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A Comparative Analysis of the First Depictions of London in Czech Literature

The aim of this study is to analyse the first depictions of London in Czech literature, namely in the travel records of the medieval author and traveller Wenzel Schaseck of Birkov and the German patrician Gabriel Tetzel of Gräfenberg and Nuremburg. These two figures made up part of the delegation of the Czech nobleman Leo of Rozmital and Blatna on his diplomatic mission through western European states in the years 1465 to 1467, a period coinciding with the reigns of the Hussite King George of Podebrady and Edward IV of England. The comparative analysis of both travel diaries in the context of historical sources will uncover not only the similarities and differences regarding the depiction of their mission and particularly the city of London, but also the credibility of their observations.

Original Czech travel works held quite a specific position in older Czech literature, as they only began to come into their own after the cessation of the Hussite wars.[1] The travel literature of the Venetian merchant Marco Polo was well-known, telling the author's authentic experiences from his travels to Mongolia and China, but was regarded as untrustworthy and labelled as a "million lies".[2] However, the hyperbolic and often unreliable travel accounts of Sir John Mandeville gained relatively significant popularity in the Czech lands, as well as the British Islands, later

inspiring authors such as Richard Hakluyt and Walter Raleigh, with their fantastic and naive concepts which drew on the travel writings of Pliny. It is interesting to note that Mandeville's travel writings – unlike Pliny's – held their popularity until the Czech National Revival period (from the 1780's to the 1850's).[3] While the onset of travel literature in England was naturally linked to the explorative voyages of the Renaissance, the appearance of authentic travel writings in the Czech lands was primarily linked to the missions of Czech rulers.[4] Medieval travel terminology was also enriched in this context by the term "lantfaréř", borrowed from the German language, and the equivalent Czech term "zjezdilec", denoting man who was given the opportunity to travel the world.[5]

The term "zjezdilec" (English traveller) appertains to Leo of Rozmital and Blatna, who undertook an arduous journey with his retinue, which several centuries later inspired the Czech author Alois Jirásek to write his historical novel *From the Czech Lands to the End of the World (Z Čech až na konec světa)* in 1888. The aim of Leo of Rozmital's diplomatic travels, initiated by Leo's brother-in-law King George of Podebrady (1420 – 1471),[6] was to undertake a peace mission to meet with prominent European Catholic rulers and princes. This mission was meant to lead to the creation of a union of European Catholic states, cooperating in repelling Turkish aggression. This ambitious plan was aimed at the creation of a "court of conciliation" which would be financed by member states contributing one percent of their yearly income. An integral part of the project consisted of periodic planned conferences of rulers of the individual states. Although the mission was obviously to pursue political aims and attempted to promote George's schemes in a straightforward way, the true import of the mission was never stated in journal records. The records are limited merely to vague justifications of a pilgrimage carried out in piety and for religious

reasons.[7] It is also interesting to note here that the accompanying permission for the journey was not issued by the King, but by Queen Johana. Generally speaking, Rozmital's journey represented a diplomatic mission hidden under the facade of a private journey undertaken for religious reasons. According to Rudolf Urbánek, the true diplomatic aim of the journey may have been later eliminated in the translation obtained by the Catholic prelate Stanislav Pavlovský, who dedicated this translation to the Moravian commissioner Zdeněk Lev.[8] The translator most likely wished to avoid the risk of possible association between the contemporary commissioner Zdeněk Lev and his pro-Hussite relative, Leo of Rozmital. Translator Horký later dubbed Rozmital's journey as a knightly, courtly, and pilgrim-like journey.[9]

