



Autumn 2022

NEWSLETTER

Czech-Liechtenstein Society

Member of Europa Nostra



CONTENTS

- The opening statement by the honorary chairman
- Liechtenstein at the Bezručova Opava festival
- Liechtenstein Day at the Meeting Brno festival
- Europa Nostra – the European summit of cultural heritage in Prague
- LVMF 2022 and the Moravian Croats
- Liechtenstein National Day



Johann Kräftner, the director of the princely Liechtenstein art collections, and his audience at the Meeting Brno festival © Jakub Šnajdr

Reflections by the Honorary Chairman

In the Lawyers and Business magazine, issue 3/2022, which was distributed to all CLS members, I read with interest a partner interview called “The Czech Republic versus the Liechtensteins Case” with Dr. Maximilian Schaffgotsch, a legal adviser to the Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation. I was thoroughly attracted by his erudite and refined legal arguments which made me reflect on the issue. I would like to share my thoughts with you. The goal of the association set out in the articles of association is to promote and cultivate Czech-Liechtenstein relations. At the same time, we are most interested in seeing the ongoing dispute between the Czech Republic and Liechtenstein resolved as soon as possible, and we herein express our clear standpoint on this.

The joint history of Czech-Liechtenstein relations, established almost 800 years ago, is quite clear and much has been written about it. Between the middle of the 13th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the princely Liechtenstein family obtained a territory spanning around 1,600 square kilometres in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia (Liechtenstein’s area is about 160 square kilometres). On this territory, it built, rebuilt or reconstructed dozens of castles, schools, hospitals, churches, old people’s homes etc. With the expropriation of the princely assets after the First World War (against a partial compensation in cash), the Liechtensteins lost about 1,000 square kilometres of land, including all that stood on it. On the basis of the Beneš Decrees in 1945, they lost the rest of their assets through confiscation without compensation.



At first sight, the legal nature of mutual relationships and the court disputes seem to be very complicated even in the eyes of experts, let alone the lay public. However, I dare say their nature is in fact very simple.

In my opinion, it is beyond doubt that the Beneš Decrees, which only concerned Germans, Hungarians, collaborationists and traitors, should in no way have been applied to ruling Prince Franz Josef II, who was the head of a sovereign state, or the other 36 Liechtenstein citizens. It should be clear to everyone at first sight that the Liechtensteins are not and have never been Germans (which is the only, and fabricated at that, reason that Czechoslovak authorities used to justify the confiscation after 1945), and that the property seizure was unlawful from the start. It is quite obvious that the state committed wrongdoings vis-a-vis the citizens of Liechtenstein, which must be put right as soon as possible.

The princely Liechtenstein family has been seeking a remedy for all Liechtenstein citizens continually since 1945. First it used legal means which were rejected by the communist authorities after 1948, and then it tried to reach an agreement, especially after 1989. To no avail up to now. On the contrary, the disputes have recently been taken to courtrooms for different reasons.

This includes above all the so-called Říčany case, a dispute over about 600 hectares of land entered in line with regulations in the Land Registry as the property of Prince Franz Josef II and subsequently of the Foundation, which inherited it in accord with the law. However, the Czech state had the land transferred into its hands following a lawsuit filed in 2014. Once again, the relevant courts including the Czech Constitutional Court based their decisions on the argument that the Liechtensteins are of a German nationality, without taking any steps to offer evidence. As a result, and since the Liechtensteins are perceived in the same way in other disputes too, the Liechtenstein government decided to file an international complaint against the Czech Republic with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg.

This is not the Foundation's dispute over the return of confiscated or otherwise seized property, but a dispute between two countries with the statement that the Czech Republic violated the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights through courts after 2014, in particular by neglecting the prohibition of discrimination, the rights to protection of property, to a fair trial, to respect for private and family life, and to an effective remedy. Czechoslovakia initialled the Convention in 1992. If the ECHR does not reject the complaint, it can only state in its

verdict that the relevant articles of the Convention have been violated, and then it will be up to the relevant Czech authorities to arrange a remedy in the Říčany case.

However, a positive verdict of the ECHR should have a crucial, though indirect, influence on other disputes over the return of property confiscated from Liechtenstein citizens. The Foundation and other Liechtenstein citizens had to start these disputes against the Czech Republic at 26 Czech courts at the end of 2018 to protect their rights within a deadline for the adverse possession of real estate in line with paragraph 196 and paragraph 3066 of the Civil Code, otherwise all those confiscated or seized assets of Liechtenstein citizens would most probably have become the property of the Czech Republic for good.

These are and will be drawn-out court trials lasting many years. It is possible that after all ordinary and extraordinary types of remedy have been exhausted, they will end up at Strasbourg again. I am convinced that in these trials, the state should offer a legal reason forming the basis for its occupancy/ownership. In other words, the courts should aim at proving whether the confiscation based on the Beneš Decrees should have affected the Liechtensteins or not (hence, this is not an attack on the Decrees as such: the Foundation does not question their existence and validity), and whether the seizure was not an invalid, or even negligible (legally non-existent), legal act, given the fact that the confiscation was merely based on the statement that the Liechtensteins are Germans in the sense of the Decrees, which they are definitely not.

