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Gog and Magog: Using Concepts of Apocalyptic Enemies in the Hussite era

Little was certain about Gog and Magog in the Middle Ages. It was generally agreed that they were distant, evil and inhuman. Interpretations of Gog and Magog pointed both to a real people, however it may have been ethically defined, to which they assigned geographical coordinates in the then horizon of the world, and an image of apocalyptic destroyers announcing the fulfilment of history. Medieval society imbued their descriptions with its fears and at the same time, its boundaries. The story of Gog and Magog was a story of the expectation of a terrible ravaging army which would augur the end of history, and the ultimate enemy of the Christian world, into which society's anxieties and fears were projected. At the same time, it was a story of defining oneself vis--vis the unknown, determining what was generally right and what was dangerous and unacceptable. The characteristics ascribed to the Gog and Magog people therefore included cannibalism, infanticide, sexual perversion, and lack of restraint. Gog and Magog represented throughout the Middle Ages a metaphor of danger, an enemy of the Christian world, at first mainly external, then, as the church reform movement gathered strength, an internal threat. In the last case they frequently moved from the original periphery of the land to the centre of Christian society.

Gog and Magog, enemy people which will, according to the apocalyptic prophecies, destroy the world alongside Antichrist in the last moments of history, posed a thorny interpretation problem. Even the medieval authors often failed to grasp and name them unambiguously. In the sources the notions of Gog and Magog moved on a thin borderline between reality and an allegorical construct. As part of the biblical text Gog and Magog were subjected to classic exegetic techniques and hermeneutic interpretations. In their notions of the world system they arrived to areas on the geographic periphery, which lay at the greatest distance from the centre of the world and the main scene of the history of salvation, inhabited by diverse monsters.¹ Texts of medieval travellers, but also theologians, associated them with

1 John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, Cambridge – London 1981, p. 37. Of the Czech scholars who paid attention to human monsters in the medieval sources see for example Jana Rozehnalov, *Lidsk monstra ve stedovekch pramenech. Promny evropskho vztahu k "jinmu"*, in: *Nboenstv a tlo*, eds. Iva Dolealov – Eleonra Hamar – Lubo Belka, Brno 2006, pp. 95 – 108; J. Rozehnalov, *Za obzory dobovho poznn. Tradice a empirie ve stedovekch zprvch o Asii*, in: *Frantiknstv v kontaktech s jinm a cizm*, ed. Petr Hlavcek, Praha 2009, p. 48 – 52. Gog and Magog often lived in immediate vicinity of human monsters. Alexandrian Legends, Pseudo-Methodius or the so-called *Epistula Prudenti viro* traditionally included among the twenty two nations and kings enclosed in the Caspian Mountains Gog and Magog. They encountered Kynocephalos, a nation with a dog's head, Sirens and monopods, a people with one leg only. Gog and Magog were associated in *Epistula prudenti viro* with the Mongols (Tatars), sent in the last phase of

a number of nations and people – the Huns, Arabs, Turks, Mongols, Magyars, Scythians, Khazars, Jews, and others.²

From the late antiquity the Gog and Magog tribes were associated with Alexander the Great and his Eastern campaign. In the first century after Christ Titus Flavius Josephus noted in his *History of the Jewish War* that Alexander closed with an iron gate a mountain pass to stop Scythians passing through it and endangering the civilised world. The motif of the enclosed nations gradually became an important element of the medieval Alexandrian legend, and Alexander's imprisonment of "unclean nations in the far north"³ became an integral part of the apocalyptic prophecies from the 8th century. This was due to a large degree to *Revelationes* of the so-called Pseudo-Methodius,⁴ originally written in Syriack then translated into Greek and afterwards Latin, a text that ranked among the most influential prophetic writings of the Middle Ages, after the biblical books, of course.

Pseudo-Methodius brought the characteristic of nations enclosed in the mountains which became a defining description for the following centuries. The dominant feature is cannibalism, showing the outright perversity and danger posed by this people. He described the unclean nations imprisoned by Alexander behind a gate of gold between two mountains as descendants of the biblical tribe of Japheth,⁵ "who frighten the whole world, eat human flesh and drink blood of beasts as if it was water. They also eat all that is abhorrent and unclean, such as dogs, mice, snakes, scorpions and everything that crawls on the ground. They do not hesitate to eat unborn

human history to punish mankind for its sins, *Epistola Prudenti viro*, ed. Charles Burnett, in: Ch. Burnett, An Apocryphal Letter from the Arabic Philosopher Al-Kindi to Theodore, Frederick II's Astrologer, concerning Gog and Magog, the Enclosed Nations, and the Scourge of the Mongols, *Viator* 15, 1984, p. 166. Similarly cf. *Mirabilia mundi*, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 2035, fol. 46v–49v, where is an identical enumeration.

² Their enumeration is brought in what is today a classic and fundamental work on the topic Andrew Runni Anderson, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog, and the Enclosed Nations*, Cambridge 1932, pp. 12–14.

³ The north was associated in the Middle Ages with cold and dark, and in the Christian tradition it was also regarded as the place of the reprobate, cf. *Hugo de Sancto Victore, Libellus de formatione archæ*, CCCM 176, ed. P. Sicard, Turnhout 2001, cap. 11, p. 157. Hugo of St Victor placed the cursed nations Gog and Magog on an island in the north of Asia, in the proximity of "Amazonia". Cf. Patrick Gautier Dalché, *La "Descriptio mappae mundi" de Hugues de Saint-Victor: texte inédit avec introduction et commentaire*, Paris 1988, pp. 82–83. For details of the northern areas on medieval maps see Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken, *Fines Terrae. Die Enden der Erde und der vierte Kontinent auf mittelalterlichen Weltkarten*, Hannover 1992, pp. 167–171.

⁴ For textual relations between Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Kallisten's version of the Alexandrian theme cf. Ernst Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen*, Halle 1898, pp. 34–35. The new edition of Pseudo-Methodius in: *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*, eds. W. J. Aerts und G. A. A. Kortekaas, Bd.1: Einleitung, Texte, Indices Locorum et Nominum; Löwen 1998 (Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium 569= Subsidia 97).

⁵ Magog appears in the Bible for the first time as one of the sons of Japheth, son of Noah. In later expositions he was regarded as the forefather of all the pagan, i.e. non-Jewish nations.

babies cut out of their mothers' wombs, and take children away from their mothers to eat them."⁶

In a similar vein Gog and Magog were described on medieval maps of the world which incorporated spatial visualisations of the medieval cosmology and theology, depicting the history of salvation in a geographically defined space. World maps were frequently attributed the same degree of weight and authority as the texts of the Church Fathers.⁷ The Ebstorf map of the world (1234) shows both nations in the northern hemisphere enclosed behind a wall near the Caspian Sea. An inscription identifying the two drawn figures reads that they are the unclean nations of Gog and Magog, servants of Antichrist, who eat human flesh and drink human blood, enclosed by Alexander.⁸ A similar scene as on the Ebstorf map, two figures living on human flesh, is found on the Hereford map, though there is some confusion and combination of the existing motifs. From the explanatory inscription we learn that they are Esseans from Scythia who do not bury their dead relatives but eat them during a ceremony. It can be added here that this custom was recorded in another context and described by John Mandeville in his travelogue.⁹ On the edge of the map they are depicted on the island of Terraconta¹⁰ "*Turks (Turchi) from the generation of Gog and Magog*", described as unclean barbarians who eat the flesh of children and unborn babies. We find the Caspian mountains (Caucasus) on the Hereford map without further explanation in the east, not far from the earthly paradise.¹¹

In the Middle Ages also the problematic approach to the Jews in society was projected into the image of Gog and Magog. Jews appeared in the traditional stories about Antichrist as his loyal allies and gradually they came to be directly identified

6 Pseudo-Methodius, Sancti Methodii episcopi Paterensis Sermo de regnum Cantium et in novissimis temporibus certa demonstratio, in: *Sibyllinische Texte*, pp. 72–73.

