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## The Death of a Child in a Noble Family: Prince Walter Prosper (1839–1841) and the Funeral Ritual of the House of Schwarzenberg in the Nineteenth Century

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*Abstract:* The funeral rituals and ceremonies of the House of Schwarzenberg were passed from generation to generation from the seventeenth and eighteenth century until the interwar period, and contributed significantly to the identity of the family. This article is focused on the specific case of Prince Walter Prosper (1839–1841), who died at the age of two as a consequence of a severe head injury. The article describes not only the ceremonies and rituals which took place during Prince Walter's funeral, but also uses them to explain the general course of Schwarzenberg burials. As mentioned above, Prince Walter died tragically and suddenly, which was in sharp contrast with the Schwarzenberg ideal of death. The question of the tragic and sudden death of a child and its impact on the rest of the family and its behaviour is also dealt with in this article. Our research is based on the study of the archival material in the Třeboň State Regional Archive, Department in Český Krumlov, where the archive of the House Schwarzenberg is stored, and on a comparison with the research conducted by other Czech historians, mainly Václav Grubhoffner.

**Key words:** Schwarzenberg – Walter Prosper – 19<sup>th</sup> century – death – funeral – rituals – ceremonies – tomb

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Funerals of the Schwarzenbergs<sup>1</sup> consisted of a number of mutually connected ceremonies and rituals, the ground principles of which were established in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. In the eighteenth century, the pattern of something which might be called the “Schwarzenberg funeral” was consolidated. This

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1 In this article, the name ‘Schwarzenberg’ is used only for the primogeniture line of the House. On the general history of the House see Karl zu SCHWARZENBERG, *Geschichte des reichsständischen Hauses Schwarzenberg*, Neustadt an der Aisch 1963; Martin GAŽI (ed.), *Schwarzenbergové v české a středoevropské kulturní historii*, České Budějovice 2013; Hannes STEKL, *Österreichs Aristokratie im Vormärz. Herrschaftsstill und Lebensformen der Fürstenhäuser Lichtenstein und Schwarzenberg*, München 1973. On the second line see Zdeněk BEZECNÝ, *Příliš uzavřená společnost. Orličtí Schwarzenbergové a šlechtická společnost v Čechách v druhé polovině 19. a na počátku 20. století*, České Budějovice 2005; IDEM, *Smrt šlechtice*, in: Fenomén smrti v české kultuře 19. století: sborník příspěvků z 20. ročníku symposia k problematice 19. století, Praha 2001, pp. 206–266. On the general history of the Bohemian aristocracy see Václav BŮŽEK – Josef HRDLIČKA – Pavel KRÁL – Zdeněk VYBÍRAL, *Věk urozených. Šlechta v českých zemích na prahu novověku*, Praha – Litomyšl 2002; CERMÁN, *Šlechtická kultura v 18. století. Filozofové, mystici, politici*, Praha 2011; Jiří HRBEK, *Proměny valdštejnské reprezentace. Symbolické sítě valdštejnského rodu v 17. a 18. století*, Praha 2015; Petr MAŤA, *Svět české aristokracie*

pattern was then passed down from generation to generation for many decades and centuries. Although the form of some particular ceremonies changed to a greater or lesser degree over time, the overall funeral pattern nevertheless remained almost the same until the interwar period, and without doubt contributed significantly to the identity of one of the most powerful houses in the Habsburg Empire.

This article presents the funeral of one particular member of the House Schwarzenberg – Prince Walter Prosper (1839–1841).<sup>2</sup> The course of this funeral is used not only to describe the entire burial ceremony with all its individual elements, but also to explain how the particular rituals could change in such an exceptional case as the funeral of a two-year-old, tragically deceased child.<sup>3</sup> The question of tragic and sudden death, and the impact it could have had on the rest of the family and their behaviour, is also covered in this article.