With more than forty years of an attorney's career under my belt, I am fully aware that as long as lower-instance courts are bound by the legal opinions of higher-instance courts including the Constitutional Court, it is not easy for Czech judges to deal with the lawsuits filed by the citizens of Liechtenstein, especially as there are different explanations of some legal institutions such as the passage of time (*ratione temporis*). However, if we acknowledge that a wrongdoing has been committed, it is always possible, and in this case necessary, to start out-of-court negotiations in order to put things right and ensure justice, and to close the affair with a bilaterally advantageous peaceful solution, which the Liechtenstein government and the Foundation have repeatedly proposed. I would really like this to happen as soon as possible, also with respect to our association's activities. ■

Jiří Balaščík

Honorary Chairman of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society



The audience enjoyed not only the lectures themselves, but also the distributed material on Liechtenstein and the activities of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society
© Marcela Feretová, Silesian Museum

■ Liechtenstein at the Bezručova Opava festival

The renowned cultural multi-genre festival Bezručova Opava took place on September 5-29, 2022. This year's 65th edition was named *Moving Between Worlds* and offered several dozen programmes of all artistic genres.

On Friday, September 16, a public lecture on Liechtenstein called "Liechtenstein, a Country You Either Do Not Know or Admire" was held in the Müller House of the Silesian Museum in Opava. The lecture was delivered by Daniel Herman, the honorary consul of the Principality of Liechtenstein in the Czech Republic and former Czech culture minister. His lecture was supplemented by Ondřej Haničák, a historian and head of the Social Science Department of the Silesian Museum.

Silesian Museum director Jana Horáková started the programme with her opening speech, followed by a short entry by Tomáš Elis, secretary of the Opava City Hall. Petr Svoboda, the chairman of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society, then followed with his opening speech. He passed the floor on to Daniel Herman, the chief lecturer of the evening. The audience, who filled up almost the entire Ceremonial Hall of the Müller House, could hear information about the past and the present of the country between the Alps and the Rhine, but also about its rulers and relationships with other countries, including the Czech Republic. This all in a house built in 1726, which as a former caretaker's house was a part of the premises of the currently defunct Liechtenstein castle.



Daniel Herman, the Honorary Consul of the Principality of Liechtenstein in the Czech Republic, lectures on the history of Liechtenstein and its present at the Bezručova Opava festival © Marcela Feretová, Silesian Museum

After Daniel Herman, it was the second and last lecturer, Ondřej Haničák, who cast even more light on the historic context of the Liechtenstein family and Opava. The lecture abundant in information was then followed by an inspiring final discussion with the audience. ■



Ondřej Haničák, a historian and head of the Social Science Department of the Silesian Museum, took over from Daniel Herman to continue the interesting lecture
© Marcela Feretová, Silesian Museum



■ Liechtenstein Day at the Meeting Brno festival: When the Past Meets the Present

Within the seventh edition of the multi-genre festival Meeting Brno, titled *The Merging Places*, a day focused on Liechtenstein and called *Liechtenstein is meeting Brno* was held on Tuesday, July 26. The afternoon programme of the day in the building of the Museum of Applied Arts at the Moravian Gallery in Brno comprised two interesting lectures. The programme was hosted by two moderators, the festival president and Czechoslovak Hussite Church friar Martina Viktorie Kopecká and festival vice-president, politician, sociologist and psychotherapist David Macek. Both lectures were attended by so many visitors that the beautifully decorated hall of the Moravian Gallery was literally bursting at the seams. Both lay visitors and experts attending the lectures listened attentively until the very end.



The event's moderators were friar Martina Viktorie Kopecká and politician, sociologist and psychotherapist David Macek
© Jakub Šnajdr



Listeners had an opportunity to discuss their perceptions and impressions between the lectures © Jakub Šnajdr

A lecture on Liechtenstein and refreshments from a robot

The first lecture called “Liechtenstein, a Country You Either Do Not Know or Admire” dealt with Liechtenstein in general and with the past and the present of the Liechtenstein family. It was delivered by Daniel Herman, the honorary consul of the Principality of Liechtenstein in the Czech Republic and patron of this year's edition of the Meeting Brno festival, together with Michal Růžička, the spokesman for the princely Liechtenstein family for the Czech Republic and spokesman for the Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation. The light yet educative lecture told listeners about today's Liechtenstein and its links to our country. It was one in a series of planned lectures on this topic, which will take place in different towns and cities of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia this and next year. Between the Brno lectures, visitors could mingle in the hall of the Museum of Applied Arts with a glass of wine in hand. The hall is decorated with the magnificent work “The Demon of Growth” by Křištof Kintera. Those in need of a cup of coffee could go to a ground floor room called Café robot, where this popular drink — as its name suggests — was prepared by a unique robotic arm. If you think this is not enough, you should know that you can have a “selfieccino” — your own portrait or that of your friend — imprinted into the froth via an application here. Those attending the lectures also had the opportunity during the break to see art exhibitions in the museum building for free. Since the new concept of the Museum of Applied Arts, which is the work of renowned Czech designers including Maxim Velčovský, Eva Eisler and the Olgoj Chorchoj studio, is called ART DESIGN FASHION, the permanent displays offer above all Czech design works ranging from teapots via chairs to the iconic works of the renowned Czech fashion designer Liběna Rochová. The exhibition also comprises for instance an open case with glass, ceramics and china, whose survey certainly helped visitors pass their time there.

Johann II of Liechtenstein and his donations to Moravian museums

The second lecture was presented to the visitors by Johann Kräftner, the director of the princely Liechtenstein art collections. The lecture was somewhat more expert,



Curious listeners filled up the beautiful hall of the Museum of Applied Arts at the Moravian Gallery in Brno © Jakub Šnajdr

focused on the personality of Prince Johann II of Liechtenstein, whose collections and donations have enriched different Moravian museums to the present day. Listeners could learn for instance that the prince, nicknamed “the Good”, supported the industry, founded hospitals and orphanages in his domains, and that he also helped establish the first wildlife reserve in Moravia, known as the Šerák-Keprník National Park these days.