7 *Mappae mundi* as a source of equal value as the works of Saint Augustine or Isidor of Seville is mentioned in *Historia orientalis* by Jacques de Vitry, for example. On this theme cf. J.B. Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, p. 42.

8 *Die Ebstorfer Weltkarte. Kommentierte Neuauflage in zwei Bänden*, ed. Hartmut Kugler, Berlin 2007, Bd. I, p. 58–59, Bd. II, p. 105. For the Ebstorf map cf. Ann-Dorothee von den Brincken, *Fines Terrae. Die Enden der Erde und der vierte Kontinent auf mittelalterlichen Weltkarten*, Hannover 1992, p. 91–93. The relation between medieval cartography and theology Felicitas Schmieder, *Edges of the World – Edges of Time*, in: Gerhard Jaritz u. a. (ed.), *The Edges of the Medieval World*, Budapest 2009, 4–5.

9 *Cestopis tzv. Mandevilla*, ed. František Šimek, Praha 1963, pp. 114–115.

10 Island "Tarracanta" in the northern parts of the world was portrayed in the 12th century by Heinrich of Mainz on his map, which was drawn as "illustration" for the work *Imago Mundi* by Honorius of Autun, one of the most prolific authors of that time. His description of the land became, along with Isidor's *Etymologies*, the fundamental work of its kind. Honorius places Gog and Magog quite traditionally in the context of Alexander the Great and the areas around the Caspian Sea, here made part of India. Honorius Augustodunensis, *Imago Mundi*, ed. Valerie I. J. Flint, Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age 49, 1982, p. 55.

11 Scott D. Westrem, *The Hereford map. A Transcription and Translation of the Legends with Commentary*, Turnhout 2001, p. 101, 137.

with the Gog and Magog tribes. Doubtless the dissemination of the outlined model was due to a large extent to Jacques of Vitry, who listed in his *Historia orientalis* tribes of Jewish origin and included those enclosed by Alexander in the Caspian mountains. Thence would they set forth and return with Antichrist to the Holy Land. The people of Gog and Magog, described immediately afterwards in terms of the traditional motifs of perverse eating habits, took up a position in their close vicinity, though separately.¹² An important step on the way to the identification of the two groups was the well-known fictitious *Letter of Prester John*, addressed before 1165 to European rulers, the Byzantine emperor and the pope.¹³ In the first Latin versions of this letter ten Israeli tribes figure as subjects of Prester John living behind a stone river.¹⁴ The description of the tribes of Gog and Magog is directly linked to Pseudo-Methodius and his characteristic of “unclean” cannibal nations. In the Latin version of this letter the apocalyptic nations of Gog and Magog have not yet merged with the Jewish tribes, but in later, especially German language versions, the groups overlapped each other completely. The Jews thus moved to the position of the greatest apocalyptic threat and destroyers of the world.¹⁵ The outlined combination of the individual apocalyptic narratives, the Alexandrian stories and their linkage to the legend about the ten lost Israelite tribes were conserved for a long time by widespread and popular compendia of knowledge, such as *Historia scholastica* by Petrus Comestor, which ranked among the most frequently used works of its type. During the 13th century the story of the ultimate threat to Christendom was enriched with various details, Queen Amazonia appeared in it as ruler over the nations of Gog and Magog,¹⁶ a conspiracy theory was developed with clearer outlines, according to which the Jews expected with hope that the enclosed nations would come to Jerusalem with Antichrist as their Messiah before the end of the world, and together with him would destroy the entire Christian church. In this form the narration of the people

12 Jacques de Vitry, *Histoire orientale. Historia orientalis*, ed. Jean Donnadiu, Turnhout 2008, cap. LXXII, p. 328. The Gog and Magog people, separate but in the immediate neighbourhood of the other Jewish tribes, also appeared on some maps. A case in point from a later period is the so-called *Geneva Sallust map*, which does not include profuse detail but does describe both Bohemia and Prague. In the area to which the legend of the enclosed nations applied it is possible to find a caption saying that here are “Magogi. Gogi. Iudei inclusi”. Konrad Miller, *Mappae Mundi. Die ältesten Weltkarten*, Bd. III, Stuttgart 1895, p. 142. A summary of the cartographic sources is given by Ulrich Knefelkamp, *Die Suche nach dem Reich des Priesterkönigs Johannes. Dargestellt anhand von Reiseberichten und anderen ethnographischen Quellen des 12. bis 17. Jahrhunderts*, Gelsenkirchen 1986, pp. 96–100.

13 The discussion about the form and language versions of the letter is summarised by Jean Delumeau, *Dějiny Ráje. Zahrada rozkoše*, Praha 2003, pp. 82–83.

14 For the fusion of the two myths Jean Richard, *L'Extrême-Orient légendaire au Moyen Age: Roi David et Prêtre Jean*, *Annales d'Ethiopie* 2, 1957, pp. 228–229, here p. 236.

15 For details of this topic see Andrew Colin Gow, *The Red Jews. Antisemitism in an Apocalyptic Age 1200–1600*, Leiden – New York – Köln 1995.

16 For the geographical fusion of the two elements see David Fraesdorff, *Der barbarische Norden. Vorstellungen und Fremdkategorien bei Rimbart, Tietmar von Merseburg, Adam von Bremen und Helmold von Bosau*, Berlin 2005, p. 310–311, 316–317.

