

Adoption of Habsburg Portrait Models for Aristocratic Likenesses in the Czech Lands in the Reign of Ferdinand I*

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In the reign of Ferdinand I of Habsburg, important examples of portrait painting were done in the Lands of the Bohemian Crown. Though few examples of Renaissance portraiture of that period have survived, there are some noteworthy portraits dating from 1526–1564. The paper focuses on the reception of the so-called Habsburg portrait type in portrait painting in Bohemia and Moravia and examines the purpose for which the commissioners used it. Two specific approaches will be illustrated on the portrait cycle of Adam I of Hradec and his family, painted by Jacob Seisenegger and dated 1529, and portraits of William of Rosenberg, his brother and sisters, commissioned between 1552 and 1554. In both cases, the commissioners were persons of the highest rank in Bohemian aristocratic society.

KEYWORDS:

Renaissance in Bohemia; Portrait Painting; Portrait Galleries; Aristocratic Picture Galleries

The portrait is an efficient form of representation for a ruler and his dynasty. Portraiture thrived in the 16th century, its compositional variants quickly developing until popular formulas became established. Other social strata adopted portrait compositions from the highest ruling circles, and in so doing helped to spread and popularize them. The Habsburg dynasty carefully built up its propagandistic image, gradually codifying the portrait depictions of the Emperor and his family in the course of the 16th century. The three-quarter or full-length portrait in contrapposto showing the Emperor as a man of noble rank became most popular.¹ Around the 1550s, this type of portrait spread throughout the empire, and certain variants to neighbouring European countries.

Among the very few Renaissance portraits painted in our territory in 1526–1564 that have survived are remarkable and iconographically stimulating portrait groups of the Hradec (Neuhaus) and Rožmberk (Rosenberg) families.² In both cases, the full-

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- 1 For more details about the ruler's representative portrait, see e. g. Marianna JENKINS, *The State Portrait, its Origin and Evolution*, New York 1947.
- 2 Bohemia's oldest aristocratic portrait is believed to be Portrait of Albrecht Bezručický of Kolowrat; see Jaroslav PEŠINA, *Nejstarší český renesanční portrét* [The Oldest Bohemian Renaissance Portrait], *Umění* 3, 1955, pp. 153–158, but the identifying inscription and dating 1506 can be found only in the Baroque copy in the Kolowrat collections in Rychnov



length portraits were commissioned by members of the highest aristocratic circles of the Kingdom of Bohemia, representatives of prominent noble families. Adam I of Hradec (1494–1531) held the office of Supreme Chancellor of the Kingdom of Bohemia starting with the rule of Louis II of Hungary and was a major champion of Ferdinand I's accession to the Bohemian throne.³ William of Rosenberg inherited the largest domain in the Czech Lands and, as a Rosenberg ruler, was entitled to a privileged position among the Bohemian and Moravian aristocracy, the second highest status after the King. Later, this astute politician assumed the country's highest offices and undertook significant diplomatic missions.⁴

We might assume these two aristocrats commissioned prestigious portrait groups based on royal or imperial models to underline their close relationship with the royal circle. However, a more detailed analysis will show the situation to be more complicated.

THE PORTRAIT CYCLE OF ADAM I OF HRADEC

Of the Hradec family's portrait cycle, full-length portraits of Adam I of Hradec, his wife Anne of Rožmitál (both in Telč Chateau) [Fig. 1, 2] and a double portrait of their sons, Jáchym (1526–1565) and Zachariáš (1527–1589) [Fig. 3],⁵ housed at the Červená Lhota Chateau have survived.⁶ The cycle very likely included a group portrait of the Hradec family's young ladies, daughters Voršila (born 1518 — died before 1580),

nad Kněžnou, not in the original in the Heinz Kisters collection. The other early portraits from the Kolowrat or Šlik collections have survived only as later copies some of which are problematic (e.g. that of Jiří Bezdrůžický of Kolowrat depicts Štěpán Šlik). I deal with this theme in a monograph which will be published in early 2016.

3 For more on the Lords of Hradec, see Václav BŮŽEK (ed.), *Poslední páni z Hradce* [The Last Lords of Hradec], Opera historica 6, České Budějovice 1998.

4 For more on the personality of William of Rosenberg, see Jaroslav PÁNEK, *Vilém z Rožmberka. Politik smíru* [William of Roseberg, A Politician of Conciliation], Praha 1998, with further references.

5 Adam I of Hradec, painted on wood, 195 × 104 cm, Telč Chateau, Inv. No. 326/M 287; Anne of Rožmitál, 1529, painted on wood, 195 × 104 cm, Telč Chateau, Inv. No. 327/M 288; Jáchym and Zachariáš of Hradec, painted on wood, 149 × 102 cm, Červená Lhota Chateau, Inv. No. ČL 463 (469), the inscription "SLAWATA" is a later addition.