Prince Walter was born in Vienna on 22 April 1839, the third and last child of the highly renowned couple Prince Johann Adolf II (1799–1888) and Princess Eleonore (1812–1873), and was Christened Walter Prosper Joseph Soter Cajus. All these names, except for Joseph,<sup>4</sup> were rather unusual if not exceptional for the Schwarzenbergs, and have always attracted the attention of laypersons as well as historians. In the nineteenth century a story about the illegitimacy of Prince Walter even circulated, due to the unfamiliarity of his names within the family context. Although this question is not the subject of this article, we consider it important to express that though Walter was certainly an unusual name for the Schwarzenbergs, it did not reflect his theoretical illegitimacy, but instead undoubtedly the very strong relationship his parents had to the British Isles, where they spent a great

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(1500–1700), Praha 2004; Radmila ŠVAŘÍČKOVÁ SLABÁKOVÁ, *Rodinné strategie šlechty. Mensdorffové-Pouilly v 19. století*, Praha 2007; Jan ŽUPANIČ, *Nová šlechta rakouského císařství*, Praha 2006.

- 2 This article is based mainly on the study of archive documents from the State regional archive in Třeboň, which include personal documents of Princess Eleonore and reports about the funeral of Prince Walter (Family resource of the Schwarzenbergs – Eleonore Gemahlin Johann Adolfs II., fass. 581, fass. 581/1, fass. 584; Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fass. 593), diaries of Princess Eleonore (Collection of manuscripts) and materials about the tomb of Prince Walter (Fund Český Krumlov Estate – Sig. I<sup>a</sup> 3K<sup>a</sup> 15 c/1).
- 3 On childhood in the milieu of the Bohemian aristocracy see Zdeněk BEZECNÝ, *Dětství, mládí a výchova Karla IV. ze Schwarzenbergu*, in: Tomáš Jiránek – Jiří Kubeš (eds.), *Dítě a dětství napříč staletími*, Pardubice 2003, pp. 67–72; Milan HLAVAČKA, *Dětství, dospívání a rodinná strategie v korespondenci dětí knížeti Jiřímu Kristiánu Lobkovicovi*, in: Porta Bohemica, Litoměřice 2003, pp. 7–23; Milena LENDEROVÁ, *Tragický bál. Život a smrt Pavlíny ze Schwarzenbergu*, Praha – Litomyšl 2005; Milena LENDEROVÁ – Karel RÝDL, *Radostné dětství? Dítě v Čechách devatenáctého století*, Praha 2006; Milena LENDEROVÁ – Tomáš JIRÁNEK – Marie MACKOVÁ, *Z dějiny české každodennosti. Život v 19. století*, Praha 2017.
- 4 Some ancestors of Prince Walter were Christened Joseph – above all his grandfather, Prince Joseph II Johan (1769–1833).

deal of time during their travels.<sup>5</sup> Prince Johan Adolf II and his wife were also very fond of British culture,<sup>6</sup> and it seems as very probable that the name Walter referred to the Scottish author Walter Scott (1771–1832), whose books were ranked among the favourites of Princess Eleonore, which might be proven by consulting her library.<sup>7</sup>

It was not only Walter's name that drew attention to him, but also the way in which he died and was buried. Prince Walter breathed his last suddenly on 19 April 1841, just a few days before his second birthday, when the family was staying in the imperial capital of Vienna. The specific cause of Walter's death remains unknown due to the lack of archive materials. The official announcement published by the Schwarzenberg Office states only that the death was "*unexpected and sudden*". However, there is one preserved document which may provide us with some information – the autopsy protocol. According to this protocol, the Prince suffered several injuries including a cerebral oedema and brain haemorrhage, while the rest of his body did not show any other injury. It seems as inevitable that Prince died from severe trauma to the head.<sup>8</sup> There have been many theories attempting to clarify the cause of Walter's death, i.e. the origin of the severe injuries, including the possibility that the Prince fell out of a carriage during a ride through Vienna.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, these hypotheses are not especially important for the subject of our article, namely Schwarzenberg funerals.