On 26 November 1465, the fourteen-member delegation set out from Prague with fifty-two horses and one supply cart. The retinue of Lord Leo was made up of Catholic squires from southwest Bohemia, personal servants and linguistically skilled heralds who were versed in coats of arms and genealogical relations and who worked as interpreters. Among the group there were also cooks, and even a jester and lute-player.[10] Wenzel Schaseck indirectly confirms the Catholic denomination of Rozmital's fellow travellers in his journal entry by commenting on the "confession of sins" in the city of Plzeň at the very beginning of their journey.[11] Some of the most significant members of Rozmital's sizable retinue included the knights John Zehrowsky of Kolovraty, Burianus of Schwamberg, nobleman Achatz Frodner, a figure named Borzita (most likely Borzita of Martinice), who was placed in Catalonian imprisonment near Barcelona, Wenzel of Egerburg and Pietipes, squires Miros of Vochov and Wenzel Schaseck of Birkov, the German patrician Gabriel Tetzel of Gräfenberk and Nuremburg.[12] The names of the following members of Leo's suite were unfortunately preserved only in a faulty manner, for example the

name Pollack most likely refers to the surname Polák, perhaps from the Sulislav Polák Family. Urbánek[13] and Letts[14] identically list the corruption of the surname Knysto, i.e. the damaged section of text most probably indicating the page, John Knizek of Beharov. Urbánek also gives hypotheses on possible genealogical variations of the members of the retinue.[15] The structure of Rozmital's retinue however confirms the representative character of the mission serving to spread the "good name and repute" of the Czech King abroad.

The journey was simultaneously recorded by two of the previously mentioned members of the mission – Wenzel Schaseck of Birkov and Gabriel Tetzel of Gräfenberk and Nuremberg. The character of Schaseck's and Tetzel's journal records was a priori predetermined by various authorial perspectives stemming from varied social statuses and also the experiences of both authors. Schaseck's journal reflects the view of a petty Czech nobleman and squire, lacking any previous travel experience. Contrary to Schaseck, Gabriel Tetzel observed his new experiences from the point of view of a wealthy German patrician, whose perception and overall mentality was predestined by the high social status of his parents.[16] Tetzel's comparative advantage came mainly from his relatively rich experiences of travelling, as he had already undertaken a trip with a group of Nuremburg patricians to the Holy Tomb in Palestine at the age of fourteen.[17] In the year 1465 he joined Rozmital's Czech mission most probably in order to assist Lord Leo with the financial matters of the mission.

Tetzel's travel journal was preserved in only one copy as a section of a more extensive codex archived in the Bavarian State Library in Munich under the signature Cdgm.1279.[18] Czech researchers had known of Tetzel's records since the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, they were utilized mainly for comparative purposes

with Schaseck's works, which during the period of the fading "victorious phase" of the National Revival in the 1830s and 1850s, the end of the nineteenth century, and the first half of the twentieth century were used mainly for stressing Hussite ideals and the reign of George of Podebrady. Czech researchers had only mere fragments of the translation at their disposal, for example, the annotated translation by Bohumil Mathesius which was published in the year 1940 together with Schaseck's journal accompanied by an introductory note by Rudolf Urbánek. The only complex translation of the complete Tetzel travel journal that exists today is paradoxically the renowned English translation written by Malcolm Letts, who uses a comparative viewpoint of both travel journals. Letts's translation is located in the State Research Library in Olomouc. In the year 2003, an excellent translation written by Lenka Líbalová[19] was published, making it the first complete translation of Tetzel's travel journal in the Czech language. Gabriel Tetzel can be considered the author (or more exactly the intellectual creator) of the travel records, although the text was recorded between the years 1469 and 1500 by Gabriel Muffel – Tetzel's cousin – who also participated in Rozmital's mission.[20] The whole manuscript most probably appeared in the middle of the fifteenth century and belonged to the Muffel Family. Tetzel's travel journal can be classified by its lettering as belonging to the branch of Upper German called Ostfränkische, typical for Nuremburg, Bamberg, and Würzburg in the years between 1350 and 1500.[21]

Wenzel Schaseck's travel journal was a better known source of information concerning Leo of Rozmital's journey in the years 1465 to 1467. This written source was probably created after their return from the journey, which explains various chronological and topographical errors which the author would have avoided in recording information directly during the journey.[22] The record was preserved in a

