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Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein

A Poet between Nations and Denominations

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Abstract

Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein (ca. 1461–1510), a Bohemian nobleman and outstanding Latin poet, is remarkable for the rich and contradictory ways in which his personality was interpreted up to the twentieth century. Although a fervent Catholic, in the sixteenth century he became a model for Czech non-Catholic humanists of Wittenberg training, for whom he represented a hero who liberated his country from barbarism. The Catholics did not “take him back” until long after the defeat of the non-Catholic Estates, and in the second half of the seventeenth century the Jesuits presented a legend of him as a poet laureate of the Pope himself. In parallel, his legacy lived on in the German Lutheran lands, where his first brief monograph was written and reprints of his works were published. The Enlightenment provided a less polarizing view of Hassenstein, though paradoxically it was a Jesuit, Ignatius Cornova, who has written the most comprehensive monograph on Hassenstein to date. Although Cornova tried to take a balanced view, even he could not avoid using psychologizing conclusions to describe Hassenstein in a way that suited his pedagogical purposes, even if in so doing he had to suppress or distort some facts. After the Enlightenment, the confessional aspect lost its urgency, and another conflicting issue arose in the presentation of Hassenstein—his belonging to a certain nation. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, scholars argued over whether he was Czech or German. These debates faithfully mirrored contemporary political developments, and only ended after World War II, when modern editions of Hassenstein’s works and the scholarly studies by their editors, Dana Martínková and Jan Martínek, provided an objective view of Hassenstein as a humanist writer and historical figure.

Keywords

Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein, reception of Neo-Latin literature, Bohemia, nationalism, confessionalism

Introduction

Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein lived in a difficult period and the reception of his work is also complicated. Over the centuries, his intellectual legacy has been claimed by both, Utraquists and Lutherans, he was later presented as an exemplary Catholic scholar by the Jesuits, and he was fought over by the Czechs and the Germans. Yet this highly respected author, famous in his time for his library, was almost forgotten for many decades after his death. This was partly because almost none of his works was published. The revival of interest in Hassenstein's personality and work is associated with the second generation of humanist poets in the Czech lands in the second half of the sixteenth century and he is still considered the most important author of his time in Bohemia. This importance explains the claims of various denominations and national entities to appropriate his legacy.

First, Hassenstein's life, attitudes, and opinions should be discussed, as he presented them in his poems and letters, in order to better understand the later peripeties of the publication and interpretation of his work and the presentation and stylisation of his personality.¹ He was born into a noble Catholic family, the Lobkowicz of Hassenstein. Probably destined for an ecclesiastical career from an early age, he studied law in Bologna and Ferrara, where he obtained a doctorate in canon law in 1482. He also studied ancient Greek, astronomy, and poetry. On his return to Prague, he became a royal secretary, and his excellent education won him the admiration of Czech intellectuals, among whom I should mention Victorin Cornelius of Všehrdy (1460–1520), whom we shall encounter later. When the royal chancellery was moved to Buda in 1490, he embarked upon a journey to the Holy Land, which earned him the nickname “the Czech Odysseus”. He travelled through Greece, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. In his own words, he wanted to see places associated with ancient history and literature.

He returned to Bohemia earlier than planned because the Olomouc chapter elected him bishop in 1490. This election was not confirmed by the Pope. The same thing happened again a short later, when Pope Alexander VI, despite numerous interventions, again refused to recognize the chapter's choice. Later, Hassenstein applied for the position of coadjutor to the Bishop of Wrocław—again without success. The main reasons for his failure were probably his unwillingness to pay for the position and his exceedingly radical attitude towards non-Catholics in the Kingdom of Bohemia. These career setbacks reinforced Hassenstein's critical attitude towards papal politics, although he remained loyal to the Catholic faith. After his brief (and frustrating) attempt at a courtly career as a royal poet at the court in

¹ Recently, on Hassenstein, *Companion to Central and East European Humanism*, vol. 2: *The Czech Lands*, ed. L. Storchová, Berlin and Boston 2020, Part 1, pp. 688–701; Antonín Truhlář, Karel Hrdina, Josef Hejnic, and Jan Martínek, *Rukověť humanistického básnictví v Čechách a na Moravě – Enchiridion re natae poesis in Bohemia et Moravia cultae*, vol. 3: *K–M*, Prague 1969, pp. 170–203 (further *RHB*). A research overview is given in both works.

Buda, he retired to his castle at Hassenstein, where he devoted himself to managing the estate, running a private school and expanding his library, but never ceased to follow domestic and world news.

