

The beginnings and propagation of the Magdeburg Law in the Czech lands in the Middle Ages are in the centre of attention of historical sciences since the second half of the 19th century. The period of great interest in this theme ends in the middle of the last century and there is a change in the direction of conservation of older knowledge. A detailed look on notorious development trends in connection with use of different types of sources can open new possibilities for efforts concerning deeper cognition of one of the most important components of the so called medieval transformation.

The Magdeburg Law is a phenomenon transgressing borders of contemporary as well as medieval states in Central- and Eastern Europe, which is the reason to study it in the context of wider regions. Presented study incorporates three themes. The first chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the initial situation that existed in the thirteenth century in one of the most important cities of northwest Bohemia Litoměřice, the later head of a great family of cities of German town law. The starting point for an attempt to explore the Litoměřice law in the 13th century is a not preserved compilation of various legal regulations sent directly from Magdeburg to Litoměřice in 1282. This is a rare case in Czech lands, which could be connected with uneasy situation after death of King Přemysl Otakar II. in 1278. In the time of interregnum Litoměřice tried to improve its legal system and the aldermen of Magdeburg issued an extensive piece of legal instructions for it. Since that, Litoměřice possessed a copy of up-to-date legal text, which enabled the town to become the seat of a higher court for the other towns using Magdeburg Law in Bohemia. King confirmed this position in 1325 and again in 1387.