

RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF A RULER'S LEGITIMACY IN BOHEMIA IN THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES

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The contribution deals with the religious legitimation of the power of a sovereign in medieval Bohemia before the Hussite epoch. On the basis of narrative sources – legends, chronicles, and texts seeking to instill moral behavior – the author demonstrates that political thought in Bohemia was in touch with contemporary West European ideas about the religious nature of the office of a ruler. In this context, he proves that the concept of *rex imago Christi* (as in the legend of Christian) gradually became *rex imago Dei* (as in the Kosmas chronicle), and analyzes how this notion further developed at the courts of the last Přemyslids and those of the Luxembourg dynasty in the high and late middle ages. The author demonstrates that the religious aspect of a medieval ruler's power was more than a mere legitimatizing element. It also restricted attempts on the part of a sovereign to use his power in a despotic way. This restricting function was based on the notions of a just society and of the role its sovereign ought to play, rooted in Christian morals and ethics.