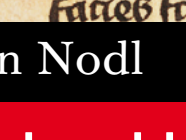


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Martin Nodl

Prague, Jan Hus
and Prague University

Prague, Jan Hus and Prague University

Martin Nodl

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“Konfessionalisierung und religiöse (In)Toleranz in Prag in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts, Bohemia.” *Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der böhmischen Länder* 58 (2018): 286–309. Partially revised.

Between Authority and Obedience: Ecclesiology Versus Practical Religion

“Mezi autoritou a poslušností: eklesiologie versus praktické náboženství.” In *Jan Hus: žycie, myśl, dziedzictwo*, edited by Pawel Kras and Martin Nodl, 111–127, Warszawa: Instytut Historii PAN, 2017.

II. Prague University

Corporative Interests Versus Nationalism: Prague University at the Turn of the 15th Century

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Jan Hus and Prague University

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III. Prague

The Old Town Hall as the Site of Election of Czech Kings and the Symbol of the Land’s Majesty

“Staroměstská radnice jako místo volby českých králů a symbol zemského majestátu.” In *Husitské re-formace: proměna kulturního kódu v 15. století*, edited by Pavlína Cermanová and Pavel Soukup, 276–304, Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2019. Partially revised.

**Ritual and Politics: Conflicts of Vladislav II Jagiello
and the Appointment of Councilors in the Old and New Towns
of Prague in the Early 16th Century**

“Rytuał i polityka. Konflikty Władysława Jagiellończyka oraz tryb mianowania rajców w Starym i Nowym Mieście praskim na początku XVI wieku.” In *Jagiellonowie i ich świat. Konflikty Jagiellonów*, edited by Bożena Czwojdrak, Jerzy Sperka, Piotr Węcowski, 203–219, Kraków 2023: Societas Vistulana. Partially revised.

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Prague—University of Prague—Bohemian Reformation. These three concepts reflect the main topics of this book. The Bohemian Reformation, currently understood by a number of German Anglo-American researchers as the reformation before the Reformation, offered, at the end of the 14th century, a radical solution to the spiritual and institutional crisis of the late medieval church. Czech reformers, both radical and moderate, sensed an internal peril to the chance of salvation. They considered the world they lived in to be so corrupt that they saw no other solution than to reform the church and the entire Christian world through radical reform. That rectification was to be of a spiritual nature, it was to target the soul and heart of all believers—from the simplest peasants to the highest prelates. Yet the bearer of the reform was to be secular power—the monarch, his court and the nobility—who alone could use their authority to encourage or even force the church to change. Hence, the reform had to occur from above, as all attempts to reform the church from below had failed.

The most radical herald of the inevitability of reform was Jan Hus, Master of Liberal Arts and Bachelor of Theology. Hus, however, was not the only one in the first decade of the 15th century to have come up with new and often radical reform ideas, aimed at mending the world. In the Prague context, the beginnings of reform thought are distinctly connected with the University of Prague. Without a university, without dozens of educated people who came to Prague from Central, Central Eastern and Northern Europe, there would have been mere isolated individuals with reformist views in the Czech setting. Such a considerable reform current would have never arisen without the university. It was a current that at the time subverted the religious system and the church in a number of respects. That was no doubt an inadvertent consequence of the establishment of the University of

Prague by Charles IV. Through the first university in Central Europe, the king wished to enable students within the Roman–German Empire to acquire knowledge in law, theology and medicine outside the ancient university centers in Italy, France and England. In the first years of the University of Prague, the founding king acted quite like a wicked stepmother, for his reign did not require the Prague graduates, but educated lawyers and theologians from Padua, Bologna and Paris found employment in his court.

The foundation of new universities in Vienna and Kraków, however, turned the interests of Charles IV also to Prague. That led to the founding of the first major master's college (called Karolinum or Charles College). From the 1360s onwards, the university administrative system ever more distinctly applied the principle of division of power and responsibilities among university nations: the Czech, Bavarian, Saxon, and Polish. The parity within university administration—until 1409 based on the principle of concord of nations (*concordia nationum*), to which all students took an oath upon admission to the university—had been unable to prevent philosophical and, by extension, religious controversies at the university caused by the reception of English theologian John Wyclif. It was primarily Wyclif who stirred the Prague reform ideas, the dawn of which the German and Czech scholars date to the 1380s, towards religious radicalism. At the beginning of the 15th century, the radicalism increasingly acquired a national character. It was markedly manifested in the conflicts over the Decree of Kutná Hora and over its implementation in everyday university life. With the aid of the Decree of Kutná Hora and the attitudes of the radical Bohemian masters, the Bohemian Reformation acquired a specific national shape, the reflection of which can be seen in the speeches of the philosopher Jerome of Prague and in the service of Jan Hus as the rector. In connection with the nationalisation of the religious reform, elements of Czech messianism emerged with the university. It remains an integral component of Czech political thought to this day (Bohemia as a bridge between the East and West, the quest for a third way, socialism with a human face, Czech Euroscepticism, etc.).

