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## Constructing hatred: So-called Dalimil, *Němci* and the rise of ethnic strife in the fourteenth-century Bohemia\*

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„Po všech Němciech pověst jdieše  
že Soběslav jich nenávidieše.”<sup>1</sup>

The turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries was in Central Europe a moment of heightened ethnic tensions. They were seen as a natural result of increased contact with foreigners — mostly German-speaking population of varying social status — in the course of the great colonisation movement since the late 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> Growing political activities of incoming German knights and burghers of the most important urban centers, such as Prague, Wrocław and Cracow, was a decisive factor in the genesis of the aforementioned phenomena. Meanwhile, Central European rulers saw in the foreign chivalry and burghers an opportunity to consolidate their power. The bearers of ethnic resentment against German newcomers were thus primarily representatives of the native Slavonic secular and ecclesiastical elites, but the factors stimulating its intensification in different regions of Central Europe varied.<sup>3</sup> These tensions were evident even to outside and distant observers, such as the anonymous Franciscan author of a brief description of southern and eastern Europe, who noted around 1308 about Poles that “naturale odium est inter ipsos et Theotonicos.”<sup>4</sup> There is ample evidence of such tensions in the narrative sources. Among them, however,

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<sup>1</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 68, p. 179 (v. 15–16): [Among the Germans spread the news / that Soběslav hates them] — all translations of old Czech texts in footnotes by the author.

<sup>2</sup> The influence of these phenomena on the formation of early forms of national identity with elements of proto-nationalism has already been the subject of repeated research interest: ZIENTARA 1968, pp. 197–212; GAWLAS 1990, pp. 149–194; ŠMAHEL 2000, pp. 12–34; GRAUS 1980.

<sup>3</sup> On the perception of foreigners in earlier Czech historiographical works: AURAST 2020; SOBIE-SIAK 2018, pp. 322–334; ZELENKA 2021, pp. 211–217; KALHOUS 2021, pp. 81–99.

<sup>4</sup> *Descriptio* 1916, p. 56; ZIENTARA 1968.

only the Chronicle of So-called Dalimil provides a coherent, historically motivated picture of ‘strangers’ and long-term ethnic conflict waged with them.<sup>5</sup>

The Styrian chronicler Ottokar, writing around 1320, recalling disfavour and ingratitude shown by King Wenceslaus II to his German advisors — Arnold, Bishop of Bamberg, and Suabian nobleman Dietgen of Kastel, noted that there is widespread knowledge of the hatred, hostility and envy that Czechs feel towards Germans.<sup>6</sup> In order to express one of these negative feelings, the chronicler used a Middle High German word *haz*, which is easily identifiable with contemporary German word *Hass* — hatred.<sup>7</sup> Ottokar’s opinion about Czechs and their rulers wasn’t overly positive either,<sup>8</sup> but confirmation of the veracity of chronicler’s words is not difficult to find on the other side of ethnic border. All too many proofs are provided by an anonymous Old Bohemian author called Dalimil, a contemporary of Styrian chronicler, who ca. 1315 also rhymed his literary work in vernacular as a kind of compendium of native history from the beginnings of the Czech polity to his present days.<sup>9</sup> Nowhere in the historiography of that time did the ethnic conflict emerge so strongly, moreover in such elaborated form, as in So-called Dalimil’s work. Already the innovative employment of a vernacular language in the historiographic work, which has counterparts only in contemporary Middle High German works, defined the natural audience for the radical ideological message of the chronicle. The concept of ethno-political identity, which the chronicler consistently constructed around synonymous notions of *země* (land) and *jazyk* (language) and the idea of a political community of noblemen — *obec*, which together with the ruler is supposed to guard welfare of the whole land, is coupled to aggressive xenophobia.<sup>10</sup>

Unequivocally, almost obsessively anti-German tone of the entire work, written at the beginning of the reign of the new Luxembourg dynasty, immediately after turbulent period of struggles for the Czech throne, means that the rhymed chronicle is often interpreted as a product of current social traumas, caused not only

<sup>5</sup> Interesting parallels can be revealed by analyzing contemporary ethnic resentments against the Frenchmen in Western and Southern Europe. On Sicily 1282 and in Flanders 1302 there was an outbreak of physical violence against the French newcomers due to political reasons. About the reminiscences of these events in contemporary historiography KAMP 2021, pp. 65–98.

<sup>6</sup> *Ottokars Österreichische Reimchronik*, p. 296, v. 22400–22422: “wand wir wizen alle daz, / daz gevære, nit und haz / der Bêheim stæt dem Tiutschen treit.”

<sup>7</sup> The Grimms’ dictionary still gives a version *Hasz*, more akin to Middle High German: „HASZ, m.”, *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*, digitalisierte Fassung im Wörterbuchnetz des Trier Center for Digital Humanities, Version 01/21, <https://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB?lemid=H03230> (access: 22.05.2022).

<sup>8</sup> See: BOK 2021, p. 113; RAZIM 2009, p. 163–172.

<sup>9</sup> BLAHOVÁ 1995, pp. 272–303; attempts to identify the chronicler must be regarded as not very fortunate, see for example EDEL 2000.

<sup>10</sup> On So-called Dalimil’s political ideology: GRAUS 1986, pp. 92–95; UHLÍŘ 1985, pp. 7–32; BLAHOVÁ 1995, pp. 224–254; BLAHOVÁ 2008, pp. 635–652.

by the assumption of power by foreign king after four centuries of rule by the native dynasty.<sup>11</sup> The reasons for such xenophobic reaction can be found in the influx of German militant newcomers during the competition for the throne.<sup>12</sup> The latter were not chivalrous immigrants or casual visitors to the king's court, as was mostly the case up to that time, but mercenary warriors in the service of the militant parties — the Habsburgs, the Luxemburgs or Henry of Carinthia and his Saxon allies. Political repressions and usual looting excesses by the intruders were not only hard on the native nobility and the common people, but also on the German Cistercians from Sedlec and Zbraslav. There were also political aspirations of the German patriciate of the leading urban centres — especially Prague and Kutná Hora, clashing with the monopolising influence of the Czech lords on power. It is impossible to deny either the influence of current events on the chronicler's assessments or the fact that the chronicle is a symptom of an early stage of proto-nationalism, the driving force of which was, as in Poland at the time, the growing Czech-German antagonism.

