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Summary

THE IMAGE OF THE RULER IN THE POLITICAL THOUGHT OF BOHUSLAV BALBÍN

The Czech Jesuit Bohuslav Balbín found renown as the author of extensive volumes on the history of the Kingdom of Bohemia, in which he expressed not only his patriotic fervor but also his political thought. This can primarily be found in his extensive commentaries on the political events of Bohemian history, and although he did not devote a special treatise to political theory, a certain internal coherence is apparent. The framework of Balbín's political thought is Jesuit anti-Machiavellianism, i.e. a polemic against the political realism of Niccolo Machiavelli. In this polemic, Balbín was inspired by his Jesuit confreres, especially Luis de Molina, Adam Contzen and Pedro de Ribadeneira. Another source of inspiration was the ancient Stoic tradition, discovered and reinterpreted

by Justus Lipsius at the turn of the 17th century. Based on his thorough knowledge of these authors, Balbín discussed the basic political issues that were current in the second half of the 17th century. Specifically, he addressed the definition of the distinction between king and tyrant, which stemmed from the relationship between the monarch and his subjects (not only the nobility, but all inhabitants of the kingdom). This was also linked to related problems such as the proper upbringing of the future monarch, his relationship to laws and tradition, and also to the country's representatives. Bohuslav Balbín has thus far been primarily perceived as a defender of old customs, political traditions and the Czech language in the period after the end of the Thirty Years' War. His political thought was, however, more complex and his view of the figure of the monarch, a key figure in the monarchical political system, reveals a new dimension to this Czech thinker.

Keywords: Early Modern political thought; Bohuslav Balbín; ideal ruler; Baroque patriotism; 17th century Bohemia

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