6 The parents' portraits have been presented in literature by Jaroslav PETRŮ, *K počátkům činnosti Jakuba Seiseneggera* [The Beginnings of the Activity of Jakob Seisenegger], *Historická Olomouc a její současné problémy* 3, 1980, pp. 190–194; in German, see IDEM, *Seiseneggers Bildnisse Adams I. von Hradec und Annas von Rožmitál*, *Umění* 33, 1985, pp. 193–203. Eva Bukolská attributed the children's portrait to Seisenegger: Eva BUKOLSKÁ, *Renesanční portrét v Čechách a na Moravě* [The Renaissance Portrait in Bohemia and Moravia], Ph.D. thesis — Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Praha 1968, pp. 37–40. For the latest information on the portraits, see Kurt LÖCHER, *Jakob Seisenegger, Hofmaler Kaiser Ferdinands I. — Neue Funde und Stand der Forschung*, *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 63, 2012, pp. 103–147, at p. 104–107.



Mandelína (1519–1580) and Alžběta (1525–1585),⁷ or a double portrait of the younger girls and a separate one of the oldest, 11-year-old Voršila. A later inventory of the painting collection of the Slawata family, which inherited the Hradec estate, includes an item that suggests this: “Two young ladies of Hradec (painted on wood)”.⁸ The entry also gives the painting’s dimensions, which are identical to those of the boys’ portrait. The two artworks, however, were differently priced in the inventory. While the double portrait of the boys was valued at two guldens, the portrait of the girls cost only 30 kreutzers.⁹ It is therefore possible that the girls’ portrait was heavily damaged by the end of the 17th century.

The portrait of Anne of Rožmitál is dated 1529 on the back of the panel and inscriptions on the children’s and Adam’s portraits give the ages of the sitters, which corresponds to their ages in 1529. The portraits capture the Supreme Chancellor and his family life-sized and in full length; the parents stand in front of an articulated wall on a tiled floor, while the children are depicted with toys on a terrace with a background landscape vista in the style of the late Danube school.¹⁰ The mother holds a thistle in her hands, a symbol of Christ’s suffering. The paintings share the motif of an articulated background and flooring and are interconnected as follows: the portrait of the children on the left, that of their father, Adam I of Hradec in the middle, and that of their mother on the right. All the figures are turned to the left, the children even reach out their hands in that direction. We do not know to whom they are turning. Were the figures of the girls placed there? Or portraits of Adam’s parents?

JAKOB SEISENEGGER AND HIS ACTIVITIES AT THE TURN OF 1520S AND 1530S

Adam’s portrait bears the signature of Jakob Seisenegger (1505–1567), the crossed letters I and S and a stylized owl. It is generally acknowledged that Seisenegger also painted the other portraits in this group. Unfortunately, we know nothing about the background of this Austrian artist.¹¹ He was born in 1505 and died in Linz in 1567. The

7 The biographical data of the family members were drawn from the genealogy compiled by Josef Hrdlička and Jiří Kubeš in: V. BŮŽEK (ed.), *Poslední páni*, p. 317.

8 The 1693 inventory included paintings from the estate of the Hradec family and their heirs, the Slawata family, from all their residences; see Josef SALABA, *Slavatovská obrazárna* [The Slawata Picture Gallery], *Památky archeologické* 17, 1896–1897, pp. 709–718, at p. 714.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 713, the parents’ portraits are described as follows: “Adam of Hradec, Supreme Chancellor of the Kingdom of Bohemia, 8 guldens. His spouse 8 guldens;” p. 715: “Two young noblemen of Hradec (painting on wood, 2 ½ cubits high), 2 guldens;” p. 714: “Two young ladies of Hradec (painting on wood, 2 ½ cubits high), 30 kreutzers.”

10 The castle in the background cannot be Jindřichův Hradec as this town lies in a lowland and by a pond.

11 A monograph on the artist was written by Kurt LÖCHER, *Jakob Seisenegger. Hofmaler Kaiser Ferdinands I.*, Berlin 1962. The researcher recently presented his new findings in the article quoted in footnote No. 6.



portraits of the Hradec family are his oldest known works, but by 1529 he was already a mature painter with a technique grounded in the artistic traditions of southern Germany, Austria and the Danube region. Kurt Löcher recently published his view that Seisenegger worked in Prague at that time; he painted the Hradec portraits there, probably in the workshop of the Master of the Litoměřice Altarpiece (the painter of the mural paintings in the St Wenceslaus chapel).¹² We can agree there is a connection between the Prague milieu and Seisenegger's work, but only an iconographic one as his style of painting is closer to Barthel Beham or Master of Thenn's Children rather than to the Master of the Litoměřice Altarpiece.

