

Vos autem estis advena

John of Luxembourg and the Political Argument of Foreignness in Fourteenth-Century Bohemia

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Abstract. While Count John ‘the Blind’ is celebrated as a national hero in Luxembourg, in 1939 the Czech historian J. Šusta famously coined his image as the ‘King Foreigner’ (*král cizinec*). In fact, due to the murder of the last male Přemyslid, Wenceslas III, for the first time in history, the Kingdom of Bohemia was forced to elevate to king a representative of a non-Bohemian dynasty. To what extent was the first Luxembourg on the Bohemian throne considered ‘foreign’ in fourteenth-century Bohemia? What factors did his contemporaries use to define a potential otherness? The paper shows the phases of the rule of John of Luxembourg where the aspect of ‘foreignness’ determined public discourse, and the goals various groups of actors intended to achieve by recourse to it.

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On 18 April 1989, the *Tageblatt*, Luxembourg’s second largest daily newspaper, published the results of a survey which asked the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy to name the most important personalities in Luxembourg’s history. In second place, just behind Grand Duchess Charlotte (1896–1985), who had died four years earlier, was Count John of Luxembourg (1296–1346), also known as ‘the Blind’. To this day, there are numerous references in popular jokes, satire, and fiction to the count, who went blind in his later years. John is also a popular motif in the visual arts, and the composer Laurent Menager dedicated a march, the *Marche Jean l’Aveugle*, to him. In 1346, already completely blind, he rode into the Battle of Crécy as a liegeman of the king of France, where his death created an excellent basis for the mythification of his person. The figure of Count John was used to create identity in Luxembourg’s state- and nation-building processes of the nineteenth century, during which he was quickly stylised as a national hero. To this day, John remains a hugely popular figure in Luxembourg: in 2009, showmen at the annual *Schueberfouer*, a fair which was in

fact founded by Count John in 1340, donated a stained-glass window to the chapel at the *Glacis*, the square where the fair takes place. The window shows the count as a glorious knight in accordance with the heroic myth, demonstrating how the story of John has been passed down through the ages.¹

In Central Europe, where John of Luxembourg ruled as king of Bohemia from 1310/11 to 1346,² the count's image is quite different. Josef Šusta summed up his perception in the catchy formula of the 'King Foreigner' (*král cizinec*) he coined in 1939.³ Over time, however, Czech historiography has abandoned this one-dimensional assessment of John of Luxembourg. For example, Ivan Hlaváček has pointed out that John does not deserve "the mere derisive name of a royal stranger", which describes only one of his many facets.⁴ However, the 'King Foreigner' invites us to examine the extent to which John of Luxembourg was already considered 'foreign' in contemporary Bohemia, moreover, to ask what and whom John's Bohemian contemporaries generally regarded as or called 'foreign'. The mere fact that in 1306, for the first time in their history, after the assassination of the last Přemyslid King, Wenceslas III, the Bohemian elites were forced to raise a representative of a non-Bohemian dynasty to king⁵ gives reason to believe that the 'otherness' of the ruler from outside Bohemia may well have found its way into the political discourse of his time.

State of research and key questions

The topic of identity and community formation as well as the emergence of a sense of belonging and togetherness in medieval Bohemia is a 'well-tilled field'. According to Martin Nodl, nationalism and national consciousness in medieval Bohemia are "among the most discussed questions in Czech medieval studies."⁶ František Graus and František Šmahel have worked extensively on this issue since the 1960s.⁷

1 Maas, "Johann der Blinde, emblematische Heldengestalt"; Margue, "Jean l'Aveugle, prince idéal."

2 Margue, "Die Erbtöchter," 38.

3 Šusta, *České dějiny*; Schlotheuber, "Die Bedeutung von Sprachen," 359; Schlotheuber, "Die »größtmögliche Veränderung«,," 116. In this tradition, Jörg K. Hoensch entitled the first chapter dedicated to John of Luxembourg in his well-known monograph on the Luxembourgs "King Foreigner as Ruler of Bohemia", Hoensch, *Die Luxemburger*, 51.

4 Hlaváček, "Johann der Blinde," 166.

5 Bobková, "Das Königspaar Johann und Elisabeth," 47.

6 Nodl, "Nationalismus und Nationalbewusstsein," 187, with reference to the most important research literature in footnote 3, 189–90, as well as Jaworski, "Zur Frage vormoderner Nationalismen," 398.

