

ROZPRAWY

ELISE F. GRAUER

BRIDGING THE GAP – COUNT ATHANAZY RACZYŃSKI AND HIS GALLERIES IN POLAND AND PRUSSIA*

In 1883, the German Imperial authorities pulled down the *Palais Raczyński* in Berlin in order to make space for the erection of the *Reichstag*, the young nation's new Parliament. The *Palais Raczyński* had housed Polish Count Athanazy Nałęcz Raczyński's art collection, which now found asylum in the *National-Galerie* on Berlin's Museum Island,¹ before being removed to Poznań's *Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum* in Prussian-administered Western Poland in 1903.² Raczyński's grave fell victim to the Berlin Wall in the early 1960s.³ His estate in Gaj Maly, site of his gallery of family portraits, was transformed into a foundling hospital during the Polish socialism. The Raczyński family emigrated from Poland after the Second World War.

In the 19th century, Count Raczyński and his collection had played a prominent role in the cultural life of Prussia and the Great Duchy of Poznań. With the events following shortly after his death, however, most of the traces of a life full of efforts for the arts in Poland and Prussia were lost gradually. Although the collection survives almost intact in the National Museum in Poznań today, it has become detached from its original spaces and wider context. To a visitor in the 21st century the compilation of Raczyński's collection is far from self-explanatory. It can

* The article is based on my M.A.-dissertation, written in 2002 at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London.

¹ Lionel von Donop, *Verzeichniss der Gräflich Raczyński'schen Kunstsammlungen in der Königlichen National-Galerie*, Berlin 1886.

² Although Poland did not exist as an independent political entity, the term 'Poland' is used in this article for reasons of simplicity. It describes the former Polish territory in the borders until 1772.

³ Raczyński had been buried on the catholic churchyard of St Hedwig's cathedral in Berlin.

be adequately appreciated only when seen against the backdrop of Raczyński's ambitions, his social and political situation and his ambiguous position between Poland and Prussia.

A number of publications already exist on Athanazy Raczyński.⁴ This article does not propose to present fundamentally new historical facts but will introduce Raczyński and his works from a specific angle – by focussing on his activities in the world of art in the light of his Polish-Prussian biography. Particularly his galleries will be examined to show how they served him as means to achieve certain personal, professional, political and social goals. This will be done by referring amongst other sources to Raczyński's mostly unpublished diaries, which he wrote between 1806 and 1870. The documents are now in the possession of a family member in London, where the author had the privilege to peruse them.

As the many entries in Raczyński's hitherto largely unused diaries show, the collector and diplomat felt torn throughout his life between diverging sets of values that he saw represented by his mother country Poland on the one hand and his chosen country Prussia on the other hand. Polish compatriots criticised Raczyński as a turncoat to the Prussians whereas the latter mistrusted him due to his status as a foreigner. Also, Raczyński's catholic denomination did not make things easier for him in protestant Prussia. Politically a conservative hard-liner Raczyński, moreover, saw himself confronted with an increasingly democratic political landscape. Before this background, negotiating these conflicts and finding his position in society seemed to be of overwhelming importance to Raczyński. Apart from the diaries, his gallery projects, often pervaded by his political views, give strong testimony of the count's strife for social recognition and self-definition. Raczyński's Polish-Prussian biography fundamentally influenced his gallery at the *Königsplatz* in Berlin but possibly most significantly shaped his last project: the family gallery in Gaj Mały, twenty-five kilometres north west of Poznań. So far this gallery has hardly received any attention by art historians and was never appreciated in the context of his other projects.

This article will examine comprehensively and systematically the cultural history of Raczyński's four gallery projects in the context of his

⁴ Key works are *Galeria Athanazego Raczyńskiego*, ex.cat., Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu, Poznań 1981; Michael S. Cullen, 'Das Palais Raczyński. Vom Bauwerk, das dem Reichstag weichen musste', in *Berlin und Geschichte und Gegenwart. Jahrbuch des Landesarchivs Berlin* (1984), pp. 25-48; *Sammlung Graf Raczyński. Malerei der Spätromantik aus dem Nationalmuseum Poznań*, ex.cat., Neue Pinakothek, Munich 1992. Zofia Ostrowska-Kęłbowska, 'Polish Residences-Museums in the 19th century', in *Polish Art Studies II, Studies in Art History* (1980), pp. 59-82.

ambiguous position between Poland and Prussia. It will demonstrate how Raczyński's collecting policy, his artistic taste as well as the way he displayed his collection reflect his political and cultural outlook and thus facilitate conclusions on his motivations. His galleries will be presented as political, personal and social statements – thereby defining the collector's position in his respective environment.

PORTRAIT OF ATHANAZY RACZYŃSKI

Raczyński was born on 2 May 1788 in Rogalin – the family seat twenty kilometres south of Poznań. After the early death of their mother, Michalina Raczyńska, Athanazy and his elder brother Edward (1786-1845) spent most of their childhood under the supervision of their paternal grandmother close to the Silesian border in Chobienice, Poland. This may have contributed to their education following even more conservative guidelines than those of the nobility of the time. Of course, the children learned French, which was to remain Athanazy's main language, although he was also fluent in Polish, Russian, German, Danish, Spanish, Portuguese and English. In his diaries, Raczyński used mainly French. However, aesthetic considerations in connection with the German Romantic movement, he wrote in German. In his correspondence which he often copied into the diary, the language depended on the addressee. Polish appears only when Raczyński expressed very personal matters, in particular in erotic sequences.⁵

Athanazy studied at the *Viadrina* University in Frankfurt/Oder before setting off on his first long journey, which took him to Dresden, Mainz, Aachen, Antwerp, Paris, Berlin, Breslau and Warsaw. Travelling remained a dominant occupation in Raczyński's life and enabled him to visit an enormous number of art galleries, exhibitions, museums and artist's workshops all over Europe.

By the age of 25, Athanazy had set his eye on a good marriage and a career:⁶

One needs ... an occupation. The thing, which occupies me most, is my family. I want to work for it. I want to erect an entail,⁷ because this is the only way to prevent a family from falling apart. In order to succeed with such a plan, one

⁵ All translations of both diary-entries and other sources are my own. Short foreign phrases or words in the body of the text will be accompanied with an English translation in parentheses where this seemed necessary.

⁶ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 17 April 1811, in Joseph A. Raczyński, *Noch ist Polen nicht verloren. Aus den Tagebüchern des Athanasius Raczyński 1788-1818*, Munich 1984.

⁷ An entail is an inalienable ancestral estate.

has ... to be able to show that one has served the government. Thus, one has to pursue a career. The one I am most inclined to is diplomacy. Then one would wish for a wealthy bride of noble birth; a good position would not do any harm either.⁸

Preserving the family's heritage was of particular importance to the Polish nobility. The long drawn-out decline of the Polish oligarchy from the 17th century and the successive divisions of Poland in the late 18th century had been putting the nobility under considerable strain.⁹ For Athanazy, art galleries were one means by which he sought to perpetuate his own and his family's glory. Two entries in his diary illustrate the young man's ambitions:

All my dreams are related to the enhancement of the reputation of my name. Constantly, I am thinking about the possibility to found an entail, to add titles, and to organise everything so that it can last for a long time.¹⁰

The state of my household is comfortable and does not call for enlargement. ... There is a considerable surplus. This I intend to devote to a single goal and this is creating a collection of classical paintings, which is to form the reputation of my family.¹¹

In 1816, aged 28, Athanazy married Annette Radziwill: 'At 8 o' clock in the morning I was married in the church. I stayed overnight in Błonie in order to start there with the procreation of a new generation of the Raczyńskis'.¹² Annette was heiress to a large fortune and enjoyed close connections with the Prussian royal family.¹³ Both through his marriage and the intelligent administration of his estates, Raczyński increased his wealth considerably.¹⁴ Although a son and two daughters were born in rapid succession,¹⁵ thus fulfilling Raczyński's hope to continue the family line, by the 1820s the couple had become estranged and Athanazy enjoyed numerous affairs.¹⁶

⁸ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 2 March 1813, in Joseph A. Raczyński (1984), op. cit., fn. 6.

⁹ Norman Davies, *Im Herzen Europas. Geschichte Polens*, Munich 1999, pp. 268-277.

¹⁰ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 8 July 1817, in Joseph A. Raczyński (1984), op. cit., fn. 6.

¹¹ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 26 February 1821 in Joseph A. Raczyński (1984), op. cit., fn. 6.

¹² *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 12 November 1816, in Joseph A. Raczyński (1984), op. cit., fn. 6.

¹³ Annette's cousin Count Anton Radziwill was married to Louise, daughter of Prince Ferdinand of Prussia.

¹⁴ *Raczyński diaries*, entries for 26 February 1821 and 17 May 1852.

¹⁵ Charles (1817-1899), Wanda (1819-1845) and Therese (1820-?).

¹⁶ 'I departed from Berlin in order to evade a disreputable liaison. The object of my love is a 34 year-old girl who is given to drinking and who is kept by two gentlemen at the

Despite his wife's connections to the Prussian court, Raczyński's ambition to 'become an ambassador to a foreign court'¹⁷ was not easily realised. After his first steps on the diplomatic stage which came as early as 1813, when he had served as an attaché to the Saxon ambassador in Paris, he worked for the Prussian King Frederick William III as a diplomat in Copenhagen between 1830 and 1834. Yet, this was a relatively minor post, which did not meet Raczyński's expectations. He had to wait for another ten years for his next diplomatic mission, as his Polish and catholic background put him at a severe disadvantage in the scramble for government patronage in protestant Prussia. Raczyński felt rejected by the Prussians 'like a Pariah, a christened jew',¹⁸ and complained bitterly about what he perceived as unfair treatment:

Those gentlemen are admirable in their spirit of class and clique. There is not a single family which does not have several members at this place: I am the only one of my family, the only one of the nobility of my country, the only Pole of the province who is ready to serve, who is asking for work and for nothing else; I am one of the most prominent personalities of the Great Duchy, and they all are full of anger at the mere thought that the exclusion I suffer and which is at the same time politically unwise and unjust could end.¹⁹

It was only after the accession of Frederick William IV that Raczyński was finally recalled to office as the Prussian ambassador to Lisbon in 1842. By 1848, however, the politically conservative count had resigned from his post, citing the impact of the Revolution as his main reason in letters to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the King respectively:

I have reached the 60th year of my life and I am too old to join a movement which requires fresher forces. I therefore have the honour to ask your Excellency most obediently to place at the feet of my most merciful King my request regarding my discharge from public office. May he succeed in halting the dreadful thunderstorm which broke over Prussia, over Germany, over all of Europe, to bring back to his people those things which Prussia enjoyed for such a long time: peace, silence, order and security of persons and property.²⁰

same time, the secretary of Prince William and his groom'. [*Raczyński diaries*, entry for the end of May 1839].

¹⁷ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 20 February 1818, in Joseph A. Raczyński (1984), op. cit., fn. 6.

¹⁸ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 26 February 1838.

¹⁹ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 25 June 1837.

²⁰ Raczyński to the minister for foreign affairs Baron von Arnim in Berlin, in *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 2 April 1848.

I thought it would have been impossible to continue serving you, as it seemed to me, that it would not be your Majesty I would serve but the new Prussian institutions of which I do not expect anything good and with which my mind could never identify itself.²¹

Nevertheless, Raczyński subsequently accepted the offer to serve as ambassador to Spain. Retiring from diplomatic service in 1852, he kept himself busy in his old age with the enlargement of his houses in Berlin and Poland. Although he witnessed the discussions about the erection of a building for the newly established German parliament, the *Reichstag*, on the site of his Berlin home, he was spared the sight of the 'Palais Raczyński' being pulled down; Athanazy Raczyński died in Berlin on 21 August 1874.

BETWEEN POLAND AND PRUSSIA

As a member of the Polish nobility and as an inhabitant of the Great Duchy of Poznań administered by the Prussian state until 1918, Raczyński found himself in a complicated position: the French Revolution had affected political and class relations all over Europe, setting, very broadly spoken, the nobility against an increasingly powerful bourgeoisie, and a cosmopolitan European aristocratic society against national movements. In Poland, which due to the Polish divisions was eliminated from the European map, these conflicts were exacerbated. Polish society oscillated between revolt against the occupying powers, adherence to the revolutionary ideals and loyalty to the institutions of the *ancien régime*. Although the desire for an independent Polish state was supported by members of all social classes, there were divergent ideas as to how this state should be constituted: liberals fought not only against the occupying powers but also against the *ancien régime*, whereas aristocrats envisaged the return of a monarchy.

