

Carl Gotthard Langhans' journey to Italy at the turn of 1768 and 1769

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The Italian journey of Carl G. Langhans (1732–1808) was an exceptional undertaking among architects active in Prussia during the reign of Frederick II Hohenzollern (king in 1740–1786). Its route, chronology, some events, information about the buildings seen and people encountered, can now only be reconstructed in general outlines which however give an idea of the purpose and effects of the journey. The most important preserved archival evidence of Langhans' Italian journey is his five letters to Prince Franz Philipp Adrian von Hatzfeld (1717–1779), stored in the State Archive in Wrocław¹, and several drawings held in the Berlin Märkisches Museum². The only preserved artistic effect of the journey are the architectural details made in Carrara and two busts decorating the portico of the former Palace of Hatzfelds in Wrocław³.

Langhans' journey was a project related to the construction of the new Hatzfeld Palace, in the former Albrechtsgasse in Wrocław (Breslau). The founder of the palace, Franz Philipp Adrian von Hatzfeld, belonged to the Catholic and pro-Habsburg nobility of Prussian Silesia. He received the title of prince from the king of Prussia in 1742, perhaps in accordance with Frederick II's principle that the uncertain subjects should be gained for the kingdom by flooding them with titles and decorations⁴. Indeed, no pro-Habsburg declarations by the Prince are known, even though his sympathies with Austria were evidenced both by testimonies from witnesses of the time⁵, and by the still ongoing personal contacts with Vienna, sustained by his brother Karl Friedrich Anton, Minister of Finance of Empress Maria Theresa⁶. However, the most

¹ State Archive in Wrocław, Hatzfelds Archive, sign. 1085. Langhans' letters were mentioned for the first time in the work of **W. Th. Hinrichs** *Carl Gotthard Langhans. Ein schlesischer Baumeister 1733–1808* (Strassburg 1909, pp. 20–24).

² Drawings created during the journey in Italy can be found in the collection of drawings probably pasted by C. G. Langhans on the cards of a bound notebook. Collection in the Märkisches Museum in Berlin.

³ These are probably the capitals of the portico columns. Both busts – that of a Greek and that of a Roman – have not yet been identified.

⁴ See **M. Kaiser**, *Regierende Fürsten und Prinzen von Geblüt. Der Bruderzwist als dynastisches Strukturprinzip*, „Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin – Brandenburg. Jahrbuch“ vol. 4 (2001–2002), p. 3.

⁵ See **E. A. Lehndorff**, *Des Reichsgrafen Ernst Ahasverus Heinrich von Lehndorff Tagebücher nach seiner Kammerherrenzeit*, vol. 1, Gotha 1921, p. 44. Lehndorff, a Prussian diplomat, used to be Hatzfeld's guest. In his diaries he mentions the pro-Austrian sympathies expressed by the Wrocław prince.

⁶ See **H. Wagner**, *Hatzfeldt, Karl Friedrich Graf von*, [in:] *Neue Deutsche Biographie* vol. 8 (1969), p. 63 f., <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd137435142.html#ndbcontent> (access date: 1 III 2020).

striking sign of these contacts was an outstanding and stylistically groundbreaking piece of architecture in this part of Europe, the new Wrocław residence. The circumstances of the palace design and the question of its creator were cleared up thanks to the discovery by Hellmut Lorenz in the Stuttgart Landesbibliothek of hitherto unknown, signed and dated copies of the palace designs⁷. This discovery made it possible to precise the historical position of this building in the history of early Neoclassical architecture⁸. In 1760, in the middle of the Seven Years' War, the Austrian artillery besieging Wrocław demolished the first Hatzfeld Palace, erected between 1714 and 1722, probably according to a design by Christoph Hackner⁹. Shortly after the end of the war, the construction of a new Prince's seat began. For this purpose, in June 1763, Franz Philipp Adrian hired Carl Gotthard Langhans as the Prince's Construction Inspector, entrusting him with the execution of two simultaneous architectural projects – the extension of the Żmigród (Trachenberg) palace and the organization of works related to the construction of a new residence on the site of the demolished Wrocław palace. Langhans designed the wing added to the Baroque residence in Żmigród and supervised its realization. The design of the new palace in Wrocław was entrusted to another architect. In the case of this realization, Langhans' task was primarily to organize and conduct construction works and coordinate the activities of the team of designers and interior decorators. In 1763, the construction of the palace in Wrocław was commenced by levelling the site and removing the ruins of the destroyed old residence and several adjacent buildings.

