wielkopolska in pursuit of the Prussian army. Napoleon himself entered Poznań on 27 November. The victory of the French over the Prussians raised the hopes of many Poles about the possibilities of regaining independence.

13 Leon Dembowski, *Moje wspomnienia*, vol. 1 (Petersburg: K. Grendyszyński, 1898), 277.

14 Józef Załuski, *Wspomnienia*, wstęp i opracowanie Anna Palarczykowa (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1976), 58–59.

15 See Jarosław Czubyat, *Księstwo Warszawskie*, 259–261.



FIGURE 11 Constantin Cretius after Marcello Bacciarelli, *Portrait of Athanasius Raczyński at the Age of 21*, 1809
RACZYŃSKI FOUNDATION AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN POZNAŃ, INV. NO.
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was occupied by insurgent forces after being taken on February 18), then to the most important and most heavily defended Prussian fortress in Pomerania – Gdańsk. Raczyński took part in the siege of the city, including bloody battles for the Wisłoujście Fortress. The taking of Gdańsk was a key moment in the Pomeranian campaign of 1807. It was of major significance for the future fate of the war, as, among other things, it enabled the French army to better prepare for the coming Battle of Friedland.¹⁶ In Raczyński's later accounts of these events, his personal history and that of the war became enmeshed. In his diary, he wrote: 'On the 1st or 2nd of May, Gdańsk capitulated. I just turned nineteen.' On May 2nd Athanasius was indeed nineteen years old, but the fortress surrendered almost three weeks later, on May 24th, and three days later was abandoned by its Prussian garrison. However, Raczyński's stay in liberated Gdańsk was not a fortuitous one. During his first days in the city, he fell seriously ill with typhus and was confined to his bed for several days, suffering from a high fever and periodic losses of consciousness. Following a partial recovery, he returned to Rogalin to place himself in the care of his brother.

General Sokolnicki provided an epilogue to Athanasius' military service by mentioning him in a comprehensive report prepared for General Jan Henryk Dąbrowski as having been among those 'officers, non-commissioned officers and knights who, following the disintegration of the corps, reported personally to headquarters and whose conduct and bravery, along with their perseverance and zeal, deserve to be recommended for recognition by the highest authority.'¹⁷ On 1 January 1808, Sokolnicki recommended that the Emperor award him the *Légion d'honneur*, France's highest military honour in recognition of his actions in the battle for Gdańsk, where he showed 'great devotion and he was among those soldiers who particularly distinguished themselves in the battle of May 15 at Wisłoujście.'¹⁸ Ultimately, however, Raczyński was not awarded the medal.

The price he paid for his part in the military campaign included not only health problems but also a bitter conflict with his grandfather Kazimierz that poisoned their relations for several months. However, neither circumstance

16 See Gabriel Zych, *Rok 1807* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1957), 207–220.

17 Sokolnicki describes Athanasius in his report as 'a volunteer, a young man full of beautiful hopes. His natural vitality has made him bold as much as his good upbringing has endowed him with prudence. He has distinguished himself in many actions, especially in this one [the siege of Gdańsk].' The report, written in late 1807, was published by Janusz Staszewski, "Udział pospolitego ruszenia w walkach na Pomorzu i pod Gdańskiem w 1807 r.," *Rocznik Gdański* 9/10 (1935/1936): 486–510, quotes 495, 508.

18 APP, Majątek Rogalin, 55, p. 5.

prevented Athanasius from taking part in later fighting during the Austro-Polish war of 1809.

If we are to believe Raczyński's claims, his decision to serve once again in the army was motivated not by patriotism but by personal considerations. 'I will become a soldier: not because I am disposed to do so, but because of Miss Turno [Athanasius' difficult love interest at the time] and the indifference I feel towards my family.'¹⁹ In mid-March, a month before Austrian troops crossed the border of the Duchy of Warsaw, Athanasius asked Prince Józef Poniatowski, the commander-in-chief of the Polish Army, to accept him into his service. His request was approved but, due to pressure from members of the public and to his great bitterness, he was accepted in the army as a common rank and file soldier, albeit with the promise of a quick promotion to the rank of officer. This promotion was indeed soon attained. On 7 April 1809, Prince Józef Poniatowski signed the commission naming Raczyński, then a cadet in the third cavalry regiment, as 'an unpaid auxiliary ensign.'²⁰ Athanasius was sent by Colonel Tadeusz Tyszkiewicz to serve as an aide-de-camp to General Aleksander Roźniecki, commander of the first brigade. On 16 April, he left Warsaw by way of Raszyn for Tarczyn, the general's headquarters.