7 Graus, "Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins"; Šmahel, "Česká anomálie?"; Šmahel, "The Idea of the »Nation« in Hussite Bohemia," and the more detailed Czech-language version published two years later Šmahel, *Idea národa v husitských Čechách*; Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen*.

As recently as 2021, Šmahel published a new monograph on Bohemia at the end of the Middle Ages, in which he also revisits the national question.⁸ The topic has hardly lost any of its popularity and still continues to fascinate. Instead of focusing once again on the direct reference points that brought about the cohesion of a community in medieval Bohemia,⁹ the main purpose of this brief overview is to trace what Rainer Schwinges has called ‘negative solidarity’: the solidarity of a social group, which may present itself in contrast to other groups.¹⁰ Janosch Freuding has recently highlighted again that people tend to react to their own insecurities with strategies of othering in order to make ‘the foreign’ more foreign and ‘their own’ more their own—an idea that will also be considered here.¹¹ Since it is not the intent of this paper to deal with these negative elements of defining communities exhaustively, our remarks start from the assumption that the demarcation of the ‘indigenous ethnic group’ from foreigners in Bohemia “predominantly had the character of a Czech–German antagonism”, which will be outlined here on the basis of the research literature, thus made accessible for comparison.¹²

A review of the literature makes clear the central position of the chronicles produced in late medieval Bohemia for the investigation of the topic.¹³ Therefore, this paper proceeds as follows: based on the most important narrative sources of the fourteenth century and the relevant literature, first, the following questions will be addressed:

- Who raised the aspect of ‘foreignness’? (II)
- What were the factors used to define ‘foreignness’, and how were notions of ‘foreignness’ expressed linguistically? (III)
- When were thoughts about one’s own otherness or the otherness of others expressed publicly? What conclusions can we draw from these findings about the motives and intentions of the authors of such ideas? (IV)

After this stocktaking, the scope for future studies on the topic will be explored as well as the potential for research arising from a deeper study of the documentary source material (V).

8 Šmahel, *Europas Mitte in Bewegung*.

9 They are, among others, treated by Schwinges, “»Primäre« und »sekundäre« Nation.” On the five sources of identity of the early medieval *Bohemi* according to Cosmas, Kalhous, *Bohemi*, 82.

10 Schwinges, “»Primäre« und »sekundäre« Nation,” 506.

11 Freuding, *Fremdheitserfahrungen und Othering*, 47.

12 Šmahel, *Europas Mitte in Bewegung*, 248. On the perception of other groups of strangers by medieval Bohemian authors, Marani-Moravová, *Peter von Zittau*, 164–81; Adde, “Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil”; Aurast, “»Nachbarn« als Fremde?”

13 Jaworski, “Zur Frage vormoderner Nationalismen,” 409.

Origins of the issue of ‘foreignness’

As in other regions, the discussion of ‘foreignness’ in Bohemia is directly linked to the emergence of a ‘we-feeling’. According to František Graus, this sense of belonging can be traced back to the eleventh century and initially manifested itself in ecclesiastical circles.¹⁴ An early testimony to the demarcation of one’s own community from other communities is the *Chronica Boemorum* by Cosmas of Prague, who died in 1125.¹⁵ When the demographics of Bohemia changed fundamentally in the course of the so-called ‘Eastern settlement’,¹⁶ this also had an impact on the question of the ‘us’ and ‘others’ dichotomy. In the thirteenth century, the Přemyslid kings and other important Bohemian territorial lords invited in German colonists. In order to advance mining and expand the urban system, Ottokar II needed craftsmen and specialists, who left their homeland further west, heading for Bohemia.¹⁷ At the same time, the migration of German merchants to Bohemia was already in full swing. Meanwhile, enclosed German-speaking settlement areas emerged in Bohemia, and a German-speaking patriciate gradually developed in the cities. Soon, two groups speaking different languages—the Czechs and the Germans—lived side by side on Bohemian territory. Around 1300, the German population in Bohemia represented one sixth of the total population.¹⁸ Up to the second half of the fourteenth century, the patrician class in Prague’s Old Town was ethnically majority German.¹⁹

For the first time since the Brandenburg administration of Bohemia following the death of Ottokar II in 1278, after the assassination of Wenceslas III in 1306, the inhabitants of the kingdom were confronted with the eventuality that Czech might not be the natural language of their future ruler.²⁰ In 1310, this eventuality became reality when John of Luxembourg, who was partially educated at the French royal court,

14 Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 21. With Schwinges, “»Primäre« und »sekundäre« Nation,” 508, it should be pointed out that the clergy formed the group of people who were able to record anything in writing at that time.