Seisenegger is well-known as a painter at the court of Ferdinand I, but he did not start to work for the King until 1530 at the Diet in Augsburg. A year later, on 1st January 1531, the artist entered Ferdinand's service as his court painter. Written sources tell us that Seisenegger did paintings for King Ferdinand I in 1530–1535.¹³ Specifically, in a supplication addressed to the ruler the artist asks to be paid for paintings done for Ferdinand I during those five years. Twenty four paintings are listed, most of them portraits. In 1530, Ferdinand I commissioned Seisenegger to paint a full-length portrait of Emperor Charles V in Augsburg during a session of the Imperial Diet (lost). The painter also asks to be paid for portraits of the children of Archduke Ferdinand I,¹⁴ a miniature portrait of Prince Philip, and two panels with a perspective view of a town. On 1 January 1531, Seisenegger became Ferdinand's court painter and painted another full-length portrait of the Emperor in Prague (lost — but the portrait now housed at the Palacio Real in Palma de Mallorca can be considered its copy).¹⁵ He painted another portrait of Charles V in Regensburg in 1532, a replica of the painting done in Augsburg in 1530, and a portrait of Archduchess Elisabeth, as well as replicas of the portraits of the children of Ferdinand I, which he had painted two years earlier in Augsburg. Later in the same year in Innsbruck, Seisenegger painted a portrait of Queen Anne Jagiello (lost) and the King's children (a group portrait of his sons and a portrait of his daughters that have survived in copies).¹⁶ The document mentions no portrait of Ferdinand I. Most of those paintings are now lost. The supplication also mentions the well-known portrait of Emperor Charles with a Great Dane dog painted in 1532 (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna) after which Titian made a famous monumental copy (Prado, Madrid).¹⁷ Italian painters — particularly Titian — knew how to portray a figure in a more elegant posture and how to add greater monumentality to the sitter — the so-called *decoro* — than their often overly-naturalistic colleagues north

12 IDEM, *Jakob Seisenegger*, 2012, pp. 107–109.

13 See Ernst BIRK, *Jakob Seisenegger, Kaiser Ferdinand I. Hofmaler, 1531–1567. Eine Studie zur österreichischen Kunstgeschichte aus bisher unbenützten Quellen*, Mittheilungen der K.K. Central-Kommission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale 9, 1864, pp. 70–76.

14 K. LÖCHER, *Jakob Seisenegger*, 1962, pp. 85, 86, 90–91, Fig. 5–7.

15 For a photograph, see IDEM, *Jakob Seisenegger*, 2012, p. 114, Fig. 11.

16 IDEM, *Jakob Seisenegger*, 1962, pp. 95, 99, Fig. 10–11.

17 For a discussion about who painted the original and who did the copy, see Sylvia FERINO-PAGDEN — Andreas BEYER (edd.), *Tizian versus Seisenegger: die Portraits Karls V. mit Hund*, Turnhout 2005.

of the Alps. This combination of the northern European type of full-length portrait, which primarily has its roots in the Burgundian courtly and knightly culture, and the idealizing approach of Italian masters gave rise to the highly dignified and majestic portrait composition that became so popular at the Habsburg courts.



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HRADEC PORTRAITS

Let us, however, go back to 1529. The portraits of the Hradec family are notable in more than one respect. It is a very early group of full-length portraits — the oldest surviving in the Czech Lands — and a very early one in the European context. Full-length portraits dating from the first third of the 16th century have only survived in small numbers, though they are believed to have been numerous. Full-length portraits are known from Roman sculpture. The formula existed in the Middle Ages and in early modern era in devotional paintings of figures of donors or in “crypto-portraits” of the saints, and also in secular courtly or knightly scenes — especially in the Franco-Flemish region — such as wedding or commemorative portraits (including the *Arnolfini Wedding* by Jan Van Eyck from 1434). This portrait type was popular in the Nine Heroes cycles or in depictions of members of the Order of the Golden Fleece. The state portrait¹⁸ — renditions of rulers in painting and sculpture — emerged after 1350 at the English and French courts and in the Luxembourg dynasty, especially in the reign of Emperor Charles IV in Prague.¹⁹ The rulers’ genealogical cycles are documented in Bohemia as early as 1355 in Karlštejn and Prague Castle and again under the Jagiellonians, but, among other places, we also find them in Bavaria, where the Wittelsbach cycle (1460–1470) from the Alte Hof in Munich has survived.²⁰

As mentioned above, very few examples of full-length easel portrait paintings dating from the first third of the 16th century have survived²¹ — the wedding Portraits

18 For more details, see M. JENKINS, *The State Portrait*.

19 See Antonín MATĚJČEK, *Podíl Čech na vzniku portrétu v 14. století* [The Bohemian Contribution to the Advent of the Portrait], *Umění* 10, 1937, pp. 65–74.

20 More on genealogical cycles in Bohemia e.g. Pavel PREISS, *Cykly českých panovníků na státních zámcích. Příspěvek k ikonografii českých králů a knížat* [Cycles of Bohemian Rulers in State Chateaux. A paper on the iconography of Bohemian Kings and Princes], *Zprávy památkové péče* 17, 1957, pp. 65–78; Karel STEJSKAL, *Matouš Ornys a jeho “rod císaře Karla IV.”* (*K otázce českého historizujícího manýrismu*) [Matouš Ornys and his “Family” of Emperor Charles IV. (On the Question of Bohemian Historicising Mannerism)], *Umění* 24, 1976, pp. 13–58; IDEM, *Die Rekonstruktion des Luxemburger Stammbaums auf Karlstein*, *Umění* 26, 1978, pp. 535–563; Jaromír HOMOLKA, *Malíři a dílny pracující na výzdobě kaple sv. Kříže vedle mistra Theodorika* [Painters and Workshops Working on Decoration of St Cross Chapel Besides Master Theodoric], in: Jiří Fajt (ed.), *Magister Theodoricus*, exhibition catalogue, Praha 2007, pp. 350–368, at p. 358; Marie BLÁHOVÁ, *Panovnické genealogie a jejich politická funkce ve středověku* [Rulers’ Genealogies and their Political Function in the Middle Ages], *Sborník archivních prací* 48, 1998, No. 1, pp. 11–47.