In this book, I describe the form of the nationalisation of the University of Prague, as well as the limits and restrictive consequences of

leaning towards nationalism for the Bohemian Reformation and Czech medieval society. Particular emphasis is placed on the distinctiveness and specificity of the Czech and, in many respects, Prague context. It makes Prague and the University of Prague a world outside Christian ecumenism of the time. In addition to nationalisation and the ensuing messianism, the uniqueness of the Bohemian Reformation was also in that it forced the Catholic Church of the early 1430s to a dialogue with heretics condemned by the Council of Constance and Pope Martin V. Unable to assert itself through power with the crusades, the Catholic Church had to conclude with the heretics (the Utraquists) the so-called Compacts of Basel which allowed the practice of a double religious rite within Catholicism. Yet the uniqueness of the Bohemian Reformation also lies in other aspects explored in this publication. In Jan Hus, the Bohemian Reformation gave rise to a new, radical ecclesiology. It challenged the hierarchical system of the church and gave much greater weight to the spiritual responsibility of all believers.

The Bohemian Reformation led to the creation of a kingdom of dual faith, where Catholics and Utraquists coexisted side-by-side throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. It also generated, *via facti*, the idea of religious tolerance out of necessity, a phenomenon quite alien to late medieval society. Tolerance, enforced as a land law by the Religious peace of Kutná Hora in 1485, had major limits. It applied only to Catholics and to compacts recognised by the Utraquists, but not to radical faith groups, particularly the Unity of the Brethren. From the middle of the 15th century, the Unity attempted to return the church and religious practices to the time of the early days of the revolution. Yet, similarly to the first reformers, the Czech Brethren also saw the religious ideal in the primordial, post-Christian church. The Unity of the Brethren became a persecuted sect. In practice, however, the persecution never reached the dimensions of the medieval inquisition: the majority of the Czech nobility, growing largely religiously indifferent as time progressed, promoted the principle of least possible interference with their sovereign rights, thus also with the religious conduct of their subjects.

The tolerant approach within the limits of the Compacts of Basel, which was practiced by the nobility and most of the royal and vassal

cities, led to the opposite in the Prague context: to intolerant thought. Prague, which was one of the most important power centers during the Hussite revolution, promoted the principle of religious unification. It grew its roots as early as before 1419, when the University of Prague approved the requirement of an oath on the chalice, which meant closing the university to Catholics (who were restored in the 1460s). In the revolutionary 1420s and 1430s, identification with the chalice became utter necessity in the Old and New Towns of Prague. Its refusal led to the confiscation of the property of Catholic townspeople. After the Battle of Lipany, or after the endorsement of the Compacts of Basel, the issue of the possible return of the former Catholic townspeople and the restitution of their property arose in the Prague context. Therefore, the Utraquist government in the city, in negotiations with Sigismund of Luxembourg, demanded a privilege that *de facto* prevented the return of Catholics and Catholic church institutions to the city. Throughout the 15th century, tendencies similar to those identified within imperial cities in the middle of the 16th century were discernible in Prague. They are known as confessionalisation. Confessional tendencies manifested themselves in Prague in the 15th century in only Utraquists being able to gain town privileges and enter into individual guilds, in exclusively placing Utraquist priests in parish churches, in supervision over the lives of believers (including marriages), in the spiritual office at the Old Town Hall (though its members were both clergy and laity, something utterly unthinkable in the Christian world until the Lutheran and Calvinist Reformations). The demands of Prague power elites even went so far that they succeeded in avoiding the applicability of the Religious peace of Kutná Hora to the Old and New Towns of Prague.