In 1764, the design of the palace was completed. Its author was not the Prince's Architect but a Frenchman, Isidore Canevale (or Ganevale, 1730–1786)¹⁰.

In 1760 he came from Paris to Vienna as a collaborator of Giovanni N. Servandoni (1695–1766), to make decorations for Maria Theresa's birthday. He found recognition in Austria and remained there until his death. His work has not yet been thoroughly studied. The design of the Hatzfeld Palace was probably the most significant work of Canevale created during his first years in Vienna. He referred in it to the forms and styles of Roman *cinquecento* palace architecture that was in those times highly appreciated by French students of the Roman branch of the Royal Academy of Architecture¹¹. This design was undoubtedly a radical artistic novelty in the whole of Central European art. For Langhans, it appeared to be so controversial that it became a stimulus for a counter-design based on the same general architectural concept, but transformed in a baroque way. In it, the Roman, austere, Renaissance-Classical style of Canevale was replaced by the artistic, extended articulation of the façade, and instead of an arrangement balanced in height of three wings, Langhans proposed a traditional compositional system, with a higher front wing and subordinated lower rear wings. However, in the end, the Langhans' version of the plans was not accepted and the erection of the palace body began according to the French design, with one important exception: the disposition and decoration of the interiors. For an unknown reason Langhans was entrusted with redesigning the interior layout and designing the main staircase in a new form. The architect was also to make designs for the decoration of several palace rooms in cooperation with Canevale and Berlin-Potsdam stucco artists Dominik Merck and Johann Peter Echlter. In summer 1768 the construction works reached the stage of realization of the main representative staircase, interior decoration, selection of furniture and search for works of art, as well as designing or even building a balcony portico of the palace. These matters must have been of such importance to Hatzfeld that he ordered Langhans to

⁷ H. Lorenz, *Das Palais Hatzfeld in Breslau/Wrocław. Carl Gotthard Langhans oder Isidore Canevale?*, "Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege" 1996, no. 1.

⁸ See J. K. Kos, *Ani centrum, ani peryferie. Architektura pruskiego Śląska w okresie autonomii administracyjnej w latach 1740–1815*, Wrocław 2016, pp. 154–159.

⁹ See K. Kalinowski, *Architektura doby baroku na Śląsku*, Warszawa 1977, p. 257.

¹⁰ See I. Bibo, *Ein französischer Architekt in Mitteleuropa: Isidore Ganneval (Canevale)*, "Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Vergleichende Kunstforschung in Wien" 1997, no. 3.

¹¹ See J. Erichsen, *Antique und Grec. Studien zur Funktion der Antike in Architektur und Kunsttheorie des Frühklassizismus*, Köln 1980, s. 120.

go on a European journey, the route of which would lead through Bohemia, Austria to Italy and further to France. This journey, undoubtedly very expensive, was to be financed from the Prince's private fund. The aim of the project was to collect staircase designs, to buy furniture and sculptures for the palace, as well as to expand the palace library. For the Wrocław architect, the journey was, above all, a unique opportunity to escape the stagnation of post-war Prussian Silesia and to acquire European artistic refinement. For Hatzfeld, on the other hand, it could have been, apart from practical benefits directly related to the construction of the palace, an element of building the prestige of the grand *seigneur*, based on cooperation with his own "court" artist, the best one in Silesia.

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Langhans' Italian letters always began with the expression "Serene Highness" ("*Euer Durchlaucht*"), which was the official title formula for the highest nobility in the countries of early modern Europe. However, the content of the letters shows that the relations between the architect and Hatzfeld were not completely formal in character. For Hatzfeld, Langhans was not only an authority on artistic matters, but also a person with a great deal of independence in making financial decisions, such as buying furniture, works of art, books or sculptures. One of the letters written many years later (1775) by the Prince's Architect to the Wrocław aristocrat shows that Langhans could also have been privy to certain political interests of his principal¹². However, the Italian correspondence does not show this.