21 For a detailed survey on the topic of full-figure portraits, see Hubertus FRONING, *Die Entstehung und Entwicklung des stehenden Ganzfigurenporträts in der Tafelmalerei des 16. Jahrhunderts. Eine formalgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, dissertation thesis, Julius-



of Henry IV the Pious, the Duke of Saxony, and Catherine of Mecklenburg by Lucas Cranach the Elder from 1514 are considered the oldest.²² The later double Portraits of Hans Ulrich Süring von Syrgenstein and Anne von Laubenberg (?), which are attributed to Christopher Amberger and dated 1525 seem stylistically close to the Hradec paintings, though they probably formed a triptych with a devotional painting.²³ Other than the Hradec group, no family gallery of full-length portraits dating from this period is known to have survived.

Where did Adam of Hradec find the inspiration for the founding of his portrait gallery? He undoubtedly knew the portraits at the Prague Castle — the Czech Lands had a long portrait tradition due to Charles IV and the Jagellonian kings. The full-length Portraits of Vladislaus II Jagiello, King of Bohemia and Hungary and Anne de Foix in St Wenceslaus Chapel of St Vitus Cathedral date from around 1509.²⁴ They are surrounded by scenes from the life of this main patron saint of Bohemia, which probably included crypto-portraits of the Kingdom's prominent dignitaries.²⁵ It is believed that the Prague Royal palace housed a large portrait cycle of Bohemia's rulers, from Přemysl the Ploughman to Louis II of Bohemia and Hungary (mostly standing figures) dating from the 1520s, which had allegedly replaced an older imperial cycle from the period of Charles IV.²⁶ Eliška Fučíková recently challenged the existence of the Jagiellonian cycle²⁷ of which only drawn copies in the Hasenburg Codex in Vienna done after 1541 are known.²⁸ She believes the idea of altering the cycle remained

Maximilians-Universität in Würzburg, Würzburg 1973; Kurt LÖCHER, *Das Bildnis in ganze Figur. Quellen und Entwicklung*, Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte 42, 1985, pp. 74–82; Maria KUSCHE, *Der christliche Ritter und seine Dame — das Repräsentationsbildnis in ganzer Figur*, Pantheon 49, 1991, pp. 4–35.

22 Gemäldegalerie, Dresden.

23 1525, 191 × 101 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. See Christof Metzger in: Sabine HAAG — Christiane LANGE — Christof METZGER — Karl SCHÜTZ (edd.), *Dürer — Cranach — Holbein. Die Entdeckung des Menschen: Das deutsche Porträt um 1500*, pp. 267–270, Cat. No. 174–175.

24 More recently about the paintings: Ivana KYZOUROVÁ, *Básník a král. Bohuslav Hasištejnský z Lobkovic v zrcadle jagellonské doby* [Poet and King. Bohuslav Hasištejnský of Lobkovic in the Mirror of the Jagiellon Era], exhibition catalogue, Praha 2007, pp. 59–60, Cat. No. 39. K. Löcher pointed out that Seisenegger had probably known the Prague paintings, see K. LÖCHER, *Jakob Seisenegger*, 2012, pp. 107–109.

25 See Josef KRÁSA, *Nástěnná malba* [Mural Painting], in: *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění I/2* [History of Bohemian Art], Praha 1984, pp. 567–578.

26 See P. PREISS, *Cykly*.

27 I would like to thank Eliška Fučíková for the information she provided orally. She expressed this opinion in her paper presented at the conference “Dresden — Prag um 1600”. The paper will be published in *Studia Rudolphina* revue.

28 Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna. Jan Zajíc of Hasenburg, however, writes in the Codex's dedication that he had the drawings done after the castle paintings, see, most recently on this person in Jaroslav PÁNEK (ed.), *Jan Zajíc z Házmburka. Sarmacia anebo zpověď českého aristokrata* [Jan Zajíc z Házmburka. Sarmacia or Confession of a Bohemian Aristocrat], Praha 2007.



only theoretical and was not realized in painting during the reign of Louis II of Bohemia and Hungary. Between the 1540s and 1560s, the Habsburgs were tempted to re-establish the cycle, but it never happened and it seems only designs were made. However, we can see that the idea of a genealogical cycle of Bohemian rulers at the Prague Castle was alive for a large part of the 16th century.

Sources also tell us that two portrait painters (*pictores personarum*) worked in the service of Vladislaus II Jagiello in the late 15th century²⁹ and that painter Jakub of Kutná Hora was sent to Poland by Louis II, where he painted a portrait of Poland's King Sigismund I the Old in 1518 (a painting housed at Gripsholm Castle, Sweden is considered to be a copy).³⁰ During Louis' life, the well-known portraitist Hans Krell (ca 1495–1565), too, was active in Prague. He also painted full-length portraits of the King and his wife Mary of Austria in 1526 (lost, a copy of the portrait of the King is housed at Gripsholm Castle, Sweden).³¹ Krell left for Germany after the death of Louis II in 1526. Prague, which abounded with portrait depictions, may have provided sufficient motivation for the ambitious Adam of Hradec, the most powerful aristocrat in Bohemia in the late 1520s. We should also look at the motivation provided by the Habsburgs.

