COSMAE PRAGENSIS CHRONICA BOHEMORUM

COSMAS OF PRAGUE
THE CHRONICLE OF THE CZECHS

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COSMAE PRAGENSIS CHRONICA BOHEMORUM

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Edited by
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Translated by
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with the cooperation of Libor Švanda

Introduced and annotated by
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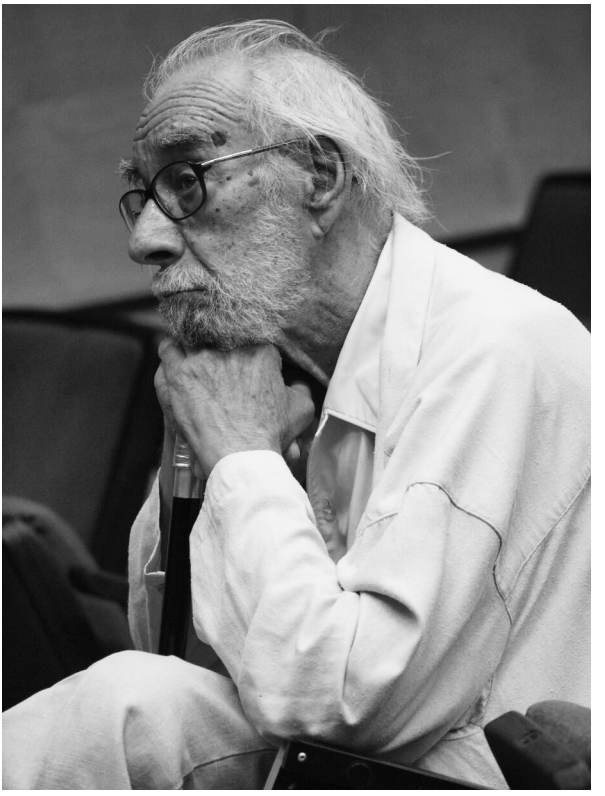
In memoriam Dušan Třeštík 1933–2007



János M. Bak,
founding member and Professor Emeritus of the CEU Department of Medieval Studies and founder of the bilingual source edition series, Central European Medieval Texts, the co-editor of this volume, passed away on 18 June, 2020 at the age of 91, a week before the book was printed. Until the last moment of his life, he was a devoted scholar, an authoritative and caring teacher, and an indefatigable spiritual father of scholarly solidarity and of our joint endeavor directed at the advancement of learning and broadening of the "Republic of Letters."

יהי זכרו ברכה לכולנו

"May his memory be a blessing for us all."

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This volume was prepared in cooperation with the Institute for Medieval Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The research was supported by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) in the SFB "Visions of Community (VISCOM)" F42-G18.

GENERAL EDITORS' PREFACE

The present volume is in two respects exceptional. First, it has been prepared by a larger team than any of the previous ones. The basic translation and partial annotation was prepared by Petra Mutlová (Masaryk University, Brno) and Martyn Rady (SSES, UC London) with the assistance of János M. Bak (CEU, Budapest), former member of the General Editors, Libor Švanda (Brno), and, briefly, also of Petr Kopal (Prague). Then, the team at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Institute for Medieval Research) in Vienna, led by Pavlína Rychterová, joined. Jan Hasil (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague), in cooperation with Irene van Renswoude (Huygens-Institute of the Dutch Academy of Sciences, KNAW), completed the annotations and wrote the preface. Final editing was done by Bak and Rychterová. They were assisted in the preparation of the Latin text by Agnes Reimitz and Giacomo Mariani (CEU, Budapest and Modena), and for English translations and language editing by Clara Reimitz, Samantha Wehr, Jan Odstrčilík and Michaela Falátková. The General Editors are grateful to all of them for their fine work. They also gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) through the SFB "Visions of Community (VISCOM)."

Second, unlike the other volumes of CEMT, this is not the first English translation of the *Chronicle of the Czechs*. A few years ago, a translation by Lisa Wolverton (Eugene, Ore.) was published. Nevertheless, we thought that Cosmas cannot be left out from our series of major narratives of early medieval Central Europe and anyhow, with its bilingual format and more detailed annotations, our volume still has a place on the bookshelves of historians and other interested readers.

With presenting this volume, and hoping that the regretfully delayed second volume of saints' lives (CEMT 7) will appear

soon, the General Editors of CEMT will have completed the original plan of its founders by having placed all the important Latin narratives of earlier medieval Central Europe "on the table." We hope having fulfilled the mission of the series to the satisfaction of readers everywhere.

Budapest, December, 2018

P. G., G. J., G. K., P. R.

ABBREVIATIONS

GENERAL

AV ČR	Akademie věd České republiky (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic)
ČSAV	Československá Akademie Věd (Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences)
cap, capp.	chapter(s)
d.	died
ed.	edited by
n.	note
NLN	Nakladatelství Lidové noviny (Publishing House Lidové noviny)
n.s.	nova series
trans.	translated by

TITLES CITED IN ABBREVIATION

CDB	*Codex Diplomaticus et Epistolaris Regni Bohemiae*. Prague: AV ČR (formerly Alois Wiesner, ČSAV), 1904-
CEMT	Central European Medieval Texts. Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 1999–
FRB	Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
Capit.	Capitularia Regum Francorum
Conc.	Concilia
DD	Diplomata
Epp. sel.	Eppistolae Selectae
Ldl	Libelli de Lite Imperatorum et Pontificum
SS	Scriptores in Folio

SS rer. Germ.	Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi
SS rer. Lang.	Scriptores Rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum
SS rer. Merov.	Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum
MPH	Monumenta Poloniae Historica
MPL	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus, series Latina*. Ed. J. P. Migne. 221 vols. Paris, 1841–1864.

Classical and Biblical references follow the common conventions.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Chronicle of the Czechs is the oldest surviving chronicle of the history of Bohemia, covering it from the mythical origins to the first quarter of the twelfth century. While its genre is not as uniform as some other "national histories," it fits well into the age when such histories were written, beginning with the *origo gentis* and becoming more elaborate for the times of their authors.[1] The last lines of the surviving text testify to the date of death of Cosmas, canon and dean of the cathedral chapter of Prague, on 21 October 1125, who seems to have worked on it until his last days. Dedications to the earlier parts of the *Chronicle* suggest that he started writing it some years before, thus the date of writing should be something like 1118–1125.

MANUSCRIPTS

No autograph or close-contemporaneous copy survived. All manuscripts are younger, but the so-called Bautzen manuscript, presently in the Library of the National Museum in Prague,[2] is from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century and is, in spite of many scribal errors, the most complete one.[3] In it, the *Chronicle* is written in two columns on 73 folios with 29 lines per page. It is the

[1] On these, in a comparative framework, see Norbert Kersken, *Geschichtsschreibung im Europa der* nationes*: Nationalgeschichtliche Gesamtdarstellungen im Mittelalter* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1995); on Cosmas esp. 573–82.

[2] Knihovna Národního muzea v Praze, signature VIII F 69.

[3] A digitalized version of this manuscript (with Latin transcript and Czech translation) can be accessed online at Manuscriptorium, accessed 10 January 2015: http://www.manuscriptorium.com. For other, older and recent editions and translation, see Bibliography, 455–7.

only one with an illumination depicting two figures on two sides of a city with trees in the background . The image has, however, nothing to do with the *Chronicle* of Cosmas.[4] The text of this codex became the basis of the critical edition by Bertold Bretholz, published in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, still regarded the best printed text of the *Chronicle* (also because an important late medieval copy of the work he had at his disposal was destroyed during the Dresden raid in February 1945).[5] Therefore, Bretholz's edition was used for the present English-Latin version. In the preface of his critical edition, Bretholz described fourteen manuscripts and their possible filiations.[6] A good number of them belong to a "younger group," that is, copies from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, but occasionally their variant readings were also considered relevant by the editor. Actually, Cosmas may have himself produced more than one variant of the text. As his prologues to the three books suggest, he sent them separately to his various friends,[7] while he must have retained a copy for himself. The note on the last page of the surviving text proves that the autograph or a contemporaneous copy was in the hands of Cosmas's colleagues, one of whom added the date of the author's death.

[4] The two figures around the "city" have been identified as Czech and Lech, the legendary eponymous founders of the Czechs and Poles. Cosmas "Latinized" the former as *Bohemus* (2 see below, 14). The two (and with "Rus," three) mythical figures are mentioned in the *Chronica Poloniae Maioris* from ca. 1295, but must have been current much earlier. On the ribbon, only "nō" is legible. It has been suggested that it may have read as "*Praga nominetur*."

[5] *Die Chronik der Böhmen des Cosmas von Prag*, ed. Bertold Bretholz, unter Mitarbeit von W. Weinberg, MGH SS rer. Germ. n.s. 2 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1923) [henceforth: *Die Chronik*].

[6] Bretholz, *Die Chronik*, XLV–LXXXV.

[7] Provost Severus of Mělník, Master Gervase, probably from Prague, and Abbot Clement of Břevnov.

THE AUTHOR

Birth, youth, and old age

Few sources cast light on the course of life of Cosmas. Among these, the text of his *Chronicle* plays a central role, with the few personal asides and recollections that are scattered randomly across the text, as well as the prefaces to the particular *libri*, which take the form of epistles to leading representatives of Bohemian clergy of the time. As to the source material from which we might learn more about his life, the situation is similar to that of most European medieval literati: only deduction or sheer hypothesizing remains as answer to many important questions.

Any attempt at tracing out Cosmas's *curriculum vitae* must begin with a basic understanding of the biographical data. As mentioned above, the most reliable date is that of his death on 21 October 1125.[8] This agrees with both the *Necrologium Bohemicum* and the *Necrologium Olomucense*.[9]

Another important milestone in the life of Cosmas was his ordination into priesthood. In his own words, he received holy orders on 11 June 1099, from the hand of Archbishop Seraphim of Esztergom at the cathedral of that bishopric.[10] We lack a direct source for corroborating this piece of information, but this important moment in the life of Cosmas may safely be pinned to the given date. Cosmas puts his ordination into a broader context of historical events which he appears to report faithfully (the Diet of Regensburg in spring 1099, the investiture and episcopal consecration of the bishop Herman, the summit *in campo, qui dicitur*

[8] See below, 426.

[9] František Graus, "Necrologium Bohemicum – Martyrologium Pragense a stopy nekosmovského pojetí českých dějin" [Necrologium Bohemicum – Martyrologium Pragense and the traces of concepts of Czech history other than Cosmas's], *Československý časopis historický* 15 (1967) [henceforth: "Necrologium Bohemicum"], 808; Beda Dudík, "Necrologium Olomucense: Handschrift der Königlichen Bibliothek in Stockholm," *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte* 59 (1880) [henceforth: "Necrologium Olomucense"], 652.

[10] See below, 310.

Luczko between the Hungarian King Coloman and Břetislav II).[11] Alas, beyond these dates, we enter unchartered territory.