When the strength of democratic movements made the latter goal appear unrealistic, the Polish nobility had to decide between loyalty towards the monarchies of the occupying powers, and loyalty to the Polish cause. This dilemma split Raczyński's own family. After he and his brother had fought for an independent, aristocratic Poland in their youth in the Napoleonic army, Athanazy abandoned this line when he no longer saw a chance for its realisation and deeply committed himself to Prussia. Later on, he classified his former patriotism as 'crazy ideas' of

²¹ Raczyński to the Prussian King Frederick William IV, draft of letter, in *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 2 April 1848.

the ‘rebirth of Poland’, which had filled ‘an 18-year-old with enthusiasm’.²² Though feeling as a Pole, Raczyński was accused by liberals of a lack of patriotism:

For a long time I was working for the erection of my entail. After six years I have succeeded and I have received a hereditary vote in the provincial estates. This mandate is a heavy burden for me and I am fleeing from the honour of sitting in that assembly in order not to expose myself to the insult, which the disfavour of the nationalistic attitude makes me fear. ... However, I cannot regret having followed a direction opposed to the demands of the liberal party which think of themselves as the only patriots. If I had followed the liberal line I would have had to devote my whole life to a lie, which, I am sure, works constantly towards the revolution of the social order, without promising future, order and happiness for the national cause.²³

His brother Edward, who stayed in Poland, served the national cause and promoted Polish culture, was also accused by liberals of his allegiance to the old aristocratic order. Edward would eventually take his own life over misunderstandings and accusations levelled against him over the funding of the monument for the first Polish Piasts Mieczysław and Bolesław in Poznań’s cathedral. Athanazy, by contrast, found his political values preserved in his adopted country but was unable to let his Polish nationality run free:

I am far from being indifferent towards the destiny of my native country: I will never stop thinking that it would have served the interests of Europe, to reconstitute Poland with strong institutions in such a way as to guarantee the political balance of Europe and the monarchical principle. However, in the current state of affairs I see only one thing, I see social order and civilisation threatened with death, I see people in uproar against any authority ... It is a question of to be or not to be, and I only have a single wish: to see civilisation rescued from destruction and the order of Europe restored.²⁴

Athanazy clung to his belief in Prussia’s political order although he was in a constant struggle for recognition by the Prussian authorities.

I imagine that I am growing in consequence, that they begin to realise my importance and begin to value my character, my funds, my projects. ... At any rate they would do well to employ me since I am not without means and the King can rely on me. I won’t have anything to do with Poland, that is a question not to be touched on without increasing one’s unhappiness. If they reject me I

²² *Raczyński diaries*, Athanazy’s preface on his childhood and youth, in Joseph A. Raczyński (1984), op. cit., fn. 6, p. 29.

²³ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 22 January 1837.

²⁴ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 18 December 1830.

shall live far from the world yet always in Prussia. Four or five thousand *Thaler* shall be sufficient for me. The remains are for my children. ... I am certain that a Pole can never overcome the impediments that are standing in his way.²⁵

COLLECTING AND PROMOTING

Raczyński's aesthetical views and his collecting policy indicate that his artistic and political ideas were closely interwoven. In organising the content and presentation of his collection Raczyński intended to convey certain political, moral and even religious statements. His collection consists almost exclusively of pictures (as opposed to e.g. sculpture); on the one hand of old paintings,²⁶ mainly Venetian masters, and of German contemporary paintings on the other.²⁷ In the early years of Raczyński's collecting activity (1820/21), the purchase of old Italian art clearly dominated. By creating this collection Raczyński wanted to make up for a non-existing Polish 'royal' collection of European paintings. However, with the renunciation of this project and Raczyński's removal to Berlin the emphasis of his collection shifted to contemporary German art. The collector held the painters of the Düsseldorf and Munich schools and the Nazarenes in particular high esteem. His sound financial situation²⁸ and the transfer of the gallery to the spacious Palais at Berlin's *Exerzierplatz* facilitated the acquisition of numerous large sized contemporary paintings in the 1840s and 50s.²⁹ Raczyński mostly commissioned paintings directly from artists, thereby assuming the role of a traditional aristocratic patron.³⁰ Sometimes he ordered copies of

²⁵ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 19 May 1837.

²⁶ Amongst these paintings was also Sandro Botticelli's *Madonna with child and singing angels* – the only painting of Raczyński's collection which remained in Berlin when his pictures went back to Poznań in 1903.

²⁷ For a detailed account of Raczyński's acquisitions see Konstanty Kalinowski, 'Die Bildergalerie des Grafen Raczyński', in *Sammlung Graf Raczyński* (1992), pp. 18-31; for the complete collection see *Galeria Atanazego Raczyńskiego* (1981), op. cit. fn. 4.

²⁸ 'My financial situation is brilliant.' [*Raczyński diaries*, entry for 17 May 1852]. Reason for this was the boom of railway stocks, Raczyński was a shareholder.

²⁹ During this period the collection was joined by works by Peter Cornelius, Ferdinand Olivier, Joseph von Führich, Eduard Bendemann, Julius Hübner, Ludwig Schorn, Carl Rottmann, Karl F. Schinkel, Moritz von Schwindt, Carl F. Lessing, Ary Scheffer and others.

³⁰ Raczyński commissioned paintings from Schnorr von Carolsfeld, Wilhelm von Schadow, Wilhelm Wach, Franz Ludwig Catel and Theodor Hildebrandt. Only very few paintings were bought at the shop of the Berlin art seller Louis Sachse.

paintings he had seen, for instance, at the *Salon* in Paris. During his offices in Spain and Portugal as well as on a London auction Raczyński also made some high quality purchases of old Spanish art.³¹ After 1853 contemporary German art dominated his collection, and only a few more old paintings were added. Initially, the collection was highly acclaimed for meeting the contemporary taste, but after 1850 certain parts of Raczyński's collection were increasingly criticised, as in the case of the painting *Christ in Limbo* by Cornelius – a late Nazarene work.

By the time of his death, Raczyński's collection consisted of almost 200 paintings with contemporary works outnumbering the Old Masters by about one third. Historical and Biblical scenes as well as genre and portraits dominate the collection. There are but few landscapes and only a single still life. This is remarkable since we know from the *Libri Veritatis*³² that Raczyński had ordered numerous still lifes – obviously he felt that these were befitting in private rooms but not in a public gallery. In terms of its general character and range, his collection of contemporary art mirrored to an extent the collection of Frederick William IV which had been displayed since 1844 in the castle *Bellevue* in Berlin.

Raczyński's emphasis clearly lay on collecting paintings.

How much would I like to see that the enthusiasm I feel for paintings were not so exclusive and that it left me the ability to direct my interest towards the remains and beauties of the Antique. I would like to talk about the baths of Titus but my head is full of all the paintings and frescoes I have seen and of all those paintings I hope to purchase.³³

Nevertheless, Raczyński possessed some sculptures: busts of the Prussian kings Frederick William III and IV by Christian Daniel Rauch, and a bust of the Emperor William I by Thomas Kietz.³⁴ All of them were acquired as an expression of homage to his Royal masters. Furthermore, Raczyński owned a white marble vase by Byström – a scaled down version of an antique from Hadrian's villa. Raczyński was by far not the only art lover in Berlin owning such an object.³⁵ The piece

³¹ He acquired, for instance, Francesco Zurbaran's *Madonna with Rosary and Carthusians*.

³² The so-called *Libri Veritatis* are a bundle of Raczyński's correspondence with artists, today stored in the archive of the National Museum Poznań.

³³ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 20 November 1820.

³⁴ Athanasius Raczyński, *Katalog der Raczyński'schen Bildersammlung*, Berlin 1876, 12th ed., p. 120.

³⁵ Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Kunstwerke und Künstler in England*, Berlin 1837-1839, vol. II, p. 373.

rather counted as one of the best-known antiques in the first half of the 19th century.³⁶ In Berlin it was almost ubiquitously known since an iron copy of the famous vase stood (and stands today) on the landing of the staircase in the Royal museum, now *Altes Museum*.

With respect to sculpture, Raczyński believed that the highest level of perfection had been reached in the antique and classicist periods. His ideas of 'genuine style' in painting he saw best achieved by Raphael. However, in his view several German artists, e.g. Cornelius, Wach, Begas and others even surpassed the best of Italian Renaissance painting.³⁷ By patronising these artists he hoped to direct the aesthetic appreciation of his contemporaries towards a 'true sense for style'. In the works of his favourite artists, Raczyński saw a timeless significance – 'style' as opposed to mere 'fashion'.

Necessarily, *das Gediogene* [the dignified] loses next to *dem Gefälligen* [the pleasant] and next to that to which we have become receptive through fashion. For instance, the miniature model of the 'Maison Carré de Nîmes'³⁸ would definitely lose against a centrepiece of the time of Louis XV; Poussin against Greuze, the Apollo Belvedere against a watercolour by Lenotre, a drawing by Overbeck against a watercolour by Katermole. Let the dissipations of taste (of fashion) have their *charm* and let *das Gediogene* have its lasting *value*. *Style* has always existed and will always exist: Renaissance, Rococo, plaits and wigs, Boromino, delicate and chic, can indeed please, but they must not please at the expense of *style*, of deep and pure sentiment, of purified taste, of ideal, sublime, dignified *Kunstrichtung*.³⁹

To Raczyński, baroque painting was not timeless and not dignified in the sense of his normative idea of style. This explains why he did not possess a single Dutch or Flemish baroque painting. Obviously, the count held a very idealist position. It is, however, difficult to mark the precise position of his normative ideas of beauty among the manifold idealistic positions of his time. As Frank Büttner shows, the concept of 'beauty' around which Raczyński's ideas revolve was subject to continuous discussions and changes.⁴⁰ As an amateur Raczyński

³⁶ This was due to engravings in Giovanni Battista Piranesi's *Vasi, candelabri, cippi, sarcophagi, tripodi ed ornamenti antichi*, Rome 1778.

³⁷ Konstanty Kalinowski, 'Die Bildergalerie des Grafen Athanasius Raczyński', in *Sammlung Graf Raczyński* (1992), op. cit. fn. 4, p. 28.

³⁸ Raczyński does not mention the Maison Carré by coincidence as the mausoleum in Rogalin is modelled after the Maison Carré.

³⁹ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 14 December 1844.

⁴⁰ Frank Büttner, 'Athanasius Graf Raczyński als Apologet der Kunst seiner Zeit', in *Sammlung Graf Raczyński* (1992), op. cit. fn. 4, p. 53.

developed his own concept of style – more often than not intermingling it with his political views.

The opposite of the timeless ‘beauty’ praised by Raczyński would be naturalistic representation. The latter was mainly esteemed by the bourgeoisie whose aesthetic judgements were gaining in weight.⁴¹ A conservative politically, Raczyński perceived art as revolutionary – and thus unhealthy – in works which exhibited ‘naturalistic representation’. This applied to Delacroix as well as to Turner whose ‘uneducated, ill-bred brushwork’ the count particularly disliked.⁴² In order to promote his conviction of the important role of religion for a society, Raczyński largely relied on the works of the Nazarenes he held in particularly high esteem.

MAKING POLITICS IN THE WORLD OF ART

Deeply convinced of his own position Raczyński commended his tastes to his contemporaries as the ultimate aesthetic ideal. On an international level he attempted to promote these by publishing a *Geschichte der Neueren Deutschen Kunst* (History of German Contemporary Art),⁴³ a three-volume work constituting the very first survey of contemporary German art. It appeared in print between 1837 and 1841 simultaneously in German and French, which illustrates the author’s determination to reach a European public. Raczyński personally covered all the expenses for the lavish print with a high number of illustrations himself. Apart from his intention to promote his aesthetic views, this can be seen as token of Raczyński’s allegiance to his chosen country. The count saw himself as an ambassador of German art – thus he recommended several German painters to Sir Charles Eastlake for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament in London.⁴⁴

The time when Raczyński worked for his *Geschichte der Neueren Deutschen Kunst* coincides with the time when he held no office. While

⁴¹ Karsten Borgmann, ‘Die Integrationskraft der Elite. Museumsgeschichte als Sozialgeschichte’, in *Museumsinszenierungen. Zur Geschichte der Institution des Kunstmuseums. Die Berliner Museumslandschaft 1830-1990*, ed. by Alexis Joachimides/ Sven Kuhrau, Dresden/ Basel 1995, p. 95.