Latin version from the year 1577, which was the work of the Moravian prelate Stanislav Pavlovský. It was published in the Czech language a number of times, for example in the year 1890 in František Augustin Slavik's work, and in the years 1940 and 1974 in Mathesius's translation, which also formed a part of Malcolm Letts's English translation (see above). A record of Schaseck's writings can be found directly in the journal, such as the description of a contest in Brussels where the narrator passes over to the first person singular present and thus reveals his identity to the reader. The author uses similar techniques in other sections of the text; although speaking in the third person singular present, Schaseck's association with his own person is evident. This voice also appears in the narration of "favours in the London Court" (see the following). Schaseck's friendly and intimate relationship with Leo of Rozmital can be seen in the records: he might well have been Leo's favoured servant. Schaseck's trustworthiness is also apparent in the records, which gives evidence as to his role carrying Rozmital's accounts to King George and back.

It is worth noting that Wenzel Schaseck mentions Gabriel Tetzel in two sections of his travel journal (firstly in connection with the tournament in Cologne), while Gabriel Tetzel does not make any mention of Schaseck. He is not even named in the list of the diplomatic mission's members. Urbánek has speculated on the possible tension between Schaseck and Tetzel, the latter being a German who joined the mission at a later date (December 1465) and possibly ignored the mission's Czech participants.[23] In spite of this, Schaseck's journal records do, in fact, confirm Tetzel's authorship.

A factual discrepancy can be found at the very beginning of the journals: according to Schaseck's records, the journey of the Czech mission began on Saint Catherine's day, meaning 26 November 1465. Tetzel, however, states that Rozmital's

company had left Prague before Saint Catherine's day, and that they reached Gräfenberg on Saint Barbora's day, 4 December, where Lord Leo asked Gabriel Tetzel to accompany him on the journey. This discrepancy in timing could have been caused by Tetzel's initial delay in joining the mission. The mission continued via Germany and Burgundy before departing from Calais to England. Schaseck and Tetzel both identically remark on the fact of Calais being the only city on the continental side of the Channel under the domain of the King of England. Both journals also mention the postponement of setting sail across the channel because of intense winds. Tetzel also suggestively narrates the dangers facing the mission after their embarkation, such as damage to the ship and the seasickness which affected most of the mission's members.[24] Contrary to Tetzel's accounts, Schaseck concentrates mainly on the specific aspects of the English coast, such as "mountains full of lime" and Dover Castle. Schaseck pays special attention to various types of naval vessels and their descriptions, listing "sea-going vessels, ships, galleons and cogs" among other types in his records.[25]

The first stop on the English coast was Sandwich, from which the mission travelled on to visit the residence of Thomas Beckett. Tetzel, contrary to Schaseck, incorrectly indicates the site of docking to be at Canterbury, which does not make sense geographically. Tetzel and Schaseck both comment on the legend connected to the natural spring in a cathedral, whose water was transformed five times into blood, and once into milk.[26] While both mention viewing holy relics, it is clear from their respective accounts that Schaseck, has a greater liturgical interest than Tetzel. After leaving Canterbury, the expedition continued on through Rochester before finally reaching London.

In their journals, Schaseck and Tetzel emphasise different aspects of medieval London, as can be seen from the following extracts:

> Schaseck: London is a grand and beautiful city and has two castles. In the first, located at the very end of the city surrounded by the ocean's gulf, lives the English King. He was present at the time of our arrival. Across the gulf there is a bridge made of stone and quite long, and houses have been built on both sides of it stretching its full length. I have never seen such a quantity of kite birds as I have here. Harming them is forbidden and is punishable by death.[27]

> Tetzel: We have passed through Canterbury through the English kingdom all the way to the capital, which is home to the English King. Its name is London and it is a very vigorous and busy city, conducting trade with all lands. In this city there are many craftsmen, and mainly goldsmiths and drapers, beautiful women and expensive food.[28]