Determining the year of his birth is the major problem of putting together a life of Cosmas,[12] as it is impossible to achieve agreement between the few references in the *Chronicle* without running into contradictions. Scholars usually draw upon a note at the end of the *Chronicle* in which Cosmas refers to himself as an octogenerian: The age "curves my back, wrinkled skin blemishes my face, my chest heaves like a tired steed's, the voice sounds hoarse like a goose's, and sickly old age weakens my senses."[13] The context suggests that this could only have been written after the death of Prince Vladislav I (24 April 1125), which would give a birth date of Cosmas of 1045. Unfortunately, a number of other notes are in conflict with this:

Cosmas speaks of himself in the narrative for 1074 as being addressed as a "good boy" (*puer bonus*) who, while still "in school" (*in scholis*), memorizes psalms in church.[14] This would place him as a pupil of the Prague chapter even though he supposedly quickly reached the canonical age for taking holy orders: his thirtieth year of age. But in fact, he would only do so a full twenty-five years later! Yet we have no reason to assume that Cosmas's career in the clergy was marred by a sudden turn of fate or stalled for some time;[15] if anything, the contrary appears likely. After all, at some

[11] See below, 308–10.

[12] Dušan Třeštík, *Kosmas* (Prague: Melantrich, 1972) [henceforth: *Kosmas*], 39–40, analyzed this issue in depth; his interpretation is not entirely convincing, but widely accepted by current Czech medievalists.

[13] See below, 420.

[14] See below, 240.

[15] Deserting one's clerical career was not an altogether rare occurrence in medieval Bohemia. The author of the Žďár annals, Jindřich Řezbář (FRB II, 519), ran away from his monastery in 1300 and for years pursued a livelihood as artisan. Two of the country's patron saints abandoned their parish or, as it were, even their bishopric: St. Procopius at the beginning of the eleventh century (Petr Sommer, *Svatý Prokop. Z počátků českého státu a církve* [St. Procopius. On the beginnings of the Czech state and Church] (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2007) [henceforth: *Svatý Prokop*], 102–3), and St. Adalbert (see below, 96).

point after 1074 and likely for some time, Cosmas attended the cathedral school in Liège where he studied under the eminent master Franco. Towards the end of his *Chronicle* (and thus towards the end of his life) Cosmas reminisces that he was then but a "youngster" (*iuvenis*), which hardly corresponds to the image of a mature man of about forty years.

Other (if indirect) dates from Cosmas's life do nothing to lessen the degree of uncertainty. His ordination as a priest would have taken place—if he really was born in 1045—long after his fiftieth birthday. He provably was a canon only in 1110 (when he would have been 65 years old) and thus cannot have been the dean of the chapter, that is, the person in charge of the chapter's day-to-day operations any earlier than 1110. The task of a dean was to supervise the chapter's assets and landholdings, which meant frequent travels. Are we supposed to believe that Cosmas actively held this challenging post as late as 1120, when he would have been 75 years old?

This obvious conflict can be resolved either by accepting, along with Dušan Třeštík, the notion of a thirty-year-old "boy," a forty-year-old "youngster," and a chipper septuagenarian dean Cosmas, or by relativizing the truth-value of Cosmas's claim that he was eighty years old in 1125. If we were to allow for a birthdate for Cosmas around the year 1060, we would be looking at a pupil of about fifteen, a youngster of twenty-five, a newly ordained priest of forty whose clerical advancement would be enhanced by a longer stay abroad of, say, ten years so as to prepare him for the career of a dignitary of the church, culminating between his fortieth and sixtieth year of age. Even under this hypothesis, Cosmas would have reached "old age" (as a 65-year-old) in 1125.[16] It is also pos-

[16] It is possible that Cosmas's remark about his age from the end of the third book of the *Chronicle* may be read in the sense that he reached not eighty years but the eighth decade of his life. That means he would be just seventy years old in 1025. In that case, all other remarks concerning his age in various stages of his life would fit. I thank my colleagues Ludmila Zelinková and David Kalhous for discussing with me this hypothesis of theirs (J.H.).

sible that the relevant passage from the third book of the *Chronicle* has a more complex meaning. Cosmas ironically inverts here the traditional old man–youth topos, to express criticism of the young, upcoming dialecticians (who were, in contrast to him, trained in France). It is possible that it does not reflect his real age.[17]

Ancestry and family

Closely related to the issue of dating the milestones in Cosmas's life is the issue of his family ties. Cosmas has nothing to say on his origins. We know essentially of one single remark, a rather cryptic annotation in the younger manuscripts according to which an ancestor of Cosmas (*attavus meus*), an ordained priest, was among the prisoners of war brought into the country after the 1039 Polish campaign.[18] At its core, this note is rather risqué, though not because it implies that Cosmas is the descendant of a priest (married priests were a common enough occurrence in Bohemia in his time);[19] besides, Cosmas himself was married. The note becomes scandalous if one takes into account that Cosmas indulged in unbridled xenophobia directed against Jews, Germans, and Poles in many places throughout the *Chronicle*.[20] It does not take much to put the dates together to arrive at the conclusion that—if a direct ancestor of Cosmas indeed arrived in Bohemia in 1039, and provided that Cosmas was born in 1045—that ancestor would have had to be Cosmas's father. (However, the chronicler, or whoever

[17] That particular topos says very little about one's real chronological age, see Anita Obermeier, *The History and Anatomy of Auctorial Self-Criticism in the European Middle Ages,* Internationale Forschungen zur allgemeinen und vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft 32 (Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999), 72.

[18] Bretholz, *Die Chronik*, 90, n. k.

[19] Cf. *Das Homiliar des Bischofs von Prag Saec. XII*, ed. Ferdinand Hecht (Prague: Verein für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen, 1863), 21.

[20] Cf. János M. Bak, "Christian Identity in the 'Chronicle of the Czechs' by Cosmas of Prague," in *Historical Narratives and Christian Identity on a European Periphery*, ed. Ildar Garipzanov (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011) [henceforth: "Christian Identity"], 176–8.

the knowledgeable author of the addendum may have been, would surely have mentioned this). If we push back Cosmas's birth year to 1060, the captive ancestor could at best have been his grandfather, and even that is not quite plausible. For this reason, Martin Wihoda's theory, according to which the annotation came into existence much later and originated from a careless copying of the text, is probably correct.[21]

"It often happens that when a man and a woman sleep together in the same bed, a third human is forthwith born,"[22] and so it was also in the case of Cosmas's marriage with a woman named Božetěcha (d. 1117);[23] his son Jindřich (Henry) probably sprang from this union. In 1123, Jindřich joined a group of Czech secular and spiritual notables on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[24] It is by no means clear whether this is the same Jindřich as Jindřich or Henry Zdík (1083–1150), bishop of Olomouc after 1126, though current scholarship largely denies the connection,[25] giving preference to the hypothesis that Cosmas's son Jindřich may have been a later canon and provost in Prague.[26] At any rate, the social network of the clerical elite in Přemyslid Bohemia during the eleventh and twefth century could be in fact styled a "family affair."

[21] *Kosmas, Kronika Čechů,* trans. Karel Hrdina, Marie Bláhová and Magdalena Moravová, with an introduction and explanatory notes by Magdalena Moravová and Martin Wihoda (Prague: Argo, 2011) [henceforth: *Kosmas*], 6.

[22] See below, 342.

[23] See below, 388.

[24] See below, 398.

[25] From among the most recent literature, cf. Martin Wihoda, *Morava v době knížecí 906–1197* [Moravia in the time of dukes 906–1197] (Prague: NLN, 2010) [henceforth: *Morava*], 173–205, and Jan Bistřický, "Muž reformy na olomouckém stolci. Jindřich Zdík" [The man of reform at the episcopal see of Olomouc. Henry Zdík], in *Osobnosti moravských dějin*, ed. Libor Jan and Zdeněk Drahoš (Brno: Matice moravská, 2006), 27–43.

[26] For instance Třeštík, *Kosmas*, 42–3.

Education

Petr Sommer described the institutional concept of preparing for the priesthood in early medieval Bohemia as a "scattered seminar."[27] Individual priests employed assistants to whom they transferred, on an ad hoc basis, without an overarching concept and inconsistently, the knowledge and skills necessary for practising pastoral care. Only a small part of the clergy received training in the chapter schools that opened the doors for a higher career within the church. The entry requirement for this elite circle comprised, aside from the necessary aptitude, a certain higher social status. Coming from a priestly background, in particular, probably set the course for a career in the clergy. In the eleventh century, the cathedral school of Prague certainly enjoyed quite a renommé, as can be seen from the active presence of Master Hubald,[28] the first harbinger of an intellectual cross-connection between Prague and Liège, during the period 1008–1018. At the time, students enrolled at the chapter school usually mastered the *trivium* and those portions of the *quadrivium* which their teachers considered essential.[29] The prefaces to the individual *libri* of Cosmas's *Chronicle* show that an elite circle distinguished itself further from this (already rather refined) group. This elite, educated at prestigious schools in Western Germany and France, was certainly not very numerous but was clearly endowed with marked self-awareness, for it was only this outstanding group of individuals who could fully grasp and appreciate the depth and the quality of Cosmas's work.

[27] Sommer, *Svatý Prokop*, 101.

[28] *Herigeri et Anselmi gesta episcoporum Tungrensium, Traiectensium et Leodensium*, ed. Rudolf Köpke, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7 (Hanover: Hahn, 1846 [1968]), 205 [henceforth: *Herigeri et Anselmi*], cf. *Ex Anselmi Gestorum episcoporum Leodiensium recensione altera*, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SS rer. Germ. 14 (Hanover: Hahn, 1883), 109; Václav Novotný, *České dějiny* 1–1 [Czech history] (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1913–1928) [henceforth: *České dějiny*], 712.

[29] Třeštík, *Kosmas*, 34–6.

Cosmas received his higher education at the Cathedral School of St. Lawrence in Liège.[30] He studied with Master Franco, who led the cathedral school from 1066 and who was famous as a mathematician.[31] Yet Cosmas remembered his old teacher rather for his teaching of grammar and dialectic.[32] In the third book of his *Chronicle*, Cosmas, by now an old man, looked back with nostalgia to the early years of his education in Liège:

> O Muse, my beautiful teacher, whether to cast anchor here by the shore or now spread my sail to the roaring east winds. You, who never age, and do not stop goading me, an old man, to youthful exploits, must know that in every old man, just as in me, there is a boyish wit and a frail mind. Oh, would that God bring me, already an octogenarian, back the years past in which in Liège, under Master Franco, you played with me in the green pastures of the arts, of grammar and of dialectic![33]

Cosmas may have had other teachers in Liège, but Franco was the master whom he remembered with admiration and affection. Cosmas's remarkable erudition and vivid literary style can be taken as example for the education he received at Liège. His predilection for fables, his versatility with rhetorical figures such as *sermocina-*

[30] Marie Bláhová, "The Function of the Saints in Early Bohemian Historical Writing," in *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom (c. 1000–1300)*, ed. Lars Boje Mortensen (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2006), 94. The mystic and theologian Rupert of Deutz may well have been Cosmas's fellow student, since Rupert and Cosmas studied with Franco in the same period. Another possible fellow student was the author known as Gallus Anonymus, see Josef Bujnoch, "Gallus Anonymus und Cosmas von Prag: Zwei Geschichtschreiber und Zeitgenossen," in *Osteuropa in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Festschrift für Günther Stöckl zum 60. Geburtstag,* ed. Hans Lemberg, Peter Nitsche, and Theodor Oberländer (Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau, 1997) [henceforth: "Gallus Anonymus"], 301–15; Sommer, *Svatý Prokop,* 123–51.

[31] Alphons Smeur, "Francon de Liège/Franco von Lüttich," in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 1989, col. 687; Menso Fulkerts, *Essays on Early Medieval Mathematics: the Latin Tradidion* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), 120–67.

[32] See below, 418.