The Old and New Towns of Prague, however, did not represent a specific entity merely in terms of religious intolerance. This book shows that, in the 15th century, the Old and New Towns of Prague acquired a very specific and, in many respects, privileged political power status on a national level. The origins of these tendencies go back to the first decade of the Hussite revolution. Military clashes, as well as the distribution of power, made Prague the mightiest force on the political chessboard of the Kingdom of Bohemia in the second half of the 1530s. It further grew in importance during the period of anarchy after the

passing of Albrecht Habsburg. In the 15th century, the Old Town Hall, as a symbol of city power, became a privileged place for the election of Czech kings. In this respect, the Old Town Hall was utterly distinctive among the town halls of Christian Europe at the time. Until George of Poděbrady took office at the Old Town Hall, Land Diet were also in session there. That enabled the Prague councilors to considerably influence political events throughout the kingdom. This significance was also reflected symbolically and in different manifestations of the power representation of the Old Town Councilors. The change in political circumstances in the country, brought about by the election of Vladislav Jagiello and the accession of the House of Jagiello to the Bohemian throne, somewhat led to a decline in the political power of the Old and New Towns of Prague. The struggle between the Bohemian towns and the Czech nobility over the form of the estates monarchy led by no means to the suppression of the ambitions of the Prague power elites. Their ambitions most apparently manifested themselves in the implementation of a highly distinct method of appointing new councilors, without the influence of the monarch and his officials—a method that differed fundamentally from the appointment of new councilors in other cities.

Not only in this respect Prague acquired a distinctive status within the power and political system of the Kingdom of Bohemia in the 15th and early 16th centuries. The book therefore presents the distinctiveness of Prague. It highlights the aspects that manifest the interconnectiveness of the Prague context with the Bohemian Reformation, and the transformation of the originally universalistic Charles University into a nationally defined (and therefore limited) higher education institution as the determining factor of the form of the Bohemian Reformation. Prague, the University of Prague and the Bohemian Reformation thus form internally connected concepts, the content of which fundamentally influenced Czech history in the 15th and early 16th centuries. In some aspects it continues to influence Czech history even today.

I. BOHEMIAN REFORMATION

THE HUSSITES AND THE BOHEMIAN REFORMATION

In the initial days of June 1421, a Diet was held in Čáslav, where representatives of the Bohemian estates agreed on a basic religious-political program. It was to become the agenda of the—at the time victorious and forward-looking—Bohemian Reformation for many years to come.¹ The refusal of the Bohemians to recognize Sigismund of Luxembourg as their king and the first victory in the conflict with local Catholics allowed people to forget the humiliation of the Bohemian crown when Jan Hus was burned at the stake in Constance, and the subsequent crisis which threatened the politically and religiously divided kingdom upon the death of Wenceslas IV. Reformist zeal, as well as an awareness of their own power, led to the Bohemian estates formulating a program based around four key points: the open and free preaching of the Word of God, the giving of Holy Communion under both kinds, the fact that the clergy should hold neither material wealth nor secular power, and the equal punishment of mortal sins, regardless of social position.² These four points to which a fifth point was added—the rejection of Sigismund as king of Bohemia—arose from two decades of intellectual discussion concerning reform, firstly among Bohemian university masters, and later also amongst Reform

¹ František Šmahel, *Husitská revoluce*, vol. 3, *Kronika válečných let* [The Hussite Revolution, vol. 3.: A Chronicle of the War Years], Práce Historického ústavu Akademie věd České republiky = Opera Instituti historici Pragae, řada A, Monographia 9/3 (Prague: Historický ústav AV ČR, 1993), 83–87.

² On the creation of the Four Articles of Prague during the revolution see Luboš Lancinger, “Čtyři artikuly pražské a podíl universitních mistrů na jejich vývoji” [The Part Played by the University Masters in the Development of the Four Articles of Prague], *Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Historia Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis* 3, no. 2 (1962): 3–61; František Šmahel, “Die vier Prager Artikel. Das Programm der hussitischen Reformation,” in *Kirchliche Reformimpulse des 14./15. Jahrhunderts in Ostmitteleuropa*, ed. Winfried Eberhard and Franz Machilek, *Forschungen und Quellen zur Kirchen- und Kulturgeschichte Ostdeutschlands* 36 (Cologne: Böhlau, 2006), 329–339.

enthusiasts such as clerics working in towns and in the countryside, who, through their simplification of religious reform teaching, were able to bring the theological subtleties of the Prague scholars to life and into the understanding of the unlearned laity.