However, can the acrimonious xenophobia of the Bohemian be explained solely by his fresh dislike of foreign rulers, their accompanying armed troops, courtiers and advisors? Or was it only the contemporary experience of the first years after the Přemyslid dynasty that shaped the chronicler's strongly anti-German worldview? The constituent elements of ethnic resentment, which I have characterized here as 'constructing hatred', require a thorough analysis. The social context beyond this narrow chronological horizon, which includes the decades-long German presence in the Přemyslid state, has so far not been given much consideration in the assessment of So-called Dalimil's motives. In an almost atavistic reflex to defend his native identity, So-called Dalimil created an image of eternal enemy and violent ethnic antagonism.<sup>13</sup> In his view, threat to the Czech noble community stemmed not only from the inevitable prospect of a foreigner installing himself on the Czech throne — something he warned against in a presentist manner already in the first chapters of his work, putting into the mouth of duchess Libuša a prophecy about the harmful nature of foreign rule.<sup>14</sup> The obsessive anti-Germanism of the chronicler caused him to consider the attitude towards Germans as an absolutely basic criterion for the assessment of Czech rulers, not only those contemporary, but also those from the distant past. Surrounding himself with newcomers, giving them free hereditary estates — *dědiny* and castles — *tvrze*, and favouring them with the ultimate intention of eliminating native elite by depriving Bohemians of their rights and property, was the gravest of all accusations that the So-called Dalimil could formulate against some of Přemyslid rulers. This thread is recurring with great frequency in the whole

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<sup>11</sup> Recently see SOBIESIAK 2018, pp. 324–325, however only vaguely, without any reference to the discussion on social affiliation of So-called Dalimil's *Němci*.

<sup>12</sup> WIHODA 2020, pp. 121–130.

<sup>13</sup> BLAHOVÁ 1995, pp. 239–243.

<sup>14</sup> DALIMIL 1988, I, cap. 4, p. 129 (v. 19–29).

chronicle, and in fact, from the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards, there was hardly a Přemyslid who, according to the chronicler, would not have been more or less favourably inclined towards the newcomers from the German Reich. Only a few of Czech dukes opposed the foreigners, and their atrocities towards the latter was accepted or even appreciated by the chronicler. The problem of the attitude not only towards the Emperor, but also towards the Germans allegedly present in a large number in Bohemia grew, under the pen of the So-called Dalimil, into a major political issue. Already in the more or less distant past there were conflicts between the Přemyslids on this basis, as well as between the princes and their Bohemian subjects, even ending in the murder or expulsion of the former.

The question of motives of the Přemyslids who favoured foreign visitors seems particularly interesting. The chronicler mentions this explicitly extremely rarely. Bořivoj II, who had already been dethroned by his brother, believed that allowing the Germans to enter his land would ensure him a stable rule. That's why he ordered the watchmen at the land's gate near Domažlice to let the strangers in through the border forest:

Ale Bořivoj neumě té milosti schovati  
I je sě opět Němcóm v zemi zváti  
A když mněšie, aby kněžstvem byl jist, posla do Domažlic list,  
Aby Němcě lesem do země pustili.<sup>15</sup>

In the case of the last Přemyslids, propensity towards newcomers was strongly correlated with a desire to harm or at least disregard Bohemian barons and the whole native community. The chronicler probably reveals some knowledge of a real turning point during the Wenceslaus I's reign when he writes about the removal of the Bohemians and giving the village of Stadice — the mythical cradle of the dynasty — to the German colonists. He noticed also the king's generosity, which, however, was aimed by no means to the locals, but to the chivalric newcomers.<sup>16</sup> So-called Dalimil considered it a mistake of the Bohemian lords not to counteract these ruler's activities, although his assessment of the noble rebellion of 1248/1249, to which he devoted a separate chapter, is ambivalent. Despite considering favours given to the Germans by Wenceslaus I as a reason for noble rebellion against the old king, the chronicler also portrayed its leader, Čtibor Hlava, as a man full of pride but unable to foresee fatal consequences of his own policy.<sup>17</sup> The military support given to the king by the Ger-

<sup>15</sup> DALIMIL, II, cap. 63, p. 135 (v. 43–47): [But Borivoy does not know how to appreciate this favor / and begins again to summon the Germans to the country / and when he thought he was sure of his power / he sent a letter to Domažlice / to let the Germans in through the forest into the land].

<sup>16</sup> DALIMIL, II, cap. 77, p. 304 (v. 27–32): „Káza s Stadíc svůj rod rozehnatí / a tu ves Němcóm dáti. / Páni pod sobú větev podtěchu, / že královi z toho nevecechu. / Neb uzřě, že počě pečě nejmieti na pány; / rozdělí Němcóm své dědiny v lany”; DALIMIL, II, cap. 80, p. 346 (v. 1–2): „Král Václav šedřý bieše, / ale Němcě v zemi plodieše.”

<sup>17</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 80, p. 346 (v. 7–16).

man territorial lords and their chivalry remained ignored (or he simply knew nothing about it), which, however, did not prevent the chronicler from interpreting the events of 1248/1249 in his typical poetics of a violent ethnic conflict.<sup>18</sup> The construction of narrative marking the end of Přemysl Otakar II's reign is in fact very similar. The theme of taking hereditary land from the Czech noblemen returned in chapter 80, marking the end of Přemysl Ottocars II's reign. It has already attracted much scholars' attention because of still disputable list of Czech lords affected by confiscations and king's reprisal.<sup>19</sup> Reasons for such a policy haven't been presented clearly in the narrative but according to the chronicler, Přemysl openly formulated a plan of removing Bohemians from their homeland.