In his diary, Raczyński provides a lengthy description of the 1809 campaign, briefly mentioning his part in it serving under General Roźniecki. Just three days after his arrival at the camp on 19 April, he took part in the Battle of Raszyn, the most dramatic and bloodiest battle in the entire campaign.²¹ He then headed with Roźniecki's forces for Galicia – the area in former southern Poland now under Austrian rule – passing through the cities of Kock and Lublin along the way and finally reaching Sandomierz. During the night of 17–18 May, the city was taken following a well-coordinated attack by units under Generals Sokolnicki and Roźniecki. Sokolnicki's soldiers attacked the fortress itself, while Roźniecki's unit was tasked with establishing a bridge-head on the outskirts of Sandomierz.²² Raczyński then took part in a victorious though tactically flawed expedition by Roźniecki's cavalry to Eastern Galicia, which ended successfully with the occupation of Lwów. The situation there was very dynamic. On 16 June, the Austrians re-captured Sandomierz. However, forced by necessity to shift their forces to the war's main front, they began to withdraw their troops to the west. The Polish headquarters, therefore,

19 DIARY, 11 March 1809.

20 Documents concerning the recruitment of Raczyński into the army and the course of his service are in APP, *Majątek Rogalin*, 55, pp. 6–13.

21 Gabriel Zych, *Armia Księstwa Warszawskiego 1807–1812* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1961), 99–107.

22 Gabriel Zych, *Armia Księstwa Warszawskiego*, 157–161.

decided to concentrate their forces and pursue the Austrians. Roźniecki's brigade was one of the first to reach the left bank of the Vistula River and, serving as the *avant-garde* of the Polish forces, began harassing the Austrian army's rearguard. In early July, the now concentrated Polish army headed for Kraków. Raczyński was among the soldiers who on 15 July entered the city, which had been abandoned by the Austrians. The next day, news reached Kraków of the defeat of Austrian troops at Wagram. The resulting ceasefire included a provision that all forces participating in the war were to remain in the positions they occupied when they learned of the truce. The July offensive, which ended with the occupation of Kraków, was the last action by the Polish army in the war of 1809. On 4 November 1809, Prince Józef Poniatowski accepted Raczyński's resignation, 'allowing him to wear the uniform of a decorated veteran, with the gold insignia indicating his rank attached, as a reward for his outstanding performance in the course of his service.'²³ He was also decorated with the golden cross of the Military Order of *Virtuti Militari*.²⁴ This cross is visible in a portrait of Raczyński painted 17 years later by Karl Wilhelm Wach. It is pinned to Athanasius' Prussian uniform just below a second-class Order of the Red Eagle awarded to him in 1820 by Frederick William III (Fig. 12).

Commenting on the events of 1809 almost forty years later, Raczyński wrote about his military achievements with great reserve, even somewhat ironically, without a hint of pathos or any attempt to embellish them: 'the memories I have of the campaign are not very interesting.' The most difficult moments were the Battle of Raszyn and combat with the Austrians 'on the heights of Sandomierz,' though he admits that 'throughout the entire campaign I was never under heavy fire.' His position with General Roźniecki is characterized as follows: 'The aides-de-camp were Gutakowski and Kicki. Artur Potocki, Władysław Tarnowski, Henryk Zabiełło and I were the remaining errand boys. We understood each other very well. Kicki was the funniest of us, while I did better in the kitchen.'²⁵ Of course, when he made this assessment of his participation in the war in 1848, he represented a completely different worldview from that of his youth; he perceived the events of the Napoleonic era very differently, but his description is probably credible.