There are few authors from the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries whom we know so much about as Hassenstein. We have almost two hundred of his Latin letters, over five hundred poems and several prose treatises, all in modern editions.² Even his famous private library, also recently monographically compiled, has survived to the present day with only minor losses.³ During his lifetime, his poems and letters were copied and collected, but these manuscripts were intended only for “friendly eyes” and not for the printing press. Although Hassenstein obviously styles himself in them, they nevertheless possess a certain sincerity and authenticity with which the author expresses his opinions on a whole range of issues. Let us outline a few basic themes which appear in Hassenstein’s letters and poems and that have been used in various ways in the later reception of his work:

- Criticism of Popes Alexander VI (1431–1503) and Julius II (1443–1513), criticism of the clergy
- Criticism of the weak government of Władysław II Jagiellończyk (1456–1516)
- Criticism of the Hussites and the Unity of Brethren
- Criticism of the power of the Jews
- Criticism of all classes of Bohemian society—accusing the most prominent men of lacking love for their country (*Ad S. Wenceslaum satira*⁴ and other poems)
- Celebration of the invention of the printing press and gunpowder (*De propriis Germanorum inventis*⁵)
- Invective against the translator of his poems into Czech (*De interprete suorum carminum*⁶)
- Letter about Prague and its inhabitants (*De Praga et incolentium moribus*⁷)
- “Ego me certe Germanum esse et profiteor et glorior” (I confidently claim to be German and I am proud of it) in a letter to Bernhard Adelmann (1459–1523) of 28 September 1507⁸
- Poems to Johannes Sturnus with obscene and erotic content
- Love poems to Charlotte (Lat. *Carlota*)

² Bohuslaus Hassensteiniius baro a Lobkowitz. *Scripta moralia*, ed. B. Ryba, Leipzig 1937; *Bohuslai Hassensteinii a Lobkowitz epistulae*, vol. 1: *Epistulae de re publica scriptae*, ed. J. Martínek and D. Martínková, Leipzig 1969 (further *Epistulae*, vol. 1); *Bohuslai Hassensteinii a Lobkowitz epistulae*, vol. 2: *Epistulae ad familiares*, ed. J. Martínek and D. Martínková, Leipzig 1980 (further *Epistulae*, vol. 2); *Bohuslaus Hassensteiniius a Lobkowitz, Opera poetica*, ed. M. Vaculínová, Munich and Leipzig 2006 (further *Opera poetica*).

³ Kamil Boldan and Emma Urbánková, *Rekonstrukce knihovny Bohuslava Hasištejnského z Lobkovic* [Reconstruction of the library of Bohuslaus of Lobkowitz and Hassenstein], Prague 2009.

⁴ *Opera poetica*, no. 24.

⁵ *Opera poetica*, no. 12.

⁶ *Opera poetica*, no. 48.

⁷ *Epistulae*, vol. 1, no. 1.

⁸ *Epistulae*, vol. 2, no. 137.

Between non-Catholics and Catholics: Hassenstein in the Renaissance and Baroque periods

The first phase of the reflection on Hassenstein's work concerns his publications in print. His descendants on the estate of Hassenstein became Lutherans and maintained contacts with the University of Wittenberg. It is therefore no coincidence that the editing of Hassenstein's works was carried out by humanists, who were intellectually linked to the Wittenberg school.⁹ Their long-term efforts to publish Bohuslaus' complete works resulted in the editions of 1562–1573.¹⁰ The main editor, Tomáš Mitis, added a number of paratexts to the editions, including Philip Melancthon's statements about the Bohemian humanists and letters from important protagonists of the Protestant culture of the time. To poets of the second generation, Hassenstein symbolised salvation from barbarism, and was stylised as a luminary who brought the light of Renaissance culture to the Czech lands. His contemporary, Augustin of Olomouc (1467–1513), was also perceived in a similar way, as recently discussed by Lucie Storchová.¹¹

The non-Catholic editors appreciated Hassenstein's critical attitude towards the Popes and the prelates and partly agreed with his criticism of Bohemian society. It is no coincidence that the marginalia Mitis added to the texts draw attention to these aspects. However, Hassenstein's criticism of Hussitism and non-Catholics in general and his intensely critical view of the conditions in Bohemia were problematic. This was probably the reason why Mitis did not include in his edition a letter to Kristián Pedík about Prague, in which Hassenstein criticises the excesses of the Hussites and Jan Žižka (ca. 1360–1424). Minor changes were also made to the text of the letter to King Vladislaus, where Mitis softened or omitted some critical statements about contemporary Bohemia. A number of controversial texts, including a letter about the Prague burghers' negotiations for reconciliation with the Catholic Church, in which Hassenstein vehemently expresses his Catholic faith, were left in their original form by Mitis.¹²