Their first impressions illustrate how Schaseck and Tetzel reflect on the same facts regarding London in different ways; both remaining faithful to their own character. Schaseck, whose travel experience was relatively limited, concentrates on the magnitude and grandeur of London and intuitively links its prosperity with its strategically chosen position on the River Thames. He records the dominating features of the city in careful detail, focusing on Westminster and the Tower. In the interests of natural history, Schaseck supplies unique details on the numerous kite birds, which were protected by law and aided in keeping the streets clean.[29] During festivities, the medieval streets of London were kept clean, but at other times could often be covered with mud and refuse. An open sewer ran through the middle of the streets, and the wider streets often had two. This meant that maintaining cleanliness and order proved to be quite a demanding task. Street-sweepers carried refuse away in carts to large ditches or dumping grounds located past the city gates. Also similarly troublesome were pigs which roamed freely through the streets.[30]

In the Czech translation of Schaseck's journal, London Bridge is described as a "bridge across the gulf". Schaseck's mistaken identification of the arm of the river

for the ocean's gulf might have arisen from his lack of topographical knowledge or possibly is the result of a translation error. Malcolm Letts uses more factually accurate terminology: " [...] This arm [the river Thames] is crossed [..]."[31] Schaseck's description of the bridge itself is perhaps coloured by his memory of Prague's Charles Bridge (or the Kamenný Bridge), decorated with statues and sculptures along both sides, rather than the congested warren of shops and houses which perched above the low arches over the Thames. In contrast Tetzel's record reflects the viewpoint of a more experienced traveller and hardheaded negotiator: including information on the commercial activities taking place in London and comments, in accordance with his obvious interests, on the quantity of craftsmen, the significant prices of food and the beauty of the women. However, neither Schaseck nor Tetzel mention the marketplaces, shops, and warehouses along the banks of the Thames, which would perhaps be the significant features a modern historian of the period might choose to concentrate on.

Schaseck demonstrates a great sense for detail in his account of London's important sites visited by many travellers, for example Thomas Beckett's birthplace or the church in which Saint Keuhardus was laid to rest.[32] He marvelled at the skilful and carefully wrought decorations in this church and regarded the churches in London as being incomparable. Indeed, the quantity of churches in Medieval London was unique in the context of fifteenth- century Europe, with approximately one hundred churches contained within the walls of the old city.[33] This might possibly have given the members of Rozmital's suite the impression that London was a "city of churches". Schaseck has a similarly superlative and exclusive view of the holy remains and gold gravestones preserved in London. His illustrative description of London is supplemented by specific and quantitative information, for instance the twenty gold

gravestones decorated with gemstones which are located there. In general, Schaseck characterizes England as a land teeming with gold, silver, beautiful women and maidens. His observations appear to be quite accurate, as London at the time was generally perceived as a city of gold: certainly the wealth on display undoubtedly astounded the Czech and German travellers. Schaseck describes in great detail the royal treasure, especially the valuable gold chalice, and includes the story which is connected to the chalice: "One country pays the King a duty of eighty thousand nobles to possess the chalice. If, however, the chalice were to be lost, the King would lose this whole amount. Therefore, it is painstakingly guarded, and no one is allowed to see it [...]."[34] He also emphasizes the hospitality of the royal court which was shown to him and his companions (note his reference to himself in the third person as discussed above): "During the banquet, all those present behaved politely and nobly to Lord Leo and likewise to all his companions, especially to Schaseck, both at the royal court and elsewhere."[35] He even mentions the animals in the game preserve.

Contrary to Schaseck, Tetzel neglects the memorable landmarks and holy relics of London, and focuses more on Rozmital's arrival at the city and the attendant royal "welcoming gesture". Edward IV arranged the best inn for Rozmital and his retinue and sent for a herald and advisor to accompany the mission upon their arrival to the city. Neither Schaseck nor Tetzel states exactly where their accommodation in London was located. However, it can be assumed that they stayed in one of the various travellers' inns, of which there were many on the main street of Southwark. It is also unknown whether Rozmital hung his coat of arms from the window of the inn, as was custom at that time.

After a short and unfortunately unspecified passage of time (written as being "shortly after"), Lord Leo was allowed to enter the company of King Edward IV.

