



Documentary evidence for the study of droughts in the Czech Lands

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The study of droughts in the instrumental period can be based on various drought indices calculated usually from precipitation and temperature series. Documentary evidence, overlapping partly also with meteorological measurements, represents another important source utilisable particularly for the pre-instrumental period. Direct reports of drought or indirect indications of its impacts may be found in various individual or institutional sources: narrative written sources (annals, chronicles, commemorative records), weather diaries, personal and official correspondence, stall-keepers' and market songs, journalism, financial-economic records, religious sources (rogations, sermons, praying), special printed sources, chronograms, epigraphic sources ("hunger" stones). Corresponding data indicate directly meteorological drought and with describing of drought impacts also agricultural and hydrological droughts. The first credible direct drought information from the Czech Lands reports not any rain or snowfall during the 1090/1091 winter (Monk of Sázava). But data before AD 1500 are relatively scarce and they are related prevalingly to Bohemia. Density of precipitation/drought documentary records in the Czech Lands increases significantly after 1500. This allows create series of precipitation indices with classification of dry months in the scale -1 as dry, -2 as very dry and -3 as extremely dry month. Such dataset is important for the creation of 500-year Czech drought chronology.