At the end of the second lecture, Czech-Liechtenstein Society chairman Petr Svoboda was given room by the moderators to briefly introduce the association’s activity and objectives and possibly address listeners interested in joining. A short discussion with the audience on the lectures they had just heard followed. Visitors on that day included several famous faces such as Eva Lustigová, the daughter of the writer Arnošt Lustig, who currently works on maintaining her father’s legacy.

Reception at the end of a fine day

The afternoon lectures were followed by an evening reception for invited guests and members of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society at the restaurant and lounge of



Daniel Herman, the Honorary Consul of the Principality of Liechtenstein in the Czech Republic, delivered the first part of the lecture © Jakub Šnajdr

a nearby hotel. The present guests enjoyed full tables with refreshments and a meeting over a glass, during which they could discuss the lectures they had attended at the Moravian Gallery, but also the future of the Czech-Liechtenstein society and Czech-Liechtenstein relations in general. Although Liechtenstein Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Her Highness Maria-Pia Kothbauer Liechtenstein, could not personally take part in the reception because of a sudden illness, the reception still nicely rounded out a pleasant day dedicated to Liechtenstein. ■



Michal Růžička, spokesman for the princely Liechtenstein family for the Czech Republic and spokesman for the Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation, presented information not only about the princely family © Jakub Šnajdr



Daniel Herman welcomes guests and members of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society at the evening reception © Jakub Šnajdr



■ European cultural heritage summit organised by Europa Nostra association held in Prague in September

A European cultural heritage summit organised annually by the Europa Nostra association was held in Prague on September 25-27. Europa Nostra is a pan-European federation of non-governmental organisations focused on care and protection of the European cultural heritage.

The government of the Czech Republic also placed this year's summit among major events held within the Czech presidency of the European Union in the second half of the year. The Czech representative of Europa Nostra is Petr Svoboda, vice-president of the Association of Castle Owners, a member of the Europa Nostra council and chairman of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society, who attended the Prague summit in person. ■



Mariya Gabriel, EU commissioner for innovation, research, culture, education and youth, speaks at the opening meeting of the European Heritage Policy Agora forum at the Žofín Palace © Felix Q Media / Europa Nostra



Petr Svoboda delivers his speech at the opening reception at the Prague Mayor's residence © Felix Q Media / Europa Nostra



From left to right: Hermann Parzinger, Europa Nostra executive president; Mariya Gabriel, EU commissioner for innovation, research, culture, education and youth; Martin Baxa, Czech culture minister; and Petr Svoboda at the European Heritage Policy Agora forum at the Žofín Palace © Felix Q Media / Europa Nostra



On Thursday, September 8, representatives of the Czech-Liechtenstein Society took part in a reception organised on this date annually by the embassy of the Principality of Liechtenstein in Vienna, which also covers the Czech Republic, for representatives of the Austrian political, social and economic scene. Just like every year, the reception was held at the Liechtenstein Garden Palace.



Besides CLS members Petr Svoboda, Zuzana Holendová, Daniel Herman, Richard Svoboda and Ivana Holásková, the reception was also attended by Litomyšl Mayor Daniel Brýdl on behalf of the Czech Republic

■ Lednice-Valtice Music Festival in the rhythm of Balkan music

The seventh edition of the Lednice-Valtice Music Festival took place on September 24-October 8. Last year, the organisers offered the largest survey of the work of world-renowned Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi held in Europe in the past fifty years, while this year's edition focused on the music of the Croatian minority that arrived in southern Moravia in the past following an invitation from the Liechtenstein family.

The organisers offered listeners compositions by authors and performers from countries that were once part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. A new feature of the latest edition was the so-called Yugoprologue, a two-day open-air festival of Balkan brass music, which took place on August 26-27 in the places where the Moravian Croats once lived — in Charvátská Nová Ves and Hlohovec.

Just like every year, the concerts were held in the architectonic gems of the Lednice-Valtice Complex. Besides the concerts, the festival visitors could also “taste” the castles in Lednice and Valtice, Diana's temple called Rendez-vous near Valtice, and the Lednice church of St James the Elder.



■ The history of Moravian Croats owes a lot to Liechtensteins

The Moravian Croats formed a compact community with its own tradition, customs, and also language in southern Moravia for more than 400 years. They were a part of a colourful cultural and ethnic mosaic existing here for long centuries. The circumstances of their arrival from the Balkans are still shrouded by many secrets. One thing is certain though: it was the Liechtenstein family that invited the Croatian people to several municipalities in southern Moravia. The Moravian Croats' stay in Moravia — just like that of the Liechtensteins — was forced to wind up by the Second World War and by the events that followed.

How could it be that the Croats from a remote Balkan peninsula travelled all the way to southern Moravia and settled down here? Europe was going through a difficult patch as it was increasingly jeopardised by the Turkish threat from the east. The Ottoman Empire penetrated the continent from the 14th century — in 1529, the Turks already stood at Vienna's gates. Turkish wars therefore represented a significant threat to the sovereignty and future of the individual countries in eastern and central Europe, but also to their Christian population. There was no wonder that the local Christians fled from the Balkan areas occupied by the Turks to the north in a bid to save their lives and faith. One of these were the inhabitants of the then-Croatian kingdom, who — despite protests from the local aristocracy — left their homes and set out on a long journey along the Austrian-Hungarian borders to western Slovakia from the end of the 15th century. They settled down in all these territories. And so it happened that the Croats reached southern Moravia, where they created the northernmost outpost of Croatian settlement in Europe. The newcomers were attracted by the developed trade in the region, its advantageous position and, above all, the fertile soil which was abundant in the area at that time.