⁴² Helmut Börsch-Supan, ‘Die Geschichte der Neueren Deutschen Kunst von Athanasius Graf Raczyński’, in *Beiträge zur Rezeption der Kunst des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Wulf Schadendorf, Munich 1975, p. 19.

⁴³ Athanasius Raczyński, *Geschichte der Neueren Deutschen Kunst*, Berlin 1836-41.

⁴⁴ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 28 November 1841; William Vaughan, *German Romanticism and English Art*, New Haven/ London 1979, pp. 54-56.

being refused in his desire to serve as a diplomat, Raczyński applied the arts of politics to the politics of art.

On a local level, Raczyński's almost missionary zeal in wanting to promote his artistic as well as moral convictions is indicated by his collecting policy consisting mainly in the commissioning of paintings. Moreover, the manner in which Raczyński presented his collection to visitors of his gallery can be read as a political statement, which he sought to transmit through the presentation of 'ideal' works of art exclusively, and their explanation in a didactically composed catalogue. Furthermore, his Berlin galleries were to contribute to the task of bringing the arts to flourish in Berlin, which he described as 'a desert with respect to art until 1820'.⁴⁵ Here again he assumes the role of Mæcenas. However, this princely tradition is broken up, when it comes to the function of art in the public sphere. The bourgeoisie considered art as an integral part of public education and wanted to see the mere 'decorative' banned in favour of morally intended art – so did Raczyński. Especially the view on the importance of art for the forming of 'taste' – a skill traditionally connected to the elite – had been developed by enlightenment thinkers like Johann Georg Sulzer, who now attributed to it a political dimension.⁴⁶ For Raczyński art was a means for education and moral rebirth of society. In that sense, art and art galleries were also meant to reduce the potential for revolutionary upheaval.⁴⁷ From the very beginning, his collection was thus intended to promote its owner's political ideals. In as much as he considered art, like religion, as a means of social policy, Raczyński and his public gallery came close to the bourgeois programme of art-education.⁴⁸

Much though he disapproved of bourgeois values on the political stage, Raczyński's views on arts can be described as a combination of princely and bourgeois attitudes. Possibly, his chief motivation was to set an example and to shape the art world of Berlin where bourgeois collectors only since the 1850s became increasingly influential.⁴⁹ For a long time Raczyński's collection was one of the very few private ones in

⁴⁵ Athanasius Raczyński (1836-41), op. cit. fn. 44, vol. III, p. 5.

⁴⁶ Johann Georg Sulzer, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*, 3rd ed., Frankfurt/Leipzig 1798, vol. II, p. 404.

⁴⁷ Zofia Ostrowska-Kęłbowska, 'The Gallery of Athanazy Raczyński. Some Comments on the Exhibition in the National Museum Poznań', in *Studia Muzealne*, 14, (1984), p. 25.

⁴⁸ Frank Büttner, 'Bildungsideen und bildende Kunst in Deutschland um 1800', in *Industrielle Welt*, ed. by Reinhart Kosseleck, Stuttgart 1990, pp. 259-284.

⁴⁹ Ekkehard Mai/ Peter Paret (ed.), *Sammler, Stifter und Museen. Kunstförderung in Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Köln/ Weimar 1993, p. 7.

Berlin and, indeed, served as a reference for later bourgeois collectors.⁵⁰ In fact, his gallery was one of the first collections accessible to at least a fraction of the Berlin public.⁵¹

SPACES OF DISPLAY

Altogether, Raczyński erected four buildings to house his collections – two in Poland and two in Prussia. Driven by the idea to compensate for the lack of a picture gallery in the European tradition in Poland, Raczyński commissioned a gallery building in Poznań in the late 1820s. However, his collection never went there. Raczyński was disgusted at the Polish revolutionary upheaval in 1830/31 and consequently decided to display his paintings in his imposing house at 21 *Unter den Linden* in Berlin. In 1847, he moved the collection to a newly erected Palais at the *Exerzierplatz* (since 1864 *Königsplatz*, today *Platz der Republik*) close to the Brandenburg Gate. His last gallery project – the erection of a gallery of family portraits – Raczyński undertook towards the end of his life in Gaj Mały, Poland.

BEYOND POLISH PREFERENCES – A EUROPEAN PICTURE GALLERY FOR POZNAŃ

Influenced by his brother Edward, Athanazy initially decided to display his collection of paintings in Poznań. A few years earlier, Edward had built a public library on Poznań's prominent *Wilhelmsplatz* (today *plac Wolności*) and donated it to the town complete with a collection of 21.000 volumes of books as well as a manuscript collection relating to Polish history.⁵² Originally, the brothers intended to erect the gallery building as a pendant to the library in order to form a centre for the arts and sciences. Due to problems with the Prussian authorities, however, the gallery finally had to be built as a wing to the library.⁵³ [ill. 1] The gallery building, believed to have been designed by Karl

⁵⁰ Karsten Borgmann (1995), op. cit. fn. 42, p. 98.

⁵¹ Besides Raczyński's gallery only the galleries of Ravené and of Wagener were accessible to the public by the 1850s.

⁵² Architects of the library built in 1820/21 were presumably the French Pierre-François Léonard Fontaine and Charles Percier. [Zofia Ostrowska-Kęłbowska, *Architektura i budownictwo w Poznaniu w latach 1780-1880*, Warszawa/ Poznań, 1982, p. 204].

⁵³ Zofia Ostrowska-Kęłbowska (1982), op. cit. fn. 35, p. 205.

Friedrich Schinkel, was completed in 1829.⁵⁴ Unlike the library, it does not exist any longer. Slightly lower than the library, the gallery wing was an elongated building on a rectangular ground with a regularly structured facade and a hidden roof. Two exhibition rooms with high ceilings were situated above a rusticated ground floor.⁵⁵ On the gallery floor, there were four large windows flanked by sculptures in niches.



1. Library and Gallery Raczyński in Poznań around 1830, in *Wspomnienia Wielkopolskie* III, 1843

Raczyński's plan to erect an exhibition building exclusively devoted to pictures was without precedent in Poland. All other collections displayed in publicly accessible museum-like spaces consisted of a mixture of paintings, furniture, armour and other objects. Raczyński was the first to install a Western European model of a public picture gallery in Poland.

Originally, Edward and Athanazy had planned to arrange their private flats in this cultural complex, thus achieving a connection between living space and exhibition space, a concept that was to remain an important aspect for Athanazy's subsequent gallery projects. This type of a 'residence-museum',⁵⁶ developed by members of the old ruling

⁵⁴ Zofia Ostrowska-Kęmbłowska (1982), op. cit. fn. 35, p. 204.

⁵⁵ Arthur Kronthal, 'Die Raczyński'sche Bibliothek', in Bernhard Franke (ed.), *Die Residenzstadt Posen und ihre Verwaltung im Jahre 1911*, Poznań 1911, p. 379.

⁵⁶ Zofia Ostrowska-Kęmbłowska (1980), op. cit. fn. 4, p. 61; Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, 'Museums and national identity in Poland', in *Art and National Identity in*

class, was important for the history of museums in Poland, where the governments of the occupying powers were opposed to the foundation of public institutions such as museums and were, indeed, often suspicious of such foundations as hotbeds of nationalism. Using residential buildings for exhibitions therefore proved a patent method to circumvent this difficulty.

Although the building was completed, Athanazy's art collection, then stored in his castle in Zawada, never went to Poznań and the joint project of the 'Poznań Medici'⁵⁷ did not succeed. Apart from the insecurities arising from the political upheavals in Poland, the divergent concepts of the two brothers concerning their role as Mæcenas contributed to Athanazy's resolution that his part of the project, the creation of a European gallery of paintings similar to the royal collections elsewhere, was unlikely to succeed. In contrast to Edward's collection of books and manuscripts focussing on Polish history, Athanazy's collection of European paintings may have fallen foul of Polish national preferences for patriotic motivated collections, as they existed in Kórnik and Puławy.⁵⁸ Athanazy was not interested in a site of national trophies. His 'feelings as a Pole' were, as he said, 'affected by [his] feelings as a member of the European Society'.⁵⁹ Educated in the aristocratic spirit of the 18th century, his ideal was a Europe of an educated elite transcending national and political borders. Following such a supranational concept, Athanazy committed himself to the tradition of the European art museum, whereas Edward felt obliged to supporting specifically Polish culture and history. Therefore, it cannot be accidental that Edward's library building and not the gallery is modelled on the facade of the *Louvre* as a Nation's cultural institution per se. Although in terms of politics, Edward did not adhere to revolutionary ideas, when he established his library as a Polish national institution open for literally everyone, his position was much more 'democratic' than the one of his brother.

Poland and England, papers delivered at the University of London History of Art conference, April 1995, ed. by Anna Kwilecka/ Francis Ames-Lewis, Birckbeck College, London 1996, pp. 157-163.

⁵⁷ It was Edward's wife, Konstancja Raczyńska, who used the phrase 'Poznań Medici' in a letter to Athanazy dated 21 June 1834, in *Lettres d'Edouard 1843-1838* [Archive of the National Museum Poznań]; Anna Dobrzycka, *Poznańscy Medyceusze. Rodziny portret Raczyńskich*, in *Studia Muzealne*, 12, (1977), pp. 115-119.

⁵⁸ Zofia Ostrowska-Kęblińska (1980), op. cit. fn. 4, pp. 62, 64, 66-71.

⁵⁹ Athanazy to his sister-in-law Konstancja Raczyńska, 23 December 1830 [Archive of the National Museum Poznań].

Despite Athanazy's decision against displaying his collection in Poznań, he continued to be involved in the cultural life of the town.⁶⁰ The gallery building was now used for exhibitions of contemporary paintings organised by the *Kunstverein* (Art Association) of Poznań.⁶¹ Founded in 1836, it was the first *Kunstverein* in the whole of Poland and one of the very few associations in the Great Duchy to have both Prussian and Polish members. Raczyński's crucial involvement with the *Kunstverein* – he served as a member of the selection committee and a contributor to catalogues – demonstrates his commitment to such Prussian-Polish reconciliation in the cultural realm.

WITHIN PRUSSIAN SOCIETY – THE GALLERY *UNTER DEN LINDEN* IN BERLIN

In contrast to Poland, the Prussian state had its royal picture collection, which from 1830 onwards was accessible to the public in Berlin's first purpose-built museum.⁶² Thus, Raczyński's 'royal' collection was not needed for official use, which brought about a change in his collecting policy.

Raczyński's house in Berlin was situated at *21 Unter den Linden*,⁶³ the city's most prominent boulevard and the main westerly approach to the *Stadtschloß* (residence). Raczyński had acquired the building in 1834 when he had returned from Copenhagen. Schinkel extended the baroque house and created a gallery space.

The hanging of the pictures was completed on 2 August 1836.⁶⁴ A portrait of the Raczyński family in the gallery room gives a detailed view of the display of the pictures in the gallery. Moreover, the portrait

⁶⁰ In 1834 Raczyński wanted to sell the gallery building to the town, which, however lacked money. Until the alteration of the building in 1845/46 exhibitions took place in the gallery. Finally the hotel *Dresdner Hof* was arranged in the building.

⁶¹ Magdalena Warkoczewska, 'Towarzystwo Sztuk Pięknych w Poznaniu w latach 1837-1848', in *Studia Muzealne*, 9, (1972), pp. 7-20.

⁶² Schinkel's Royal Museum was opened on 3 August 1830. It has been named *Altes Museum* (Old Museum) since the erection of the *Neues Museum* (New Museum) in the mid-19th century.

