

We cordially invite you to the conference

The Rise of Wallenstein and the Re-Start of the Thirty Years' War 1625,

which will take place on **19 April 2024 at 9:00 a.m.** in the Zaháň Lounge of the Senate of the Czech Republic in the Wallenstein Palace.

The event is organised under the auspices of the Vice-Chair of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic RNDr. Jitka Seitlová

Access to the Wallenstein Palace will be available from 8:30 a.m. at reception C 2. Admission will only be possible for registered and confirmed participants. Guests must pass a security check and show proof of identity upon entry. Please kindly confirm your participation at pavel.marek@upce.cz. The number of places is limited.



Wallenstein: A Scene of the Thirty Years War Ernest Crofts (1847-1911)



*Wallenstein Palace, Zaháňský salonek, Valdštejnské náměstí 4,
118 00 Praha – Malá Strana*

There are a good many books that focus on the controversies about Wallenstein's end, far fewer that deal with the circumstances surrounding the beginning of his "First Generalate" in 1625. The previous year, 1624, had been a year of almost "All Quiet on the Western Front" (except for the siege of Breda). The "Thirty Years' War" seemed to have come to an end after only half a dozen years of sporadic fighting. The war was galvanised into life again by an uneasy combination of powers with an anti-Habsburg agenda that culminated in the Hague Treaty (December 1625) but soon fell apart again. But the mere threat of such a challenge, spearheaded by Christian IV of Denmark, provided (or seemed to provide?) the stimulus for the Emperor to entrust Wallenstein with raising an army that turned out to be bigger than any Ferdinand II had possessed hitherto – and much bigger than he could ever hope to pay for...

The aim of our conference is to analyse both the international and the domestic "Austrian" (and Bohemian) dimension of those crucial two years, 1624–1625, by taking a fresh look at the sources. We are interested both in the initial aims, actions, and mindsets of the (soon-to-be) warring powers and their perceptions of the Wallenstein phenomenon that they had helped to bring about and their reactions to it.

PROGRAMME

Friday 19 April 2024

09:00–09:30 Opening

09:30–10:00 Keynote: **Lothar Höbelt** (University of Vienna)
The Court of Vienna and the Context of the Wallenstein Phenomenon in 1624/1625

PANEL I

10:10 **David Parrott** (University of Oxford)
French perceptions of the rise of Wallenstein, 1624–1626

10:30 **Thomas G. Otte** (University of East Anglia, Norwich)
"A Faraway Country?": England and the Opening of the Thirty Years' War

10:50 **Michael Bregnsbo** (Syddansk Universitet, Odense)
The Motives behind King Christian IV's Decision to Enter the Thirty Years' War in 1625 and His Ensuing Defeat

11:10–11:40 Discussion

11:40–12:00 Coffee Break

PANEL II

12:00 **Gianvittorio Signorotto** (Università degli studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia)
Italy in turmoil. Threats to Habsburg hegemony in the 1620s

12:20 **Tomáš Černušák** (Historický ústav AV ČR)
Valtellina as a Breaking Point? Reflections of the Nuncio Carlo Caraffa and the Context of the Politics of Pope Urban VIII

12:40–13:00 Discussion

13:00–14:30 Lunch Break

PANEL III

14:30 **Manuel Rivero Rodríguez** (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, IULCE)
The Count Duke of Olivares, the union of arms and the turn of 1625

14:50 **Rubén González Cuerva** (CSIC Madrid)
Wallenstein, the improbable Spanish Client

15:10 **Bernardo García García** (Universidad Complutense de Madrid/Fundación Carlos de Amberes)
The Infanta Isabella's Strategy (1627–1633): Seeking the military assistance of Wallenstein's forces to pressure the Dutch Republic

15:30–16:00 Discussion

PANEL IV

- 16:00 **Robert Rebitsch** (Universität Innsbruck)
Bavaria and the formation of the imperial army in 1625
- 16:20 **Vítězslav Prchal** (Univerzita Pardubice)
Gateway to a Land of Boundless Opportunities: the Growing Power of the Imperial Army and Rewarding the Loyalists, Bohemia and Moravia 1621–1627
- 16:40–17:00 Coffee Break
- 17:00 **Gábor Kármán** (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia)
No Way Out from the Maze? Gábor Bethlen in the Thirty Years' War in the 1620s
- 17:20 **Petr Vorel** (Univerzita Pardubice)
Albrecht von Wallenstein and his monetary policy
- 17:40 **Maria Zdislava Röhsner** (Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Wien)
Wallenstein in the Haus-, Hof- and Staatsarchiv
- 18:00 Discussion