The whole chain of interconnected rituals, similar for all members of the Schwarzenberg family, was started after the Prince died. His death, as in the case of most of the Schwarzenbergs, was immediately followed by the placing of the dead body on a death bed, where it was displayed for some time. The closest and also the momentarily present members of the family had the opportunity to bid farewell during that time, which was very often connected with the kissing of the deceased's forehead, cheek or hand. As Walter

5 On the travels of Johan Adolf II and Eleonora, see especially Filip BINDER, *Zámek Hluboká v 19. století a Jan Adolfze Schwarzenberga*, MA thesis, Charles University Prague, Praha 2014; Jindřich VYBÍRAL, *Století dědiců a zakladatelů. Architektura jižních Čech v období historismu*, Praha 1999; Jindřich VYBÍRAL – Milada SEKYRKOVÁ, *Britská cesta Jana Adolfa roku 1825*, Umění. Časopis Ústavu dějin umění Akademie věd České republiky 46, 1998, vol. 1/2, pp. 129–145.

6 The most compelling proof of this relationship was the reconstruction of the Hluboká palace in neo-gothic style.

7 An inventory of Eleonore's library is stored in Státní oblastní archiv Třeboň (SOA Třeboň), oddělení Český Krumlov (odd. Český Krumlov), fond Rodinný archiv Schwarzenberků (RA Schwarzenberků), Eleonore Gemahlin Joh. Ad. II., fascikl (fasc.) 581. [State regional archive Třeboň, department Český Krumlov, Family archive of the Schwarzenbergs].

8 The autopsy protocol is stored in SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593.

9 This theory was presented by Anna KUBÍKOVÁ, *Walterova hrobka u Červeného Dvora*, Obnovená tradice 17, 2006, vol. 34 [online]. URL: <<http://www.hss.barok.org/text-clanku.php?t=664&a=Kub%EDkov%E1%20Anna#top>>, [accessed 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020].

died at the age of two, kissing his forehead or cheek seems highly probable. It was usual that such great reverence was devoted to the death bed and death space in the Schwarzenberg family in the nineteenth century. In some specific cases, such as the room in which Princess Eleonore died in 1873, the space was kept unchanged for many years, as we are informed by Josef Šusta (1874–1845) in his memoirs: “...as children, we were shown the bed on which she [Princess Eleonore] died in 1873, shortly before I was born. The reverence of keeping the death room unchanged made a cold impression on us...”<sup>10</sup>

The autopsy usually took place on the second day after death, but Walter’s autopsy was delayed and carried out on 22 April, three days after he died.<sup>11</sup> This delay was most probably caused by the absence of Prince Johan Adolf II, who was at the Château Murau in Styria at the time, and not in Vienna.<sup>12</sup> As the head of the family, he had to be informed about the death of his son, then he had to travel to Vienna to set the whole chain of rituals in motion. During the autopsy, not only was the body examined, but also the viscera were removed from the body and placed in a separate urn, after which the mortal remains were embalmed.

There was a long tradition of removing the viscera from the dead body among the Schwarzenbergs in the nineteenth century. One of the reasons for carrying out this practice was the effort to delay the decaying of the dead body and ensure that it would last the many days long burial. Another reason was a long family tradition established in the seventeenth century – the separate funeral of the heart and other viscera. The general tradition of separate viscera funerals was founded by Prince Johan Adolf I (1615–1683) after the death of his wife in 1681, who also chose St. Giles Church in Třeboň as the resting place for the organs. Five decades later, in 1732, Prince Joseph I Adam (1722–1782) established a new line of this tradition – separate funerals for hearts, which took place in St. Vitus Church in Český Krumlov. Both these traditions of separate funerals were abandoned by the Schwarzenbergs over the course of time; first the tradition of burying organs in Třeboň in 1782 and then, in 1833, also the tradition of the funerals for hearts.<sup>13</sup>

However, the process of removing the organs from dead bodies continued, as we are also informed in the autopsy protocol of Prince Walter, whose viscera were removed and

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10 Josef ŠUSTA, *Léta dětství a jinošství. Vzpomínky I*, Praha 1947, p. 47.

11 An autopsy protocol was written by the specialist Doctor Dlouhý, and the autopsy itself was carried out under the supervision of Doctor Franz Ritter von Rettenbach, Doctor Götz and Doctor Lenk.

12 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593, Reports about Prince Walter’s funeral at Třeboň Estate.