The portrait iconography of the new King Ferdinand was not well developed by 1529.³² Early portraits showed him mostly half-length as a child or a young boy (as we can see in Netherlandish portraits or Hans Maler's painting). His profile portraits were disseminated far and wide on medals and coins. Nor do we know many portraits of his brother, Emperor Charles V of 1520–1530, which became much more numerous after his coronation in Italy in 1530, and were even more abundant after 1547. Ferdinand's portraits also had a far-reaching impact after 1530 (e.g. his engraved portrait by Barthel Beham of 1531 or painted portraits by Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen) [Fig. 4].³³

Jakob Seisenegger's surviving accounting records show that in his first years of service for Ferdinand I he painted portraits of the Emperor and his family and the family of Bohemia's King, but not of Ferdinand I. He seems, therefore, to have focused on enhancing awareness of the dynasty (the Emperor as head of the empire) and documenting the family members.

29 Václav Vladivoj TOMEK, *Dějepis města Prahy VIII* [A History of the City of Prague], 1892, p. 402: “[...] Jakub, who had already been dead by 1488, and another Jakub, who was still alive in 1499.”

30 E. BUKOLSKÁ, *Renesanční portrét*, pp. 165–166.

31 See Kurt LÖCHER, *Der Maler Hans Krell aus Crailsheim in den Diensten des Markgrafen Georg von Brandenburg-Ansbach und König Ludwigs II. von Ungarn*, *Jahrbuch des Historischen Vereins für Mittelfranken* 97, 1994/95, pp. 151–186, at p. 174–175.

32 For more details about Ferdinand's portraits, see Wolfgang HILGER, *Ikongraphie Kaiser Ferdinands I. (1503–1564)*, Wien 1969; IDEM, “Das Bild vom König und Kaiser”. *Ammerkungen zu Verbreitung und Wirkungsgeschichte von Herrscherdarstellungen am Beispiel Ferdinands I.*, in: Wilfried Seipel (ed.), *Kaiser Ferdinand I. 1503–1564. Das Werden der Habsburgermonarchie*, exhibition catalogue, Wien 2003, pp. 231–241. Friedrich B. Polleross has long dealt with iconography of Habsburg portraits; among his many studies, let us mention e.g. Friedrich B. POLLERROSS, *Kaiser, König, Landesfürst: Habsburgische “Dreifaltigkeit”*, in: Andreas Beyer (ed.), *Bildnis, Fürst und Territorium*, München 2000, pp. 189–218.

33 W. HILGER, *Das Bild*, p. 236.



Only one Habsburg full-length portrait from before 1529 is known; it is related to the Hradec cycle and depicts the two-year-old Maximilian II with a small sack and a bird in his hands standing in front of a wall with a landscape vista (Liechtenstein Museum, Vienna).³⁴ The portrait's motif and execution undoubtedly echo the south German style and the Danube school and are very similar to the portrait of Hradec's children. The portrait of Archduke Maximilian is dated 1529 and bears an inscription giving the age and height of the child. The signature BB was identified with painter Barthel Beham,³⁵ but Kurt Löcher attributes the painting to the Bavarian artist Hans Schöpfer (ca 1505–1569).³⁶

Curiously, the Hradec portraits are of a better painting quality than that of Maximilian. Nevertheless, there is a hypothesis that the portrait of the young prince may have inspired Adam of Hradec, who already had ample visual experience with portraits at the Prague Castle, to commission a family cycle for his residence, and then the chancellor may have recommended the young and talented artist Seisenegger to his King.

It can be assumed, however, that if an established "Habsburg portrait type" had existed in 1529, Adam I of Hradec would have used it. A representative portrait primarily conveys a message of the social status of the sitter and any codified model made this message easier.

PORTRAIT GALLERY OF WILLIAM OF ROSENBERG

Curiosity about painted portraits peaked in our countries since the mid-16th century. The second oldest family portrait group surviving in the Czech Lands (commissioned by William of Rosenberg) dates from that period. The young ruler of the House of Rosenberg was born in 1535 and died in 1592. Full-length portraits of the new generation of Rosenbergs were commissioned in 1552–1554. The cycle included a portrait of William [Fig. 5]³⁷ and his younger brother Peter Vok,³⁸ which were painted in 1552, while their sisters Alžběta, Bohunka and Eva were portrayed two years later.³⁹ All are attributed to the same painter called the Master of the Lords of

³⁴ 1529, painted on wood, 120 × 63 cm, Liechtenstein Museum, Vienna.

³⁵ Christian Metzger, in: S. HAAG — C. LANGE — C. METZGER — K. SCHÜTZ (ed.), *Dürer*, pp. 32–33, Cat. No. 5.

³⁶ Kurt LÖCHER, *Hans Schöpfer die Ältere. Ein Münchner Maler des 16. Jahrhunderts*, München 1995, pp. 12–16.