The following years, which were filled with conflict and the rise of religious radicals who tried to remove all human inventions from religious life as well as from ritual practices, were also distinguished by the gradual realization of university masters that the reformist ideals they initially espoused were getting out of hand,³ with the result that ideas of reform were largely reduced to the question of the lay chalice. Sigismund of Luxembourg, after making all sorts of promises, was finally accepted as king of Bohemia in 1436; the reign of secular priests, together with their ownership of land and material goods, was quietly tolerated (although the restitution of the pre-revolutionary property status never took place—this, however, was less of an achievement of a reform and more an indicator of pure power on the part of the peers, who had appropriated clerical property);⁴ and the public display and punishment of sins was no longer spoken of. The sole centerpiece of reform thinking was reduced to the chalice, namely that according to the second article of the Čáslav Diet, “for the sublime Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ to be served under both kinds through bread and wine to all faithful Christians, old and young, given freely, as He hath ordained and commanded.”⁵ Unlike the theological concepts or steadfast beliefs of the first generation of revolutionary reformers, this ideology was quite crucial. Indeed, during the negotiations with the Council of Basel, which represented a breakthrough in the contemporary practice of dealing with heretics and which—in the form of the Compacts of Basel—led to the (albeit temporary) ecclesiastical

³ For a general discussion of university masters during the revolution see Jiří Kejř, *Mistři pražské univerzity a kněží táborští* [The Masters of Prague University and the Taborite Priests] (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1981).

⁴ The genesis of agreements formed with the Emperor Sigismund can be found in Šmahel, *Husitská revoluce*, 3: 296–319.

⁵ František Palacký, ed., *Archiv český, čili, Staré písemné památky české i moravské, sebrané z archivů domácích i cizích*, 3 [Czech Archive: Old Czech and Moravian Written Records, Collected from Domestic and Foreign Archives, vol. 3] (Prague: Stawy Králowstwij Českého, 1844), 226–230.

legalization of Utraquism by the Roman Catholic Church,⁶ the Hussite priests stepped back from their belief in the necessity of receiving communion under both kinds as the means to salvation, and instead settled for the implementation of this belief only in the Bohemian environment, without making it a requirement for the whole Christian community. Even so, the chalice remained central to the thinking of both the Hussite priests and the Hussite nobility and their subjects, and it was a belief to which they devoted their souls and that outwardly characterized their faith. With the exception of the chalice, however, most people's beliefs began to gradually return to the ritual practices of the Catholic Church from which the reformers never truly managed to break away, and they continued to perceive the Catholic Church as the only possible bearer of apostolic succession. The return to the ritual practices of the Catholic Church, as well as classical expressions of Catholic piety, was also reflected in Hussite liturgy and images, which by this time were fully accepted,⁷ and which began to take on a decidedly Utraquist appearance throughout the 15th century, even though they still continued to draw on general (and therefore non-denominational) Christian symbolism.⁸

From the mid-15th century onwards, it became increasingly apparent that most of the Bohemian population was losing its zeal for reform. A focus on the chalice, together with attempts to find common ground

⁶ For the most up-to-date discussion of the Compacts of Basel see František Šmahel, "Basilejská kompaktáta, jejich zpisemnění a ratifikace" [The Compacts of Basel: Their Drafting and Ratification], *Studia Mediaevalia Bohemica* 1, no. 2 (2009): 187-229.

⁷ Today, there is plenty of scholarship focusing on the question of Hussite iconoclasm: see in particular Horst Bredekamp, *Kunst als Medium sozialer Konflikte. Bilderkämpfe von der Spätantike bis zur Hussitenrevolution*, Edition Suhrkamp 763 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1975), 231-328; Karel Stejskal, "Funkce obrazu v husitství" [The Function of Images in Hussitism], *Husitský Tábor* 8 (1985): 19-28; Karel Stejskal, "Ikonoklasmus českého středověku a jeho limity" [Iconoclasm of the Bohemian Middle Ages and Its Limits], *Umění: Časopis Ústavu dějin umění Akademie věd České republiky* 48, no. 4 (2000): 206-217; Milena Bartlová, "Understanding Hussite Iconoclasm," in *Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice*, vol. 7, ed. Zdeněk V. David and David R. Holeton, *Filosofický časopis, Supplementum* 1 (Prague: Filosofia, 2009), 115-126.

⁸ For a concise overview of this issue see Kateřina Horníčková, "Mezi tradicí a inovací. Náboženský obraz v českém utrakvismu" [Between Tradition and Innovation: Religious Image in the Bohemian Utraquism], in *Umění české reformace (1380-1620)*, ed. Kateřina Horníčková and Michal Šroněk (Prague: Academia, 2010), 87-90.