13 Václav GRUBHOFFER, *Pod závojem smrti. Poslední věci Schwarzenbergů 1732–1914*, České Budějovice 2013, pp. 165–194; IDEM, „*Mou nesmrtelnou duši poručím milosrdenství jejího stvořitele...*“ *Pohřby Schwarzenbergů v 19. a na počátku 20. století*, in: Martin Gaži (ed.), *Schwarzenbergové v české a středoevropské kulturní historii*, České Budějovice 2013, pp. 653–664.

placed in a separate urn, but buried alongside the body. It seems that in Walter's case we most likely see the last reverberation of the tradition of separate funerals for organs, since after all the last burial of a heart took place only eight years before the Prince died. From this perspective, the Prince's funeral, i.e. the autopsy and the removal of the organs, stands on a boundary, as the practice of removing organs was replaced by injecting special embalming solutions in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

After the autopsy had been carried out the dead body was dressed in funeral clothes, which in most cases were black,<sup>15</sup> although according to Walter's death portrait his were white. The body was then transferred to the chapel or drawing room of that particular family seat, where it was put on display, and the first private or semi-public *ostentio corporis* began. Family members and closest friends could use this display of the body to bid farewell to the deceased, and in some rather rare cases, e.g. when a high ranking member of the family died, even the highest representatives of the Empire could come and pay their tribute.<sup>16</sup>

The first display of the dead body usually lasted one day, and was followed by the transport of the remains to the place of burial, traditionally the Southern Bohemian town of Třeboň. The time sequence in the case of Prince Walter was kept very similar. The autopsy was carried out on 22 April, and one day later the dead body was transported in the funeral carriage to Třeboň, meaning that the first *ostentio corporis* must have taken place from the afternoon of 22 April until the morning of 23 April.<sup>17</sup>

The journey from Vienna took more than one day, and the carriage accompanied by the family officers and servants arrived in Třeboň on 24 April. Before the carriage entered the town, all those attending the funeral "... sorrowful and full of sincere feelings of love..." walked from the edge of the town to meet and welcome the carriage carrying "the youngest bud of The House Schwarzenberg", and the public part of the whole funeral ceremony began. After that the coffin was consecrated by the dean of Třeboň and the funeral procession was formed by the funeral guests.<sup>18</sup>

14 On autopsy and embalming and its development in history see Pavel KRÁL, *Smrt a pohřby české šlechty na počátku raného novověku*, České Budějovice 2004; Christine QUIGLEY, *Dissension on Display. Cadavers, Anatomists, and Public spectacle*, McFarland 2012; IDEM, *The Corpse. A History*, McFarland 1996. As case studies for the premodern period in Bohemia Bohdana DIVIŠOVÁ, *Smrt, pitva a pražská balzamace vévody Jindřicha Julia Brunšvického, tajného rady císaře Rudolfa II*, *Dějiny věd a techniky* 50, 2017, vol. 1, pp. 47–64; Jan BETLACH, *Pitva Melchiora z Redernu roku 1600 v Německém Brodě*, Havlíčkovobrodsko: sborník příspěvků o historii region 31, 2017, pp. 105–113.

15 V. GRUBHOFFER, *Pod závojem smrti*, p. 127.

16 *Ibid.*, pp. 130–140.

17 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593, Reports about Prince Walter's funeral in Třeboň.

18 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593, Reports about funeral rituals and ceremonies of Prince Walter which took place in Třeboň.

The funeral procession, often referred to as the “conduct” and described as the peak of the whole funeral ceremony by many historians<sup>19</sup>, in Walter’s case consisted of several groups of different people representing the House Schwarzenberg, the Habsburg Empire, the Roman-Catholic Church and the town of Třeboň. At the very front a crucifix was carried, followed by school children, paupers and people treated in the Schwarzenberg hospitals, wearing their uniforms. Behind them walked musicians and singers, local clergymen, jägers and foresters working on the Třeboň estate. These were followed by the carriage carrying the dead body and the highest ranking Schwarzenberg officers,<sup>20</sup> representing the House in this most honourable place throughout the whole conduct. Behind them was Michael Freiherr von Dobřenitz, representing the military officers stationed in Třeboň, and he was followed by the higher Schwarzenberg officers working on the Třeboň estate, Třeboň town officers, some citizens of Třeboň and wives and widows of the Schwarzenberg officers. At the very end of the funeral procession walked all the citizens of the town of Třeboň and the surrounding villages.<sup>21</sup>

At this stage it is necessary to make a short digression from the description of Walter’s funeral ceremony, because of one rather striking modification concerning the composition of the funeral conduct – the absence of Prince’s parents and family in general. The House Schwarzenberg was truly represented only by its highest ranking officers – *Hofmeister* Josef Horský and *Sekretär* František Kaizl. The absence of the parents and the rest of the family might be indeed rather surprising, and also added credence to the rumour of Prince’s illegitimacy. Nevertheless, the fact that no one from the House Schwarzenberg attended either the conduct or the rest of the public rituals should not be understood as especially rare.

