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TRAVEL DIARY OF THE DUCHESS OF SAGAN DOROTHEA FROM A JAGIELLONIAN LIBRARY MANUSCRIPT. DESCRIPTION AND EDITION: EXPECTATIONS AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents the description of the manuscript *Reiseerinnerungen 1852-1853* [Travel Memoirs 1852-1853] written in German by Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duchess of Sagan (1793-1862), as perceived from the perspective of expectations and challenges connected with its planned edition. The richly ornamented handwritten neo-Gothic volume, currently in the collection of the Jagiellonian Library (BJ Rkp. 7424), records the Duchess's seven-month journey to Italy. It is interesting both in view of the author's personality, its content, and the visual layer. A well-known representative of the European aristocracy, Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord played an important role in Polish culture. The account

of her Italian journey reflects her elite connections and interest in art. The description of the manuscript in the present article is to expose expectations and challenges implied by the planned critical edition to be conducted by an interdisciplinary team composed of a historian and a literary scholar.

KEYWORDS: Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord, *Reise Erinnerungen 1852-1853*, manuscript, Jagiellonian Library

The present paper discusses a manuscript written in German and containing the record of the travel to Italy in 1852-1853 of Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duchess of Sagan (1793-1862), meant to list expectations and challenges connected with its critical edition whose implementation is planned by a team composed of a historian and a literary scholar.

The manuscript bearing the title *Reise Erinnerungen 1852-1853* [Travel Memoirs 1852-1853] is currently held in the collection of the Jagiellonian Library (BJ Rkp. 7424).¹ The manuscript incites interest both thanks to its attractive visual layer and the identity of its author. The signature placed on the last page ‘Dorothea H[er]z[ogin von] Sagan’² allows to attribute the authorship of the memoirs to famous Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord of the Courland House of Biron, as of 1817 bearing the title of the Duchess of Dino³ and that of the Duchess of Sagan as of 1845.

1 BJ Rkp. 7424 Germ. and the 3rd quarter of the 19th century. 33.8 x 24.5 cm. folios 147 (1-146, 69a), including 2 folios not written on (85 and 147). Edition <https://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra/publication/204840/edition/193636/content> [Accessed: 16 January 2024]

2 The abbreviation can also be read as ‘Dorothea Herzogin zu Sagan’, since the Duchess also used that signature.

3 Thanks to the marriage Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord was also the Duchess of Dino. The title of the ‘duca de Dino’ connected with a small island in Calabria was received by Charles the Talleyrand in 1817 who renounced it for the sake of the Duchess’s husband. See J. Durka, ‘Wokół życiorysu księżnej Doroty Dino i jej krótkiej wizyty w Antoninie latem 1843’, *Poznańskie Zeszyty Humanistyczne* 2010, T. XIV, ed. A. Czabański, pp.19-27, p. 24.

Dorothea, Duchess of Courland, was born in 1793 as the fourth youngest daughter of Anna Charlotte Dorothea von Medem and Peter von Biron, Duke of Courland and Semigalia. However, it was the Polish diplomat Aleksander Benedykt Batowski⁴ his mother had a long-standing love affair with that was considered her biological father. Her education was strongly shaped by the wife of Prince Antoni Radziwiłł, known for her pro-Polish views and the learned teacher Scypion Piattoli, Secretary of King Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski, co-creator of the Constitution of 3 May.⁵ The latter encouraged his student to marry Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, however, in 1809, the Duchess finally married Edmund de Talleyrand, nephew of Charles de Talleyrand-Périgord, a French politician, France's Foreign Minister, and was introduced to Napoleon's court. She soon began accompanying the famous uncle of her husband not merely at Paris salons and during the stays at his estates, but also on official diplomatic missions to the Congress of Vienna (1815) or to England (1830-1834). She finally became the life companion of Charles de Talleyrand-Périgord.⁶ Widely appreciated for her general knowledge and diplomatic tact, she was considered the initiator of the politician's reconciliation with the Catholic Church, having herself converted to Catholicism in 1811.⁷