³⁷ An unknown painter called the Master of the Lords of Rosenberg, Portrait of William of Rosenberg, 1552, oil on canvas, 188 × 86 cm, Nelahozeves, Lobkowicz Collections, Inv. No. LR7253. See Max DVOŘÁK — Bohumil MATĚJKA, *Soupis památek historických a uměleckých v politickém okrese roudnickém, II. Zámek roudnický* [Inventory of Historical and Cultural Monuments in the Political District of Roudnice, II. The Chateau of Roudnice], Praha 1907, pp. 87–88.

³⁸ Master of the Lords of Rosenberg, Portrait of Peter Vok of Rosenberg, 1552 (?), oil on canvas, 182 × 88 cm, Nelahozeves, Lobkowicz Collections, Inv. No. LR 7251.

³⁹ Portrait of Alžběta of Rosenberg, 1554, oil on canvas, 188.5 × 96 cm, Nelahozeves, Lobkowicz Collections, Inv. No. LR 4761; Portrait of Bohunka of Rosenberg, 1554, oil on canvas, 190 × 93 cm,

Rosenberg. This unknown artist of probably south German origin absorbed lessons from Italian painting.⁴⁰

This portrait gallery, too, was undoubtedly a clear projection of dynastic awareness highlighting the power and unity of the new generation of the Rosenberg family. It should be noted that the young Rosenbergs spent four childhood years with their relatives in Jindřichův Hradec (the Hradec family's residence), and would have had Seisenegger's portrait group constantly before their eyes.⁴¹

William I of Rosenberg was 16 years old when Ferdinand I officially made him an adult in March 1551 and the young man assumed rule over his family's domain from his guardians.⁴² The vast domain had declined in the preceding years as the family engaged in bitter feuds, and its status among the estates was in jeopardy. William was an ambitious man. He was educated at the best schools and lived close to the royal court as well as the Diet in Augsburg for a long time. He also participated in a well-known trip to Italy with a group of Bohemian noblemen to greet Archduke Maximilian, the new titular King of Bohemia, and to accompany him to the country.⁴³ When William returned from this stimulating trip, he proceeded to reign with great expectations and self-confidence, but soon found himself in a very difficult situation. The privileged status of the Rosenberg ruler (who held the second highest office in the Czech Lands after the King since the late 15th century) was seriously jeopardized at that time. King Ferdinand bestowed this privileged position in Bohemian state society (formerly belonging solely to the Rosenberg rulers) on Prince Heinrich of Plauen (1510–1554), who was a staunch supporter of Ferdinand's policy and, as importantly, his moneylender.⁴⁴ The young Rosenberg took up a dangerous political struggle to defend the rights of his family and restore his all but lost position. An opportunity arose when the King invited William to the Bohemian Court of Justice. Had the young Rosenberg accepted the invitation, he would have had to take a new seat and recognize

Nelahozeves, Lobkowicz Collections, Inv. No. LR 4766; Portrait of Eva of Rosenberg, 1554, oil on canvas, 184 × 96 cm, Nelahozeves, Lobkowicz Collections, Inv. No. LR 4714.

40 I deal with this theme in detail in my monograph, which will be published in 2016.

41 For more on the sojourn of the Rosenbergs in Jindřichův Hradec, see Jaroslav PÁNEK, *Rožmberští sirotci na jindřichohradeckém a českokrumlovském zámku* [The Rosenberg Orphans at the Castle of Jindřichův Hradec and Český Krumlov], *Jindřichohradecký vlastivědný sborník* 1, 1989, pp. 1–20.

42 The biographical details are mainly drawn from IDEM, *Vilém z Rožmberka*; František KAVKA, *Zlatý věk Růží* [The Golden Age of the Roses], Praha 1966; Jaroslav PÁNEK (ed.), *Václav Březan, Životy posledních Rožmberků I–II* [Václav Březan, Lives of the Last Rosenbergs I–II], Praha 1985.

43 A monograph on the Italian sojourn was published by IDEM, *Výprava české šlechty do Itálie v letech 1551–1552* [A Journey of Bohemian Nobles to Italy in 1551–1552], České Budějovice 2003.

44 For the dispute with the Plauen family, see IDEM, *Zápas o vedení české stavovské obce v polovině 16. století (Knižata z Plavna a Vilém z Rožmberka) 1547–1556* [A Struggle over the Leadership of the Bohemian Estates Community in the Middle of the 16th Century (Plauen princes and William of Rosenberg)], in: *Československý časopis historický* 31, 1983, pp. 863–887; IDEM, *Vilém z Rožmberka*, pp. 85–109.



the superior status of the Plauen princes. William therefore excused himself for being too young, but asked for the Rosenbergs' privileged position to be restored. He reportedly said that unless this injustice were corrected, he would be prepared to forsake the country for the land of his origin. Legend traced his family's roots to the Roman princes of Orsini. A difficult time of political negotiations and strategic steps lasted four years. In 1556, Rosenberg won a compromise (his position at the Bohemian Court of Justice was restored and the princes of Plauen kept theirs in the Diet and the Royal Council). Not long after Heinrich of Plauen's death, the problem was cleared up. The result of his struggle was much to the satisfaction of the young ruler. The meaning of the Rosenberg family portrait gallery has to be seen in this context.⁴⁵