It is worth asking at this point what Raczyński's attitude was towards Napoleon and his actions. It was dynamic and evolved over time. While

23 Letters from Prince Józef Poniatowski in APP, *Majątek Rogalin*, 55, p. 14.

24 The order in this matter was signed on 9 September 1809 by the Chief of Staff, General Fiszer. The official royal patent, signed by the Minister of War, Prince Józef Poniatowski, is dated 1 January 1810. See: APP, *Majątek Rogalin*, 55, pp. 11–13 and p. 15.

25 A comment in his *DIARY* dated 18 June 1848.



FIGURE 12 Karl Wilhelm Wach, *Portrait of Athanasius Raczyński*, 1826
 RACZYŃSKI FOUNDATION AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN POZNAŃ, INV. NO.
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initially an enthusiastic supporter, his feelings gradually cooled, and by 1812 his sentiments included clearly critical elements.

When will the calamities plaguing my poor country come to an end? Peasants are dying of hunger. The nobility's wealth is melting away day-by-day. We maintain an army that we cannot afford, but does anything await us in the future that might provide some sort of compensation

for all these misfortunes? Illusions, only illusions! I can see Poland as if through a mist, but I can see neither success, peace, nor prosperity. I see the Fatherland, but I don't see a place in it for the national honour, although the people who serve it have good ideas. Napoleon wants these but wanting what he wants does not necessarily mean wanting what is best for us. It is not by desiring the good that we repel the evil that he brings. We have to go along with it because we know that in spite of ourselves, we will let him carry us away, and the damage this will cause will be all the greater and more severe. Devil be damned! Hail Napoleon! Hail Poland! Hail to our homeland! *March, march Dąbrowski from the Italian lands to Poland.* The Polonaise, Kościuszko, and applause, and forward march!²⁶

The failure of the Russian campaign in 1812 and the events of the next three years further complicated his assessment of the French Emperor. From the summer of 1813 to the autumn of 1815, Raczyński lived for the most part in Paris, the nerve centre of the historic events reshaping Europe. He followed their course attentively, and his journal from that time reads largely as a chronicle of political events, based on press reports, news passed on by word of mouth, and finally his own observations. Napoleon was undoubtedly a figure that fascinated Athanasius. However, he gradually rid himself of any illusion that the Emperor offered any hope for Poland and ultimately came to see him as a threat to her. In March of 1814, following a string of victories by French troops in battles against allied armies, Raczyński was convinced that Napoleon would once again successfully overcome the difficulties he faced. However, he no longer saw this as an opportunity for Poland: 'My poor country! What is to be your fate? There is no telling how this will end. The future terrifies me.'²⁷

A few months later, after Napoleon was exiled to Elba, Raczyński tried to put together a synthetic assessment of his actions. His account was forgiving, but it contained a clear note of resentment based on his feeling that a great opportunity had been lost:

I generally forgive Napoleon for the evil he caused and for not doing the good he could have done. When he took the throne, he had the public behind him; he had opportunities within easy reach. If he so desired, the world would be a happy place, and he himself would be great for all times. Enlightened institutions, true freedom for all people, a balance

26 DIARY, 11 March 1812.

27 DIARY, 10 March 1814.

between political powers, and universal peace would have provided for laws that would have earned him the gratitude of whole nations. Instead, he won battles, established a royal court, and dressed in gold. He plundered Europe without enriching France.²⁸

The events of ‘the Hundred Days’ further complicated the image of the former French Emperor. Raczyński observed these events with great concern, considering them a threat to the still volatile political and social order in France and Europe. Napoleon had become, in his eyes, a dangerous and ruthless troublemaker, driven by unsated ambitions, who was paving the way for further violence and despotism. He was a ‘wolf’ seeking to devour the nations of Europe. Yet Athanasius also saw him as a potential defender against an even greater threat – Jacobin terror. The dramatic events of the spring of 1815 and the spectre of another European war and a potential Jacobin coup led to a consolidation of Raczyński’s anti-liberal and anti-revolutionary views.