The consistent subordination of the narrative to xenophobic discourse meant that, when writing about the more distant past, the chronicler did not hesitate to deviate far from his historiographical prototypes, deeply modifying course of events recorded in twelfth-century Czech narrative sources. According to So-called Dalimil, the conflict between Soběslav I and Lotar III, which culminated in a victorious battle at Chlumec, resulted from the emperor's striving to revenge on the duke for persecuting Germans settled in the Czech lands.<sup>20</sup> However, Soběslav was followed by Ladislaus II (called also Vratislaus in some manuscripts), allegedly his son but unlike his father, a "přítel jazyka němečského" — a friend of German language, who received the royal crown from the emperor and returned from the Reich surrounded by Germans. For this reason, Vladislav's son Soběslav and the Bohemian noblemen opposed the ruler, had him dethroned and forced to flee to Germany. Wladislaus' successor, which is recorded by the chronicler not without evident satisfaction, ordered to cut off the ears and noses of the Germans staying in his duchy, saying:

Němče, po světu nehled',  
v svéj zemi mezi svými sed'  
Po dobrés ot svých nevyšel  
Pověz, proč si mezi cizie přišel?<sup>21</sup>

The chronicler embellished this made-up story with a macabre motif of paying Czech warriors a hundred marks of silver for the cut off German noses brought on a shield, which reflects the chronicler's attitude to the use of physical violence against strangers. However, the imperial intervention in favour of the deposed Ladislaus, called here "the German king", ends with another great victory for Bohemians. The following fragment of chapter 68 is a reflection of the chronicler's strong

<sup>18</sup> On these events further PAUK 2006, pp. 87–106.

<sup>19</sup> See JAN 2008, pp. 85–100.

<sup>20</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 65, p. 150 (v. 3–6).

<sup>21</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 68, p. 179 (v. 5–8): [German, in the world don't look around! / Sit in your land among your own! / In a good cause from your own you have not gone out. / Tell me, why you have come among strangers?].

conviction about negative role of the cultural reception of foreign elements, attractive to the Czech elite — courtly customs and German as an elitary dialect. Here, the successor of the emperor killed by Bohemians in a battle continues his efforts to subjugate the rebellious nation, but this time by non-military means. To this end, he successfully pressures Soběslav to send his two sons, Boleslaus and Přemysl, to the imperial court. Emperor's courtiers even changed their Slavic names, then calling them Friedrich and Conrad, and have easily taught them German language and customs as well. This kind of cultural 'colonialism' did not elicit any response from their father, Bohemian duke, but eventually So-called Dalimil put a long speech into Sobieslav's mouth, addressed from the fathers's deathbed to aforesaid sons, summoned from Germany. The chronicler's audience once again received here a fierce admonition about the importance of domestic political values, as well as a warning against favouring of foreigners in the land.<sup>22</sup>

In the part of So-called Dalimil's narrative on the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the chronicler even resorts to historiographical confabulation. In chapter 59, there is a story of the fictitious Duke Stanimir, with whom Duke Friedrich had to struggle for power. Here, too, the logic of narrative is subsumed to the ethnic antagonism, though without any prototype in earlier historiographical works. Stanimir, allegedly brought up, after all, at the imperial court, was said to have favoured the Germans at first, so he was exiled by the Bohemians and replaced by his brother Conrad, but the latter soon proved to be a protector of the foreigners too. The noblemen killed then Conrad, as he openly had declared his hatred of the nation: "Smrdí mi česká duše / pravě jako umrlá kušě."<sup>23</sup> Kingslaughter seems therefore to be only a simple retribution for contempt and hatred of one's own people.

Conrad was succeeded by the aforementioned Stanimir, who promised his subjects to expel the Germans, but as soon as he had consolidated himself on the throne, he ultimately proved to be the worst of all protectors of the newcomers:

Dvůr vešken němečský jmíeše,  
Čechův před sě nepustíeše.  
Na Prazě Hrabi němečského posadi  
A všě tvrže Němci osadi.<sup>24</sup>

In the historiographical concept of So-called Dalimil, rulers surrounding themselves with newcomers from the German Reich, as in the case of Conrad and Stanimir, invariably brought misfortune and political collapse, exile or even violent death.

<sup>22</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 68, pp. 182–183 (v. 145–180).

<sup>23</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 69, p. 220 (v. 16–24): [Czech soul smells to me / almost like a dead mongrel].

<sup>24</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 66, p. 221 (v. 39–43): [He had the whole court German / he did not allow Czechs in front of him / in Prague he established a German burgrave / and all the castles were manned by Germans].

In the less distant past there was also the case of Přemysl Otakar II. So-called Dalimil's description of his reign was widely commented by scholars from the perspective of its reliability. The downfall of the great ruler began when "král počě o svých netbati, / města i vsi počě Němcóm dávati. / Němcóv jě sě zdí hraditi / a pánóm počě nasilé činiti."<sup>25</sup> The chronicler put into the king's mouth the phrase that he did not want to see a single Czech on the Prague bridge — a motif also present, but without any connection with Přemysl Otakar in the so-called 'fragment of Budějovice' of the Old Bohemian *Alexandreida*.<sup>26</sup> It was on the advice of these Germans that the Bohemian ruler was first to give in to the demands of Rudolf Habsburg and hand over the Austrian lands to him, and then, abandoned by the Bohemian lords because of the violence and injustice done to them, he set off mainly at the head of the Germans to his fatal battle against the German king.<sup>27</sup> The chronicler also builds a causal link between the presence of strangers at the court and in the council of Wenceslaus II and the lack of just and peaceful internal rule in the kingdom.<sup>28</sup> Thanks to the bad advice of the Germans, the king strengthened his future enemy by sending his people silver and gold. It is therefore not surprising that Spityhněv, whose name the chronicler rhymed with the phrase "Němcom zjevi svój hněv",<sup>29</sup> emerges as the ideal Czech ruler in the work. Only in the case did the expulsion of the Germans have a source prototype in Cosmas' narrative, although the chronicler did not fail to embellish the story with the tale of leaving the abess banished from Prague in the Bavarian border forest, which may evoke ominous associations with our contemporary humanitarian crisis on the eastern border. The chronicler metaphorically compared the expulsion of foreigners to weeding nettles in a farmyard and removing turnips from a horse's mane.<sup>30</sup> The scale of the chronicler's manipulations, subordinated to the purpose of proving constant ethnic antagonism, is also reflected in the short account of the conflict between Bishop Andrew of Prague and King Přemysl Otakar I about the freedom of the church, which actually took place in the second decade of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Again, the reason for the purported rejection of Andrew's election by the Bohemian lords was supposed to be the granting of benefices to Germans and their presence at the bishop's court.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 86, p. 404 (v. 5–8): [the king began not to care about his people / cities and villages began to give away to the Germans / the Germans began to build castles / and do violence to the lords].

