

Zdeněk Brtnický of Waldstein and his diary from the years 1597–1603

(Abstract)

The subject of the doctoral thesis is an in many aspects noteworthy personality of Moravian aristocrat Zdeněk Brtnický of Waldstein, one of the 30 directors in the era of rebellion of the estates. The dissertation focuses chiefly on the period of his and pre-university and university studies, for which the largest amount of the sources has been preserved, primarily his voluminous personal diary.

Zdeněk Brtnický of Waldstein was born on 12 May 1582. In his very childhood he became an orphan – his father Henry Brtnický of Waldstein and on Sádek died already in 1589, followed by his wife and Zdeněk's mother Susanne Helt of Kement three years later. First place where Waldstein is known to have studied, is Lutheran noblemen's school in Velké Meziříčí, which was founded by Waldstein's grandmother Alena Helt of Kement, born Meziříčská of Lomnice. From 1592 to 1594 he studied in Jihlava, then he studied in Brzeg in Silesia for other two years and in the summer 1596, equipped with good Latin education, he moved on to Strasbourg, where he stayed for three years and attended academy.

In the years 1599 he set out on the grand tour through the western and southern Europe. Having first stayed for a few weeks in Paris, he travelled over the Lower countries, then he returned to Paris and from November 1599 to March 1600 he studied at university in Orléans. In the spring of the year 1600 he travelled through France where he visited among the others Marseille, Avignon, Toulouse and other places, in summer he spent six weeks in England and then he moved on to Italy where he stayed for one year and half. He studied in Verona and Siena and in autumn 1601 travelled over Italy and spent a few days or weeks in Venice, Rome, Naples, Padua, Florence and so forth.

In June 1602 he came back to Moravia and took over the inherited property – Sádek, Brtnice and Moravské Budějovice – and married Magdalene of Thurn. After her death in the year 1617 he married Catherine Křinecká of Ronov. He did not manage to hold any state office until 1619, when he became one of the 30 directors. After the battle of White Mountain he was arrested, condemned to life imprisonment and died in the prison of the Špilberk castle on 24 June 1623.

There are many sources which are preserved. Among them there are mainly Waldstein's own texts, such as his autograph album, correspondence or his published Latin speeches. The

most noteworthy one is, however, his Latin personal diary from the years 1597–1603. It is very detailed (its extent is approximately 730 pages) and enables historians to study many aspects of his personality, such as his education, intellectual and artistic interests, his religiosity and view on followers of different confessions, his perception of the urban environment, his relationships and contacts and others. In spite of this, it has not been edited so far and belongs to very little studied sources. Therefore the final part of the thesis comprises partial edition of the Waldstein's diary with a commentary.