Recalling the events of 1812 almost fifty years later, Raczyński evaluated his attitude as follows:

How much of a supporter of Napoleon was I at that time? [...] I don’t regret it. At that time, I still dreamt of a Poland under the strong rule, as one would expect from Bonaparte’s iron fist. Poland could then be separated from Russia without leaving it at the mercy of the Jacobins. Things have changed a lot, and I have changed with them.²⁹

3 In Warsaw Circles

Between 1808 and 1812, Raczyński spent most of his time in Warsaw, except for his aforementioned stint in the military, as well as several months spent in Vienna and Paris and shorter stays in Rogalin and Dresden. He led an intensive social and emotional life, and gradually built up his social position, drawing up plans for a beneficial marriage and making preparations to enter politics. The atmosphere and the situation in Warsaw favoured such activities. By 1806, after the disastrous decade that followed the Third Partition, when the city was depopulated and neglected, despite countless difficulties related to the disastrous state of the city budget, weak municipal institutions, and the presence of

²⁸ DIARY, 26 June 1814.

²⁹ A comment in his DIARY dated 14 July 1849.

a large number of foreign and Polish troops, Warsaw was slowly being reborn.³⁰ The number of inhabitants gradually increased, and political life intensified, expressed in the form of ceremonies, celebrations and parades, especially after the establishment of the Duchy of Warsaw. Warsaw's *beau monde* became active once again: 'all the wealthier families comprising the *beau monde* of Warsaw at that time would gather together at each other's homes, salons and social circles were revived.'³¹ 'The younger circle made merry. We all know that the pursuit of pleasure is what drives the urban social elite,' was Wirydianna Fiszerowa's apt diagnosis.³²

Raczyński's friends and acquaintances in Warsaw frequented the elegant salons of Anna Countess Aleksander Potocka (née Tyszkiewicz), Anna Countess Seweryn Potocka (née Sapieha, who rented rooms with her daughters in Kazimierz Raczyński's palace) and Aleksandra Countess Stanisław Potocka (née Lubomirska). These were places of importance in the city's social topography. Members of the Potocki family, which was abundantly represented in the capital city and formed 'a social circle of their own,'³³ hosted balls and theatrical productions in their homes for Warsaw's high society, and Athanasius, 'a very beautiful young man, very talented and high-spirited, [...] was quite enthralled by earthly things and elegance.'³⁴ The people closest to him were more or less his age. These included his cousin Marcei Lubomirski (until his tragic death in 1809); the brothers Alfred and Artur Potocki, sons of the eccentric Jan Potocki, who was also the first husband of Athanasius' future sister-in-law; Franciszek Potocki ('although he does not seem to me very intelligent he has nice manners, expresses himself easily, and has a lot of

30 On Warsaw in the period 1806–1815 see: Jarosław Czuby, *Warszawa 1806–1815. Miasto i ludzie* (Warszawa: Neriton, 1992). Also: Bronisław Pawłowski, "Warszawa w r. 1809," *Roczniki Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu* 45–50 (1948): 3–21; Jarosław Czuby, *Księstwo Warszawskie*, 42–45.

31 For a more detailed description see: Juliusz Falkowski, *Obrazy z życia kilku ostatnich pokoleń w Polsce*, 25–64, 173–217. See also: Fryderyk Skarbek, *Pamiętniki Seglasy*, opracował i posłowiem opatrzył Kazimierz Bartoszyński (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1959), 129–148.

32 Wirydianna Fiszerowa, *Dzieje moje własne i osób postronnych*, 300.

33 Karolina Nakwaska (née Potocka) recalled: 'In Warsaw at that time there were twelve married men with families with this surname. [...] The members of the Potocki family were hand in hand with one another and formed a kind of social circle of their own [...]. When there was a ball or a party at the home of one of them, the Potocki family would all contribute to make it more glamorous, lend each other silverware and servants, and so the whole staff wore the same family colours;' Karolina z Potockich Nakwaska, *Pamiętnik o Adamie hr. Potockim, pułkowniku n pułku jazdy Księstwa Warszawskiego* (Kraków: J. Wildt, 1862), 48–51.