Red and green — the typical colours of the Moravian Croats, but also blue, yellow, pink. The Croats' costumes, just like their villages, shone with a variety of colours. Herewith a painting by Moravian Croat painter Othmar Růžička depicting the Kiritof feast in Frélichov. The Kiritof (from the German word Kirchentag, meaning a feast) was undoubtedly the Croats' favourite party which always involved merry-making, dancing and feasting, 1st half of the 20th century, ©SOCHN

How come? The Hussite and subsequently Czech-Hungarian wars in the course of the 15th century, but also fighting between the local aristocratic families together with frequent epidemics, led to the downfall of the entire Moravia. Many settlements and often entire territories perished as a result of depopulation. And the individual domains experienced an extensive economic slowdown. Therefore it should not be a surprise that their owners were looking for ways to push their property towards greater prosperity in this situation. The solution was to ensure enough subjects who had always represented the basis of any domain's wealth. The Liechtenstein family was well aware of this. During 900 years of its existence, its representatives have proven many times that they are good caretakers and administrators of their family assets. It was the Liechtensteins who received

Liechtensteins in the 16th century

At the time when the Liechtensteins invited the Croats to their domains, in the 16th century, they were already a powerful and respected noble family. On both sides of the border, in southern Moravia and in Lower Austria, they gradually created a vast complex of domains from the 12th century on, which in the following centuries formed the basis of their family's power. In Moravia, they were first mentioned in 1249 when Heinrich I of Liechtenstein obtained Mikulov from Czech King Přemysl Otakar II as a reward for his support. Mikulov soon became the main seat of the family and kept this status until 1560 when the Mikulov branch of the family was forced to sell it. Besides, the Liechtensteins also obtained the Valtice domain at the end of the 14th century. To be precise, we should say that Valtice was a part of Lower Austria until 1920, when it was attached to Czechoslovakia on the basis of the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Until 1584, the family also owned the Drnholec domain near Mikulov. Lednice was included in the Liechtenstein domains in the middle of the 13th century.



New home

The beginnings in the new homes in Moravia were certainly not easy for the Croats. In most cases, they came to derelict, depopulated villages where they had to build everything from scratch. Land registries and urbaria providing important information show that the Liechtensteins did their best to make life easier for them as their new lords. In both Valtice and Mikulov regions, the Croats could use wood from the Liechtensteins' forest Boří les near Valtice to build new houses. Reliefs from all duties for the first five years since settlement were undoubtedly a great benefit too.

The Croats soon proved their worth as good caretakers, vintners, fruit-growers but also fishermen. They could use expertise imported from their original homes in the Moravian environment, which was similar to the conditions in Croatia to a great extent. Ever since

In the course of the 16th century, Croats came to different municipalities in Liechtenstein domains in the Moravian-Austrian borderland, following an invitation from the Liechtensteins. Their presence is proved by church register entries, where they were often registered under the name of "Charvát" or under names unusual in the region, such as Radowanetz, Velenticz or Grbawtschicz. In places where they lived in a minority, they gradually merged with the majority population. In the end, two Croatian enclaves emerged — one in a purely German settlement in the Mikulov or, more precisely, Drnholec area with the villages of Frélichov (Jevišovka), Dobré Pole and Nový Přerov, and the other in a dominantly Czech-speaking environment in what was at that time the Lower Austrian district of Valtice with the villages of Charvátská Nová Ves, Hlohovec and Poštorná. ©SOCHN

the fleeing Croats and helped them settle down in their domains in the Moravian-Lower Austrian borderland.

The arrival of Croats in Moravia

Based on thorough historic research, we date the beginnings of the Croats' arrival in southern Moravia to the 1530s. These southern Slavic refugees found refuge mostly in the then-Liechtenstein domains of Drnholec near Mikulov, Valtice and Lednice. This shows that the Liechtensteins played a fundamental role in the history of the Moravian Croats. The first Croats probably got to Moravia around the year 1530, following an invitation by Georg Hartmann I of Liechtenstein. They settled down in the derelict villages of Frélichov (today's Jevišovka) in the Drnholec domain near Mikulov, in Charvátská Nová Ves and Poštorná near Valtice. In the 1570s, Hartmann II of Liechtenstein, the son of Georg Hartmann I, decided to move Croats also to Nový Přerov, Dobré Pole, Kulenfurt (today's Brod nad Dyjí) and Hlohovec. We also have evidence of Croatian settlers from other southern Moravian municipalities, but they relatively quickly merged with the majority population here.

In places where the Croats came in larger numbers and lived together, mostly entire families, they managed to retain the Croatian identity and also their language. Two enclaves gradually emerged — in the Mikulov area, or rather in Drnholec, and in the Valtice district. In municipalities in the Valtice region, which were surrounded by Slavic settlements, the Croatian language was used for several centuries (in Charvátská Nová Ves and Poštorná it was in use until the end of the 18th century, in Hlohovec it was used until the early 20th century). In villages situated in the German-speaking Mikulov area, the Croats retained their identity until their forced eviction in 1948.