⁶³ The site later became no. 36 *Unter den Linden*. Since the end of the Second World War the house no longer exists. [Margarethe Kühn (ed.), *Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Lebenswerk, 11, part 3, Bauten für Wissenschaft, Verwaltung, Heer, Wohnbau und Denkmäler*, Munich 1981, pp. 237-238].

⁶⁴ 'My gallery of paintings is finished. Today, I completed the placement of the paintings. Tomorrow at the King's birthday I will celebrate its inauguration'. [Raczyński diaries, entry for 2 August 1836].



2. Carl Adolph Henning, *Portrait of the Raczyński-family*, (1839), oil/ canvas, 308 x 200 cm, National Museum Poznań

painted by Adolph Henning in 1839 indicates Athanazy's self-understanding in the cultural field.

The painting shows Athanazy standing in the foreground next to his brother Edward sitting in a chair. [ill. 2] In the background stand the

brothers' sons Charles and Roger.⁶⁵ The books on the table are Edward's *Polnisches Medaillenkabinett* (Polish cabinet of gems) and his *Reise in die Türkei* (Journey to Turkey). On top of the books we see a model of the monument of the first Polish Piasts Mieczysław and Bolesław by Christian Daniel Rauch, which Edward had commissioned.⁶⁶ The composition of the portrait not only intends to celebrate the great patronage of artists by the two brothers, it also shows the different areas of their commitment in the cultural field. Athanazy's sphere are the paintings and the gallery, whereas Edward is concerned with research in and support of Polish history and culture.

The pictures in the gallery room were presented on a wall painted in red. As Raczyński was well informed on the discussions concerning the arrangement of Berlin's Royal Museum, it is likely that he followed in his gallery some of Schinkel's recommendations for that museum. Schinkel had visited the painter François Gérard in Paris, who believed that museum walls in a *sang de boeuf* were preferable to a green-greyish colour mixture, which was perceived inappropriate for a *Kunstheiliges* (shrine of art).⁶⁷ For the embellishment of the museum's interior, Schinkel and Alois Hirt had therefore recommended to the king a coat of paint in dark red for the walls.

Raczyński hung the pictures tilted in order to get better lighting conditions. Exactly like in the Paris *Salon* which the count had frequently visited a wooden strip supported the paintings. As all the paintings shown in the portrait can be identified, it seems probable that Raczyński had a definite arrangement in mind, which clearly differed from the 'gentlemen's hang', still common in 19th century private galleries.

The fact that the family portrait only depicts contemporary paintings emphasizes the importance of Raczyński's patronage and his conviction that German contemporary art stood on the verge of an extraordinary flowering. The portrait also shows how the pictures were displayed. The display as depicted by Henning corresponds with the list

⁶⁵ Athanazy Raczyński, *Katalog der Familienporträts in Gay*, Berlin 1866, p. 22; Anna Dobrzycka (1977), op. cit. fn. 58, pp. 115-120.

⁶⁶ Edouard Raczyński, *Bericht über den Ausbau der Grabkapelle Mieszko des Tapferen zu Posen*, Poznań 1845.

⁶⁷ Manuscript by Schinkel and Hirt printed and commented in Reinhard Wegner, 'Die Einrichtung des Alten Museums in Berlin. Anmerkungen zu einem neu entdeckten Schinkel-Dokument', in *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 31, (1989), pp. 271-284; for Schinkel's experiences in Paris and Gérard's recommendations see Gottfried Riemann, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Reise nach England, Schottland und Paris im Jahre 1826*, Berlin 1986, p. 102.

of the picture hanging Raczyński gave in his diary.⁶⁸ On the wall with the door, the paintings were hung in two rows, each containing old and modern art.⁶⁹ The display started from the left with Old Masters leading to the contemporary works which began approximately half way down the room.⁷⁰ As we can see in the portrait, the modern paintings reached down to the doorway.⁷¹

The whole arrangement – with the Old Masters leading to the modern ones – emphasized the collector's conviction that German art directly succeeded the best of Italian art. Of what artistic flight German art was capable, Raczyński demonstrated even more on the narrow side of the gallery room, shown in the background. The wall was entirely covered by Wilhelm von Kaulbach's internationally celebrated *Battle of the Huns*.⁷² The wall facing the four men was occupied by three large paintings: Antonio Canaletto's *Election of the Polish King*, Bernardo Strozzi's *Abduction of Europe*, and Jacopo and Francesco Bassano's *Forge of Vulcan*. Opened in 1836, the year when the first volume of the *Geschichte der Neueren Deutschen Kunst* was published, Raczyński's gallery was the living testimony and realisation of the principles advanced in his book.

Truly a monarchist, Raczyński celebrated the opening of his gallery with a dinner on the birthday of the Prussian King. On the guest list were illustrious members of Berlin's cultural life with good connections to the court, such as van der Haagen,⁷³ Gustav Waagen⁷⁴, the sculptor

⁶⁸ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 2 August 1836.

⁶⁹ Thus, Schlagenhauff's assertion of an 'hierarchical hanging of the collection' which 'placed the old masters and a few moderns in a top row, the remaining moderns below' is incorrect. [Annette D. Schlagenhauff, *Capital Concerns: German Perceptions of French Art in Berlin, 1830-1855*, Ph.D. thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 2001, p. 104].

⁷⁰ Jagemann, 'Die Gemäldesammlung des Grafen Raczyński in Berlin', in *Allgemeines Organ*, 2, (October 1842), no. 40, p. 190.

⁷¹ Visible on the wall to the left are the following paintings: a portrait of Athanazy's wife Annette by Carl Wilhelm Wach, a portrait of his son Charles painted by Carl Begas the Older, the painting *Pilgrims in the desert* by Stilke, *Sixtus V as Shepherd* by Schnetz, *Praying Roman Women* by Maes, which was removed from the gallery later on. Also visible is Wach's *Head of Maria* and *Les Moissonneurs* by Leopold Robert.

⁷² Kaulbach's huge *Battle of the Huns*, was regarded as 'one of the greatest curiosities' and as a 'jewel' of Berlin. [Jagemann, 'Kaulbach', in *Allgemeines Organ*, 2, (October 1842), no. 40, pp. 157-8; Jagemann, 'Die Gemäldesammlung des Grafen Raczyński in Berlin', in *Allgemeines Organ*, 2, no. 40, pp. 190, 196]. The Cartoon was finally executed as a fresco in Berlin's *Neuem Museum*.

⁷³ Van der Haagen was professor for German literature and, like Raczyński, active member of Berlin's *Wissenschaftlicher Kunstverein* (Academic Art Association).

⁷⁴ Gustav Friedrich Waagen was director of Berlin's Royal Museum.

Christian Daniel Rauch, the painters Wach and Begas, a senior member of the Prussian military and a priest. Later, Bettina von Arnim would rent parts of the house and invite politicians, academics and artists.⁷⁵ With Raczyński's gallery and Arnim's open house, 21 *Unter den Linden* became a pleasurable site in Berlin's cultural life.⁷⁶

It is questionable whether this kind of socialising served Raczyński's career as much as he might have hoped. Especially during the *Kölner Kirchenstreit*,⁷⁷ his badly desired diplomatic career in Prussia was impeded by his Polish and catholic background. 'My nationality, my religion alarms people in the government, or it seems to be a reason for them which serves to exclude me'.⁷⁸ Judging by Franz Krüger's painting *Parade on the Opernplatz 1837* (1939), which shows Raczyński in a group of spectators among Schinkel, Wach, Waagen, Wagener and Beuth,⁷⁹ Prussia's public neither perceived Raczyński as a politician nor as a member of the ruling class, but instead as a prominent figure in the world of art.⁸⁰ In this world, he was an amateur and a connoisseur, much in the princely tradition, and not a professional or academic art-historian. This somewhat ambivalent position makes it all the more remarkable that Raczyński attempted to create an exemplary collection, to establish standards in presentation and even to use art as a means for promoting political ideas. This is most apparent in his second gallery project in Berlin.

TRUE TASTE FOR A 'HEALTHY' SOCIETY – THE GALLERY AT THE KÖNIGSPLATZ

Raczyński had for a long time set his sight on a new home for his steadily growing collection. An opportunity arose when Peter Joseph Lenné carried out alterations to the *Tiergarten*-park.⁸¹ North of the *Tiergarten*, very close to the Brandenburg Gate, a huge, sandy *Exerzierplatz*

⁷⁵ Bettina von Arnim was the sister of the poet Clemens Brentano. She became famous in 1835 when she published her correspondence with the much older Goethe.

⁷⁶ Irmgard Wirth, *Berliner Biedermeier*, Berlin 1972, p. 112.

⁷⁷ The so-called *Kölner Kirchenstreit* was a religious controversy following the imprisonment of the archbishop of Cologne by the Prussian state in 1837.

⁷⁸ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 26 February 1838.

⁷⁹ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 26 November 1839.

⁸⁰ Angelika Wesenberg, 'Raczyński in Berlin' in *Sammlung Graf Raczyński* (1992), op. cit. fn. 4, p. 70.

⁸¹ Harri Günther/ Sibylle Harksen, *Peter Joseph Lenné, Pläne für Berlin, Bestandskatalog der Lennépläne in der Plankammer der Staatlichen Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci*, part 3, Berlin/ Potsdam 1989, p. 36.

(square for military training) was situated.⁸² Inspired by the experience of a beer hall the king had visited in Breslau, Frederick William IV commissioned the architect Ludwig Persius to erect the *Etablissement Kroll* on the Western side of the place, which was to become a scintillating place for entertainment in Berlin.⁸³ When in 1844 Lenné had to alter the square, he needed a building to stand as a pendant to the *Etablissement Kroll*. This was how Raczyński's gallery came into being:

I had dinner at the King's place. ... He told me that he took a lively interest in my gallery. In his name, Lenné offered me a site close to the Brandenburg Gate which I consider to be 'delicieux'. The King said to me that this would be an embellishment of the park.⁸⁴

The King allocated the Eastern side of the *Exerzierplatz* to Raczyński by direct cabinet order of 30 March 1842. Through a legal construct, called *Nießbrauch* (usufruct), Raczyński obtained the right to use and build on the site whilst the property itself remained in state ownership. According to the contract, the collector had to commit himself to fund the building and its maintenance.⁸⁵ Although it was not stated that Raczyński was expected to make his art collection accessible to the public, such an expectation was implicit in the requirement for him to arrange his picture gallery in the new building; he was also not allowed to remove more than one third of the collection from the site. Directly adjacent to Raczyński's gallery the king wanted to see studios for artists. The architect Johann Heinrich Strack drew up plans for all the buildings.⁸⁶ Although on historic maps the whole complex is called *Galerie Raczyński*, it was only the middle part, No. 2 *Königsplatz*, which was actually occupied by the Count. [ill. 3] The Northern and Southern parts were not administrated by him but by the *Ministerium für Geistliche, Unterrichts- und Medizinal-Angelegenheiten* (Ministry of Religion, Education and Medicine). The buildings were erected between 1844 and

⁸² *Platz der Republik. Vom Exerzierplatz zum Regierungsviertel*, ex.cat., ed. by Michael S. Cullen/ Gerd Müller, Landesarchiv Berlin, Berlin 1992.

⁸³ Michael S. Cullen, *Der Reichstag. Parlament – Denkmal – Symbol*, Berlin 1995, pp. 22-26.

⁸⁴ Raczyński to his brother Edward, in *Raczyński diaries* 14 March 1842.

⁸⁵ Contract between Raczyński and the Prussian State, in *Bauakte Raczyński*, Landesarchiv Berlin, Rep. 202, Acc. 2068, Nr. 4195.

⁸⁶ Berlin, Plansammlung der Technischen Universität, *Strack-Nachlass*, two original plans for the building by Strack, TU 17117 and TU 17118. The plans even had been exhibited at the second German congress of architects in Bamberg in 1842. [Anon., 'Die zweite Versammlung deutscher Architekten und Ingenieure, gehalten in Bamberg an den Tagen des achten, neunten und zehnten September 1843', in *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 8, (1843), p. 279].