- 4 Andrzej Benedykt Batowski (1760-1841), who was as a youth in the French army, upon the return to Poland became the Chamberlain of Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski and member of the Society of Friends of the Constitution of 3 May. In 1792, he became a royal commissar in the Duchy of Courland. During the Kosciuszko Uprising he was a liaison between Kosciuszko and France. As the Grand Pantler of the Warsaw Duchy he represented the interests of the Polish Governing Commission before Charles Talleyrand. In 1820, he was granted the title of a count in the Congress Kingdom, and in 1830, he became the Great Hunter at the royal court of Nicholas I of Russia. See A. Skałkowski, 'Batowski Aleksander Benedykt' in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Vol. 1 Kraków 1935, pp. 353-354.
- 5 See B. Koska, *Dorota de Talleyrand-Périgord – księżna Dino i Żagania*, [information on the publisher provided] Opole 2023, p. 9. <https://zbc.uz.zgora.pl/dlibra/publication/64590/edition/57986/content> [Accessed: 18 January 2024].
- 6 Her relationship with Edmund de Talleyrand-Périgord was concluded with a divorce declared after six years of separation in 1830.
- 7 A spectacular conversion of the Duchess known for her extramarital relationships is described by D.A. Rosenthal, *Konvertitenbilder aus dem neunzehnten Jahrhundert, Ersten Bandes erste Abtheilung. Deutschland I*, Verlags-Anstalt vorm. G. J. Manz, Regensburg 1899, pp. 239-242.

Following Talleyrand's death in 1838, the aristocrat moved to settle in Silesia, initially at the family Zatonie estate, as at that point she was not entitled to take over Sagan which was first inherited by her sisters: in 1800, by Wilhelmina, and Pauline in 1839 who, in turn, passed it on to her son.⁸ Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord took over the Duchy of Sagan only in 1844 as a result of a conflict with her nephew, and the title of the Duchess of Sagan with the right of her lineal descendants to inherit was awarded to her by Frederick William IV of Prussia in 1845.⁹ Having settled down in Sagan, she started to restore the former splendour to her residence: the palace and the garden. She was known for her charitable activities thanks to establishing ecumenical schools, a hospital, and many other philanthropic endeavours. Furthermore, she won recognition as a collector.¹⁰

The Duchess of Sagan boasted a rich collection of art works, and, this being particularly interesting from the perspective of the history of the libraries placed on the Polish territories, a precious collection of French, German, English, and Italian books.¹¹ Her jewel in the crown was a set of autographs of illustrious states-

8 Wilhelmina (1771-1839)], Duchess of Sagan in 1800-1839; Pauline (1782-1845)], Duchess of Sagan in 1839-1843; Duke Konstantin Hohenzollern-Hechingen (1801-1869).

9 See B. Koska, *Dorota de Talleyrand-Périgord – księżna Dino i Żagania*, p. 94.

10 The extensive collection of the Duchess containing 435 paintings and 61 sculptures was composed of the works by Italian, Dutch, German, Austrian, French, and Spanish artists, including also contemporary ones. See K. Adamek-Pujszo, *Zespół pałacowo-parkowy w Żaganiu*, <https://www.palaceiparki.pl/zespól-palacowo-parkowy-w-zaganiu/dzieje-zespolu-i-jego-wlasciciele-i> [Accessed: 18 January 2023]

11 The palace library contained e.g., the first editions of Goethe, Schiller, Stendhal, Balzac, Dickens, Hugo, and other European writers of the 18th and the 1st half of the 19th centuries, precious encyclopaedias, dictionaries, and atlases. See J. P. Majchrzak, 'Die Büchersammlung der herzoglichen Bibliothek in Żagań/Sagan (1631-1944) Geschichtlicher Abriss und Charakteristik der Sammlung' in: *Historia książki na terenach pogranicza i jej rola w kształtowaniu społeczeństw wielokulturowych Materiały z polsko-niemieckiej konferencji bibliotecznej Zielona Góra, 21-22 kwietnia 2005 / Zur Geschichte des Buches in der Grenzregion und dessen Rolle in der Bildung der multikulturellen Gesellschaften Materialien aus der deutsch-polnischen Konferenz der Bibliothekaren und Bibliothekarinnen*, ed. K. Raczyńska, Pro Libris, Zielona Góra 2005, pp. 126-132, here: p. 132. See also B. Idzikowska, 'Pamiętkowy kufel Doroty Talleyrand-Périgord i kolekcja numizmatyczna żagańskich Bironów', *Wiadomości Numizmatyczne*, 2014, Y. LVIII/ fasc. 1-2, pp. 197-198.