<sup>26</sup> *Alexandreida* 1947, p. 126: „Hi to by sě státi mohlo, / ačby to co juž pomohlo, / že Němci, již sú zde hošcie, / chtie doždaci, by na moscě / Praze, jehož Bóh snad nechá / nebyli viděti Čecha, / hi mohli by sě birž státi, / by jich byli nevidati.”

<sup>27</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 86, pp. 404–405 (v. 5–8, v. 55–68), s. 405: „Málo Čechóv s sobú na vojnu pojě / a Němci jide, jíž jě svojě. [...] Tehdy král s Němci v boj vnide / a pohriehu ten tu snide.”

<sup>28</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 90, p. 443 (v. 29–32).

<sup>29</sup> DALIMIL 1988, I, cap. 48, p. 553 (v. 2): [He will show the Germans his wrath].

<sup>30</sup> DALIMIL 1988, I, cap. 48, p. 553 (v. 1–14).

<sup>31</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 72, p. 259 (v. 8–12).

An essential question arises as to who exactly So-called Dalimil had in mind when he wrote about Germans constantly threatening the Czech political community. The social identification of So-called Dalimil's *Němci* has already become a subject of research controversy. Negating the significance of this record as a testimony to the early stage of the formation of national consciousness in the broader circles of Czech society at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Zdeněk Uhlíř attempted to reduce its anti-Germanism to the function of a sole political ideology. The latter was to be shaped under the influence of current events of 1306–1311, when, in addition to concerns about a foreigner on the throne, there were also emancipatory attempts by the German burghers of Prague and Kutná Hora, who were aspiring to important political influence during the competition for the Bohemian crown.<sup>32</sup> For this reason Uhlíř saw only a “class” sense in the chronicler's use of the term *Němci*, reducing it to the upper layer of town dwellers of German origin. Similarly, the ethnic value of the term *Češi* was far reduced from one social stratum, i.e. the lords and knights threatened in their political and proprietary rights.<sup>33</sup> As a result, the proto-nationalism of the So-called Dalimil was linked to the sphere of political ideology, thereby Uhlíř challenged its important role in the formation of early Czech national consciousness. The latter was to be formed, as it were, bottom-up, in the social consciousness of broad layers, which was expressed, for example, in the cult of “national” saints. Such a categorical separation of these two spheres must raise serious doubts. Even with a cursory analysis of the semantic scope of the two ethnic terms found in the chronicle, these theses seem difficult to accept. The revision of Uhlíř's thesis was undertaken as the first by Jaroslav Mezník. On the basis of analysis of 109 uses of the term *Němci* he observed that in 22 cases it clearly refers to outsiders, active in Bohemia as warriors, and in 49 cases it denotes Germans settled in Bohemia; the vast majority of them can be socially classified as knights rather than burghers.<sup>34</sup> In a concise text, however, the Czech scholar did not provide details of his semantic analysis. This picture has recently been replaced by a more detailed systematisation of source appearances of Germans in the work of the So-called Dalimil by Martin Nodl, who essentially verified Mezník's theses.<sup>35</sup> With reference to these findings, it is worth devoting some more attention to the type of activity attributed to Germans in Bohemia by the So-called Dalimil. This will make it possible to clarify what social circle the chronicler had in mind and whether his work is useful for the study of national resentment in Bohemia with regard to the influx of German knights.

An important difficulty in an analysis of this kind is the fact that we actually very rarely learn directly who the Germans mentioned in the work actually were. With the exception of those passages where the German rulers are mentioned, the author did

<sup>32</sup> MUSÍLEK 2009, pp. 139–163.

<sup>33</sup> UHLÍŘ 1988, pp. 143–170.

<sup>34</sup> MEZNÍK 1990, pp. 3–10; see also ADDE-VOMAČKÁ 2016, pp. 14, 115–118.

<sup>35</sup> NODL 2013, pp. 193–198.



not personalise this ethnic designation — the *Němci* always appear in the chronicle as a more or less defined collective, very rarely as personalised individuals. The chronicler distinguished however, numerous peoples living in the Reich — Brabantians, Frisians, Rhinelanders, Swabians, Thuringians, Bavarians, Saxons and Franconians — e.g. in the army summoned by the Emperor to invade Bohemia in the past. However, he was more precise in defining the geographical provenance of the dangerous newcomers from the German Reich only when describing times close to his own: thus, in accordance with reality, Přemysl Otakar II waged war with Bavarians (*Bawoři*), armed men occupying the country on behalf of the regent of the Kingdom of Bohemia, Margrave of Brandenburg Otto V, were Saxons. The army of King Albrecht of Habsburg invading Bohemia in 1304 was made up of Swabians, while the knights occupying the country during the reign of King Henry were accurately described as Carinthians and Meisseners, having in mind above all the territorial rulers of the Reich whom they served.<sup>36</sup> The chronicler also spared the recipients the personalities of the foreign visitors. Even in relation to the ambivalently described Hojer of Friedeburg — on the one hand a loyal courtier of Wenceslaus I, rescuing his master from oppression at the imperial court, and on the other an importer of the harmful custom of tournament games to Bohemia — the So-called Dalimil did not use an ethnic designation, writing about him only as a “host.”<sup>37</sup> The murderer of King Wenceslaus III was an anonymous Thuringian — one of three knights of that origin, sent to the Bohemian court by Albrecht Habsburg for a criminal purpose.<sup>38</sup> Other Germans present in Bohemia generally remained completely anonymous as well. In fact, there were only a few exceptions: members of Waise family, noblemen of Austrian origin but settled in Moravia, who were killed in battle against Hungary, Carinthian knight Henry of Aufenstein in the service of King Henry, as well as Prague burghers, referred to by their family names, though also without emphasising their ethnic origin.<sup>39</sup>

Already under the fictional Duke Stanimir, Germans populate the ducal court, displacing Bohemian lords; they also get castles under control, and one of them even becomes burgrave of Prague. At the time the chronicle was written, this was already a very important court office, created in the era of the last Přemyslids, and linked — which is probably not without significance here — with an important institutional function in the composition of the land court. The newcomers thus belonged to the court elite, held offices and benefices, and it was a serious accusation against the rulers to accept them as members of the council and to place their trust in them. The German named Lokr, cast in the role of murderer of Duke Břetislav II, is cha-

<sup>36</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 68, p. 180 (v. 55–58); cap. 101, p. 531 (v. 2).

