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The transformation of the Grand Tour of Czech and Austrian Nobility in the First Half of the 18th Century: A New Recipe for Staying Powerful

Abstract: The article deals with the fundamental transformation of the Grand Tour of the nobility from the Czech and Austrian Lands during the first half of the 18th century. The author shows they moved from the thorough mastering of the aristocratic habits to the extensive education mainly in the field of public law in order to be able to participate in the activities of central and provincial bureaucratic institutions of the Austrian Habsburg Monarchy. The Catholic nobles started to study law at the universities in Protestant countries (mainly in Leiden and Leipzig), the attractiveness of the United Provinces, the Duchy of Lorraine and Imperial area (instead of Italy and France) increased significantly and the young nobles shortened the time dedicated to the noble exercises. At the end, the author tries to compare this situation with the Grand Tours of the Polish nobility.

Keywords: Grand Tour; 18th Century; Habsburg Monarchy; Czech nobility; university

Słowa kluczowe: Wielki Objazd, XVIII w., monarchia Habsburgów, szlachta czeska, uniwersytet

In the last twenty years, grand tours have evoked a great deal of interest amongst historians in many European countries, which reflects the general level of popularity of the history of the nobility that, according to recent research, remained as an important social layer until modern times and during the modernisation process would not lose their popularity with burgher elites to such an extent as was previously anticipated. Considered as key tools for

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the maintenance of its privileged position in society are the grand tours, which have significantly helped to shape the estate's concept of nobility and their sense of uniqueness and difference from the lower societal levels. This is a phenomenon that enjoyed its greatest boom in the 17th and the 18th centuries; though not in all countries did grand tours take place at exactly the same time and they definitely did not take the same form everywhere. Their course was influenced by many differing factors – from the ruling dynasty and its kinship ties via their variable popularity with various educational institutions to the financial and family situations of some specific nobles.¹

Especially in the Austrian Habsburg Monarchy grand tours bloomed during the entire period between 1570–1750 and they underwent three phases. In the first one (from approx. 1570 – the Thirty Years' War) they often took the form of peregrination between different universities because most nobles in Czech and Austrian lands were not of the Catholic confession and instead they nurtured their relations with Protestant scholars. Mostly, however, they did not stay at one university for very long but during their tours they visited several of them and put most emphasis specifically on the social dimensions of their travels. After Ferdinand II's victory at the White Mountain over the estates army in 1620 the situation began to change slowly, because during the Thirty Years' War Ferdinand was able to fundamentally change the religious beliefs in both the Czech and the Austrian Lands. Most of the nobility then became Catholics and subsequently grace and favour were primarily distributed at the ruler's court. The grand tours also responded to this change and they entered their second phase (the Thirty Years' War – the Wars of the Spanish Succession). It was no longer necessary to travel around more universities; it sufficed to spend a longer period of time at one educational institution and to specifically master the proper standards of behaviour that were applicable in the court environment. While the older universities were facing a decrease in popularity (Czech and Austrian nobles were visiting Leuven and Siena for the longest time periods) the noble academies in France (in Paris or Angers) and its surroundings (in Leuven, Turin and Florence) began to celebrate their new-found success. During this period the tours were additionally subject to strong confessionalisation pressure and therefore Catholics tended rather to avoid non-Catholic countries or just to pass through them. They preferred to visit Papal Rome, the Paris of Louis XIV or the Governor's court in Brussels. Then they often spent more than an entire year in one of these destinations. Some of them even set off to distant Spain to the court of the Spanish Habsburgs.²

At the beginning of the 18th century, however, the grand tours of the Czech and Austrian nobility again began to transform significantly. This change

¹ For the German lands see Leibetseder 2004, Stannek 2001, for the English situation Black 1992 and 2003, Chaney 2000, Sweet 2012, for the French situation Motley 1990, Boutier 2005, see also Babel – Paravicini 2005.