15 Aurast, *Fremde, Freunde, Feinde*; Kalhous, *Bohemi*, 81; Aurast, “Wir und die Anderen”; Jaworski, “Zur Frage vormoderner Nationalismen,” 406; Hilsch, “Cosmas von Prag”; Schwinges, “»Primäre« und »sekundäre« Nation,” 499.

16 Graus, “Die Problematik der deutschen Ostsiedlung.”

17 Adde, “Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik,” 122; Adde, “Les »Diplômes inauguraux,»” 10; Adde, “Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil,” 43–45; Hilsch, “*Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*,” 106.

18 Adde, “Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik,” 122; Hoensch, *Geschichte Böhmens*, 100.

19 Šmahel, *Europas Mitte in Bewegung*, 241–46; Adde, “Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik,” 122.

20 Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 25–26.

spoke fluent German and French, and understood Latin,²¹ prevailed in the race to the Bohemian throne. The early phase of his reign saw the creation and dissemination of a second key source for our topic—the *Chronicle of 'Dalimil'*, the first chronicle in the Czech language, whose historical account ends with the 1310 accession of John of Luxembourg. Its still unidentified author described the last two decades of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century from his personal experience and wrote his chronicle in the interest of the Czech nobility.²² According to Peter Hilsch, the negative image of foreigners is the “most striking feature of the chronicle.”²³ On the basis of lexical analyses, Éloïse Adde has specified that, on the other hand, no ‘group of foreigners’ carried such a negative connotation as the Germans.²⁴ In any case, the chronicle can be seen as clear evidence that, by the beginning of the fourteenth century at the latest, ‘foreignness’ was more than an exclusively ecclesiastical concern.²⁵ The pamphlet *De Theotunicis bonum dictamen* is classified by František Šmahel as the “earliest manifestation of a bourgeois national self-confidence.”²⁶ While Wilhelm Wostry dated the anonymous pamphlet, written in an urban milieu, to the second quarter of the fourteenth century,²⁷ Czech medievalists now agree that the document should be assigned to the second half of the fourteenth century.²⁸

In addition, the *Zbraslav Chronicle* also informs us that categories such as ‘sameness’ and ‘otherness’ have certainly been considered by the Czech nobility in the context of political decision-making. According to the accounts of Peter of Zittau, whose historical work is considered extremely credible, the barons preferred John of Luxembourg to Walram, brother of the Roman King Henry VII, because in view of his youth, John would learn the customs of the country more easily than Walram, who was about thirty years old at that time.²⁹

21 Schlottheuber, “Die Bedeutung von Sprachen”, 357; Hoensch, *Die Luxemburger*, 25.

22 Adde, “Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik,” 119–20; Adde, “Environnement textuel et réception du texte medieval,” 169; Adde, *La Chronique de Dalimil*, 9–11; Hilsch, “Die Königsaler Chronik und ihre Autoren,” 15; Adde, “Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil,” 12; Wolf, “Deutsche sind Fremde?,” 109; Hilsch, “Johann der Blinde,” 26–27; Hilsch, “*Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*,” 105; Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen*, 219; Schwinges, “»Primäre« und »sekundäre« Nation,” 512; Jaworski, “Zur Frage vormoderner Nationalismen,” 407; Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 28.

23 Hilsch, “*Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*,” 105.

24 Adde, “Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil,” 31–32.

25 Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 29–32.

26 Šmahel, *Europas Mitte in Bewegung*, 251.

27 Wostry, “Ein deutschfeindliches Pamphlet aus Böhmen,” 214.

28 Šmahel, *Europas Mitte in Bewegung*, 251; Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen*, 222.

