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GAVRIL RADOMIR'S MARRIAGE LIFE – LOVE OR POLITICS

(Summary)

Gavril Radomir had two marriages. There are very few sources about them, but the evidence they contain hints about dynamism and emotions, revealing the secret intensity of the personal life of historical figures from the Bulgarian mediaeval history, which is worthy of an attempt to be uncovered. And as the story is about the second person in the hierarchy of the mediaeval Bulgarian state (Gavril Radomir took his marriage decisions while he was still just the crown prince), his personal life was inevitably connected to the politics, since he lived in an epoch and milieu when and where the choice of spouse often depended on political considerations or had influence on political relationships. The analysis of the evidence about Gavril Radomir's marriages, about the reasons for them, about the identities of his two wives will allow us to present the historical situation in Bulgaria on the verge between the first and the second millennium in a new and hopefully interesting way. The main characters in this short but exciting saga apart from Gavril Radomir were his two wives. The first one was a Hungarian princess, who came to the Bulgarian royal house in the late tenth century. And the second one was a Byzantine, captive from Larissa, called Irina. Two interpolations to the Vienna manuscript of the chronicle of Scylitzes are the only source of information about the marriages of Samuil's crown prince and about the reasons for their conclusion. Unfortunately, the evidence is too scanty. We only learn that: the first wife of Gavril Radomir was a "daughter of the Hungarian king", but no name is mentioned – neither of the daughter nor of her father; the marriage was dissolved on the initiative of the Bulgarian royal

prince for unknown reasons and as a result the princess despite of being pregnant was compelled to go back to Hungary; then Gavril Radomir married again to a beautiful prisoner from Larisa named Irina, and all that happened while Samuil was still alive. On the base of these primary data and some other circumstantial evidence an attempt is made to reveal the reasons for the conclusion of the first marriage; to define more accurately its duration; to find out what caused the divorce and why the prince married a second time, and finally answer the question how much the crown prince's marriage life was subject to policy and how much to his own feelings.