3. Eduard Gerhardt, The Palais Raczyński in Berlin, (1852), watercolour, 22 x 38 cm, National Museum Poznań

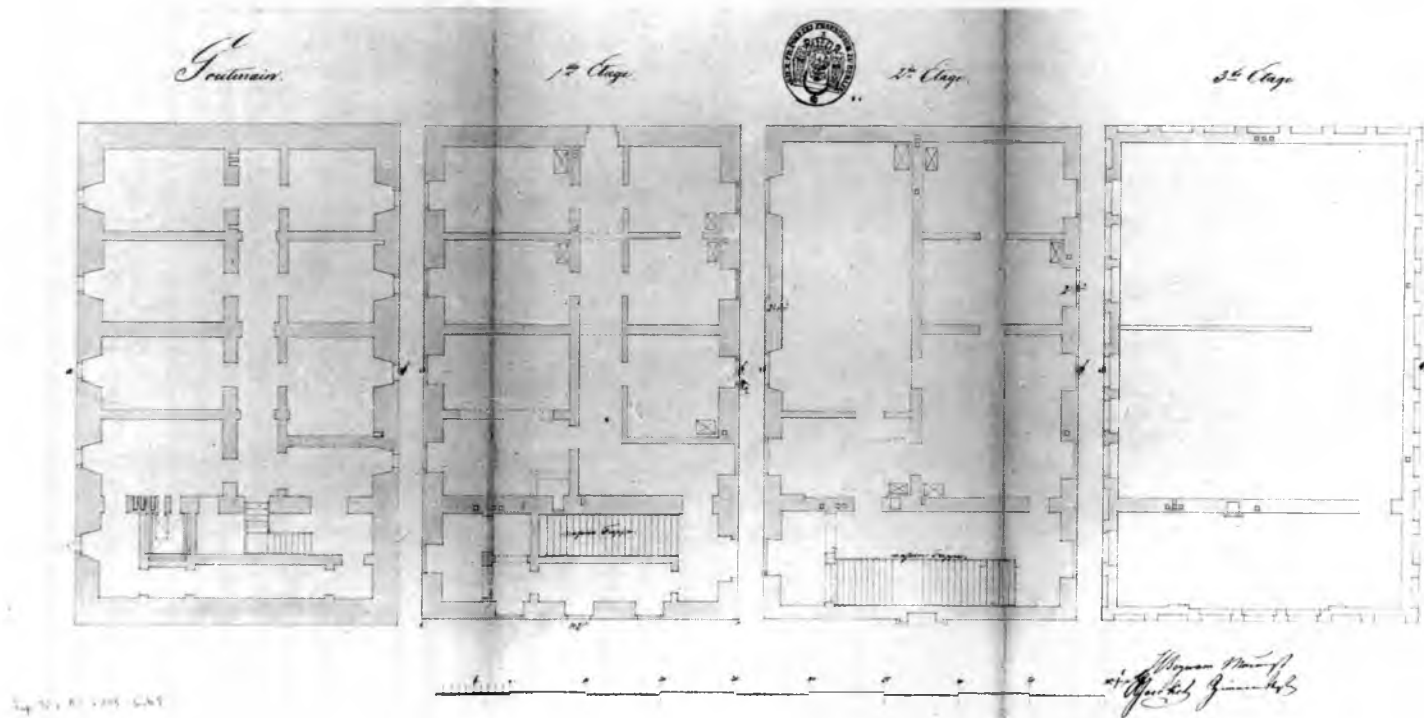
1847. The painter Peter Cornelius, whose employment in Prussia had been strongly supported by Raczyński, occupied the Southern complex.⁸⁷ Painters holding state scholarships were invited to work in the Northern part.⁸⁸ Thus, Raczyński, whose model as art patron was Ludwig I of Bavaria,⁸⁹ collaborated with the Prussian monarch in creating a cultural centre. Moreover, he posed in the tradition of princely patronage and collecting, his arms on the facade of the Palais proudly proclaiming his family's cultural leadership.

Strack's tripartite group of houses consisted of two corner-buildings and a higher middle part, connected by open arcaded galleries made of light brick and decorated with terracotta tondos. Except for the arcades,

⁸⁷ Cornelius executed in these studios the cartons for the planned *Campo Santo*, which finally was not put into reality.

⁸⁸ Between 1847 and 1853 the painters Herrmann, Schubert, Kaselowski, Teschner, Cretius, Gräfe, Engelbrecht and Schröder as well as the sculptors Franz and Stürmer used the studios. [Michael S. Cullen (1992), *op. cit.* fn. 83, p. 32].

⁸⁹ Athanase Raczyński, *Les Arts en Portugal*, Paris 1846, p. 76.



4. H. Beymann/A. Jaeckel, Palais Raczyński, plans (1844), drawing, 66,5 × 62 cm, in *Bauakte Raczyński*, Landesarchiv Berlin, Kartenabteilung, signature A 3138

the brickwork of the whole ensemble was plastered. Strack expressed the museum character of the middle part by giving it the shape of a temple with an open row of pilasters under the ledge of the roof and a crowning pediment. Raczyński's gallery towering over the middle building was decorated with an aedicule and several sculptures. Placing the temple on a high socle evoked the impression of an ancient monument, such as, for instance, the mausoleum Halikarnassus.⁹⁰ One is also reminded of architectural monuments designed by Frederick Gilly or Leo von Klenze.⁹¹

On the ground floor were the porter's lodge, kitchen, working areas, and storage rooms.⁹² [ill. 4] Raczyński's apartments including a salon measuring sixty square metres, which had three windows opening towards the river Spree, took up the second floor. The entire third floor was reserved for the gallery. Behind the house, additional premises accommodated servants' quarters, stables and mews.⁹³

A characteristic example of Strack's early work, the building stands in the tradition of the plain style of the school founded by his teacher Schinkel.⁹⁴ Raczyński very much appreciated Strack's creation when he saw the completed building during a visit from Portugal: 'I arrived here yesterday evening at 6 o'clock. I found my house completed. I like it infinitely. It is very comfortable, the gallery satisfied me.'⁹⁵ Architectural critics generally commented very positively on the building – at least before Raczyński commissioned Strack to add wings to the Palais in 1866/67, replacing half of the arcades on either side of the building.⁹⁶ [ill. 5]

If any building of this whole epoch displayed a connection with Schinkel's spirit, it was the group of buildings on the *Königsplatz*. It showed the noblest sense of form and a *gediegenes* classical treatment until a few years ago a clumsy enlargement of the house in the middle unfortunately destroyed the beauty of the balanced relations irrevocably.⁹⁷

⁹⁰ Irmgard Wirth, *Die Bauwerke und Kunstdenkmäler von Berlin. Bezirk Tiergarten*, Berlin 1955, pp. 147-149.

⁹¹ Zofia Ostrowska-Kęłbowska (1980), op. cit. fn. 4, p. 77.

⁹² Michael S. Cullen (1984), op. cit. fn. 4, p. 32.

⁹³ *Bauakte Raczyński*, sheet 12, plan of the building site by Holzmann (1847).

⁹⁴ Eva Börsch-Supan, *Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel 1840-1870*, Munich 1977, p. 691.

⁹⁵ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 14 March 1847.

⁹⁶ *Bauakte Raczyński*, op. cit. fn. 86, sheets 26, 36, 43.

⁹⁷ Alfred Woltmann, *Die Baugeschichte Berlins bis auf die Gegenwart*, Berlin 1872, p. 247.

The gallery was open to the public daily between 12 am and 2 pm;⁹⁸ admission cost 7½ *Silbergroschen*, which included a copy of the catalogue.⁹⁹ By comparison, the royal museum, also open daily, was free of charge, except on Tuesdays and on Wednesdays when it was reserved for artists.¹⁰⁰ Many private galleries were accessible exclusively by appointment, and often only displayed parts of the collections.¹⁰¹



5. Palais Raczyński after its enlargement, (1881), photograph, 35,5 × 27 cm, Berlin, in Michael S. Cullen, *Vom Exercierplatz zum Platz der Republik*, ex.cat, Landesarchiv Berlin 1992, ill. III/10

As the visitor entered the Palais, he saw new and old glass paintings in the windows, which must have created extraordinary lighting effects.¹⁰² Presumably, this church-like illumination, which fitted Raczyński's preferred *Nazarenes* and his perception of art of quasi-religious significance, was meant to attune visitors to the 'high art' displayed under the temple's roof.¹⁰³ Visitors to his gallery had to climb a staircase

⁹⁸ Max Schasler, *Berlins Kunstschatze, 2, Die Öffentlichen und Privat-Kunstsammlungen, Kunstinstitute und Ateliers der Künstler und Kunstindustriellen von Berlin*, Berlin 1856, p. 284.

⁹⁹ A. Woldt (ed.), *Neuester Fremdenführer durch Berlin. Nebst einem Stadtplan und einer Karte der Umgebung Berlins*, Berlin 1868, p. 23. A sum of 7 *Silbergroschen* was enough for two journeys through Berlin by the horse-bus. [*Neuester Fremdenführer durch Berlin*, 2nd ed. Berlin 1848, p. 20].

¹⁰⁰ A. Woldt (1868), op. cit. fn. 100, p. 36.

¹⁰¹ A. Woldt (1868), op. cit. fn. 100, p. 40.

¹⁰² Max Schasler (1856), op. cit. fn. 99, p. 284.

¹⁰³ Raczyński had purchased many paintings on glass already in the 1820s. [Poznań, archive of the National Museum, *Libri Veritatis, Verzeichnis der Gemäldeinkäufe; Raczyński diaries*, entry for 1 September 1820].

painted with frescoes by Michael Echter, Wilhem Peters and Julius Detmers.¹⁰⁴ On top of the stairs, the visitor was welcomed by Thorwaldsen's marble sculpture *Ganymed*.¹⁰⁵



6. Palais Raczyński, (1852), photograph, 25 × 19 cm, [Landes-Bildstelle Berlin, Rep. 250, Acc. 2374, Rep. 394] in Michael S. Cullen, *Vom Exerzierplatz zum Platz der Republik*, ex.cat, Landesarchiv Berlin 1992, ill. III/4

When entering the gallery through a rather narrow door the visitor found himself in a room of almost 200 square metres split into two parts by a dividing wall which did not reach the ceiling. In order to avoid unflattering light one window above the wall was left out which indicates that the wall was part of the initial plan. None of the walls had windows except the wall on the North side, where windows reached from the height of five metres to the ceiling two metres above. Additional light entered through skylights displaying the paintings in a very

¹⁰⁴ Subjects of the frescoes were a Sybil after a drawing by Overbeck, an Eritrean Sybil, an allegory after Kaulbach, Saint Lucas, the Vision of Ezekiel and some arabesques. [Poznań, archive of the National Museum, *Libri Veritatis, correspondence with artists 1855-1858*, sheet 51 onwards.

¹⁰⁵ Max Schasler (1856), op. cit. fn. 99, p. 284; for Thorwaldsen's sculpture see Anna Dobrzycka, 'Ganymède: trois lettres inédites de Thorwaldsen à Athanase Raczyński', in *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie*, 7, (1966), no. 1, p. 31.

favourable light, according to contemporaries.¹⁰⁶ As a photograph of 1852 indicates, top lighting had been planned from the beginning. [ill. 6] In that respect Raczyński's gallery surpassed the Royal Picture Gallery, which had been frequently criticised for its deficient lighting.



7. Athanazy Raczyński, Sketch of part of a gallery wall in the Palais (1863), in *Libri Veritatis*, Archive of the National Museum Poznań

It is impossible to fully reconstruct the hang of the pictures. The position of but a few paintings is known: *Father Rhine* by Schwind, for instance, occupied the space below the windows in the part of the gallery where the visitor entered.¹⁰⁷ Since Raczyński had his entire collection on display the paintings hung closely together. The collector had carefully planned the hanging. This can be concluded from a sketch of part of one gallery wall dated 1863 when Raczyński considered purchasing a picture by Orcagna. [ill. 7] The sketch suggests that the order of pictures in the catalogues corresponded with the actual hang. Thus the visitor would be guided through the exhibition by the catalogue divided by schools: An

¹⁰⁶ Max Schasler (1856), op. cit. fn. 99, p. 281.