The individual volumes of the edition were published (probably not coincidentally) after the accession of the Habsburg Maximilian II (1527–1576) to the Bohemian throne in 1562. The 1570 edition of Hassenstein's poems is also dedicated to him. Maximilian was known for his tolerance towards non-Catholic denominations, and

⁹ For the reception of Hassenstein in Bohemia in the sixteenth century see Lucie Storchová, "Musarum et patriae fulgida stella suae. Inscenace Bohuslava Hasištejnského z Lobkovic a sebeidentifikační praktiky českých humanistů poloviny 16. století" [Bohuslaus of Lobkowitz and Hassenstein and the self-identification practices of Czech humanists of the mid-sixteenth century], *Acta Musei Nationalis Pragae – Historia litterarum* 52 (2007), no. 1–4, pp. 9–18; Storchová, *Creating a Nation through an Anthology of Neo-Latin Poetry: Bohemians as a Community of Honour in the mid-16th Century*, esp. Chapter 6: "The Culmination of the Competition for Honour in the 1560s: Editions of Bohuslaus of Lobkowitz and Hassenstein" [forthcoming].

¹⁰ For the detailed description of prints see *RHB*, vol. 3, pp. 178–181.

¹¹ Lucie Storchová, "The 'Apostle' of Renaissance Humanism in Moravia? Re-Figuring Augustinus Olomucensis in Modern Czech Historiography", in: *Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis*, ed. P. Ekler and F. G. Kiss, Budapest 2015, pp. 149–156.

¹² Jan Martínek, "Quo modo Bohuslaus Hassensteinus in patriam animatus fuerit", *Listy filologické* 93 (1970), pp. 37–43.

a certain compromise is evident in the dedications of the editions by Mitis—besides the descendant of the Hassenstein line, Christopher, they are also dedicated to two members of other lines of the family who professed Catholicism and held high positions in the kingdom's administration. However, the publication of Hassenstein's poems can be seen as his appropriation by Czech non-Catholics—his work had no resonance in Catholic circles at the time, for obvious reasons.

The situation changed after the defeat of the Protestant Estates at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620. For the non-Catholic intellectuals, who for the most part chose to live in exile, Hassenstein's work, with its critical aspect, did not represent the necessary consolation and strength of opinion in their difficult situation; rather, prints were produced and published that responded to the current situation and works that returned to the past of the Czech lands before White Mountain, idealising and proclaiming the continuity of the non-Catholic intellectual community. The victorious Catholic party, only after a delay of several decades, found a way to accept Hassenstein's personality.

After 1620, the Utraquist University was entrusted to the Jesuit Order, and in 1654 the original Charles University and the Jesuit Academy were united. Later, that union was manifested in the illustrated propaganda book *Gloria universitatis Carolo-Ferdinandae*, celebrating the final victory of Catholicism in the Czech lands in the field of education.¹³ In this publication, the victorious party first claims the legacy of Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein through an eulogy in which he is praised as the poet laureate and leading intellectual of the then-Holy Roman Empire of the German nation. The eulogy is illustrated with a copperplate of a fictitious portrait of him with a laurel wreath on his head, which became the model for the so-called Lobkowicz portrait, which is still reproduced today. The legend of Hassenstein as a poet laureate is completed by the story of a competition announced by the Pope for an elegiac couplet with the longest words, which he is said to have won.¹⁴

The eminent Jesuit historian Bohuslaus Balbín (1621–1688) wrote a brief treatment of Hassenstein's life and work at the same time. However, it was published in print in 1777, long after Balbín's death, in his *Bohemia docta*.¹⁵ It should be remembered that Balbín, for whom his namesake was 'the phoenix of the learned', here completely omitted Hassenstein's contacts with non-Catholic humanists such as Victorin Cornelius of Všebrdy. His selection of Hassenstein's poems was also remarkable: the comparison of Bohemia and Hungary, the power of the Jews, the praise of

¹³ [Georg Weis], *Gloria universitatis Carolo-Ferdinandae Pragensis triginta tribus encomiis divulgata*, Prague 1672. See Ivana Čornejová, "Gloria Universitatis Carolo-Ferdinandae Pragensis – oslava pražské univerzity v barokních Čechách", in: *Baroko v Itálii – baroko v Čechách*, ed. J. Pánek and V. Herold, Prague 2003, pp. 90–100.

¹⁴ Neither the claims of winning nor the narrative of the competition are based on truth. The only poem quoted from Hassenstein's work here is the curious pun with which he was supposed to have won the papal competition: "Conturbabantur Constantinopolitani / innumerabilibus sollicitudinibus" (Constantinopolitans were troubled with innumerable anxieties, *Opera poetica*, no. 260).