<sup>37</sup> PAUK 2022b (forthcoming). I have also analyzed So-called Dalimil’s views on the reception of new court customs in a separate paper PAUK 2014, pp. 197–204.

<sup>38</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 96, p. 465 (v. 7–8).

<sup>39</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 99, p. 515.

acterised by such qualities. Lokr was a duke's huntsman, who was endowed with both ruler's confidence and grants of land. In the original story of the assassination, provided by the Cosmas' chronicle, the origin of the assassin was not mentioned, but the purpose of this amplification in So-called Dalimil's work seems completely self-evident — to illustrate the unfaithfulness of the newcomers, ready to betray despite favours and gifts they received.<sup>40</sup> In the much less distant past, the aforementioned Germans in the entourage of Přemysl Otakar II receive towns, villages and *dědiny* taken from Bohemian lords, advise the king to compromise with the Habsburg, and finally set off with him militarily at Dürnkrut. There is therefore no doubt about their elitary and chivalrous social status. Similarly, the newcomers present at the Wenceslaus II's court not only steer the king's policy towards the Habsburgs, but, being allowed access to the secrets of power, even play the role of agents of King Albrecht, informing him about the actions of the Bohemian ruler.<sup>41</sup> Even German marriages of the Přemyslids could mean that Germans were allowed into the court as the duchess used to be surrounded by German servants: “Němkyni německú čeled bude jmieti / a německy bude učiti me děti” — as Duke Oldřich have stated justifying his marriage to a Bohemian peasant woman.<sup>42</sup> A vote of no confidence in foreigners is perhaps most emphatic in the speech made by the chronicler in the mouth of Duke Vladislav addressed to his brother, Bořivoy, who favoured the Germans:

Bát'o, proč druhem se nekážeš,  
že Němcom jíti z dvoru nekážeš?  
Či nepomníš, co jsou nám zlého učinili,  
kako jsou Němci náš rod zradili?  
Vidal-lis kdy v jiněj zemi cizozemců v radě?  
Kterýž ten jest, ten chce svéj cti vádě.  
Z své země se dobrý nepostojí,  
Ktož se doma neschová, ten u nás stojí  
Kako ten můž cizozemci věren býti,  
Jenž s svými nemohohl sbýti?  
Kako ten bude tobě dobřě raditi,  
jenž myslí, kako by mohl uškoditi?  
Cizozemec nepřišel jest hledat dobra tvého,  
Ale na to, aby hledal užitka svého.  
Bude-li se tobě zle věsti,  
Kdo nedá jemu do své země lésti?<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> COSMAS VON PRAG 1980, lib. 3, cap. 13, p. 173.

<sup>41</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 90, p. 443 (v. 30–32), also cap. 91, p. 454 (v. 9–12).

<sup>42</sup> DALIMIL 1988, I, cap. 42, p. 493 (v. 25–26).

<sup>43</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 63, p. 134 (v. 7–22): [My brother, why don't you listen to the warnings of others, / that you don't tell the Germans to go away from the court? / Don't you remember what they did to us wrong / how the Germans betrayed our kin? / Has anyone seen foreigners on the council in another country? / Whoever acts in this way violates his honor. / The good from his land shall not

The Germans leaving their homeland and hastening to Bohemia in this passage are clearly members of the social elite — they sit on the ducal council, where they look after their own interests only, incapable of maintaining loyalty, which is the main value building the bond between the ruler and country's noblemen.

As often as the “eternal” Czech-German antagonism itself, the work recurs with the vision of the Czech nobility being deprived of their hereditary estates for the benefit of foreigners. The frequency of references to the rulers giving away *dědiny* (hereditary landed properties) to Germans testifies to the importance of the problem in the social perceptions and concepts of the chronicler. The same fears must have accompanied at the same time the author of the Old Bohemian *Alexandreida*, who creates a stark opposition between the status of newcomers and free Bohemian nobility, whose position is based on the free holding of land.<sup>44</sup> According to the chronicler, due to the promotion of foreigners by the Bohemian rulers, the native nobility and knighthood forming the “*obec*” — i.e. political community of Bohemians, were the only defenders of the national language and customs. Although such a thought was not expressed explicitly, it can be assumed that foreigners permanently settled in the Czech Lands and acquiring hereditary land ownership aspired to the group of *terrigenae*. In the chronicler's opinion, this creates the prospect of weakening and breaking up of the political community. The threat of distribution of wealth and benefices is particularly real under the rule of a foreign king. So-called Dalimil's mythical duchess Libuše admonishes against such danger in her prophecy amplified in relation to the prototype, i.e. Cosmas' story on the beginning of the ducal power in Bohemia. It would have been natural for a foreign ruler to surround himself with people of his own *jazyk* (language) and distribute to them landed property confiscated from the Bohemians. So-called Dalimil also accuses domestic rulers, especially those from the relatively recent past — Wenceslaus I and Přemysl Otakar II — of attempts at such actions. The former, according to So-called Dalimil, donated the village of Stadice to the Germans, from where, according to the legend, the dynasty derived its ancestry — which must have been particularly shocking for the author's native audience. We can easily guess that the Germans present in Stadice were village colonists, locating the village according to new legal models. The only particular instance of such distribution recorded in the chronicle is the donation of Bilina to the favourite of Wenceslaus I, Hoyer of Friedeburg, most probably in accordance with the reality. However, the rest of the chronicler's references to rewarding newcomers never refer to specific places or persons.