Organisers

doc. Mgr. Pavel Marek, Ph.D.
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Lothar Höbelt

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ABSTRACTS

Lothar Höbelt

The Court of Vienna and the Context of the Wallenstein Phenomenon in 1624/1625

During the 1620s Emperor Ferdinand II faced a number of challengers from all quarters of the globe. It therefore seemed logical that he entrusted Wallenstein with raising a huge army in the spring of 1625. However, most of these challenges turned out to be potential rather than real. In fact, the year preceding Wallenstein's appointment saw a number of regiments disbanded or sent abroad. Retrenchment and disarmament were the order of the day. The dangers looming in Hungary, Italy, and the West all seemed to have evaporated in the spring of 1625, and the Anglo-Danish alliance in the North still seemed very distant. At best, the Wallenstein army could be regarded as a reserve force ("essercito volante") with no certain aim – except for one: to rid the hereditary lands of the "old regiments" they could no longer support. The move towards the Empire was a dual-purpose weapon. Wallenstein could support Tilly if the Danish War did escalate – or he could transfer the cost of paying off the army to the unfortunate estates of the Empire if peace happened to break out.

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David Parrott

French perceptions of the rise of Wallenstein, 1624–1626

1624 represented a year of relative peace in the Holy Roman Empire, but was also marked by the re-emergence of Cardinal Richelieu as first minister to King Louis XIII and the adoption of a militantly anti-Habsburg foreign policy after years of rapprochement and/or temporising by successive French governments. Richelieu's immediate focus in 1624–1625 was North Italy, where French troops sought to disrupt Habsburg lines of communication through the Alpine Valtelline passes. But he and his diplomats were also interested in finding ways to destabilise the Imperial settlement in the Holy Roman Empire. Thus, the military capacity of the Emperor and his relationship with the army of the Catholic League were observed and reported on carefully by French representatives in Vienna and in the Empire. This paper will look at the extent to which French diplomats and ministers recognised the rise of Wallenstein in the years 1624–1626, how far they saw his military and organisational methods as distinct, and how they understood his generalship, administration, and strategic decisions as part of a larger Habsburg project to confront the new challenges posed by the Treaty of the Hague, the Danish intervention, and the military opportunism of Gábor Bethlen. Standing back from the immediate diplomatic reporting, the paper will also look more widely at the ways in which both the allies and enemies of Richelieu came to view and judge the rise of Wallenstein in their writings.

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Thomas G. Otte

"A Faraway Country"?: England and the Opening of the Thirty Years' War

English policy during the early phase of what was to become the Thirty Years' War was marked by noble intentions, fuelled by remarkable self-delusion. and ended, ultimately, in utter failure. James I expected to be accepted as a mediator by his brother-monarchs and fancied himself as the arbiter of Europe and yet had no policy to make his views count (if he knew them). He hankered after a Spanish alliance, but Parliament and factions at court desired a war with Spain, and by preference a cheap one. In pursuing the mirage of a Spanish treaty, he helped the Emperor to gain a free hand to punish the wayward Elector without having to consider the wishes of the King of England. He hoped to strike a blow for the recovery of the Palatinate, but would not aid the Elector in his attempt to retain his position as King of Bohemia. There were the beginnings of a grand alliance against Austria, but efforts in that direction were pursued only haphazardly and its accomplishment was always endangered by the English state's acute financial embarrassments. James ended up drifting into a combination with France that helped to inflame religious zeal and intolerance at home and that hindered his plans for a campaign to restore the Palatinate to Frederick. By the time of James's death in March 1625, the scheme for a larger alliance against the House of Austria had atrophied to separate arrangements with the Dutch and the Danes, and it was left to his successor to turn these into usable policy tools. However, Charles I was overwhelmed by projects and expenses and with nominal allies who were either unable or unwilling to assist him. Instead of an Anglo-Dutch-French expedition to recover the elector's possessions, the king ended up launching a disastrous naval campaign against Spain in late 1625, and then found himself at war with France in the following year.