29 “Inter illos vero viros, qui communi profectui Bohemie intendebant, quidam dicebant: Ecce, rex iste gloriosus Romanorum filium habet Johannem et fratrem Walramum; unum igitur

Factors defining ‘foreignness’ and their formulation

One of the major factors that determined ‘foreignness’ in fourteenth-century Bohemia is customs. Thus, ‘Dalimil’ discusses a Duke Soběslav II (1173–1178), who when talking about his sons’ education at the imperial court, is concerned that his descendants might forget the Czech language and customs there.³⁰ Twenty years after the accession of John of Luxembourg to Bohemia, the Abbot of the Zbraslav Monastery, Peter of Zittau, wrote about the novelties regarding customs (*De novitatibus morum*). On the one hand, he recognised developments—and not for the better—in changing fashions: long beards instead of short-cropped, burnt-in curls, long and pointed hats, short and skimpy sleeves, tight boots, and beaked shoes displaced the common style of dress.³¹ Like ‘Dalimil’, he considered the tournament system introduced by the Germans a ‘bad habit’, which contributed to the general moral decline.³² Peter of Zittau attributed the origin of this societal change to the popular unreflected adoption of the habits of the ‘various lords’ who had ruled over the Kingdom since the extinction of the Přemyslids, the ‘natural’ kings

ex hiis duobus ab ipso postulabimus, cui venustam nostram puellam Elizabeth, regni nostri filiam, matrimonialiter copulabimus. Sic fiet Deo regente in regno Bohemie novus rex et nova lex et bona. Hec autem et talis facta est longi consilii brevis conclusio, quod plus expediat filius quam frater regis regno. Dixerunt enim: Adolescens iste faciliter mores terre nostre discet, cum filiis nostris crescet, ipsosque ex hoc semper plus diliget, et ipse, quasi in regno natus sit, ab universis indigenis dileccior fiet,” Emler, ed., “Petri Zittaviensis Cronica Aule Regie,” Book I, Chapter 95; Schlotheuber, “Die Bedeutung von Sprachen,” 358; Schlotheuber, “Die »größtmögliche Veränderung«,” 114–15.

30 Brom, ed., *Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*, Chapter 68. Adde, *La Chronique de Dalimil*, 226; Adde, “Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil,” 19.

31 “Sunt quidam istorum mirabilium inventorum, qui more barbarorum barbas longas nutriunt, nec has radunt. Sunt et alii, qui dignitatem deformando virilem morem secuntur in crinibus per omnia muliebrem; alii crines suos in latum more lanificum percuciant in rotundum auretenusque diffundunt; alii calamistro crines tornant, ut comis crispantibus et circumvolantibus humeros suos ornent. Mitrarum usus, qui fuit primitus, nunc penitus est abrasus. [...] Curta et arta cum quadam menda circa cubitum dependente in tunica, que quasi auris circumvolat asinina, iam iam videntur plurium vestimenta. Pilea longa superiusque acuta, diversimode colorata portantur in urbibus, plus in via. Nullum iam cernimus tam contemptum in agris arantem rusticum, qui non deferat latum capucium et oblongum. De caligis et sotularibus crura et pedes artissime stringentibus senibus et prudentibus sepe admiracio fit et risus. Nunc clerici parvas crinibus suis tectas deferunt in capitibus coronas, magnos vero in lateribus gladios et cultellos; e contra raro videmus laicum, qui in cingulo zonam non habeat ad orandum. Tanta ac talis surrexit abusio ac novitatum detestabilium inventio, quod eas non solus, sed cum pluribus reprehendo et describere ipsas nolo,” Emler, ed., “Petri Zittaviensis Cronica Aule Regie,” Book II, Chapter 23; Marani-Moravová, *Peter von Zittau*, 185; Schlotheuber, “Die »größtmögliche Veränderung«,” 106.

32 Schlotheuber, “Die »größtmögliche Veränderung«,” 121–22; Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 27; Hilsch, “Johann der Blinde,” 25.

of Bohemia.³³ Francis of Prague later adopted Peter's *De novitatibus morum* chapter almost in its entirety for his chronicle, giving it the title *De novitatibus morum, que temporibus regis Johannis ortum habuerunt* (on novel customs which arose in the time of King John).³⁴

