

ON THE GENESIS OF THE FRENCH NATION

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The author discusses general and specific problems accompanying the formation of nations, using the example of the transition of the late Carolingian to the Capetian rule. He begins with an analysis of the Capetian sovereign rule, its possible relevant late Carolingian determinant factors, and its correlation to the large principalities. For a long time the Isle de France did not come up to the large territorial principalities with regard to its political structures and social and economic development. Thus the rights of the King beyond this confined sovereign territory were important, especially the control over the church, where the king had the advantage over any prince. Royal episcopates and monasteries interfered with the formation of a comprehensive non-Capetian rule and they were condensation centers for future expansion of the royal power. Besides the components of territorial principalities within the royal power and the elements of Capetian authority beyond the Isle de France those ideological factors may not be disregarded which raised kingship over princes. These factors were: the renewed connection to the Carolingian state traditions and forms of sovereign rule, as well as the importance of the church for the stabilisation of a state consciousness and its growth to a national consciousness.