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Michael Bregnsbo

The Motives behind King Christian IV's Decision to Enter the Thirty Years' War in 1625 and His Ensuing Defeat

In 1625, King Christian IV of Denmark-Norway decided to enter the ongoing war in Germany as the head of a coalition of willing North German Protestant princes and with promises of financial support from France, England, and the Netherlands. Certainly, the Danish aristocratic council of the realm opposed this decision, but the king circumvented it by entering the war in his capacity of Duke of Holstein. This war led to a disastrous defeat at Lutter am Barenberge in 1626 and an ensuing ruinous occupation by imperial forces of large parts of the kingdom of Denmark till 1629. In Danish historiography, this defeat is seen as a watershed: the first of a large number of later defeats transforming the Danish state from a middle-sized European power to the present-day small power named Denmark, and King Christian has been heavily criticised for what has been seen as a foolhardy and totally unnecessary decision to go to war. The paper will discuss the motives of the king for entering the war and whether the defeat was really as foolhardy and foreseeable as many Danish historians have thought or might have been due to international

political, military, or strategic changes that he could not have foreseen. Furthermore, there will be discussion of why the Danish state, despite its disastrous defeat, nonetheless managed to escape territorial concessions at the Peace of Lübeck in 1629.

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Gianvittorio Signorotto

Italy in turmoil. Threats to Habsburg hegemony in the 1620s.

In the early 1620s, the Italian scenario was characterised by strong tension, connected to the continental events of the two Habsburg branches. The first War of Monferrato, triggered by Charles Emmanuel of Savoy, opened a new phase. Spanish hegemony on the peninsula was called into question by the potentados, who hoped for an intervention by France; the papacy, with the election of Urban VIII, was no longer in favour of Spain. The State of Milan prepared itself for a possible attack on its western border and in the north, where the Duke of Feria's troops were stationed in Valtellina. In 1624, following the Paris Agreement between France, Venice, and Savoy, an army sent by Richelieu occupied the Grisons. The year after that, the Duke of Savoy's attempt to conquer Genoa with French and Dutch support jeopardised the continental logistics of the Habsburgs, momentarily re-established thanks to the Peace of Monzon (1626). In the meantime, stances against the Catholic king's claim to impose himself as defender of the faith and protector of all Christian states grew. The imperial authority, which to a lesser extent was undermining the honour and profit of the Italian princes, was not as badly affected, but a subsequent phase was in the course of being prepared in which the shift to the anti-Spanish front would imply the betrayal of the pledge of obedience to the Emperor. Diplomatic evidence and political and historiographical debate, alongside the documented public opinion of the time, reveal these anxieties and contradictions. The wars in Germany and the events in Valtellina would go on to stimulate Italian interest in the important figures and internal political games at the court of Vienna; in view of the War of Mantua, with increasing fears of the descent of imperial troops, the name of Wallenstein would begin its ascent to notoriety.

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Tomáš Černušák

Valtellina as a Breaking Point? Reflections of the Nuncio Carlo Caraffa and the Context of the Politics of Pope Urban VIII.

The reports of the nuncio Carlo Caraffa from Vienna in 1624 reflect the position that Emperor Ferdinand II had reached after the successes of the last few years: the Elector of the Palatinate had been defeated, Gábor Bethlen had made peace, and it was possible to reduce the size of the imperial army. In the second half of the year, however, warning reports began to emerge of the formation of an anti-Habsburg league, which was to include France and Venice, and of preparations for war in both countries. An important moment was the French intervention in November 1624, led by the Marquis de Coevres, which led to the capture of the fortresses held

by the papal troops in Valtellina. The paper will consider whether this event may have contributed to the appointment of Wallenstein as commander of the imperial army and what the policy of the early years of the pontificate of Urban VIII was in this context.