However, in medieval Bohemia, language is usually emphasised as the most significant criterion for distinguishing between natives and foreigners.³⁵ For example, 'Dalimil' recommends to John of Luxembourg at the beginning of his reign that he should only tolerate Czech nobles in his council. He advises the barons to consider only persons of their own 'tongue' in the election of the king and to disregard foreigners.³⁶ In the *Chronicle of 'Dalimil'*, the 'tongue' (*jazyk*) functions as the most important criterion of classification, which is even more significant than social characteristics, such as class.³⁷ As an example, the author cites the story of Duke Oldřich (1012–1033/34), who preferred to marry a Czech peasant woman rather than a German princess, because she would bring up her children in the German language.³⁸

Lack of language skills as a sign of foreignness is also encountered in the *Zbraslav Chronicle*: Peter of Zittau, for example, informs his readers that it was considered a great evil that the first wife of Charles IV, Blanche of Valois, spoke only French.³⁹ Eva Schlotheuber also suggests that language was the decisive distinguishing feature between the native and the foreigner for the interpretation of a passage in the *Vita Caroli*, the autobiography of Charles IV. The scene in question is one in which Charles's account has certain Bohemian nobles appear in front of his father,

33 "Nam post naturalium regum interitum passa est Boemia diversum multiplexque dominium, de quo accepit morum consuetudines diversorum," Emler, ed., "Petri Zittaviensis Cronica Aule Regie," Book II, Chapter 23; Schlotheuber, "Die »größtmögliche Veränderung«,“ 107; Wostry, "Ein deutschfeindliches Pamphlet aus Böhmen," 212–13.

34 Emler, ed., "Chronicon Francisci Pragensis," 404; Marani-Moravová, *Peter von Zittau*, 185.

35 Graus, "Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins," 40.

36 Brom, ed., *Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*, Chapter 103; Schlotheuber, "Die »größtmögliche Veränderung«,“ 117.

37 Hilsch, "Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant," 106.

38 "Raději sě chci s šlechtěnú sedlkú českú smieti než králevú německú za ženu jmieti. Vřet každému srdce po jazyku svému, a pro to Němkyně méně bude přieti lidu mému. Němkyni německú čeled bude jmieti a německy bude učiti mé děti," Brom, ed., *Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*, Chapter 42; Adde, "Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik," 127; Adde, *La Chronique de Dalimil*, 108; Adde, "Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil," 48; Hilsch, "Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant," 105–6; Schwinges, "»Primäre« und »sekundäre« Nation," 520.

39 "Magno habemus pro gravamine quod ipsa solum loquitur in sermone Gallico," Emler, ed., "Petri Zittaviensis Cronica Aule Regie," Book III, Chapter 2; Schlotheuber, "Die Bedeutung von Sprachen," 361.

King John. The representatives of the high nobility had asked the king to be wary of his son Charles, for he held numerous castles in the country, saying Charles could drive his father out of the realm if he wished, for he was the heir to the kingdom, was of Bohemian descent, and highly esteemed by the Bohemians.⁴⁰ However, *Vos autem estis advena*: “you are a stranger”, the nobles would remind John of Luxembourg.⁴¹ With recourse to Giles of Rome, Eva Schlotheuber makes a plausible case that, in the medieval imagination, a person who was sent as an adult to regions where the language was clearly different from their mother tongue could be judged as eternally foreign (*semper ... advenam*), for that person would hardly ever learn to really speak the local language, no matter how long they stayed there, and consequently the inhabitants of the country would always perceive them as a foreigner.⁴²

Returning to Bohemian sources from the fourteenth century, we should point out that language is not a universal characteristic for determining affiliation. This becomes clear, among others, in the *Theotunicis bonum dictamen*, when the author addresses the reader with the following words:

“May anger not seize you, native, who uses the German language, for among men I consider the use of different languages a gift of God. Those I mark are those who leave their homeland, enter foreign realms and regions like foxes, rule here like lions and are finally driven out like dogs.”⁴³

According to the anonymous author, ‘being native’ and speaking the German language are not mutually exclusive. The fact that German does not necessarily have to be a hallmark of an *alienigena* can be demonstrated in other contexts as well. For example, Abbot of the Zbraslav Monastery Peter of Zittau came from a region that, starting from the reign of King Ottokar II (1253–1278), belonged to the Kingdom of Bohemia but where the use of the German language was dominant.⁴⁴ He nevertheless

40 “Accedentes patrem nostrum sibi suggesserunt dicentes: Domine! provideatis vobis, filius vester habet in regno multa castra et magnam sequelam ex parte vestri; unde si diu ita prevalebit, expellet vos, quando voluerit; nam et ipse heres regni et de stirpe regum Boemie est, et multum diligitur a Boemis, [...]” Emler, ed., “Vita Caroli IV,” Chapter 8; Schlotheuber, “Die Bedeutung von Sprachen,” 360.

