

In Czech historical writing, history of aristocracy has been on a rise ever since the turbulent days of 1990s. It has always been characterized by application of various methods borrowed from different other fields, such as cultural or social history as well as historical anthropology, and its primary goal was to understand the mentality of the specific social class that is early modern aristocracy. Throughout time, several approaches emerged from the initial probing: first, study of political culture and power; second, study of aristocratic courts and residences; and, third, study of aristocratic family and its life-cycle. All this research was originally focused on 16th century aristocracy; however, it also successfully tackles topics of late 17th and 18th century in recent years as well. Study of aristocratic residences especially has quite a long tradition in Czech historiography, following the lines of socially interpreted art history. On the other hand, as military history is a rather neglected part of writing on the early modern era, this problem transpires into the connection of warfare and aristocracy in 16th to 18th century. For example, not even one analysis has been written on careers of noblemen in the armies of Habsburg monarchy.

This study acknowledges its inspiration in the so-called “new military history” as practiced in western historical writing on warfare since late 1970s. It mainly looks to its cultural and social approach to the topic of war and follows two primary goals. First, it wants to give a higher profile the influential concept of so-called “military revolution”, which interprets (in various ways) the dynamics of continuity and change in early modern warfare and tries to create a strong link with the changes in contemporary social structure.