34 Juliusz Falkowski, *Obrazy z życia kilku ostatnich pokoleń w Polsce*, 210.

self-confidence and charm'); Henryk Zabiełło ('the best boy, the noblest man, but how boring!'); and 'good' Leon Dembowski.³⁵ Among Athanasius' women friends were his favourite cousin, Teresa Jabłonowska (née Lubomirska),³⁶ Urszula Turno, Sydonia Potocka, Józefina Czartoryska, Ewa Sułkowska (née Kicka), Róża Potocka, Teresa Kicka, Zofia Czosnowska, and the sisters Aniela and Zofia Roztworowska.

He was particularly close friends with Alfred Potocki, a gallant, easy-mannered man, and a perfect companion in salon events.³⁷ He confessed: 'I like Alfred and can boast that I enjoy his favour.'³⁸ He had a much more complex relationship with Artur Potocki, the idol of Warsaw and Galicia's 'golden youth,' an 'incomparable party companion,' 'oracle of the salons,' 'favourite of the street,'³⁹ a ladies' man, 'whom all the beauties of Warsaw were crazy about.'⁴⁰ Raczyński admired his zest, sense of humour, excellent manners and easy-going attitude, but did not feel any close attachment to him and was probably not especially fond of him. He also had a low opinion of Potocki's intellectual qualities (Potocki, we should add, was not portrayed sympathetically during his youth by diarists, who nonetheless acknowledged his virtues⁴¹).

35 All quotes in: DIARY, 18 December 1809.

36 Teresa (née Lubomirska), who married prince Maksymilian Piotr Jabłonowski in 1811, was the daughter of prince Michał Lubomirski and his wife Magdalena (née Raczyńska). Magdalena was the daughter of Kazimierz Raczyński and the sister of Michalina Raczyńska, Athanasius' mother. During the period in question, Teresa Jabłonowska was staying at the Raczyński Palace, where she held a popular aristocratic salon.

37 See the biographical note in: Jerzy Zdrada, "Potocki Alfred," in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* xxvii (Wrocław et al.: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1983), 760–762.

38 DIARY, 5 February 1810.

39 This is the portrait of Artur Potocki painted by Stanisław Schnür-Peplowski: 'the count was an excellent horseman, a keen skater, a connoisseur of paintings, and above all, an incomparable companion at parties, an excellent *causer*. His dress was seemingly careless, but always elegant, he was courteous with everyone, he was both highly esteemed in salons and loved in the streets;' Stanisław Schnür-Peplowski, *Obrazy z przeszłości Galicji i Krakowa (1772–1858)*, vol. II (Lwów: Gubrynowicz i Schmidt, 1896), 309.

40 Wirginia Jezierska, *Z życia dworów i zamków na Kresach, 1828–1844*, z autografu francuskiego przetłumaczył i wydał dr Leon Białkowski (Poznań: Dziennik Poznański, 1924), 100.

41 Sabina Grzegorzewska, in a rather extensive portrait of Artur Potocki, wrote: 'One should not be surprised at any of his eccentricity, he was a man spoiled by success and affluence, jaded with luxury and life, and bored with the world.' (Sabina Grzegorzewska, *Pamiętniki Sabiny z Gostkowskich Grzegorzewskiej* (Warszawa: Kronika Rodzinna, 1889), 58). Aleksander Fredro, who knew Potocki from his military service, though valuing his 'honor, wit and kindness' and admiring, not without jealousy, his temper, added that 'it was enough to look at his undone uniform, his loosely tied scarf, his crooked ammunition pouch, and his out of place pendant to recognize him as a spoiled child of Warsaw society' (Aleksander Fredro, *Trzy po trzy*, opracowała i wstępem poprzedziła Krystyna

In spite of this, Raczyński spent a great deal of time in Potocki's company. He also devoted more space to him in his diary than to any of his other friends. He attempted several times to paint a portrait of Potocki in words, trying to somehow capture his personality, which was both engaging and irritating.⁴²

Raczyński thus socialized in the company of youth from the families of Warsaw's wealthy social elite. This, of course, had its price. It required Athanasius to maintain a very high standard of living, a standard which sometimes exceeded his financial possibilities. The consequences were inevitable: '19 March 1809. Yesterday was a day of important events for me. I began by increasing my debt by 350 ducats...'

