



TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITY AT THE IMPERIAL COURT IN VIENNA: THE CASE OF DIETRICHSTEIN, HARRACH, AND SCHWARZENBERG

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the transformation of the aristocratic identity of noble families in the Habsburg Monarchy during the 17th and early 18th centuries. It explores how members of elite noble families, such as the Dietrichsteins, Harrachs, and Schwarzenbergs, navigated the sociopolitical changes at the imperial court in Vienna. The article argues that through their long-term service to the Habsburg emperors, transnational marriage alliances, and integration into European noble society, these families developed a cosmopolitan identity. This identity, tied to loyalty to the Habsburgs, was shaped by a shared aristocratic culture, multilingualism, and strategic social networks. Furthermore, the study examines how these nobles transcended regional affiliations and embraced the imperial court as the primary arena for their social, political, and cultural aspirations.

KEYWORDS: Habsburg Monarchy; aristocratic identity; transnational nobility; imperial court; nobility.

IDENTIDAD TRANSNACIONAL EN LA CORTE IMPERIAL DE VIENA: EL CASO DE DIETRICHSTEIN, HARRACH Y SCHWARZENBERG

RESUMEN

Este estudio profundiza en la transformación de la identidad aristocrática de las familias nobles de la Monarquía de los Habsburgo durante el siglo XVII y principios del XVIII. Explora cómo los miembros de familias de alta nobleza, como los Dietrichstein, los Harrach y los Schwarzenberg, navegaron por los cambios sociopolíticos en la Corte imperial de Viena. El artículo sostiene que, a través de su prolongado servicio a los

emperadores Habsburgo, sus alianzas matrimoniales transnacionales y su integración en la sociedad nobiliaria europea, estas familias desarrollaron una identidad cosmopolita. Esta identidad, ligada a la lealtad a los Habsburgo, estaba conformada por una cultura aristocrática compartida, el multilingüismo y redes sociales estratégicas. Además, el estudio examina cómo estos nobles trascendieron las afiliaciones regionales y se integraron a la Corte imperial como el lugar principal de sus aspiraciones sociales, políticas y culturales.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Monarquía de los Habsburgo; identidad aristocrática; nobleza transnacional; Corte imperial; nobleza.

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The Central European court of the Habsburg emperors symbolized a social, cultural, and power center in the eyes of the nobility of the Austrian lands since the accession of Maximilian I (1459-1519) to the throne in 1493. The monarch made a purposeful effort to attach more noble families to his court and to install their members in court offices. The court's attractiveness became even stronger during the reign of Ferdinand I (1503-1564), especially after 1558, when he was given the title of Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (PRESS, 1991: 289-312; EHRENPREIS, 2001: 235-261). Ferdinand I's integration efforts provoked opposition among the nobles of the multinational Habsburg monarchy, who guarded their rights with great pride. In particular, the representatives of the noblest members of society from the Bohemian lands and the Kingdom of Hungary were reticent to pursue this kind of public career, preferring a completely different model (BŮŽEK and PÁLFFY, 2003: 53-92). Regarding power, their interest in serving near the ruler remained outside the scope of attention. Traditional work in the offices of the various countries of the Habsburg monarchy continued to dominate the conservative thinking of the early modern nobles from the eastern part of the monarchy over the advantages offered by the office at the Viennese court (MAŤA, 2004: 391). Yet not all members of the nobility acted uniformly, and a small number of noble individuals gradually became aware of the imperial court's growing attractiveness. In the 16th and 17th centuries, more nobles sought to enter the imperial court permanently.

From the second third of the 17th century onward, service at the imperial court in Vienna began to represent a particular ideal of an aristocratic career, which all noblemen tried to achieve, or at least get close to, to the utmost of their abilities. These were intended to confirm or even raise the social prestige of the nobles in the countries from which they arrived at the imperial court on a short-term basis (BŮŽEK and

PÁLFFY: 2003; DUINDAM, 2003). A turning point occurred after the turbulent events of 1618-1620, when the Bohemian Estates revolted against the Habsburgs and the Thirty Years' War broke out. Acting close to the ruler was one of the most critical tools of noble representation. It was one of the most distinctive elements of social distinction to other members of this social class (MAŤA, 1999: 43-52). The nobility immediately reacted to the change in the distribution of political power, the decline of the estates' institutions in the various lands of the multinational state, and the takeover of power by the authorities of the imperial court led by the sovereign and the central administrative offices of the monarchy in Vienna. The court career began to be promoted above activity in the provincial estates' institutions, diplomatic missions, the military, and even in the central administration of the Habsburg monarchy (BŮŽEK and MAŤA, 2001: 371-492; SMÍŠEK, 2009). At the same time, in the eyes of the noble Central European society, the importance of a closer connection to the main - Spanish - line of the Habsburg dynasty increased significantly. This was particularly evident in the membership of the nobles in the Order of the Golden Fleece, the Knights of the Order of Calatrava, their proficient knowledge of the Spanish language and their correspondence with influential figures at the royal court in Madrid, and even members of the local ruling family (LEE STOLIČKA, 2021: 34-52; MAREK, 2017: 175-183; MARTÍ, 2021: 247-270).