men, monarchs, writers, and artists. It contained e.g. an extensive correspondence of Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord with Frederic William IV, Charles Talleyrand, letters of L. Beethoven, R. Wagner, G. Verdi, F. Chopin, and A. von Humboldt, while among the Polonica the correspondence of King Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski with her mother Duchess Dorothea von Medem, as well as manuscripts by Adam Jerzy Czartoryski.¹² During WW II, the book collection and that of the autographs suffered the same fate as many other European collections: they have been searched for until this very day. In 1944, the most precious items from the library and the manuscripts were transferred to Kliczków located near Bolesławiec, yet there are no traces left of that operation. Scholars have been unable to find out what happened to the collection between the closing down of the last inventory on 27 December 1944 and the seizure of the Sagan Palace by the Red Army in February 1945. Almost a decade following WW II some renowned European auction houses started auctioning both single books and manuscripts with the book plate and Call Nos. of the Sagan Palace Library. The vicissitudes of the remaining parts of the important Sagan book collection remain unknown.¹³

The manuscript discussed here reached the Jagiellonian Library in 1947, and was registered as ACNO: Przyb. 2/47.¹⁴ It remains unknown how it reached Krakow; the record accompanying the manuscript's accession, both in the Accession Book of the Manuscript Section of the Jagiellonian Library (BJ) and in the inventory of BJ's manuscripts is laconic. It gives the date: 15 January 1947, and says that it came from an individual anonymous donor. This

12 Se J. P. Majchrzak, *Die Büchersammlung der herzoglichen Bibliothek in Żagań/Sagan*, p. 132. The Duchess's correspondence unavailable today served in its majority as the basis of the biography published in 1917 whose author discusses her relations with representatives of the European aristocracy: E. Feckes, *Dorothea, Herzogin von Dino und Sagan, ihr Leben mit besonderer Berücksichtigung ihrer Beziehungen zur preussischen Königshause und zu deutschen Politikern*, J. B. Kleinsche Druckerei: Krefeld 1917, see details. pp. 61-76.

13 J. P. Majchrzak, *Die Büchersammlung der herzoglichen Bibliothek in Żagań/Sagan*, p. 132.

14 See *Inwentarz Rękopisów Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej nr. 7001-8000, Część I nr 7000-7500*, Kraków 1966, p. 151.

entry in the Accession Book is preceded by a manuscript bearing ACNO. Przyb. 1/47, being also an anonymous donation, possibly by the same individual. The document in question is a parchment diploma dated 12 February 1846, granting Duchess Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord of Sagan the right to wear a Maltese cross in the same shape as that worn on the attire of the Order's members and permitting her to partake in the Order's spiritual benefits. Neither of the documents associated with Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord features any proprietary traces permitting to associate them with the collection created by the Duchess in Sagan; they are not recorded in the pre-WW II catalogue of Sagan archives and manuscripts either.¹⁵ However, they must have been the property of the Duchess, although it can also be assumed that having been personal documents of the Duchess they did not undergo the formal registering process as her collection items.