Raczyński continued to cultivate his most important Warsaw acquaintances after he had left the city. He had a special bond with Teresa Jabłonowska, whom he met rarely, but who for decades was one of his most important and trusted correspondents. He also maintained close relations especially during the Galician period, that is in the mid-1820s, with the brothers Alfred and Artur Potocki. The relatively short distance between the Potocki residences (Alfred's Łańcut and Artur's Krzeszowice) and Raczyński's estate in Zawada was conducive to visits. Contact with Artur intensified, among other matters, in connection with plans to reconstruct the Krzeszowice Palace. Raczyński mediated in the establishment of contacts between Potocki and Berlin architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel, who was hired to design the residence and the attached church and burial chapel (which he did though the work was not completed as we know from Schinkel's *Collection of Architectural Designs*).⁴³ In a letter to his brother Edward dated April 10, 1823, he wrote with satisfaction: 'Alfred and Artur were here. It was decided that Schinkel from Berlin would build a huge palace in Krzeszowice on rocks in the Gothic style. I gave it to him and I'm extremely content with this because it's going to be a delightful thing. I believe this because of Schinkel's talent and the surrounding area.'⁴⁴

Czajkowska (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1987; first published 1877), 94). See also: Anna Palarczykova, "Potocki Artur," in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* xxvii (Wrocław et al.: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1983), 795–797.

42 See, among others: DIARY, 23 May and 15 December 1816.

43 See letter from Raczyński to Karl Friedrich Schinkel of 24 December 1822; BR, Poznań, ms 2729/II, p. 19. On Raczyński's contacts with the Berlin architect see: Tadeusz J. Żuchowski, „Karl Friedrich Schinkel und Athanasius Graf Raczyński.“ On projects for a castle in Krzeszowice, see: Waldemar Baraniewski, Tadeusz S. Jaroszewski, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel i Polacy*, exh. cat. (Warszawa: Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, 1987), 103–111.

44 Letter from Athanasius to Edward Raczyński dated 10 April 1823, in: APP, Majątek Rogalin, 75, pp. 237–240. A few years later, Raczyński also mediated in contacts between Schinkel and Tytus Działyński, who was thinking of remodelling his residence in Kórnik (see Raczyński's letters to Tytus Działyński of March 23rd and June 23rd 1828) in: BK, ms

4 Smelling of the Antechamber

Athanasius Raczyński's professional plans began to crystallize during his time in Warsaw, where he saw a place for himself in the Saxon diplomatic service. While staying in Dresden, he wrote in his diary: 'I've got diplomacy in my head. We'll see where it takes me. In any case, I solemnly promise myself to stand by this.'⁴⁵

At the time, Athanasius already had contacts with high-ranking officials in both Warsaw and Dresden, including the Minister of State in the Duchy of Warsaw Stanisław Breza and the Saxonian Cabinet Minister of Foreign Affairs Count Friedrich Christian von Senfft. With their support, in the spring of 1810, he began applying for posts in the Saxon diplomatic service in the royal courts in Vienna and Madrid.⁴⁶ During a stay in the Saxon capital in 1811, thanks to these contacts, he was introduced to the Royal Family and the Cabinet Minister and Senior Stable Master (*Oberstallmeister*) Count Camillo Marcolini. A few weeks later (11 May 1811), already in Warsaw, he was called to serve, in the words of the official message, 'in light of his faithful service and becoming disposition,' in the office of Chamberlain. A decree on this matter was issued by Frederick Augustus I at Pillnitz Castle on 18 May 1811.⁴⁷ Raczyński received his nomination from the King's hand during an audience in Warsaw on 15 October.

Much seemed to indicate that his plans to join the diplomatic service would soon be realized. In early November, Raczyński was convinced that he would be assigned to the diplomatic offices in Kassel.⁴⁸ Although this destination did not arouse his enthusiasm (he was dreaming of Paris, of course), he treated it as an opportunity and a personal challenge. 'It's been decided that I will go to Kassel to work as an attaché. I'm not very happy about this, but if it's not too awful, I'm determined to spend three years there. If, after that time, I am not assured of an imminent appointment to the post of minister, then I swear to God, I will become a landlord. If positions don't come to me on their own,

7349/2, pp. 311–313; also: Waldemar Baraniewski, Tadeusz S. Jaroszewski, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel i Polacy*, 126–127.