² Kubeš 2013, Hojda – Chodějovská 2014, Csáky-Loebenstein 1971, Holý 2010, 347–383, Smíšek 2009, 143–179, Weigle 1962, Wils 1909.

had not been analysed in the Czech historiography until recently³ and it will be described and interpreted in this text. For this purpose, a sample of approximately twenty grand tours from the period between the final phase of the Wars of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714) and the beginning of the reign of Maria Theresa (1740–1780) was collected. In order to make this segment of the reality the most diverse, the sample also included aristocratic families with the titles of Princes, Counts and Barons with estates located in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and the Austrian countries (see Table 1).

Table 1. Selected researched Grand Tours of the Czech and Austrian Nobility (1710–1750)

von Götzen, Johann Franz Anton	1710–1714
Czernin von Chudenitz, Franz Joseph	1715–1717
Petřvaldský von Petřvald, Amand Anton	1715–1719
von Dietrichstein, Karl Maximilian and Johann Leopold	1719–1724
Gallas, Philipp Joseph	1721–1725
Collaredo, Rudolf Joseph	1723–1725
Czernin von Chudenitz, Hermann Jakob	1725–1727
von Nostitz, Josef Wilhelm and Anton Christoph	1721–1729
Buquoy, Franz Leopold and Karl Jakob	1726–1731
Chotek, Johann Karl and Rudolf	1727–1730
Lažansky von Bukowa, Maximilian Wenzel and Karl Joseph	1729–1731
von Thun-Hohenstein, Johann Joseph	1730 (?)–1731
von Waldstein, Johann Karl and Woraczicky von Pabienitz, Joseph	1731–1733
von Kaunitz, Wenzel Anton	1731–1734
Kinsky, Johann Leopold	1733–1734 (?)
von Kaunitz, Ludwig Joseph	1740–1744
Czernin von Chudenitz, Prokop Adalbert	1744–1746
von Dietrichstein, Johann Karl and Franz de Paula	1749–1751
von Sweerts-Sporck, Johann Christian	1750–1752

While it is not yet possible to deduce very much from this simple enumeration, we can only conclude that grand tours took place regularly throughout almost the entire first half of the 18th century (with the exception of some years during the Wars of the Spanish Succession) and this continued to last (with one exception) for between two to five years. Therefore I selected 12 tours from this sample in the second stage and I collected data on the most important places that those young cavaliers visited during their journeys and where they spent at least a month. I believe that these data already make it clear

³ Kubeš 2013, Cerman 2010.

that in comparison with the previous period the main targets of grand tours changed rather significantly (see Table 2).

Table 2. The itinerars of the 12 chosen Grand Tours of the Czech and Austrian Nobility (1710–1750) – for full names see the Table 1, the numbers in brackets = the length of the stay in months

	Dietrichstein (1719–1724)	Gallas (1721–1725)	Colloredo (1723–1726)	Nostitz (1721–1729)	Buquoy (1726–1731)	Chotek (1727–1730)
1.	Salzburg (9)	Salzburg (22)	Salzburg (20)	Rome (54)	Leiden (5)	Leiden (9)
2.	Leiden (7)	Lorraine (2)	Leiden (3)	Salzburg (9)	Lorraine (12)	Brussels (2)
3.	Paris (2)	the United Provinces (3)	Lunéville (planned)	Leiden (10)	Paris (4)	Lorraine (1)
4.	Lorraine (11)	Rome (7)		Brussels (2)	Rome (19)	Paris (16)
5.	Rome (7)	Paris (3)		Paris (3)	Milan (9)	Rome (3)
6.				Lorraine (6)		
	Thun (1730–1731)	Waldstein (1731–1733)	Kaunitz (1731–1734)	Czernin (1744–1746)	Kaunitz (1740–1744)	Dietrichstein (1749–1751)
1.	Rome (4)	Lorraine (6)	Leipzig (18)	Leiden (7)	Leipzig (10)	Leipzig (12)
2.	Leiden (7)	England (2)	Rome (6)	London (2)	Turin (6)	the Reich (4)
3.	Paris (4)	Paris (3)	Paris (5)	the Reich (4)	Rome (2)	Rome (4)
4.	Lorraine (1)	Rome (6)	Lorraine (1)			Florence (2)

