

THE PEASANT UPRISING ON THE LIECHTENSTEIN ESTATE OF MÄHRISCH TRÜBAU—TÜRNU, 1706—13

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The peasant uprising on the Liechtenstein estate of Mährisch Trübau—Türnu in 1705 occurred simultaneously with the insurrection of the subjects of the large Liechtenstein-ruled territories of Eisenberg, Goldenstein, Hohenstadt and Aussee; it extended from the Altvater mountains almost to Olmütz. Due to the almost complete lack of source material in the bigger archives, this peasant uprising has virtually been ignored in the historical literature on the subject. Detailed material on it can be found only in the house archive of the ruling Liechtenstein princes, in Vienna.

The insurrection was organized and led by the hereditary mayors („Erbrichter“) of the 178 village communities. Unlike the big peasant uprisings of 1680 in Bohemia, this one remained bloodless, being conducted entirely along legal lines. The reason was that the young monarch Joseph I took the peasants under his special protection from the very beginning. The so-called „Hohenstadt Specifications“ reveal that in the years 1705 and 1706 he granted 37 audiences to the peasant spokesmen. The nobility tried to sabotage the Emperor's moves by retarding the implementation of his orders.

In view of the wartime destruction of the records of the other estates, the present study focusses on the peasant uprising in the Trübau—Türnbau estate. But the existing sources amply illustrate events in the other estates as well. The result is thus a picture of the whole uprising, rounded off by the imperial decisions covering all the estates, which are presented in an appendix. The study not only describes the course of the uprising but attempts to identify its causes, the author reaching new conclusions also in this respect.

The fact that this insurrection was only partially successful can be explained by the early death of Joseph I — for it was thus left to his successor, Charles VI, to pass final judgement on the grievances submitted by the peasants.