45 DIARY, 17 April 1811.

46 Correspondence on this matter with Breza and Senfft in APP, Majątek Rogalin, 55, pp. 17–19.

47 Sächsische Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, 10007, Oberkammerherrdepartament, Cap. 02 (*Kammerherrernennungen und –entlassungen, Personal, Besoldung, Pensionen*), No. 19, f. 27. See also documents concerning the nomination signed by Stanisław Breza in: APP, Majątek Rogalin, 55, p. 23 and 27; see also p. 26, 28, 29.

48 Correspondence on this matter with Breza in APP, Majątek Rogalin, 55, p. 31.

I won't be the sort who chases after them.⁴⁹ Life would later prove to Raczyński that it was necessary to chase after positions, sometimes for many years....

However, Raczyński had to wait another year to be assigned to a diplomatic mission. Finally, on 29 October 1812, he left Warsaw to travel via Rogalin to Dresden, and from there, he assumed, to Kassel. While initial talks with Count von Senfft had indeed confirmed such a plan, a few weeks later, he was given the opportunity to choose another destination, namely Copenhagen. Raczyński decided to accept this offer because, as he later remarked, Denmark was 'the only second-rate country that still had diplomacy.'⁵⁰ However, in this case also, his plans ultimately came to nothing. Raczyński was indeed appointed a legation counsellor in Copenhagen, but he did not go there due to the complicated political situation in Saxony.

Instead, on 1 January 1813, Athanasius assumed his duties as Chamberlain.⁵¹ Feeling somewhat bitter, he wrote in his diary in a slightly ironic tone about his duties and more generally about the Saxon Court itself, which despite its organizational structure, was towards the end of the introverted Frederick Augustus' long reign fairly unremarkable.⁵²

The Saxon court looks rather grotesque. Most of those comprising it are veritable caricatures. The King himself and the whole Royal Family would be comical if they weren't so deserving of respect. The King is pious, conscientious, educated, and fully committed to his position. He's rational, just, righteous, and unbending. He's always serious but also kind; he's stiff but polite. He's restrained and simple in his manners. The Princess combines an active and penetrating mind with all the qualities of her father. Prince Maximilian is said to be the most distinguished of the three brothers, while Prince Anthony is the least. But everyone, young and old, makes up a family more worthy of respect than any other in the world. The purpose of this lengthy introduction is to say that they have made me, one seeking to serve in diplomacy, an *attaché* to the Royal Court, and having assumed this role, it is only fitting for me to ask to be allowed

49 DIARY, 4 November 1811.

50 DIARY, 17 December 1812.

51 Sächsische Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, 10007, Oberkammerherrdepartament, Cap. 05, No. 28.

52 Karlheinz Blaschke, „Hof und Hofgesellschaft im Königreich Sachsen während des 19. Jahrhunderts,“ in Karl Möckl, ed., *Hof und Hofgesellschaft in den deutschen Staaten im 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert*, Büdinger Forschungen zur Sozialgeschichte 1985 und 1986 (Boppard am Rhein: Boldt, 1990), 177–206, esp. 182–183. For more about the organization of the Saxon court in the early nineteenth century, see pp. 185–188.

to perform my duties. I have served in this office for one month under the Queen and one month under the King. These would have been the two most boring months of my life if not for the pleasure I found in getting to know the ruling family, who treated me with kindness and who cannot be treated disrespectfully in view of their merits as well as their rank. [...] The duties of a Chamberlain in Saxony are limited to just a few things. When the King goes to church – I walk ahead of him; when he drinks tea – I serve it to him. At the table, I serve him soup; at the theatre, I stand behind his chair. And that's roughly everything this important service involves. I accompany the Queen when the King is hunting [...] and I have the pleasure of eating with the King, Queen, Princess [Maria] Augusta, the chief hunter, and the royal aide-de-camp. At breakfast, the King speaks just a few times, while the Queen's mouth never shuts.

