

Jan Hubecius a Bartoloměj Martinides, *Dva humanistické popisy Prahy: Úvodní studie, edice, překlad a komentář Vojtěch Pelc* [Jan Hubecius and Bartoloměj Martinides, *Two Humanistic Descriptions of Prague: Introductory study, edition, translation and commentary by Vojtěch Pelc*] [= *Bilingua* III]. Praha: Jednota klasických filologů, 2019, 265 pages, ISBN 978-80-904945-5-8.

Making early modern texts available to today's readers is a meritorious deed per se. In addition, if it is a topic such as the description of Prague, which belongs to a genre very popular in humanism but relatively little known today, it is a very good basis for an interesting book.

This peer-reviewed book is the third volume of the *Bilingua* series, published by the Jednota klasických filologů (Union of Classical Philologists) and led by L. Pultrová and M. Bažil (Institute of Greek and Latin Studies, Faculty of Arts, Charles University). The aim of this publishing project – similar to the *Reclam* series in Germany or *Collection Budé* in France – is to provide critical editions of Greek and Latin texts, accompanied by a Czech translation, a commentary and an introductory study. The texts are thus available not only to researchers in the field, but also to students and the general public. Following the two volumes of ancient texts – Alcman's *Partheneion*¹ and Cicero's *Caesarianae*² – there is now a published volume of humanistic texts, closely related to the ancient tradition.³

In this book we find two of the three preserved early modern comprehensive descriptions of Prague, Hubecius' poem and Martinides' prose text, neither of which has yet been published to its full extent. The third preserved text, the narration of Prague in a letter by B. Hasištejnský, was published by J. Martínek and D. Martínková already in 1969⁴ and its translation is being prepared by V. Pelc and M. Vaculínová. Namely M. Vaculínová examines the literary descriptions of Prague, presents their chronological overview and analyses them in more detail.⁵ The starting point for the research of these texts was a joint project of the Faculty of Arts, Charles University and the University of Rostock on the topic *Praise of the City in Latin Literature of the Early Modern Age*.⁶ As part of this project,

¹ R. Roreitner (transl.), Alkmán, *Partheneion z Louvru* [Louvre-Partheneion]. Praha: Jednota klasických filologů, 2016.

² M. Ctíbor (transl.), Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Caesarianae: Řeči proslovené před Caesarem* [Caesarianae: The speeches delivered before Caesar]. Praha: Jednota klasických filologů, 2018.

³ Subsequently, the fourth volume of the series was also published: D. Urbanová, E. Poláčková, T. Weissar, R. Černoch (transl.), Titus Maccius Plautus, *Curculio aneb Darmojed* [Curculio or The Weevil]. Praha: Jednota klasických filologů, 2019. The original texts of these ancient works are taken from existing modern editions.

⁴ J. Martínek, D. Martínková (eds.), *Bohuslai Hassensteinii a Lobkowicz Epistulae. Tom. I: Epistulae de re publica scriptae*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1969, 1–12.

⁵ M. Vaculínová, 'Obraz Prahy v latinských literárních dílech raného novověku' [An image of Prague in Latin early modern literary works]. In: O. Fejtová, V. Ledvinka, M. Maříková, J. Pešek (eds.), *Historiografie s městem spojená: Historiografie o městech a historiografie ve městech* [= Documenta Pragensia 37]. Praha: Archiv hlavního města Prahy, 2018, 269–287.

⁶ M. Vaculínová, 'Obraz Prahy v latinských literárních dílech raného novověku' [An image of Prague in Latin early modern literary works]. In: O. Fejtová, V. Ledvinka, M. Maříková, J. Pešek (eds.), *Historiografie s městem spojená: Historiografie o městech a historiografie ve městech* [= Documenta Pragensia 37]. Praha: Archiv hlavního města Prahy, 2018, 269, note 1.

a parallel seminar took place in 2015–2016 (led by M. Vaculínová in Prague, and M. Bažil in Rostock), which concluded with a joint workshop.⁷ The structure of the reviewed publication is given by the *Bilingua* series: an introductory study, a Latin edition with a parallel Czech translation, an editorial note and bibliography.