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Manuel Rivero Rodríguez

The Count Duke of Olivares, the union of arms and the turn of 1625

In 1625, the Count Duke of Olivares broke with the foreign policy scheme developed by his uncle Don Baltasar de Zúñiga, Philip IV's first favourite. In fact, the policy pursued in that year sought an alliance with France and a break with the royalist policy towards England and the Empire. In order to be able to deal with two different foreign policy fronts, on the one hand, support for the Habsburgs in Central Europe and, on the other, the deployment of a broad global offensive against the Dutch, he conceived the union of arms, a system that would make it possible to finance the war and obtain far more resources. This union of arms was based on a global conception of foreign policy which addressed both the problems of the Thirty Years' War and the maintenance of world hegemony in the Atlantic and Pacific.

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Rubén González Cuerva

Wallenstein, the improbable Spanish Client

The rise of Wallenstein opened new and triumphant paths for the imperial army, but the reaction of the Spanish branch of the dynasty was ambivalent. In the previous years, the count of Oñate, the Spanish ambassador in Vienna, had become a powerful war impresario successfully conditioning imperial policy. Apart from securing generous military funding for his Austrian family, King Philip IV's imperial diplomacy relied heavily on the building of a powerful court network in Vienna. Through the receipt of honorary and financial rewards, a heterogeneous group of courtiers acknowledged Philip IV as a legitimate patron but, although this dynastic patronage secured tighter communication between Vienna and Madrid, these courtiers also received criticism for being "Hispanicised" and thus unreliable and almost treacherous. In this setting, Wallenstein was an ideal candidate for Spanish patronage, as a staunch Catholic devoted to the House of Austria. However, the Bohemian general proved to be an original character in this regard too because he never engaged openly in these networks. We analyse the delicate establishment of relations between Wallenstein and Spanish diplomacy in a context of clientelism changed by the Thirty Years' War.

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Bernardo J. García García

The Infanta Isabella's Strategy (1627–1633): Seeking the military assistance of Wallenstein's forces to pressure the Dutch Republic

In the frame of our Research Project POLEMHIS. Political Communication, Information Management, and Memory of the Conflicts in the Spanish Monarchy (1548–1725), I will review the strategy developed, especially between 1627 and 1633, by the governor the Infanta Isabella in order to create a second front in Western Frisia to pressure the Dutch Republic, following the successful experience of Spinola's campaigns in the Rhine, Gelderland, and Overijssel in 1604–1606, which facilitated the ceasefire and the opening of negotiations for a truce. My main goal in this paper is to consider the agency of the Infanta seeking the personal assistance of General Wallenstein, mainly after the departure of Spinola, first to Spain and later to Milan, or the occasional support of part of his forces (mainly cavalry), offering in exchange the title of Duke of Western Frisia or the possession of Lingen and its country. The cooperation of the naval forces in Flanders would also be of special relevance in the war against King Christian IV of Denmark. They could provide a fleet of 28 vessels and the control of a port in the mouth of the Elbe. In general, the evolution of the war in the Imperium was closely linked with other conflicts in which the Spanish Monarchy was involved, and from the Infanta's point of view any negotiation of truce or peace in Germany would involve the King of Spain and the conflict in the Low Countries. We will follow the Infanta's agency sending envoys to Wallenstein, such as Count Ottavio Sforza, Gabriel de Roy, the President Jacques Bruneau, Admiral Firmin de Lodossa, and other measures, but also consider her manoeuvres and perseverance in trying to harmonise more effective cooperation between the Habsburgs and the Catholic League.

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Robert Rebitsch

Bavaria and the formation of the imperial army in 1625

In the Battle of White Mountain, the imperial army fought together with the Bavarian-led army of the Catholic League against the forces of Frederick V of the Palatinate. After winning the Bohemian War, however, the imperial army went steadily downhill. In 1624, the forces of Emperor Ferdinand II only had a strength of seven cavalry regiments and eleven infantry regiments. Although the Bohemian nobleman Albrecht von Wallenstein had already approached the imperial court in 1623 to raise a larger army, nothing happened in this respect until 1625. The lieutenant-general of Maximilian I of Bavaria, Johann t'Serclaes von Tilly, fought the victorious battles for the Catholic party and the Spaniards resumed their fight against the Dutch, who were allied with the "Winter King". Tilly was far more willing to cooperate with the Spanish against the Dutch than Maximilian was. However, when the Danish King Christian IV mobilised against Tilly's troops in his role as Kreis colonel of the Lower Saxon Circle, the Catholic armies had to be reinforced. In the spring of 1625, Ferdinand II therefore commissioned Wallenstein, who had been promoted to "Obrister Feldhauptmann", to raise an imperial army of initially 24,000

men. Wallenstein, a skilful war entrepreneur and general, very quickly managed to raise an army on a par with the League's army.