Langhans' first Italian letter, and probably the first letter written during the journey, is dated 15 XII 1768. It was written in Venice, to which the architect had arrived the day before. Langhans informed Hatzfeld about his recent stay in Vienna and the present one in Venice: he wrote that "there is nothing interesting for an architect in Venice"¹³, so he would finish his visit here before the end of December and go to Rome to reach Naples in mid-January 1769. Unlike not inspiring Venice, his earlier sojourn in Vienna was very fruitful. Thanks to Hatzfeld's letters of recommendation (*Entremiso*) and the help of the Prince's brother, Langhans could see the interiors of many palaces. Of these, however, he only mentions the works of Johann B. Fischer von Erlach and Francesco Martinelli: The Paar Palace¹⁴ and of The Esterházy Palace¹⁵. The architect saw and drew their furnishings and also "learned" ("*gelernt*") that the wall surfaces covered with gypsum (plaster, stucco), as well as cornices ("*Leisten*") and reliefs ("*Bildhauerarbeit*") made of this material are more durable, nicer and easier to work with and gilding than wood panelling. Apart from these buildings Langhans also saw "all imperial palaces", The Schönborn Palace¹⁶ and St. Vait¹⁷. Also in those buildings, "he copied on paper all that can be useful during the construction of the Prince's palace". He concludes his description of his Viennese insights by asking the Prince not to continue the construction of the stairs in the Wrocław palace until his return from the journey¹⁸. This is because he would bring many of the best "models" ("*Models*") of staircases from Vienna. In January 1769, Langhans, accompanied by an unspecified secretary of the Portuguese official delegation ("*legation Secretaires*"), arrived in Rome via Bologna and Florence. In his letter to Hatzfeld, written in Rome on

¹² A letter written shortly after C. G. Langhans' visit in Wörlitz in 1775 mentions the architect's meetings with various Prussian politicians. See The State Archive in Wrocław, The Hatzfelds' Archive, sign. 1085.

¹³ See original quote: "*Es scheint mir als ob Venedig nicht viel von den enthielte was für einen Architecten lehrreich ist*". All quotations from C. G. Langhans' letters in the article come from the correspondence preserved in the State Archive in Wrocław. See footnote no. 1.

¹⁴ It's probably the Palace Paar with interiors by I. Canevale. Information from Professor Hellmut Lorenz from Vienna.

¹⁵ Palace Esterházy by F. Martinelli, 1695.

¹⁶ It is probably Schönborn-Batthyány Palace, designed by J. B. Fischer von Erlach, 1706.

¹⁷ Perhaps it is a Catholic church with such a dedication, rebuilt in Baroque forms in 1742–1745 by M. Gell.

¹⁸ See original quote: "*dahero ich gerne sehen würde, wenn in meiner Abwesenheit mit dem Baue der Treppe nicht weiter vorgegangen würde [...]*".

29 I 1769, he mentioned the impression made on him by the cities along the way. He wrote that “as for my (artistic) intentions, I found a great deal of interesting pieces of art in both cities”¹⁹: in Bologna these were the works of “the famous Palladio” (“*Berühmten Paladii*”), made in a “miraculous way from pure brick and lime”. In Florence, on the other hand, the architect was amazed by “its ancient treasures” (“*Schätze derer Antiquitaeten*”). Langhans also visited there studios of sculptors, not mentioned by name, where he saw “beautiful tables and fireplace vases”, in his opinion suitable for the palace in Wrocław. However, it was ultimately up to Hatzfeld to decide on their purchase, after receiving information about the shipping costs, and a possible transaction would take place during the architect’s return trip, leading through Livorno and again Florence. Financial matters would be settled by the Wrocław-based company Molinari (“*Molinarische Handlung*”) and the Florentine banker Thomaso Baldi. In his letter, Langhans also promised that during his stay in Massa/Carrara he would obtain information about the prices of a square foot of white marble and the cost of sending this material to Wrocław. The marble would be used to make “the busts we talked about” (“*die bewußten Buste*”²⁰). Hatzfeld was to decide whether to carve these sculptures in Carrara or in Wrocław. Langhans’ plan for his further journey was to leave Rome for Naples on 1 II and return to Rome on 12 or 14 II. However, for unknown reasons he did not meet these dates. His journey was prolonged and in the second half of February 1769 he was still in Naples.

This is evidenced by two letters sent from Naples. In the first one, only half a page long, written on 17 II 1769, Langhans described the difficulties he encountered when trying to acquire two famous publications of that time, released by the Italian Bourbons’ printing house: “*La descrizione del Herculano*”²¹ and “*Le Pianta del Palazzo reale di Caserta et del Aquedotte*”²². These “excellent works” were intended to be bought not only by Hatzfeld, but also by both brothers of King Frederick II – Princes Henry and Ferdinand. On this matter and on their behalf, Langhans was asked by letter by Cammerherr of the Berlin Royal Court. The acquisition of these “sold out” works was so important to them that the Langhans turned to the Direttore delle Stamparia reale, Padre della Torre²³ for their purchase. The final part of the letter shows that these efforts were to succeed.