In the introductory study, V. Pelc first focuses on the character of Neo-Latin literature. He draws attention to the neglect of Latin production, especially poetic, in the 16th and 17th centuries by older Czech researchers and also presents newer and contemporary research (D. Martíňková, V. Moul, J. Bloemendal, Y. Haskell). Most researchers admit a certain legitimacy of negative judgments of humanistic texts (e.g. their non-originality) and try to critically reflect on them. However, it is not possible to rely solely on the standards of modern literary criticism, as the examined texts have inestimable value for historiography, source study or literary and cultural history.

The next part of the study deals with the description of cities as a very popular humanistic genre with a long literary tradition, whose character was primarily celebratory and idealising (*laus*), but at the same time endeavouring to provide an accurate description (*descriptio*). There is a constant tension between the traditional elements of celebratory rhetoric and the effort to capture the specific reality of the described city.⁸ The genre builds on prescribed rhetorical rules and uses common motives, so-called *loci communes*. In humanism, there was a number of handbooks with *loci communes* inventories, which, unfortunately, given the scope and focus of publication, V. Pelc does not deal with further.

The main part of the study presents the basic biography and literary production of both authors, Jan Hubecius (post 1570–1632) and Bartoloměj Martinides (literary active 1594–1631),⁹ taken mainly from the handbook *Rukověť humanistického básnictví* (The Enchiridion of Humanistic Poetry).¹⁰ V. Pelc discusses in more detail the writings published in the book under review, Hubecius' poem *Carmen continens descriptionem Pragae* (1591)¹¹ and Martinides' prose *Descriptio amplissimae atque ornatissimae regiae urbis Pragensis* (1615).¹² Both texts show the same content and structural features. In the case of content, there is a celebration of the capital, the city's location, historical excursions, description of important monuments, Prague's inhabitants and their daily lives. For structure, there is a dedication to the city council, related verses written by friends and a three-part construction of the text (*Praga Vetus, Minor, Nova*). V. Pelc outlines in detail

⁷ *Roma, Praga, Rostochium: Obraz a chvála města v latinské literatuře: Städtebild und -lob in der lateinischen Literatur*. Institute of Greek and Latin Studies, Faculty of Arts, Charles University and Heinrich Schliemann-Institute of Ancient Studies, University of Rostock. Prague 16 March 2016.

⁸ M. Vaculínová, 'Obraz Prahy v latinských literárních dílech raného novověku' [An image of Prague in Latin early modern literary works]. In: O. Fejtová, V. Ledvinka, M. Maříková, J. Pešek (eds.), *Historiografie s městem spojená: Historiografie o městech a historiografie ve městech* [= Documenta Pragensia 37]. Praha: Archiv hlavního města Prahy, 2018, 270, note 4; M. Vaculínová uses the term "encomiastic topography", which D. Martíňková introduced in the Czech literature.

⁹ According to the database BCBT (Bibliografie cizojazyčných bohemikálních tisků do roku 1800 [Foreign-language printed Bohemica up to year 1800]): <http://clavius.lib.cas.cz/katalog/l.dll?cll~P=492855> (accessed 27 May 2020).

¹⁰ J. Hejnic, J. Martinek, *Rukověť humanistického básnictví: Enchiridion renatae poesis Latinae in Bohemia et Moravia cultae 1–6*. Praha: Academia, 1966–2011.

¹¹ J. Hubecius, *Carmen continens descriptionem celeberrimae urbis Pragae*. Pragae: Schuman, 1591. Cf. BCBT: <http://clavius.lib.cas.cz/katalog/l.dll?cll~P=422974> (accessed 27 May 2020).

¹² B. Martinides, *Descriptio amplissimae atque ornatissimae regiae urbis Pragensis, metropolis totius Boëmiae*. Pragae: Sedesanus, 1615. BCBT: see note 9.

the content of both works and compares how the descriptions differ (level of detail, geographical scope, social issues of the day).