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depart / He who does not abide at home, he shall stay with us. / How can a foreigner be faithful to him who could not live with his own? / How can you be well advised by one / who only thinks how he could harm you? / The foreigner has not come to seek your welfare, / but his own benefit. / Will it go badly for the one / who does not let him enter his land?].

<sup>44</sup> *Alexandreida* 1947, p. 66: “Vspoměntež, že ste svobodni, / a tito hostie nehodní, / již sú porobeni vámi. / Pomyslite na to sami / pro svú čest a také pro mě / ač ny svú moci polomie / čest a zbožie potratime, / jakž sě viec neopravime.”

The complex of So-called Dalimil's xenophobic views, strongly tinged with politically motivated nationalism, makes of the *Němci* a barely stratified group, almost socially and linguistically homogeneous, in which it is possible to distinguish representatives of specific social groups only with additional criteria: these are both German peasants colonizing Stadice, German burghers populating in the 1260's the Smaller Town of Prague and, finally and by far the greatest extent, German knights, courtiers and clerks dominating on the Přemyslid courts from the remote past onward.<sup>45</sup> In the context of the above conclusion that the *Němci* in the Old Bohemian chronicle of the So-called Dalimil are mostly members of the upper social stratum and the court elite, this message becomes of paramount importance when assessing the social reaction to the phenomenon of chivalric migrations to Bohemia. Above all, the question arises about the representativeness of the author's views to a particular social group or to the Czech political nation as a whole in the first decades of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

Were So-called Dalimil's xenophobic reactions and assessments an individual attitude, personal prejudices and phobias only, or rather a record of more common social frustrations? Other contemporaneous records, not only of Czech origin, tend to assume the latter. Particularly expressive testimony of such tensions — leaving aside Old Bohemian *Alexandreida* already referred to here — seems to be an anonymous Latin song about the rebellion of the Albert, the vogt of of the Cracow town and its German burghers against Polish duke, which dates back to shortly after 1320. The second part of the song, probably later addition to the original version, contains some generalising opinions on the nature of Germans settling in new areas. The author's opinions about the newcomers and their relations with their neighbours are surprisingly similar to those found in the So-called Dalimil: the Czechs, deceived by the Germans, almost lost their property and their country to the newcomers.<sup>46</sup> A common motif in the image of the newcomers, made up in both texts, is a desire to seize power by deceit, as well as by building fortifications and to dominate the locals, who who are to be deprived of of the material basis of their status — free property (*dědiny*). Hostile reactions against German newcomers are visible in various parts of Central Europe already in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, even in places where a foreign substrate in power elite could not be significant. For instance, in 1269 Duke Siemomysl of Kuyavia was expelled from his duchy by noblemen because of his favouritism towards German knights. In a pact made with the barons in 1278, the Duke promised to expel the newcomers from his own land and court, and to declare all privileges and endowments issued in their favour null and void. Siemomysl's brother, Duke Leszek the Black

<sup>45</sup> See also NODL 2021, p. 196.

<sup>46</sup> KOWALEWICZ 1965, pp. 125–138 (edition pp. 134–135): „Sic Bohemi sunt delusi / De bonis suis detrusi / Ab ipsis Theutunicis / Et iam quasi perierunt / Sua bona expenderunt, / In caligis et tunicis.” See also OKNIŃSKI 2021, pp. 367–372.

of Cracow also did not hesitate to gain political and material support from the newcomers — in this case, mainly the German burghers of Cracow, and chroniclers accused him of following foreign court fashions.

The criticism toward the presence of Germans as courtiers, officials and advisors in the entourage of Czech rulers as well as the infiltration of newcomers into the Bohemian-Moravian landed community, which was vehemently expressed by the So-called Dalimil, was not clearly reflected in the political realities until the John of Luxemburg's reign. Already in the so-called electoral capitulations of 1310, and then in the analogous agreement with the Moravian political elite in the following year, the young king had to approve the ban on entrusting offices, benefices and burgraviates, both in the kingdom as a whole and in his own court, as well as granting estates to any foreigner (*alienigena et extraneus*). Moreover, estates already acquired by a foreigner, whether by grant or purchase, were to be alienated to the *alicui terrigenae* within a year; after this deadline, in the case of a dowry, the estate was to fall to the wife's family.<sup>47</sup> Hosting foreign advisers on the court was therefore a clear violation of the above-mentioned obligations on the part of King John. Peter of Zittau, Abbot of Aula Regia monastery, confirmed that from the beginning of his reign Luxemburg was surrounded by German aristocrats and knights, whom he admitted to his council and to whom he entrusted royal benefices. This exclusion from participation in the government and incomes would soon provoke a negative reaction from the most powerful Bohemian lords, led by Henry of Lípa and John of Vartenberk. We do not know how many foreigners from the surroundings of the king were forced to leave the court and the kingdom. The Chronicle of Aula Regia chronicler mentions by name only three associates of King John — Count Bertold of Henneberg, who seems to have resided permanently in Bohemia since 1310 as one of the allies of the Luxemburgs in the conquest of the Bohemian throne, Landgrave Ulrich of Leuchtenburg, and the Swabian knight Dietgen of Kastell, who held an unknown office (perhaps as a royal captain) in Moravia. According to Peter of Zittau, the accusations made by Bohemian lords against royal favourites included greed and financial abuse, as well as misappropriation of offices, without due care for security and public order in the Kingdom.<sup>48</sup>

The question must be eventually raised whether the conflict around the foreign entourage of John of Luxembourg could have been the only and sufficient trigger for the rise of anti-German emotions by the chronicler and his social milieu. In the context of recent research on the presence of foreigners in the Přemyslid state,

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<sup>47</sup> *Korunní archiv* 1896, no. 11, cap. 6: „nullum capitaneum, nullum purcravium vel castellanum in castris nostris, nullum beneficiarium vel officialem aliquem in Boemia vel Moravia vel in curia nostra ponemus alienigenam, nec bona, possessiones vel castra vel officia aliqua alienigenis ipsis in perpetuum vel ad tempus dabimus, nec eos hereditare in regno Boemie aequaliter admittamus” (CHALO-UPECKÝ 1949, pp. 69–102).