¹⁵ This work was not published in print until the 1770s.

Karlovy Vary and the Emperor Charles IV. He quotes a passage from the Satire to St. Wenceslaus, which contains criticism of leading nobles.¹⁶

The non-Catholic tradition continued, with some delay, in the German Protestant countries. Here it follows the tradition of the Mitis editions, guided by interest in the personality of Hassenstein as an important literary figure who criticised the Catholic Church in his works. His treatise on human misery was published twice in the seventeenth century, as was his poetic exhortation against the Turks, and two Latin settings of Hassenstein's life and works were published in the early eighteenth century.¹⁷

Science and objectivity: the reception of Hassenstein's work in the Enlightenment

A new wave of interest in Hassenstein and other Bohemian humanists came with the onset of the Enlightenment, which brought religious tolerance and an increase in the importance of secular power at the expense of ecclesiastical power. As a result of educational reforms, the importance of Latin gradually declined and German, the official language of higher education in the Habsburg Monarchy, took its place in literature. Nevertheless, every Bohemian literary historian of the Enlightenment wrote about Hassenstein, and in their treatises he became the subject of real scholarly interest, culminating in a monograph by Ignaz Cornova in 1808.¹⁸ The Enlightenment writers, including Cornova, took up the theme of the sixteenth-century humanists, for whom Hassenstein was the star or phoenix of his homeland, and exaggeratedly referred to him as a light that illuminated not only the Czech lands, but also Germany and Hungary.¹⁹

Ignác Cornova (1740–1822), although a member of the Jesuit order, which was abolished in 1773, was a thoroughly modern writer who had an excellent command of classical languages, but his main inspiration was contemporary literature in living tongues. His biography of Hassenstein was modelled on contemporary biographies of prominent humanists such as Erasmus and Ulrich von Hutten. This type of biography relied on knowing famous men directly from their writings, which were widely quoted. In particular, the letters of eminent persons and other ego-documents were then intended to contribute to the understanding of specific authors and to create a profile of their personality. Cornova's biography of Hassenstein was also a

¹⁶ *Bohuslai Balbini ... Bohemia docta*, ed. P. Candidus a s. Theresia, Prague 1777, p. 60.

¹⁷ About this, in detail, Marta Vaculínová, "Němečtí životopisci Bohuslava Hasištejského z Lobkovic a jejich vztahy k Čechám" [German biographers of Bohuslaus of Lobkowitz and Hassenstein and their relations to Bohemia], *Acta Musei Nationalis Pragae – Historia litterarum* 52 (2007), no. 1–4, pp. 39–44.

¹⁸ Ignaz Cornova, *Der große Böhme Bohuslaw von Lobkowitz und zu Hassenstein nach seinen eigenen Schriften geschildert*, Prague 1808.

¹⁹ For more, see Marta Vaculínová, "Ignác Cornova a jeho biografie Bohuslava Hasištejského z Lobkovic" [Ignaz Cornova and his biography of Bohuslaus of Lobkowitz and Hassenstein], *Cornova* 11 (2022), no. 2, pp. 27–50.

combination of scholarly and fictional approaches. The use of German, into which he also translated parts of Hassenstein's works, significantly broadened the readership of the work, including women, who were often the recipients of Cornova's dedications.

After centuries in which the personality and work of Hassenstein were interpreted to suit the needs of particular denominations, we finally find in Cornova's biography a more objective view of Hassenstein. A number of his conclusions on problematic issues, even those often raised later, are still valid today. He acknowledges Hassenstein as a devout Catholic, but criticizes his intolerance of the Utraquists, especially Victorin Cornelius of Všebrdy, and of the Unity of the Brethren, represented in Hassenstein's work on Marta of Boskovice who was, moreover, a woman.²⁰ Cornova has no difficulty in reproducing mocking epigrams about the Pope; after all, as a true follower of Joseph II (1741–1790), he rejected papal dogmatism and opposed the expansion of papal power at the expense of the secular state. He was the first to publish Hassenstein's letter about Prague and, by way of juxtaposition, did not include the letter to Petr IV of Rožmberk (1462–1523), known only in Czech translation.

Further, he included neither the critical poems against the Jews, nor the epigrams to Johann Sturnus, which contained some obscene allusions and did not correspond to Josephinian ideas about the moral and educational mission of literature. For the sake of completeness, however, he mentioned them in remarking that we cannot infer from them that Hassenstein was ill-mannered. He also states that he does not wish to dwell on Hassenstein's relationship with Charlotte or other women, and the few love poems do not yet prove that such relationships existed. (He probably assumed that Hassenstein had some kind of priestly ordination and therefore never married.)