Research conducted by Czech historians, in particular Václav Grubhoffer from the University of South Bohemia, has proven that an aristocrat of the nineteenth century found himself in a difficult situation after someone very close to him passed away. During that

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19 Philippe ARIÉS, *Dějiny smrti I.*, Praha 2000, pp. 207–210; for another perspective see Norbert ELIAS, *O osamělosti umírajících v našich dnech*, Praha 1998. On death and funerals of the Bohemian aristocracy in the pre-modern period, see especially Pavel KRÁL, *Smrt a pohřby české šlechty na počátku novověku*, České Budějovice 2004; Tomáš KNOZ, *Krankheit, Tod und Verwigung von Adligen in der Frühen Neuzeit. Im Schnittpunkt von Historischer Anthropologie, medizinischer Anthropologie und Kunstgeschichte*, in: Václav Bůžek – Dana Štefanová (eds.), *Menschen-Handlungen-Strukturen. Historisch-antropologische Zugangsweisen in den Geschichts-wissenschaften*, České Budějovice 2001, pp. 81–115. In general for the period of the nineteenth and twentieth century see Helena LORENZOVÁ – Taťána PETRASOVÁ (eds.), *Fenomén smrti v české kultuře 19. století. Sborník příspěvků z 20. ročníku symposia k problematice 19. století*, Praha 2001; Lenka NEŠPOROVÁ, *Smrt, umírání a pohřební rituály v české společnosti ve 20. století*, *Soudobé dějiny* 14, 2007, vol. 3–4, pp. 354–378.

20 Hofmeister Josef Horský and Sekretär František Kaizl.

21 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593, Reports on the funeral rituals and ceremonies of Prince Walter which took place in Třeboň.

century, the funerals of members of famous aristocratic houses gradually became “a matter of great public interest”, closely watched by many. Under such conditions the aristocrats had to choose between two opposing options – either to attend the funeral, fulfil their social duty and also bid farewell to the deceased at the risk of expressing their emotions and grief in the public eye, thus damaging their image as aristocrats without emotions, or not to attend the funeral at all.<sup>22</sup>

The unbearable burden of grief was the reason why not a single member of the House of Schwarzenberg attended Walter’s funeral. Substantial evidence of sorrow might be found in the Schwarzenberg archive, which demonstrates how the family, especially the mother Princess Eleonore, was saddened and needed to commemorate the deceased. One of these means of commemoration was a black leather case with the inscription † W. S., containing certain items belonging to Prince Walter – a few items of clothing, an illustrated book, Walter’s death portrait or several sketches of the sepulchre, which was built for him.<sup>23</sup> Princess Eleonore also started to write special diaries, in which she copied melancholic and grim passages from her favourite books, and later on she even composed her own mournful poems.<sup>24</sup> She also became withdrawn for some time after Walter died and did not communicate even with her best friends.

Direct proof of Eleonore’s grief might be found in a quote from the letter she sent to her perhaps very best friend Princess Leontine Clary-Aldringen, a few weeks after her son had died:

*“My dear Leontine, I did not reply to your many kind letters, but believe me that I am very grateful for them and for all the kindness you have shown me. It was absolutely impossible for me to write letters for a long time, and even now I do so only with great difficulty [...] It is not only a huge suffering for a mother, it is a terrible sorrow and pain, as if a piece of your heart has been torn out. And there is nothing in this world which could heal this wound. Only belief in God Almighty [...]”*<sup>25</sup>

It must be said that the Schwarzenberg family were absent at more funerals than just Walter’s in the second half of the nineteenth century. When Princess Eleonore died in the summer 1873, the mental condition of her husband, Prince Johann Adolf II, was so bad that he did not attend her funeral and his son and heir took over his role. A similar situation to the death of Walter Schwarzenberg occurred also in the next generation of the family,

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22 Václav GRUBBHOFER, *Paměť rodu v zrcadle smrti. Funerální obřady v rodině Schwarzenberků v občanské době*, in: Václav Bůžek – Pravel Král (eds.), *Paměť urozenosti*, Praha 2007, pp. 201–202.

