

The paintings depicting Józef Dołęga-Sierakowski's entry into Istanbul once belonged to the Sierakowski collection kept in Waplewo Wielkie and were probably lost during the Second World War, although it may be that they still exist but have not yet been identified.

The display of two images of the legation of Józef Dołęga Sierakowski (1682–1748) as an envoy of King Augustus II to Constantinople in the Waplewo collection added prestige, as the depiction of the ceremonial event of entering the Turkish capital was part of a tradition of special commemoration of noble ancestors known, among others, from the seats of the Radziwiłłs and Potockis.¹ The ceremonial entry belonged to the so-called speaking portraits (*les portraits parlants*) recalling a specific historical event that needed to be recorded in order to give prominence to the protagonist involved and thus raise the status of the family.²

Both paintings probably found their way into the Waplewo collection in the lifetime of of Kajetan Sierakowski (1753–1841), who was the grandson of Józef Dołęga Sierakowski on the side of his mother, Teresa Dołęga Sierakowska, married to Roman Ogończyk Sierakowski. This is confirmed by Kajetan Sierakowski's will, preserved in the Husarzewski family archives³ and, in the case of the larger painting, by a note in the catalogue of the Waplewo collection published in 1879.⁴ An entry in Kajetan Sierakowski's will mentions two paintings depicting the embassy: 'a historical painting of the entry of the Turks into Constantinople in a gilt frame, fifty roubles' and 'a historical painting of the entry of the Polish envoy into Constantinople in a simple frame, twenty roubles'.

A note in Rodziewicz's catalogue reads:

- 1 R. Aftanazy, *Dzieje rezydencji na dawnych kresach Rzeczypospolitej*, vol. 2: *Województwo nowogródzkie, brzesko-litewskie* (Wrocław, 1992), p. 334; T. Sulerzyska, 'Galerie obrazów i „Gabinety Sztuki” Radziwiłłów w XVII w.', *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki*, vol. 23, 1961, no. 1, p. 91.
- 2 A. Ryszkiewicz, 'Niektóre przejawy pychy szlacheckiej w dziełach sztuki', in: *Tradycje szlacheckie w kulturze polskiej*, ed. Z. Stefanowska (Warszawa, 1976), p. 166.
- 3 The Ossoliński National Institute, Department of Manuscripts, sign. 5761/III (DE-569), The Husarzewski Archive, Akta majątkowe rodziny Sierakowskich i jej dóbr: Osiek, Lubowidz, Waplewo i in. 1811–1854. Testament Kajetana Sierakowskiego, pp. 249–251, items 75, 76. In the inventory of paintings included in the will, the larger painting depicting the ceremonial entry into Constantinople is referred to as 'the entry of the Turks into Constantinople'.
- 4 K. Rodziewicz, *Katalog zbioru obrazów oraz innych przedmiotów sztuki znajdujących się w posiadaniu rodziny hrabiów Sierakowskich w Waplewie (Prusy Zachodnie) sporządzony w listopadzie 1878* (Poznań, 1897), A/140.

COMMUNICATION

TWO REPRESENTATIONS OF JÓZEF DOŁĘGA-SIERAKOWSKI'S EMBASSY TO ISTANBUL FROM THE OGOŃCZYK-SIERAKOWSKI COLLECTION IN WAPLEWO WIELKIE

Dobromiła Rzyska-Laube

Museum of the Tradition of Polish Nobility in Waplewo Wielkie, branch of the National Museum in Gdańsk

Wilanów Studies
vol. XXX, 2023
pp. 543–553
Yearbook, E-ISSN: 2720-0116

A/140 *Entry of a Polish envoy to Constantinople 1732*, eighteenth century, canvas, 327 × 95, gilt frame; From Count Kajetan Sierakowski

There are two more valuable sources attesting to the presence of both paintings in the Waplewo collection. These are the recollections of a visitor to the Sierakowski family in 1881, Professor Stanisław Tarnowski,⁵ which will be discussed later, and notes by the art historian Zygmunt Batowski relating to his stay in Waplewo in 1912.⁶ Thanks to Batowski's notes, we have a fairly accurate description of both paintings:

A/140. The entry of a Polish envoy to Constantinople 1732 (member of the Sierakowski family, who also received from the Sultan a precious casket, now kept in the Waplewo collection).

A long, narrow image, more than 3 metres in length. It depicts a long procession of mounted horsemen: Turks themselves and armies of the Eastern type, folding on itself once;

On the left, a view of Constantinople stretching towards the right – this seems to be just a fragment of the procession, a vanguard?, as the chief dignitary is nowhere to be seen, and no Poles are discernible in the procession itself; in one place one of the horsemen may be a Polish hussar (It is not enough, though!)

One of the better paintings of this kind, an imitation of Della Bella.

– B/29 Entrance of Józef Sierakowski (Dołęga), Grand Guardian of the Crown, as envoy to Constantinople, during the rule of Augustus II. 1732

The entry of Józef Dołęga (not Ogończyk) Sierakowski to Constantinople as envoy in the reign of Augustus II.

A painting of strictly manners (costume) value, very interesting. In the background on the left, we see (amazing) Constantinople, a procession breaking into a five-fold serpentine is entering the city.