[33] See below, 420.

tio, his irony, and his familiarity with late-Roman poets and satirists are typical of the literary-rhetorical tradition of the school of Liège. That tradition was shaped in the tenth century under famous Liège teachers and bishops such as Notger, Everacles, and Rather of Lobbes (better known as Rather of Verona). According to Adelmann of Chartres (d. 1061), who studied in Liège in his youth, the cathedral school of Liège was a breeding ground of the major arts.[34] Pierre Riché even described Liège as a "nouvelle Athènes."[35] Since Franco died ca. 1083, Cosmas must also have studied under his successor, if the possible dates of his return from Liège (he was back in Prague probably by 1086 but surely by 1091) are correct. We may well wonder, though, whether Cosmas indeed stayed on until 1091 or remained in Liège as a student or perhaps moved on to a different occupation.

Clerical career

In the year 1086 Cosmas attended, in his own words, the issue of the deed which recognized the borders of the bishopric of Prague, on April 29, at the synod of Mainz.[36] On this occasion, Cosmas supposedly witnessed the confirmation of the deed by the emperor's own hand, which could mean that he had been engaged in

[34] Adelmannus Brixiensis, *De viris illustribus sui temporis*, in *PL* 143, 1297: "Legia magnarum quondam artium nutricula."

[35] Pierre Riché, "Education et culture de l'an Mil. La place de la Lotharingie," in *Religion et culture autour de l'an mil. Royaume capétien et Lotharingie. Actes du Colloque Hugues Capet 987–1987. La France de l'an Mil, Auxerre, 26 et 27 juin 1987; Metz, 11 et 12 septembre 1987* (Paris: Picard, 1990); Sommer, *Svatý Prokop*, 280.

[36] See below, 250–4. For another version of this charter, see *Die Urkunden Heinrichs IV.*, ed. Dietrich von Gladiss, MGH DD 4 (Berlin: Böhlau, 1941), 515–8, n. 390. For the analysis of this document, see Helmut Beumann and Walter Schlesinger, "Urkundenstudien zur deutschen Ostpolitik unter Otto III," *Archiv für Diplomatik, Schriftgeschichte, Siegel- und Wappenkunde* 1 (1955) [henceforth: "Urkundenstudien"], 132–256. Cf. David Kalhous, *Anatomy of a Duchy. The Political and Ecclesiastical Structures of Early Přemyslid Bohemia* (Leiden: Brill, 2012) [henceforth: *Anatomy*], 81–97; also Barbara Krzemieńská and Dušan Třeštík, "O dokumencie praskim z roku 1086" [On the Prague Document from the year 1086], *Studie źródloznawczee/Commentationes* 5 (1960) [henceforth: "O dokumencie"], 79–102.

diplomatic matters of the Bohemian realm. However, the character of his *Chronicle* speaks against this hypothesis; the numerous inaccuracies when it comes to factual circumstances outside Bohemia and the overall thematic structure of Cosmas's narrative rather suggest that the essence of his official duties—as dean of the chapter—was the management of the bishop's practical affairs. In 1091, Cosmas appears as a travel companion of the Prague bishop on a trip abroad, accompanying him alongside the Prague bishop-elect Cosmas and the Olomouc bishop-elect Ondřej (Andrew) to Mantua.[37] None of the sources reveal the actual position or office then held by Cosmas (who must have been a deacon at the time). In any case, he again travelled beyond the borders of the principality of Bohemia as a member of the Prague bishop's entourage in 1094 when his namesake Bishop Cosmas received holy orders in Mainz.[38] Another trip abroad involved what must have been the most significant day in Cosmas's life, 11 October 1099, when he was ordained into the priesthood by Archbishop Seraphim of Esztergom.[39] Incidentally, the trip itself was undertaken so that yet another Prague bishop-elect, Heřman (Herman), could be anointed as bishop (a ceremony that must have been attended by Cosmas as well).

With increasing intensity, the more recent passages of the *Chronicle* take on almost the character of a memoir, and correspondingly, more and more incidental notes shine through in the text, which gives us an idea of rather marginal temporal issues in connection with the operation of the Prague chapter. In 1110, Cosmas mentions his immediate involvement in property matters of the Prague chapter,[40] and it is this year that is usually (and probably quite justifiably) considered as the *ante quem* of his assumption of the dean's office (whereas Cosmas himself mentions that he was the dean only in 1120).[41] This position marks the peak of his ecclesias-

[37] See below, 282.

[38] See below, 298–300.

[39] See below, 310.

[40] E.g. see below, 220–2 and 366–8.

[41] See below, 2.

tical career. It appears that it not only brought Cosmas an adequate level of material security in his advanced age but also allowed him to take residence directly at Prague Castle and thus to partake in the day-to-day political and social events that took place there.

THE *CHRONICLE*

The three books of the *Chronicle* cover very different times. The first starts with the mythical beginnings of the Czech people, wanderers who arrived to a "promised land of milk and honey" and then obtained their first prince, the plowman Přemysl. It continues the story into historical times, down to 1038. The second book covers the reigns of the Dukes Břetislav I (1034–1055) and his sons Spytihněv (1055–1061) and King Vratislav II (1061–1092). The third is entirely devoted to times that the author witnessed himself, from 1092 to the year of his death.[42]

[42] The most up-to-date scholarly histories on the oldest epochs are in Czech: Dušan Třeštík, *Počátky Přemyslovců. Vstup Čechů do dějin (530–935)* [The beginning of the Přemyslids: The entrance of the Czechs into history] (Prague: NLN, 1997, 2nd ed. 2003) [henceforth: *Počátky*]; Josef Žemlička, *Čechy v době knížecí* (1034–1198) [Bohemia in the age of the dukes] (Prague: NLN, 1997) [henceforth: *Čechy v době knížecí*]; and esp. Petr Sommer, Dušan Třeštík, and Josef Žemlička, *Přemyslovci. Budování českého státu* [The Přemyslids. Building the Czech state] (Prague: NLN, 2009). A comprehensive overview in English of the early times is the chapter "Bohemia and Moravia" by Petr Sommer, Dušan Třeštík, and Josef Žemlička, with additional material on art by Zoë Opačić, in: *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy. Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' ca. 900–1200*, ed. Nora Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 214–262 [henceforth: "Bohemia and Moravia"]. A study on several issues treated by Cosmas is Lisa Wolverton, *Hastening toward Prague. Power and Society in the Medieval Czech Lands* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) [henceforth: *Hastening*], and Kalhous, *Anatomy*. In German, see also the section on Bohemia in the exhibition catalogue, *Europas Mitte um 1000: Beiträge zur Geschichte, Kunst und Archäologie*, ed. Alfried Wieczorek and Hans-Martin Hinz (Stuttgart: Theiss, 2000) [henceforth: *Europas Mitte um 1000*], and *Handbuch der Geschichte der Böhmischen Länder I: Die böhmischen Länder von der archaischen Zeit bis zum Ausgang der hussitischen Revolution*, ed. Karl Bosl et al. (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1967). Even though the *Handbuch* is methodologically somewhat outdated, it contains much information and extensive bibliographies.

Causae scribendi and readership

Cosmas himself observes in the pages of the *Chronicle*[43] that he began working on it in or around 1118; thanks to the four prefaces that have been preserved, we are able to follow the circumstances under which this literary work came into being—and to do so at unprecedented detail, compared to other large-scale chronicles of the European Middle Ages.

As the work progressed, the declared *causa scribendi* and the possible readership underwent changes. According to the prefaces addressed to Provost Šebíř of Mělník and to Master Gervasius, archdeacon of the Prague chapter, the first book was meant to be a compact literary work designated for an intimate circle of like-minded intellectuals whom Cosmas befriended. Neither introduction betrays any large-scale concept by Cosmas aiming at a national chronicle. The ostentatious modesty with which Cosmas describes his own creation as the whims of an old man is usually understood to be a literary mannerism. Even so, the first book of Cosmas's *Chronicle* clearly contains several moments of discontinuity, both in the narrative itself and in the motifs and their literary treatment.[44] It is even fair to assume that the works that found their way onto the lecterns of Provost Šebíř and Master Gervasius were quite different in scope and concept and merely foreshadowed the final appearance of Cosmas's work.[45]

[43] See below, 2.

[44] See below, XXXII–XXXVII.

[45] Recently Martin Wihoda (in Hrdina – Wihoda, *Kosmas*, 10–2) reopened the question of whether Cosmas's work represents a concept that was thought out from the beginning, or whether it came into existence segment by segment and layer by layer. Major previous opinions on this matter are put forward by Bretholz (*Die Chronik,* XX–XXV) and Václav Hrubý, "Na okraj nového vydání Kosmovy kroniky" [On the new edition of Cosmas's *Chronicle*], *Časopis Matice moravské* 49 (1925), 371–84, but also the review of Václav Novotný, "Die Chronik der Böhmen des Cosmas von Prag. Unter Mitarbeit von W. Weinberger herausgegeben von Bertold Bretholz," *Časopis Matice moravské* 48 (1924), 250–65, and Třeštík, (*Kosmas*, 69–77).

For Šebíř of Mělník, to whom the work in its original form was dedicated, Cosmas provides no details on the contents of his work, which allows for the assumption that he worked off a subject that was generally known and of standard proportions. Presumably, the idea was to provide a history of the ducal seat and chapter, that is, essentially, what is today the second part of the first book.[46] The original intention of Cosmas thus seems to have been a literary elaboration on annals of the Prague chapter that have since been lost. Dušan Třeštík holds this hypothetical text for the primary source of the *Chronicle*.[47] According to him, it is improbable that this version, i.e. the enlarged annals of the Prague chapter, already included quotations, paraphrases, and references to Regino of Prüm and to imperial annals (that are nowhere developed further).[48] These additions seem to be incompatible with the original theme and only attain meaning by the later effort to expand what began as an institutional chronicle into a national chronicle.

The second piece of Cosmas's text, which stands on its own in terms of its literary treatment, motifs, and sources of information, were the first chapters containing the *origo gentis* narrative.[49] They originated, according to the second preface to the first book addressed to Master Gervasius, in the legendary stories of old men,[50] but it is probable that they represent the invention of the chronicler. Their classical and biblical templates are obvious. The second preface may be taken as a proof that the *origo gentis* narrative must have been created only later. Moreover, there is a visible break in narration of the first book: Cosmas inorganically touches upon the figure of Bořivoj twice[51] but deliberately leaves out the complex of themes

[46] See below, 60–146.

[47] Třeštík, *Počátky*, 102–5.

[48] E.g. below, 74–8, 370–2 and 376–8.

[49] See below, 8–60.

[50] I.e. below, 5: "I have started this account with the first inhabitants of the land of the Czechs, and, to the extent of my ability and knowledge, I relate for the pleasure of all good people the few things I have learned from the fanciful tales of old men, not striving for human praise but to prevent the stories from wholly falling into oblivion."

[51] See below, 42–6 and 60–2.

associated with the legends of Wenceslas and Ludmila.[52] This omission may be caused by the decision of the author to make Prince Břetislav I the main "hero" of the *Chronicle*. His holy predecessor on the throne would make a sort of "natural" centre of the narrative and would give different meaning to the *Chronicle*.

There is no indication that Cosmas would have expected that his writings be read by wider public ("in schools and castles," as the so-called Gallus Anonymus had wished[53]). The moralizing purpose comes through quite a few times when Cosmas compares his contemporaries—vainglorious and servile—to the upright and honest ancients. However, to present a glorious past and teach the present generations about models to follow and errors to avoid was a common concern of all medieval historians (and, maybe, of modern ones as well). Cosmas was no exception.