with Rome—despite the abolition of the Compacts by Pope Pius II⁹ and the rejection of humanism from lands beyond the Alps, which, together with the renewed studies of the Bible, were to become the pillars of contemporary criticism of the church in Western Europe—meant that the initiation role of the Hussites was completely forgotten by those involved in the emerging European Reformation by the end of the second decade of the 16th century. The question of the lay chalice was of no significance to the reform-minded German theologians and clerics, since in their opinion it had no impact on the essence of religion. When Luther formulated his new articles of faith, he regarded the Hussites as sectarians and heretics, second only to the struggling Waldensians and Cathars. He had nothing but words of contempt for Hus and his followers.¹⁰ The cause of his negative attitude towards them was not, however, a detailed examination of the Hussite doctrine, but rather ignorance of the Bohemian Reformation, which was treated as if it had never existed. When Luther (in relation to the Hussites) later ceased to think of these reformers only in terms of their false depiction as violent heretics, he began to find more and more common ground between theories of the Bohemian Reformation and his own. Nonetheless, mutual wariness and persistence of nationalist stereotypes amongst both the Bohemian Utraquists and German reformers, which were

⁹ On Pope Pius II and his relationship with the Bohemian environment see František Šmahel, “Enea Silvio Piccolomini a jeho Historie česká” [Enea Silvio Piccolomini and his *Historia Bohemica*], in *Aeneae Silvii Historia Bohemica – Enea Silvio Historie česká*, ed. Dana Martínková, Alena Hadravová and Jiří Matl, *Clavis monumentorum litterarum (Regnum Bohemiae) 4, Fontes rerum Regni Bohemiae 1* (Prague: Koniasch Latin Press, 1998), XIII–LII. For the most recent discussion of the abolition of the Compacts see Janusz Smolucha, *Polityka Kurii Rzymskiej za pontyfikatu Piusa II (1458–1464) wobec Czech i krajów sąsiednich. Z dziejów dyplomacji papieskiej w XV wieku* (Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2008), 217–289.

¹⁰ Sources have already been compiled by Jaroslav Goll, “Jak soudil Luther o Husovi” [As Luther Understood Hus], *Časopis Musea Království českého* 54, no. 1 (1880): 60–80. See also Heiko A. Oberman, “Hus a Luther. Antikrist a druhý reformační objev” [Hus and Luther: The Antichrist and the Second Reform Discovery], in *Jan Hus mezi epochami, národy a konfesemi: sborník z mezinárodního symposia, konaného 22.–26. září v Bayreuthu*, *SRN*, ed. Jan Blahoslav Lášek (Prague: Česká křesťanská akademie, 1995), 265–276.

underpinned by notions of messianism¹¹ and the belief of given parties that they were the “chosen one,” ultimately meant that the old Bohemian Reformation world never established any close connection with the world of the German and Swiss Reformation, despite the fact that the doctrines put forward by these latter movements were attractive for a growing proportion of the faithful among the Utraquists and the Unity of the Brethren in the years before 1600. Such issues, together with the development of the Bohemian Reformation itself, which was forcibly terminated by the defeat of the Estates Uprising at the Battle of White Mountain and the subsequent Peace of Westphalia that led to the permanent integration of Bohemian lands into the sphere of Habsburg Catholicism and ruined all chances for religious tolerance, were reflected in the marginalization of Bohemian Reformation as an independent reform movement of the 16th century.¹² Were the Utraquist Church assigned its true importance within the history of the Reformation, there might easily be questions raised concerning the exclusivity of the German and Swiss Reformation, not to mention challenging the notion, long-prevalent in German historiography, of the exclusive path of German history. In general scholarly awareness, the Bohemian Reformation thus often remains outside of the main Reformation stream. And were it not for comparatively minded historians, who have gradually relativized the notions of modernity and genuine innovation in the early modern world and begun to realize the mental dependency of 16th-century people on the socio-cultural co-ordinates

¹¹ See Rudolf Urbánek, “Počátky českého mesianismu” [Beginnings of Czech Messianism], in *Českou minulostí. Práce věnované profesoru Karlovy university Václavu Novotnému jeho žáky k šedesátým narozeninám*, ed. Otokar Odložilík, Jaroslav Prokeš and Rudolf Urbánek (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1929), 124–145; Rudolf Urbánek, “Český mesianismus ve své době hrdinské” [Czech Messianism in Its Heroic Time], in *Od pravěku k dnešku: sborník prací z dějin československých: k šedesátým narozeninám Josefa Pekaře*, vol. 1 (Prague: Historický klub, 1930), 262–284; František Šmahel, *Idea národa v husitských Čechách* [The Idea of the Nation in Hussite Bohemia], 2nd ed. *Historické myšlení* 11 (Prague: Argo, 2000).