23 The record of this case is stored in SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593.

24 Princess Eleonore’s diaries are stored in SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, Sbirka rukopisů.

25 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Eleonore Gemahlin Johann Adolfs II., fasc. 584, Letter sent by Princess Eleonore to Princess Leontine Clary-Aldringen.

when the young ambassador to Tokyo Karl Laurenz (1871–1902) died of scarlet fever. His parents, primarily his mother Princess Ida (1839–1921), also decided not to attend the public part of the funeral ceremonies and preferred to bid him farewell in private.<sup>26</sup>

It was not only the members of the Schwarzenberg family who were affected by the loss of their loved ones. In 1869 Mathilde Windisch-Graetz (1835–1907) and the whole extended family were saddened by the death of her ten-year-old daughter Eleonore (1859–1869). The devastating impact of the death of a child for a mother is even better demonstrated by the case of Mathilde's relative Valerie Windisch-Graetz (1843–1912), who lost her first son Paul Emil at the age of five (1876–1881). She was also tormented by the sorrow for a longer period of time, and similarly to Princess Eleonore of Schwarzenberg after the death of Prince Walter, Valerie used letters and diaries as a form of therapy to relieve her pain.<sup>27</sup>

Let us now return to the conduct and funeral rituals of Prince Walter in Třeboň. After the funeral procession was formed, it set off on its way to the town. The conduct entered the town through the Hradecká gate and walked to the courtyard of the château, where the coffin and the urn with the remains were taken down from the carriage and carried by four Schwarzenberg officers into the château chapel, where they were placed on the catafalque, which was decorated with flowers and the Schwarzenberg coat of arms. The ducal crown, symbolising the power of the House, was carried together with the remains and placed on the coffin. A requiem was then offered for the repose of Prince Walter. The first truly public *ostentio corporis* was opened by this service, during which several groups of Schwarzenberg employees stayed in the chapel and prayed for the soul of the deceased, and the general public was allowed to enter and bid farewell.<sup>28</sup>

The public display of the dead body took place overnight, and ended soon after noon on 25 April. The overwhelming majority of Schwarzenberg funerals would end at this hour, or more precisely at the moment when the remains were carried into the crypt of the Church of St. Giles near Třeboň,<sup>29</sup> which was the Schwarzenberg resting place for many years, but this did not apply in the case of the funeral of Prince Walter. The rituals and ceremonies which took place in Třeboň were not a culmination of the funeral, as they would usually be, but rather a part of a longer chain of funeral rituals.

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26 V. GRUBHOFFER, *Pod závojem smrti*, pp. 117–118, 139–140. For more details on the aristocracy and grief see Silvia HÖLBL, *Harrach. Familienangelegenheiten: eine mikrohistorische Untersuchung zu Familienbeziehungen (19./20. Jahrhundert)*, PhD diss., Universität Wien, Wien 2010; Radmila SLABÁKOVÁ, *Žal a umírání v denících a soukromé korespondenci rakouskouherské šlechty 19. století*, *Studia Historica Nitriensia* 9, 2001, pp. 153–163.

27 Hannes STEKL – Marija WAKOUNIG, *Windisch-Graetz. Ein Fürstenhaus im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Wien – Köln – Weimar 1992, pp. 248–250.

28 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593, Reports on funeral rituals and ceremonies of Prince Walter which took place in Třeboň.