According to Tetzel's account, the King was delighted by the great respect of his subjects, but in spite of this he did not hesitate to show Leo his respect by offering him his hand.[36] Leo informed Edward IV of his journey and mainly of his aims, which the King acknowledged positively and went on to assure Leo of his friendship towards him. Tetzel's description of the King as a handsome, straightforward man and of his court and noble courtiers seems (similarly to Schaseck's description of London's sites) quite authentic. Historical sources describe Edward IV as a charismatic ruler, soldier, and man of action who was characterized by the "grace of his person and the gallantry of his demeanor".[37] The depiction of the banquet which the Czech travellers participated in several days later gives a suggestive view of Edward's London court.[38] After the lavish banquet consisting of fifty courses, the King adopted the members of the mission into his order, which was most likely the Order of Roses and Suns founded by Edward himself. Knights were presented with a golden medal and "non-knights" with a silver one, which he personally placed around their necks. Edward authorized Leo of Rozmital and a number of other newly dubbed knights to pass on the order to others as well. He dubbed John Zehrowsky of Kolovraty, Achatz Frodner, Wenzel of Pietipes and Miros of Vochov, knights of the order.[39] In his list of newly dubbed knights, Tetzel does not list Burianus, whose name appears only in Schaseck's writings.[40] Regardless of this minor discrepancy in the accounts, it is clear that a great act of honour was shown to the members Rozmital's mission by the English King.

After a short time, Rozmital's retinue met with the King again, and also with the Queen, Elizabeth Woodville (sometimes also Wydeville), who had just completed her puerperium (the oldest child of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville, Elizabeth of York, was born on 11 February, 1466). Tetzel describes the Queen's trip to the church and her escort made up of members of the priesthood, choir boys, women and girls

from the countryside and from London, who were followed by trumpeters, pipers, forty two singers of the royal choir, forty two heralds, and sixty earls and knights. According to Tetzel's account, the Queen took up the rear of the procession with two dukes, followed by her mother who was accompanied by sixty girls and ladies. The Queen then listened to a lyrical mass and afterwards, along with all the members of her escort, took part in a banquet which took place in four separate halls. Lord Leo and his retinue were once again shown the utmost reverence, as they feasted at the tables reserved for the King's court and the King himself. On this occasion, Edward's chair was occupied by one of his most important nobles (most probably the Earl of Warwick), while Leo, according to Tetzel's record, sat a mere two seats to the side of him. Lord Leo also experienced all the privileges commonly reserved for the King himself, for example the tasting of various dishes. While the banquet was taking place, King Edward rewarded the royal trumpeters, pipers, jesters, and heralds with gifts to the sum of four hundred nobles.

After the banquet had finished, the members of Rozmital's suite were given the unique opportunity to view the Queen's banquet in the adjacent hall, which was attended by the Queen's mother and the King's sister and also by her courtiers and ladies of the court. Tetzel was successful in capturing the atmosphere of the banquet, which lasted for almost three hours. He also recorded the customs associated with the Queen's banquet during other similar events: the Queen sat in an elaborate golden chair alone at the table, as her mother and the King's sisters stood by. While speaking with the Queen, they remained kneeling until she took a drink of water.[41] Bohumil Mathesius suggests that this was not directly about the actual drinking of water, but for the Queen to wash her hands with.[42] The Queen's mother and sister were allowed to take their seats after the first course was brought in. The banquet itself, during

which the Queen, her mother, and her sister-in-law were served the most select dishes, took place in absolute silence. After the banquet there was dancing, but the Queen remained in her chair and her mother continued to kneel at her feet with only brief interruptions. Tetzel gives the same depiction of these "never before seen" customs of the court dedicated to the Queen.[43] The dance, which the King's sister also took part in, was followed by songs sung by the royal vocalists and a mass which members of Rozmital's mission also participated in. On this occasion, Tetzel uses superlatives and categorical statements in his statement that he had never before heard such beautiful singing. Leo of Rozmital and his companions were allowed to view the holy relics at the end of the celebration, which were in the possession of the King located in London. These were relics such as the stone of Mount Olivet with a print of Christ's footprint, and a belt and ring of the Virgin Mary, and others.[44] It is probable that Rozmital and his party visited this unique collection of relics in Saint Paul's Cathedral. In regards to Schaseck's and Tetzel's comments on these holy relics and saints, it should be noted that these holy relics and legends connected to the saints were among the main aspects which gave medieval London its special character and "colour". In Schaseck's and Tetzel's journals there is a certain conflict between progressivism – expressed by the desire for new experiences – and a particular conservatism marked by what, at times, seems to be a strictly uncritical adulation for these holy relics and faith in the miracles of the saints.

