

PETER OF ZITTAU

Life and Personality of a High Medieval Chronicler in the Context
of His Narrative Strategies*Robert Antonín*

The study presents the personality of Peter of Zittau (d. 1339) through the narrative strategies he used in the Zbraslav Chronicle. It draws on basic tenets of literary theory according to which every author inevitably operates within the boundaries delineated by their own mental horizons. These parameters are determined by the cultural and social position of the author on the one hand, and by their ideological intention and their understanding of the potential audience on the other. Peter is characterised as a mature man, which corresponds to his reflections on the past and the present. As he grows older, Peter's negative perception of the present and his idealisation of the past increase. He takes on the role of a moralist and critic of the present times, an intellectual with a sceptical view. He also acts as a creative personality with a fundamental intellectual and moral urge to create and a desire to reform society as a whole. Peter wanted to be recognised as a committed monk of the Cistercian Order. His devotion to the order made him its ideologist and a creator of Cistercian propaganda. The analysis shows that Peter was a systematic pragmatist who pursued the economic benefit of his monastery and his own political interests. The presented findings on the intentions of the Zbraslav Chronicle contribute not only to the interpretation of this work itself, but also to a more comprehensive understanding of the historical period it describes.