Gog and Magog also appeared in *Compendium theologiae veritatis*, which became one of the principal sources of knowledge for the late medieval adaptations of Antichrist's life, including a pictorial Antichrist cycle, which was part of the richly illuminated Velislav Bible, created at the Prague court after the middle of the 14th century.¹⁷

The apocalyptic nations of Gog and Magog equally became a natural part of the projected world of medieval travel books. A case in point is a tract by the so-called John of Mandeville.¹⁸ When the author of this travel compilation reached in his descriptions the Caspian Sea, he had knowledge whose scope and information content corresponded to the present tradition.¹⁹ In the mountains by the Caspian Sea John Mandeville sought the ten Israelite tribes enclosed there by Alexander to protect the surrounding countries. There the Jews would remain under the rule of Queen Amazonia until the last events of the world, and according to their own prophecies, they would come out alongside Antichrist, liberate all their brothers in the faith from the pagan and Christian power, and slay all those who would not accept the Jewish faith. This story appeared in a Czech translation of Mandeville, which was made at the behest of King Václav IV by Vavřinec of Březová, known in particular as the author of the *Hussite Chronicle*: “those Jews are to come out and liberate the Jews from the clutches of the pagans and the Christians and are to exterminate all those who will not have their faith; and this will happen in times of Antichrist”.²⁰ The association between the apocalyptic nations and the Jews was only one of the possibilities for describing them and placing them in the context of the ordering of the world and of history. Most authors and chroniclers saw the threat of an apocalyptic army in the Arabs and a little later, in the Mongols.²¹ This was the case of Marco Polo whose trav-

17 Hugo Argentinensis, *Epitome alias Compendium theologiae veritatis, non minus publicis concionatoribus quam scholasticis proficuum*, Coloniae 1503, cap. 11.

18 A possible link between Mandeville's travelogue and Hussite historiography was pointed out by Petr Čornej, *Ráj na ostrově aneb prostor pro adamity*, *Táborský archiv* 13, 2007, pp. 41–46.

19 For the main models used by Mandeville in this point see Rosemary Tzanaki, *Mandeville's Medieval Audiences. A Study on the Reception of the Book of Sir John Mandeville (1371–1550)*, Aldershot 2003, p. 145.

20 *Cestopis tzv. Mandevilla*, pp. 144–145. The Czech translation of Mandeville's travelogue was modelled on a German version by Otto von Dimeringen. It moreover stated in several variants that the Jewish tribes Gog and Magog, who call themselves Red Jews. Cf. *Reysen und Wanderschaften des [...] Johannis de Montevuilla*, Köln 1600, p. 211. The issue of the Red Jews is analysed in detail by A.C. Gow, *The Red Jews*, passim. Gow does not mention Mandeville's travelogue among his examples. Klaus Ridder, *Jean de Mandevilles 'Reisen'. Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der deutschen Übersetzung des Otto von Diemerungen*, München – Zürich 1991. The cited print was not included by Ridder in his enumeration.

21 Cf. Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews. Making Monsters in Medieval Art*, Princeton – Oxford 2003, pp. 236–238. A valuable work in this respect is by Felicitas Schmieder, *Europa und die Fremden. Die Mongolen im Urteil des Abendlandes vom 13. bis in das 15. Jahrhundert*, Sigmaringen 1994, pp. 258–285. Charles Burnett – Patrik Gautier Dalché, *Attitudes towards the Mongols in Medieval Literature: The XXII Kings of Gog and Magog from the Court of Frederick II to Jean de Mandeville*, *Viator* 22, 1991, pp. 153–167.

el book was translated around 1400 into Old Czech. However, Marco Polo does not mention any connection with the last events of the world in this place.²²

If we ask the crucial question what images were associated with the nations of Gog and Magog in the Hussite era and part of what discourses they became, we have to answer first from what sources the knowledge of these questions could be drawn in medieval Bohemia, and hence on what foundations were the images made. The literature that was available in Bohemia in the 14th and early 15th century made it possible, given the interconnection of information, to create a relatively homogenous idea of the threat and nature of the apocalyptic nations. Repeated information proceeded in several directions of exposition although it agreed about the completely negative characteristics of the nations of Gog and Magog. Interpretations by most Czech authors associated the apocalyptic people of Gog and Magog most often with the Jews or Christian leading dissolute lives. Associations with Arabs, Mongols, and other exotic nations, if it was even present in the Czech consciousness, were limited to travel writings.

Of the above-mentioned works the stories about Alexander the Great were doubtless read in Bohemia, although in the extant passages of the old Bohemian version, the so-called *Alexandreis*,²³ written at the beginning of the 14th century, there is no mention of nations enclosed in the mountains. In 1426, at the time of the “terrible Hussite persecution”, a former cantor of Kutná Hora Jan made for an honourable Brno citizen, Jindřich, a copy of *Tractatus Methodii Episcopi*, which included a depiction of terrible cannibal nations freed from captivity in the mountains just before the coming of Antichrist. The author of this tractate compressed the apocalyptic events into one image: he placed the nations of Gog and Magog in the context of the coming of the Last Emperor and the subsequent appearance of the Son of Damnation.²⁴ In the same manuscript as the copy of Pseudo-Methodius we find one of the copies of the pseudo-Joachim exposition of *Super Isaiam*, a work which is also relevant to the variability of the exposition of the apocalyptic figures, including Gog and Magog. In the manuscript collections of Czech libraries we also find a number of transcripts of *Letter of Prester John* to Emperor Friedrich, most dated to the 15th century, and at least one, Ms. VIII D I NL Prague, to the 14th century.²⁵ *Letter of Prester John* is abridged here and ends with a depiction of the “unclean” nations, which were driven, according to this transcript, by Alexander of Macedonia from their orig-

²² Marko Polo, *Milión*, ed. Miroslava Mattušová, Praha 1961, p. 124.

²³ Cf. *Alexandreida*, Praha 1947. Prokop Lang, Co asi bylo obsahem ztracených částí *Alexandreidy* staročeské? *Listy filologické* 1883, p. 69, p. 275, p. 398.

²⁴ Zemský archiv Olomouc, Cod. 280, fol. 196v.

²⁵ The manuscripts are enumerated by Bettina Wagner, *Die “Epistola presbiteri Johannis” lateinisch und deutsch. Überlieferung, Textgeschichte, Rezeption und Übertragungen im Mittelalter*, Tübingen 2000, p. 712.

inal lands and were subjugated by John.²⁶ The Alexandrian motifs were thus interwoven with stories related to John's empire and the cartographic version. An anonymous map of the world dated to the middle of the 15th century, which is unfortunately lost, originally kept in the Scientific Library in Olomouc, copied the narrative of the cited version of *Letter of Prester John* and depicted the nations of Gog and Magog twice; once enclosed, with a reference to Alexander the Great, and another time in the neighbourhood of India, where tradition had placed John's empire.²⁷

An exemplar of one of the primary sources that formulated the image and the concepts of the apocalyptic nations, *Historia Orientalis* by Jacques de Vitry, was one of the oldest acquisitions of the Prague University library. The local scholars had at their disposal writings by Roger Bacon, and could naturally find information about the nations of Gog and Magog in the theological compendia, such as *Compendium theologiae veritatis*, *Historia scholastica* by Petrus Comestor, translated into Czech at the end of the 14th century,²⁸ or *Speculum historiale* by Vincent of Beauvais. Another category of sources in which one could find information about the apocalyptic nations and their character was travel literature. The Mandeville's travelogues and Marco Polo's *Million* were evidently so popular in medieval Bohemia that they were translated into Czech and this in a period just before the Hussite wars. A question arises here, however, whether the narrative of the travel sources was reflected in any way in the reformist rhetoric, polemical discourse and reformist apocalyptic thinking of the pre-Hussite and Hussite time, or whether these were two different and unrelated planes of text and thought.

