

THE BOHEMIAN NOBILITY (ADELSNATION) AS A
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF BOHEMIA
FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED
ORDINANCE (1627) TO THE BEGINNING OF MARIA
THERESIA'S REIGN

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Taking as a point of departure questions of modern research on the estates, examines the position of the Bohemian estates and their relationship to the sovereign, from the time when the Revised Ordinance (*Verneuerte Landesordnung*) went into effect until 1742. If the written constitution is con-

fronted with constitutional reality, it becomes clear that although the Revised Ordinance eliminated the former pre-eminence of the Bohemian estates, it did not destroy the latter's joint rulership role. The Bohemian estates — whose ranking representatives were the nobility — preserved their direct authority over the majority of the land's subjects, their own self-administration and jurisdiction, annual Diets, and (from 1714 on) the Land Committee. Beyond this the provincial administrative agencies remained a preserve of the most distinguished Bohemian families. Despite the integration of larger segments of the Bohemian nobility which the House of Hapsburg attempted and in fact had already achieved partially, a bloc representing the interests of the land of Bohemia still existed. The homage paid to Charles Albert in 1741/42 shows that these representative sections of the Bohemian estates turned to the Wittelsbachs in the hope of thereby strengthening their own position as well as that of the Kingdom of Bohemia.