The typical character of Hubecius' poem is the effort to update traditional poetic forms and their use in a new context. It consists of 552 hexameters and uses direct quotations, paraphrases and expressions from Virgil's *Aeneid* and *Georgics* - therefore both heroic and didactic epics are applied. V. Pelc revealed that about one third of the verses came from Virgil and, using concrete examples, he shows the ways of transposing, i.e. exact quotes and freer adoption (pp. 37–38). Related to this method of writing, V. Pelc mentions the cento, a genre that is mainly studied in the Czech Republic by M. Bažil and M. Okáčová.¹³ In addition to Virgil, V. Pelc also presents a contemporary source of inspiration for the poem, a two-year older Czech poem by B. Jičínský,¹⁴ to which M. Vaculínová has already alluded.¹⁵ As V. Pelc shows with specific examples of mistakenly adopted information (e.g. about the builder of the Powder Gate, p. 36), this acceptance of entire passages of the text seems to be Hubecius' effort to render Jičínský's Czech verses into Latin. In addition, V. Pelc observes the contemporary intertextual connection between Hubecius' work and the work of his classmates. He points out, for example, that Hubecius became a source of inspiration for V. Rhacotomus Vodňanský¹⁶ – even though his poem celebrates another city, namely Hradec Králové – and V. Pelc provides proof of it with an example of a greedy merchant in the market (p. 29). V. Pelc pays attention not only to what the poem contains, but also to what is left out (surprisingly little is devoted to the Lesser Town and, for example, the description of Prague Castle is omitted completely). The editor draws attention to the recurring motifs that form a kind of structuring/connecting element of the poem, such as ascension to heavenly heights, edifices built to the stars, receiving somebody or something with cheers or applause etc. (p. 34).

Martinides' prose is the most comprehensive early modern description of Prague (64 pages of printed text, 4° format), which is presented as an international cultural metropolis (p. 51). The description is based on the accumulation of details, enumerations (sometimes absurd)¹⁷ or numerical data (e.g. the length of the Prague bridge, pp. 158–159). The core of the text constitution is the rhetorical ideal of formal and con-

¹³ Cf. M. Bažil, *Centones Christiani: Métamorphoses d'une forme intertextuelle dans la poésie latine chrétienne de l'Antiquité tardive* [Collection des Études Augustiniennes: Série Moyen Âge et Temps Modernes 47]. Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 2009; M. Bažil, 'Pátá kniha Aeneidy v antické centonové poezii. Část I: Úvod, témata performance a pohledu' [Aeneid V and ancient cento poetry I: Introduction, the concepts of performance and gaze]. *Listy filologické* 142, 2019, 307–322; M. Okáčová, *Centones Vergiliani: Klasická poezie „pod kaleidoskopem“* [Centones Vergiliani: Classical poetry in the kaleidoscope]. Praha: KLP, 2016.

¹⁴ B. Dominus Jičínský, *Píseň historická o slavných městech Pražských* [An historical song about the famous Prague cities]. Praha: Valda, 1589.

¹⁵ M. Vaculínová, 'Obraz Prahy v latinských literárních dílech raného novověku' [An image of Prague in Latin early modern literary works]. In: O. Fejtová, V. Ledvinka, M. Maříková, J. Pešek (eds.), *Historiografie s městem spojená: Historiografie o městech a historiografie ve městech* [= Documenta Pragensia 37]. Praha: Archiv hlavního města Prahy, 2018, 275, note 23.

¹⁶ V. Rhacotomus, *Reginae Hradecii topographia, cui accesserunt clarorum virorum ibidem defunctorum epitaphia*. Praga: Schumaniana, 1595; cf. BCBT: <http://clavius.lib.cas.cz/katalog/l.dll?cl~P=479405> (accessed 27 May 2020).

¹⁷ For example, a list of 35 religious orders, some of which never settled in Prague (pp. 214–217), an overview of various craftsmen and professions (pp. 234–235) or a mixture of imagined nations inhabiting Prague (including *Catizi*, according to Pliny the Elder a Pygmy tribe, probably from Thrace, p. 182).

tent abundance (*copia*) and variety (*varietas*), which V. Pelc critically reflects. In addition, he brings a surprising observation: Martinides drew a source of inspiration for his enumerations from a dictionary by D. Adam of Veleslavín *Dictionarium linguae Latinae* (1579),¹⁸ as specific examples show (p. 53). V. Pelc also touches on the more general cultural-historical features of the work, especially the emphasis on contemporary issues such as confession, social elites and contacts, values and taste. The text is accompanied by numerous marginalia (names of monuments, additional information, citations of other works). The overlap outside Prague makes the description partly the praise of the whole of Bohemia. The editor considers the passages dedicated to Lutheran churches (Holy Trinity and St. Salvator) to be the most informative and valuable parts of the writings, as they are intending to provide an accurate and very detailed description.¹⁹

The introductory study is followed by an edition of both texts with a parallel Czech translation. For both writings, the surviving copies, the concept of the edition itself, the character of the translation and the commentaries are briefly introduced. The critical apparatus of Hubecius' text mainly includes references to the quoted passages from Virgil and the original wording of the emended printing errors. The commentary under the Czech translation specifies factual information, interprets ancient names and compares the text with the Czech verse work by B. Jičínský.²⁰ In his successful translation, V. Pelc is guided by an effort to be as accurate as possible, but at the same time he preserves the poetic qualities of the original and shows great ingenuity, for example in translating idioms or language puns.²¹ He has thus formally created a prosaic translation that respects the layout and order of the verses as much as possible.

