

“A PILLAR OF GERMANIZATION”?
HOW THE FAMILY COLLOREDO-MANNSFELD WAS
DEPRIVED OF THEIR RIGHTS AND EXPROPRIATED
DURING WORLD WAR II

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The present study deals with the fate of the noble family Colloredo-Mannsfeld from the founding of the first Czechoslovak Republic through to the time after the communist takeover of 1948. Having belonged to the élite in the Habsburg monarchy, after 1918 the Colloredo-Mannsfeld were stripped of all privileges just like other families belonging to the former nobility, and a considerable part of their property was nationalized. During the German occupation, members of the family were prosecuted as representatives of the Czech élite. The possessions which had been seized

by Nazi Germany were not returned after 1945. On the contrary, now the Coloredo-Mannsfeld were accused of collaboration with the Germans. The case, which the present study unfolds with the aid of official documents, reveals on one hand that not all areas in nobility and restitution research have been sufficiently covered so far, and on the other hand it demonstrates that the problem of twofold expropriation, first after 1938 and then again after 1945/48, is practically not present in the consciousness of the Czech population even today.