29 The resting place was located at the Church of St. Giles outside the town of Třeboň.



After the *ostentio corporis* in the Třeboň château had ended, the coffin and the urn were again placed on the funeral carriage and, accompanied by Schwarzenberg officers, departed for Český Krumlov, which was considered the main residence of the House in Bohemia at that time. The carriage and its company passed several Schwarzenberg villages, in which the journey was interrupted, and Walter's remains consecrated by local priests, before they arrived in Český Krumlov at dusk.<sup>30</sup>

As a matter of fact, the rituals and ceremonies which took place in Český Krumlov after the carriage arrived there were very similar, almost identical. The remains were welcomed outside of the town, by the chapel of the Holy Trinity, where the conduct was formed. The composition of the funeral procession was the same as in Třeboň, with the difference only that the Schwarzenberg employees in the conduct were those working on the Český Krumlov estate. The conduct, lit up by many candles and torches, walked from the Holy Trinity Chapel towards the town, passed through the Budějovická gate and entered the second courtyard of the family residence. Then the Schwarzenberg grenadier guard performed a parade to honour the Prince, after which Walter's remains were taken to the château chapel of St. George. The coffin and the urn were again placed on the catafalque, and a requiem service was held at 10 o'clock in the evening, which opened another public *ostentio corporis*, lasting for next twenty-four hours, during which more services were held.<sup>31</sup>

The prelate of St. Vitus Church in Český Krumlov held the last requiem for Prince Walter at 10 o'clock in the evening on 26 April, and with that the last *ostentio corporis* of Walter's entire funeral was concluded. The coffin and the urn were taken from St. George's Chapel after the service, and in a more modest conduct carried through the palace into the much smaller chapel of St. Anne, where they were placed and locked away. The act of handing over the keys of the chapel to the keeper of the Český Krumlov château and the director of the Český Krumlov estate was the very last step in the funeral of Prince Walter of Schwarzenberg.<sup>32</sup> However, Walter's posthumous journey was only temporarily interrupted.

Very soon after Walter's death, the princely couple Johan Adolf II and Eleonore decided to erect a completely new and separate tomb for their deceased child – the chapel of the Holy Cross. Their motives for doing this are unknown, and we only know what the requests of the Prince and the Princess were. They chose a location which they named *Waltersruhe* near the Červený Dvůr château, the neo-gothic style for the building, and they also insisted on it being built quickly. The request for a building permit was therefore filed on 21 May

30 Namely Štěpánovice, Plavnice, Kosov, Rájov and Přisečná.

31 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593. Reports on funeral rituals and ceremonies of Prince Walter which took place in Český Krumlov.

32 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593. Reports on funeral rituals and ceremonies of Prince Walter which took place in Český Krumlov.

1841 and processed only one month later. The Prince even the delivery of as many bricks as possible from the ongoing reconstruction of the Hluboká château. His haste to finish the building in the shortest possible time may be also evident in the case of the decorative elements. Johan Adolf II ordered most of these decorations – a stone crucifix, three coats of arms, a pedestal for the coffin and altar, a wooden gate and iron bars all from Vienna, but as the delivery of the altar was delayed it was decided to place an older altar from the chapel of the Červený dvůr château into the tomb rather than wait.<sup>33</sup>

Already on 23 November 1841, the Schwarzenberg officers of the Český Krumlov estate were notified that the remains of Walter were to be transferred to the Chapel of the Holy Cross, which was also due to be consecrated the next day.<sup>34</sup> The ceremony took place on the morning of 24 November, when the bishop of České Budějovice Arnošt Konstantin Růžička (1761–1845) consecrated the chapel, and the coffin with the urn were placed there.<sup>35</sup>

It may seem unbelievable, but even in the Chapel of the Holy Cross Prince Walter did not find his eternal peace. When his mother Princess Eleonore died in the summer of 1873 after a long sickness, the coffin and the urn were taken from *Waltersruhe* and transported back to Třeboň, so they could be buried alongside the remains of Eleonore. Nevertheless, the traditional resting place of the House – the crypt in the Church of St. Giles Church near Třeboň – was inappropriate for any more burials around 1873 with regard to the hygienic and representation aspects. The decision was therefore taken to bury Princess Eleonore and her son Walter in a separate grave at the graveyard of the Church of St. Giles. Prince Johan Adolf II, devastated by the death of his wife, obligated by the legacy of his father and restricted by the inconvenient state of the contemporary resting place, decided to erect a completely new family tomb just one year later, in July 1874. Faithful to the family tradition, the Prince chose Třeboň as the location for the new tomb, i.e. again in the immediate proximity of the town. The new, grand and also expensive neo-gothic sepulchre was finished four years later. The ceremonial consecration took place on 29 July 1874, precisely on the fourth anniversary of Princess Eleonore's death. The remains of Prince Walter and his mother were transferred to the new tomb as its first occupants, alongside the coffin of Prince Joseph II Johan (1769–1833), who was Walter's grandfather