The office of Chamberlain (*Kammerherr*) was an honorary post held by representatives of the nobility, serving under a Prince or King. 'It involved,' we read in volume 33 of Johann Georg Krünitz's *Oekonomische Encyclopädie*, published in 1785, 'the performance of so-called "service," i.e., stationing oneself in the antechamber and constantly remaining at the disposal of the Prince, helping him dress and undress, accompanying him during trips, rides and other travels, announcing applicants for private audiences, receiving letters with requests addressed directly to the Prince, cutting up his food at the table, etc. In some Courts, more is demanded of the Chamberlain; in others, less is required.'⁵³ Known in German royal courts since the sixteenth century, the Chamberlain's office in Dresden was introduced in the mid-seventeenth century. Raczyński, as we have seen, served for two months, first (in January) in the service of the King and then (in February) in the service of the Queen. Depending on the court and the epoch, the number of Chamberlains could vary, from a few to as many as 500. When Raczyński began his court career in 1812, the Chamberlain's key, a symbol of his office, was held in the Saxon court by one hundred and five representatives of the nobility.⁵⁴ According to Krünitz, it was a dignity of high rank which brought with it prestige and respect, both 'in the Court and outside it,' and the privilege of being close to the ruler, being with him in his

53 Johann Georg Krünitz et al., *Oekonomische Encyclopädie oder allgemeines System der Staats- Stadt- Haus- und Landwirthschaft*, vol. 33 (Berlin: Joachim Pauli, 1785), 384.

54 *Königlich-Sächsischer Hof- und Staats-Kalender auf das Schaltjahr 1812*, pp. 46–50.

private apartments and during his daily activities, was considered a reward for one's service.⁵⁵

Despite the privileges involved, such service was, of course, below the expectations of the ambitious Raczyński. He viewed it with exceptional distaste the function he served, calling it 'a pathetic profession, smelling of the antechamber.' He, nevertheless, mobilized himself and treated this as a step towards achieving his principal aim: 'my goal is diplomacy.'

However, this goal would soon be slipping away. This time it was due to political events, namely, the military campaign of 1812 and Napoleon's defeat in Russia and the counterattack by Russian troops and their occupation in March 1812 of Dresden as the capital of a state allied with Napoleon. Raczyński left the city on 26 February, travelling first to Teplice and then to Regensburg. He did not return to the capital of Saxony until the end of May when he reapplied for a post in the diplomatic corps. However, the King refused his application for a post at the diplomatic mission in Madrid. It was not until his letter of June 1813, in which he asked to be sent to the mission in Paris, that, thanks to the support of Secretary of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Detlov von Einsidel, he received a favourable reply from the monarch. On 5 July, he left Dresden. A week later, on 12 July, just before midnight, he finally found himself in the French capital as Secretary of the Saxon Legation led by Baron Wilhelm August von Just.

Raczyński's stay in Paris was very important to him, but this was for reasons other than professional ones. The function of the secretary of a second-rank mission – at that time, Saxony was not a key player in great-power politics – was not, as can be inferred from Athanasius' diary entries, particularly demanding. The Parisian period, on the other hand, was significant mainly for different reasons. First of all, it gave Raczyński an opportunity to participate in major events that would decide the political situation in Europe. He watched and described what would prove to be Napoleon's last campaigns with great attention, trying to put together a comprehensive description of the actions of the great and controversial leader. He would later refer to these experiences on many occasions. Secondly, he was experiencing a very intense period in his personal life at that time, associated with his most important youthful affair with the Countess Catherine-Françoise de Vaubois, whom he called Fanny. Raczyński's time spent in Paris was marked by great politics and great love.

55 In 1816 a new, five-stage division of courtly ranks in the Saxon court was adopted; chamberlains were assigned the third class, together with senior officials from central and provincial institutions, colonels and lieutenants, as well as a court preacher; Karlheinz Blaschke, „Hof und Hofgesellschaft im Königreich Sachsen,“ 190–191.