This presentation will examine the political and military conditions in 1624 and 1625, how an imperial army was formed, and what role was played by the Bavarian prince and head of the Catholic League. Did Maximilian actually initiate the formation of imperial troops? Had Maximilian been afraid that he would have to fight the mercenary leader Mansfeld all on his own? What were the relationships like with France and Richelieu, whom he tried to appease, on the one hand, but who were also a source of worries, on the other hand? Did Emperor Ferdinand comply with Maximilian's insistence or had there been plans to massively reinforce his own army for some time or was this decision purely due to the political and military circumstances prevailing at the time? What role did Albrecht von Wallenstein play in the decision to build up a large imperial army? And what happened to the two Catholic armies in the course of the Lower Saxon-Danish War?

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Vítězslav Prchal

Gateway to a Land of Boundless Opportunities: the Growing Power of the Imperial Army and Rewarding the Loyalists, Bohemia and Moravia 1621–1627

The rise to power of Albrecht von Wallenstein in the 1620s took place against the background of several very specific factors. After the defeat of the rebellious Estates, Ferdinand II applied the principle of collective guilt to Bohemia and Moravia for the crime against the Crown (*crimen lesae maiestatis*). In practice, this meant that all existing privileges and legislation were invalidated, and the country was temporarily governed in a kind of legal vacuum by a corps of loyalists, primarily Prince Karl von Liechtenstein, a close ally of Wallenstein. At the same time, there was a large-scale redistribution of land property in both countries in the form of the confiscation of land from the delinquents and, conversely, rewarding the loyalists on very favourable terms. The scale of these property transfers was unprecedented both in duration (the last wave of large-scale confiscations is associated with Wallenstein's fall in 1634) and in scale; more than 850 people were condemned to lose their property, and more than 50% of the land changed its owner within a few years. Parallel to this was the so-called monetary reform, *de facto* a controlled coinage devaluation that benefited only a few persons involved, including Liechtenstein and Wallenstein. In both countries, victorious armies were encamped at the expense of the Estates, the last points of resistance (Tábor, Třeboň, Kladsko, Plzeň) were being annihilated, and widespread re-Catholicisation was underway, often by less than kind means. This paper will briefly recall all these general aspects, which attracted many military entrepreneurs and gentlemen of fortune to the country, sensing their lifetime opportunity.

From the existing documents of the Bohemian Governorate (*Statthalterei*) and the protocols of the Aulic War Council in Vienna, it is quite clear that the two defeated countries temporarily deprived of their rights were of crucial importance to the Emperor in his plans for building the imperial army – not only as a supply of man-

power and a place to house regiments but also in terms of logistics, supplies, and financial sources. Against this background, the process of the gradual building up of the imperial field army in the 1620s will be presented (based on sources from the Viennese Kriegsarchiv and the National Archives in Prague), as well as how it was to be logistically secured from the provincial resources of Bohemia and Moravia. Last but not least, attention will be paid to how the Emperor used the resources of the "land of unlimited opportunities" to reward loyal army officers (often from abroad) who then settled here and helped to reshape the structure of the Estates of Bohemia and Moravia.

