

The Bohemian coronations in the baroque period certainly ranked among the most significant political events in the entire Habsburg monarchy in the 17th and 18th centuries. In my study, I tried to compare the coronations of Ferdinand III. (1627), of his two sons Ferdinand IV. (1646) and Leopold I. (1656) and of Leopold's son Charles VI. (1723). I discussed four spheres, in which we can see these events. The first one was the political sphere: after the battle on the White Mountain, Bohemia became a hereditary monarchy, so it was never more necessary for Habsburgs to deal with the Bohemian estates, when the son of the King should be coronated. But the vote of the new king was only one limitation of the King's power, another limitations, which originated from the early modern political philosophy, continued further in the baroque period. There was no responsibility to the estates, but King was responsible to the God and to this effect he took an oath during the coronation mass before the unction. When the archbishop of Prague as a consecrator was pouring the holy oil with balsam (chrism) on the head of the King, he received the God's Grace like the Jewish kings of the Old Testament (David, Salomon). The coronation connected the politics with the religion and only after the unction the King could receive the coronation insignia and could be enthroned. During the coronation ceremony, two groups of formal rules mingled. The first one was connected with the Bohemian royal ceremony, the second one with the court ritual. The coronation rules of Bohemian Kings were determined by Charles IV who was inspired by the imperial procedure and also by the coronation ritual of French Kings. During the liturgy, the King sacrificed a golden and a silver loaf of bread and a chalice of wine like a priest.