41 Emler, ed., “Vita Caroli IV,” Chapter 8.

42 Schlotheuber, “Die Bedeutung von Sprachen,” 360–61.

43 “Non movearis ira, qui idiomate Theutunico frueris, indigena. Nam apud homines diversitate linguarum fruentem donum deicum fore pono. Quos denoto, noto eos, qui relicto natali solo aliena regna seu regiones vulpine intrans, leonine regnant et expellentur ultimo velud canes, De Theotunicis bonum dictamen,” quoted from Wostry, “Ein deutschfeindliches Pamphlet aus Böhmen,” 232.

44 Marani-Moravová, *Peter von Zittau*, 76.

speaks of *nos Bohemi* (we Bohemians) in his chronicle as a matter of course.⁴⁵ This shows that although he was German-speaking, he saw himself as Bohemian.⁴⁶

Public expression of otherness

When Cosmas of Prague wrote about Bohemians and Germans, the structural and social circumstances were different than in the early fourteenth century, when the last-mentioned sources have been written. In Cosmas's time, the Germans were indeed still strangers in the sense that they did not inhabit the same land as the Czech-speaking population. Yet, the Kingdom of Bohemia was part of the Holy Roman Empire, even though it enjoyed a special position. It was not until 1344, during its elevation to archbishopric, that the bishopric of Prague was detached from the ecclesiastical province of Mainz. The Bohemian Church was subordinated to the archbishopric of Mainz until that time, and thus we may assume a certain competition between the Bohemian and German clergy.⁴⁷ This presumed rivalry proves to be very probable with regard to the filling of the most important offices—especially that of the bishopric of Prague: Until the end of the twelfth century, less than a quarter of the bishops of Prague were Czech.⁴⁸

The *Chronicle of 'Dalimil'* was written between 1310 and 1314, thus is synchronous with the change of dynasty in favour of the House of Luxembourg in Bohemia. It was under the influence of another ruler coming from abroad, after Rudolf of Habsburg (1306–1307) and Henry of Carinthia (1307–1310) had already failed to assert themselves as successors to the Přemyslids.⁴⁹ John of Luxembourg brought along a large retinue and numerous advisors, especially from the Rhineland and Luxembourg.⁵⁰ At the same time, the consequences of German settlement now began to clearly emerge, as the economically potent German-speaking patriciate sought to assert itself politically as well—the “original” political community pro-

45 Emler, ed., “Petri Zittaviensis Cronica Aule Regie,” Book I, Chapter 71; Marani-Moravová, *Peter von Zittau*, 78–79; Adde, “Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik,” 123, also cites the example of Gerlach, the abbot of Milevsko, who speaks analogously of *gens nostra* in his account.

46 Ševčík, “Deutsche als Fremde und Einheimische,” 122.

47 Jaworski, “Zur Frage vormoderner Nationalismen,” 407; Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 23, 25; Leithold, *Cosmas und die Deutschen*; Leithold, “Cosmas und die Deutschen,” 206.

48 Schwinges, “»Primäre« und »sekundäre« Nation,” 507–8.

49 Adde, *La Chronique de Dalimil*, 34–41; Adde, “Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil,” 48–49.

50 Schlotheuber, “Die Bedeutung von Sprachen,” 358; Schlotheuber, “Die »größtmögliche Veränderung«,” 110; Abdullahi, “Johann der Blinde”; Hoensch, *Die Luxemburger*, 53–54.

moted by ‘Dalimil’ thus found itself exposed to a multi-layered threat.⁵¹

In his study “The Foreign as an Argument”, Oliver Näpel concludes that a negative portrayal of the foreigner was particularly prevalent in such times of crisis. By degrading the stranger to the point of inhumanity, resistance and his exclusion were thus legitimised, while strengthening the own group’s collective identity.⁵² This theoretical consideration is very much in line with the prevailing research finding that ‘Dalimil’ wanted to present a political programme, an ideology that was not only intended to make the Czech nobility aware of the danger posed by the Germans but was also meant to help them assert or regain their former position.⁵³ With his strong emphasis on the linguistic aspect, the author chose a feature that made it possible to exclude the disagreeable competitors, who were striving for power everywhere.⁵⁴

While Peter of Zittau was aware of the conflicts between natives and foreigners in the kingdom, he labelled them as politically or economically rather than ethnically motivated. This is why he discusses the demonstrative ‘patriotism’ of the ‘self-less’ nobility with an ironic undertone.⁵⁵ Not least for this reason, František Graus

51 Adde, “Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil,” 48; Graus, “Die Problematik der deutschen Ostsiedlung,” 32.