Let us also examine its close connection with the portraits of Emperor Charles V, his son Philip and the young Archduke Maximilian dating from the 1550s. These depictions represent a new Habsburg portrait type, full figure in contrapposto, which William had seen at the Diet in Augsburg. Portraits of William and his brother and sisters adopt this brand new portrait scheme, which was only employed at this early date by the Imperial family.⁴⁶ The portrait shows William standing by a table with his ruler's attributes — a golden bell (that of the master of the house — despite his very young age), a luxurious golden coffer (wealth), a letter in Italian (suggesting his Italian origin?) and a silver nugget (a rich domain — new silver ore deposits were found in 1550 in Ratibořské Hory near Tábor, a promising source of new income). The objects help create an image for the Rosenberg as a ruler of wealth, economic potential and high culture. The portrait of William of Rosenberg is most reminiscent in its composition of the full-length portrait of Archduke Maximilian (Prado, Madrid)⁴⁷ done by Netherlandish portrait painter Anthonis Mor (1519–1576/1578) in 1550, who worked for Mary, Queen of Hungary, and Emperor Charles V. Maximilian's left hand rests on a table with a helmet on top of it. One year later, a pair portrait of Empress Mary was painted (her figure again leaning against a table).⁴⁸ A variant of this composition is a portrait of Prince Philip in armour,⁴⁹ which Titian painted during the Diet in Augsburg in 1550–1551 (where William of Rosenberg stayed for eight

45 This opinion was first offered by Blanka KUBÍKOVÁ, *Kapitoly z ikonografie renesančního portrétu v Čechách a na Moravě* [Chapters from the Iconography of the Renaissance Portrait in Bohemia and Moravia], Ph.D. thesis, Charles University in Prague 2010, and later published in EADEM, *Celofigurové podobizny Viléma z Rožmberka. Příspěvek k jejich ikonografii a k problematice rožmberské portrétní galerie* [Full-length Portraits of William of Rosenberg. A paper on their iconography and the Rosenberg Portrait Gallery], *Folia Historica Bohemica* 26, 2011, No. 2, pp. 439–478.

46 The portraits were discussed in more detail in my doctoral thesis: EADEM, *Kapitoly*, pp. 50–101. In the broader context of the Rosenberg picture gallery in EADEM, *Závěsné malířství v rezidencích posledních Rožmberků* [Hanging Pictures in the Residences of the Last Rosenbergs], in: Jaroslav Pánek (ed.), *Rožmberkové. Rod českých velmožů a jeho cesta dějinami*, České Budějovice 2011, pp. 482–492. The book will be published in German in 2015.

47 1550, oil on canvas, 184 × 100 cm, Madrid, Prado.

48 Anthonis Mor, 1551, oil on canvas, 181 × 90 cm, Madrid, Prado.

49 1550–1551, oil on canvas, 193 × 11 cm, Madrid, Prado.

months). William's portrait undoubtedly draws inspiration from the new portrait scheme depicting the aristocrat in a majestic posture and making it possible to enrich the artwork's content with precious attributes.

Peter Vok is depicted in a more common type of scheme, which is also based on the Habsburg knightly portrait — clad in an elegant attire with an *épée* and gloves.⁵⁰ A similar composition can be found, among others, in a full-length portrait of Emperor Charles V by Francesco Terzio dated 1550, which is housed at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. William of Rosenberg's sisters are captured in usual feminine compositions — the girls in modest, but certainly expensive dresses, wearing costly jewellery attesting to their wealth.

The portraits present the sitters as members of the highest social circles, but the portrait of William of Rosenberg also conveys a powerful political message — unless his conditions are met by Ferdinand I, the young Rosenberg, convinced of his privileged princely origin, is determined to leave the country for Italy. The new prestigious portrait scheme made it possible for him to demonstrate both his loyalty to the King (his portrait followed the model of the Habsburg rulers) and the limits of this loyalty.

When William of Rosenberg won his lengthy struggle, he enriched his coat-of-arms as well as his title. Although young, he became the undisputed authority of the Bohemian estates; he presented himself as a self-confident aristocrat aware of his rights and willing to take chances and fight for them. He soon acquired major land tenures and became the second most powerful man in the country.

Both examples of the portrait family galleries are important and illustrative of their period. The first Hradec cycle from the early days of Ferdinand's royal position in Bohemia shows that the portrait iconography of the new King — as well as that of Charles V — did not yet have an established form. Adam I of Hradec therefore seemed to draw inspiration from various sources, with the very advanced portrait tradition of the Prague court undoubtedly playing a major role. The portrait iconography of Emperor Charles V — from which the iconography of Ferdinand I and the portraits of the younger generation, namely Philip II and Archduke Maximilian were derived to a significant extent — became established between the 1530s and 1540s. As a cosmopolitan Rosenberg was familiar with the portrait models of the Emperor and his closest family, he did not hesitate to found a portrait gallery in this brand new style, which unambiguously shows him as a member of the highest imperial elite and a self-confident ruler of the largest domain in Bohemia with a family tree rooted in Italy. From the mid-16th century, this Habsburg type grew to be used in portraits of noblemen in all the countries controlled by the Habsburgs and spread in some form to other countries.

⁵⁰ See note 38.



FIG. 1: Adam I of Hradec, 1529 (© National Heritage Institute, Telč Chateau, photo Adam Pokorný).