¹⁰⁷ Athanasius Raczyński (1876), op. cit. fn. 35, p. 24.

overview of contemporary German history painting was followed by Schadow's Düsseldorf school and the German Romantics. This led the visitor to the old Italian schools and some old German works, which must have hung in the second part of the gallery. There, the Spanish paintings were also displayed, together with a mixture of old and modern paintings from France and the Netherlands.

As his *Geschichte der Neueren Deutschen Kunst* shows, Raczyński was well informed about the controversies concerning the hanging of the royal collection in the *Altes Museum*. The Count neither agreed with the hanging policy of the museum nor with the state's general policy in the field of art: 'the arts in Berlin are in a terrible state despite the zeal of the king: but there is a remedy for everything and if I were charged with this task, I believe, I would raise them from the dead quite soon.' As for Berlin's museum, he lamented in particular the filling of its right wing

with old relics of history and of anti-Raphaelite art, which are so ugly that they would scare children. There is no need to cover all the walls entirely with paintings. Sacrifice 5, 6, or 7 sections to these strange items, lock them up properly so that they cannot be stolen, and let the visitors only see paintings which won't make them hate the arts.¹⁰⁸

Raczyński opposed the principle of display promoted particularly by the museum's director Waagen, by which specific aesthetic values were subordinated to historical considerations.¹⁰⁹ The concept of the chronological hang had been introduced in the *Altes Museum* by the art-historian Heinrich Gustav Hotho in 1840.¹¹⁰ Waagen's historical survey collection inevitably included works of second-rate quality.¹¹¹ Raczyński by contrast did not seek to display art history from antiquity to the present, as this would force him to compromise his aesthetic preferences. His museum would exhibit only the best examples of the best schools:

A museum is a temple of taste. It does not have to be either complete or ordered chronologically, especially if this can only be achieved at the expense of taste. ... In my opinion, the main goal of a gallery seems to be to give pleasure to those

¹⁰⁸ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 3 November 1843.

¹⁰⁹ For the early controversies concerning the hanging of the pictures in Berlin's royal picture gallery see Christoph M. Vogtherr, 'Zwischen Norm und Kunstgeschichte. Wilhelm von Humboldts Denkschrift von 1829 zur Hängung in der Berliner Gemäldegalerie', in *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 34, (1992), pp. 53-64; Stephen Moyano, 'Quality vs History: Schinkel's Altes Museum and Prussian Arts Policy', in *Art Bulletin*, 72, (December 1990), no. 4, pp. 585-608.

¹¹⁰ Elisabeth Ziemer, *Heinrich Gustav Hotho 1802-1873. Ein Berliner Kunsthistoriker, Kunstkritiker und Philosoph*, Berlin 1994, p. 262.

¹¹¹ Gabriele Bickendorf, 'Gustav Friedrich Waagen und der Historismus in der Kunstgeschichte', in *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 37, (1995), p. 32.

who already have taste and to develop that faculty in those who lack it; and with those who are in the possession of taste, to exercise it.¹¹²

Despite his criticism, the *Altes Museum* clearly affected the way Raczyński arranged his own collection. He certainly adopted the idea of employing a picture restorer.¹¹³ Moreover, the Royal Museum had put up signs explaining the hang, the name of the artists, titles and subjects of the pictures in each room.¹¹⁴ Raczyński marked his paintings more selectively: those he considered exemplary of his aesthetic thought, such as Overbeck's *Sposalizio*, had the artists' name inscribed on the frame.

While Frederick William IV had his collection of twenty portraits showing bearers of the *Orden pour le mérite für die Verdienste um die Wissenschaft und die Künste* (order for merits in science and art; introduced 1842) on display at the Potsdam *Marmorpalais*,¹¹⁵ Raczyński commissioned half-length portraits of his favourite artists since 1847, which were all displayed in the same row in the gallery.¹¹⁶ Raczyński's gallery attempted to set out a coherent artistic and educational programme showing the achievements of art in Germany and leading the way for future developments. This was accentuated when he placed full-length terracotta statues of his chosen representatives of 'true taste' in the fields of architecture, sculpture and painting on the roof of his enlarged Palais in 1868/89. From left to right these were statues of Cornelius, Overbeck, Kaulbach and Carstens on top of the left wing, and Rauch, Schinkel, Thorwaldsen and Schadow on top of the right.¹¹⁷

The catalogue which was published in twelve editions between 1839 and 1876 also promulgated Raczyński's views on art. Although publishing a catalogue for a private collection was not exceptional in itself,¹¹⁸

¹¹² Athanasius Raczyński (1836-41), op. cit. fn. 44, vol. III, pp. 18-19.

¹¹³ Reinhard Wegner (1989), op. cit. fn. 68, p. 275. Restorer in Raczyński's gallery was the Polish painter Edward Stanisław Czarnikow.

¹¹⁴ A. Woldt (1868), op. cit. fn. 100, p. 23.

¹¹⁵ *Friedrich Wilhelm IV. Künstler und König zum 200. Geburtstag*, ex. cat. ed. by Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, 1995, p. 192

¹¹⁶ Max Schasler, (1856), op. cit. fn. 99, p. 288. Raczyński had been commissioned portraits of the following artists: Rauch, Schinkel, Wach, Cornelius, Overbeck, Kaulbach, Schadow and Thorwaldsen [Athansius Raczyński, (1876), op. cit. fn. 35, p. 27].

¹¹⁷ Poznań, archive of the National Museum, *Libri Veritatis, correspondence with artists*, correspondence with the *Tonfabrikant March* from 26 March 1869 including a sketch for the arrangement of the sculptures on the roof. Artists of the sculptures were Franz, Blaeser, Drake, Stürmer and Encke [*Libri Veritatis, Statuen an meinem Hause*].

¹¹⁸ Two years earlier, in 1837, the art-historian Franz Kugler had written a catalogue for the collection of Wagener in Berlin, which might have influenced Raczyński in the set up of his own catalogue. [Paul Ortwin Rave (ed.) *Kunst in Berlin*, Berlin 1965, p. 142].

Raczyński's catalogues stand apart from those of comparable collectors such as Count Schack in Munich¹¹⁹ and demonstrate a much more academic approach to collecting and displaying. For example, he depicted a full sized reproduction of an inscription on one of the paintings in his catalogue.¹²⁰ Containing up to 125 pages in the later editions, the catalogues provided the visitor with information about the artists and the size, provenance and price of paintings though the author was less than consistent in offering these details. Often, information on the quality and the extent of the restoration of his pictures is included. Occasionally, Raczyński aimed to give proof of the authenticity of paintings by quoting the *Libri Veritatis* or his correspondence with experts. The count even informed his readers where the *Libri* were stored: in the socle underneath Byström's marble vase.¹²¹

As Raczyński used not only German and French in his quotations but also cited Spanish, Italian and English letters the catalogue addressed a rather select, intellectual audience. Raczyński even tutored his readers in the pronunciation of certain foreign names.¹²² Altogether, his catalogues demonstrate how well informed Raczyński was about developments and controversies in Europe's art world. Apart from that, they draw a lively picture of his intellectual life, his collecting activities, his travelling and ambitions.

Raczyński's project was without parallel in Europe. No other private collection was such a shrine of learning and exemplary good taste, combining the owner's home with a perfect art museum.¹²³ The whole was meant to function as a model for both, the stately museums whose policy of collecting and ways of display Raczyński disapproved as well as for the new type of bourgeois collector of industrial wealth. The latter were thereby encouraged to take princely collectors such as count Raczyński as their point of reference.¹²⁴ The Polish count contributed distinctly to the development of the art landscape in Berlin. His gallery surpassed the state museums when it came to the exhibition of contemporary German art. Even the King's collection of contemporary paintings, open to the public since 1844 at castle *Bellevue*, was rather

¹¹⁹ Adolf Graf von Schack, *Meine Gemäldesammlung*, Stuttgart 1891, 6th edition.

¹²⁰ In question is an inscription on the frame of a *Crucifixion* by the Netherlandish school of the 15th century. Raczyński printed a facsimile of the inscription in the catalogue and quoted his correspondence with an expert for these topics. Also, he translated the inscription. [Athanasius Raczyński (1876), op. cit. fn. 35, pp. 45-48]

¹²¹ Athanasius Raczyński (1876), op. cit. fn. 35, p. 123.

¹²² Raczyński explained, for instance, in a footnote, how to pronounce the name 'Carreño da Miranda' [Athanasius Raczyński (1876), op. cit. fn. 35, p. 73].

¹²³ Zofia Ostrowska-Kęłbowska (1980), op. cit. fn. 4, p. 76.

¹²⁴ Karsten Borgmann (1995), op. cit. fn. 42, p. 98.

provisory in terms of presentation and display and did moreover lack the political impetus of Raczyński's gallery.¹²⁵ With his gallery the count was engaged in politics on a socio-cultural field by promoting 'true taste' in order to achieve a politically 'healthy' thus non-revolutionary society. In that educational respect, Raczyński adhered to the bourgeois concept of the museum as a moral institution whilst at the same time using it to enhance his political and social reputation. It almost seems as an irony of fate that Raczyński's institution of high culture and true taste was situated as a pendant to the *Etablissement Kroll* which offered easy entertainment and, moreover, became a meeting point for the 1848 revolutionaries.¹²⁶

A FAMILY SANCTUARY – THE GALLERY IN GAJ MAŁY

At first glance, the last gallery project of Raczyński – his gallery of family portraits in Gaj Mały – appears to be of a completely different nature. This may explain why it has not been linked by other scholars to Raczyński's earlier galleries or indeed been investigated in its own right. However, Gaj Mały as the most intimate of his projects facilitates conclusions about the personality and aspirations of Raczyński. Especially an appreciation of Gaj Mały in context with the Palais in Berlin enhances the understanding of the collector's manifold motivations and ambitions, which arguably culminated with his last project.

The estate became property of the Raczyński family in the mid-18th century and formed part of Athanazy's entail established in 1825. [ill. 8] In the event of the family's extinction Athanazy had decided that it should be handed over to the Prussian royal family.¹²⁷ After his son Charles had died childless, the estate went to members of the Courland branch of the Raczyński family, who lived there until the Second World War. Today, although many of the buildings in Gaj Mały are in a poor condition the entire estate still exists, including farm buildings and the former servants quarters. Also the park in the style of an English landscape garden with its stately trees and an alley of hornbeam persist to the present day.

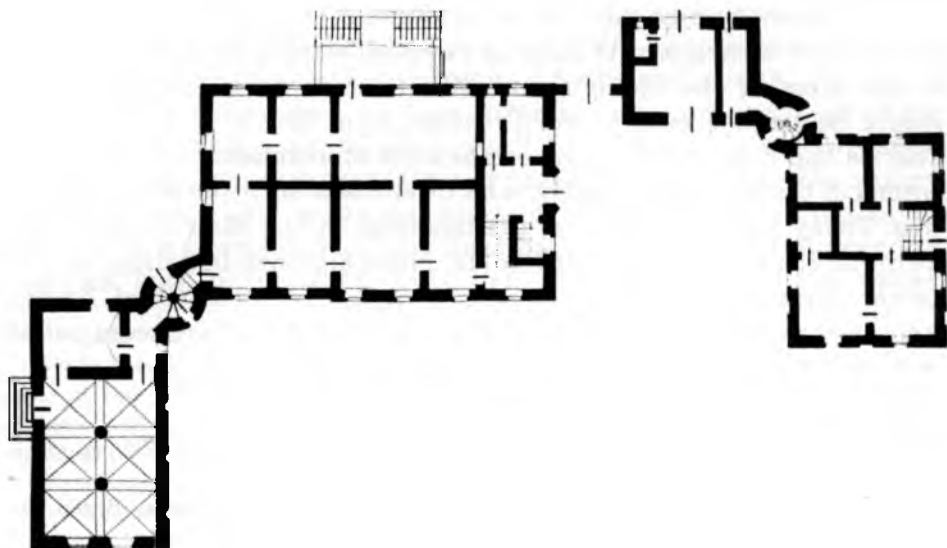
¹²⁵ Friedrich Wilhelm IV. *Künstler und König zum 200. Geburtstag* (1995), op. cit. fn. 116, p. 318-321.