In the formation of the expositions of the apocalyptic nations and the figures of Gog and Magog in the Czech milieu an important component was the influence of the concepts of Joachim of Fiore, respectively the tradition of Joachitic interpretations.²⁹ Although we can only speculate about the presence of direct transcripts of Joachim's writings in medieval Bohemia, a non-negligible influence must be conceded to authors who started from the teachings of the Calabrian abbot, in the Czech medieval

²⁶ NL Prague, Ms. VIII D 1, fol. 244^r.

²⁷ The map is known from photographic documentation published in Anton Mayer, *Mittelalterliche Weltkarten aus Olmütz*, in: K. André, *Kartographische Denkmäler der Sudetenländer*, Bd. 8, Prag 1932, Figure 1. The first inscription states: "hic inter montes caspy includit allexander gog et magog gentes immundas"; the other "gog et magog". As for the customary methods used to draw medieval maps, see Evelyn Edson – Emilie Savage-Smith – Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken, *Der mittelalterliche Kosmos. Karten der christlichen und islamischen Welt*, Darmstadt 2005, pp. 67 – 68.

²⁸ Petra Comestora-Manducator, *Historia scholastica*, ed. Jan V. Novák, Praha 1910–1920. The translation of Comestor's *Historiae scholasticae* was probably made for the Emmaus monastery in Prague, where in the reign of Karel IV one of the centres of old Slavonic culture was created. This explains the fact that fragments of the translation written in Glagolitic script have survived. Cf. Ludmila Pacnerová, *Staročeský hlaholský Comestor*, Praha 2002.

²⁹ In accordance with the scholarly literature on this theme I designate as Joachitic writings texts by pseudo-Joachim or those whose ideas were directly related to Joachim of Fiore.

intellectual world Johannes von Rupesciss in the first place;³⁰ also the above-mentioned pseudo-Joachim *Super Isaiam* is extant in several transcripts.³¹

Joachim's work meant a shift from the above-mentioned projection of medieval anti-Judaism to the image of the apocalyptic nations and at the same time, showed a new way of approaching the significance of Gog and Magog in the theology of history. Joachim replaced the existing model of the Antichrist-Jew with an image of Antichrist-Christian (tyrant, emperor, pope, in every case a member of western Christendom). In contrast, he ascribed to the Jews a positive role, seeing their conversion to Christianity as one of the central moments on the way to perfection of the third age of the Holy Spirit. The fulfilment of the words from *Epistle to the Romans* (Rm 11, 24–25) became however problematic in Joachim's system as against the previous tradition. He did not expect in the perfection of the age of the Holy Spirit only conversion of Jews to Christianity, but also return of Christians to Judaism and hence achievement of unity of the spiritual people.³²

To expose the complex of the eschatological enemy Joachim of Fiore used a picture of a dragon from the twelfth chapter of the *Apocalypse of John*. To him, the seven dragon's heads designated Antichrist and his predecessors, while the dragon's tail symbolised the last Antichrist – Gog – who will appear in the world at the very end of history.³³ This concept was adapted also by author of the above-mentioned pseudo-Joachitic exposition *Super Isaiam*. The origin of at least one copy of this tract (Olomouc Chapter library, codex 280) can be sought according to the character of the other texts in the anti-Hussite milieu (including a *Tractate against the Hussites*

30 In the second half of the 14th century Rupesciss *Vade mecum in tribulatione a Liber secretorum eventum* is likely to have been known in Bohemia. We find a reference to reading Rupesciss writings in a fragment of record of an inquisition trial held around 1400, cf. Ivan Hlaváček, Zur böhmischen Inquisition und Häresiebekämpfung um das Jahr 1400, in: *Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation im Spätmittelalter*, eds. František Šmahel – Elisabeth Müller-Luckner, München 1998, Fragment A, p. 124–125. Cf. also Kurt-Victor Selge, Handschriften Joachims von Fiore in Böhmen, in: *Eschatologie und Hussitismus*, eds. František Šmahel, Alexander Patschovsky, Praha 1993, pp. 53–60. On the same topic Zdeňka Hledíková, Pelhřimovský školmistr Konrád a jeho rukopis, in: *Septuaginta Paulo Spunar oblata (70+2)*, ed. Jiří K. Kroupa, Praha 2000, pp. 249–252.

31 Library of National Museum Prague, XIV B 17; Library of Metropolitan Chapter Olomouc, cod. 28 and cod. 280.

32 Robert Lerner, *The Feast of Saint Abraham. Medieval Millenarians and the Jews*, Philadelphia 2001, s. 31–37; cf. ib., Antichrists and Antichrist in Joachim of Fiore, *Speculum* 60, 1985, p. 561. On Joachim of Fiore Bernard McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought*, New York – London 1985. As the diagrams in Joachim's *Liber Figurarum* indicate, he attached much importance and a positive role to the descendants of Shem (*populus Judaicus*) and Japhet (*populus Gentilis*). Both generations were to achieve the greatest florescence in the third age of the Holy Spirit, cf. Marjorie Reeves – Beatrice Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore*, Oxford 1972, pp. 170–173; Figure 18, 19.

33 Joachim of Fiore, *Expositio Apocalypsim*, Venice 1527, fol. 196v, his concept of Antichrist R. Lerner, *Antichrists*, p. 567. For the dragon picture in Joachim of Fiore M. Reeves – B. Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae*, pp. 146–152.

by Mařík Rvačka and another anonymous tractate also oriented against the Hussite and Wycliffian heresy). We find here Gog and Magog on the tail of an apocalyptic dragon, just like in Joachim of Fiore, in the role of a hitherto undefined enemy – Antichrist, who will appear at the end of time. Finally, into the recorded diagrams whose character was close to one of the types of medieval maps of the world was entered a description of the land of *Magogia*, neighbouring Amazonia, and incorporated into the complex ‘Ethiopia’, where the Middle Ages placed India and with it Prester John’s empire.³⁴

Of Joachim’s followers the idea of the positive role of the Jews in the apocalyptic events was taken farthest by the French Franciscan John of Rupescissa, whose writing are most likely to have been read by a well-known Prague preacher of the second half of the 14th century, Milíč of Kremsier. In the tractate *Liber secretorum eventuum* Rupescissa presaged that after the defeat of Antichrist a miraculous conversion of the Jews would take place, and they would become literally paragons of Christian faith in an empire of a thousand years. Also, the new ruler, having the characteristic of the Last Emperor, was to be from the house of Abraham. Apocalyptic attacks of the Gog and Magog people at the end of time were interpreted by Rupescissa as a pagan onslaught directed against the converted and now ruling Jews.³⁵ These prophetic notions percolated demonstrably to the Czech milieu. The Dominican Konrad of Halberstadt, who lived at the court of Karel IV, brought from a trip to Avignon a transcript of *Liber secretorum* and included a summary of an important part of it into his chronicle dedicated to the Prague archbishop.³⁶ If Rupescissa spoke in this context of a people of an apocalyptic time, those who would populate period after Antichrist’s defeat, he did not associate them in any case with Gog and Magog. He connected their coming with the final coming of Antichrist and envisaged it in the future.³⁷

