

Abstract:

The dissertation focuses on the phenomenon of matrimonial politics in the 15th century illustrated by the example of the last princess of the House of Luxembourg – Elisabeth of Görlitz. In the introduction, the author discusses the topic in the methodological sense and tries to critically evaluate the term matrimonial politics and distinguish it from dynastic (or family) politics. Consequently, she defines the concept of it, which she further explores as one of the instruments of power that politically exploits the possibility of a new, artificial and nearly unbreakable family bond.

Marriages have always been a kind of promise of a common future, not only in a romantic sense but also in a purely practical sense. It was not just a union between a man and a woman, as it perceived contemporarily. It was a union of entire families. While marriages may have been contracted for objective reasons it must always be assumed that they were not just an immediate solution. In order to understand medieval society and the political situation, it is therefore imperative to pay attention to the consequences of marriage when conducting research on it. The family's matrimonial politics did not really end with the wedding ceremony.

This study based on an analysis of available historical sources attempts to summarize the life of the last princess of the House of Luxembourg, her significance in this process and how essential women's contacts with relatives were. Regarding the fact that Elisabeth of Görlitz (1390? – 1451) used to be the only descendant of the House of Luxembourg during a significant period and therefore she had hypothetical chance to acquire extensive estates from her relatives, she was desired bride. It is therefore possible to trace motivations and reasons for her engagements and marriages, both of her suitors and her blood relatives. As one of the few Luxembourger princesses, she also outlived both of her husbands, and we can therefore observe the differences between the negotiation of the two unions and research their consequences.

Key words:

Middle Ages, Elisabeth of Görlitz, Anthony Duke of Brabant, John III the Pitiless, House of Luxembourg, Sigismund of Luxembourg, Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia, Bohemia, Luxembourg, Burgundy, Brabant, Holland, Zeeland, Hainaut, Empire, Marriages, Matrimonial Politics, Dynastic Politics, Family Politics, Women History Studies