Just two days later, on 19 II, another letter was written in which Langhans described his stay in the capital of Campania. He wrote that he saw “almost everything” in Naples and its surroundings. He was in Caserta, where he not only visited the great palace residence of the Bourbons, but also met with its designer, the famous architect” Luigi Vanvitelli (1700–1773). With one of his students (“the first”) he visited ancient places: Pozzuoli, Baiae, Cumae and Portici. Langhans reported with pride on Vanvitelli’s reaction to his project (“*Riss*”) of the Wrocław palace²⁴. Also, a trip to the summit of Vesuvius made a great impression on Langhans. He dedicated a large part of his letter to it, describing the sight of lava, its smell and other “wonders of nature”. Among other artistic experiences from his stay in Campania, he has noted table tops seen in Portici, made of various types of lava, “similar to porphyry and exceeding the beauty of marble”. In other respects, however, Naples was a disappointment. First of all, Langhans did not find many “beautiful stairs” there, except the staircase in the Bourbons’ Royal Palace in Caserta, which, however, “due to its size is not suitable for imitation” in the palace in Wrocław. In the same letter he stated with satisfaction that, at his request, the construction of the stairs to the half-floor (“*Entresoles*”) in Hatzfeld’s residence had been postponed.

¹⁹ See original quote: „In beyden Städten [i.e. in Bologna and Florence] habe ich was meine Absichten anbelanget außer ordentlich viel merckwürdiges gefunden”.

²⁰ Most probably, these are the two busts located in the portico of the Hatzfeld Palace in Wrocław.

²¹ In 1768, the mentioned publishing house had the following volumes: *Le pitture antiche di Ercolano e contorni incise con qualche spiegazione*, vol. 1, Napoli 1757; vol. 2, Napoli 1760; vol. 3, Napoli, 1762; vol. 4, Napoli 1765; *De’ bronzi di Ercolano e contorni incisi con qualche spiegazione*, vol. 1: Busti, Napoli 1767.

²² It could probably be the publishing house. See L. Vanvitelli, *Dichiarazioni dei Disegni del Reale Palazzo di Caserta*, Napoli 1756.

²³ Giovanni Maria Torre (1713–1782), scientist, physicist. See *Biografia universale antica e moderna*, Venezia 1829, vol. 58, pp. 172–173.

²⁴ See original quote: „Er hat den Riß des Hoch.Durchlaucht Palis gesehen und mich mit der Versicherung umarmet, daß es Ihm reine freunde wäre, daß die Teutschen in Ansehung der Architectur nicht in den Gusto derer Frantzosen verfielen”.

The last letter from the Italian journey was written on 12 IV 1769 in Florence, where the architect received unexpected news of the need to interrupt his further journey and return to Wrocław. Only from this letter we learn that the further journey was to lead to France. Langhans accepted Hatzfeld's request with undisguised regret and wrote in response: "if I were to go (to France) in the future, the cost of such a travel would be double. But in order to prove my attachment to Your Majesty, I decided to go back from here through Milan, the Reich and Saxony"²⁵. Langhans intended to come to Wrocław in early May 1769 at the earliest. In a recent Italian letter, the Prince's Architect reports to Hatzfeld about purchases made on his return trip from Rome to Florence. Carrara was once again included in his itinerary. Here he arranged to ship in two months the ordered "marble things" ("*Marmor Sachen*"), i.e. eight capitals and 8-foot cornices. At the same time, the two busts ("*beyde Busti*") would be also transported to Wrocław. But further purchases were also planned. It seems from the letter that Langhans did a research in Carrara about the price of marble and left here information about the dimensions of undefined columns, coat of arms and lion. These items were possibly ordered personally by the Prince. However, the architect's doubts were raised by the high cost of transportation by ship through Hamburg and Berlin. Besides, it was not certain whether such a ship could be found in Livorno. The purchase of blue or grey marble, from which the columns of the palace portico were to be made, was also considered. However, with regard to this purchase Langhans stated that such marble is to be found also in "our" Silesian quarries and there is no need to bring it from Italy²⁶. However, he would wait for the final decision on 12 or 13 IV in Nuremberg.

This was the end of Langhans' Italian correspondence with Hatzfeld.