¹² On conceptions of the Reformation see a summary of a range of literature in František Šmahel, “Zur Einführung: Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation – causa ad disputandum,” in *Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation im Spätmittelalter*, ed. František Šmahel and Elisabeth Müller-Luckner, *Schriften des Historischen Kollegs, Kolloquien* 39 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998), VII–XIV.

of the late Middle Ages, the idea of the Bohemian Reformation as a “Reformation before the Reformations” would never have arisen.¹³

Even if we consider the fact that the “Bohemian Reformation” provided some inspiration for the “World Reformation,” albeit mostly as a sort of dawning that increasingly lost its lustre throughout the 15th century, we are often confronted with the fact that awareness of the nature of the Bohemian Reformation gradually disappeared. Moreover, so did knowledge of when and under what circumstances its basic contours were conceived and what mental and political barriers prevented the Bohemian reformers from having any impact outside their limited sphere of influence.

Here, we will attempt to outline all these problems simply and briefly and with the awareness and knowledge that this is just one interpretation of the story of the Bohemian Reformation, and that other scenarios cannot be denied a right to independence and truth. The problem of the Bohemian Reformation that will be identified here is that, as a movement, it constantly looked back, on the one hand confronted with its Hussite heritage and on the other hand with foreign influences that the Bohemian Reformation was unable to adopt, with the result that 16th-century Bohemian non-Catholics were prevented from fully identifying with religious beliefs akin to theirs. The historical awareness of the Bohemian Reformists, which was much stronger than that of the Lutherans and Calvinists who kept their gaze firmly fixed on the future rather than the past, is the ultimate underlying reason why the Bohemian Reformation has often been viewed as a single Reformation trend that spanned two centuries. There has thus been no real acknowledgement of the pause that occurred between the Bohemian Reformation in the first decades of the 15th century and the Bohemian

¹³ František Šmahel, *La révolution hussite, une anomalie historique*, Collège de France. Essais et conférences (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1985). A partially reworked version of this can be found in František Šmahel, *Husitské Čechy. Struktury, procesy, ideje* [Hussite Bohemia: Structures, Processes, Ideas], *Česká historie* 9 (Prague: NLN, 2001), 9–75; Ferdinand Seibt, “Eine historische Anomalie?,” in *Husitství – reformace – renesance: sborník k 60. narozeninám Františka Šmahela*, vol. 1, ed. Jaroslav Pánek, Miloslav Polívka and Noemi Rejchrtová, *Práce Historického ústavu ČAV = Opera Institutu historici Praeae, řada C, Miscellanea* 9 (Prague: Historický ústav AV ČR, 1994), 275–286.

Reformation in the late 16th and early 17th century; these cannot be consolidated by simple recognition of tradition.¹⁴

The problem arises with the very interpretation of the genesis and beginning of the Bohemian Reformation. When Jan Hus, still intoxicated by the victory of the Bohemian nation in the conflict over the Decree of Kutná Hora, first lectured as the new university rector on the history of the domestic reform movement,¹⁵ he completely failed to take note of the Prague-German university reform environment of the 1380s and 1390s. Jan Hus, who was in 1409 a very different person from the one he would become in the southern Bohemian countryside, and later at the stake in Constance, deliberately started writing Bohemian reform history without having the slightest idea what path it would follow. His opinion was that the fathers of the Bohemian reform were those Bohemian university masters who were critical of contemporary religious life, namely Vojtěch Raňkův of Ježov (Adalbertus Ranconis de Ericinio), Nicholas Biceps, and Stephen of Kolín. He failed to mention Milíč of Kroměříž or Matthew of Janov in his university lecture, perhaps because they did not belong to the Prague university milieu, although the Parisian master Matthew was very close to him in that he, just like Hus (or later in the first decade of the 15th century, Jakoubek of Stříbro), began to confront everyday realities of the church around him with the religious outlook of the early church, which had become an elusive ideal for him. From the early years of the 15th century, Hus

¹⁴ A continuous view of the Bohemian Reformation is typical of the works of Ferdinand Hrejsa, namely his *Dějiny křesťanství v Československu*, vol. 6, *Za krále Maxmiliána II. 1564–1576 (Česká konfese)* [The History of Christianity in Czechoslovakia, vol. 6.: During the Reign of Maximilian II 1564–1576 (Bohemian Confession)], Spisy Husovy československé evangelické fakulty bohoslovecké, řada A 14 (Prague: Husova československá evangelická fakulta bohoslovecká, 1950), and more recently in Robert Kalivoda, “Husitská revoluce a poděbradská epocha” [The Hussite Revolution and the Era of George of Poděbrady], *Filosofický časopis* 13 (1965): 387–393; Robert Kalivoda, “Husitství a jeho vyústění v době předbělohorské a pobělohorské” [Hussitism and Its Legacy in the Pre- and Post-White Mountain Periods], *Studia Comeniana et historica* 13, no. 25 (1983): 3–44, and to a certain extent also Ferdinand Seibt, *Hussitenstudien: Personen, Ereignisse, Ideen einer frühen Revolution*, Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum 60 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1987), 27–60.