FIG. 2: Anna Hradecká of Rožmitál, 1529 (© National Heritage Institute, Telč Chateau, photo Adam Pokorný).



FIG. 3: Jáchym and Zachariáš of Hradec, 1529 (© National Heritage Institute, Červená Lhota Chateau, photo Adam Pokorný).



FIG. 4: Barthel Beham, Ferdinand I, 1531 (© National Gallery in Prague).

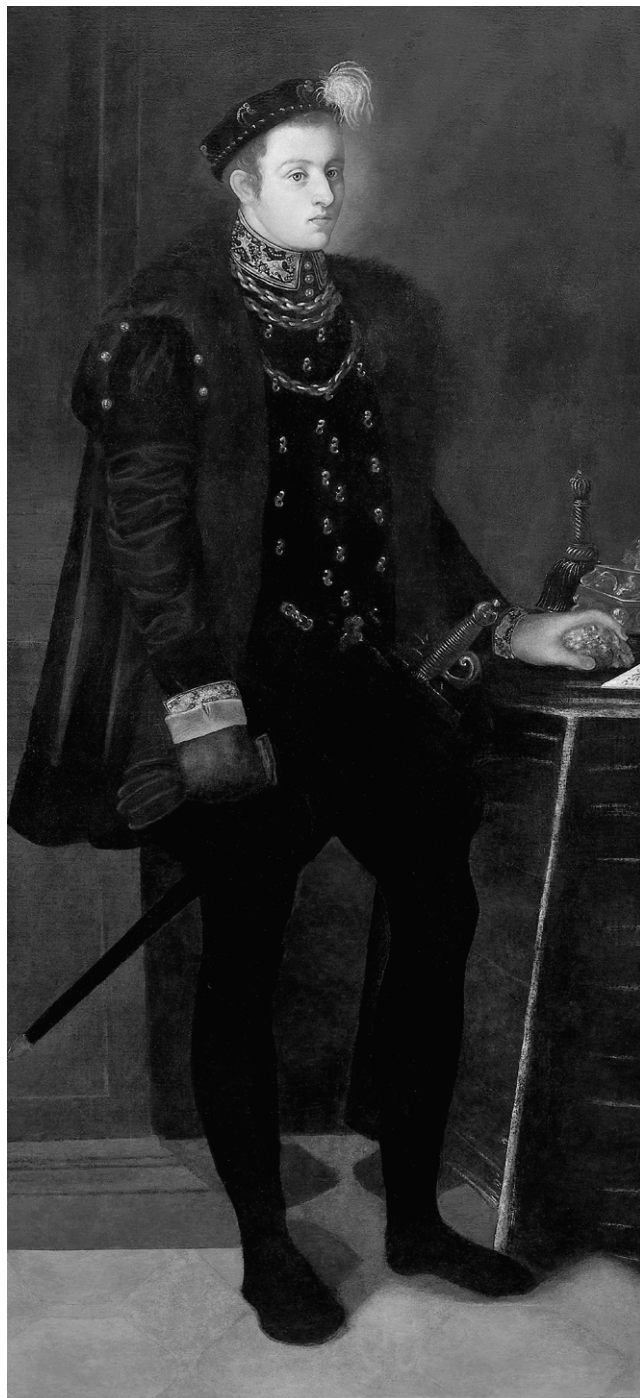


FIG. 5: William of Rosenberg, 1552 (© Lobkowitz Collections, Nelahozeves Chateau).

RÉSUMÉ:

Among the very few Renaissance portraits painted in our territory in 1526–1564 that have survived are remarkable and iconographically stimulating portrait groups of the Hradec (Neuhaus) and Rožmberk (Rosenberg) families. In both cases, the full-length portraits were commissioned by members of the highest aristocratic circles of the Kingdom of Bohemia, representatives of prominent noble families. Adam I of Hradec (1494–1531) held the office of Supreme Chancellor of the Kingdom of Bohemia and was a major champion of Ferdinand I's accession to the Bohemian throne. William of Rosenberg inherited the largest domain in the Czech Lands and, as the Rosenberg ruler, was entitled to a privileged position among the Bohemian and Moravian aristocracy, the second highest status after the King. Later, this astute politician assumed the country's highest offices.

Both examples of the portrait family galleries are important and illustrative of their period. The first Hradec cycle (1529) from the early days of Ferdinand's royal position in Bohemia shows that the portrait iconography of the new King — as well as that of Charles V — did not yet have an established form. Adam I of Hradec therefore seemed to draw inspiration from various sources, with the very advanced portrait tradition of the Prague court undoubtedly playing a major role.

The portrait iconography of Emperor Charles V — from which the iconography of Ferdinand I and the portraits of the younger generation, namely Philip II and Archduke Maximilian were derived to a significant extent — became established between the 1530s and 1540s. As a cosmopolitan Rosenberg was familiar with the portrait models of the Emperor and his closest family and he did not hesitate to found a portrait gallery (1552–1554) in this brand new style, which unambiguously shows him as a member of the highest imperial elite and a self-confident ruler of the largest domain in Bohemia with a family tree rooted in Italy. From the mid-16th century, this Habsburg type grew to be used in portraits of noblemen in all the countries controlled by the Habsburgs and spread in some form to other countries.

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