<sup>48</sup> *Chronica Aulae Regiae* 2022, lib. 1, cap. 126, pp. 353–354.

this does not seem so obvious.<sup>49</sup> It is undeniable that foreign knights and clergymen dominated — although rather not in terms of numerosity but rather of influence and power — already in the entourage of king Wenceslaus II.<sup>50</sup> One should return at this point to the already quoted So-called Dalimil's passage, where the autor criticises the last Přemyslids' misgovernance. Keeping his tendentious manner, he points to the cause of the king's failures as lying in his unjust government and favouring Germans. Expelled from the kingdom at the beginning of the Wenceslaus II's reign of, they returned now as a real scourge. German courtiers allegedly acted in the interest of their real master — Roman king Albrecht I Habsburg, who was hostile towards the Přemyslids. Thus, according to the chronicler, the king, deceived by treacherous Habsburg agents whom he had accepted into his council, erroneously considered his sworn enemy a friend and ally.<sup>51</sup> The bias of the chronicler's opinion is all too clear, which does not change the fact that he undoubtedly had quite precise information about the origin and careers of Wenceslaus II's foreign entourage. A prosopographical analysis of this milieu at the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries leads to the conclusion that it was indeed at this time that people from more distant areas of the German Reich which earlier had not been a starting point of chivalric migrations to the East, appeared in the Czech elite of power elite. These were e.g. Swabian ministerials: brothers Dietgen and Ulrich of Kastell, who were politically connected to the Habsburgs, as well as lords of Klingenberg, whom we see in Bohemia at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century already as settled members of the political noble community.<sup>52</sup> Such a Habsburg connection is even more evident in the case of Burchard VIII of Querfurt, burgrave of Magdeburg, holder of Hardegg county in Lower Austria. His family had no previous interrelations to the Czech lands. However, at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Burchard held an office of chamberlain of the Czech Kingdom, and later a land judge in Pleisseland and the March of Meissen, which were ephemerally acquired by the Přemyslid. His close relations with the Habsburgs, particularly evident after 1308, make it possible to see him as a possible intermediary in the 1298 agreement between Wenceslaus II and Albrecht Habsburg, which formed basis for Czech expansion into the hereditary territories of the Wettin house.<sup>53</sup> All this makes Burchard of Querfurt the best fit for So-called Dalimil's image and role as a "Habsburg agent" in Wenceslaus II's entourage. In the latter's wider entourage — apart from well-recognized circle of clerical advisors headed by Arnold of Solms, Bishop of Bamberg, Bernard of Kamenz, chancellor and preposite of Vyšehrad chap-

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<sup>49</sup> PAUK 2022a (forthcoming).

<sup>50</sup> On Wenceslaus II's court milieu recently: DVOŘÁČKOVÁ-MALÁ 2011; JAN 2015, pp. 375–418.

<sup>51</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 90, p. 443; cap. 91, p. 454.

<sup>52</sup> *Ottokars Österreichische Reimchronik*, II, p. 296–300.

<sup>53</sup> JAN 2015, pp. 262–265; ANTONÍN 2009, pp. 165–187; his ties to the Habsburgs were already noticed in older literature: GRÄBNER 1903, p. 89.

ter and then Peter of Aspelt, bishop of Basel and Heidenric, Abbot of Sedlec monastery<sup>54</sup> — we also find other Germans dignitaries (such as Albert of Seeberg, or Dietrich Pucemann from Pleissenland, possibly also Otto of Bieberstein), to whom no connections with the Habsburgs can be ascribed, but their presence could have influenced the image of the foreign-ethnic character of the royal court. The association of Wenceslaus II's influential German courtiers with the Habsburgs was therefore not the chronicler's invention. Tendentially, but in keeping with his extreme anti-German orientation, he actually portrayed them *in gremio* as traitors to the Bohemian king and hostile agents. The chronicler's opinions about the domination of Germans at the court of Wenceslaus II, although strongly biased and exaggerated, could therefore have been influenced by facts, while the image of the contemporary threat from newcomers was probably influenced by experiences older than the turbulent events of the conflict over the throne of Bohemia after 1306.

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Current approach of 'emotional communities' developed several years ago in Barbara Rosenwein's seminal work has so far not been applied to the issue of ethnic hostilities in the late medieval Central Europe.<sup>55</sup> Complex semantic research on the chronicler's vocabulary is recently advanced by Eloïse Adde-Vomáčka, however, the chronicler employed precise terms to describe his own emotions rather rarely.<sup>56</sup> The contextualization of feelings of hostility, xenophobia and hatred in the So-called Dalimil's chronicle may thus be only one element in recognising his concept of domestic past and present. The quotation from chapter 68, placed here as a motto, is the only case I know where the sentiment of hatred towards Germans is expressed so outright. However, the intention to create an emotional community of fear and resentment, based on historical arguments and contemporary experience is extremely explicit. The work, written down in vernacular, in rhymed form, and therefore adapted to recitation and easier to memorize, certainly had a potentially wider circle of influence than contemporary Latin texts. Consciously using old Czech rhymed prose may reveal the author's intention to create such an emotional community. So-called Dalimil has usually addressed the collective audience through the mouths of his characters, warning against the malevolent influence of foreigners, it means Germans. These passages have both the character of a political program, as well as moral instructions. The chronicler has made his audience aware of the antiquity and immutability of the threat posed by the Germans. He has condemned mistakes of the past rulers, unwise to harm their own community by promoting dangerous newcomers. So-called Dalimil's extreme xenophobia, although permitting hatred

<sup>54</sup> JAN 2015, pp. 403–417; DVOŘÁČKOVÁ-MALÁ 2006, pp. 107–121; CHARVÁTOVÁ 2009, pp. 71–90.

<sup>55</sup> ROSENWEIN 2006.