Schools in Croatian villages in the Mikulov area were German and, from 1918 until the inclusion of the borderland into Nazi Germany, Czech. The Croats spoke Croatian among themselves, but they were aware that to communicate with the world around them, they had to master the languages of the majority population. They often had a command of all three languages — German, Czech and Moravian Croatian, which however was only passed on verbally. In villages, the Croats often used the so-called Chakava dialect which they had brought over from their original homes. This was very different from today's proper Croatian, and besides, the contact with German and Czech resulted in various loans and tweaks to the vocabulary. The Croats were proud of their language, they had a strong emotional bond to it. This was one of the main reasons why the Moravian Croatian language survived until the 20th century. Today, it is actively spoken only by a handful of elderly people. The picture depicts children at a German school in Frélichov. Early 20th century, ©SOCHN



The Liechtenstein family — namely Hartmann I (†1539), his son Georg Hartmann I (1513–1562) and grandson Hartmann II (1544–1585) — helped the Croats settle down in its domains. Some of the Liechtenstein family members took part in battles with the Turks in the Balkans as commanders of the imperial armies. Therefore they had the opportunity to get acquainted with the problems and difficult life of the local Christian population. A portrait of Hartmann II of Liechtenstein
© LIECHTENSTEIN. The Princely Collections, Vaduz–Vienna

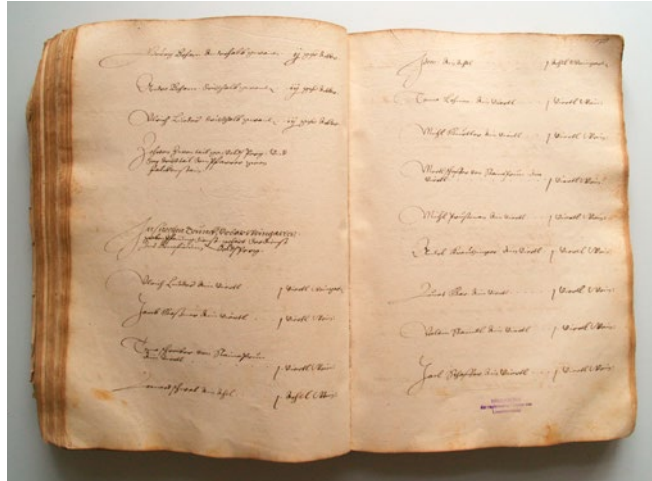
vak identity prevailed after that. The only exception was the village of Hlohovec, where the Croatian language was still used around 1900, also owing to its remote position. For a long time, the Hlohovec people also retained their contacts with the Mikulov Croats, who were the chief carriers of the Croatian tradition and language in Moravia.

In the 1530s, Hartmann I of Liechtenstein, the lord of Valtice, reconstructed with the help of Croats the formerly neglected villages of Unterthemenau (Poštorná, in some resources also called Unter-Krabaten) and Oberthemenau (Charvátská Nová Ves, in resources also Ober-Krabaten). Several decades later, in 1570, Hartmann II of Liechtenstein invited other Croats who had probably already settled down in other parts of Lower Austria to the Valtice region — this is how Hlohovec was founded.

their arrival in Moravia, the Croats were for instance closely linked to the wine-making business. In the Drnholec area, Croatian villages obtained a permit to establish vineyards from Johann of Liechtenstein as early as in 1538.

Croats in the Valtice area

Charvátská Nová Ves, Poštorná and Hlohovec — those were three originally Croatian villages in the Valtice region. As a legacy left by the Moravian Croats, the Croatian names of some inhabitants such as Bartolšic, Fabičovic, Grbavčić or Markovič have survived to the present day. Unlike the Drnholec and Mikulov Croats, who survived as an original community until the middle of the 20th century, the Croatian element in the Valtice region mostly vanished by the beginning of the 19th century. The Czech language and the Moravian or Moravian-Slovak



Valuable documents on the arrival of the Croats in Moravia can be found at the Liechtenstein archive in Vienna (Hausarchiv der regierenden Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein). Herewith a 1570 urbarium written during the reign of Hartmann II of Liechtenstein.

It comprises a list of all municipalities of the Liechtenstein domains at that time, of the owners of the individual manors and their duties. It has also yielded a number of Croatian names. © LIECHTENSTEIN. The Princely Collections, Vaduz–Vienna

The faster assimilation of the Valtice Croats was undoubtedly due to their Slavic environment, so familiar in terms of language and culture to the inhabitants of the three Croatian villages. On the other hand, the Mikulov Croats were surrounded almost exclusively by German speakers, and therefore they found it easier to distinguish themselves and retain their otherness. This is why, when somebody mentions the Moravian Croats these days, they mostly mean Croats living in the Mikulov area.

Croats in the Mikulov area

We should begin right away by clarifying a historic mistake here. It was long believed that it was Christoph von Teuffenbach who had invited Croats to the Drnholec domain near Mikulov. Christoph bought Drnholec and the surrounding villages from the Liechtensteins in 1584. Only a detailed research in the archives by historian Adolf Turek showed in the 1930s that the Croats had arrived in the Drnholec area much earlier, at a time when it was still controlled by the Liechtensteins. However, this domain was barely profitable, it was in a poor state with most villages derelict after the wars and disasters of the past period.