Tetzel's evident interest in people, customs and activities can be seen in his detailed description of the banquet. The character of Tetzel's journals, although written down at various intervals (see above), show that in a number of instances he suggestively drew from his own emotional memory. Tetzel's account of the banquet is a significant demonstration of how such events functioned as a propaganda tool used

to increase London's attractiveness.[45] Regarding the comment concerning the Queen's post-natal seclusion, it is possible to speculate that the banquet was also arranged to celebrate the birth of the royal child. It is evident in the aforementioned accounts that the members of Rozmital's retinue were quite astounded by the riches which were displayed to them. In reality, Edward's court was smaller than some of his predecessors, but it still numbered six hundred persons including kitchen personnel, officers, equerries, musicians, grooms, knights and lower-ranked noblemen.[46]

Tetzel also makes mention of a visit to a distinguished London home to which Rozmital and his party were invited by two dukes. The hosts provided the travellers with excellent English food consisting of sixty courses. The travel records unfortunately do not mention details of the visit or the character of the dishes served; however most main dishes in the fifteenth century contained meat, for example swan, baked capon, rabbit in bouillon, baked rooster, and so forth. Meat dishes were often accompanied by various sweet desserts, including Leche Lombarde, a type of pudding made from cream, gelatine, sugar, almonds, raisins, dates and other ingredients.[47] It can also be assumed that medieval food was also considerably spiced. A favourite vegetable of medieval London kitchens was onion, as well as garlic. In the London of the fifteenth century, namely in Bread Street and East Cheap, there were a number of public canteens where cooks often prepared food brought directly to them by their customers.[48] Leo of Rozmital and his companions, however, had the opportunity to visit one of London's aristocratic residencies, of which there existed approximately thirty in the year 1500 and another forty-five under the ownership of prelates.[49] Unfortunately neither Schaseck nor Tetzel made record of the appearance of the residence, which at that time were often particularly extensive and built with courtyards. Christopher Hibbert, for example, gives a detailed description of such an

aristocratic residence.[50] In return, Leo of Rozmital treated the English nobility with numerous typical Czech dishes. The jousting tournament planned by Rozmital unfortunately did not take place.[51] Lord Leo, Achatz Frodner and Gabriel Tetzel later presented all their armour and horses to the English King as a gift. Before the mission's departure from London, King Edward reimbursed Rozmital for his expenses at the inn and assigned him a man who was to lead the retinue to the sea and help them procure a vessel.

Schaseck supplements Tetzel's accounts of London with information on the magnificent gardens and their numerous types of plants and trees, the beautiful churches, golden gravestones, and the quantity of holy relics there. Schaseck openly admits that although he tried his hardest, it was not possible to record them all. He also comments on the great quantity of full-time goldsmiths in London, of which there were approximately four hundred (according to Schaseck these were only master craftsmen, not employing journeymen). In the context of the structure and development of London's crafts this comment is quite accurate, as goldsmiths (or more accurately gold-beaters) belonged to one of the oldest crafts practised in London and first documented in the year 1180. In this year, according to Inwood, eighteen unregistered London livery companies including gold beaters were given a fine.[52] In the year 1327, the goldsmith's trade guild obtained a royal document enabling these crafts to be officially monitored in the city of London and essentially in all of England.[53] The Goldsmiths' House, the residence of London's livery company goldsmiths was located between London Wall and Cheapside. Neither Tetzel nor Schaseck, most likely because of their unfamiliarity with the English language, mention any definite locations of crafts by listing the names of streets whose

etymology reflects the types of products manufactured or sold there, for example Silver, Honey Lane, Milk Street, Bread Street, and so on.