52 Näpel, *Das Fremde als Argument*, 186, 188.

53 Adde, “Environnement textuel et réception du texte medieval,” 170; Adde, “Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik,” 120; Adde, “Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil,” 52.

54 In this context, Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 40, refers to language as the “most important protective wall of their own nationality”. In the same sense, Schwinges, “»Primäre« und »sekundäre« Nation,” 519, speaks of a “narrow and impermeable band for speakers of other languages”.

55 “A principio ingressione sue in Bohemiam inclitus Johannes rex iuxta se frequenter plurimos de Alemania comites ac nobiles sapientia quam potentia insignes habere consueverat, quorum fretus consilio singula fere sui regni negocia disponebat, quibus et vicissim regalia beneficia et officia conferebat. Videntes autem regni Bohemie barones se nonnunquam a secretis regis tractatibus sequestrari, lucrumque et pecunias, quas prius tollere didicerant, extere nacionis manibus attractari, invidia, que prosperis insidiatur alienis eventibus, in quorundam magnatum cordibus non distulit nerviciter radicari. [...] Unde regni nobiles crebro privata concilia et familiaria colloquia celebrant, vias omnes, quas valent, palliata sollicitudine ad eliminandum de regno Alemanos excogitant, demum regalibus aspectibus talibus cum affatibus se presentant: Domine, inquiunt, rex vestra naturalis industria liquido regni statum et condicionem hominum intelligit, nichilominus tamen et de hoc exponere ipsa fides, qua vobis astringimur, enucleacius nos compellit. Ecce isti hospites, qui in regno sunt, simul avaricie student, fiscum regium eviscerant, solum ad hoc cura frequens ipsos sollicitat, ut pecunias per fasque nefasque congregent et deducant, castra et beneficia regni plura occupant, et tamen pacem in stratis facere non sufficiunt nec laborant. Nobis autem, qui in regno nati et regi famulari parati sumus, si domine rex vos curaretis credere atque beneficia terre committere, optime valeritis hec omnia dispendia precavere, per vos pax fieret, rex et regnum proficeret, et que sic modo deducitur, in regno pecunia remaneret,” Emler, ed., “Petri

highlights competition as the reason for the emergence of the negative images of foreigners, especially with regard to Germans: “The driving force of the antagonisms,” says Graus, “clearly appears in the sources to be the self-interest of certain classes”⁵⁶ and “their tangible power-political interests” made “the lords zealous advocates of their ‘national’ interests.”⁵⁷ Although I generally share Graus’s thesis, speaking of ‘certain classes’ seems too general and needs to be examined in greater detail. Specifically, Hilsch emphasises that by no means were all high nobles and clerics dissatisfied with the government of John of Luxembourg.⁵⁸ He makes this point, for example, by noting that the *Chronicle of ‘Dalimil’* was translated into German during the last years of the reign of John of Luxembourg (1342–1346) and that parts of it were changed in this context. It is striking that during this translation process, in many cases, the word ‘German’ was replaced by the more neutral term ‘foreign.’⁵⁹ However, it is important to stress that the author did not regard German Bohemians as foreigners. This becomes particularly clear, when the translator declares Duke Soběslav I (1125–1140)—in ‘Dalimil’s’ view a ‘friend of the Czechs’ (*přiteletě českého*)—to be *der Tutschin vrient im lande* (the enemy of the Germans in the country). The translator explains the reason for his decision to change the terminology in the following verses, which are an extension of the original version:

“Whoever reviles the Germans
and ostracises them in Bohemia,
is not righteous in my eyes.”⁶⁰

In addition to occasional insertions, the author of the German-language *Chronicle of ‘Dalimil’* altered in particular the last chapter of his model, deleting ‘Dalimil’s’ advice to King John without replacement. In this version of the chronicle, John of Luxembourg was thus not urged to choose his advisors exclusively from the ranks of Czech-speaking barons. Taking into account the translator’s excellent knowledge of inner-city conditions and the Christian-pious remarks that

Zittaviensis Cronica Aule Regie,” Book I, Chapter 126; Hilsch, “Die Königsaal-Chronik und ihre Autoren,” 16.

