

Abstract

The dissertation deals with the work of apostolic nuncios at the court of Rudolf II in the years 1578–1594. It focuses mainly on the real influence of the nuncios in this context, their demands and their mentality. After presenting the state of research to date and the motivation for the choice of the topic, the biographies of the individual nuncios are first presented, with particular reference specifically to their mission at Rudolph's court. The main source for the treatment was the correspondence between Rome and the individual nuncios.

These activities of the nuncios are then presented in the context of the development of the Catholic Church, especially with regard to the evolving understanding of the papal office and the concept of Christianity as a religion. The countries of the Bohemian Crown had a specific position in this respect, since after the Hussite Wars, two religious parties/confessions coexisted in them: under both and under one. Compared to the rest of Europe, therefore, a sometimes more, sometimes less peaceful religious coexistence developed there after a period of conflict. Based on a study of the texts of two of the nuncios who held office during the period under review (Germanico Malaspina and Cesare Speciano), the dissertation then addresses the question of tolerance and the notion of "true and false" *ragion di stato*.

Keywords:

Catholic Church; early modern period; papacy; nuncios; ragion di stato; religious tolerance