The line of Joachim’s followers, who adopted the idea of the establishment of a third age of bliss before the end of history, was only one of the paths where those who drew inspiration from the constructs of the Calabrian abbot went. The second set of texts consisted of biblical expositions which sought a nexus between concrete historical events and a corresponding sequence of biblical, mainly apocalyptic vers-

34 Library of the Metropolitan Chapter Olomouc, cod. 28, fol. 168v; cod. 280, fol. 36r, cf. *Scriptum super Isaie*, BAV, Vat. Lat. 4959, fol. 28r. The same picture is in Library of the National Museum, Prague, XIV B 17, fol. 34r. Inspirational insights on the diagrams in Joachim’s writings are brought by Gian Luca Potestà, *Geschichte als Ordnung in der Diagrammatik Joachims von Fiore*, in: *Die Bildwelt der Diagramme Joachims von Fiore. Zur Medialität religiös-politischer Programme im Mittelalter*, ed. Alexander Patschovsky, Ostfildern 2003, pp. 115–145.

35 Johannes de Rupescissa, *Liber secretorum eventuum*, ed. Robert E. Lerner – Christine Morerod-Fat-tebert, Fribourg 1994, p. 177–179. On this issue see R. Lerner, *The Feast*, pp. 79–82.

36 Konrad von Halberstadt O.P., *Chronographia Interminata 1277–1355/59*, ed. Rainer Leng, Wiesbaden 1996, pp. 223–224. On dissemination of knowledge of the texts of Rupesciss in Bohemia, Robert Lerner, “Popular Justice”: Rupescissa in Hussite Bohemia, in: *Eschatologie und Hussitismus*, hg. František Šmahel – Alexander Patschovsky, Praha 1996, pp. 42–43.

37 Cf. this passage in the chronicle of Konrad of Halberstadt, *Chronographia Interminata*, p. 224.

es. Thus they understood the text of *Apocalypse of John* as a temporal linear prophecy on the course of history. A prime example of this category was *Expositio in Apocalypsim* by Alexander the Minorite. His treatise even circulated in several transcripts under Joachim's name.³⁸ With support in the expositions of the Holy Fathers Jeremy and Augustine and a reference to the legend about the tribes enclosed by Alexander the Great in the Caucasian mountains, Alexander the Minorite enumerated nations who might torment the Christian world under the name of Gog and Magog in the final phase of history.³⁹ The manuscript collection of the Prague Metropolitan Chapter of Saint Vitus is one of the transcripts of Alexander's exposition, where the text is accompanied by a number of illustrations. It is however very unlikely that this manuscript, whose writing dates to Avignon in the 1430s, had no influence on the creation of the corpus of knowledge and the picture of the apocalyptic nations of Gog and Magog in the Czech milieu. Its presence in Bohemia is only evidenced as property of the administrator of the Prague archbishopric, Václav of Krumlov, who was active around the middle of the 15th century.⁴⁰

The picture of the apocalyptic nations provided the medieval society with an ideal tool for denigration and demonization of an adversary. Bringing the prophecies, including the apocalyptic ones, up to date and linking them with the reality they explained and made more comprehensible for the contemporaries, was a frequently used practice of medieval authors. Naturally, the prophecies came into play predominantly in times that needed an explanation, times of historical turns, crises and social chaos. Also, pre-Hussite and Hussite Bohemia was to a great extent permeated by the apocalyptic rhetoric, which provided an interpretation patterns for understanding and describing the events gathering momentum within the framework of the valid theological interpretation of history, and became to a great extent their catalyst. The period authors explained their own presence as part of the prophecies being fulfilled, and the interpretation of the apocalyptic pictures and their connection with the current events comes to the fore in their texts. A frequent theme of the pre-Hussite and Hussite theologians was the appearance and deeds of Antichrist, whom they often saw all around. Mathias of Janov, a distinguished Czech theologian and reformer of the pre-Hussite generation, was after all the author of the most extensive treatise on Antichrist ever written in the Middle Ages.⁴¹

Apocalyptic pictures were among the pre-Hussite and Hussite reformist authors a frequently used tool for describing and interpreting the course of events. In particular, the theme of definition of Antichrist and manifestations of his activities in the

38 On the text tradition and the manuscript preservation of the treatise Sabine Schmolinsky, *Der Apokalypsenkommentar des Alexander Minorita. Zur frühen Rezeption Joachims von Fiore in Deutschland*, Hannover 1991, pp. 15–23, pp. 31–52.

39 Alexander Minorita, *Expositio in Apocalypsim*, ed. Alois Wachtel, Weimar 1955, pp. 450–451.

40 Library of Metropolitan Chapter Prague, Ms. Cim 5. On the manuscript history S. Schmolinsky, *Der Apokalypsenkommentar*, pp. 18–20.

41 Mathias of Janov, *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti III*, ed. Vlastimil Kybal, Innsbruck 1911.

world were very appealing and topical for the intellectuals from the milieu of the University of Prague. In relation to Mathias of Janov this question was examined in detail by Jacob of Mies, Stanislav of Znojmo or Štěpán of Pálež, who adopted Stanislav's treatise on Antichrist for his *De Ecclesia*. In the same manner Jan Hus had to come to terms with this highly topical problem.⁴² Given the frequency with which the name of Antichrist was heard in Bohemia at this time, even in relation to concrete persons or groups, it is somewhat surprising that Gog and Magog appear relatively seldom among the rhetorical devices and in the symbolic identifications. This does not mean, however, that they did not have in the period sources a place of importance, in different types of depositions and on different discourse planes, which had a common denominator in the reference to the last events in world's history. The interpretations of Gog and Magog were naturally dependent on which possibility of explanation and conception of the last events in the world a given author chose in a specific situation and in which tradition he followed. The apocalyptic nations of Gog and Magog, as well as the other elements of the apocalyptic concept, came together with reality on three levels of exegetical hermeneutical exposition. In the broadest sense they related to the course of church history as a whole. In a narrower sense, we find them as a means to describe the current ills in church and society. Third, they were presented as a necessary part of the path to a higher perfection in the history of salvation.

Prague preacher and pre-Hussite “prophet of Antichrist's coming” Milíč of Kremsier,⁴³ for whom the prophecies on an apocalyptic note were a natural part of the world of ideas, moved in his “reading” of Antichrist and the apocalyptic nations on two interpretation levels. In the treatise *Sermo de Die novissimo* of 1367 he describes the ultimate phase of the world's history as a story populated by real characters and set at a concrete time and space. In a long tradition the entrenched ideas of Antichrist and his actions in the world come to life here, constituting a whole narrative with protagonists and own dynamic. He introduced Antichrist, Son of Damnation, following in the previous tradition, as a man of flesh and blood, born in Babylon, seducing people with false miracles and riches, and defeated in the end by an intervention of Archangel Michael.⁴⁴ Into this depiction of the events he put the in-

⁴² The relevant manuscripts are listed by Jan Sedlák, *Studie a texty k náboženským dějinám III/1*, Olomouc 1916, p. 30, note 1. A basic study of Jacob of Mies's tractate *De Antichristo* was written by Vlastimil Kybal, M. Mathias z Janova a M. Jakoubek ze Stříbra, *ČČH* 11, 1905, pp. 22–38. For Hus's notion of Antichrist see František J. Holeček, “Ministri dei possunt in dampnationem perpetuam papam male viventem detrudere ...” (Hus a problém Antikrista), in: *Jan Hus na přelomu tisíciletí*, ed. Miloš Drda – František J. Holeček – Zdeněk Vybíral, Tábor 2001 (= HT Supplementum 1), pp. 219–245.