Putting new, "mythical" chapters in front of the original text caused a major shift in the author's (hypothetical) concept. The chronicler drew here a connection between the history of the most important institutions in the land and the *Herkunftsgeschichte* of the Czechs.[54] He therefore offered a narrative that could legitimize the rule of the Přemyslid family.[55] Even so, this was still not a national ("state") chronicle that would have reflected the history of the Czechs within the broader context of the history of the empire in particular, in the way the second and third book of Cosmas's *Chronicle* do. It appears that the third and most recent layer was created by incorporating the passages from Regino and annals. Cosmas may not have had at first the capacity fully to flesh these out, as can be seen from the fact that he embarked on this exten-

[52] See below, 62–4.

[53] See *Gesta principum Polonorum. The Deeds of the Princes of the Poles*, ed. and trans. Paul Knoll and Frank Schaer, CEMT 3 (Budapest/New York: CEU Press, 2003) [henceforth: *GpP*], 213.

[54] See below, 10–28. See also Alheydis Plassmann, *Origo gentis: Identitäts- und Legitimitätsstiftung in früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Herkunftserzählungen,* Orbis mediaevalis: Vorstellungswelten des Mittelalters 7 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006) [henceforth: *Origo gentis*], 324–9.

[55] See below, 30–42.

sion only after he had finished the second book of his *Chronicle*. He revealed it in a preface to the second book addressed to Abbot Clement of Břevnov Monastery, hinting at his ultimate intention: to draw up a history of the Přemyslid realm from its beginnings to the recent times.

No doubt, in the second book Cosmas still drew on the lost annals of the Prague chapter as a source for his work. However, as the author himself notes in what clearly appears to be a *postscriptum* to the first book,[56] that mediated testimony, official documents, and in particular Cosmas's own autopsy now (i.e. in the second book) began to play an ever more important role as sources of information. Cosmas's "autopsy" dominates the third book, which brings the account up to date, right to the final days of the author. It follows from the closing verse of the second book and the preface to the third book that the extended concept of a "national" chronicle (i.e. books I and II) included no plan for a further continuation of the narrative. However, when the author broadened his ambition beyond what was originally conceived as a scholarly miniature, his audience grew accordingly. This public voiced interest in seeing more of Cosmas's work.[57] It also included broader circles beyond the higher clergy, as can be seen from Cosmas's concern (expressed in the preface to the third book) that he might draw the ire of the powerful[58] but also from punch lines and flourishes that are clearly addressed at a broader audience.

Dušan Třeštík saw Cosmas's final aim above all in presenting a continuity of the governance in the Bohemian duchy by underlining the people, not only the land or its rulers. He wrote:

> The origins, as described by Cosmas, play a key role in Czech history. His statement that the Czechs settled in an empty land meant that they as its first inhabitants were the rightful owners

[56] See below, 142–6.

[57] As can be seen from the reference to a certain Bohumil, pupil of Abbot Kliment, in the prologue to the second book, 150–2.

[58] See below, 192–4.

> of the country. The election of the first ruler had an equally important meaning whereby the people gave up their freedom and fully submitted to the duke's authority. The election attested to the age-long rights of the Přemyslid dynasty to reign over the land while at the same time sanctioning the principle of monarchy: allegedly, already Přemysl determined that only one person of his family should reign. [...] Up until the times of Boleslav II the situation in the Czech lands was orderly, Břetislav I's law of seniority succession was observed and the dukes did not constantly fight among themselves. There was peace in the Czech lands and their international position was strong.[59]

Cosmas regretted that this situation changed in his times. He tried to show a mirror to his contemporaries: the past as example for the present and future. By connecting the fate of the people closely to the dynasty, Cosmas wished to underline that (in Třeštík's words)

> ... the Czech nation was united not only by the knowledge that they had come from a common ancestor (which is something every primitive tribe always and everywhere imagined), but by the fact that they concluded some sort of a "social contract" with the ruling dynasty. Therefore, the Czechs were not only a tribe but a community of people who are subject to the duke and who are connected with him through bonds of obedience and fidelity which they undertook long ago when they elected the forefather of the dynasty as their ruler. They are not connected through blood but through politics. Cicero would call them a populus—politically active citizens.[60]

It is fair to say that Cosmas saw his intentions successfully accomplished in the first and second book of his *Chronicle*: "Hold your

[59] Dušan Třeštík, "O Kosmovi a jeho kronice," in *Kosmova Kronika česká*, trans. Karel Hrdina, and Marie Bláhová (Prague/Litomyšl: Paseka 2005), 12. See also Třeštík, *Kosmas*, 113–20, and Třeštík, *Počátky*, 99–116.

[60] Třeštík, "O Kosmovi," 12.

pace, Muse, you have had plenty of stories. The song is sung, say: farewell, dear reader."[61] In spite of this sentiment, Cosmas went on to revisit his work. The preface to the third book, which addresses a broad readership, suggests that the first two books resonated with a very special audience. Cosmas does not say anything about the identity of those early recipients, but his account of how he was urged to resume his history of the Czechs indicates that among his readers were now not only his personal acquaintances. He also counted, at least on a mediated level, with the well-connected power holders of his time: "it is better to be fully silent about men and times of our own age than to cause harm by speaking the truth, for truth always engenders hate."[62]

Cosmas's style and approach to his work are noticeably different in the third book. He moved on to the form of personal memoirs and to a description of the shared history of the society of his times. There are fewer references to classical works and to ecclesiastical texts, and the text is now only minimally punctuated by the incorporation of secondary motifs (and if they do occur, they are Cosmas's private observations and recollections).

Genre, motifs, and style

Cosmas's *Chronicle of the Czechs* is an excellent piece of literature. It may have been based on a more or less faithful rendering of known facts[63] (to the extent that his sources were able to supply), but the carefully conceived literary approach is no less significant. This approach is reflected in the author's constant switching between genres: in the set of partly inherited but adapted motifs that provided—especially the first book that would otherwise be a collection of disjointed historical snippets—a coherent narrative structure. To these comes the broad palette of styles which Cosmas

[61] See below, 288.

[62] See below, 292–4.

[63] Cf. Jiří Sláma, "Kosmovy záměrné omyly" [The deliberate mistakes of Cosmas], in *Dějiny ve věku nejistot: Sborník k příležitosti 70. narozenin Dušana Třeštíka*, ed. Jan Klápště, Eva Plešková, and Josef Žemlička (Prague: NLN, 2003), 261–7.

employs and which includes the clever use of biblical and classical quotations as much as various literary figures of speech.

The skillful mix of genres, motifs, and styles represents the key element in the lasting impact of Cosmas's work. It is also a proof of his literary gifts, for it allowed him to make his text attractive to readers and provided the *Chronicle* with a hermeneutical consistency. It prevented the hodgepodge of heterogeneous historical events from being reduced to a mere annalistic summary of facts, bare of any contextual value. A proper understanding of Cosmas's text as a literary work is an indispensable requirement for any critique of the *Chronicle* as a historical source. However, the sheer scale of Cosmas's inventiveness makes this task daunting, as can be seen from the large and diverse body of literature tackling this aspect. Until recently, no comprehensive work attempted to analyze in depth Cosmas's text under this important aspect.[64] Furthermore, the partial and isolated contributions to the issue were almost exclusively the domain of Czech speaking scholarship. Only recently did the study of Lisa Wolverton[65] appear on the scene; its obvious advantage and merit lies in its independence from Czech and Central European debates, which has allowed her to address the issue in a very personal way but within the context of the broader (especially Anglophone) discourse of literary scholarship. Wolverton's understanding of the Czech identity as being tied to the soil certainly has the potential to inspire further research, and so does her gender-based interpretation of certain motifs (e.g. the Maidens' War, Libuše as ruler and prophetess, Matilda of Tuscany, etc.), or her deconstruction of Cosmas's concept of power. Still we lack a consistent analysis of Cosmas's text, for Wolverton pays only marginal attention to those aspects which do not resonate with the main themes of contemporary literary studies. Such would be Cosmas's role as a source for the "etatization process" (state build-

[64] Berthold Bretholz discussed the issue in *Die Chronik*, esp. XXVI–XXXVI. Dušan Třeštík (in the studies cited) addressed some of the topics too, but a comprehensive appraisal is still missing.

[65] Lisa Wolverton, *Cosmas of Prague: Narrative, Classicism, Politics* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015) [henceforth: *Narrative*].

ing) in tenth-century Bohemia, or his attitude to Slavonic vs. Latin liturgy; here the traditional approach is unlikely to yield any fresh answers. Thus, not even this latest literary analysis of Cosmas's work, however unprecedented in scope and ambition, may be the last word in terms of completeness or clarity.

A few general conclusions can still be risked about how Cosmas works with genres and motifs. The *Chronicle* is clearly divided into two parts of roughly equal dimensions. The first, essentially the first book and the first half of the second, is a highly variegated mixture of genres and motifs. The second part can be best described as a stylistically homogeneous, compact account of contemporary political history interspersed at rather regular intervals with occasional personal recollections of the author and anecdotes.

The mythical beginnings are narrated in a colorful style with strong leanings on the Old Testament but also with echoes from Virgil's story on the founding of Rome. The narrative about the first ruler reflects perhaps some kind of oral traditions concerning the Přemyslid dynasty.[66] Many elements of the story are variants on themes common in medieval historiography in the East and West alike. Remarkably, however, Cosmas did not connect the ancestors of the ruling family to any known Biblical person (such as one of the sons of Noah, as was usual in the genre) nor to figures of the classical world such as the Trojans but let them appear indigenous. The early historical times are covered unevenly, often only by quite terse annalistic entries, mostly culled from other historians, above all, from the Chronicle of Regino of Prüm.[67] Annalistic lines ap-

[66] On the mixture of possible local (though hardly folkloric!) traditions and common European *Wandermotive* in this part, see František Graus, "Kirchliche und heidnische (magische) Komponenten der Stellung der Přemysliden: Přemyslidensage und St. Wenzelslegende," in *Siedlung und Verfassung Böhmens in der Frühzeit,* ed. František Graus and Herbert Ludat (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1976), 148–61.

[67] "Chronicon Reginonis," in *Quellen zur karolingischen Reichsgeschichte*, ed. Reinhold Rau, vol. 3, Freiherr vom Stein Gedächtnisausgabe 7 (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1960); English translation by Simon MacLean, *History and Politics in Late Carolingian and Ottonian Europe: The Chronicle of Regino of Prüm and Adalbert of Magdeburg* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009) [henceforth: *History*].

pear later as well but vanish entirely from the third book, which is most detailed in reporting the day-to-day conflicts and confrontations with quite a few political-moralizing comments.

Princes and prelates

While narrating the story of the Czech people, Cosmas also wrote a *gesta principum*, describing and characterizing Bohemian dukes (and the two kings). Moreover, the *Chronicle* also contains a *gesta episcoporum*: all the bishops of Prague up to Cosmas's own times are discussed in detail and most of them receive nice obituaries from the author. One must keep in mind, though, that these passages, which probably represent the first hypothetical version of the chronicle, may not necessarily have been based on real circumstances—especially in the case of figures from the tenth century. In several cases, we are clearly dealing with retrojection of concerns that troubled Cosmas's contemporaries into previous eras (for which the political testament of Boleslav II is a characteristic example[68]). In other cases, older legendary tales and (maybe oral) traditions were elaborated upon to create complementary *exempla*. In this manner, Cosmas very elegantly resolves the problem of scarce historical information. Such stories are, for instance, the narrative about the contemptible prince vs. the good prince (Boleslav I vs. Boleslav II), or the story about the cursed bishop Strachkvas, usurper of the see,[69] and the saintly bishop Adalbert. Strachkvas is Boleslav II's son in the *Chronicle*; his baptism provides the backdrop for St. Wenceslas's assassination. Cosmas describes the course of Strachkvas's life thus: first he calls him an "excellent son born

[68] See below, 106–10.