The itineraries suggest the four trends that define the transformation of the grand tours. 1) Newly emerging were the long periods of stays at the universities in Salzburg, Leiden and Leipzig. 2) A considerable number of the cavaliers were now stopping in Lorraine for longer periods of time. 3) With few exceptions, however, stays in Paris and Rome were being shortened while no one had even visited Turin's royal academy. 4) Since the 1730's the time that the young nobles spent travelling around the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation was significantly prolonged. We will now briefly stop to examine these phenomena and try to explain them.

Re 1) The nobles from the Habsburg Monarchy ceased visiting the traditional universities because they were not satisfied with the lecture courses that were offered nor with their quality. The parents' basic requirement was that their children should be educated well in various areas of the law that are applicable to the Imperial environment. While they were living at home they had already learnt the fundamentals (e.g. at the Law Faculty of the University of Prague), but the best teachers of what was then highly valued public law (*ius publicum*) were abroad and most of them were also Protestants. At the beginning only a few of those who were in the environment of the Habsburg Monarchy wanted to study their works directly, so they chose a compromise solution and from the late 17th century onwards they started to attend the dynamically

developing Benedictine university in Salzburg, where, additionally, there was also the interesting court of the Salzburg Archbishop Franz Anton von Harrach (1709–1727), together with a high-quality riding school and several masters of noble exercises (fencing, dance, etc.) were available. The Wars of the Spanish Succession additionally strengthened this trend (while Salzburg itself remained both safe and secure). Meanwhile the progressive law teachers (e.g. Franz Joseph Herz) at the Benedictine university were also receiving news from Protestant environment. Amongst the first to study law there in the academic year 1692–1693 were Johann Karl and Otto Wenzel von Nostitz and, from our sample group, Johann Franz von Götzen stayed there during the years 1710–1712 and he was followed-up by additional cavaliers in the 1720's. During the years 1700–1730 the Salzburg university *Matrikel* recorded a total of 106 nobles from the Czech Lands, Lower and Upper Austria and Silesia.⁴

When the Wars of the Spanish Succession ended, other universities began to compete strongly with Salzburg. This time though they were in countries with a majority of Protestants, and the most important of these turned out to be from Leiden university in the Netherlands. In the long-term the United Provinces became an important ally of the Austrian Habsburgs, so the nobles from the Czech and the Austrian Lands were interested to learn where their wealth had come from, and subsequently a renowned lawyer then also settled in Leiden and taught law from a pro-imperial perspective. His name was Johann Jakob Vitriarius (1679–1745) and he had worked in Leiden since 1719. Since then the number of his students from Central Europe increased significantly and in fact we can say that all the young cavaliers from the most important Czech and Austrian families attended his law course during the 1720's. "*Wir seynd hin umb daß [jus] publicum zu hören bey dem herrn Vidriariam, welcher ein hibscher und gelerter mann ist...*", the young Clary-Aldringen brothers communicated in their diary dating from the year 1727. From our sample he taught the Dietrichstein brothers, the future Prince Rudolf Joseph Colloredo, the brothers Nostitz, Buquoy, Chotek or Count Johann Joseph von Thun. Probably the last of the Czech nobles who met him in Leiden at the cusp of 1744 and 1745 was Prokop Adalbert Count von Czernin. Vitriarius (he died in December 1745) was still teaching this rich Bohemian Count and Czernin rewarded him for his efforts with 500 Dutch guildens.⁵

The university in Leipzig, Saxony, first appeared in the itineraries of grand tours in the 1730's. The first of our sample who arrived there was Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz, the future State Chancellor of Maria Theresa, and he stayed there for two entire semesters in the years 1731–1732. According to his father's wish he was there to intensively improve his knowledge of Imperial history and the various legal fields. He studied public law with the renowned Johann Jakob Mascov (1689–1761) and fief law with Georg Christian Gebauer (1690–1773). He needed to do all of this so that, in the future, he would be able to work in Vienna as a *Reichshofrat*. Nor, of course, was noble exercise omitted and in

⁴ Cf. Kubeš, 2007a, Kubeš, 2013, Cerman, 2004a; Redlich, 1933.