Costumes and armour are entirely recognisable. First the trumpeters, then the armoured cavalry with the White Eagle flag, then the Turks on horseback, alternating with the Janissaries – infantry (white high caps on their heads, looking like cylinders without ruffs, wider at the top), then a troop of dignitaries in Hungarian or Polish costumes, on foot, then the Saxon horsemen in red uniforms and bicorne hats, then the national cavalry in the colours of various warriors (*kontusz* robes and square caps as in the times of the Stanislaus Augustus), then the Turks on foot and on horseback again, then, between the Turkish pashas (?), Sierakowski in Polish costume on horseback, wearing a cap with a heron's feather, followed by the rest of the sultan's retinue on foot in turbans – and finally a long troop [the entire lower (fifth) row] of Polish hussars in armour with wings, with lances, covered with hides on top of their armour.

On the back of the canvas: an inscription from the eighteenth century (perhaps from the times of Stanislaus Augustus)

Józef owner of Żabiec and Duliby/Sierakowski/ Grand Guardian of the Crown/ Rep. of the Ukrainian Party/ Envoy of Augustus II King of Poland/ To Constantinople/1732

5 S. Tarnowski, *Z wakacyj (Prusy Królewskie)*, vol. 2 (Kraków, 1888), p. 277.

6 Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Zygmunt Batowski Legacy, sign. III-2, j.9, Waplewo Sierakowskich.



Fig. 1

Dining room in Waplewo with the painting *Józef Sierakowski's Entry into Constantinople* in evidence, before 1929, from the collection owned by Eugeniusz Dembski, National Museum in Gdańsk

The entry of the envoy began with the armoured regiment and ended with the hussar regiment in armour and with tin wings, in use at the time, with trumpeters and pennants, covered in lynx skins

(A similar Entrance of envoy P. Potocki is kept by the family at Roś in Lithuania (Tarnowski, *Przegląd Polski*, vol. 63, 1882, p. 215/6)

On canvas: obliquely, at the top, stitching (?)

83.5 × 123.5

This procession may have been painted from Sierakowski's description of the embassy contained in his published diaries.

Zygmunt Batowski's descriptions are a very valuable document for identifying the paintings, if they have survived to our times. Their descriptions are confirmed by laconic notes in Kajetan Sierakowski's will, suggesting that the larger painting presented only the Turkish troops preceding Sierakowski's legation, while the smaller one, as Batowski and Tarnowski pointed out, was compositionally (the procession turning five times) reminiscent of the well-known entry of Piotr Potocki's embassy to Pera in 1790.⁷ It is not impossible that the Waplewo painting had been used as a model for the representation kept in the Potocki estate in Roś.

7 T. Pocheć-Perkowska, 'Dzieje zbioru malarstwa z Rosi w galerii wilanowskiej w świetle danych archiwalnych', *Studia Wilanowskie*, vol. 7, 1981, p. 24, Fig. 13; Tarnowski, *Z wakacyj*, p. 277.

There are many indications that a photograph of the dining room of the Waplewo manor, taken before 1929, shows one of the lost canvases. Although the photograph does not make it possible to identify a specific scene in the painting presented above the doorway leading from the dining room to the pantry, the characteristic proportions (long and narrow canvas) make it possible to identify the painting as a representation of a procession of Turkish horsemen entering Constantinople (Fig. 1).

The aforementioned recollections of Professor Stanisław Tarnowski, who visited Waplewo in 1881, testify to the family's cultivation of the glory of their noble ancestor, not only through the presentation of two paintings showing Sierakowski's entry to Istanbul, but also the appropriate display of a 'golden, coral-encrusted casket' given to the Polish envoy by Sultan Mahmud I. Tarnowski wrote: 'This gift is, of course, kept carefully as a jewel in a collection of various keepsakes and beautiful trinkets'.⁸

The set of memorabilia connected with the distinguished ancestor was completed by his portrait in armour, which is also unlikely to have survived to the present day,⁹ and the diary of Sierakowski's embassy to Istanbul, once held in the Waplewo manuscript collection.¹⁰

The surviving archives will perhaps contribute to the identification of two paintings that are so far considered lost.

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8 Ibid.

9 The collection of the Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery features a portrait of Józef Dołęga Sierakowski, which may have been the prototype or a copy of the Waplewo portrait. I would like to thank Mr Jerzy Petrus for this information.

10 Rodziewicz, *Katalog zbioru obrazów*, B/26; T. Żychliński, *Złota księga szlachty polskiej*, vol. 1 (Poznań, 1879), p. 281; M. Rzepka, 'Z prac nad edycją *Diariusza legationis JWJMc Pana Strażnika Wielkiego Koronnego odprawionej roku 1732*', *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Językoznawcza*, vol. 27, 2200, no. 2, p. 153.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- p. 551 Dining room in Waplewo with the painting *Józef Sierakowski's Entry into Constantinople* in evidence, before 1929, from the collection owned by Eugeniusz Dembski, scanned by the Museum of the Tradition of Polish Nobility in Waplewo, branch of the National Museum in Gdańsk

DOBROMILA RZYSKA-LAUBE

orcid.org/0000-0001-9389-5779

Born in Gdańsk in 1975, MA in History (University of Gdańsk), Protection of Cultural Assets (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń). Since 2014, she has been working as a curator at the Museum of the Tradition of Polish Nobility in Waplewo Wielkie, branch of the National Museum in Gdańsk, for which she prepared the concept of museum arrangement in 2011. In 2019, she defended at the University of Gdańsk her doctoral thesis on art collections held by Polish landowner in Pomerania: *Zbiory artystyczne polskich ziemian na Pomorzu od końca XVIII w. po czasy dzisiejsze*, written under the supervision of Professor Małgorzata Omilanowska. Mother of three children.

The study was carried out as part of the preparation of the author's doctoral thesis.

Contact: dobromila.rzyska@wp.pl