The German writers and jurists Carl Gustav Heraeus (1671-1725) and Julius Bernard von Rohr (1688-1742) offer an unmistakable testimony of the perception of the imperial court by noblemen from Bohemia and Austria in the 17th and the first half of the 18th century. They were the ones who promoted service in the emperor's immediate circle as the ideal of a noble career. They also mentioned that courtly noble dynasties emerged in the early modern period, whose members regularly gained access to the highest court offices (HERAEUS, 1721: 155; SCHLECHTE, 1989: 238). Among them could be counted approximately fifty of the noblest and richest noble families of the Habsburg Monarchy, such as the Auerspergs, Dietrichsteins, Harrachs, Lambergs, Liechtensteins, Lobkowitzs, Mannsfelds, Schwarzenbergs, Sinzendorfs, Starhembergs, Waldsteins and others. The members of these noble families were characterized by their permanent, usually several years', residence in the capital; only exceptionally, and only

with the special permission of the monarch did they leave the court (MAŤA, 2004: 417, 432-433, 439; MAŤA, 2003: 218-219; SCHEUTZ, 2015: 186).

In this regard, the decisive influence of the imperial court on the values and thinking of a particular nobleman should be emphasized. That institution of power could enforce and generally infuse structures of cognition and evaluation to shape the tastes and lifestyles of nobility. In the minds of the nobility, the Viennese court represented a basis for a particular intellectual and moral conformity, a passive adaptation of individuals to existing conditions and official mores. The imperial court unified the customs and behavior of its members, shaping a typical mentality by unifying rules and homogenizing forms of communication within this society. Through enacted systems of classification, official procedures, court ceremonies, and social rituals, it shaped mental structures and enforced common principles of vision and thought forms. In doing so, he largely purposely constructed a shared identity. If individual nobles wanted to establish a long-term and solid presence in the imperial court, they had to accept this unified vision as their own (KRUEGER, 2009: 3-25; PRESS, 1991: 289-312).

The present study will also follow this direction. Using the example of three Central European noble families (the Dietrichsteins, the Harrachs, and the Schwarzenbergs), the authors will attempt to examine the various elements of their identities (DROSSBACH and HENGERER, 2021: 9-24; LEBEAU, 2016: 143-161; LEONHARD and WIELAND, 2011: 7-34). The first family mentioned, the Dietrichsteins, belonged to an ancient noble family from Carinthia, whose roots can be traced back to the beginning of the 11th century. From the 16th century onwards, its members systematically entered the highest court offices of the Habsburg emperors, became their confidants, and regularly held the office of the Master of the court (Hofmeister) of the emperor. In the period under analysis, these were mainly Maximilian II (1596-1655), Gundakar (1623-1690), Ferdinand Joseph (1636-1698), and Philip Sigismund of Dietrichstein (1651-1716) (FEYFAR, 2009). The first documented ancestor of the Harrachs can be found at the end of the 13th century in southern Bohemia, from where they then headed to the Austrian lands. It was only from the second third of the 17th century onwards that selected members of the family acquired the highest court offices. Ferdinand Bonaventura (1637-1706) and Alois Tomáš Raimund of Harrach (1669-1742) should be included (HEILINGSETZER, 1995: 81-

87). The outstanding political influence of the Archbishop of Prague, Cardinal Ernst Adalbert of Harrach (1598-1667), cannot be overlooked (CATALANO, 2005; KELLER and CATALANO, 2010). In contrast, the Schwarzenbergs did not establish themselves permanently at the Viennese court until the second half of the 17th century, thanks to Johann Adolf (1615-1683). Ferdinand Wilhelm (1652-1703) and Adam Franz (1680-1732) successfully followed him (SCHWARZENBERG, 1963; CHALINE and CERMÁN, 2011).

The authors seek to elaborate on the thesis that the higher nobility or elite of the noble society in the Habsburg monarchy managed to transcend the regional horizons in the 17th century and were distinguished by a transnational, cosmopolitan, and even (pan)European character. This was undoubtedly due to the far-reaching changes in the composition of the Bohemian and Moravian nobility after the suppression of the uprising against the emperor in 1618-1620. Over the next thirty years, more than half of the noble estates in the Kingdom of Bohemia changed ownership. With the emigration of noble individuals of non-Catholic faith, the possibility of acquiring some of the estates confiscated from those that had been defeated opened for the supporters of the ruling dynasty (BÍLEK, 1882-1883; KNOZ, 2006). In their place came the nobility, mostly of foreign origin, who were completely loyal to the emperor. Among them, the Althanns, Berchtolds, Buquoyas, Collalts, Colloreds, Gallas, Leslies, Nostitz, Piccolominis, Rottals, Schwarzenbergs, Trauttmansdorff, and many others rose to the forefront of the nobility. Research to this point indicates that between 1621 and 1656 a total of 417 noble persons from 334 noble families received *incollates* in the Kingdom of Bohemia (POLIŠENSKÝ and SNIDER, 1972: 521). Studies conducted from 1683 to 1740 showed that in the Kingdom of Bohemia, there were 95 newcomers for every 58 native residents, and in the Moravian Margraviate, there were 70 foreign noble families for every 48 native residents (HASSENPFUG-ELZHOLZ, 1982: 168-188; KLÍMA, 1985: 159).