⁵ Kubeš, 2013, du Rieu 1875, quotation by Kubeš, 2006, 103.

Leipzig Kaunitz took courses in fencing and dancing and he also devoted his time to learning Italian. Eventually his younger brother Ludwig Joseph and several other nobles followed in Kaunitz's footsteps and they arrived in Leipzig in the 1740's.⁶ Based on very intensive and thorough study at one specific university, at which grand tours began during the first half of the 18th century, Ivo Cerman refers to this stage of development as rationalised grand tours.⁷

Re 2) After the end of the Wars of the Spanish Succession another new feature in the itineraries of these journeys of the nobility belonging to the Habsburg Monarchy was extended visits to Lorraine, specifically to Lunéville, its new residential town. This trend is clearly apparent in Table 2 – nine out of the 12 journeys presented led there and all of these nine journeys were carried-out before 1734. After this year ended nobody stopped there any more. Therefore it was only a temporary trend that was fuelled by Duke Leopold of Lorraine's recovery of Lorraine (1697) and also by the close kinship ties that existed between the Dukes of Lorraine and the Habsburgs. In 1723 Franz Stephan, the Duke's son, had already been chosen to become the future husband of the eldest daughter of Emperor Charles VI. So in 1725 when the Governor of Milan Hieronymus Count Colloredo wrote travel instructions for his son Joseph Rudolf, he emphatically warned him:

Weillen der lotteringsche hoff in sehr große verbindnuß mit den unßrigen stehet, alß ist sich wohl in acht zu nehmen, sich geschaid und vernünfftig aldorten auffzuführen, umb so mehr alß zum öfftern die relazionen von Lunevil nacher Wien pflegen einzulauffen, alß mueß du durch deine guede auff-führung zeitlich trachten, in einem guden concept zu komen.⁸

The ducal court was not the only institution that attracted young cavaliers. The noble academy operated in the country from 1699, after which it was based in turn in Nancy and Lunéville. On average, between the years 1714–1729, six nobles from the Czech and Austrian Lands enrolled in this academy annually. In addition French was spoken there and thereby the cavaliers could make improvement in this language before they had even arrived in France. Lorraine's popularity ended with the additional occupation of this territory by the French army during the War of the Polish Succession in 1734. The Dukes of Lorraine were never to get their lands back.⁹

Re 3) Compared with the previous period the cavaliers did not spend so much time in Paris and Rome as they used to. While during the second half of the 17th century they regularly stayed there for as long as a year, now their stays were shortened and, with a few exceptions, they did not stay in those cities for longer than half a year. Mostly it was for just a few months at a time. While Rome had never lost its attraction, it happened in some cases that by the end

⁶ Klingenstein, 1975, 158–253.

⁷ Cerman, 2004a.

⁸ See the edition of the instructions made by Kubeš, 2007b, 50–52.