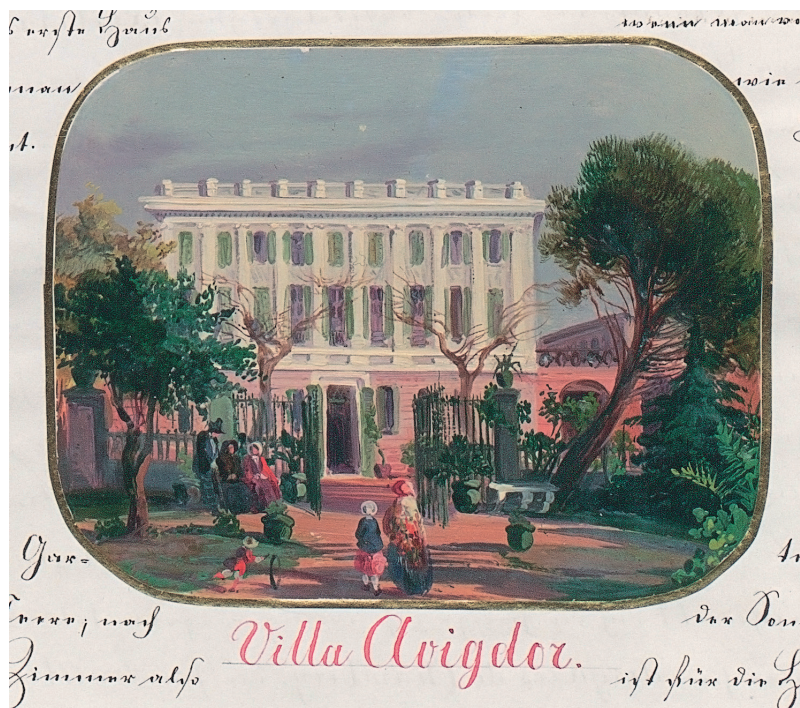
The manuscript *Reise Erinnerungen 1852-53* contains the description of the travel of the Duchess of Sagan to southern Europe. She was heading for Nice (which belonged at the time to the Kingdom of Sardinia) [Photo 1], a venue of winter encounters of the European aristocracy at which Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord had also spent the winter 1841-1842. According to the record the route Dorothea embarked upon in the 1850s, much longer than the one before, lasting for seven months, began on 10 October 1851 in Berlin; successively leading via Potsdam, Munich, Trent, and Genoa to Nice, where the Duchess spent four months. On her return journey from the Côte d'Azur, the author spent a month in Venice, where she engaged in extensive sightseeing. She subsequently arrived in Sagan on 17 May 1853, via Graz, Vienna, Dresden, and Berlin.

The chronologically ordered account in the format of a diary was divided into five chapters (defined with the German word *Abtheilung*). Four titles e.g. 'Chapter I: to Nice', 'Chapter II: in Nice',

15 Tronlehn Fürstenthum Sagan' in *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae, Die Inventare der nicht-staatlichen Archive Schlesiens. Kreis Sagan*, red. Erich Gräber, Breslau 1927, Vol. 32, pp. 93-139 <http://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/plain-content?id=19985> [Accessed: 16 August 2023].

‘Chapter III: to Venice’, ‘Chapter IV: in Venice’ are determined with topographic criteria. These parts are followed by ‘Chapter V: Returning Home’. The manuscript’s detailed structure is as follows:

- f. 1. Title page
- f. 2. Title page of Chapter ‘I Abtheilung’
- ff. 3-39 Journey from Berlin via Potsdam, Leipzig, Nuremberg. Munich. Innsbruck, Verona. Milan, Genoa, to Nice 10 October – 9 November 1852
- f. 40 Title page of Chapter ‘III Abtheilung nach Venedig’
- ff. 87-96 Journey from Nice via San Remo, Genoa, Verona, to Venice 5-29 March 1853
- f. 97 Title page of Chapter ‘IV Abtheilung in Venedig’
- ff. 135-147 Journey from Venice via Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, to Sagan 26 April – 17 May 1853



The text of the *Reise Erinnerungen* written in black ink, in the Gothic German script, known as *Kurrent*, contains interjections in Italian, French, and English, written down in Antiqua, similarly as the majority of proper names. Illustration captions are written in red ink. Red ink is also used for some proper names and words worth emphasizing in chapters II to IV. On l.145r there appears the author's personal signature 'Dorothea H[er]z[ogin von] Sagan' (see footnote 2). Her handwriting is clearly distinct from that in which the first-person account was written. The hand which wrote the fair copy remains anonymous, though it can be supposed that it belonged to Luise von Bolschwing, a lady-in-waiting; she accompanied the Duchess on her Italian trip, and the correspondence and other writing-related jobs were traditionally the task of ladies-in-waiting of queens and princesses.¹⁶

The manuscript boasts a binding from the latter half of the 19th century of claret-coloured leather. The central section of the front cover is delineated by alternating gold and blind lines embossed in the leather. The front cover features a mark after a rhombus-shaped plaque which could have contained the owner's coat of arms. The spine features gilded linear gilding. The doublure is of navy-blue silk, with the internal cover edges decorated with a golden ornament; moreover, leaf edges are gilded. Thicker cardboard leaves were used for the title page of the whole work and title pages of respective chapters. The manuscript has four decorative bookmarks of navy-blue silk attached to the book signature, and ending in decorative braids.