One of the visible manifestations of the cosmopolitan nature of nobility belonged to a unified noble culture, which, despite partial regional and confessional differences, manifested itself in an almost identical lifestyle, world of thought, and values of the mentioned individuals. Transnational marriage alliances and kinship connections also had a considerable influence on this fact. This resulted from the deeply sophisticated

policy of the noble families in question, which was designed to raise their power and prestige (ASCH, 2003; ASCH, 2008: 28-32; BÉLY, 1999; DEMEL, 2005: 8-19; WARREN SABEAN and TEUSCHER, 2011: 1-22). This fact can be illustrated by the example of the Dietrichsteins. The foundation of the complex interrelationship was laid by the imperial diplomat Adam of Dietrichstein (1527-1590), who married the Catalan noblewoman Margareta Folch de Cardona y Requesens (1535-1609) in 1553 (de CRUZ MEDINA, 2014: 99-119; EDELMAYER, 1993: 89-116). He strengthened his ties to the Iberian Peninsula through his four daughters, who married members of important Spanish noble families (Mendoza y de la Cerda, de Borja y Manuel, de Fonseca y Enríquez, de Córdoba y Aragón, and Hurtado de Mendoza y Mendoza) (de CRUZ MEDINA, 2008: 1267-1301). On the other hand, Adam's son Sigismund (1560-1604) married the Italian noblewoman Giovanna della Scala (1574-1644). Thanks to the above-mentioned marriage alliances, the Dietrichsteins' strong family ties spread to various parts of southern and south-western Europe (BŮŽEK, 2021: 117-152).

During the 17th century, the main focus of the family shifted to the creation of an extensive family network in the various countries of the Central European Habsburg Monarchy, with occasional overlap with the Holy Roman Empire. Behind such marriages was the intention of the Habsburg rulers to influence the formation of power and socially desirable kinship and clientele structures at their court in Vienna. The alliances not only symbolized the formation of close ties between the nobility of the various lands under Habsburg rule, but at the same time, they represented a personal link with other centers of power of the Habsburg monarchy and in individual regions within the Holy Roman Empire. Therefore, the descendants of the Dietrichsteins were repeatedly married, for example, to the Collalts, Eggenbergs, Harrachs, Khevenhüllers, Lambergs, Liechtensteins, Lobkowiczs, Mansfelds, Martinitzs, Pöttings, Salms, Schwarzenbergs, Trauttmansdorffs, Weissenwolffs, who also owned landed property in several Central European lands (SCHWARZ, 1943: 220-226, 412-416; SMÍŠEK, 2009: 207-217).

Completely different was the approach of the Schwarzenbergs, who belonged to the traditional nobility of the Holy Roman Empire thanks to their ownership of the free domain of Gimborn in the Brandenburg Mark. This is why it is now possible to see in their family tree from the end of the 13th century several noble wives from the Holy

Roman Empire (e.g. Fürstenbergs, Counts of Sulz, Oettingen-Wallerstein, Margrave of Baden-Baden, Metternichs, Pallants, Rheineck), the Netherlands and Sweden (e.g. van Aylva, de Groote, van Nesselrode, van Starckenborgh, Count of Börringe). Johann Adolf interrupted this tradition of Schwarzenberg marriages to noble women from the Holy Roman Empire in the 1640s. Under the influence of his service at the court of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria, brother of Emperor Ferdinand III, he married Maria Justina of Starhemberg, daughter of the Styrian nobleman Ludwig of Starhemberg (1564-1620) and his wife Barbara of Herberstein (1574-1616), in March 1644, at the request of the imperial couple. This move placed him in the extensive kinship network of two important Austrian families that enjoyed an influential position in the immediate vicinity of the Habsburg emperors. At the same time, the Schwarzenbergs expanded their marital circle into the Bohemian lands, where they gradually established relations with the Liebsteinsky of Kolowrat, Lobkowitz, and Sternberg families (SMÍŠEK, 2013: 127-154).