⁹ Kubeš, 2013, 108–113; Conrads, 1982, 235–236.

of the reporting period the young men had not arrived in France (and thereby in Paris) at all. During the War of the Austrian Succession this was not at all surprising, but in the mid-18th century, when the two countries were in peace, the brothers Dietrichstein also did not visit France.¹⁰

This change relates to the fact that the Central European cavaliers ceased going to France because of the time-consuming and costly stays in noble academies and were simply content with the fact that they had acquainted themselves with the environment of the royal court and had visited the most important royal residences located around Paris. In addition to the virtually obligatory stay at Versailles they also regularly appeared in Marly (where there was also an interesting garden with The Great Cascade and the famous *la machine*), in Sceaux, in Vincennes and also further on in Fontainebleau. In 1730 the wealthy Bohemian Count, Franz Joseph Czernin, voiced his radical view regarding the “uselessness” of long French stays:

Dann währe das berühmte Paris zu sehen, woh aber wahrhaftig nicht viel zu lernen ist undt da mann von dem französischen hoff schon die ideaem in Hollandt mit mehr wahrheit undt fundament einholen kann, ist nichts als das aug mit Versailles, Marli undt der einfältig welth, umb sagen zu können, mann ist da gewesen, zu contentiren undt das geld zu anderen nöthigen ausgaben aufzuheben...

Most cavaliers therefore visited France and also regularly used their stay for purchasing high-quality clothes. In 1728 the Buquoys brothers spent only three months there, still they purchased three sets of clothes, new livery for their servants, stockings, wigs, English watches and other accessories for which they spent more than 2,000 guildens. Johann Leopold Kinsky's father ordered him to use his short stay in the City on the Seine in 1733 primarily for buying a wedding dress for his bride-to-be.¹¹

Re 4) The attractiveness of the German area had changed significantly. During the second half of the 17th century cavaliers basically just passed quickly through the German lands because, in their opinion, more important targets were to be found beyond their borders. Typical, for example, is the statement made by Karl Eusebius von Liechtenstein when he was telling his son that “im reich, das ist in denen reichstädten und churfürstlichen höfen, ist nichts oder gar wenig zu sehen, dann was alldorten rares wäre, ist anderswo auch und viel mehreres und besser besehen worden”. He must have to cross the German lands anyway, however, since the roads run across them. During this “durchreiß” he should at least look at some of the duchesses because in the future he still may marry some of them.¹²

After the Wars of the Spanish Succession, however, not everybody would identify any longer with Liechtenstein's perspective. First the stops on this until then standard thoroughfare through Central Germany had changed –

¹⁰ Cerman, 2004b, 172–182.

¹¹ Kubeš, 2013, 64–68, quote 289.

¹² See von Falke, 1877, 407.

cavaliers now stop at the Bishopric residence in Bamberg, in a new residence that belonged to the Palatine Electors in Mannheim or in an expensively rebuilt Episcopal residence located in Würzburg (Buquoy). The northern regions also began to enjoy more significant attention. Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz, after his study in Leipzig, did not set off on the 11th July 1732 either to the west or to south, as one might expect, but he travelled north to the Prussian Kings' residence in Berlin and then to the residence of the English Kings in Hannover, where he met George II (at the turn of July and August 1732). Then, although he went to both the Netherlands, he stayed there only for a very short time (i.e. September – October). Then he returned to the Imperial area, spending November and December there while he was on his way south to Italy. But he certainly did not travel in a hurry. He stopped absolutely everywhere and spent considerable time visiting residences and cities. He saw the crown jewels in Aachen, the Electoral residences in Cologne and Mainz, visited Frankfurt am Main where the Roman Kings were elected, the modern Episcopal residence in Würzburg, the City of Nuremberg and even spent two weeks in Munich in Bavaria.¹³

This trend that German historians define as the patriotisation of grand tours was reflected even more significantly in the journeys of Czech and Austrian cavaliers in the 1740's. Prokop Adalbert Czernin, after his studies in Leiden and a short journey to England, stayed in 1745 only within the Imperial area. In addition to a month-long stay in Hanover he spent most of his time in Frankfurt, where Francis Stephen of Lorraine was elected in autumn as the new Roman Monarch and later on was crowned as the Emperor. Czernin also travelled through the Rhineland and spent Christmas in Würzburg on his way home. During their grand tour in the years 1749–1751 that took place after a long period of study in Leipzig the Dietrichstein brothers also spent four months travelling around in the German speaking countries.¹⁴

In conclusion, we should answer two questions: 1) What do the present trends reveal about the transformation of the nobility from the western part of the Habsburg Empire during the early 18th century? 2) Did similar changes also occur amongst the Polish nobility?