The manuscript is characterized by the consistency in shaping its visual layer. An important role is played in it by rich illustrations. As already mentioned, both the title page and title pages of all the chapters are richly decorated; additionally, ornaments can be found on three leaves beginning new months. Seventy-six illustrations

16 See M. Jaglarz, K. Jaśtał, 'Fehlende Signaturen. Zur unveröffentlichten Handschrift der *Reiseerinnerungen* 1852-1853 der Herzogin Dorothea von Sagan', in *Signaturen der Vielfalt. Autorinnen in der Sammlung Varnhagen*, eds. J. Kita-Huber, J. Paulus, V&R unipress, Göttingen 2024, pp. 285-298, particularly pp. 291-294.

were pasted in the text: one photograph, lithographs, pen-and-ink drawings, gouaches, and water colours illustrating landscapes and architecture of the places the Duchess visited. All the illustrations remain anonymous. Although the majority of them are of high aesthetic quality, their style is not homogenous. Some of them may have been executed by the Duchess herself, who dealt with drawing and painting, and was considered a talented amateur.¹⁷

The fact that these artistic elements are included in the manuscript significantly boosts its aesthetic quality and its importance as a document of culture, since the illustrations present e.g., views of the sites (such as e.g., the square in front of the Milan Cathedral or Nuremberg churches) whose look has significantly altered owing to the historical developments.¹⁸

Other essential visual features of the discussed volume will include ornamental initials used in town names in the entries giving the account of the Duchess arriving in a given town and the use of fleuron [Photo 2]. These two elements renew the graphic forms used in Gothic manuscripts which began to arouse interest once again in the first half of the 19th century.¹⁹ The forms were adapted over that time both professionally, e.g., in book illustrations, and in amateur projects such as albums (regarded to be a women's domain).

When talking about the presence of the above decorations in the *Reise Erinnerungen* it has to be remembered that the Duchess of Sagan knew the book illustrator Allwina Frommann. Frommann, who made her living thanks to commissions and private classes

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- 17 The fact that the author dealt with painting during her journey is confirmed by the entry under the date 25 January 1853 (BJ Rkp. 7424 ff. 71v-72r): 'Apart from my flatmate, I did not see anybody: I would read, write, and paint a lot'.
 - 18 We would like to extend our gratitude for the iconographic consultation to Joanna Winiewicz-Wolska, PhD.
 - 19 Sandra Hidmann and Laura Light emphasize that the term 'Neo-Gothic' is traditionally associated with architecture, while at the same time omitting its importance for other culture areas, including 19th-century manuscripts and books. See S. Hidmann, L. Light, 'Neo-Gothic Book Production and Medievalism', *Les Enluminures*, New York, Chicago, Paris 2015, pp. 4-5. <https://www.textmanuscripts.com/enlu-assets/catalogues/primer/primer-5-neogothic/primer-5---neo-gothic-with-pricelist.pdf>. [Accessed: 18 January 2024].

given to female students of aristocratic families, in 1849-1861, regularly spent one of the summer months at the Sagan residence teaching the Duchess drawing and doing some small commissions for her.²⁰ The *Reise Erinnerungen* manuscript mentions the painter five times, pointing to the fact that one of her accomplishments was displayed at a Berlin exhibition, and emphasizing her fascination with decorative initials as well as the visual layer of mediaeval books. Heading for Sagan at the end of the journey, the Duchess also announced an approaching visit of 'nice Frommann',²¹ however, neither this mention nor the previous ones suggest that the teacher played a role in illustrating the planned manuscript of the travel memoirs. From the differences in the aesthetic quality of its respective initials and fleurons,²² as well as the likeness of the ornaments of the title page and ornaments placed on the last page of the manuscript to Frommann's drawings, it can be supposed that she too authored some of the manuscript's artistic elements. Nonetheless, neither the illustrator's contribution nor that of the anonymous individual who wrote down the memoirs of Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord was mentioned in the manuscript, while the signature identifies the Duchess of Sagan as both the protagonist of the account and its sole author.

The value of the *Reise Erinnerungen* for the research into history and culture of the 19th century stems not only from it being a book representing neo-Gothic conventions of a richly adorned manuscript,

20 See I. Dietsch, „Ich warte auf meine Zeit“. Allwina Frommann: Buchillustratorin, Mälerin und Zeitbeobachterin der Revolution von 1848, Weimarer Taschenbuchverlag, Weimar 2010, pp. 189-199; A. Fuchs, 'Waisenhaus, Pädagogium und Verlagsbuchhandlung im 18. Jahrhundert. Familie Frommann in Züllichau', in: *Sulechów na przestrzeni wieków. 300 lat Fundacji Rodziny Steinbartów. Uczniowie i nauczyciele szkół sulechowskich i ich powiązania europejskie*, eds. B. Burda, A. Chodorowska, Oficyna Wydawnicza Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, Zielona Góra 2019, pp. 133-150, here pp. 147-149.