Although the transnational identity of this group of individuals consisted of several components, it was based, as already indicated above, on complete loyalty and faithful service to the Habsburg family (WREDE, 2016: 21-22.). It was not for no reason that Ferdinand Wilhelm of Schwarzenberg urged his son Adam Franz in his will of 1703 to “continue to demonstrate and maintain a very deep respect, unwavering loyalty and devotion to the brightest House of Austria”.¹ He adopted this attitude from his father, Johann Adolf, who, according to the testimony of Venetian and Swedish envoys to the Viennese court, was known for his unshakable loyalty and faithful service to the Habsburgs (HELBIG, 1862: 63; PRIBRAM, 1901: 98; SMÍŠEK, 2012: 65-79). King Philip IV of Spain is said to have viewed the loyalty of Cardinal Ernst Adalbert of Harrach in the same way, “...la Majestad del señor Rey Don Felipe Cuarto (que santa gloria aya) la calidad y lustre de su Casa, y los servicios del Cardenal de Harrach su tío, le hizo merced de la insignia del Tusón de oro...”.²

¹ “dem hochlöblichsten hauss Ostereich die schuldigste veneration, treu undt unverwelchliche devotion ohne unterbruch zu tragen erweisen undt conserviren”. State Regional Archives Třeboň, Department Český Krumlov, Schwarzenberg Family Archive, fascicle 412.

² National Archives of Austria, General Administrative Archive, Family Archive Harrach, Familie in specie: Afra - Wenzel (1548 (ca.)-1920), 336 Ferdinand Bonaventura I., Biographica: Chronolog, Reihe, box 334.

The Dietrichsteins' loyalty to the Habsburgs did not escape the attention of contemporary authors and foreign diplomats at the Vienna court. The Venetian envoy in Vienna, Zuanne Moresini, in his final report of 26 July 1674, emphasized the fact that the Emperor respected Ferdinand Joseph of Dietrichstein “for his noble origin and inherited loyalty” (FIDLER, 1866: 151). It did not escape the notice of the Venetian diplomats that the Dietrichsteins had based their ascent and high social prestige on their long faithful service to the Habsburgs. These noble individuals, like the Harrachs and Schwarzenbergs, had no part in the anti-Habsburg actions of the Estates' opposition in the second half of the 16th and first half of the 17th centuries. On the contrary, at this time they were already seeking the help of the Spanish Habsburgs, as in the case of Cardinal Franz of Dietrichstein, whose land property in the Moravian Margraviate was confiscated by the Protestant Estates.

The clergyman mentioned above, as well as the future Cardinal Ernst Adalbert of Harrach, actively provided practical assistance to other Habsburg servants in that territory, such as the imperial general Charles Bonaventure Buquoy during his military campaign against the rebellious Estates in the years 1619-1621 (LEE STOLIČKA, 2020: 28-30). Therefore, they could easily accept the offered court or ecclesiastical prebends. As a reward for their traditional support and loyalty, they were granted high court offices - in particular, the office of High Steward to the Emperor - and permission to be near the imperial family (FIDLER, 1866: 132-133). The literati Carl Gustav Heraeus and Julius Bernard von Rohr even judged that the Dietrichsteins stood above all noble families in this regard and were the ideal or prototype of courtiers. Since they had been continuously in the service of the Habsburg emperors since the end of the 16th century, they, like some foreign envoys in Vienna, noted that a kind of transgenerational solid bond had gradually developed between the Dietrichsteins and the Habsburgs (FIEDLER, 1867: 132-133, 151; HERAEUS, 1721: 155; SCHLECHTE, 1989: 238).³

Moreover, the court of the Baroque Habsburgs in Vienna represented the most significant cultural, religious, political, and social center of Central Europe in the eyes of its contemporaries. Due to the multinational character of the Habsburg monarchy, it was characterized by a high degree of internationalism. In addition, the marriages of the

³ *The message of the papal nuncio in Vienna, Andrea Santa Croce, dated 29 November 1698.* Vatican Secret Archives, Secretary of State-Germany, sign. 235, folia 900.

Habsburg monarchs to brides from the Apennine and Iberian peninsulas attracted many Italians, Dutch, Spaniards, and people of other nationalities who arrived here with the courts of the empresses (MAŤA, 2003: 191-198). The imperial court at this time was, therefore, also a complex mechanism with a distinctive rationality. The elaborate court ceremony, the refined manners, the language skills, and the need to navigate the subtle nuances of social relations placed unusually high demands on courtiers, which could hardly be met without proper training and education. The educational process and training aimed to prepare the courtier for the life of a great man, to become a perfect cavalier (*homme d'honneur*, *homme honnête*), able to cope with any situation. It is no coincidence that this transnational ideal of the early modern courtier was forged by famous contemporary scholars and writers across Europe, such as Eustache de Refuge (1564-1617), Nicolas Faret (1596-1646), and Balthasar Gracian (1601-1658) (ÁLVAREZ-OSSORIO ALVARIÑO, 1998: 193-261; BEETZ, 1990). The influence of their ideas can be noted from the 1670s in correspondence between members of noble Central European families, including the Dietrichsteins, Harrachs, and Schwarzenbergs (CERMAN, 2010: 74-82; HEISS, 1990: 155-181; KUBEŠ, 2013: 54-57; SMÍŠEK, 2009: 122-126).⁴