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The 18th century was a century of architects' travels. For the first time in the history of this profession, foreign travels were not only an important element of professional education, but they also became an important factor building professional prestige, strengthening the chance in the competitive architectural market. The long expeditions were made mainly by wealthy French and English architects. Less frequently they were done by those from other European countries. Compared to previous centuries, in the second half of the 18th century, the geography of their trips changed. The traditional route of the modern Grand Tour, which united European aristocrats and art connoisseurs, painters, sculptors and architects, led to Italy and generally ended up in Campania. Naples and its vicinity was the farthest region of Italy reached by most travellers coming from beyond the Alps. Changes that have been taking place since the first half of the 18th century in the European aesthetic consciousness, the broadening of geographical horizons and the deepening of the historical ones, have gradually changed routes of travel. Sometimes, even putting their lives at risk, they went to regions outside of the Grand Tour topography, closed by the borders of the Italian shoe. Sicily, Dalmatia, Greece and the Middle East were gradually discovered. New sources of artistic inspiration were sought there. They discovered the austere Doric order of the archaic Greek temples of Sicily, drew Diocletian's palace in Split, took new, more accurate measurements of the buildings on the Acropolis, and even reached Baalbek and Palmyra, from where they brought, among others, patterns of ornamental decoration and examples of previously unknown ancient buildings. The pioneers of expeditions to these regions, considered dangerous, being under Turkish control, were mainly English and French architects and enthusiasts of antiquity.

²⁵ See original quote: „wenn ich diese Tour [i.e. to France] künftig besonders machen sollte die Kosten doppel seyn würden. Von inzwischen Ew. Hochfürstlichen Durchlaucht auch in diesem Stücke meine unterthäniges Attachement zu zeigen , habe ich mich entschlossen von hieraus direkt [...] zurück zu kommen”.

²⁶ Grey marble, a Silesian speciality of this century, came from the quarries in Przeworno (Prieborn).

As a result of the changes taking place in the historical and artistic consciousness, in the second half of the 18th century two routes of tours were formed to seek artistic inspiration. The classic, traditional one limited to Italy, but generally without Sicily. And a new one, corresponding to the changing tastes of the era, covering Sicily and less frequently Dalmatia, Greece and the Middle East. Here, Greek-Roman antiquities unknown so far were discovered, and since the beginning of the nineteenth century also “Saracen” ones. A new route of artistic journeys has also become England, with its Neo-Palladianism and early Neo-Gothic, rarely visited by continental architects before. Travelling was expensive, risky and exhausting. It was financed by state scholarships (French nationals) or by rich patrons, less frequently by the architects themselves. The result of the journeys were numerous new publications of the nature of measurement and drawing inventories. Wonderful print making publications were for their authors an important medium of self-promotion on the professional market of London or Paris.

Architects active in the second half of the 18th century in Central European countries rarely made long journeys. However, there were exceptions. These included the tours of Johann Christian Kammsetzer (1753–1795), financed by King Stanisław August. The first, started in 1776, was connected with the royal mission, diplomatic but also artistic. Its route led through the rarely visited borderlands of Europe, through Turkey and Greece²⁷. Kammsetzer visited Constantinople, saw the Greek islands and Athens. After a year he returned to Warsaw, but in 1780 he set off on another journey. Its route led through Vienna to Italy, and from there to Paris and London. The journey, which lasted as long as three years, was essentially a foreign stay, which resulted in getting to know the most important centres of new European architecture by the Warsaw architect. Kammsetzer’s journeys distinguished themselves from journeys of other architects both in length and topography. Greece, Turkey and England were not among the most visited places at that time.

A year before Langhans’ Italian tour, another Polish architect, Efraim Szreger (1727–1783), stayed in Rome. However, little is known about his European journey, leading through Italy, Germany and France. It was also financed from the royal fund and had a cognitive purpose²⁸.

Prussian architects began their European journeys in principle only in the last years of the 18th century. Their didactic tours were facilitated by the new artistic situation in Berlin and Prussia created after the death of Frederick II (1786). European tours have ceased to be an elite privilege limited so far to the few artists – architects and painters – associated with the royal court, but have become, especially in the last decade of the 18th century and early 19th century, an obvious component of the architectural education of Berlin builders. Journeys in Italy and France, less frequently in England, financed from the royal fund or sometimes paid from one’s own income, contributed to a rapid improvement in the artistic level of the architecture in Hohenzollerns’ lands. European journeys were made at the end of the 18th century and at the beginning of the 19th century by Heinrich Gantz (in Italy between 1790–1795), Friedrich Gilly (1797–1798, France, England, Austria), Karl F. Schinkel (1803–1804, Italy and France; 1824, again Italy; 1826, France and England).