21 BJ Rkp. 7424 f 143v.

22 In the 19th century, fleurons were ranked among 'arabesques'. The interest in them was incited also by e.g., the Romantic debate concerning arabesques. See J. Woźniakowski, 'Arabeska w literaturze i sztuce wczesnego romantyzmu', in *Pogranicza i korespondencje sztuk*, eds. T. Cieślakowska, J. Sławiński, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1980, pp. 191-203, here pp.199-200.

but also from its content. What actually proves the most decisive in this respect is not so much the theme of a travel to Italy: Italian voyages were in the late 18th and throughout the whole 19th century possibly the most frequent topic of the European travel literature. The book's importance results from the connections, political competences, and artistic interests of Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord, who, thanks to her financial standing could easily embark upon many-month journeys of which one is reflected in the book.

When travelling across the German, Italian, and Austrian territories, the account's protagonist freely socialized with Europe's crowned heads and social elites. Among the numerous prominent individuals she saw already on the first days the manuscript mentions representatives of the ruling House of Hohenzollern: Prince Augustus William of Prussia (brother of Frederick IV), his wife, King Frederick IV's nephew, and a friend from youth Wilhelm Radziwiłł.²³ The last days of the journey brought a meeting with Prince Metternich, widow of the Emperor of Austria Francis II Caroline Augustus von Wittelsbach; Dorothea also attended a private audience with the mother of Emperor Francis Joseph I, Archduchess Sophie. An equally high social status characterizes numerous friends she met with in Italy, with the climax of aristocratic meetings being the visit to the last heir of the House of Bourbon to the French crown Henri D'Artois residing in Venice and his mother Princess the Berry, Caroline of Bourbon and Sicily. Among the names of those met in Berlin we can find Alexander von Humboldt and Maria Kalergis von Nesselrode-Ereshoven.²⁴ In the course of her travel the Duchess was joined by her children: Pauline de Castellane, Napoléon-Louis de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duke of Valençay, future Duke of Sagan, his brother Alexandre Edmond de Talleyrand-Périgord, 3rd Duke of Dino, additionally her brother in law and the administrator of the Sagan estates Carl Rudolf Graf von der

23 See J. Durka, 'Wokół życiorysu księżnej Doroty Dino i jej krótkiej wizyty w Antoninie', pp. 25–26.

24 Famous 'Madame Kalergis' was remembered in Poland as Norwid's lover.

Schulenburg-Vitzenburg, as well as her close friend Charles Talleyrand's secretary Adolf Fourier de Bacourt whom the Duchess would later name the executor of her will.

Many of these names also appear in the Duchess's texts known from 20th-century publications. However, the particular quality of the discussed manuscript is that it also gives the account of lower-social-status individuals she uses services of while travelling, e.g., above-mentioned Luise von Bolschwing and Allwina Frommann. In the text their names are recorded, and so are character features and behaviour; however, the Duchess does not mention the function she assigns to them. Furthermore, in the account of their potentially deadly error there also appear anonymous chambermaids, which allows the reader to glimpse, if only momentarily, into the operations of the Duchess's court during the journey.

Apart from the numerous meetings with representatives of the European aristocracy two areas stand to the fore: observations related to the visited sites with a particular emphasis on the encounters with art and political commentaries. Although Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord spent over four of the seven months of her journey in Nice, hoping to rest and repair her failing health, she dedicated the remaining three months to seeing relatives and friends, and visiting subsequent cities. She was not only interested in Italian towns, but also German and Austrian ones, although it is the first which are attributed more prominence in the *Reise Erinnerungen*. The Duchess finds almost every of the visited places inspiring to describe the landscape, buildings, and local collections of sculptures and paintings. Furthermore, the author also records concerts, theatre performances and operas seen in Berlin, Verona, and Vienna, registering repertories, names of musicians and actors. The text records, e.g., a Berlin concert of above-mentioned Maria Kalergis, the staging of the opera *Moses in Egitto* by Rossini (1792-1868), Vienna performances of the famous actress Mademoiselle Rachel,²⁵ and a theatre production at the Vienna

25 Mademoiselle Rachel: stage name of Elizabeth-Rachel Félix (1821-1858), actress known for great success in the plays by French classics.

