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Topic of the issue: “The nobility and towns in the Middle Ages”

Scientific editors of the issue: Mgr. Jan Boukal and Mgr. Jan Malý

In October 2017, five hundred years had passed since the publication of the Treaty of St. Wenceslas, a document whose purpose was to resolve a nearly two-decade-long conflict between the towns and the nobility. In 1500, the Vladislav Land Order was issued, which significantly favoured the economic activities of the newly economically emancipated nobility and thus interfered with the traditional rights of the burgher estate; particularly pressing issues were the right to brew beer and the right to vote in the provincial assembly. A dispute between the two estates ensued and was even manifested in violent clashes. A treaty was concluded in 1517, bringing about a certain compromise between the two parties, while at the same time allowing the nobility to further develop in the economic field.

The primary aim of this monothematic issue will be to bring forth new perspectives on selected chapters from the history of relations between the aforementioned social classes. In the traditional conception of Czech historiography, the relations between the nobility and the towns appear to be combative. However, modern research is slowly moving toward the study of the multi-layered nature of those relations. On what occasions were nobles and burghers forced to communicate with each other? What did they require from each other? What was the permeability between the individual layers? If a conflict occurred, by what rules did it play out?

Keywords: nobility, towns, late Middle Ages, wars, relations

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Contact: BoukalJan@seznam.cz

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