However, not even Cornova was entirely objective—he subordinated the biography to moral and educational goals and wanted to provide his readers with a model of an educated nobleman, a humanist of good character and supporter of the arts and sciences. He deliberately suppressed or excused some of the unpleasant features of Hassenstein's character to emphasize his positive qualities, even if only manifested in literature.

For the nation or against it: the reception of Hassenstein's work in the Czech National Revival

We can observe a weakening since the Enlightenment of the confessional perspective in the reception of Hassenstein's work, its place having been taken by the perspective of the nation and the national language. The Czech language and Czech literature, which at the beginning of the nineteenth century were almost marginalised, gradually emancipated themselves and underwent a radical development, which by the end of

²⁰ Cornova, *Der große Böhme*, pp. 168–169.

the century had brought Czech up to a par with German. The original territorial patriotism, as we know it from Cornova and Dobrovský, which included the inhabitants of the Czech kingdom regardless of their mother tongue—in German, *Böhme*—was replaced by a patriotism conditioned by the use of a specific language. Czech literature was understood by the new generation, represented by Josef Jungmann, as Czech-language literature, which meant that authors writing in other languages lost importance. The representatives of the so-called ‘national humanism’, the scholars writing in Czech, represented by Victorin Cornelius of Všebrdy, became more important at that time.

There was also less interest in Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein, who had written exclusively in Latin, but his importance did not allow him to be completely excluded from the newly conceptualised Czech literature. This is well illustrated by the sight of Josef Jungmann in his *History of Czech Literature* (1825), who says of Hassenstein: “... the most excellent mind the Czech country has ever produced, if only he had written in Czech!”²¹ It should likewise be remembered that the German Bohemians did not doubt the excellence of Hassenstein, regarding him as a forerunner of Erasmus in Central Europe.

In order to prevent Hassenstein being lost under the new approach to Czech literature, an initiative was launched to prove that he also wrote in Czech. This was to be done by means of his letter to Petr of Rožmberk on the administration of the state, which has survived only in a Czech translation. Josef Dobrovský had already assumed that it was a translation of the Latin original, which he attributed to Řehoř Hrubý of Jelení (ca. 1460–1513)²²; Cornova did not publish this letter, although he probably knew about it.

The Catholic priest and writer Karel Vinařický, also known for translating Virgil’s *Aeneid* into Czech, took on the role of advocate for Hassenstein as a Czech language writer. In 1831 he published a dialogue in the *Časopis českého museum* (*Journal of the Czech Museum*), written according to the humanist models of the genre.²³ In a conversation between the two protagonists, called ‘Mr Doubter’ and ‘I’, he explains why the letter to Petr of Rožmberk is an original work written in Czech. Mr Doubter, for his part, concludes the dialogue with the conviction that he will search for the Latin original “until cholera seizes me”, but it looked like Vinařický’s intent was fulfilled, because in the following decades there was no speculation that the Czech version might not be Hassenstein’s original work. However, the Latin original was not found by Mr Doubter, but by Paul Oskar Kristeller in 1959 at the Royal Library in Stockholm.²⁴

²¹ Josef Jungmann, *Historie literatury české* [History of the Czech Literature], Prague 1825, p. 72. My translation.

²² Josef Dobrovský, *Geschichte der Böhmisches Sprache und ältern Literatur*, Prague 1818, p. 361.

²³ Karel Vinařický, “Rozmluva o českém listu p. Bohuslava Hasisteinského z Lobkowic ku p. Petrowi z Rožmberka: Psán-li původně česky, neboli latinsky?” [Dialogue about the Czech letter of Lord Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein to Lord Petr of Rožmberk: was it originally written in Czech, or in Latin?], *Časopis českého museum* 5 (1831), no. 4, pp. 421–434. Dialogue as a genre was popular at the time; Josef Jungmann, for instance, wrote his programmatic work *Dvojí rozmlouvání o jazyce českém* [Double dialogue about the Czech language] (1806) in this form.

²⁴ Dana Martínková, “Nález spisu Bohuslava Hasištejnského z Lobkowic o správě státu” [The discovery of the writings of Bohuslaus Hassensteinius of Lobkowicz on the administration of the state], *Zprávy Jednoty klasických filologů* 3 (1961), pp. 121–126; for the edition of the letter see *Epistulae*, vol. 1, pp. 1–12.