Writing, reading, and language learning began around the age of five, followed by arithmetic, basic religion, and social behavior at around eight, with other disciplines added later (CERMAN, 2010; SMÍŠEK, 2009: 118-180). Foreign languages, of course, played an essential role in the education of future imperial courtiers. While people from all over Europe came together at the imperial court, they were far from fluent in German. On the contrary, linguistic plurality was a characteristic feature of Viennese society in the 17th and 18th centuries. Being firmly established and serving for a long time in this institution imposed considerable linguistic demands on the nobleman, who had to become a polyglot. Multilingualism was, in fact, an expression of solidarity or belonging to a particular community. It is no coincidence that the extraordinary apostolic nuncio in Vienna, Alfonso Litta (1608-1679), in the 1670s compared the cosmopolitan society of the Habsburg capital to biblical Babylon, famous for its

⁴ National Archives of Austria, General Administrative Archive, Family Archive Harrach, Familie in specie: Afra - Wenzel (1548 (ca.)-1920), 336 Ferdinand Bonaventura I., Biographica: Chronolog, Reihe, box 334.

language confusion.⁵ Research has shown that Italian, Latin, French, and Spanish, in addition to German, were among the languages commonly spoken at the Viennese court in the 17th and first half of the 18th centuries (WUZELLA, 2003: 415-438).

According to Ferdinand Joseph of Dietrichstein or Johann Adolf and Ferdinand Wilhelm of Schwarzenberg, the young Dietrichsteins, Harrachs, and Schwarzenbergs were taught the basics of foreign languages by experienced and knowledgeable native speakers. The young Ferdinand Wilhelm of Schwarzenberg was thus gradually tutored by the Frenchmen Jean Delgeur, Nicolas Gelée, the unidentified Jacquemin and de la Grillonière, and the Italians Lucas Ferrari and Giovanni Alberti as preceptors, court masters or accompanists. On the other hand, Jean de Burton and Ignazio Baratti were responsible for the education of Adam Franz Schwarzenberg (SMÍŠEK, 2015: 25-55; SMÍŠEK, 2024). Among the Dietrichsteins, it is possible to notice persons such as Ambrosius S. Ludmila, Theodor de L'Eau, Egidius Rubin, an unnamed Lancier, Giovanni Emanuelli, Jacopo Pauli, Fabrizio de la Roche or Guillaume de la Vaulx (MATZURA, 1929: 1-13 and 45-65; SMÍŠEK, 2009: 129-179.). In the case of Ferdinand Bonaventura of Harrach, Nicolaus Guyot and Jean Marcy held the office of his court master (KUBEŠ, 2013: 207 and 405).

At the end of the socialization process, usually between the ages of 16 and 20, young noblemen would embark on a several-year study tour of southern and western Europe. This was a kind of “initiation ceremony”, marking the transition from youth to adulthood. It was an opportunity for adolescents to learn about foreign countries, their cultures, customs, and, of course, to improve their language skills (KUBEŠ, 2013; LEIBSEDER, 2004; STANNEK, 2001). A comparison of the educational journeys of the young Auerspergs, Czernins, Dietrichsteins, Harrachs, Lambergs, Liechtensteins, Lobkowitzs, Schwarzenbergs, and members of other noble families in the 17th and first half of the 18th centuries shows that they developed a model that they regularly followed during this period. A stay of several months on the Apennine Peninsula in France and in the Spanish Netherlands had a firm place in this pattern. Less frequently, they headed for Spain or the British Isles. A thorough knowledge of foreign lands and the way of life there affected the young man’s outward appearance and inner life. As the

⁵ “*Instrutione Diverse Date à Monsignore Litta Eletto Nunzio Straordinario All’Imperatore. L’Anno 1678 et Altre Relatione Curiose*”. State Archives of Rome, Odescalchi Archives (family), sign. 3A11, file 6.

eminent Czech historian Zdeněk Kalista has noted, “In the heat of courtly society in Rome, Paris, Florence, and Brussels, this slowly maturing boy was transformed into the international type of the cavalier-courtier, as the Baroque period created him from the old cadre of Renaissance Cortegians” (KALISTA, 1932: 197-198). After his return from the cavalier journey, he no longer appeared as a bitter provincial nobleman, but rather as a young, world-weary cavalier who had personally experienced the most important European capitals, their culture, and lifestyle. In addition, during his voyage of discovery, he made acquaintances with many of his fellow peers and local personalities, which he further developed in writing and purposefully built a transnational communication network upon his return to Central Europe (LEIBETSEDER, 2004: 33).