Re 1) It is obvious that the aim of the Czech and the Austrian nobility's grand tours was no longer only the thorough mastering of the usual aristocratic habits (i.e. various aristocratic activities, courtly behaviour, etc.). Gradually, however, under the influence of the early concepts of the Enlightenment, tendency to educate young noblemen, not only for the service of the sovereign but especially for the benefit of the homeland, began to grow stronger. Cavaliers received much higher quality education, especially of a legal nature (*Institutiones, Digesta, ius publicum*), in order to be able to participate in the activities of central and provincial bureaucratic institutions and to hold key positions in regard to the administration of the Habsburg Monarchy. After the Wars of the Spanish Succession to some extent the grand tours became study trips, which

¹³ Kubeš, 2013, 114–116; Klingenstein, 1975, 238–243.

¹⁴ Kubeš, 2013, 170–176.

after their completion were complemented by shorter journeys through South, Central and Western Europe, during which the nobles no longer enrolled for long periods in noble academies (Paris, Turin). On the contrary, characteristic for them was in-depth study at a university in a Protestant country (e.g. in Leiden or Leipzig), a high-degree of interest in understanding the Habsburg allies of the United Provinces and the increased attractiveness of the Imperial area (e.g. the “new” universities, the electoral courts and the ties to Great Britain via Hanover). While noble exercise was not completely removed from the grand tours, the time, which they dedicated to it, shortened, and the cavaliers completed it either while they were still at home, or after the completion of their studies during their journeys around other countries. Simply the time was gradually changing and therefore there was also a slow transformation of the grand tours. The young men who returned from these differently designed tours back to Central Europe were eventually those who with Maria Theresa reformed Habsburg Monarchy (Kaunitz, Colloredo, etc.). Their knowledge of the law and the Imperial area certainly helped them in that a lot.

Re 2) Recent Polish historiography notes in unison that the Polish nobility’s grand tours at the time of the reign of the Kings of the Saxon dynasty (1697–1763) did not significantly differ in terms of the destinations visited from the previous period. They continued to travel from Poland through the Habsburg Monarchy to the south to Italy, where the highlight was a long stay in Rome, and then they continued on to France, where they spent most time visiting Paris. Then the Polish nobles travelled back home across the Netherlands and the northern parts of the Imperial area.¹⁵ Long stays at universities in Salzburg, Leipzig and Leiden certainly did not become a feature of their grand tours. The records in the published university registers speak clearly: while in the 1720’s and the 1730’s more than a hundred nobles came to Leiden from the Czech Lands and from Upper and Lower Austria to study at the Law Faculty, whereas only one nobleman, Calvinist Paweł Orzechowski from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, studied there during the same period (1722).¹⁶ It also appears that in the first half of the 18th century the Polish nobles still had great interest in the noble academies, which the Czech and Austrian nobles stopped attending in the early 18th century. (Felicjan Józef Piaskowski spent half of the year 1718 at the Turin royal academy and the first half of 1720 at the academy in Angers¹⁷) At first glance, it therefore appears that the Polish nobles continued to focus on following their traditional aristocratic habits and that the rationalisation of grand tours, as we know it from the environment of the Habsburg Monarchy,¹⁸ did not happen in Poland. If that was actually the case can only be answered by a detailed research of other grand tours that took place in the early 18th century.

¹⁵ See mainly Markiewicz, 2011; Popiołek, 2014, 58–62; Kamecka, 2012; Kucharski, 2013; Bratuń, 2002.

¹⁶ Cf. du Rieu, 1875, 879.

¹⁷ Kucharski, 2009.

¹⁸ Cerman, 2004a.

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