

## SUMMARIES

### RECENT RESEARCH ON THE PERSON OF THE AUTHOR OF THE „PLOUGHMAN“

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It has now been established that the poet who called himself Johannes de Tepla or de Sitbor was before and after 1400, town clerk, notary and headmaster in Saaz. As the manuscripts of the dialogue „The Ploughman of Bohemia“ were written outside of Bohemia, the possibility that its sources might be found in Bohemia itself was long overlooked. Doskočil was recently able to show that a collected volume of the metropolitan library in Prague had been in the hands of the poet; it contained a *Tractatus de crudelitate mortis*, which undoubtedly gave him ideas for his dialogue. Thus the sources no longer need be traced to foreign countries such as England, as Burdach, for example, attempted to do. A more exact evaluation of the evidence also throws light on his origin. His father was the parson Henslinus de Sytbor (died in 1375) in the village of Schüttwa south of Ronsperg in the Bischofteinitz district. As Doskočil regards the Schüttwa area in the last quarter of the 14th century as purely Czech, he considers Henslinus a Czech parson and the „Ploughman“ author a notary who was Czech by origin and wrote in Czech and German. Bilingualism was a characteristic feature of the age of Charles IV. Doskočil also ascribes the Czech disputation Tkadlec, which was clearly influenced by the „Ploughman“ dialogue, to Johannes von Tepl.

A careful survey of place-names in the Schüttwa area, which this study undertakes, shows, however, that a number of them had come into the German language already in the second half of the 13th century and that there was a German minority in the district. The parsons were thus compelled to hear confession also in German, as well as to speak German with the German children of the parsonage. This means, however, that the poet's father cannot be considered a Czech parson. A German — and the name Henslinus suggest that he was such — who understood Czech would also have been suitable for this position.

Tepl, which is probably where the poet studied, was at the time a town on the linguistic border with a mixed population. Around 1400, Saaz was a town that was in the process of losing its German majority in the Council (*Rat*). It is certain that the notary of such a town would have commanded both tongues. Bilingualism was by no means, as Czech studies assume, common in all Bohemia. It was in the linguistic border zone of the period and

in the towns in the interior which had a mixed population, but not in the peripheral German areas. A more precise knowledge of the linguistic situation of the pre-Hussite era is needed.