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Gábor Kármán

No Way Out from the Maze? Gábor Bethlen in the Thirty Years' War in the 1620s

The alliance of the Hungarian estates with the Confoederatio Bohemica collapsed in less than a year, at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, and although their leader, Gábor Bethlen, prince of Transylvania and king-elect of Hungary could count with continuously decreasing support, he continued his fight until he signed his separate peace with the Habsburgs on New Year's Eve in 1621. The Diet of Sopron/Ödenburg in 1622 signalled a compromise between Ferdinand II and the Hungarian estates, and in this decade only very small fragments of the latter could be motivated into a renewed revolt against the Habsburgs. Bethlen, nevertheless, did not give up and launched two more campaigns to Hungary (in 1623 and 1626), hoping to unite his forces with various contingents of the anti-Habsburg party of the war, and also enjoying a growing amount of Ottoman support. The latter phenomenon, which has increasingly been becoming the focus of the attention of Hungarian historiography in recent decades, seems to have been a crucial element steering Bethlen's policies. In spite of having won his throne with Ottoman support, the prince had a hard time convincing the Sublime Porte to support his endeavour in 1619, and by the time the Sultan's court fully agreed to assist him (during the spring of 1621), his Protestant alliance had already collapsed. This paper will argue that in order to understand Bethlen's actions during the 1620s we have to take into consideration an aspect that has hitherto been as good as neglected: the fact that he was forced to take steps or at least to demonstrate that he was actively seeking ways to do so in order to preserve his newly-won credit among the Ottoman decision makers, both in the imperial centre and in the border region, where he was building his own parallel network of supporters.

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Petr Vorel

Albrecht von Wallenstein and his monetary policy

Albrecht Eusebius of Wallenstein (1583–1634) entered European history not only as a military leader and politician, but also as an issuer of coinage. All these three components of his activities were strongly interconnected. In his paper, the author will

present Wallenstein's monetary activity in the context of new research on Habsburg credit and monetary policy during the Thirty Years' War. In this context, Wallenstein's experience from his time in the so-called "coin consortium" (1622–1623) is crucial. He was well aware of the possibilities of combining unlimited political power with the ability to manipulate the monetary system. Therefore, he later actively sought the right to issue his own coins. At his request, the extensive landed property that Wallenstein had gradually acquired, mainly from confiscations after 1620 in north-eastern Bohemia, was consolidated into the newly established Duchy of Frýdlant (1626), which also included the newly-established right to mint coins. The town of Jičín, where the new mint began its operations, became the centre of the new duchy and Wallenstein's main residence. Further coinage rights were later acquired by Wallenstein after he acquired the Duchy of Zaháň in Silesia (1627) and also an imperial territorial principality, the Duchy of Mecklenburg (1628). However, the main centre of Wallenstein's production of coinage was his systematically built new residential town of Jičín, located in eastern Bohemia. At the height of Wallenstein's power, the local coinage was very extensive, even though Wallenstein had no newly mined precious metals of his own. He was well aware of the basic rule that coinage could only be profitable under such conditions if it was a matter of common coins produced in large quantities and if their circulation could be enforced by power over a large territory. Therefore, especially Wallenstein's small silver three-kreutzer coins (groats) were produced in large quantities. Their production was advantageous for him precisely because his coins had to be accepted at their full face value not only in his Duchy of Frýdlant and in the whole of Bohemia, but also in all areas of the Roman-German Empire to which the Habsburg power extended at that time. For larger international payments, Wallenstein needed gold ducats, so gold coins were minted in large quantities in Jičín. Silver thalers or other silver and gold representative coins of high weight, the production of which did not bring economic profit, were minted by Wallenstein only in symbolic quantities. After Wallenstein's death in 1634, the Emperor had all his coins declared invalid. The Imperial Chamber systematically withdrew them from circulation and had them melted down as input material for the production of ordinary government coins. That is why all the coins produced during Albrecht von Wallenstein's short stay in the European spotlight are more or less rare today.

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Zdislava Röhnsner

Wallenstein in the Haus-, Hof- and Staatsarchiv

Like the history of the great general himself, the history of the "Wallenstein archive(s)" is a complicated one: the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna contains files from a great number of different sources dealing with issues concerning Wallenstein and his army. For a long time they also included the papers of his chancellery that had been confiscated after the general's fall. However, those papers were transferred to the Czech State Archives in Prague following another great political upheaval in 1918. Moreover, from the beginning of the 19th century onwards, some papers relating to Wallenstein's career were purchased by researchers such as Hermann Hallwich, whose documents are now stored in the Haus-, Hof- and Staatsarchiv.

Some of them subsequently also found their way into the archives, the acquisition policy of the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv being a worthy topic of research in itself.

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