[69] For the most recent account of his personality, see Josef Šrámek, "Osobnost procházející dějinami, stále záhadný Kristián" [A character passing through the ages: the ever-elusive Kristián], *Studia Theologica* 10 (2007), 32–40. From the point of view of the literary studies, the Strachkvas narrative is dicussed in Jan Hasil, "Kosmas: literát, ideolog a historiograf raného přemyslovského státu" [Cosmas: writer, ideologue and historian of the early Přemyslid state], in *Přednášky z 56. běhu Letní školy slovanských studií*, ed. Jiří Hasil (Prague: FF UK, 2013), 138–46.

from esteemed wife"[70] who with time grew up to become a talented boy, embarking, to the joy of his parents, on an ecclesiastical career[71]—apparently a successful one, for Cosmas has St. Adalbert sing the praises of Strachkvas's suitability for the bishop's office.[72] Strachkvas declines the honor, though: "I am a monk, I am dead, I cannot bury the dead."[73] Yet, no later than in the next chapter, the chronicler calls Strachkvas a man who covets episcopal honors, a dandy, a peacock, a hypocrite, and the "high priest of the ignoble." For good measure he adds a paraphrase of Isaiah when he calls Strachkvas a pseudo-bishop.[74] followed by a description of his disgraceful demise during the episcopal consecration.[75] Cosmas gives us no good reason for this blatant change of character of Strachkvas; we are left to deduce the twist in the story on our own. The only hint is a prediction by St. Adalbert that Strachkvas will in the end accept the bishopric after all: "Know, brother, know that what you do not do now for good, you will do later but with great harm to yourself."[76] Cosmas thus juxtaposes St. Adalbert—the bishop who yearned to become a monk, and became a martyr—and a carefully created literary adaptation of the tradition of Strachkvas, the monk who craved to become bishop, and whom betides ignominious death at the very moment at which God should bestow favor upon him. The juxtaposition is further enhanced by the employment of the rhetorical device of *vituperatio*.[77]

Cosmas consciously avoided hagiographical texts such as the Lives of St. Wenceslas or (in detail) of St. Adalbert and, in-

[70] See below, 66.

[71] See below, 66–8.

[72] See below, 96–8.

[73] Cf. below, 99, n. 257.

[74] See below, 102.

[75] See ibid.

[76] See below, 98.

[77] This rhetorical device was correctly identified already by Dušan Třeštík, "Přemyslovec Kristián" [K. the Přemyslid], *Archeologické rozhledy* 51 (1999) [henceforth: "Přemyslovec Kristián"], 612–3, though without providing any interpretation as to its use.

stead of inserting them into the text of his *Chronicle*, he advised his readers to learn the respective stories directly from them, i.e. from other books (which is again a proof that he aimed at well-educated elites).[78] It is the genre of the micro-legend, however, which plays a singular role in the flow of Cosmas's narrative, and which the author took to such extremes as to create a "cameo" role for himself in one of them.[79] He included, among others, the story of the five eremitical brethren, murdered by robbers in Poland, with very elaborate and poetic praises of their asceticism.[80] He also produced a sort of "epos" about the so-called Lucko war, which represents an autonomous insert into the first part of the first book and which makes an impression of a small and compressed stylistic exercise.[81]

Cosmas's readings and the Liège tradition

As a former student of a famous educational institution, Cosmas knew the works of Virgil, Ovid, Sallust, Lucan, and Statius well and, as a cleric, he was conversant with the Bible and with such Christian authors as Boethius and Sedulius Scottus. He used both kinds of literary models, Classical and Judeo-Christian, in a free manner: sometimes quoting verbatim, sometimes culling a word or two, or paraphrasing. His fellow clerical readers would have appreciated some fine hints at Biblical passages. The head of a treacher-

[78] See below, 62–4.

[79] For instance, the legend of the Bamberg Chalice, see below, 122–4, and in particular Cosmas's own visionary dream, 240–2.

[80] See below, 126–32. Actually, Cosmas could have known Bruno Querfurtensis's *Vita quinque fratrum*, ed. Jadwiga Karwasińska, MPH n.s. 4 (Warsaw: Państw. Wydaw. Nauk., 1973); see also with English translation by Marina Miladinov in *Vitae sanctorum aetatis conversionis Europae Centralis (saec. X–XI). Saints of the Christianization Age of Central Europe (Tenth–Eleventh Centuries)*, ed. Gábor Klaniczay, CEMT 6 (Budapest: CEU Press, 2013), 183–314 [henceforth: *Saints*]; but, considering that it survived in a single manuscript and may not have circulated in the Middle Ages, he may have had some other source about their life and death.

[81] See below, 42–60. The so-called *Legenda Christiani,* which is probably older and which offers its own (very short) version of the origins of Přemyslid power, does not contain this episode.

ously murdered child (in the story of the mythical Duke Neklan[82]) is presented to the ducal court on a dish (*caput in disco*) just like that of John the Baptist.[83] A nice parallel to Christ's Passion can be detected in the chapter about Duke Břetislav II's murder in 1100. The duke is reported to have foretold his companions, at the table (probably a motif from the New Testament referring to the Last Supper), his inevitable fate. Then, returning from his last hunt, he is received by his men, coming out "with lanterns and torches" (verbatim from John 18:3 on the betrayal of Jesus). The fatally wounded duke fell, like the angel (or star?) Lucifer from heaven (an interesting expression of a rather ambivalent attitude of the chronicler to this particular ruler: the Angel Lucifer fell because of his *superbia*) while his murderer was "sent by the devil" and is also styled *minister Satane.*[84]

In one instance, Cosmas reinterpreted a line from the *Disticha Catonis*, regarding the value of money,[85] but that is rare. He liked animal metaphors from Classical fables but seems to have composed his own as well.[86] His Latin is good, occasionally quite elegant and witty, although when he wants to display his familiarity with Greco-Roman mythology, he occasionally gets into deep waters. The *Chronicle* is rich in rhymed and rhythmical prose, and is at a number of places—according to the custom of *prosimetrum*—interspersed with ten- to fifteen-lines long pieces of poetry. One or two lines long hexameters abound.[87]

Unfortunately, no library catalogue from the school of Liège that could give us an indication of the readings of the students has survived from this period. However, we have a relevant

[82] See below, 50–2.

[83] See below, 58, cf. Mt. 14:8.

[84] See below, 318.

[85] See below, 108.

[86] On these, in a comparative context, see Krisztina Fügedi, "Bohemian sheep, Hungarian horses, and Polish wild boars," in *Animal Diversities*, ed. Gerhard Jaritz, Medium Aevum Quotidianum, Sonderband 16 (Krems: Medium Aevum Quotidianum, 2005), 66–88.

[87] A detailed analysis of style and form is offered in Bretholz, *Die Chronik*, XXXVI–XLV.

source that allows us to form at least an approximate idea: the library catalogue of Lobbes Abbey, with which the cathedral school of Liège entertained close relations during the period of interest. Several masters of the cathedral school of Liège and a few bishops were recruited from the monastery of Lobbes. That catalogue accounts for most of the titles with which Cosmas was familiar as proven by the references in his work.[88] In the library catalogues of Lobbes, we find much of the classical literature that Cosmas cites such as Sallust's *Bellum Iugurtinum* and his *De Catilinae coniuratio*, Vergil's *Aeneis* (as well as his *Bucolica*), Lucan's *Bellum civile*, Boetius's *Consolatio philosophiae,* Horace's *Odes* and *Ars poetica*, and Cicero's *De oratore*. Although we find no direct references in Cosmas's *Chronicle* to rhetorical handbooks such as Cicero's *De oratore*, we can assume that these texts played a role in the curriculum of the Liège school. The remarkable richness of the collection of classical literature can be traced back to Bishop Rather (899–974), monk of Lobbes and bishop of Liège, who was an avid collector of manuscripts and travelled around Europe in search of rare classical texts. In light of the availability of these texts, we need not necessarily go from the assumption that Cosmas derived his classical citations from grammatical handbooks or, as has been maintained, from Regino of Prüm's chronicle.[89] Cosmas may well have had ready access to the full texts of the classical authors he cites.

Another indication of the kind of literary-rhetorical education that Cosmas received at the cathedral school of Liège can be gleaned from the *Chronicle of Liège*, written around 980 by Heriger of Lobbes, a magister from the monastery of Lobbes, commissioned by Bishop Notger of Liège. Heriger describes rhetorical

[88] Cf. Francois Dolbeau, "Un nouveau catalogue des manuscripts de Lobbes aux XIe et XIIe siècles," *Études augustinienses* 14 (1979), 69–71; Henry Omont, "Catalogue des manuscrits de l'abbaye de Lobbes (1049)," *Revue des bibliotheques* 1 (1891), 3–14.

[89] Marie Bláhová, for example, took it for granted that Cosmas borrowed his references to Paul the Deacon's *Historia Romana* from the *Chronicle* of Regino, but Paul the Deacon's *Historia* is also listed in the library's catalogue, as was, for that matter, Regino's chronicle.

exercises, known as *suasoriae* and *controversae*, by which students practiced their skills in declamation, dialectical reasoning, and the composition of (fictional) speeches. He remarks that the exercises in *declamatio* of the school of Liège were different from those of other schools in the sense that students would be given fictional frivolous themes instead of actual judicial cases to practice their rhetorical skills.[90] One can easily imagine how Cosmas would have learned to compose his fictional speeches, which are a characteristic feature of his *Chronicle*, from practicing *declamatio* via improvisations upon fictional themes such as Heriger describes. The rhetorical device that Cosmas employs frequently in his *Chronicle*, rendering the views and opinions of his protagonists in direct speech or inserting full-blown (fictional) speeches into his *Chronicle*, is called *sermocinatio* or *ethopoeia*. Quintilian describes in his *Institutes of Oratory* how *sermocinatio* grew from school exercises, in which a pupil had to speak as a pirate, a badly behaved son, or an old father.[91] According to Quintilian, such exercises in speech making came close to comedy. We can see this comical trait also in Cosmas's fictitional speeches,[92] for example in the speech that he

[90] *Herigeri et Anselmi*, 165: "Et ne hic labor, qui te adhortante susceptus est, inferacis operis fiat: non eius modo cuius meminimus, sancti scilicet Remacli, verum caeterorum nostrae sedis pontificum tempora et gesta, quae undecumque potuere conradi, ad nostra usque tempora collegi, et cuius potissimum anhelabas desiderio, vitam inde exceptam, votis tuis porrexi; longe quidem mea sententia ab oratoris obtimi excellentia me ratus differre qui plurima paucis absolvere, pauca plurimis protelare, vel magna extenuare, maxima e minimis efficere, lata anguste, arigusta late, vulgata dicenter dicentia intellectualiter, nova usitate, usitata nove et id genus valeat plurima delibare, cui et a poeta praecipitur: Aut famam sequere, aut sibi convenientia finge. Nec ut scholares posito themate quibus verbis uti potuit qui injuriam passus est velle qui intulit aliquid finximus frivolum, immo nec creperum." Heriger talks about "we," from which we can infer that he is talking about educational practices in the cathedral school of Liège, not of the monastic school of Lobbes, since he is writing a chronicle of Liège.