Five years after the dialogue, Karel Vinařický published an entire book on Hassenstein in which, not unlike Cornova, he combined a biography of the author with translations of his works.²⁵ Again, the nationalists symbolically appropriated Hassenstein's work and incorporated it into Czech literature. Censorship interfered with the translation before publication, as evidenced by the omitted sentence in the letter from the Moravian nobility.²⁶ However, Hassenstein was not entirely accepted, owing to his critical views on Bohemia. His dislike for the Czech nation and language had already been criticised by Josef Kajetán Tyl before the publication of Vinařický's monograph and was criticised again in the 1880s by Josef Truhlář and Jan Herben.²⁷

In the 1860s, the political situation in the Habsburg monarchy became easier and with it came greater freedom of the press. At the same time, the gap widened between the supporters of the emancipation of the Czech language and the German Bohemians, who had been on the defensive up to that point; eventually they too moved from their original territorial patriotism to a concept determined by language, and gradually German Bohemians (*Deutschböhmen*) became Sudeten Germans (*Sudetendeutsche*),²⁸ as we shall see below. In 1861 the Society for the History of Germans in Bohemia was founded, which published its journal *Mitteilungen*. Its first editor-in-chief was Anton Schmalfuß, who in 1863 published the article "Der 'große Böhme' Bohuslaw von Hassenstein ein Deutscher."²⁹ He argued, firstly, that Johann Trithemius (1462–1516) had referred to Hassenstein as 'Germanus',³⁰ and secondly, with a sentence taken from Hassenstein's aforementioned letter to Bernhard Adelman: "Ego me certe Germanum esse et profiteor et glorior" (I confidently claim to be German and I am proud of it).

²⁵ Karel Vinařický, *Pána Bohuslawa Hasišteynského z Lobkowic věk a spisy vybrané* [The times and selected writings of Lord Bohuslaus Hassensteinius of Lobkowicz], Prague 1836.

²⁶ This censorship intervention was later mentioned by Vinařický in his article "Bohuslav z Lobkowic na Hasištejně Čech anebo Němec?" [Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein—Czech or German?] in the *Národ* magazine of 24 April 1864, [p. 3]. The sentence in which Bohuslaus doubts the suitability of the Cardinal of Montreal for the office of Bishop of Olomouc, a man who does not know the local language and customs, has been deleted (*Epistulae*, vol. 2, no. 41: "illene mores formabit et linguae et consuetudinum nostrarum prorsus ignarus?").

²⁷ Josef Kajetán Tyl, "Pohled na literaturu nejnovější" [A view of more recent literature], *Květy* 3 (1836), annex XV, příl. 57–59, annex XVI, pp. 61–64; Josef Truhlář, "Kterak se zachovali nejstarší humanisté k národu českému" [How the earliest humanists treated the Czech nation], *Časopis Musea království Českého* 54 (1880), pp. 476–489 (on this, see Jan Malura, "Josef Truhlář a bádání nad humanismem v českých zemích", in: *Viator Pilsnensis neboli Plzeňský poutník. Literárnímu vědci Viktoru Viktorovi k sedmdesátinám*, ed. V. Bok and H. Chýlová, Plzeň 2012, p. 70); Jan Herben, "Z černé knihy národa českého. Bohuslav z Lobkowic a na Hasištejně" [From the black book of the Czech nation: Bohuslaus of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein], *Ruch* 4 (1882), pp. 279–281.

²⁸ See Nina Lohmann, "Wilhelm Wostry und die 'sudetendeutsche' Geschichtsschreibung bis 1938", *Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Historia Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis* 44 (2004), no. 1–2, pp. 45–146.

²⁹ Anton Schmalfuß, "Der 'große Böhme' Bohuslaw von Hassenstein ein Deutscher", *Mitteilungen des Vereines für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen* 2 (1864), no. 5, pp. 155–156.

³⁰ Johannes Trithemius, *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, Basel 1494, fol. 138r: "Bouslaus de hassenstein: natione Germanus, vir nobilis".

At this point I would like to include a short digression. In early modern Europe, Czechs (*Bohemi*) were commonly referred to as Germans (*Germani*, members of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation); for example, the verses of Czech poets are included in the anthology *Deliciae poetarum Germanorum* (1612). The term *Bohemus* was used by foreign scholars from countries bordering on Bohemia or who had contacts with Bohemian scholars. The term *Germani* was, however, resisted by Czech humanists as early as the sixteenth century, when, for example, they demanded a correction to the new edition of Conrad Gesner's bibliography.³¹ Although Tomáš Mitis quotes Trithemius in his edition of Hassenstein's writings, he edits the entry as follows: "Bohuslaus de Hassensteyn, natione Boëmus (impressum erat Germanus)" (Bohuslaus of Hassenstein, by the nation of Bohemia, it was printed German).³² In the dedicatory paratexts to members of the Habsburg dynasty, however, we find references to Bohemia and the Empire: "Idem Germanae celebrans inventa Minervae / propria ... princeps, non dedignare Boemas Camenas..." (The same celebrated the inventions of the German Minerva ... Ruler, do not despise the Czech Muses).³³ The later often purposeful use of the quotation "Ego me Germanum" must be explained in the context of the content of the letter in which it is used. Here, Hassenstein speaks of the possibility of transferring the Roman empire to France and defines himself as a member of the German Empire who opposes this. The fact that Hassenstein saw himself as an inhabitant of the Bohemian state (*Bohemus*) and the Roman Empire (*Germanus*) has been convincingly explained by Jan Martínek.³⁴