In earlier years, preceding the artistic revolution of the era of Frederick William II (king in 1786–1797), only few Prussian architects had a chance to see other European countries. Among them was Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff (1699–1753), architect and painter, artistic advisor and friend of Frederick Hohenzollern²⁹. At the turn of 1736–1737 he spent several months in Italy. The journey financed by the successor to the throne, the future king Frederick II, is documented in source by several letters of the artist and his numerous field sketches showing, among other things, building facades, portals, staircases. The letters and drawings show that its main aim, apart from gaining general knowledge about the state

²⁷ See N. and Z. Batowscy, M. Kwiatkowski, *Jan Chrystian Kamsetzer. Architekt Stanisława Augusta*, Warszawa 1978, pp. 65–90.

²⁸ See S. Lorentz, *Efraim Szreger. Architekt polski XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 1986, pp. 118–124.

²⁹ See H–J. Kadatz, *Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff. Baumeister Friedrichs II*, Leipzig 1983, pp. 40–41.

of the arts in Italy, was to learn about the theatrical construction in connection with the planned erection of the royal opera house in the capital of Prussia. The route of Knobelsdorff's journey seemed to follow the typical route of the aristocratic *Kavalierstour* of that time, through Venice, Florence and Rome to Naples.

To another type of artistic journeys belonged numerous trips to Italy, France and England by the private architect and artistic advisor to Prince Leopold III von Anhalt-Dessau, Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff (1736–1800)³⁰. In a small state ruled by the Anhalt-Dessau dynasty, art, and especially architecture and landscape gardening, were among the priorities of the Prince's policy. Prince Leopold's artistic initiatives were pioneering, announcing the coming classicism of the Antique-Palladian-English character. Erdmannsdorff, despite his lack of artistic education, was the main designer and executor of the Prince's artistic wishes. The English park and the Palladian palace built according to his designs in Wörlitz, admired and visited by artists and political elites of the epoch, including Langhans (in 1775), became a source of inspiration for many artistic undertakings, including that of Minister of Silesia, Karl Georg von Hoym, realized in his residence in Brzeg Dolny (Dyhernfurth).

The artistic activities of Erdmannsdorff and Leopold III were an exceptional example of the relationship between an artist and an investor of the epoch of absolutism, who belonged to different social spheres, but were active together in the realization of the Prince's artistic undertakings. Both at the stage of their conception and creation, the joint foreign tours of Erdmannsdorff and Leopold III were of fundamental importance. As early as in 1761–1762 Erdmannsdorff made his first trip to Italy, but limited only to Venice, Bologna and Florence. In the following year the first visit of the architect to England took place, accompanied by Prince Leopold and a landscape gardener Johannes F. Eysenbeck (1763–1764). A new Italian journey took place already in 1765–1766. Subsequent journeys led to Rome (1770) and once again to England (1775). In the years 1789–1790 the fourth Italian tour of the architect took place. No other European architect of that era had made so many and so long trips abroad. None of them spent as long time in England as this court artist of a small German state.

Langhans' Italian journey, one of his three European tours, was an undertaking comparable in its objectives, but not in its geographical scope and duration, to that of Erdmannsdorff. Two other Langhans' travels, not at all or only poorly documented in source, were related to his official activities, carried out in the service of the state. The first one is only mentioned in the 18th century biography of the architect. Friedrich Nicolai, Berlin publisher and author, and a private friend of Langhans, recalls his trip to Holland in 1758. The reason for this trip was to be the architect's participation in the organization of a collect, carried out, among others, in the Netherlands, by the magistrate of Świdnica (Schweidnitz), in connection with the reconstruction of the town after its destruction during the Seven Years' War³¹. Langhans' third and, at the same time, last European adventure took place at the turn of 1775/1776 and was connected with his taking up the position of director of construction affairs in both Silesian War and Domains Chambers. It was a didactic journey, financed from the royal fund. During this time, Langhans learned about water construction, but also saw the latest residential architecture and landscape gardening³². During the tour, which lasted several months, the architect saw France and England, and probably the Netherlands for the second time. However, its details are not known. There are (almost) no French or English Langhans' letters preserved. The drawings made during its course are probably limited to pencil sketches showing the structure of the haystack and hull of the ship.

Compared to the scarce documentation of both of these expeditions, the Italian journey of the architect has a remarkable, to some extent completely preserved source base. The five Langhans' letters,

³⁰ See M. Rüffer, *Grand Tour. Die Reisen Leopolds III Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau und Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff*, [in:] *Weltbild Wörlitz. Entwurf einer Kulturlandschaft*, ed. F.-A. Bechtoldt, T. Weiss, Ostfildern-Ruit 1996.

³¹ The information about the route of the journey and its purpose is not confirmed in archival sources.