¹⁵ František Michálek Bartoš, “Nové světlo do Husova rektorátu na Karlově universitě” [A New Light on Hus’s Rectorate at Charles University], *Jihočeský sborník historický* 11 (1938): 3–11.

and his followers began to emulate this model, and they hoped to attain it by excommunicating unworthy clerics from the church body. This was to be achieved firstly through the intervention of the chief ecclesiastical power and, secondly, after the escalation of relations between the reformists and Archbishop Zbyněk Zajíc of Házmburk, through the intervention of secular powers in the form of the reform-friendly King Wenceslas IV and his like-minded courtiers.¹⁶ Hus's followers were consciously influenced by the philosophical and theological views of John Wyclif in their opinions on how to implement reform. Wyclif's ideology had begun to penetrate the world of Prague University as early as the late 1370s, but the broader acceptance of these arguments, together with their adaptation for practical religious and political purposes, did not take place until the first decade of the following century.¹⁷ Wyclif, together with St Augustine, became the most recognized theological authority to whom Bohemian authors referred. The interest in Wyclif sometimes went so far that avid reformers, in their fervour, refused to admit that his radical views fundamentally disagreed with the general teachings of the church and that their application could have dire consequences. The first time this became quite openly apparent was in a conflict over Wyclif's preaching on remanence,¹⁸ views with which neither Hus nor Stephen of Páleč or Stanislav of Znojmo were willing to identify. While they did not manage to counter Wyclif's arguments with any other original, orthodox interpretation, their vacillation nonetheless provided for many a new interpretation that would later find resonance with radical rural priests and would, for the duration of the 15th century, lead to priest being pitted against priest and layman

¹⁶ For discussion of how reform-friendly courtiers influenced in specific cases decisions of King Wenceslas IV in the first two decades of the 15th century see Martin Nodl, *Dekret kutnohorský* [Decree of Kutná Hora], *Česká historie* 23 (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2010), 159–274.

¹⁷ For the most recent study see František Šmahel, *Život a dílo Jeronýma Pražského: zpráva o výzkumu* [Life and Work of Jerome of Prague: A Research Report], *Každodenní život* 45 (Prague: Argo, 2010), 161–238.

¹⁸ See Stanislav Sousedík, *Učení o eucharistii v díle M. Jana Husa* [Opinions on the Eucharist in the Work of M. Jan Hus], *Studium* 6 (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1998), for a detailed analysis of the remanence theories of Stanislav of Znojmo. With regard to Hus, Sousedík places too much credence on the gossip of Prague friars, who accused Hus of preaching remanence, and he thus pays hardly any heed to Hus's defences.

against layman, so that eventually no one knew what to believe. Suddenly everything was uncertain, including former established concepts such as the Trinity, God's real presence in the sacrament of the altar, the existence of purgatory, and the possibility of redemption from sin in this life through the intercession of the Virgin Mary and the saints.

Hus's selective perception of the origins of the Bohemian reform movement, however, had deeper roots. Unlike the reform-minded theologians throughout Europe, who at that time disputed in university lecture halls or declared their views from the pulpit (not to mention the advance of treatises and tractates), he, together with those loyal to him, was in fact very sceptical of the idea of conciliarism that was popular at the time.¹⁹ Adherents of conciliarism believed that conciliary government would not only resolve the papal schism, but also reform the church from above, through the enlightened convocation cardinals and theologians. In Hus's eyes, however, they were bearers of the same corruption of the church as the papacy itself. Nonetheless this was not the only reason why Hus refused to espouse the heritage of the Prague reformist circle in which even his admired Matthew of Janov took part. The Prague reformist circle of the 1370s–1390s was represented almost exclusively by theologians who were members of the three university nations (that is, the Bavarians, Poles, and Saxons who were present alongside the Bohemians at Prague University) who were perceived by Hus, Jerome of Prague, or John of Jesenice as being “too German.”²⁰ After the Decree of Kutná Hora, these nations left Prague University to found new institutions in Germany and Poland. Hus and his followers thus became cut off from these people, and this was furthered by the open clash that developed between supporters of