[91] Quintilian *Inst*. 3.8.49–54.

[92] On Cosmas as humorist see Petr Kopal, "I kdyby snad byl toho dne drahého otce pochoval, byl by se jistě musil smáti. Humor a smích v Kosmově kronice" [If he would bury his own father on that day, he would have to laugh still. Humor and laughter in the *Chronicle* of Cosmas], in *Evropa a Čechy na konci středověku. Sborník příspěvků věnovaných Františku Šmahelovi*, ed. Eva Doležalová, Robert Novotný and Pavel Soukup (Prague: Filosofia, 2004), 369–82.

put into the mouth of a certain ruffian, who dared to criticize the female judge Libuše. Although Libuše was the stuff of myth, she was clearly a woman Cosmas admired. Cosmas provides an ironic twist to the abusive speech of Libuše's critic by having the uneducated man quote the Roman playwright Terence. Thus he gives the man's inappropriate address of Libuše a slightly ridiculous touch, at least to those readers who were able to pick up the reference to Terence's play *The Eunuch*.[93] We can find another comic aside in Cosmas's rendition of the verbal exchange between the peasant Přemysl and a delegation from Libuše who came to tell him he was to become their duke. Cosmas remarks ironically that, in spite of Přemysl's reputed gift to foresee the future, he apparently had not seen the request of the delegates coming.[94] The rhetorical device of *sermocinatio* provided Cosmas not only with the means to enliven his historical narrative but also with an opportunity to put his own opinions into the mouths of his protagonists[95] or express his own moral judgments via an ironic inversion of someone else's speech. Irony is an important trait of Cosmas's style of writing. Although Cosmas could have become acquainted with the rhetorical scheme of irony via many possible literary influences, this can also be traced back to his literary-rhetorical education in Liège.[96]

[93] See below, 18–24: "A man should rather die [than suffer such things]," from Terence *Eunuch* 7.773.

[94] See below, 26–8: "At this speech, the foreseeing man, as if unaware of future things..." This need not be a contradiction, since Cosmas leaves the option open that Přemysl simply pretended not to know the future; the phrase contains nonetheless an ironic opposition.

[95] Libuše's reply to her boorish critic for example reflects Cosmas's own opinions on the ideal state.

[96] Irene van Rensvoude, *Licence to Speak. The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

AFTERLIFE

From Continuatores *to vernacular versions*

The "popularity" of Cosmas is borne out by the fourteen surviving manuscripts from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. However, already the Czech literary-historiographic circles of the twelfth and thirteenth century were overwhelmingly dominated by an understanding of the narrative of Czech history and of the ethos of the Přemyslid state that was shaped by Cosmas. Since the times of the Czech National Revival in the first half of the nineteenth century, these authors are known as the *continuatores* of Cosmas.[97] This group of authors is characterized by an unquestioning acceptance of the "constitution" of the Czech principality that Cosmas had verbalized. That for them was (presumably the only broadly acceptable) hermeneutic point of departure for their contemporaneous reality, even if they ultimately did not agree with each and every opinion voiced by Cosmas, as can best be seen from the series of annotations and addenda concerning the history of Sázava Monastery.[98] A second shared characteristic of these authors (to the extent that we are able to identify them) is their close ties to the court and the episcopal see in Prague, so that Cosmas represented a useful role model for them, both conceptually and topically.

The first addition to the text comes from an anonymous canon of Vyšehrad, on the events of 1126–1142, written up in line with Cosmas's style and concept.[99] Independent of him, another anonymous scribe, known as the Monk of Sázava, built upon the material by supplementing Cosmas's text with addenda on the his-

[97] As noted by Graus already in the 1960s ("Necrologium Bohemicum," 789–810), sources of a commemorative character hint at the existence of discourses which may have understood the history of the Přemyslid state, and thus the political realities of the time, somewhat differently, but which never penetrated "high literature."

[98] These insertions represent coherent source material and thus have been included in the present edition, see p. n. and Appendix.

[99] Text and Czech translation of all texts considered to be written by *continuatores* is given in Josef Emler, ed., *Cosmae Chronicon Bohemorum cum continuatoribus*, FRB II (Prague: Muzeum Král. Českého, 1874), 201–81.

tory of Sázava monastery. His continuation for the period 1126–1162 reads like a monastic chronicle rather than a chronicle of the Bohemian duchy and its people. Following up loosely on the canon of Vyšehrad, Vincentius (d. 1167), a cleric and diplomat of (likely) Czech extraction, who acquired vast knowledge on contemporary politics during his various diplomatic missions for King Vladislav (d. 1174) and Bishop Daniel (d. 1167), transformed this knowledge into annals for the period 1140–1167. These annals of Vincentius were in turn the starting point for Gerlach/Jarloch (1165–1228), the abbot of the Milevsko monastery, a scholar originally from the Rhineland, who carried the work forward to 1198. In addition, the annalistic history maintained through the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century at the Prague chapter is sometimes referred to as a "second continuation of Cosmas."[100]

The extinction of the House of the Přemyslids in 1306, followed by the tumultuous events of 1306–1310, necessarily marked a watershed for Czech historical thought. The historical consciousness of the Czechs and the coherence of Czech society could no longer be derived from the continuity of power enjoyed by the Přemyslid princes and kings. The political stage was entered by new entities (such as influential monasteries, landed gentry, and, later, townships), for which Cosmas's worldview lacked the relevant categories. The ideological concept codified by Cosmas had outlived its usefulness, the era of the *continuatores* came to an end, and the times called for a new interpretation of the history of the Czechs. However, given that Czech historical thinking and literature lacked any alternative, it was clear from the beginning where the search for that new interpretation would have to take off; and indeed, the reinterpretation of Czech history would largely prove to be a search for new ways of how to understand Cosmas's legacy.

[100] On these, Marie Bláhová, "Continuatio Cosmae I" and "Continuatio Cosmae II," in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Graeme Dunphy et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 489–91, and Lisa Wolverton's entry on "Cosmas," ibid., 494–5.

The narrative of Cosmas, especially his mythical stories about the beginnings of the Czechs, was expanded and made widely accessible by the vernacular rhymed chronicle traditionally called the "Dalimil chronicle" (1310/1314).[101] The anonymous author of its 4,500 lines strengthened Cosmas's anti-German stance and reformulated the story focussing at the problem of the identity of Czech-speaking elites facing the breakdown of existing power structures.[102] That there was demand for an innovated understanding of Czech history is borne out by the fact that, among other things, Dalimil's verses were soon (ca. 1342–1346) translated into Middle-High-German and quite recently a fragment of an illuminated manuscript containing Latin translation (probably from Italy, ca. 1330) has also been found.[103] The first half of the fourteenth century enriched Czech literature for the first time with an alternative literary form to Cosmas's monarchical-episcopal *gesta*: monastic chronicles. These, whether in their more homely manifestation (*Chronicon Domus Sarensis*)[104] or with excellent quality of style (*Chronicon Aulae Regiae*),[105] for the first time offered a dif-

[101] Jiří Daňhelka, Karel Hádek, Bohuslav Havránek, and Naděžda Kvítková, ed., *Staročeská kronika tak řečeného Dalimila. Vydání textu a veškerého textového materiálu* [The Old Czech chronicle of the so-called Dalimil. Edition of text and of all textual material], 2 vols, (Prague: Academia, 1988). See also, most recently, Éloise Adde-Vomáčka, *La chronique de Dalimil. Les débuts de l'historiographie nationale tchèque en langue vulgaire au XIV^e siècle* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2016).

[102] Following František Graus, this understanding of the earliest Czech history may be called *protonationalist*, see his "Die Bildung eines Nationalbewusstseins im mittelalterlichen Böhmen," *Historica 13* (1966), 5–49. Graus himself later abandoned his proposition, formulated in the 1960s, on the continuity of Czech *protonationalism* since the times of Cosmas; cf. Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen im Mittelalter*, Nationes 3 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1980) [henceforth: *Die Nationenbildung*], esp. 52.

[103] See Marie Blahová's entry in *The Encylopaedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, 504–5.

[104] "Letopisy žďárské," ed. Josef Emler, FRB II (Prague: Nadání Františka Palackého, 1874), 517-57.

[105] Josef Emler, ed., *Chronicon Aulae Regiae*, FRB IV (Prague: Nadání F. Palackého, 1884), 1–337. German translation: *Die Königsaaler Chronik,* ed. Stefan Albrecht, trans. Josef Bujnoch and Stefan Albrecht, Forschungen zu Geschichte und Kultur der Böhmischen Länder, Bd. 2 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014).

ferent genre of historiography and an alternative mode of speaking about sovereign (public) power.

With the stabilisation of royal power in Bohemia under the House of Luxemburg after 1344 (when the future Emperor Charles IV was installed as co-ruler), Czech society revisited the issue of legitimization of royal power. During the reign of Charles IV, several historical narratives were produced, the most successful among them the *Chronicle* of Přibík Pulkava of Radenín.[106] Přibík used the *Chronicle* of Cosmas, together with the chronicle of the so-called Dalimil, as a basis of his narrative. He concentrated on the history of the rule of the Přemyslid dynasty, which was depicted as the family of the present ruler from the Luxembourg family, and on the history not only of Bohemia but of all lands of the so-called Bohemian Crown, which at that time included several Silesian principalities and Brandenburg. The chronicle experienced several auctorial reworkings. One of them concerned the history of Brandenburg, added into the text of the chronicle after Charles IV gained that land and incorporated it into the Bohemian Crown. The individual stories of Cosmas experienced very detailed reworking in the *Czech Chronicle* (*Kronika česká*) written by Václav Hájek of Libočany (finished in 1541).[107] Václav Hájek created a real "bestseller"; his chronicle was used well into the nineteenth century, although already Gelasius Dobner revealed its factual unreliability.[108] Hájek's narratives—and not those of Cosmas—entered into the historical consciousness of the modern Czech nation, in which they live as a set of symbolical expressions of the Czech-Bohemian past until today.

[106] Josef Emler and Jan Gebauer, ed., *Przibiconis de Radenin dicti Pulkavae Chronicon Bohemiae*, FRB V (Prague: Spolek historický, 1893) [henceforth: *Przibiconis Chronicon*], 1–326. Cf. Marie Bláhová and Václav Bok, "Pulkava of Radenín, Přibík," in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, 246–7.

[107] Jan Linka, ed., *Václav Hájek z Libočan: Kronika česká* [Václav Hájek of Libočany. Czech chronicle] (Prague: Academia, 2013). Cf. Jan Linka, ed., *Na okraj Kroniky české* [On the Czech chronicle], Studia hageciana I (Prague: Academia, 2015).

[108] Dobner published a new edition of Hájek's chronicle with his own critical commentary. See *Wenceslai Hagek a Liboczan Annales Bohemorum* 1–6, ed. Gelasius Dobner (Prague: Kirchner, 1761–1781).