⁴³ Cf. Pavlína Cermanová, Il profeta Elia e l'Anticristo nell'apocalittica boema fra XIV e XV secolo, in: *Annali di Scienze Religiose* 2010, s. 189–214.

⁴⁴ The basic characteristic of the historical interpretation line of Antichrist is in Curtis V. Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards. Apocalypticism in Late Medieval and Reformation England*, Leiden – Boston – Köln 1998, pp. 19–29. Literature on the theme and relevant sources I give in the

formation that Antichrist would release the Jews who were enclosed until then, and they would accept crowns from him and would worship him as Messiah.⁴⁵ This passage where Milíč associated the apocalyptic nation with the enclosed and re-released Jews indicates his knowledge of the topic and the previous literature. We can see here a reference to the nations of Gog and Magog, whom Alexander of Macedonia enclosed in the Caucasian mountains lest they cause danger to the world. A practically identical course of those events is described in the text and pictures of the *Velislav Bible*, where Jews appear in most scenes as followers of Antichrist, as indicated by the characteristic Jewish hats and the explanatory inscriptions. Liberated from captivity in the mountains and from the yoke of Queen Amazonia, Gog and Magog are shown in an illustration wearing royal crowns, which is a possible indication of the connection between the Milíč interpretation and the *Velislav Bible*.⁴⁶ Reading the Milíč's interpretation of the last events and their principal actors, as described in *Sermo de Die Novissimo*, let us stop at another moment which will suggest the reception of the ideas and constructs of Joachim of Fiore or his followers. This is a dual eschatological role of the Jews. While Antichrist lived and his forces were preponderant, the Jews were considered his main followers and members of "Antichrist's nation". After his defeat the situation changed and with it the role of the Jews in the general eschatology. According to Milíč, those were the Jews converted to Christian faith who assumed spiritual dominance and helped hesitant Christians to find again unshakeable faith and led them to penance.⁴⁷

In the same year (1367) Milíč wrote a tractate on Antichrist, where the exposition of Final enemy and his followers shifted to a new plane and acquired other functions. Gog and Magog ceased to be a designation for a distant people enclosed somewhere far in the mountains. They moved to the centre of Christian society and became designations for concrete events and groups, which was to the pro-reform Milíč a thorn in his flesh. The principal characteristic of Gog and Magog was to be hypocrisy, a characteristic that associates the biblical symbol with "all weeds that have to be removed", pointing to heretics, false prophets, hypocrites, Beguines, and schismatics. To support his interpretation, Milíč cited the etymological argumentation passed on since the times of the Church Fathers Jerome and Augustine, when he said that Gog meant "cover" or roof in translation (*tectum*) and Magog meant "un-

study Pavlína Cermanová, Die Erzählung vom Antichrist und seine Funktion in der religiösen und politischen Imagination im luxemburgischen Böhmen, in: *Antichrist. Eschatologische Feindtypisierungen und Identifizierungen*, eds. Wolfram Brandes – Felicitas Schmieder, Berlin 2010, pp. 159–178.

⁴⁵ Milíč of Kroměříž, *Sermo de Die Novissimo Domini*, in: *The Message for the Last Days. Three Essays from the Year 1367*, ed. Milan Opočenský – Jana Opočenská, Geneva, 1998, p. 36.

⁴⁶ *Velislav biblia picta*, NL Prague, XXIII C 124, fol. 134v.

⁴⁷ *Sermo de Die Novissimo*, p. 40, "Tunc current et predicabunt perversis christianis penitentiam, ut sicud per eos perversi, ita conversi."

cover” (*de-tectum*).⁴⁸ This explanation, which was very much disseminated in the medieval texts, found firm ground in the interpretations of Gog and Magog by Czech medieval authors, also by Jacob of Mies in his huge *Výklad na Zjevení svatého Jana (Exposition of Saint John’s Apocalypse)*.⁴⁹ The very designation therefore predestined to hypocrisy and included hypocrisy. The image and definition of Gog and Magog, who had the function of proxy symbols for the current problems of the church, suggested at the same time a way to reach a state of salvation again (*ut reducat ecclesiam in statum salutis*).⁵⁰

While Milíč of Kremšier followed in part the interpretation line based on the contrast between the lives of Christ and Antichrist, where Antichrist’s story was built as a mirror perverse reflection of Christ’s life, and placed within his framework the role of the apocalyptic nations Gog and Magog, Mathias of Janov applied the dual principle to the entire social reality of the day. On one side he put the couple Gog and Magog, representing general decadence and chaos, on the other side Enoch and Elijah, apocalyptic witnesses who appealed as preachers for atonement and unveiled the true face of the church tarnished by hypocrisy, already controlled by Antichrist and his allies.⁵¹ The surrounding word was evaluated by Mathias as filled with perverse values, holiness was replaced by desire for bodily pleasures, love by hypocrisy, Christ’s spirit by that of Antichrist. Where there were formerly martyrs, prophets, followers and virgins, he saw the Great Harlot of Babylon and the terrible people of Gog and Magog announcing the grave crisis of the end of time.⁵² He elaborated two patterns of duality: Christ–Antichrist and Enoch, Elijah–Gog, Magog on a wider plane when he applied it to the necessity to name facts with real names, not concealing lapses and, naturally, preaching the necessary amends which was the only way to salvation. Gog and Magog appear here as a symbol of concealment and silence, which had taken control over the contemporary church and were the cause of the woes it was to experience in the last phase of its history.⁵³ If Mathias of Janov thought about important mileposts in the church history and by extension in the history of Salvation, he made use of Daniel’s prophecy and outlined a clear connecting line between the beginning of Antichrist’s activities on earth and the abandonment of the practice of frequent holy communion in which he saw the fulfilment of Daniel’s prophecy about the withdrawal of the everyday sacrifice and the desolation caused by odiousness.⁵⁴ It was not an original idea and he probably found his inspiration in the treatise on Antichrist penned by Jean Quidort, whose ideas were going in the

48 Milíč of Kroměříž, *Prophetia et Revelatio de Antichristo*, in: *The Message*, p. 68. Cf. Hieronymus, *Commentariorum in Hiezekielem libri XIV*, CCSL LXXV, p. 526.