¹²⁶ Hans J. Reichhardt (ed.), *Bei Kroll 1844-1957*, ex.cat., Landesarchiv Berlin, Berlin 1988.

¹²⁷ Alexander Duncker, *Die ländlichen Wohnsitze, Schlösser und Residenzen der ritterschaftlichen Gutsbesitzer in der preussischen Monarchie*, 15, Berlin 1878-80.



8. Gaj Mały around 1870, in Alexander Duncker, *Die ländlichen Wohnsitze, Schlösser und Residenzen der ritterschaftlichen Grundbesitzer in der Preussischen Monarchie*, 15, Berlin 1878-1880, ill. 883



9. Plan of Gaj Mały, sketch by Jan Skuratowicz (1981)

According to a memorial plate under the Raczyński arms in the central staircase the ensemble was 'built 1803 by General Raczyński, enlarged 1845 and adorned 1862 by Athanasius. Restored 1903 by Sigismund R.' These dates, however, are not totally correct since they do not mention the addition of the towers. The building commissioned by General Philip Raczyński is the small manor house which now constitutes the Eastern part of the ensemble. To its west, Athanazy built a small palace as new manor in 1845. He further added a building for the family gallery in 1865 attached to the palace and accessible only through a tower. Finally, the count connected the palace with the old house by a gate tower in 1767.¹²⁸ [ill. 9] None of the architects of the buildings is known.¹²⁹

The architect of the simple and functional house from 1803 must have been familiar with English and French trends and their realization in the Berlin area. Presumably he came from the circle around Friedrich Gilly. The manor house is one of the earliest examples for the recourse to the architecture of Prussian suburban villas in the Poznań region.¹³⁰ Only the mansard roof is a traditional Polish architectural element and helps to add a sophisticated air to the building.

In 1845, Athanazy made Gaj Mały the ancestral seat of his entail. This decision presumably led him to add the palace to the estate in the same year. Philip Raczyński's mansion was then turned into a quarter for servants. The palace, now forming the central part of the ensemble, has a rectangular ground measuring more than double size of the old manor. The two storey building with a simple body stands on a high socle. Its facade is structured regularly by windows decorated with neo-Rococo terracotta elements since the 1860s. [ill. 10] The palace has a high hipped roof with dormers crowned by a central turret with a clock and an onion-shaped cupola. Access to the building was from the east side where the staircase is situated but the building could also be entered via a two arm staircase from the garden side. Inside, the rooms in the two wings of the building are joined together by enfilades. Traces of any interior decoration of the palace are lost.

Through an archway connecting the gate tower to the palace, there ran a road which no longer exists. The gate tower has an almost quadratic ground. Its high socle is escarped, thus conveying a fortified character. The two storey building is sheltered under a hipped roof, which is even steeper than the one of the palace. Originally, the roof was

¹²⁸ Alexander Duncker (1878-80), op. cit. fn. 128.

¹²⁹ Jan Skuratowicz, *Dwory i palace w Wielkim Księstwie Poznańskim*, Poznań 1981, 2nd edition, p. 66.

¹³⁰ Zenon Pałat, *Rezydencja Raczyńskich w Gaju Małym*, manuscript at Wojewódzki Oddział Służby Ochrony Zabytków w Poznaniu, Poznań 1985, p. 3.

covered with slate tiles. The facade of both the north and the south side is structured by two small arched windows on each storey. Moreover, the Southern wall is decorated by a sculpture placed between the two first floor windows. This is a terracotta copy of an antique, namely the 'Reposing Satyr' of the *Halbrondell* – a great semicircle constituting the garden-side of the *Neues Palais* in Potsdam.¹³¹ The gate tower could be entered from both sides through doors of the same shape as the arched doorway. Apart from the gate tower Athanazy added two further towers. Both of them have a circular ground while their cupolas are shaped differently.



10. Gaj Mały, ground-floor window of the palace with neo-Rococo decoration in terracotta, photograph by the author (2003)

The buildings added by Athanazy were executed in a curious mixture of styles. Whilst the simple almost monumental body of the palace wing is reminiscent of the Prussian architecture of the early 19th century, its window decoration refers to Rococo. The gate tower alludes

¹³¹ The Potsdam sculpture is 1.82 m tall and was executed by Eduard Stützel in 1853 after an antique model attributed to Praxiteles from the Palazzo Sessoriano in Rome. The antique had been purchased by Bianconi, recompleted by Rauch and was then brought to Berlin's *Antiken Museum* around 1830. [Potsdam, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, documents in the department of sculptures].

to medieval town gates or to Gothic fortified churches. Furthermore, there is a number of differently shaped roofs and even combinations of the most divergent construction techniques. The palace has a large wooden staircase while the small tower next to the gallery contains an iron spiral staircase of the latest fashion. It can be taken for granted that Raczyński cooperated closely with the architect and gave very precise instructions. The use of neo-Rococo elements, for instance, is surprising, for the phenomenon of neo-Rococo in Poland started not until the 1890s.¹³² Possibly, Raczyński had the architect revert to this style because it was during the Rococo period that the family acquired Gaj Mały. Thus, the use of styles was not to define the age of the building but the period of time of the Raczyński family owning it. With the ensemble, Raczyński wanted to attain a picturesque silhouette suggesting organic growth over time. This also explains why the building has multiple axes. Regarding the integration of a gate tower and the number of differently shaped roofs' cupolas, Raczyński's idea possibly was to create the ideal *Vedute* of a European town.



11. The Gaj Mały estate from the west, showing the gallery's building altered entrance, photograph by the author (2003)

Already as a young man Raczyński began to occupy himself with his family history which again underlines his quest for self-definition: 'I spend my time taking notes on [the] liberal ideas, concerning myself with the foundation of my entail and collecting information on the

¹³² Zenon Pałat (1985), op. cit. fn. 131, p. 18.

history of my family'.¹³³ One result of his efforts was his publication *Geschichtliche Forschungen*,¹³⁴ where he compiled all the information on his family members he had gathered. Another result was the setting up of the gallery of family portraits and family archive.

The gallery building stands at a right angle to the palace. With the rectangular base and only one storey the building has a simple structure. [ill. 11] It has a tilted roof with three dormers above a wooden freeze on each of its longitudinal sides. On the south wall we find the only two windows of the gallery. Above them the family's arms are integrated in the facade. The arched windows are decorated with neo-Rococo elements, thus creating an architectural relation to the palace.



12. Sculptures on the gallery building in Gaj Mały, photograph by the author (2003)

The modesty of the building itself stands in a sharp contrast to the decoration of its Eastern facade. Here, three life-size statues are displayed creating a monumental effect. [ill. 12] As the figure of the satyr from the gate tower, all sculptures are standing on pedestals. Whilst the satyr appears to be almost squeezed in between the windows, Raczyński presented the figures at the gallery in niches which are about two metres distant from each other. Originally, the niches for the statues must have been surrounded by climbers as the walls still retain

¹³³ *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 24 November 1819, in Joseph A. Raczyński (1984), op. cit. fn. 6.

¹³⁴ Athanasius Raczyński, *Geschichtliche Forschungen*, Berlin 1860.

hooks that would hold wires for the plants. Also, the old view of the estate by Duncker, much though it idealizes the rural aspect, shows the walls overgrown with plants.

The three sculptures, one female and two male figures, are contemporary works. Although they obviously form a series, only the left figure can be clearly ascribed and identified. The middle and the right sculptures could be Ceres and Bacchus; more likely the female figure carrying a sheaf of corn could be an allegory of agriculture while the male one with grapes could refer to viniculture. The figure on the left, a man with a hat carrying a deer, is a terracotta-copy of the marble statue 'November' by Eduard Stützel. This statue was displayed in a niche of the east wing of the *Orangerie* in *Sanssouci*, Potsdam. Stützel had worked after a model by Julius Franz (dating from 1864) and executed the sculpture in 1865,¹³⁵ the year Raczyński erected his gallery in Gaj Mały. Accordingly, the count chose top-modern Berlin sculpture to adorn his gallery building. Despite their Romantic execution, the connotation of the sculptures as such adds an air of the 'Antique' and of 'pure art' to the building. In the first line this is owed to the monumental display of the statues. The absence of windows on the east wall makes the sculptures appear as if in an exhibition which, moreover, confers a museum-like aspect to the building. Furthermore, the statues in Gaj Mały are reminiscent of the sculptures on the roof of the Berlin Palais. However, the statues on Raczyński's gallery in the Prussian capital had demonstrated his taste in art by displaying his favourite artists. By contrast, the sculptural programme in Gaj Mały reverts to themes from the rural environment. Presumably, it even refers to agriculture as the traditional economic base of the Raczyński family.

Due to the sculptural decoration, the gallery in Gaj Mały clearly alludes to the species of the art museum in spite of the building's general modesty compared to the Berlin Palais. Whilst in Berlin Raczyński had created a temple of taste, the gallery in Gaj Mały was to be a temple of the family tradition.

The striking contrast between the plain building and the monumental sculptural decoration on the exterior is continued into the inside of the gallery. Its ground plan is a rectangular room with two doors in the north wall. The door and steps on the west facade were only added in the 20th century. The building's simple structure is juxtaposed by a splendour and colourfulness of decoration which surpasses that of any of Raczyński's former projects. The room has a cross-vaulted ceiling.

¹³⁵ Potsdam, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, documents in the department of sculptures.

Two massive grey marble columns crowned by gilded bronze capitals support the ceiling, which is stencilled with Pompeian motifs: tendrils and masks. [ill. 13] Although a decoration with Pompeian motifs in itself was nothing exceptional, this choice of style is anything but accidental. It alludes to Raczyński's view on Italy as the cradle of the very best art and as a country where famous noble families had also created extravagant family galleries. Moreover, the marble columns and the Pompeian decoration parallel the 'Antique' effect of the sculptures on the exterior; they convey the elevated air of an art museum to the simply structured room.



13. Ceiling of the gallery building in Gaj Mały, photograph by the author (2002)

The lighting in the gallery is remarkably unfavourable. This is amazing since Raczyński had paid much attention to this matter in his earlier projects. Originally, the only two windows of the gallery were executed in colourful stained glass showing the arms of the principal Polish families including, naturally, those of the Raczyńskis.¹³⁶ Since the windows are placed at the south side this must have created an impressive atmosphere which changed with the course of the sun – but it

¹³⁶ Poznań, archive of the National Museum, *Libri Veritatis*, correspondence with artists, sheet 350, letter to Adolf Jordan, glass painter from Düsseldorf.

definitely did not provide ideal conditions for the presentation of portraits. On the contrary, the latter came secondary to the creation of an atmospheric location. Surrounded by climbers, in its dim light and serene silence, the gallery produced an almost sacred effect intensified by the massive columns and the stained-glass windows: a 'family sanctuary'.

Since 1866 the portraits were displayed in the building. At the same time, the family archive was deposited at Gaj Maly, presumably in the small room next to the tower. In the gallery room, on a dark wooden beam connecting the walls to the vaulting, the names, titles, professions and dates of the family members are inscribed in golden, nowadays severely faded letters. The portraits of the respective persons hung below these inscriptions. From the beginning, the portraits at Gaj Maly were intended to form a uniform collection.¹³⁷ Besides some old portraits in Raczyński's possession, he ordered new copies of portraits stored in Rogalin or Chobienice. On its completion in 1870, the collection consisted of forty-six paintings of almost the same size. By comparison, Rogalin as the family's main residence had a collection of fifty portraits. In Gaj Maly, there was even space left for a second row of paintings. The gallery of family pictures remained almost unchanged until 1945. Today, most of the portraits are displayed in the castle of Rogalin, which became part of a family foundation established by Athanazy Raczyński's descendants in 1991.¹³⁸

It seems that Raczyński brought his experience with the Berlin projects to bear on this family gallery. He published a catalogue in two editions, supplementing detailed genealogical information with quotations from historical documents.¹³⁹ The paintings were listed in chronological order by sitters' dates. None of the depicted family members appears more than once – except for Raczyński's brother Edward and the founder of the entail himself. There were two portraits of Edward, three of Athanazy, and a double portrait of the brothers as children. Athanazy thus set himself apart as the centre of the family. Whereas in Berlin the whole temple was meant to function as a paradigm of art, here it was the founder's life – characterised by high aspirations and

¹³⁷ For the collection see Mateusz Pawlaczyk, 'Portrety Raczyńskich. Przyczynek do dziejów rodziny i jej kolekcji', in *Studia Muzealne*, 14, (1984), p. 128.