Only with the beginning of the nineteenh century and the "miraculously found" forged manuscripts of Königinhof/Králův Dvůr and Grünberg/Zelená hora did a complement to Cosmas's narrative of the earliest Czech history appear. These manuscripts contained lyric and epic poems about the Czech past, much more elaborate, pompous, and heroic than Cosmas or the so-called Dalimil or even Hájek of Libočany. Some of the most famous parts such as the "Court of Libuše" are based on the *Chronicle* that they not only embellished but also fashioned according to the romantic expectations about an early development of the Czech state and culture. They became the accepted version of the early history of Bohemia—accepted even by the father of modern Czech historiography, František Palacký—and a cornerstone of the National Revival.[109] Thus we owe it to the protracted debate over the authenticity of the manuscripts, in which both the professional community and the general public took part, and which carried strong nationalistic undertones that public buildings, memorials, poetry, and music created by generations of Czech artists in the second half of the nineteenth century celebrate fictitious characters rather than the heroes of Cosmas's narrative.

The master narrative and its challenges

Ever since the twelfth century, when a handful of literate Czech clerks discovered in the pages of Cosmas's *Chronicle* an ideological concept underlying the by then mature Přemyslid state, there is an astounding continuity of that master narrative in Czech historical

[109] On the Czech manuscript forgeries, see Milan Otáhal, "The Manuscript Controversy in the Czech National Revival," *Cross Currents: A Yearbook of Central European Culture* 5 (1986), 247–77. Now also Pavlína Rychterová, "The Manuscripts of Grünberg and Königinhof: Romantic Lies about the Glorious Past of the Czech Nation," in *Manufacturing Past for the Present. Forgery and Authenticity in Medievalist Texts and Objects in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. János M. Bak, Patrick Geary, and Gábor Klaniczay (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 3–30. A summary of the research concerning the manuscripts was published by Mojmír Otruba, ed., *Rukopisy královédvorský and zelenohorský. Dnešní stav poznání* [The MSS of Königinhof and Grünberg: Present state of knowledge] (Prague: Academia, 1969).

thinking. The term *master narrative/metanarrative* was introduced in the 1970s by Jean François Lyotard who used the term *grand récit* to describe a transhistoric narrative rooted in the collective awareness of the advocates of a certain culture, a narrative which lends cohesive meaning to, and determines, the compartmentalized awareness and narratives resonating through the given culture.[110] But the master narrative can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it defines a prejudice (*Vorurteil*) within the meaning of the German postmodern hermeneutic school[111]—that is to say, a point of departure (and, essentially, a prerequisite) for understanding. On the other hand, it draws up rules of discourse[112] and thus predetermines, among other things, the meaning of terms and issues worth of scholarly debate. Modern Czech historiography has not always been able to escape the obvious inherent risks associated with the master narrative.

As we have shown above, Cosmas's master narrative represented the cornerstone of Czech historiographic discourse throughout the Middle Ages and into modern times. Modern critical historical scholarship is no exemption. Cosmas's ideas were favored by František Palacký who in his *Würdigung der alten böhmischen Geschichtschreiber* wrote: "One may name these three periods [of Czech history writing] after the historians who at the time exercised dominant influence, and thus speak of Cosmas's, Hájek's, and Dobner's history."[113] However, upon reviewing the key works of writing on the earliest Czech history across the centuries, we find that the main source was invariably Cosmas who never had to face the competition of a genetically alternative concept, notwithstanding the various attempts to update and adapt his work.

[110] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).

[111] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode, Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1975), 18.

[112] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2002), esp. 55–61.

[113] František Palacký, *Würdigung der alten böhmischen Geschichtschreiber* (Prague: Borrosch, 1830), 11–2.

Palacký himself and his direct successors just added a fourth epoch to the three he had mentioned. Nationalistic political efforts in the nineteenth and twentieth century played their part in making Cosmas's master narrative an integral part of all leading modern Czech historical schools. "Official" Czech historiography, of which Cosmas was certainly the spiritual father, primarily sought to bring the various interpretations of the available sources in line with Cosmas's concept (or with that what the later medieval tradition held for it).

From the second half of the 1960s onward, the "school" of František Graus in Prague became important in Czech historical scholarship. The scholars involved accomplished a major modernization of the official (post-)Marxist understanding (which essentially had its roots in the Cosmasian *master narrative*) both in terms of methodology and theoretical background. From the 1990s onward, the views of this school achieved universal acceptance. The recent standard medieval histories were written by them, by Dušan Třeštík and Josef Žemlička. The more recent studies of Jan Klápště[114] and Petr Sommer on the beginnings of Christianity and the state have begun to attain a similar prominence.[115]

As mentioned above, the notion of taboos is inherent to any discourse, that is, the borders that must not be crossed and a framework that must not be transcended, which means that certain issues cannot be named and certain questions cannot be discussed. An example of such a taboo within the master narrative of Cosmas—and, following it, the "official line" of Czech history writing—is the situation in Bohemia in the ninth century. In brief, the question is whether there was a Czech "political na-

[114] Třeštík, *Počátky*; Žemlička, *Čechy v době knížecí*; Jan Klápště, *Proměna Českých zemí ve středověku* (Prague: NLN, 2005, [2]2012). See also the (alas, mediocre) English translation of the work: Jan Klápště, *The Czech Lands in Medieval Transformation* (Leiden: Brill, 2012) [henceforth: *Transformation*].

[115] In particular, the anthology of case studies by Petr Sommer, *Začátky křesťanství v Čechách. Kapitoly z dějin raně středověké duchovní kultury* [The beginnings of Christianity in Bohemia. Chapters from the history of early medieval culture] (Prague: Garamond, 2001).

tion" that would have regarded itself as such in that time, before Bohemia was unified under the rule of Boleslav I.[116] How it would be related to the term *Bo(h)emanos,* which had wide currency in the imperial annalistic of the time, and to other source references indicating a diversity of powers in ninth- and early-tenth-century Bohemia?[117] The positions of current scholarship are in this respect as inconsistent as the ideas of Cosmas nine hundred years ago were. The self-evident complexity and non-obviousness of the course of events in pre-Přemyslid Bohemia cannot be ignored, much less denied. It may have been pure chance that historical circumstances conspired to give rise to the Czech Přemyslid state and the nation of Czechs.[118] In any case, Cosmas of Prague and, following his lead, an overwhelming part of Czech history writing engaged in myth-making. He and they tell us the grand tale of the Czechs, with only very rare forks on the road leading into entirely inconsequential blind alleys, while the phenomenon of the Czech *gens* remains permanent and immutable. Similar evidence of Cosmas's impact on modern Czech historical thinking is provided by the case of Slavic liturgy. The conspicuous silence of Cosmas

[116] For an overview of how the perception of this issue during the early, high, and late Middle Ages developed in post-war Czech historiography, see Graus, "Die Bildung eines Nationalbewusstseins," 5–49; Graus, *Die Nationenbildung*, esp. 52; František Šmahel, *Idea národa v husitských Čechách*, [The idea of the nation in Hussite Bohemia] (Prague: Argo, ²2000); Třeštík, *Počátky*, 59–60.

[117] The issue is summarized by Jan Hasil, "Les élites franques de l'ouest comme des chefs de clans dans l'environnement slave?," *Etudes Medievales Université de Picardie Amiens* 50 (2011), 50–61.

[118] Aside from alternative "domestic" centers of state building, in particular around Kouřim (Andrea Bartošková, "Stará Kouřim," in *Europas Mitte um 1000*, 314–6), one must also consider established assimilation models that have most recently been revisited in connection with Slavic populations in the southeast of the Empire (Hans Losert, "Slawen in der Oberpfalz – eine Bestandsaufnahme," *Acta Archaeologica Carpathica* 42–43 (2007–2008), 301–70; Stefan Eichert, *Frühmittelalterliche Strukturen im Ostalpenraum. Studien zu Geschichte und Archäologie Karantaniens* [Klagenfurt: Verlag des Geschichtsvereins für Kärnten, 2012]), nor may one ignore the realistic "Moravian" scenario; see Jiří Macháček, "'Great Moravian State' – a Controversy in Central European Mediaeval Studies," *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana* 11 (2012) [henceforth: "Great Moravian State"], 5–26.

on Sázava, the true nature of which is nowhere suggested in the text, has often led scholars to draw a straightforward connection to the conflict between a "Western" Latin clergy and an "Eastern" Old-Slavonic clergy (in truth, a Latin-Slavic clergy influenced by the Eastern Church). For generations of Czech historians this has provided, and continues to provide, fodder for speculation—speculation that often seemed to anticipate current social and political consequences of the geopolitical positioning of the Czech lands between East and West. In fact, however, Sázava is not the only monastery in which Cosmas shows no interest; for instance, Ostrov u Davle (founded ca. 999) is not mentioned either.

Of course, alternatives were and are available. If we disregard the case of the notorious forged manuscripts, these alternatives begin to appear from ca. 1900 onward. Among them are narratives based on the blueprint of German nationalist discourse[119] or on the tradition of Czech humanism,[120] but above all approaches that are based on different source categories or different hermeneutical-methodical grounds.[121]

[119] Cf. Julius Lippert, *Die altslavischen Gesellschaftsformen in ihrem Verhältnisse zur Colonisation Böhmens* (Prague: Verlag des Deutschen Vereines zur Verbreitung gemeinnütziger Kenntnisse, 1889); Berthold Bretholz, *Geschichte Böhmens bis zum Aussterben der Přemysliden (1306)* (Munich and Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1912).

[120] The debate that became known as the dispute over the meaning of Czech history, which in its key phase was fought by representatives of Czech mainstream historiography against liberal-national political thinkers informed by sociology, may have focused on a more recent period but still harbored the potential for a reinterpretation of even the earliest Czech history. This reinterpretation never really occurred, due to WWI and the subsequent creation of Czechoslovakia. Under the new social circumstances, the main combatants principally found common ground in statist opinions—and accepted the Cosmasian master narrative as a part of the ideological underpinnings of the state. On this, see Miloš Havelka, ed., *Spor o smysl českých dějin 1895–1938* [Dispute over the meaning of Czech history] (Prague: Torst, 1997).

[121] From among the most important milestones, we should mention: the legal-historical interpretation by Václav Vaněček, *Prvních tisíc let... Předstátní společenská organisace a vznik státu u českých Slovanů* [The first thousand years... The pre-state organization of society and the origin of the state of the Czech Slavs] (Prague: Život a práce, 1949). An interesting example is early Marxist historical interpretation, on whose development see, most recently, Vítězslav Sommer, "Tři fáze

The twenty-first century witnessed a new wave of alternative paradigmatic approaches to the earliest Czech history—and thus, in many ways, also to Cosmas's *Chronicle*. Lisa Wolverton's book[122] recasts the earliest history of Bohemia as a *hastening toward Prague*, with Cosmas's work in the role of a more or less reliable informant, but which has had only marginal impact on the mainstream, in a clear departure from the majority of previous discourse. The work of Petr Charvát[123] similarly remains wholly outside the Czech and Central European discourse; it attempts to infer the idiosyncratic hypothesis of a unified Czech *gens* going back as far as to late antiquity. Of course, Cosmas's testimony cannot be shoehorned into this concept, though it still comes useful as a secondary literary reflection of key moments in Charvát's theory. By contrast to these studies, the representatives of Moravian medieval studies (to the extent that they attempt to capture the earliest Bohemian-Moravian history from a non-Cosmasian vantage point) prove much more sensitive towards the older discourse. While they do not accept it, they are still able to communicate with it on numerous levels. In the most recent studies of Martin Wihoda and

stranického dějepisectví v padesátých a šedesátých letech" [Three stages of the historiography of the Party in the Fifties and Sixties], in *Proměny diskursu české marxistické historiografie: Kapitoly z dějin historiografie 20. století*, ed. Bohumil Jiroušek (České Budějovice: Jihočeská univerzita, 2008), 271–86. Further, the concepts of Rudolf Turek, *Počátky české vzdělanosti. Od příchodu Slovanů do doby románské* [The beginnings of literacy in Bohemia, From the arrival of the Slavs untill the era of Romanesque architecture] (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1988); Turek, *Čechy na úsvitě dějin* [Bohemia at the dawn of history] (Prague: Orbis, ²2000); and Vladimír Karbusický, *Anfänge der historischen Überlieferung in Böhmen. Ein Beitrag zum vergleichenden Studium der mittelalterlichen Sängerepen* (Cologne/Vienna: Böhlau, 1980) [henceforth: *Anfänge*]. Finally, two works that are today all but forgotten in spite of their undiminished topicality are to be named: Rostislav Nový, *Die Anfänge des böhmischen Staates 1. Mitteleuropa im 9. Jahrhundert* (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1969), who addressed the issue in a broader (Central) European context, and above all the excellent comparative analysis penned by Graus, *Die Nationenbildung.*

122 Wolverton, *Hastening*.

123 Petr Charvát, *The Emergence of the Bohemian State* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), as to the positioning of Charvát's studies within the system of current discourse, see the review by Ivo Štefan in *Early Medieval Europe* 20 (2012), 479–81.