Besides, not all members of the broad Liechtenstein family were good managers — Christoph of Liechtenstein from the Mikulov family branch, the owner of Drnholec, was deeply indebted. In 1555, he even had to pawn the Drnholec domain for some time to Jan of Žerotín. From the middle of the 16th century, Drnholec was managed by Hartmann II of Liechtenstein, the head of the Valtice branch of the family. He tried to improve the condition of the domain by founding ponds, building farm buildings, but also by importing new subjects.

Frélichov (renamed Jevišovka in 1949) was probably colonised by Croats in the 1530s, at the same time as Charvátská Nová Ves and Poštorná in the Valtice domain run by the Liechtensteins. Another two Croatian villages in the Drnholec area, Dobré Pole and Nový Přerov, became Croatian places after 1570 when Hartmann II of Liechtenstein was the local lord. In 1574, 70 new subjects, probably



The Liechtensteins were good patrons of all municipalities in their domains including the originally Croatian ones near Valtice. Following a plea by the citizens of Poštorná and Charvátská Nová Ves, Prince Johann II of Liechtenstein (1840–1929) became a donor for a new school building and the church of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary in Poštorná. The prince covered the costs of the construction, while building material for the new church was provided by the local princely brickworks. Its ceremonial consecration took place in 1898 in the presence of the princely Liechtenstein family.
© LIECHTENSTEIN.
The Princely Collections,
Vaduz–Vienna

time that he was the person behind the arrival of Croats in the Mikulov area.

Although the Croats in the villages near Drnholec did not live under the supervision of the Liechtenstein family, it is obvious that we can give credit to the family for the enrichment of the Moravian environment with the Croatian element which became its inseparable part for long centuries. Without being able to go into too much detail, let us add that in three villages in the Mikulov area the Croats formed an original farming community with its own rules, habits and especially language. For centuries, the Croatian villages created a relatively tight space in which they lived their own lives, also because of their remote geographic position. Endogamous marriages inside the community prevailed, and when newcomers infiltrated the community,

mostly Croatian, settled down in the Drnholec domain. The presence of Croatian settlers is also proved by Croatian names such as Bosnić, Višnić, Kulačec, Jančić and Slunský entered in land registries and urbaria.

But even these efforts of the Liechtensteins at giving the Drnholec domain a boost did not suffice to improve its economic situation. This is why it was sold to the Styrian family of the Teuffenbachs. Christoph of Teuffenbach, the new owner of the domain, was an outstanding personality in the court of Emperor Rudolph II, but also a commander of the imperial army on the Croatian-Slavonian border. It was perhaps this link that led researchers to think wrongly for a long

they integrated with time and became “Croats”.

Between Czechs and Germans

It was roughly from the middle of the 19th century that the situation started to change. The process of a gradual creation of a civil society, industrialisation but also national awareness reached the isolated Croatian villages. One of the symbols of these changes was the opening of a railway connecting Břeclav and Znojmo in 1890 with train stops built in the Croatian villages too. We should add that this novelty met significant resistance in the conservative Croatian community, but it also opened the opportunity to travel to nearby and remote destinations including Brno and Vienna. Tensions linked to the overall na-



Catholic faith played an important role in the life and spiritual culture of the Moravian Croats. It also acted as a strong integration factor in the maintenance of the community. Croatian prayers and songs were passed on from generation to generation, strengthening the identity of the Moravian Croats. In this respect, annual pilgrimages to visit other “related” Croats in diasporas in Austria and Hungary were important as well. In the photograph: Believers pray in front of the church in Frélichov (Jevišovka), photo: O. Růžička, before 1929, © SOCHN



Looking at the original facades of the Moravian Croats’ houses, you cannot ignore their colourfulness and the unique wall decorations. They looked unusual in comparison with the down-to-earth houses of their German neighbours. As the writer Servác Heller noted in the *Národní listy* newspaper in 1882, Croatian villages were “an enthralling idyllic oasis shining with merry colours in the middle of a German desert”. The photograph depicts a reconstructed inter-war facade of a house in Jevišovka, 2022



tionalisation of society gradually increased in the Croatian villages. Whether they wanted to or not, the Croats became a part of a mounting Czech-German conflict which peaked in the tragic events of the Second World War.

The three Croatian villages in the Mikulov area were surrounded almost exclusively by German citizens and therefore all communication with them logically took place in German. Authorities and schools also used the dominant language. Besides, in the municipalities themselves the share of German but also Czech inhabitants kept increasing, while the typical taciturnity of the Croats weakened.

To make the idea complete, we should say that in 1930, Frélichov, the largest Croatian village, had 1,268 inhabitants including 947 Croats, 213 Germans and 108 Czechs. At least, this is how they described themselves during a census.

Czech authorities tried to reverse the prevailing German influence after the establishment of independent Czechoslovakia. In the Croatian villages, they tried to found Czech schools and associations such as the National Unity and Sokol. They also deliberately supported the idea of Slavic solidarity and the development of Croatian identity among the Croats themselves.

However, the relatively short life-span of the First Republic together with the economic crisis of the 1930s and the rising German nationalism prevented a greater development of these tendencies. Together with the entire Sudetenland, the Croatian villages became a part of the German Reich in 1938, uncompromising Germanisation was introduced in all municipalities, and some Moravian Croats had to go and fight for Germany based on the martial duty in force for the

citizens of the Reich when the war started.

The Moravian Croats were unfortunate — for Germans, they also represented a suspicious Slavic phenomenon, while Czechs saw them as alleged traitors who stood on Germany's side during the war.

And the end...