Contrary to Tetzel, Schaseck notes the London custom of cordially welcoming new noble guests from abroad, who in turn give gifts to the women and maidens. He notes that "when guests first arrive at an inn the hostess comes out with her whole family to receive them, and they have to kiss her and all the others" and colourfully portrays this hostess as a female archetype of the city.[54] Members of the mission created astonishment at the length of their hair, which the Londoners assumed to be covered in resin. In listing various other pieces of information about England, Schaseck makes no effort to hide his fondness of practical matters and comments, for example, on the use of horses not only for transportation, but also for the transport of goods and special English wood from the forest.[55] He also makes a comment on the enormous length of the trains of women's dresses. Schaseck's description of England as a private garden surrounded and protected by the sea bears comparison with the death speech of Shakespeare's John of Gaunt, who compares the sea around England to a moat guarding a home.

Tetzel enriches Schaseck's information with added material on the growing of fruit, the preserves of peculiar animals and the burning of heather instead of wood. Also interesting is the comment on the lack of wine, grain, and wood and on a drink of commoners called al' selpir.[56] Bohumil Mathesius translates this drink as "ale", and Letts gives a more detailed description on the character and method of manufacturing this drink.[57] At the beginning of the fifteenth century, there were approximately two hundred and sixty-seven recorded breweries in London, and the London Brewery Society was founded in order to protect quality in the year 1427 with its own coat of arms.[58]

It is evident in both journal records that not only Schaseck and Tetzel were enchanted by London and its inhabitants, but also the majority of members of the mission, who intensely experienced the colours, sounds, and smells of the city. In his journal, Schaseck mainly focuses on detailed topographic descriptions supplemented by distinct perceptions, namely in the area of flora, fauna, and listings of architectural sites and holy relics. Thanks to Schaseck's diligent perception, unique information on the local animal and bird life was also preserved (see London's kite birds). One of the specific aspects of Schaseck's travel journal was not only his intriguing and colourful description of events he experienced, but also his method of comparing London and Londoners through the eyes of a Czech, drawing correlations on, for example, the economic, political, and social standards in both countries. Tetzel's journals reflect the author's interest in individuals. He gives a unique description of his London contemporaries, their behaviour, lifestyle, and customs. According to Lenka Líbalová, Tetzel's travel journal contains the subjective testimony of a man accustomed to wealth, prosperity, gaiety, prestigious banquets and beautiful women.[59] In this respect, Tetzel's record creates a unique source of information on the culture of the court.

In many places, the notes taken down by both men at times correspond, and at other points differ, but mainly they intertwine and complete each other to offer a unique and incomparable view, which offers a true homage to London and its citizens

Notes:

1. From a literary standpoint, the strict determination of the time period regarding the Hussite movement (1419 – 1434) should be extended to the period including the activities of Jan Hus and his predecessors. The main significance of the Hussite movement in Czech literature comes from the simplification of this literature and the change of the public's orientation from the nobility and high clergy to the bourgeoisie and eventually the common masses. Literature

for entertainment was naturally overshadowed by the new need to clearly and coherently reflect actual events, which was linked to the removal of Latin from its privileged position by the gradual substitution of Old Czech. See Zdeňka Tichá, *Cesta starší české literatury* (Prague: Panorama, 1984), 118-119.

