

Summary

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The period of the Reformation came along with a new definition of marriage comprehended as fulfilling God's law on Earth. Performing this imposed by God duty was essential both from personal perspective and for the benefit of the society. Marriage achieved, according to the Lutherans, the range of one of pillars of the Earth order, and in Calvinist version it took on the role of a joint between earth and divine orders. The representatives of both the of Reformation camps underlined the role of secular authorities in imposing moral standards. The supervision over the institution of marriage came in this way under secular jurisdiction which demanded laws according to God's will. This formula was also accepted in Gdańsk. As 'natural foundation of social order' marriage was a state legally required.

The portraits of the dwellers of Gdańsk reflect Early Modern system of beliefs and ideas related with the institution of marriage. A man, of a superior position in a family, was ascribed strength, wisdom, independence, good manners: all the features guaranteed him not only power over a wife and children, but also a success in a company, or even to a wider extent – in a society. Female features, such as ease in subordination, modesty, loyalty and fidelity, expressed the demanded from the male point of view attitude to a spouse and confirmed her assignment to a household sphere.

Poses, gestures and facial expression of Gdańsk dwellers depicted in the discussed portraits serve a just performance of the ascribed to them roles. Valentin von Bodeck in the painting *Allegory of marital virtue* and Friedrich Gottlieb Engelcke were posed to indicate their social ease, the facial expression of a Gdańsk lawyer and Johann Konrad von Fichtel's suggest distance and self assurance. In female portraits the feature stressed most is modesty, which in Agata von der Linde and Concordia Fichtel's portraits is expressed by turning their eyes away, whereas in the lost portrait of a female patrician from the Cologne Neuerburg collection it can be easily read in her gesture of entwined hands, also submissiveness visible in leaning against her husband's arm by Agata von der Linde, as well as the presence of a sheep in Anna Koopman's portrait. Elegant clothes of female citizens of Gdańsk serve mostly accentuating their social position owed to their husbands.

In view of the preserved or known thanks to iconographic sources portraits of Gdańsk citizens, the role of a husband was one of many performed by the city inhabitants during their lives. Whereas the female portraits are restricted only to paintings depicting these men's wives or fiancées.