³² R. Wegner, *Nach Albions Stränden. Die Bedeutung Englands für die Architektur des Klassizismus und der Romantik in Preußen*, München 1994, pp. 92–103.

written between December 1768 and April 1769 to Hatzfeld, are undoubtedly only a small part of the architect's Italian travel notes. It was the custom of the epoch that he had to keep a detailed diary in which he collected observations and information on artistic and practical matters, such as information on prices of ordered works of art and items of equipment for the Wrocław palace. However, we do not know about such a diary. The only complement to the information contained in the correspondence is a few drawings created during his journey, made by Langhans and other unknown people, presently held in the Berlin Märkisches Museum³³. These are too few to define Langhans' interests more precisely on their basis. Only four of them show works of architecture. It is likely that a drawing of the Baroque portal of the Ditrichstein Palace in Brno, with a form similar to that of the entrance to the emerging Hatzfeld Palace, could have been made still during his travel through Moravia. In Vienna Langhans sketched, on two small sheets of paper, the walls and communication layout of the staircase of the Liechtenstein Palace. In Vienna, two drawings were also made to document the view of the walls of the palace hall, segmented by pilasters with the entrance portal framed by niches with statues, as well as the details of its entablature and rococo-classicist decoration. The interior of the hall is maintained in the style of austere Baroque of Domenico Martinelli. Other drawings, which we can associate with his stay in Italy were probably not the work of Langhans. Their theme is unidentified examples of tombstone architecture, with a very elaborate neoclassicist form and short descriptions in Italian.

Langhans' letters are therefore the main source from which we can learn the purpose and nature of his Italian journey. However, the Silesian architect was not its only protagonist. The journey had yet another author, a Silesian aristocrat Franz Philipp Adrian von Hatzfeld. It was him who financed the tour, probably set its route and determined some of its goals. It seems that they might have had a very practical dimension, which has already been mentioned. The founder of the new palace in Wrocław wanted to collect models, especially for staircases, as well as to import noble marbles and to purchase original furniture and artworks for the future palace. Hatzfeld's goals regarding the journey were in harmony with the whole very ambitious and extremely expensive undertaking, which was the realization of the Wrocław residence. The strategy behind this costly venture could have been justified both by reasons of state representation and a hidden political dimension, disguised as architectural. The Catholic aristocrat, openly sympathising with the Habsburgs, built a residence in Prussian Wrocław that even in the imperial Vienna of that time would have been an exceptional phenomenon. In its Silesian context, however, its monumental scale demonstrated definitely "with exaggeration" the social and political rank of The Hatzfelds which was rather moderate. In Wrocław, the new palace in Albrechtsgasse had only one architectural rival – the palace of King Frederick II Hohenzollern, built only a dozen years earlier. In comparison with this modest building, which was moreover hidden from the inhabitants of Wrocław, it was a genuine residence of a sovereign aristocrat.

For Langhans, the journey, despite its considerable pace and only half a year's duration, was no less remarkable than the architecture of the Prince's residence in Wrocław, built under his direction. In the Prussian state of that time, Silesia, recently acquired, was the only province where such an undertaking as the European journey of a private architect, financed by a wealthy aristocrat, could be possible. It was a manifestation of the cultural legacy of the local nobility, taken over after 1740, from the "bygone" Habsburg era. Still a few of the most important Silesian families had the property to satisfy their most ambitious artistic intentions. Palaces were built, parks and gardens were established in new taste. Not only could the Brandenburg nobility not afford this kind of "fancy", but it would have been impossible under Frederick II. Unless it was the nobility who moved to Silesia and here took up important positions in the Prussian state administration and army.

³³ Collection of drawings at the Märkisches Museum in Berlin. See footnote 2.

As it was mentioned, the tours of eighteenth-century architects were a manifestation of their search for new artistic inspirations, important for commercial success in the professional market. The opinion of an expert in antiquity and the authorship of architectural printmaking publications were, in Paris and London, a pass to the narrow circle of the artistic elite of the second half of the 18th century. However, Langhans' journey took place in different cultural, social and professional contexts than in the Western European world of that time, determined by the peripheral situation of Silesia and Prussia. Its aims did not consist of include the pursuit of a better professional position in a large architectural environment competing for the best contracts. Such environment in Silesia at that time and in that epoch could not have been. Langhans did not seek originality as a primary goal. His journey was a conventional route, taken by many during a typical Grand Tour.

