

CONFESSIONALIZATION AND RELIGIOUS
(IN)TOLERANCE IN PRAGUE IN THE SECOND HALF
OF THE 15TH CENTURY

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The author discusses the question whether the term confessionalization, hitherto used predominantly in German historical research dealing with the second half of the 16th century, may be also applied to the Prague environment of the years 1435-1496. He argues that the concept in its strictest sense, i.e. meaning a close connexion between confession (in the sense of creed) and the emergence of the modern state, is not applicable to the Prague developments in the second half of the 15th century. If one defines confessionalization, however, as a development devoting more and more attention to the differences between confessions, as intolerance and as enforcement of confessional discipline across a broad spectrum of aspects of social and private life, the confessionalising process was in full swing in the Prague environment. True, in the Bohemian Kingdom, seeking reconciliation among its confessions at the time in question, Prague was an exception. While there were only very limited confessionalising tendencies in the Utraquist and Catholic parts of Bohemia before the end of the 16th century, in Prague religious and political life underwent confessionalization long before this process would start in the principalities and towns under direct imperial administration.