56 Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 35–36.

57 Graus, “Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins,” 46.

58 Hilsch, “*Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*,” 114.

59 In the German version of the chronicle, for example, Duke Oldřich, prefers a Bohemian peasant woman to the daughter of a foreign king, Brom, ed., *Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*, Chapter 42; Adde, “Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik,” 127; Hilsch, “*Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*,” 107.

60 “Wer dy Tutschin smecht und in Behem land echt, den hab ich nit vor frum, Brom, ed., *Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*,” Chapter 68; Adde, “Die deutschsprachige Übersetzung der Dalimil-Chronik,” 128; Hilsch, “*Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant*,” 107.

he repeatedly interspersed, Hilsch comes to the conclusion that the *Chronicle of 'Dalimil'* was translated into German by a member of the Order of the Cross with the Red Star.⁶¹ John of Luxembourg was a special benefactor of the latter, which may have been a reason for his positive memory of the Luxembourg.⁶²

Returning to the context in which the Czech-language version of the *Chronicle of 'Dalimil'* was written, it was the early period of John of Luxembourg's reign over Bohemia, when he had to establish and consolidate his rule. The *Chronicle of 'Dalimil'* is not the only document stirring anti-foreigner sentiment at a time of a change of rule. At the beginning of the so-called *Brno Codex*, which also contains the *Chronicle of 'Dalimil'*, there is a copy of a pamphlet "to warn loyal Bohemians" (*Krátké sebráníe*) against the Germans in general, and against the election of a Bohemian king of German origin in particular. The original was most probably written around the turn of the year 1437–1438 and opposed the election of Albert V of Austria as king of Bohemia after the death of Sigismund of Luxembourg.⁶³ Once again, a publicly disseminated piece sought to polarise public opinion during a change of ruler, certainly aware that this phase usually set the course for the future organisation of rule.

Scope for future studies

In contrast to the often-consulted chronicles, the surviving documentary material has been used far less with regard to questions of diversity, its risks, and opportunities. Based on preliminary analyses of John of Luxembourg's 'administrative staff', Peter Moraw concluded that the leading families of the Bohemian nobility are hardly attested in the king's regular council and are not to be counted among his inner court.⁶⁴ However, Moraw's lists remained a torso and need to be expanded. Thanks to advancing source editions,⁶⁵ it will soon be possible to study John's personal environment between his dominions in Bohemia and Luxembourg in a much more differentiated way:

61 Hilsch, "Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant," 111, 115.

62 Hilsch, "Di tutsch kronik von Behem lant," 114.

63 Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen*, 221; Graus, "Die Problematik der deutschen Ostsiedlung," 33; Wostry, "Ein deutschefeindliches Pamphlet aus Böhmen," 204.

64 Moraw, "Über den Hof Johans von Luxemburg und Böhmen," 114–20.

65 At the University of Luxembourg, the charters of John of Luxembourg held in Belgian, German, French, and Luxembourg archives have been successively edited in the past 25 years, Pettiau and Salemme, eds, *Urkunden- und Quellenbuch*, vol. 11, part 3; Estgen et al., eds, *Urkunden- und Quellenbuch*, vol. 11, 2 parts. A further volume containing the charters of John of Luxembourg from the Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz is available in manuscript form and will be published soon.

Whose advice did the king of Bohemia regularly seek? Who were the members of his court, and who were active in his chancellery? How diverse was the group of those involved in governance? How static or flexible was the composition of this group of people? Who participated in which processes? Which were the constellations of rule that found acceptance, and which were the ones that met with resistance? What was the integrative power that emanated from the ruler's environment? For whom was the foreign king a genuine burden, and for whom was it more of an opportunity? Does a comprehensive evaluation of the documentary material actually confirm the thesis of a correlation between political exclusion and the emergence of strategies of othering? These are just a few issues that are worth exploring in order to better understand how foreigners were 'made' in pre-modern Central Europe.⁶⁶

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