**From a Mediaeval French Romance to a Czech Broadside Ballad: The Story of Peter of Provence and Fair Maguelonne**

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**Abstract**

The anonymous prose novel about Peter of Provence and fair Maguelonne was probably written in the first half of the 15th century in what is today France. The first anonymous translation into German dates most likely from the end of the 15th century. Nevertheless, the most famous and most important for the Czech speaking area is the one made in 1527 by Veit Warbeck, a Lutheran clergyman, diplomat, and secretary at the court of prince-electors of Saxony. The printed version of Warbeck’s translation, first published in 1535, served as the basis for the Czech translation, of which the first recorded edition is from 1565 but the first extant edition comes from 1741. While there are more editions and even reworkings in the second half of the 18th century and in the 19th century, we currently have no information about other editions which would cover the two-century gap between the two mentioned above. However, there is another version of the story which emerges at the end of the 17th century: a broadside ballad. The existence of the story in such a form indicates a shift in the audience of the story: from an aristocratic milieu in case of the French and German manuscripts to the bourgeoisie in the case of the first printed editions and finally to the people. At the same time, this popular sung form could be seen as a return to the possible origins of the story. The question is what happens when a romance full of long monologues or soliloquies, hidden meanings and references and, after all, with very little action is transformed into a broadside ballad which appeals to a very large audience.

**Biography:**

Alena Kotsmidova successfully defended her doctoral thesis devoted to the French novel about Peter of Provence and the fair Maguelonne and its German and Czech translations at the University of Burgundy in Dijon and at the Johannes-Gutenberg University in Mainz. More generally, she is interested in intertextual relations in the European literature of the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern Era. She worked for two years as a language assistant for the Czech language at the Sorbonne University. She regularly takes part in the Expérimentarium, a programme of the University of Burgundy, for both children and adults, popularizing the work of doctoral students and young researchers.