On the Czech side, Schmalfuß' short article in *Mitteilungen* aroused great indignation. The journals edited by Czech and Moravian politicians (*Národ*, *Moravská orlice*, and *Politik*) immediately reported on the attempt to attribute Hassenstein to the Germans. Karel Vinařický, who was already advanced in age, once again took part in the debate, as the best expert on Hassenstein's life and work.³⁵ His arguments, based on thorough knowledge, were correct—a hundred years later, Jan Martínek repeated them in a very similar way—except for one thing, the claim regarding the originally Czech letter to Petr of Rožmberk. This argument was not used by Josef Truhlář six years later when he listed the reasons against Hassenstein's Germanness, but he added another very convincing one, namely the fact that Hassenstein's older brother Jan of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein (1450–1517) became famous as an author of Czech-language works, written in his mother tongue.³⁶

³¹ See Josef Hejnic and Václav Bok, *Gesners europäische Bibliographie und ihre Beziehung zum Späthumanismus in Böhmen und Mähren*, Prague 1988, p. 16; Ferdinand Menčík, *Dopisy M. Matouše Kollína z Chotěřiny a jeho přátel ke Kašparovi z Nydbrucka*, Prague and Leipzig 1914, p. 76, no. 35.

³² *Viri incomparabilis ... Bohuslai Hassensteynii Lucubrationes oratoriae*, ed. T. Mitis, Prague 1563, fol. A2a.

³³ *Generosi baronis ... Bohuslai Hasistenii a Lobkowicz ... Appendix poematum*, ed. T. Mitis, Prague 1570, fol. Q3a.

³⁴ Martínek, "Quo modo Bohuslaus Hassensteinus in patriam animatus fuerit".

³⁵ Karel Vinařický, "Bohuslav z Lobkovic na Hasisteině Čech anebo Němec?", *Národ*, 24–28 April 1864.

³⁶ Josef Truhlář, "Humanismus v Čechách" [Humanism in Bohemia], *Časopis Musea království českého* 44 (1870), no. 4, p. 387. For more on Jan of Lobkowicz and Hassenstein see *Companion*, pp. 701–705.

I did not find any immediate reaction to the Vinařický article on the part of the *Verein* or the German-writing intellectuals. In the absence of a truly scholarly debate, however, the view that Hassenstein was German persisted in German Bohemian circles and has been encountered in scholarly works ever since.³⁷ Classical philologists from the German-speaking areas of Bohemia were reticent on the question of Hassenstein's alleged Germanness, and the editions of Hassenstein's letters by Josef Truhlář and his prose by Bohumil Ryba received positive, accurate reviews in *Mitteilungen*, without any consideration of Hassenstein's nationality.

Between science and propaganda: Hassenstein in the twentieth century

After the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, the gap between the Czech- and German-speaking populations of the new state widened further, which is also reflected in the fact that the editing of Hassenstein's work was carried out independently in both language communities. Although Bohumil Ryba announced the planned publication of the letters and poems in a prose edition, the edition of the letters was prepared independently by Augustin Potuček, the former headmaster of the German *Gymnasium* in Žatec, this edition being printed posthumously in 1946 in Budapest by the Hungarian philologist, László Juhász.³⁸ At the same time, translations of Hassenstein's poems into Czech and German were produced as a supplement to grammar school texts. The history of the Czech literature written during the First Republic became more objective after the achievement of the independent state and depicts Latin literature as part of Czech culture, although it is still not given the same importance as Czech-language literature.