Burgtheater, directed by the German writer Heinrich Laube. Resorting to her thorough education and experience gained in the course of long stays in European metropolises, Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord does not hesitate to severely judge the artists' accomplishments.

In the recollections of her travels the aristocrat presents herself not only as someone familiar with the European politics, but also its engaged commentator. The presence and high frequency of such comments does not really surprise one, since the Duchess known as Talleyrand's right hand was not only famed for her diplomatic skills, but also for her excellent knowledge of politics.²⁶

The high frequency of political comments in the text was also determined by the fact that over the seven-month trip of the Duchess many important developments took place, particularly accumulated in early 1853. The Italian states across which the author was travelling were those which had failed in their struggle for independence during the Springtide of Nations, and returned under the Austrian rule, which, however, did not quench their independence aspirations. During her stay in Nice, on 6 February 1853, the unsuccessful Uprising in Milan broke out ending in its participants' executions. The very same month the international situation deteriorated: Russia intensified her efforts to turn Turkey into her protectorate, which would lead to the outbreak of the Crimean War: in February 1853, Emperor Nicholas I of Russia sent an ultimatum to Istanbul demanding guardianship of all the holy sites of the Orthodox cult and Orthodox citizens within the territory of the Ottoman Empire. Additionally, early 1853 brought the marriage of Napoleon III to Eugénie de Montijo, later known as Empress Eugénie, strongly criticized in the aristocratic circles. On

26 See. G. Erbe, *Dorothea Herzogin von Sagan. Eine deutsch-französische Karriere*, Böhlau, Köln, Weimar, Wien 2009, p. 86; L. Guihéry, 'L'influence de la duchesse de Dino sur la pensée européenne du prince de Talleyrand', *Le Courrier du Prince*, 2022, no. 14, pp. 52–60
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358955423_L%27influence_de_la_duchesse_de_Dino_sur_la_pensee_europeenne_du_prince_de_Talleyrand [Accessed: 7 January 2024].

18 February 1853, an assassination attempt on Emperor Franz Joseph took place. All these events and their direct repercussions are reflected in the *Reise Erinnerungen*. While commenting on them, the author reaches for source materials precious from today's perspective: contemporary press and her current correspondence. She does not refrain from biting personal comments whose undertone differs from generally neutral opinions of the author known from her published recollections.

Some of the critical judgements of Dorothea de Talleyrand-Périgord sound, as justly observed by Laurent Guihéry, 'surprisingly sincere',²⁷ which permits to assume that the first-person account of the journey ordered chronologically and boasting unique illustrative material was not to be read by a wide circle of readers. At the same time, the *Reise Erinnerungen* are not of a confessional character, containing an intimate account of thoughts and emotions. There are three major elements which deny this thesis. The above-mentioned material and visual aspects of the volume suggest that the author relied on the assistance of others in its preparation. The other two issues refer to the content. The author follows the convention of applying aristocratic titles (if only in their simplified form). She does that at many points of the text, also when this applies to her sons and sister, thus, to the people from the closest family, whom she refers to using their ducal titles or using their surnames, unequivocally classifying them within the highest social groups.²⁸ This convention allows her to preserve the

27 The author claims: 'Elle témoigne d'un franc parler surprenant, dressant un portrait, parfois au vitriol (...)'. L. Guihéry, 'Souvenirs de voyage de la duchesse de Sagan, „nièce bien aimée de Talleyrand", vers Nice et Venise à l'hiver 1852-1853: un voyage exceptionnel à la découverte des richesses de l'Europe', *Le Courrier du Prince*, 2023, no.15, pp. 48-51, here p. 50. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368510682_Souvenirs_de_voyage_de_la_duchesse_de_Sagan_niece_bien_aimee_de_Talleyrand_vers_Nice_et_Venise_a_l%27hiver_1852-1853_un_voyage_exceptionnel_a_la_decouverte_des_richesses_de_l%27Europe [Accessed: 19 January 2024].