¹³⁸ Konstanty Kalinowski, 'Foundation of the Raczyński Family at the National Museum in Poznań', in *Bulletin du Musée de Varsovie*, 32, (1991), no. 4, pp. 88-89.

¹³⁹ Athanasius Raczyński, *Katalog der Familienporträts in Gay*, 1866. One edition was printed in Poznań, the other one in Berlin. Although both of them state the year 1866 as publishing date, the one printed in Poznań must have come out later as it includes a painting which joined the collection in 1870.

public service – that was to set the standard for his successors. Raczyński lamented frequently the attitude of his only son Charles whose highest ambition was ‘the prospect to possess estates, not to be controlled, to surround himself with splendour, equipages and servants’. Athanazy, however, wanted Charles ‘to perceive himself as a link in a chain which does not end with him, but with God’s will, shall be continued’. The count expected his son to be ‘the administrator but not the spendthrift of the family’s fortune and social status’.¹⁴⁰ Family politics became also evident in the absence of a portrait of the founder’s nephew Roger, who had been excluded from Athanazy’s will.

The idea of a family gallery goes back to the tradition of the Polish ancestral gallery. These rooms were intended to present to visitors the family’s glorious past embodied in the portraits of famous family members. The galleries were usually situated in the representative part of the residence – in the dining room or the chapel. Accordingly, they were of high importance for the family-life and the aristocratic culture. In 17th and 18th century Poland, a display in the chapel was particularly popular. A prominent example is the ancestral gallery in Nieśwież (today in Belarus) of the family Radziwill to whom Raczyński was connected by marriage.¹⁴¹

Although Raczyński’s family gallery is derived from this Polish tradition, the execution differs from the tradition of Polish family galleries situated integrally in the main residence, where the family lived with their ancestors under the same roof, as it were, and where the ancestral gallery enhanced the important representative function of the house. Instead of integrating the gallery into the existing building, or displaying the portraits in the chapel, Raczyński erected a new edifice only loosely connected to the main residence for the sole use as a gallery. Although this building is nowadays used as a chapel we have no indication at all that this was the intention of the builder. Also, the highly demanding architectural and decorative features such as the polychrome ceiling and the marble columns were uncommon in Polish family galleries. It is particularly this interior design that marks it out as an art gallery of its period. In contrast to this, the beam with the

¹⁴⁰ Raczyński to Dr Scheele in Eikendorf, who educated Raczyński’s son Charles, in *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 19 September 1837.

¹⁴¹ Nieśwież became property of the Prussian branch of the Radziwills in the first half of the 19th century. The gallery was admired by other families of the nobility and copied frequently. Its collection comprised family portraits in both the ‘Sarmatian’ and the Western European tradition as well as portraits of kings and other famous Polish people. [Roman Aftanazy, *Materiały do dziejów rezydencji na dawnych kresach Rzeczypospolitej*, vol. 2A, Wrocław 1986, pp. 328-363].

names inscribed belongs unequivocally to the Polish tradition. With his gallery in Gaj Mały Raczyński thus combined traditional Polish elements with the aesthetic experience he had made in the field of art in Berlin and elsewhere.

Although the decorative programme and the stained glass windows with the family arms symbolizing dynastic continuity linked the gallery firmly with Raczyński's national and local roots, there is one decisive difference to other Polish family seats of the 19th century: the absence of any patriotic aspects which were absolutely common and can already be found in Rogalin where Edward Raczyński had converted the former ballroom into an armoury displaying Polish military accessories.¹⁴² Furthermore, Athanazy's collection of portraits lacked the otherwise popular 'Sarmatian-portraits'. These pictures show the sitter in Polish national costume. They revert to a tradition in the Polish nobility who perceived themselves as defenders of Christianity (later of the catholic religion) and supporters of the national independence of the country. The pictures displayed by Raczyński are without exception in the tradition of Western portrait painting.

Thus, the collection itself and the building housing it differ from what was usual in Poland at the time. Especially the application of the architectural forms of an art gallery to an ancestral gallery marks a breach with Polish traditions. In spite of some allusions to the model of the Polish ancestral gallery, Raczyński's gallery is much closer to the tradition of European art museums of the second half of the 19th century. This overt breach with the Polish tradition appears like a reversion of his Berlin arrangements. While erecting a separate gallery building in Poland where the connection of residence and museum was very popular and indeed essential for the survival of museums during the Prussian occupation, in Berlin he lived under the same roof with his gallery. It was in the gallery and not in the dining hall downstairs where he hosted his banquets in Berlin. In Gaj Mały, however, he created a ceremonial atmosphere.

The project of the family gallery demonstrates the distance that Raczyński felt with respect to many Polish positions – a spirit, that can still be experienced in Gaj Mały today. Due to his political opinions and social status Raczyński was indeed subject to harsh criticism, if not condemnation in Poland. Estranged from his background, he embarked on inventing his own standards and created a family gallery at odds with the Polish tradition. Raczyński reverted to the European art

¹⁴² Piotr Michałowski, 'The Raczyński of Rogalin', in *Bulletin de Musée de Varsovie*, 32, (1991), no. 4, p. 113.

museum rather than to the presentation of a patriotic collection, which again stresses his deep commitment to the European noble society. The contents of the collections in Berlin and Gaj Mały and their envisaged visitors were naturally very different. Yet, in both instances Raczyński aimed at creating an exemplary, an ideal world. In Berlin, the main emphasis lay on the aesthetic and socio-cultural aspects while the theme in Gaj Mały was the collector's own personality in his role as the founder and keeper of a family tradition. In both cases Raczyński used art to produce a tradition. Thus, the gallery projects did not only serve to visualize their creator's social position but were intended to establish, promote and perpetuate traditions and principles Raczyński had invented due to his Polish-Prussian dilemma. Gaj Mały is a singular phenomenon. It owes its particular features to Raczyński's biography, his very individual way of negotiating his aspirations and experiences and his determination to use all these for establishing his own tradition.

BRIDGING THE GAP

Athanasz Raczyński shared many motifs for his intense occupation with art with other collectors of his time: the desire to enhance the family's glory, to perpetuate family traditions and to create something permanent in a rapidly changing world. He had also hoped to support his professional and political career with his Berlin galleries and to strengthen his position in the European nobility. Moreover, he believed in art as a contra-revolutionary remedy and was convinced of the importance of art in the public sector, a view he shared with many members of the bourgeoisie. As aristocrat and patron, he liked to see himself as a princely supporter of the arts and felt deeply committed to art patronage.

Compared to other collectors of his period, Raczyński's unique achievement does not lie in any single one of these motifs but rather in their combination with an educational impetus and in his determination to realize his aspirations. His desire to create and perpetuate tradition is rooted in his Polish-Prussian biography and his disappointment over the miscarriage of many of his ambitions (e.g. he had to wait for eleven years before being called to office; his son failed to produce the offspring necessary for the envisaged dynasty). Raczyński's never ceasing energy, self-consciousness and ambition – to the point of stubbornness – made him cope with these misfortunes by increasing his efforts instead of resignation and withdrawal.

I want to serve because I am not without ambition, since I am intrigued by impediments and I never knew how to relinquish anything that I ever put into my head.¹⁴³

Every single one of his gallery-projects stands out from what was usual at the time. Their attraction lies in the way the collections and their presentation reflect the collector's intentions. First of all, there is his plan for the Poznań gallery. Grounded in his absolute loyalty towards the monarchical principle, the unprecedented project of a gallery of pictures exclusively for Poland distinguished Raczyński's from contemporary institutions founded by other members of the Polish nobility. With his gallery building at Berlin's prestigious *Königsplatz*, Raczyński pursued highest ambitions: prevented from succeeding in a diplomatic career, he was determined to do better than others in the cultural field. Consequently, he created a museum, which was meant to function as a model. On a smaller scale, Raczyński had exercised this before with his first Berlin gallery *Unter den Linden*. Unlike other private collectors, Raczyński subordinated his policy of collecting and displaying to the promotion of his political, social and moral convictions. The architecture of the gallery building, the collection which comprised only 'true art' as well as the explanations in the catalogues: all these are geared towards setting examples and aim to propagate the collector as extraordinary in every respect. Possibly, Raczyński saw the imperative obligation to set an example: Whilst, as he felt, everything in his native Poland was drowning in chaos, he, the Polish expatriate was saving Poland's reputation by creating an orderly world. Finally, in his Gaj Mały project as the most intimate of his galleries, Raczyński breaks away from the usual pattern of a Polish ancestral gallery. He openly shows his contempt for the Polish tradition and thus assumes his very own position in the Polish society. Raczyński's deliberate diversion from the traditional Polish family gallery and the establishment of his particular type of gallery demonstrates his desire for a 'new tradition' of his own. A common feature of all his gallery projects is their representation of the collector's self-definition in a political, social and moral sense. Especially the Palais in Berlin and the ancestral gallery in Gaj Mały are both devoted to creating a sphere for the promotion and perpetuation of a specific attitude to the world by art.

Raczyński's biography is marked by the forever torn between conflicting interests: a Pole in Prussia, an advocate of Prussian politics in Poland, a catholic in a protestant environment, a collector with quasi-

¹⁴³ Raczyński to Constancja Raczyńska in *Raczyński diaries*, entry for 2 November 1842.

bourgeois principles in displaying art but with traditional princely habits in patronage, a monarchist among liberals. A commuter between two nations to each of which he attached contradictory, often conflicting values, it was of utmost importance for Raczyński to define his own position. In Berlin, he attempted to reconcile his noble status with his attraction to the bourgeoisie by combining the bourgeois concept of the art museum as a fundamental part of the public sphere with his princely patronage. The Polish gallery sought to bridge the gap between his Polish nationality, which caused problems in Berlin and his loyalty to the Prussian state, which in turn was perceived unfavourably in Poland. His conservative outlook did not leave him any choice but to opt for Prussia where he saw his ideals preserved: order, discipline, social hierarchy and loyalty to the monarch. In Poland, he demonstrated his choice of the Prussian political system and his loyalty to a trans-national European society by giving up his first gallery project and by creating his own type of family gallery.

It is remarkable that Raczyński sought to express his personal and political conflicts by reverting to art. While contemporary industrialists used art collecting to gentrify their fast-gained wealth,¹⁴⁴ Raczyński adopted a concept of art to define himself in his surroundings and to exert influence on the respective addressee. Raczyński succeeded in his self-sought role of the princely promoter of an almost bourgeois exhibition concept in a country that was his by choice but where he was not unequivocally welcome. In reverting to art, which gave him aesthetic pleasure at the same time, Raczyński reconciled his key values and stood up against an environment often perceived as adverse. Particularly Raczyński's last two projects can be regarded as his idiosyncratic expression of the bourgeois concept of art as a harmonious and reconciling means, reconnecting his Polishness with his cosmopolitan, European background. Art, thus, helped him to build bridges between the most controversial fields. Insofar, he perceived 'true art' as a means to an end: to pursue his intentions, to state his position and to exert influence.

Obviously, a collecting scheme so closely interwoven with political motifs is particularly prone to miscarry in changing political circumstances. Although Athanazy Raczyński had taken every conceivable precaution to leave a permanent estate to his heirs most of his projects were destroyed due to events and developments he could neither foresee nor control. A hundred-and-thirty years after Raczyński's death, only the collections in Poznań and Rogalin and the buildings in Gaj Mały have

¹⁴⁴ Ekkehard Mai/ Peter Paret (1993), op. cit. fn. 50, p. 7.

survived the sequelae of Prussian military megalomania, the Russian revolution, two World Wars and Poland's turn to socialism. Yet, the collections and the gallery building in Gaj Mały to this day offer rewarding aesthetic experiences; they bear witness of a multi-faceted personality, of a man whose strife for his own place in the world may be regarded as almost exemplary in a universe of 'displaced persons' and broken traditions.