With the rise of fascism in Germany, the rhetoric of German Bohemians intensified, supported by Nazi propaganda. Hassenstein was no longer presented as a Bohemian or German Bohemian, but he became part of German culture in the broadest sense, and in the propaganda literature he was placed alongside Goethe, Schiller, and Adalbert Stifter.³⁹ With few exceptions, however, scholars have stayed away from this

³⁷ E.g., *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*, vol. 15, Vienna 1866, pp. 314–317, on p. 317 the author directly condemns Vinařický's 1864 article as unconvincing; Adalbert Horawitz, "Lobkowitz von Hassenstein, Bohuslaw", in: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 19, Leipzig 1884, pp. 47–50; Rudolf Wolkan, *Böhmens Antheil an der deutschen Litteratur im XVI. Jahrhundert*, Part 3, Prague 1894, p. 110 starts with the phrase: "Bohuslaus Lobkowitz von Hassenstein hat sich selbst als Deutschen bekannt. Ego certe me Germanum esse et profiteor et glorior ... Und damit sind alle Bestrebungen der Tschechen, ihn zu einem der ihrigen zu machen, wohl genügend zurückgewiesen."

³⁸ *Bohuslai Hassensteinii baronis a Lobkowitz Epistolae*, ed. A. Potuček, Budapest 1946.

³⁹ Viktor Karell, *Deutsche Dichter in Karlsbad: Von Bohuslav Lobkowitz von Hassenstein bis Adalbert Stifter*, Karlsbad 1935.

line.⁴⁰ At a time when Czechoslovakia was effectively subject to Hitler's Germany, not only Czech but also some German Bohemian writers turned to the past and published or translated works of earlier Czech literature.⁴¹ For them, as for the Czech exiles in the period after 1620, Hassenstein, who was always critical, was unsuitable material.

The dramatic twists and turns in research on Hassenstein did not end with the period of the German occupation of Czechoslovakia. In 1953, Professor Bohumil Ryba, a classical philologist, was arrested by the communist secret police. In a staged trial, in which he was accused, among other things, of having invented a cipher key for an anti-state conspiracy based on a Cambridge edition of the comedies of Plautus, he was sentenced to nineteen years in prison.⁴² His preparations for an edition of Hassenstein's letters and poems were destroyed. For a long time after, the concept of so-called "national humanism" dominated the approach to the Czech literature of the early modern period.

Conclusion

Each epoch interpreted the personality and work of Bohuslaus of Lobkowitz and Hassenstein according to its own needs, choosing which texts to publish and which to emphasise. The first period, which ends before the Enlightenment, is characterised by the shifting of Hassenstein's legacy between denominations and its confessional reception. The Enlightenment represents an intermediate phase, characterized by a more objective approach, which was later followed by twentieth-century scholarship. In the Czech National Revival, Hassenstein's work became part of the debate on national literature and language. His reception ranged from scholarly treatises to popular and utilitarian articles and essays serving first Czech and then German nationalism. For reasons that I cannot explain, Hassenstein is still part of German literary history today without any argumentation, as evidenced by his personal mention in the German literature reference book published in 2008 and the inclusion of his poems in the 1966 anthology of Humanist German Poetry.⁴³

⁴⁰ Georg Ellinger, *Italien und der deutsche Humanismus*, Berlin and Leipzig 1929, p. 411: "Das Tschechentum trat freilich viel später in die Bewegung ein; aber die Deutschböhmen stellten ein hervorragendes Mitglied der Poetenzunft. Es war Bohuslaus von Lobkowitz und Hassenstein, deutscher Abkunft trotz seines halbtschechischen Namens."

⁴¹ E.g., anthologies of the texts on Prague, edited by Vincy Schwarz in collaboration with Pavel Eisner, see *Dějiny české literatury v protektorátu Čechy a Morava* [History of Czech literature in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia], ed. P. Janoušek et al., Prague 2022, p. 181.

⁴² Věra Dvořáčková, "Profesor Bohumil Ryba, mezi vědou a vězením" [Professor Bohumil Ryba, between science and prison], *Sborník Archivu bezpečnostních složek* 7 (2009), pp. 227–274. Fragments of Ryba's estate are stored in the Literary Archive in Prague.

⁴³ Jan-Dirk Müller, "Bohuslav de Hassenstein", in: *Deutscher Humanismus 1480–1520. Verfasserlexikon*, ed. F. J. Worstbrock, Berlin 2008, pp. 1032–1048; *Lateinische Gedichte deutscher Humanisten*, ed. H. C. Schnur, Stuttgart 1966 and later reprints.

If Hassenstein were a minor author, the complications described above would never have occurred. In examining the reasons for his popularity, one must also consider a purely practical one: the Lobkowicz family, from which Hassenstein came, has remained in the Czech lands to this day, albeit in a different lineage, and its members held important positions in the state in the past, making them suitable patrons of literary works. Many of them, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, were the recipients of editions or translations of Hassenstein's works. This continuity may be one of the reasons why Hassenstein's work has withstood the ravages of time, and it may also explain why his role as a patron of writers and intellectuals has been emphasized again and again, despite this being insignificant compared to the importance of his own work.

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