49 Jakoubek of Stříbro, *Výklad II*, p. 273.

50 Milíč of Kroměříž, *Prophetia*, p. 68.

51 Mathias of Janov, *Regulae*, l. III, tr. 5, dist. 11, cap. 5, p. 351.

52 Ibid, dist. 11, cap. 3, pp. 343–344.

53 Ibid, dist. 11, cap. 2, p. 338; cap. 3, p. 342.

54 Ibid, dist. 9, cap. 9, p. 168.

same direction.⁵⁵ A similar interpretation based on Daniel's prophecy was applied by Mathias of Janov to the sudden silence that fell when the voices warning against the coming of Antichrist were silenced in the church. Prophets and preachers revealing this danger since the times of the Apostles fell silent and made place for the terrifying nations of Gog and Magog, where symbolised the silence that descended on the last events in the world and made the church completely unprepared.⁵⁶ It is necessary to view in this light the role ascribed by Mathias of Janov to Milíč of Kremsier as a second Elijah, who broke the vow of silence and became the prophet of Antichrist's coming.⁵⁷ Because Mathias of Janov defined both, Antichrist and Gog and Magog in a wider sense as a currently existing community of those who suffer from an excessive partiality for the material world and for hypocrisy (both completely within the bounds of the medieval exegesis), their defeat consisted in a general return to spiritual values, overcoming desire for property and restoration of the ideals of the Early Church. This reformist intervention was to defeat Antichrist and the nations of Gog and Magog were to be slain, which would mean salvation of the true believers whose way to taking control would open in a more advanced age.⁵⁸ It is not for nothing that these words evoke the chiliastic speculations about the establishment of a new age of spiritual bliss after the defeat of Antichrist.

"Who are Gog and Magog?" is a question asked in his *Exposition of the Apocalypse* by Jacob of Mies, one of the principal creators of the Hussite theology and a leading representative of the Prague Hussite party.⁵⁹ As stated above, Jacob used as the foundation Jerome's etymological interpretation of Gog and Magog. Within the framework of the general apocalyptic concept of good and evil he applied the notion of Antichrist, accompanied by Gog and Magog, to a broad spectrum of negative phenomena in society and enemies of the true church. When he was clarifying these terms, he gradually uncovered the individual planes of the hermeneutic interpretation of the biblical symbols. On the basic plane he started from the interpretation of Saint Jerome, when he compared Gog to "a roof that honours hypocrites [...] and under the cover of justice does all things, anger, hate, jealousy and ire". Magog "out of the roof" are those who lose no time as hypocrites but come out of their hiding places as open enemies of the church, as cruel tyrants. One complements the other in the destructive work. Gog leads people astray with his lies and heresies from the true faith, while Magog liquidates the true followers of Christ physically.⁶⁰ In his *Exposition of the Apocalypse*, Jacob quite ignored the line in which the Jews

55 Jean Quidort de Paris, *Tractatus de Antichristo*, ed. Sara Peters Clark, *The Tractatus de Antichristo of John of Paris: A critical Edition, Translation, and Commentary*, Cornell University 1981, p. 49.

56 Mathias of Janov, *Regulae III*, tr. 3, dist. 11, cap. 2, p. 338.

57 *Ibid.*, l. III, tr. 5, dist. 11, cap. 6, p. 356, "alius Helyas, id est vir habundans spiritu Helye requiratur, qui diutinum rupit silentium de adventu Christi ultimo et Antychristi."

58 Mathias of Janov, *Regulae*, l. III, tr. 4, dist. 4, cap. 21, (vol. II, Innsbruck 1909), pp. 218–219.

59 Jakoubek of Střibro, *Výklad II*, p. 273.

60 *Ibid.*, pp. 273–274.

figured in the role of the apocalyptic threat. He reached in this case for a time-tested inspiration, the *Glossa ordinaria*, which also had an earlier model, the interpretation of the Apocalypse by Haimo of Auxerre.⁶¹ We also find the same argumentation as in Jacob in a Lollard tractate, *Opus arduum valde*, which copies have survived in the Czech medieval milieu: “*Gog. Id est tectos oculos et latenter impugnantes doctrinam Christi. Et Magog, id est detectos, iam aperte persequentes defensores Evangelii veritatis.*”⁶² The agreement between the Jacob of Mies and the Lollard interpretation may stem from the use of the same text source, perhaps Haimo, *Glosses*, and in the first place the theological *Compendium*, where the text accord is most marked.⁶³

Jacob of Mies’s barb in the interpretation of the apocalyptic threat of Gog and Magog, as Antichrist’s henchmen and soldiers, was not directed, as it might seem at first sight, at the ranks of the Catholics and crusaders. It is much more likely he had in mind radical Hussites deluded by chiliastic notions. When Jacob spoke of Gog, which “*spreads evil things and heretical ideas*”, his thoughts were evidently levelled at preachers preaching the establishment of Christ’s empire of a thousand years. In his words about Magog, which “*makes threats, imprisons and murders*” we can see a reference to the radical Taborite army. This interpretation is in line with a declaration that “*Magog has already incited peasants, courtiers, burghers to murder those who do not follow Gog and who stay with Christ, but it is good that the saints are in the tents as in a town*”,⁶⁴ which does not refer to the crusader armies rather than to radical Hussite hosts, which in the name of chiliastic purification, as a true Army of Christ, killed and destroy those who did not belong in their eyes among the chosen ones. The reference to “tents” (Apc 20, 9) in which saints (orthodox Christians) enclosed themselves would be in Jacob’s conception directed against the Taborite custom of celebrating masses in the open air. At the time when he was writing *Exposition of the Apocalypse* Jacob had definitely drifted apart from the party of Taborite preachers and in many places gave vent to his opinions and his indignation. Not only did he condemn adventism and chiliasm, refusal of sacraments, confessions, purgatories, Eucharistic heresies and other ideas being spread by the followers of early Tábor; he also mounted an opposition to the Hussite way of waging wars, burning churches, murders and robberies. The supposition that Jacob saw in the destructive hordes of Gog and Magog the Hussites is borne out by his interpretation of

⁶¹ Haimo, *Expositio in Apocalypsis in, lib. VII*, PL 117, col. 1187 A-C.

⁶² Library of Metropolitan Chapter Prague, Ms. A 163, fol. 113r. On *Opus arduum* (OAV) cf. Curtis van Bostick, *The Antichrist and the “trew men”: Lollard apocalypticism in late medieval and Early Modern England*, Dissertation, University of Arizona 1993, p. 154. Basic research into the dissemination of OAV in medieval Bohemia was conducted by Anne Hudson, *A Neglected Wyclifite Text, JEH* 29, 1978, pp. 259–262.

⁶³ *Compendium theologicæ veritatis*, Coloniae 1503, Lib VII, cap. XI, “*Per Gog enim secundum Glosam, illi per quos latenter diabolus persequetur fideles, designantur. Per Magog illi per quos aperte Ecclesia opprimetur*”.

⁶⁴ Jakoubek of Stříbro, *Výklad II*, p. 275.