In terms of proficiency in the previously mentioned languages, they were at an exceptionally high level. The Jesuit, literary scholar, pedagogue, and passionate defender of the Czech language Bohuslav Balbín (1621-1688) had already in the 1670s mockingly stated that the nobles from Bohemia who stayed at the Viennese court had an excellent command of German at the expense of Czech. Moreover, they regularly conversed with people of French, Apennine, or Iberian origin in their mother tongues or using Latin. According to this scholar and other foreign visitors to the Habsburg monarchy in the second half of the 17th and first half of the 18th centuries, they reportedly spoke these languages perfectly fluently, as if it were their mother tongue (PRIBRAM, 1871: 293; SMÍŠEK, 2024: 79-90; TONNER, 1869: 55 and 62-63). The French Benedictine Casimir Freschot (1640-1720) or the famous Charles Louis Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755) expressed the same observation in 1705. The poet Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1670-1741) even claimed that many noblemen from the Imperial court were far more proficient in French than native Frenchmen (CERMAN, 2015: 190; RÉAU, 1951: 46-47; SMÍŠEK, 2024: 81-82).

As has already been pointed out, the basic constitutive element of the identity of the Central European nobility in the 17th and 18th centuries was not regional or national aspects, but a certain cosmopolitanism and belonging to European noble society (ASCH, BŮŽEK and TRUGENBERGER: 2013; BECK, 2006: 252-270; KRUEGER, 2009: 3-25). Many noble families were no longer bound by land borders, as they gradually acquired extensive landed property in several countries of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Holy Roman Empire, or other European territories. This was

undoubtedly due to the nature of the Central European states under the Habsburgs. It was a “composite monarchy” that provided the transnational base, not only for the nobles (ELLIOT, 1992: 48-71). This fact can be demonstrated very well by the example of the Dietrichsteins, Harrachs, and Schwarzenbergs, who owned extensive estates in the Czech and Austrian lands, the Kingdom of Hungary, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Netherlands. The ownership of a particular dominion was a necessary complement to the public career of a nobleman, as it added to the distinction of its holder. When a nobleman prepared a (official) document, he always included in the letterhead, in addition to his name and predicate, the titles and estates he possessed. An estate granted its owner a certain identity, which is illustrative of the fact that the residence and the estates were indeed the very essence of a noble self-identity. In addition, a sufficient asset foundation was a prerequisite for the long-term presence of a noble individual at the Viennese court, in addition to a proper education and communication network. This involves significant expenses for a socially adequate life in the capital of the Habsburg monarchy, personal representation, and the potential gain of one of the highest court offices (VALENTA, 2011: 7-9.).

At the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries, the Dietrichstein family owned the estates of Arbesbach, Finkenstein, Hollenburg, Merkenstein, Thalberg in the Austrian lands, Budyně nad Ohří, Krucenbruk, Libochovice, Mikulov, Nepomysl, Polná, Vlachovo Březí in the Czech lands, and Tarasp in the territory of today's Swiss canton of Graubünden (FEYFAR, 1879). The Harrach's Austrian lands consisted of Aschach, Bruck an der Leitha, Göttelsbrunn, Prugg, Rohrau, and Stauff; in the Czech lands, Harrachov, Hrádek u Nechanic, Janovice, Jilemnice, Letohrad, Náměšt' na Hané, Velké Meziříčí (LUŠTĚNIC, NOSEK and REJHA, 2023; RAPTIS, 2017). The originally noble family of Schwarzenberg from the Holy Roman Empire held extensive estates in the present-day German states of Baden, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Lower Rhine, Swabia, Westphalia (e.g. Gimborn, Hohenlandsberg, Huissen, Idstein, Kleggau, Küssaburg, Schwarzenberg), in the Czech lands (Český Krumlov, Hluboká nad Vltavou, Netolice, Orlik, Třeboň, Vimperk, Vlčice), in the Austrian lands (Loeben, Murau, Turrach), in the Netherlands (Menameradiel, Terhorne) and a pledge in Silesia (Těšín) (BÉRENGER, 2007: 29-46; SCHWARZENBERG, 1963).

The example of the Schwarzenbergs illustrates that they did not consider the individual estates scattered across Central Europe as equal, but that there was a certain (symbolic) hierarchy between them. Thus Ferdinand Wilhelm of Schwarzenberg explained in 1697 in his instruction to his son Adam Franz, that the estates in the Kingdom of Bohemia formed the irreplaceable basis of the Schwarzenbergs' financial income. However, he attached much more importance to the estates in the Holy Roman Empire (*Reichs imediat güetter*), which brought the noble family extraordinary prestige in the eyes of contemporary society.⁶ In March 1663, Johann Adolf of Schwarzenberg similarly expressed this thought about his property in the individual countries of the Habsburg Monarchy and the Holy Roman Empire:

“In Franconia lies the main seat of the family, the immediate attachment to the Holy Roman Empire, and the outward expression of imaginary nobility; from Bohemia we derive profit, in Austria we receive greater satisfaction due to the proximity of the estates [to the imperial court]” (WOLF, 1880: 176).⁷