2. Tichá, 97.
3. Ibid.
4. The journal records of the unknown page Jaroslav, who participated in a journey to France as a member of the mission undertaken by Albrecht Kostka of Postupice, were the first sign of a political mission. See ibid., 15
5. Rudolf Urbánek, *Ve službách Jiříka krále* (Prague: Evropský literární klub, 1940), 9.
6. In the year 1450, Leo of Rozmital's sister Johana was married to George of Podebrady, who was elected Czech King in the year 1458, making Leo the brother-in-law of the most powerful and influential figure in the Czech lands.
7. Urbánek, 20.
8. Ibid., 20.
9. Václav Šašek, *Deník Václava Šaška z Bířkova* (Prague: Evropský literární klub, 1940), 201.
10. Urbánek, 25.
11. Šašek, 34.
12. A list of the most significant members of Leo of Rozmital's company comes from the journal records made by Schaseck (see note 9), Gabriel Tetzel, *Cestovní deník Lva z Rožmitálu a na Blatné 1465 – 1467*. Translated by Lenka Líbalová. (Olomouc: MONSE, 2003) and the English annotated translation by Malcolm Letts, *The Travels of Leo of Rozmital 1465 – 1467* (Cambridge: The Hakluyt Society, 1957). In his listing of the members of Rozmital's company, Tetzel makes record of the knights John Zehrowsky of Kolovraty and Burianus of Schwamberg, the nobleman Achatz Frodner, Wenzel of Pietipes, Miros, Pollack, Knysto, and Indersyz.
13. Urbánek, 331.
14. Letts, 16.
15. Urbánek, 30.
16. Gabriel Tetzel and his brother Hans declared a feudal oath in the year 1459 in Cheb and became liegemen to the Czech King.
17. Tetzel, 8.
18. Ibid., 13.
19. Lenka Líbalová's translation (Olomouc: MONSE, 2003) points to significant similarities with Letts's translation. See also note 12.
20. Muffel's participation is also confirmed by Malcolm Letts (16), who lists him among the participants of the mission and indicates that he was a member of a well-known Nuremburg family.
21. Schmidt, qted in: Tetzel, 13.
22. Urbánek, 27.

23. Ibid.
24. Tetzel's dramatic narration of the embarkation in Calais during stormy weather contains a comment on Tetzel's part in saving Leo of Rozmital's life, "And if Lord Jan and Gabriel Tetzel had not been any help, my lord would have been drowned before he reached the great ship." (Letts, 32).
25. Letts, 50.
26. Šašek, 61.
27. Ibid., 62.
28. Tetzel, 25.
29. For a confirmation of the existence of laws prohibiting killing hawks and ravens see Peter Ackroyd, *Londýn. Biografie* (Prague: Jiří Buchal – BB art, 2002), 321.
30. Christopher Hibbert, *Londýn. Životopis města* (Prague: NLN, 1998) , 36.
31. Letts, 51.
32. The researcher Horký (qted in: Šašek, 201) assumes that this is probably Saint Richard, while Malcolm Letts (52) lists Edward the Confessor.
33. Ackroyd, 102.
34. Šašek, 63.
35. Ibid.
36. Tetzel, 25.
37. Winston S. Churchill, *Dějiny anglicky mluvících národů*. Part I. Zrození Británie (Prague: Český spisovatel, 1996), 328-329.
38. Schaseck clarifies Tetzel's rather vague time specification as being "two weeks".
39. Tetzel, 25.
40. Šašek, 64.
41. Tetzel, 26.
42. Mathesius qted in: Šašek, 201.
43. Ibid., 27.
44. Amongst the other relics, Schaseck also lists one of the jugs that was filled with water on Christ's order, in order to later transform the water into wine.
45. Stephen Inwood, *Historie Londýna* (Prague: Jiří Buchal – BB art, 2003), 140-141.
46. Ibid., 105.
47. Ackroyd, 300.
48. Ibid., 305.
49. Inwood, 105.
50. Hibbert, 38-39.
51. According to Schasecks's records, Leo of Rozmital had planned to hold a jousting tournament, which the king did not subsequently permit. Malcolm Letts (48) notes that the King's disapproving attitude towards the suggested tournament may have come from a particular fear of defeat by Rozmital's men, who were renowned for their skills. Generally the King was quite fond of such tournaments.

52. Inwood, 116.
53. Ibid.
54. Letts, 54.
55. Schaseck also mentions the use of carts with two firm wheels for the transport of goods (Šašek, 64).
56. Šašek, 68; Tetzel, 27-28.
57. Letts, 49.
58. Ackroyd, 330.
59. Lenka Líbalová qted in: Tetzel, 12.