Chapter 13 of the *Apocalypse* where he employs similar turns of phrase and leaves no room for doubt as to who is the beast of prey and who is the false prophet. Accusations of hypocritical motives are heard here: “*Today’s soldiers prefer to listen to false prophets rather than to good and true ones, and brutally and cruelly, like beasts of prey, ravage, murder, pillage, and those that should be Christ’s party as if they take vengeance and murder out of love and loving. Others reject all Holy Communion, others dissolve marriages, yet others reject the Lord’s reverent Communion in both kinds.*”⁶⁵ The radical Hussites find themselves in Jacobs’s interpretation of the contemporary events placed in the context of the apocalyptic prophecy in close proximity to Antichrist, among the worst enemies of the true church, the Prague Hussites. At length, Jacob shifted his interpretation of Gog and Magog to another plane when he associated the true church, in which he referred to Hussite Prague, with the picture of Jerusalem. Gog and Magog appear there in the position of God’s Trial, which is to separate the wheat from the chaff, reveal who belongs to which camp, and help true Christians to a higher wisdom and perfection. On this interpretation plane Jacob interpreted the feud between the individual elements of the Hussite movement as an important moment on the way to salvation of the chosen ones. We find in Jacob’s interpretation another interesting moment which brings into play again the question of the influence and dissemination of the Joachim and Joachimite treatises and concepts in medieval Bohemia. Just like Joachim of Fiore and the related authors Jacob associated Gog and Magog with the image of the apocalyptic dragon’s tail.⁶⁶

Like the references to the faith and intransigence of the Maccabees,⁶⁷ at the time of open military clashes the determining motive for the use of the picture of Gog and Magog recalled the fact that in the history of Salvation God often posed a challenge to his chosen ones and a fighting trial with an enemy outnumbering them. The final crushing defeat of Gog’s armies in Ezekiel’s prophecy fulfilled an appealing model extrapolated to the Hussite experience. This was the direction taken, for example, by the Tábora elder and principal theologian of the radical Hussite wing, Nicolaus Biskupec of Pilgrim, in his Latin *Exposition* of the *Apocalypse*. Connecting the current events and the prophetic text with the whole of Hussite enemies, crusading armies, but also the church yielding to worldly life, were cast in the role of Antichrist’s numerous host that troubled the true church, but was to be defeated in the final battle.⁶⁸ The message borrowed from Ezekiel’s prophecy⁶⁹ was clear: however threat-

⁶⁵ Jakoubek of Stříbro, *Výklad I*, p. 509.

⁶⁶ Jakoubek of Stříbro, *Výklad na Zjevení sv. Jana II*, ed. František Šimek, Praha 1933, p. 273.

⁶⁷ Norman Housley, *Religious Warfare in Europe 1400–1536*, Oxford 2008, p. 109; Pavlína Rychterová – Pavel Soukup, The Reception of the Books of the Maccabees in the Hussite Reformation, in: *Dying for the Faith, Killing for the Faith. Old-Testament Faith-Warriors (1 and 2 Maccabees) in historical Perspective*, ed. Gabriela Signori, Leiden 2012, p. 202.

⁶⁸ Mikuláš of Pelhřimov, *Postilla super Apocalypsim*, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Wien, Nr. 4520, fol. 207v.

ening and numerous the enemy, God will guarantee he victory of his chosen people in the end. Such argumentation strategies based on an interpretation of the prophetic words was after all pursued by the Catholic party. In 1422 Andreas of Regensburg included in his *Hussite Chronicle* an account of a prophecy, according to which the Christians had ahead of them a great bloodshed and suffering in the fight against the heretics, and presage of decline of many kingdoms. In the end everything would be well and everyone would return to the Catholic faith.⁷⁰ To Andreas the prophecy was a welcome means to boost the morale of the Catholic party disheartened by many a defeat, but he did not conceal his mistrust in similar texts, which he called objectionable for the Christian faith and worthy of forgetting.⁷¹ Such a contradictory approach was no exception in the Middle Ages. The embarrassment that many authors felt over the prophetic texts was in a sense natural as the character of the prophecies frequently crossed the narrow boundary between orthodoxy and heresy. Andreas of Regensburg also mentioned the nations of Gog and Magog and described them in the then classic form as destructive tribes enclosed in the Caspian mountains by Alexander the Great. Although he picked up in details the well-known story of the enclosed tribes, its use lost apocalyptic relevance in the given situation. They appear as part of the depiction of one of the events where God put his people to the test without necessarily wishing them victory. In the biblical and fictitious histories Andreas sought parallels to the repeated defeats of the Catholic party in the wars against the Hussites and their justification.⁷²

Texts of different genres, be they travelogues, chronicles or theological treatises, and contemporary maps of the world, intimate to us where the Middle Ages positioned the tribes of Gog and Magog as destroying peoples postulated by biblical prophecies which would play their role in the last events in history. Gog and Magog became symbols of a world out of reach, a distant world in terms of time and territory, unknown but at the same time perceived as unseemly and dangerous. Czech authors of the Hussite period went along the paths of allegorical interpretation and the picture of

69 Ezekiel's prophecy in Chapter 38 and 39 presaged the coming of Gog from the land of Magog as an apocalyptic horde which would appear at the end of time, destroying the world, but in the end it would be defeated.

70 Andreas von Regensburg, *Chronica Husitarum*, in: *Andreas von Regensburg. Sämtliche Werke*, hg. Georg Leidinger, München 1969 (reprint of 1903 edition), p. 385. Another well-known example of the use of the prophecy by the Catholic party was a text in which Ondřej of Brod interpreted the prophecy ascribed to Jan of Jenštejn, cf. *Visio Johannis Jenstein archiep. Pragensis a. 1392*, Národní knihovna ČR Praha, XIII G 10, fol. 101v–102v, published from manuscript by Josef Truhlář, ČČH 8, 1902, pp. 188–189, and subsequent interpretation by Ondřej of Brod, *Tractatus de origine hussitarum*, ed. Jaroslav Kadlec, Tábor 1980.

71 Andreas von Regensburg, *Chronica Husitarum*, p. 384.

72 *Ibid.*, p. 684. See Norman Housley, Jak vysvětlit porážku? Ondřej z Řezna a křížové výpravy proti husitům, in: *The Crusades and the military orders. Expanding the frontiers of medieval Latin Christianity*, ed. Zsolt Hunyadi – József Laszlovszky, Budapest 2001, p. 217.

the apocalyptic destroyers became an important component in the reformist, polemic and self-interpretation discourse. They interpreted their own presence as part of the prophecies being fulfilled and used the apocalyptic pictures as an argument to proclaim the necessity of reform and to name and define the enemy. As they did not hesitate to designate the materialised Antichrist in their neighbourhood, Gog and Magog became an instrument for describing the current course of events and its interpretation. For Hussites, the apocalyptic labelled negative *figures* of enemies were a tool how to describe not only the opposite party of Catholic church, the crusades and The Emperor Sigismund, but also the fraction inside the Hussite themselves. The reference framework and social function of medieval travelogues, prophetic texts and biblical interpretations from the workshops of church pro-reform authors were naturally different. Whereas in the writings of the church reformers the actors of the latest events were part of the present in the allegorical sense, the travelogues shifted the apocalyptic nations to the edge of the world and the end of time, where author's and reader's imagination could reach but direct experience could not.⁷³

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