Other meaningful evidence of the distinctive role of individual estates in the eyes of the Schwarzenbergs is offered by their addressing and titling in official correspondence, New Year's wishes, and other documents. In this case, the Holy Roman Empire estate of the Schwarzenbergs, with which the holding of the princely title was linked, and Gimborn were always mentioned first. When Adam Franz of Schwarzenberg acquired the *landkreis* of Klettgau and the County of Sulz after the death of his mother Maria Anna, née Sulz (1653-1698), it followed immediately after the estates mentioned above. Next in the hierarchy were the landed estates in the Kingdom of Bohemia, led by Wittingau, Frauenberg, Postelberg, and others. After 1719, when Adam Franz inherited the Duchy of Krumau from his aunt Maria Ernestine of Eggenberg, née Schwarzenberg (1649-1719), it was Böhmisches Krumau that preceded all the Bohemian estates. The Schwarzenberg estates in Styria and Lower Austria symbolically closed the long line of estates.

⁶ State Regional Archives Třeboň, Department Český Krumlov, Schwarzenberg Family Archive, fascicle 418.

⁷ “In Frankhen ist das stammhaus, die reichsimmedietät und der äußerliche schein einer imaginirten grandezza, in Böhmen ist die nutzbarkheit, in Oesterreich gibt es wegen der nahen gelegenheit ein mehrere satisfaction”. *Letter of Johann Adolff of Schwarzenberg to Kaspar of Zelion, 1 March 1663*. State Regional Archives Třeboň, Department Český Krumlov, Schwarzenberg Family Archive, fascicle 396.

Several references have already been made to the land property in the Holy Roman Empire in connection with noble individuals long serving at the imperial court in Vienna. It was to this group of persons that the Habsburgs began to grant the princely predicate from the beginning of the 17th century. The first to receive it was Charles I of Liechtenstein in 1608, followed by Hans Ulrich of Eggenberg and Gundakar of Liechtenstein in 1623, Cardinal Franz of Dietrichstein in 1624, and gradually others. Johann Adolf of Schwarzenberg was succeeded in 1674; the Harrachs, on the other hand, never received the title (KLEIN, 1986: 137-192; SCHLIP, 1988: 249-292). The new princes formed a narrow group with their own lifestyle and thinking, whose main goal was social ascension and further integration into the structure of the Holy Roman Empire. This arose from a desire to show a certain independence from the emperor, which was the privilege of the nobles from this background. In the eyes of the nobility of the Habsburg monarchy, promotion to the status of the prince and the associated gain of certain territory in the Holy Roman Empire symbolized one of the main indicators of social prominence. Of course, the Emperor benefited from the promotion, as it secured the complete loyalty of the new princes and their support in the meetings of the Imperial Diets and the assemblies of the individual imperial regions (CHALINE and CERMÁN, 2011: 17).

If the Dietrichsteins, the Harrachs, the Schwarzenbergs, and other noble individuals from among the imperial court owned land in several countries of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Holy Roman Empire, or Europe, they were cosmopolitan, a transnational group of individuals with a distinctive lifestyle and world of thought, one can legitimately ask the question of whether they were in any way expressing their provincial affiliation, or whether they were displaying personal sympathies for one of the countries in which they owned landed property, or for a particular estate.

When Adam Franz of Schwarzenberg left for an educational tour of Western Europe in the spring of 1697, he visited the ancient Schwarzenberg family estate in Lower Franconia (Holy Roman Empire) for a few days. On his brief stay there, Johann Adam Leonhard Reiz, a priest in nearby Marktbreit, wrote a celebratory poem of ten stanzas.⁸ In it, in flowery German, he welcomed the young nobleman as the sole heir

⁸ State Regional Archives Třeboň, Department Český Krumlov, Schwarzenberg Family Archive, fascicle 416.

and future lord of the estate. At the same time, he wished him good luck during several years of wandering in foreign lands and a happy return to his “Vatterland - patria”. The same term was used a year later in a paternal admonition to his son Adam Franz by the reigning Prince Ferdinand Wilhelm of Schwarzenberg. He reminded the child that the main goal of the educational process was his transformation into a cavalier who would, in the future, “usefully serve His Imperial Majesty and his country in the field of war or politics, or both simultaneously”.⁹ Johann Heinrich Haimb, on the other hand, resorted to Latin in his genealogical writing on the history of the Schwarzenberg family in 1708, when he noted that “*hodie Serenissima Gens Schwartzenbergica pro patria nostra Franconica immortalī laude digna gesserit*” (HAIMB, 1708: 125).

As the previous lines have indicated, each of the three historical figures who were in some manner associated with the noble Schwarzenberg family touched upon the term “*patria*” in their works. The contemporaries of Adam Franz of Schwarzenberg used it to refer to “the place where one was born and saw the light of day.” Moreover, they felt warm sympathy for and held him in a particular manner (ZEDLER, 1754: 737). If, however, the historian reflects more deeply on the context of the terms used and their semantic meaning, he will find that in the imagination of the above writers, they did not represent the same thing. The rhetoric of Johann Heinrich Haimbe’s text and especially the poem by Johann Adam Leonhard Reiz reveals strong local patriotic tendencies and a subjectively tinged emotional relationship of the Franks to a specific bordered territorial unit. Therefore, both scholars did not hesitate to refer to the region of the Holy Roman Empire, from which the Schwarzenbergs initially emerged, as their “Vatterland” or “*Patria*” (SEIFERT, 2010; THÜNE, 1987).