After the war, the Moravian Croats were therefore labelled as unreliable citizens who cannot stay on the strategically important state borders. Based on a decision of the Land National Committee, they were expelled from their original homes after 1948. They had to move to central and northern Moravia, a region whose climate and living conditions were completely different. A gradual assimilation followed, and the story of the Moravian Croats in southern Moravia thus came to an end after more than 400 years. ■



The year 1989 brought new opportunities and hopes for the Moravian Croats. The Association of Croatian-Born Citizens in the Czech Republic was established in 1991. Since then, Jevišovka, former Frélichov, has hosted annual meetings of Moravian Croats, the so-called Kiritof. The feast comprises a Holy Mass and a march through the village to a memorial of the arrival of Croats in Moravia, led by youths dressed in traditional Moravian Croat costumes and a goat.

©SOCHN



With the end of the Second World War, three Croatian villages in the Mikulov area were gripped by an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear. In the first postwar years of 1946 and 1947, several hundred Moravian Croats were expelled from the villages. Some people decided not to wait and rather move to Austria, but most waited in suspense to see what will happen. However, even the Croatian oath of allegiance to Czechoslovakia organised by the Land National Committee in November 1947 (in the picture) did not help. February 1948 and the communist injustice gave the green light to the displacement of the Moravian Croats to the interior. © SOCHN



Latest news from Liechtenstein

The Liechtenstein National Day

On Monday, August 15, the citizens of the Principality of Liechtenstein celebrated their National Day. This happened after two years during which the celebrations were restricted because of the coronavirus pandemic. The more the people of Liechtenstein could enjoy the fully-fledged celebrations of this year.

The official programme started in the morning with speeches by Hereditary Prince Alois of Liechtenstein and Parliament Speaker Albert Frick. At 2pm, a large music festival followed in the capital Vaduz. After 9pm, people started to light fires and set out on the popular Alpine tourist track Fürstensteig with torches in hands. The Liechtensteins finished the day-long celebration at 10pm by singing the national anthem in Vaduz together.



The National Day celebrations were held in sunny weather
© Daniel Schwendener / Liechtenstein Marketing

History of the Liechtenstein National Day

The Liechtenstein government first labelled August 15 as the national holiday in 1940. The date has twofold significance for the citizens of Liechtenstein. First, August 15 was already at that time a public holiday commemorating the Ascension of the Virgin Mary, and then it recalls the birthday of Prince Franz Josef II, who was born on August 16, 1906 and was the father of the current ruling prince, Hans Adam II of Liechtenstein. The holiday was unique in that



The Vaduz castle was illuminated with Liechtenstein's national colours for the celebrations
© Daniel Schwendener / Liechtenstein Marketing



His Highness Ruling Prince Hans Adam II with other family members descends from the Vaduz castle © Daniel Schwendener / Liechtenstein Marketing

it was introduced during the war. Only a few days before the holiday was officially declared in one of the smallest countries in the world, Adolf Hitler said in his speech that “small countries have no right to existence,” and therefore the introduction of this national day can be understood as an act of patriotism as well as resistance. After Franz Josef II’s death in 1989, it was decided that the National Day would still be celebrated on August

15, even though the current head of state, Prince Hans Adam II, was born on February 14. The reasons behind this decision are mainly practical — celebrating the National Day in the summer is definitely better than in winter when the feast may be hampered by weather. Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Great Britain have taken a similar standpoint to the ruler’s birthday celebrations.

In 1990, the National Day was legally acknowledged as Liechtenstein’s state holiday and since that time, state ceremonies have taken place annually on a meadow near the Vaduz castle. On August 15 in the afternoon, the capital is always full of people of different ages enjoying the traditional celebrations and a funfair. The National Day is then rounded out magnificently by 30-minute fireworks right next to the princely castle. ■



A speech by His Highness Hereditary Prince Alois of Liechtenstein © Daniel Schwendener / Liechtenstein Marketing



Members of the princely family and other participants in the National Day celebrations heard speeches delivered by outstanding personalities © Daniel Schwendener / Liechtenstein Marketing



... take a look at our Instagram account @czechliechtensteinsociety

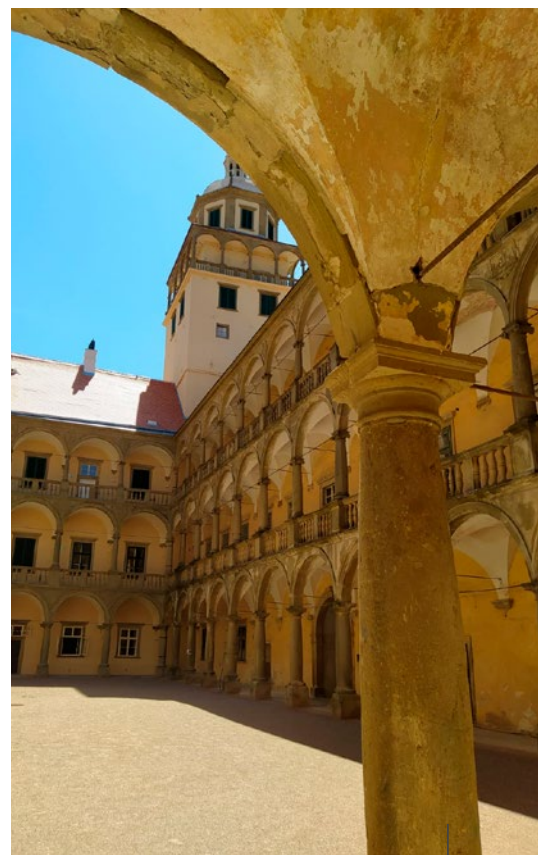
We continue our Instagram activities! Join us and follow @czechliechtensteinsociety!



