IZVLEČEK


KLJUČNE BESEDE

Ljutomer, trg, grad, ljutomerski ministeriali, Otokar II. Přemysl, Habsburžani, vinogradi, pozni srednji vek

ABSTRACT

LJUTOMER IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The contribution discusses the medieval beginnings of the settlement and castle of Ljutomer as well as of the noble families that resided in it during that period. The article draws on analysed sources and the existing Slovenian and Austrian literature. The beginnings of (originally Salzburg-owned) Ljutomer date to the thirteenth century, when the first data emerge regarding both the market town and the castle. The market town first appears in the land register of the Bohemian king Ottokar II Přemysl (the then Styrian duke) as early as 1265. Over the following decades, Ljutomer passed through the hands of various Styrian dukes from the Habsburg dynasty. The residents of the castle apparently played no notable part in the Styrian provincial politics. From the thirteenth century onwards, many vineyards of various owners dotted the hills around Ljutomer.

KEYWORDS

Ljutomer, market town, castle, Ljutomer ministeriales, Ottokar II Přemysl, Habsburgs, vineyards, Late Middle Ages

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Ljutomer in the Middle Ages

In 1242, the Archbishop of Salzburg enfeoffed Frederick II, Duke of Styria, with the settlement and the castle of Ljutomer. Whereas it is impossible to infer from sources when exactly the town and the castle passed into the possession of the Archdiocese of Salzburg, it seems safe to assume that it happened following the conclusion of peace between Salzburg and Hungary in 1131. After 1242, the authority over the settlement and the castle was wielded by respective Styrian dukes and the memory of the original Salzburg ownership seems to have completely faded in the fourteenth century. In the second half of the thirteenth century, the castle already served as the seat of the provincial princely ministeriales family, with its most prominent names Konrad and Walter. Because the family realized no notable political or military accomplishments for several decades, it is not included in Ottokar’s Austrian Rhyme Chronicle (Ottokars Österreichische Reimchronik), the most important source for studying the history of the territory of the Eastern Alps in the second half of the thirteenth century.

In the first quarter of the fourteenth century, Konrad IV of Ljutomer became the first member of the family who rose to a high rank among members of the Styrian nobility. However, by April 1326, he had already been dead and buried in the Rein monastery, and the family seems to have become extinct. The castellans mentioned in connection with the Ljutomer Castle later in the fourteenth century were apparently not members of the same family, nor did they establish a solid family line. During a substantial part of the fifteenth century, the castle served as the seat of the Schweinpeck family, which lost control over Ljutomer shortly before the end of the century.

While enjoying market-town privileges at least from the 1260s onwards, the settlement of Ljutomer endeavoured unsuccessfully in the Middle Ages to also obtain town privileges. In 1342, it obtained the same privileges as Radgona. Over the following decades, the privileges were confirmed and extended by each successive Styrian duke. Archduke Rudolf IV made a short visit to Ljutomer in 1362. Already in the Middle Ages, a substantial part of the market-town economy rested on viticulture and wine trade in the nearby wine-growing hills, where monasteries, too, had their vineyards. The locally produced wine seems to have been highly valued and “since time immemorial”, according to the data from the late fourteenth century, even exported to towns in the present-day Austrian Carinthia.