In the case of Ferdinand Wilhelm of Schwarzenberg, however, it is possible to observe a significant shift in thought, which was related to the changing identity of the nobility settled in the Czech and Austrian lands in the first half of the 17th century. This was no longer based on language, involvement in the provincial administration, and identification with the country. The turbulent events associated with the Bohemian Estates Revolt of 1618-1620, the changes in the composition of the Estates community

⁹ “Ihro Mayestät dem kayser und Vatterland in Statu politico seu militari oder cumulative nützlich zu dienen”. O tom “*Paterna monita ad dominum comitem Adamum Franciscum*” *Ferdinand Wilhelm of Schwarzenberg from July 1698*. State Regional Archives Třeboň, Department Český Krumlov, Schwarzenberg Family Archive, fascicle 398, 416.

in the various parts of the Habsburg monarchy, the arrival of the nobility of foreign origin from different parts of Europe, and the centralization of the government weakened the land's patriotism and historicity (BŮŽEK and MAŤA, 2001: 287-321; PALMITESSA, 2014). Through the lens of this perspective, Ferdinand Wilhelm of Schwarzenberg therefore did not think of the Franks as his “Vatterland/Patria” at the end of the 17th century. When he referred to the region and the Schwarzenberg domain in written sources, he always referred to it, like his father Johann Adolf, by the term “Stammhaus - Place of Origin”.¹⁰ On the other hand, they both perceived the term “Vatterland/Patria” in a much broader, geographical sense and used it in relation to the multinational state ruled by the Austrian Habsburgs, including the Holy Roman Empire. The basic constitutive element of the Schwarzenbergs’ identity was not, as has been said several times, regional or national, but belonging to a transnational European aristocratic society (BECK, 2006: 252-270; KRUEGER, 2009: 3-25; SMÍŠEK, 2015: 79, 207 and 506).

The sources of Dietrichstein and Harrach’s provenance also eloquently testify to this. Prince Ferdinand Joseph of Dietrichstein occasionally used terms such as “Vaterland”, “*patria*”, and “*patrie*” in his educational instructions, which were addressed to his younger siblings and descendants embarking on cavalier journeys across southern and western Europe. This multilingualism among the nobility is a testament to their intellectual prowess.¹¹ Identical terms can be found in the pages of Cardinal Ernst Adalbert of Harrach’s Italian and German diaries when he stayed in the Apennine Peninsula from the 1630s to the 1660s. (KELLER, CATALANO: 2010, vol. II, 353, 369, 443, 702, 761; vol. III, 618, 646; vol. IV, 805; vol. V, 58; vol. VI, 297, 418; vol. VII, 129, 450). Although these were of various designations, in the vast majority of cases, they had geographical significance and referred to the writers’ regional affiliation, in this case, the Central European Habsburg monarchy. In isolated cases, Ernst Adalbert of Harrach used the term “vatterlandt” to refer to the place from

¹⁰ *Letter from Johann Adolf of Schwarzenberg to Kaspar of Zelion, 9 June 1669*. State Regional Archives Třeboň, Department Český Krumlov, Schwarzenberg Family Archive, fascicle 399.

¹¹ Moravian Provincial Archive in Brno, G 140 – Family Archive Dietrichstein, inventory 1585, box 360; inventory 1587, box 362; inventory 1589, box 363.

which his father had come and figuratively “place of origin” (KLINGENSTEIN, 1995: 150-219; LEBEAU, 2016: 146-148).¹²

The analysis of the individual components of the transnational identity of the representatives of three important noble families, whose members were active for a long time in the immediate surroundings of the Habsburg emperors in the second half of the 17th and the first half of the 18th centuries, provides interesting material to penetrate the thoughts of this group of people and allows us to learn about their complex value ladder. The life of Central European noblemen in the mentioned period was not bound only by the borders of the Habsburg Empire or the Holy Roman Empire. It was no longer a regional nobility but a transnational nobility. Its integration in Central Europe and even in Europe had a fundamental influence on its cosmopolitan identity. The nobility from the individual countries under Habsburg rule became an integral part of European noble culture, which they knew and willingly accepted due to their kinship and social ties, linguistic competence and education, property background, and mobility. Its identity was linked to the creation of the Habsburg composite monarchy, the imperial court in Vienna, and the attachment of the most noble part of society to the capital of the Habsburg state. The primary interest of this social group was not to defend the privileges of individual countries or kingdoms but the interests of the monarchy and the ruling dynasty.

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¹² See: (KELLER, CATALANO: 2010, vol. VII, 29-30, 844).

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