22 July 2022 - Are you planning to visit Mikulov in summer? You can also discover a piece of Liechtenstein history in this picturesque South Moravian town. Mikulov became the first ever estate of the Liechtenstein family in the Czech lands: in 1249 it was donated by King Přemysl Otakar II. to Heinrich I. of Liechtenstein for his loyal service. Later, the Liechtenstein family lost it when they had to sell it. However, their successful activity in Moravia continued. ■



9 August 2022
- Moravský Krumlov Castle is not only the Slav Epic by Alfons Mucha, but also a newly opened sightseeing tour called the Nobleman's Chambers. The tour for small groups lasts less than an hour and starts in the courtyard. People will hear the story of the castle, as well as human and objects destinies, in the picture gallery, the Blue Room, the Kinsky Fireplace Room and the Liechtenstein Library



Room. A special personality of the castle was Princess Eleonora of Liechtenstein, the lady in waiting to Maria Theresa. During Eleonora's reign, the castle was rebuilt in Baroque Classicist style, she initiated the building of the castle park and the family tomb in Moravský Krumlov. Visitors can learn more about the Liechtensteins at the exhibition in the castle tower. ■

29 August 2022 - The University of Liechtenstein offers studies at bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. The main fields of study are architecture and business economics, under which specifically falls the study of entrepreneurship, finance, information systems/IT and business law. Students and faculty at the university are from around forty countries, and the school collaborates with eighty other institutions. ■



■ From the media

Truth about Elizabeth's successor: Duke Franz should reign instead of Charles

21. 9. 2022 | tn.nova.cz | Zdeněk Drgáč

The Windsor dynasty is not the only noble family that should claim the British throne. The descendants of the York, Tudor and Stuart families could claim the royal crown as well. Many say the latter family is the best placed to rule over the United Kingdom.

There is no place on the British throne for the family of the late Queen Elizabeth II, according to Jacobites and many other opponents of the Windsor dynasty. The Buckingham Palace should instead be the seat of 89-year-old Franz, the Duke of Bavaria, they say.

Franz is currently the oldest living direct descendant of King Charles I of the Stuart dynasty, who ruled over England, Scotland and Ireland in 1600–1649. His son James II was dethroned in 1688 for being a Catholic. And his line was deprived of the possibility to retake the throne by the Act of Settlement from 1701, which ruled out all Catholics and those who were married to a Catholic as successors. It is from the name of King James II that Jacobites derive their name. They believe Duke Franz is the rightful sovereign of England, Scotland and Ireland.

Britons ruled by Germans

The Windsors, whose reign over Great Britain started with King Edward VII in 1901, were originally called the Saxe-Coburg-Gotha family and came from the territory of today's Thuringia in Germany. The switch occurred in 1917, during the First World War, when strong anti-German sentiments could be felt across Britain.

Queen Elizabeth II came up with another switch to Mountbatten-Windsor in 1960, using the surname of her husband, Prince Philip, but only for more distant descendants. Philip was also of a German origin, he hailed from the Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg dynasty. There is probably more German than British blood running in the veins of King Charles III.

Critics of the Windsors insist this too is a major argument in favour of a swap at the helm of the monarchy, says the Daily Star news site. If there were male-preference primogeniture, that is, a succession system with the hereditary right of a firstborn, which in the traditional

concept is superior to British law, then the ruler would indeed be Duke Franz. Jacobites say he is entitled to be called Francis II of England, Scotland, France and Ireland. However, he does not use these titles and has never staked a claim for the British crown during his lifetime. Franz is also the head of the Wittelsbach family, which used to rule in the Kingdom of Bavaria. His great-grandfather was King Ludwig III, dethroned in 1918. After his death, the titles that were no longer valid in Germany or the Czech lands but could be used as surnames were inherited by his brother, Prince Max. He did not have a son either and was replaced by Prince Ludwig of Bavaria after his death. The Stuart heir was Max's daughter, Princess Sophie of Liechtenstein.

Even though Duke Franz had no such ambitions, we cannot rule out that one of his descendants will want to take the Buckingham Palace over.

The unshakeable Windsors

The descendants of other ruling families could try to have a say in this game too. In the York dynasty, it could be Simon Abney-Hastings, 15th Earl of Loudoun, but he has been living in Australia for a long time. The Tudors are currently represented by Timothy Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound, 7th Earl of Minto.

However, owing to the incredible length of Queen Elizabeth II's reign and her high popularity, the position of the Windsors seems to be unshakeable. The first in line following the succeeding King Charles III is his son, Prince William, followed by his own children, Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis.

Queen Elizabeth II deceased on Thursday, September 8. She acceded to the throne as a 25-year-old and stayed on for a respectable 70 years. She became the longest-ruling British sovereign. On the global scale, she was beaten only by French King Louis XIV by two years. Britain paid its last tribute to her on Monday this week.

A day after his mother's death, Charles III vowed faithful service to the Britons, the BBC reminds its readers. "As the queen herself did with such unswerving devotion, I too now solemnly pledge myself, throughout the remaining time God grants me, to uphold the constitutional principles at the heart of our nation. And wherever you may live in the United Kingdom, or in the Realms and territories across the world, and whatever may be your background or beliefs, I shall endeavor to serve you with loyalty, respect and love, as I have throughout my life," he said almost two weeks ago. ■