The edition of Martinides' description omits, especially for reasons of scale, the dedication text and poems written by friends. The critical apparatus under the Latin text includes quotations from ancient authors, the Bible and humanistic works. Emendations of printing errors are more frequent in this text, which indicates a lower quality of the print. The commentary under the Czech translation focuses on the factual, cultural and historical context and explains selected rhetorical elements. Some parts of Martinides' work have been translated before,²² however, for the first time a complete translation of the text is submitted in this publication written in a very cultivated and readable language.

The texts are followed by a united editorial note (pp. 255–256), which provides – perhaps too briefly – an overview of the principles used in the transcription of texts. Creating

¹⁸ D. Adam z Veleslavína, *Dictionarium Linguae Latinae, ex Magno Basilii Fabri Thesauro collectum [...], nunc primum in gratiam studiosae inventutis Bohemicae editum*. Prague: Melantrich, 1579.

¹⁹ E.g. lists of the participants at the founding ceremonies of both churches: pp. 208–211, 218–223.

²⁰ Although the scope of the Jičínský's poem is less than one third of the Hubecius' ones, the content and order of the material of both writings are essentially the same, and Jičínský paradoxically describes – more briefly and without epic digressions – more buildings and interesting places.

²¹ See p. 121, note 73: in Latin, onion (*caepe*), that Hubecius derives etymologically from the head (*caput*), hence the translation “head cabbage” in Czech.

²² Some of the accompanying poems were translated by B. Ryba in V. Schwarz (ed.), *Očima lásky: verše českých básníků o Praze* [Through the eyes of love: Verses of Czech poets about Prague]. Praha: Borový, 1941, 41–45; the whole work was freely translated into Czech by C. A. Straka, ‘Popis Prahy od Bartoloměje Martinida z r. 1615’ [Description of Prague by Bartoloměj Martinides from 1615]. *Časopis společnosti přátel starožitností českých v Praze* 24, 1916, 122–133; about one third of the text was translated by D. Martínková, *Poselství ducha: Latinská próza českých humanistů* [The message of the spirit: Latin prose of Czech humanists]. Praha: Odeon, 1975, 207–222.

common rules for transcribing several different texts is always a challenging task. V. Pelc follows the path that prevails in the Czech environment today: slight unification or modification (*i/y*, *ae/e*, *u/v*), keeping non-classical forms, preserving common abbreviations, adjusting capital letters and punctuation towards the current rules of Czech. All this leads to an easier understanding of the text and helps the reader with orientation in the text. There is a question whether it is necessary to keep the variant writing *i/j* and to modify *faemina* > *femina*, while *faelix* remains. I think neither prevents comprehension. In the edited Latin text, however, we also find a variant form of *foemineum* (p. 74), *infelix* (p. 96) and some emendations, which are rather classicising adjustments (*squallebant* > *squalebant*, p. 70, *septingentos* > *septingentos*, p. 74). A list of abbreviations is not attached to the edition, but their meaning is obvious from the translation even to a less familiar reader. After all, the editor really leaves only the most common abbreviations and he writes all the others in full (*d[omi]n[us]*, p. 218).

However, these are trifles that do not detract from the quality of careful editorial work, sensitive translation and adequate notes. The peer-reviewed publication has the aim of contributing to the study of Neo-Latin literature and to bring enrichment, not only for neo-Latinists but also for the professional and lay public,²³ which V. Pelc has definitely succeeded in doing.

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²³ V. Pelc (p. 15): “Budiž tedy tato kniha chápána jako příspěvek ke kolektivnímu úsilí o náležitě představení novolatinské literatury s veškerými jejími přednostmi i slabinami” [Let this book be understood as a contribution to the collective effort to properly present Neo-Latin literature with all its strengths and weaknesses].