David Kalhous,[124] we encounter an honest and critical reception of Cosmas's text as one of many sources on the earliest Czech and Moravian history, even if the objectives of their work are still different in each case. Wihoda attempts a regional history of Moravia in a modern guise, while Kalhous undertakes a structural analysis of society under the Přemyslids. Current Moravian medieval studies do not challenge Cosmas's particular auctorial intentions but have nonetheless freed themselves from the spell of his master narrative. In contrast to the moderate approach of the Brno school, the most recent Czech contribution to the earliest history of Bohemia, a biography of St. Wenceslas as its ruler penned by Vratislav Vaníček,[125] adopts a decidedly confrontational course against "official" historiography. Vaníček polemicizes in particular against the narrative of Dušan Třeštík, emphasized in the public discourse by the exceptional presence of this historian in Czech mainstream media during the past thirty years or so. The biography places the figure of St. Wenceslas to the front and center of its narrative, as some sort of "linchpin" of Czech history, whose ethos it extrapolates not only to chronologically later times but, surprisingly, even to earlier periods! In this manner, a dissenting narrative arises and is set apart from Cosmas's master narrative. While for Cosmas St. Wenceslas, with his charisma of the eternal ruler cum universal saint, remains above the daily political and social hubbub, untarnished and aloft, Vaníček turns him into a doer, an agent, an active mover of events (for instance, when he calls St. Adalbert "Wenceslas's bishop"). For this reason, the two narratives remain on different planes, even though Vaníček of course draws upon Cosmas for facts and events to build his story.

The above excursion should give a broad idea of how fundamentally significant the *Chronicle of the Czechs* is and was for Czech political and historical thinking, and it may be regarded as

[124] Esp. Martin Wihoda, *První česká království* [The first kingdoms of Bohemia] (Prague: NLN, 2015); Kalhous, *Anatomy*; Kalhous, *Bohemi*, 122–58.

[125] Vratislav Vaníček, *Svatý Václav: Panovník a světec v raném středověku* [St. Wenceslas: monarch and saint in the Early Middle Ages] (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2014).

"natural" that neighboring scholarly disciplines also show interest in this literary key relic. Current literary studies and textological research are represented by the studies of Jiří Hošna[126] and Libor Švanda;[127] historico-geographical *realia* in the text were analyzed in recent years by Pavel Bolina.[128] Of course, for the archeology of Přemyslid Bohemia, the *Chronicle* of Cosmas is an inexhaustible treasure trove. As early as in the second half of the nineteenth century, Ludvík Šnajdr[129] systematically collected material at sites which are mentioned in the oldest literary relics, among them Cosmas's *Chronicle*, thanks to which he was the first to identify early medieval ceramics in Bohemia. For those studying settlement history, Cosmas represents a body of information of fundamental importance. Archaeologists regularly return to those passages in the *Chronicle* that describe the development and construction of fortified centers of settlements and fortresses, as they need written sources to gain a first idea of where they were placed within the

[126] E.g. Jiří Hošna, "Intertextové vztahy ve svatováclavské legendistice" [Intertextual relations in the hagiographic texts on St. Wenceslas], in *Speculum medii aevi*, ed. Věra Jirousová (Prague: Koniasch Latin Press, 1998), 25–43; idem, "Slovanský a latinský fenomén v české literatuře raného středověku" [The Slavic and Latin phenomenon in early medieval Czech literature], in *Přednášky z XLI. běhu Letní školy slovanských studií*, ed. Jan Kuklík (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1998), 89–99.

[127] E.g. Libor Švanda, "K recepci antiky v Kosmově kronice" [On the reception of antiquity in the Chronicle of Cosmas], *Graeco-Latina Brunensia* 14 (2009), 331–40; idem, "Laudationes v Kosmově kronice" [Laudationes in the Chronicle of Cosmas], in *Pierwsze polsko-czeskie forum młodych mediewistów*, ed. Józef Dobosz, Jakub Kujawiński, and Marzena Matla-Kozlowska (Poznań: Uniwersytet Adama Mickiewicza Poznań, 2007) [henceforth: "Laudationes"], 123–33; idem, "K obrazu ideálního panovníka v Kosmově kronice" [On the image of the ideal ruler in the Chronicle of Cosmas], in *Querite primum regnum Dei. Sborník příspěvků k poctě Jany Nechutové*, ed. Helena Krmíčková et al. (Brno: Matice moravská /MU Brno, 2006), 211–21.

[128] E.g. Pavel Bolina, "Příspěvek k interpretaci Kosmových desátkových údajů. (K 880. výročí úmrtí kronikáře)" [A contribution to the interpretation of Cosmas's tithe records. (On the 880th anniversary of the chronicler's death)], *Český časopis historický 103* (2005), 828–60; Pavel Bolina and Tomáš Klimek, "K problematice Kosmovy bechyňské cesty" [On the issue of Cosmas's journey to Bechin], *Historická geografie* 36 (2010) [henceforth: "K problematice"], 99–136.

[129] See Jan Filip, "Ludvík Šnajdr – průkopník české vědy archeologické" [Ludvík Šnajdr – the pioneer of Czech archeology], in *Zdeňku Nejedlému Československá akademie věd. Sborník prací k 75. narozeninám* (Prague: ČSAV, 1953), esp. 648–52.

terrain of Bohemia, and of the rough chronology of settlement.[130] Two remarks by Cosmas on the construction of fortifications around Prague Castle and, in particular, of the *opere romano* rampart in Stará Boleslav, provide an invaluable glimpse of the efforts that went into building these fortifications.[131]

Clearly, the archaeology of early medieval Bohemia has also been influenced and formed by Cosmas's master narrative, the more so since "Slavic" archaeology, both through its choice of topics and the way in which it interprets them, has been complementing the "official" focus of Czech historiography.[132] It is not by accident that the strongest concept of Czech archaeology in the second half of

[130] Characteristically Jiří Sláma, *Střední Čechy v raném středověku II. Hradiště, příspěvky k jejich dějinám a významu* [Central Bohemia in the Early Middle Ages, II. Fortresses, contributions to their history and significance], Praehistorica XIV (Prague: Karolinum, 1986).

[131] See below, 192–4 and 70–4; cf. Ivana Boháčová et al., *Stará Boleslav: Přemyslovský hrad v raném středověku* [St. B., an early medieval Přemyslid fortress], Mediaevalia archaeologica V (Prague: Archeologický ústav AV ČR, 2003) [henceforth: *Stará Boleslav*], 17–28; Stefan Albrecht, "Von der Anarchie zum Staat: einige Überlegungen zu Cosmas von Prag," in *Der Wandel um 1000. Beiträge der Sektion zur slawischen Frühgeschichte der 18. Jahrestagung des Mittel- und Ostdeutschen Verbandes für Altertumsforschung in Greifswald, 23. bis 27. März 2009*, ed. Felix Biermann, Thomas Kersting, and Anne Klammt (Langenweissbach: Beier & Beran, 2011), 177–89.

[132] Incidentally, the pronounced overlap in terms of methodology and paradigms between historical archaeology and historiography in Czech scholarship has long been the subject matter of a polemical dispute fought against the representatives of "total or comprehensive" medieval studies (Zdeněk Smetánka, "Dva domy v Jiřské ulici a jeden v podhradí. Ze vzpomínek a rozpomínek na proměny archeologie středověku" [Two houses in Jiřská Street and one in the suburb. From the memories and recollections of the transformations of medieval archaeology], in: *Středověká Evropa v pohybu. K poctě Jana Klápště*, ed. Ivana Boháčová and Petr Sommer (Prague: Archeologický ústav AV ČR, 2015), 510.) by the proponents of a more narrow concept of archaeology as the science of artifacts—e.g. Evžen Neustupný, *Metoda archeologie* [The method of archaeology] (Plzeň: Aleš Čeněk, 2007). It appears that Czech archaeology partakes in the discussion of primarily historical topics more frequently than is customary in the rest of Europe—cf. the recent discussion over the character of the Great Moravian State (Macháček, "Great Moravian State"; Ivo Štefan, "Mocní náčelníci od řeky Moravy? Poznámky ke struktuře raných států" [Mighty chieftains from the river of Morava? Notes on the structure of early states], *Archeologické rozhledy* 66 (2014), 141–76.).

the twentieth century which attained recognition in the general scholarly discourse—namely, Jiří Sláma's *Přemyslid domain*—is interpreted as the result of a process that has been dated to an era which Cosmas sidestepped with an elegant rhetorical device.[133]

The desideratum expressed by Graus at the end of the 1960s—that a non-Cosmasian understanding of Czech history has to be looked for—has yet to be fulfilled. But during the past decade, serious efforts within Czech historiography were undertaken to leave Cosmas's behind and to open up to the broader historiography on the European stage and possibly beyond. Doubtless, the task also calls for new approaches to Cosmas—both the work and the man—and the present edition hopes to help to respond to this challenge.

PRINCIPLES OF THIS EDITION

The present—first bi-lingual Latin-English—edition follows the general principles of the Central European Medieval Texts series.

The Latin text

As usual in CEMT, the Latin text is based on the best critical edition, in this case that of Bretholz (*Die Chronik*), without the variant readings printed in the MGH edition. Only rarely did

[133] See below, 62–4. Regarding the development of how historians write about the earliest Czech history, we need to note that the basic outline of these concepts emerged already in the first half of the 1970s, in polemical texts by Jiří Sláma, "K historickému významu budečského hradiště" [On the historical significance of the fortress of Budec], *Archeologické rozhledy* 26 (1974), 34–50; Idem, "Poznámky k problému historického významu některých raně středověkých hradišť ve středních Čechách" [Notes on the issue of historical significance of certain early medieval fortresses in Central Bohemia], *Archeologické rozhledy* 29 (1977), 60–79; cf. Zdeněk Váňa, "Výzkum Libušína v letech 1970 a 1971. Doplňující poznámky k postavení hradiště ve středočeské oblasti" [The exploration of Libušín in 1970 and 1971. Additional notes on the role of the fortress within the Central Bohemian region], *Archeologické rozhledy* 27 (1975), 52–71, that is, before the important historical studies published at the beginning of the 1980s—in particular the original version of Třeštík's *Počátky* published in 1981 and Graus's *Die Nationenbildung* of 1980—became influential.