28 Compare e.g., the following accounts in the *Reise Erinnerungen*: of 9 January 1853 (BJ Rkp. 7424 f. 67v) 'Yesterday was the anniversary of the death of my sister Hohenzollern', and of 16 January 1853 (BJ Rkp. 7424 f. 68v): 'Yesterday my son Valençay came here'.

social distinction between the aristocracy and commoners. Furthermore, the author is consistently discreet with reference to the detailed content discussed both during the formal and semi-formal visits and encounters with family members. Recording the very meeting as such and (often) the visitor list, she insists on protecting privacy, not mentioning the detailed conversation content, similarly as avoiding tackling delicate family issues, which points to a conscious self-censorship.²⁹

Reise Erinnerungen provide valuable demonstrative material showing how a recollection text becomes a space for creating social and cultural identity of the European elites of the time represented by the author. For this very reason, as a historical and literary source it is worth being shared in the format of a critical edition in its original language,³⁰ all the more so as such a publication would complement the recollections connected with Sagan in circulation in academic literature by an important representative of the European aristocracy, both written by herself³¹ and those

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- 29 The characteristic description of a formal meeting can be found in the entry on 12 January 1853 (BJ Rkp. 7424 f. 68r). 'In order to please my son Dino I gave yesterday a real Piedmont dinner: at least as far as the guests were concerned, which went quite well. Count Robilante has dignity, Count Sclopis has scientific education, Marquis de Chateauneuf has enthusiasm and serenity. Countess Castiglione is still beautiful, lively, Countess Sclopis delicate, suffering, and charming: the beautiful Italian word *morbidezza* suits her perfectly. Marquise de Chateauneuf, M^{lle} Chelaincourt born in France, is dignified, pious, philanthropic. Briefly, all went smoothly, however, as we spent time together from 6 to 10 I felt tired.' An exemplary discrete record of a private conversation can be seen in the entry dated 11 January 1853 (BJ Rkp. 7424 f. 68r) concerning the talk the Duchess had with her children: 'Yesterday, we spent several hours unpleasantly discussing some family issues.'
- 30 The French translation *Journal de voyage en Europe. Berlin-Nice-Venise-Sagan 1852-1853, Duchesse de Dino, Dorothee de Courlande*. Illustrated edition, ed. L. Guihéry, Editions Lacurne, Paris 2023 and popular Polish translation *Wspomnienia z podróży 1852-1853*, Fundacja Ogrody Kultury im. księżnej Dino, Zielona Góra 2023 do not fill in the gap.
- 31 *Kroniki księżnej Dino: zapiski z Zatonia z lat 1840-1861*, comp. J. Skorulski, transl. K. Witucka, Fundacja Ogrody Kultury im. księżnej Dino, Zielona Góra 2021 and *Notatki o Valençay: addenda*, comp. J. Skorulski, trans. K. Witucka, Fundacja Ogrody Kultury im. księżnej Dino, Zielona Góra 2023.

compiled after her death by her granddaughters Marie Dorothea Radziwiłł and Dorothea de Castellane.³²

The edition we are planning will include the text's transcription, an academic introduction, as well as text and factual references. What we foresee challenging will be the text's edition which needs to negotiate between the need to preserve authenticity and eliminating barriers which could discourage contemporary readers from reading it, this being possible through applying modern spelling and correcting grammar errors. Additionally, broad contextual knowledge will be required of the places and individuals, this extremely difficult in view of the multitude of representatives of the European aristocracy, patriciate, and artists among whom there are many names of less-known individuals. It will also be important to provide the text's historic-literary contexts, with a particular emphasis on 19th-century travel accounts created by women. The planned edition will be accompanied by a commentary containing both its philological and historical interpretation, and will also discuss the visual aspect of the manuscript (iconographic description). Such an approach: the edition of the text in an interdisciplinary team composed of a literary scholar and a historian, permits a comprehensive overview of the text by taking into account different, yet complementary perspectives.



32 Duchesse de Dino, *Chronique de 1831 à 1862 publiée avec des annotations et un index biographique par la princesse Radziwiłł, née Castellane*. Vols. 1-4, Librairie Plon, Paris 1909-191,0 and *Souvenirs de la duchesse de Dino publiés par sa petite-fille la comtesse Jean de Castellane*, Calmann-Levy, Editeurs, Paris [1908].

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