33 The foundation act and the plans of the tomb are stored in SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, fond Velkostatek Český Krumlov (VkČK), signatura (sign.) I<sup>A</sup> 3K<sup>a</sup> 15c/1. [State regional archive Třeboň, department Český Krumlov, resource Český Krumlov Estate].

34 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, RA Schwarzenberků, Kinder Johann Adolf II. Walther, fasc. 593, Circular of the Director of the Český Krumlov Estate.

35 SOA Třeboň, odd. Český Krumlov, VkČK, (sign.) I<sup>A</sup> 3K<sup>a</sup> 15c/1, Description of the consecration of the Chapel of the Holy Cross.

and the founder of the primogeniture line of the House of Schwarzenberg, and they have rested there ever since.<sup>36</sup>

As can be seen above, the funerals of the Schwarzenberg family members were truly sophisticated events, full of interconnected ceremonies and rituals, which helped to shape the family identity and maintain an awareness of its continuity. The pattern of these events was definitively established in the eighteenth century and then maintained until the interwar period, with some specific changes of the form of the rituals. Prince Walter's funeral seems to have taken place on the brink of the changes mentioned. His viscera were taken from the body, placed into a separate urn, yet they were not buried in a special tomb as they would have been just a few years before. He still had a painting of himself on his deathbed, and this custom was replaced by photographing the dead body in the second half of the nineteenth century. These changes show that the pattern of the funeral was truly settled, but also capable of responding to changes in the contemporary mentality.

Because Prince Walter's funeral was a special case, it was also modified in specific ways. The biggest change was that his remains were buried in the newly constructed tomb *Waltersruhe*, and not in the traditional resting place of the family, which at that time was the crypt of the Church of St. Giles near Třeboň. Moreover, the Prince's remains underwent further funeral ceremonies and rituals, which took place in Český Krumlov. It must be stated that the family did not modify Walter's funeral into a completely new one, but only added another chain of rituals to a longer funeral process, and these additional rituals were performed in the same pattern as the traditional ones, which always took place in Třeboň.

Another oddity in Walter's posthumous whereabouts was the numerous transfers of his remains to different tombs or graves. We can only speculate with regard to the first transport of his coffin and urn to the chapel of the Holy Cross, known as *Waltersruhe*, directly connected to the decision of Johann Adolf II and Eleonore to build the new tomb. But the shock of the sudden and tragic death, which was in such a high contrast with the Schwarzenberg ideal of dying, seems to be the most probable reason.<sup>37</sup> The reasons for the two further transports are rather clearer. In her last will, Princess Eleonore, thanks to her strong position within the family, ordered that her son was to be buried alongside

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36 V. GRUBHOFFER, *Pod závojem smrti*, pp. 165–168, 203–210.

37 The paradigm of a “good death” in the Schwarzenberg family of the nineteenth century was established in 1833, when Prince Joseph II Johann (1769–1833) died. The ideal way of dying was divested of the baroque theatrical religiousness and gestures, and was replaced by family intimacy. Even though the presence of a clergyman, who heard the confession and administered the Last Sacrament of the Church, was still natural, the space around the *deathbed* was reserved mainly for the family members, who were supposed to gather in high numbers and bid farewell to the dying one. For more information see V. GRUBHOFFER, *Pod závojem smrti*, pp. 110–115.

her. And after four years, when Prince Johan Adolf II finished the construction of the new neo-gothic tomb, he wanted to gather all the relatives under the same roof.

This article has also shown what an impact such a sudden and tragic death of a two-year-old child could have on the rest of the family and its behaviour. In a comparison with the research of other Czech historians engaged in the study of the aristocracy, the article demonstrated that the members of the family sometimes preferred to not attend the public part of the funeral, in order to avoid the risk of expressing their grief in public.