

SUMMARIES

BONDAGE OF NOBILITY

Karl Bosl

The vast majority of medieval population was unfree — they were bondsmen. The degree of lack of freedom of the bondsmen depended on the power and influence of the head of the familia they belonged to, and varied according to opportunities and rights offered by the respective dominion. Intermarriages and other fluctuation between the familiae became easier and thus more frequent only after the great awakening of the European society in the 11th century. Since the 10/11th century an already privileged class appeared more and more distinctly, which belonged in a dependent personal association to a familia, namely in the first place to the familia of the king and the bishops of the kingdom. The development of the members of this class from „extreme bondage“ to administrative servants and then to lower nobility was principally limited to Germany. Presumably the „noble bondage“ of the administrative servants gained by their services can be understood as the first component of a farreaching social process of emancipation.