Langhans set off on a European journey as a respected architect, already known even beyond Silesia. Since around 1767 he had been designing in Brandenburg, and even for members of the royal court, among others for Prince Henry, brother of Frederick II, for whom he decorated several interiors of the palace in Rheinsberg, and perhaps also for his Berlin palace. Langhans went to Italy as a "*teutscher Architect*", with his own designs or those realized by him. The letters mention only one of them: the design of the Hatzfeld Palace, probably the one made by Canevale, or its variant, modified by the Prince's Architect. We know that it was presented to Luigi Vanvitelli, and praised by him for being in a different taste than French. Probably this Italian architect meant Rococo. His great palace in Caserta was a work connecting two epochs – Baroque and Classicism. Like Canevale's Wrocław design, it was one of the early manifestations of the new classicist trends in European art. Perhaps the same design was also the cause of another event on this journey. Hinrichs recalls, referring to the source information, that during his return trip on 3 II 1769 Langhans was admitted to the Academy of Bologna³⁴. His membership was proposed by the vice-president of the academy, architect Bartholomeo Minozzi³⁵. We do not know on what basis a visitor from Silesia was admitted to it. Whether it was the design of the palace or perhaps the design of technical facilities, which Langhans was no less intensively concerned with in his professional life than with construction. Academia Clementina Bonarum Artium gathered architects and sculptors, but also scientists from such diverse fields as physics, mathematics, anatomy and medicine.

Merely a few preserved drawings and letters are insufficient source for the reconstruction of the artistic experience gained by Langhans during his journey. We do not know what he saw and what he could be particularly interested in. It seems certain, however, that apart from architecture, it was also a monumental sculpture, tombstone sculpture and artisanal craft. The list of buildings mentioned in the letters or recorded in the drawings is limited to a few Viennese palaces, one church and the Bourbons' residence in Caserta. Similarly short is the list of general comments on architecture: Langhans admires the typical Bologna construction technique of shaping facades from visible bricks without any plaster or cladding, and the technique of marbling the internal walls, which he must have known already from Silesia. Besides Vanvitelli, he mentions only one artist. It is the "famous" Palladio, whose works he could see in Vicenza, although the letters do not confirm it. The remark about the "famous" Italian is a very important evidence of the state of artistic awareness of the Wrocław artist, confirming the his interest in the upcoming Palladian classicism as early as in the 1760s. In the 1770s Langhans will become its outstanding representative.

What significance did this unfinished European journey have for the Prince's Architect? Its effects could have had two dimensions: a concrete, architectural and artistic one, consisting in bringing

³⁴ See W. Th. Hinrichs, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

³⁵ See *ibidem*. Perhaps it is the painter from Bologna, Bernardino Minozzi (1699-1769), who was president of the Clementine Academy since 1750. See *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler. Von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, Hrsg. U. Thieme, F. Becker, Leipzig 1930, vol. 24, p. 108.

to Wrocław patterns of decoration, details and architectural solutions, and a mental one, including impressions, thoughts and experiences resulting from the contact with the great art world of Italy, but also Vienna, which cannot be forgotten. Langhans' journey was undoubtedly too short to be an opportunity to deepen his professional skills. It did not result in the appearance of any new, special style in the architect's known works, created soon after 1769. The artistic culture he saw during his six-month tour did not belong to the avant-garde of that time. Langhans saw the artistic past rather. The future of European architecture he would see only a dozen or so years later, visiting England at the turn of 1775 and 1776. And it was this journey that inspired his further work. Unfortunately, it is still an almost unknown episode in his biography.

Słowa kluczowe

Carl Gotthard Langhans, Pałac Hatzfeldów we Wrocławiu, architektura, klasycyzm, podróże do Włoch, Śląsk, Włochy

Keywords

Carl Gotthard Langhans, Hatzfeld Palace in Wrocław, architecture, classicism, journeys to Italy, Silesia, Italy

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Summary

JERZY KRZYSZTOF KOS (University of Wrocław) / Carl Gotthard Langhans' journey to Italy at the turn of 1768 and 1769

The article discusses the correspondence between Carl Gotthard Langhans and Prince Franz Philipp Adrian von Hatzfeld during the journey of this Wrocław architect to Italy. Five preserved letters of the architect are in the collection of the State Archive in Wrocław. The Italian journey took place at the turn of 1768 and 1769 and was connected with the realization of the classicist Hatzfeld Palace, which had been erected in Wrocław since 1764. Langhans' letters document the phases of the journey, contain information about the places visited and the items of furnishings of the palace ordered in Italy. Despite their brevity, they are a unique evidence of the artistic culture of the second half of the 18th century.