<sup>56</sup> ADDE-VOMÁČKA 2016.

and use of physical violence, is in fact entirely reactionary and defensive in nature.<sup>57</sup> The chronicler does not formulate any general judgments about the nature of all Germans. Instead, he constructs a collective, extremely negative image of a German newcomer — irrelevant whether immigrant or temporary visitor, courtier or militant mercenary.<sup>58</sup> The very fact that he left his homeland was, for the chronicler, supposed to be evidence of pernicious nature of the newcomers: as he has argued, one who cannot live among his own countrymen is prone to show bad qualities also among other nation. The chronicler promotes the notion that nothing good can be expected from the Germans, as they are always looking for misdeeds against the Czechs: “všickni Němci českého zlého hledají.”<sup>59</sup> The pernicious nature of the newcomers has been manifested first and foremost in their propensity for treachery: they bring to the country not only malicious customs such as chivalric tournaments (*Ojir*), but do not even shrink from assassinating Bohemian rulers (*Lokr*; *Durynk*). In gaining influence at court and in seizing the estates of the Bohemian nobility, they were supported by the rulers. All of this, in So-called Dalimil’s opinion, posed a mortal threat to the community, which made resistance and use of violence justified. The expulsion of intruders ordered by some Czech rulers (Spityhněv, Wenceslaus II) was a commendable action, as well as mutilation or even extinction. Noblemen leading the resistance against the *Němci*, were therefore regarded by the chronicler as natural leaders of the ethno-political community.

The concept of the ethnic homogeneity of the kingdom is founded on fierce opposition to any foreigners, but it cannot be reduced, as Pavlina Rychterova has argued recently, to the role of a universal political discourse, which is allegedly discernible in the earlier historiographical works as well.<sup>60</sup> The chronicle of So-called Dalimil essentially represents a completely new type of consciousness, strictly focused on the political community, autonomous from the Přemyslid dynasty, transpersonal, and endowed with a distinct ethno-linguistic features. It is decisively opposed to the rulers — not only to the current foreign ones (Habsburgs, Carinthian dukes or Luxemburgs), but also to extinguished native dynasty. It is the Přemyslids who are very often condemned for their actions against prosperity of the noble com-

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<sup>57</sup> BLAHOVÁ 1995, p. 243.

<sup>58</sup> JUREK 1996, pp. 19–21. In the case of Bohemia and Moravia, these categories are even more challenging to separate due to the scarcity of source material (cf. PAUK 2022a forthcoming).

<sup>59</sup> DALIMIL 1988, II, cap. 60, p. 91 (v. 36): [all the Germans are looking for evil for the Czechs].

<sup>60</sup> RYCHTEROVÁ 2021, pp. 171–206. Rychterova reduces the conflict with Germans — constitutive for author’s worldview and backbone of his narrative on the past and present times, to the statement that one can replace So-called Dalimil’s “Germans” with the term “foreigners” with similar effect. She argues that antagonism with the Poles did not occur in a similar scale to the Czech-German one only because of the linguistic proximity, which would disturb the ease of categorization into “natives” and “foreigners.” The new proposal concerning basis of identity constructed by the chronicler, marginalizing the hitherto emphasized issues of proto-nationalism and anti-German phobias seems to be too much abstracted from the broader Central European social and political contexts.



munity. The social scope of this community seems to exceed even beyond status barriers, as the chronicler descends some of the noblemen from peasants, or allows Duke Oldřich to marry a Bohemian peasant woman instead of a German countess.<sup>61</sup>

As long as German clerics and knights reached Slavic courts on their own, they were quickly assimilated among the Slavic entourage of princes, as were the German wives of princes [...]. The problem changed when foreign newcomers arrived in larger numbers in the 13<sup>th</sup> century — mainly as ministers, seeking social advancement in Slavic countries, and readily accepted due to their military skills and knowledge of the achievements of chivalric culture.

This opinion expressed by Benedykt Zientara, pointing to the roots of ethnic antagonism in more or less subjective perception of the loss of offices, benefices and grants by native knights and clergy in favor of new German power elite, seems very relevant to the Czech social realities of the early 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>62</sup> The most important result of this study leads to conclusion that indispensable condition for such an escalation of social tensions at the top of power elite paradoxically seems to be relatively low number of newcomers, insufficient to dominate the ruler's entourage and to change ethnic composition of the entire courtly elite, as it in contrary to the Czech lands has happened in Silesia or Western Pomerania. The political and economic strenght of the native noble elite generated violent responses to foreigners' aspirations, along with its textual reflections in narrative works. Such testimonies of ethnic antagonism similar to the So-called Dalimil's chronicle are not available in Silesia and Pomerania.<sup>63</sup> Thus, the So-called Dalimil's chronicle is the only text in this time that makes ethnic resentment and hostility toward foreigners one of the cornerstones of political nation's identity in a very coherent way. Hostility toward the German newcomers, along with criticism of the Czech rulers who proteged them, thoroughly woven into historical narrative, is the most significant component of the chronicler's political thinking. This thread dominates other more positive aspects of building proto-national identity.

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<sup>61</sup> DALIMIL 1988, I, cap. 42, p. 493.

<sup>62</sup> ZIENTARA 1968, p. 206.

<sup>63</sup> A motif of a puzzling and rather fictional ethnic conflict in Silesia during the reign of Henry the Bearded appears in the so-called Polish-Silesian Chronicle from the late 13<sup>th</sup> century; see further ZIENTARA 1979.

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### **Summary**

The chronicle of the So-called Dalimil provides the clearest testimony to the ethnic tensions that arose in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century throughout Central Europe as a result of the increasing presence of newcomers from Germany. The first issue addressed in this paper is the concept of the past and the present constructed on the basis of ethnic resentment, founded on the belief that the Germans were eternally hostile to the Czechs and viewed as a constant threat to the Czech political community. An important problem is to determine the social scope of the term “Germans” used by the chronicler. An analysis confirms that he had in mind primarily members of social elites – knights and courtiers who made up the entourage of Bohemian rulers. My second question concerns the problem of the scale of knightly migration to Bohemia as a real factor in the emergence of ethnic tensions in the early fourteenth century, in a sense explaining the feelings represented by the chronicler.