¹⁹ At this stage, it is unnecessary to cite the overabundant literature on conciliarism, but an excellent summary can be found in Jürgen Miethke, “Konziliarismus – die neue Doktrin einer neuen Kirchenverfassung,” in *Reform von Kirche und Reich zur Zeit der Konzilien von Konstanz (1414–1418) und Basel (1431–1449): Konstanz-Prager Historisches Kolloquium (11.–17. Oktober 1993)*, ed. Ivan Hlaváček and Alexander Patschovsky (Konstanz: Universitätsverlag Konstanz, 1996), 29–59. With regard to the Prague milieu, the most recent work is that by Olivier Marin, *L'archevêque, le maître et le dévot. Genèses du mouvement réformateur pragois. Années 1360–1419*, *Études d'histoire médiévale* 9 (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2005), 166–175.

²⁰ For further detail see Nodl, *Dekret*, 257–262.

philosophical nominalism and Wyclif's realism²¹ after the year 1402, which—mainly due to mutual slander and later denouncements—made the two camps into implacably separate communities that went to great lengths to shut one another out. And yet, whether Hus could admit it to himself or not, both movements, the Bohemian reform movement of the early 15th century and the university movement of the 1370s–90s, had much in common.

The 1380s were years in which the prime roles in the reform movement were played by Henry Totting of Oyta, Conrad of Soltau, Matthew of Kraków, John Marienwerder, Henry of Bitterfeld, and Nicolaus Magni de Jawor, and they were filled with an open and completely uncompromising critique of the life of the contemporary church, represented by prelates who lived ostentatiously and parsons who were neglectful of their duties.²² This criticism, which was replete with ideas of the emerging conciliarism—although it never aligned with the ideas of Archbishop John of Jenštejn or King Wenceslas IV²³—nonetheless never stretched to the idea of public punishment of sins, the advancement of material poverty of the clergy, or a return to the practices of the early church, and instead focused on the systematic catechesis of the poorly educated clergy.²⁴ The reform-minded university scholars therefore wrote biblical interpretations, compiled confessional

²¹ Vilém Herold, "Zum Prager philosophischen Wyclifismus," in *Häresie*, ed. Šmahel and Müller-Luckner, 133–146.

²² Matthias Nuding, *Matthäus von Krakau. Theologe, Politiker, Kirchenreformer in Krakau, Prag und Heidelberg zur Zeit des Großen Abendländischen Schismas*, Spätmittelalter und Reformation, no. R. 38 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 25–75; Nodl, *Dekret*, 133–140.

²³ The most detailed study up to now remains that by Rudolf Holinka, *Církevní politika arcibiskupa Jana z Jenštejna za pontifikátu Urbana VI.: studie z dějin velikého schismatu západního* [Church Politics of the Archbishop John of Jenštejn during the Pontificate of Urban VI.: A Study from the History of the Great Western Schism], Spisy Filosofické fakulty University Komenského v Bratislavě 14 (Bratislava: Filosofická fakulta University Komenského, 1933).

²⁴ For a discussion of the catechesis of prelates in pre-Hussite Bohemia see Martin Nodl, "Mezi laickou a učenickou zbožností. Katechetické příručky pro faráře v českém a slezském prostředí pozdního středověku" [Between Lay and Learned Piety: Late Medieval Catechetical Handbooks for Parish Priests in Bohemia and Silesia], in *Korunní země v dějinách českého státu IV. Náboženský život a církevní poměry v zemích Koruny české ve 14.–17. století*, ed. Lenka Bobková and Jana Konvičná (Prague: Filosofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy v Praze, 2009), 176–191.

manuals, proposed reforms of monastic life, and produced clearly worded instructions on how to understand and communicate the fundamental articles of Christian faith to the laity. The essence of their reasoning was to reform priests, who, once enlightened, were then to facilitate the reform of the entire church, including lay people. Not all laymen, however, were in their eyes considered mere recipients of religious truths. In the spirit of the newly invigorated piety, *devotio moderna*,²⁵ at this time, which was of a somewhat different character in Bohemia than in Flanders, many reform-minded university scholars, namely Matthew of Kraków and Henry of Bitterfeld, began to promote the idea of frequent or even daily communion of the Blessed Sacrament in order to benefit the newly and deeply devoted laity.²⁶

Ultimately, the complicated tussle surrounding these ideas, which was finally won by the university reformists whose views in this respect closely coincided with those of the reformist and religiously zealous circle around Matthew of Janov, was to prove a major influence on the Bohemian Reformation. Thanks to the assertion of the idea that daily communion was a spiritual food that brought the laity closer to the clergy and spiritually strengthened them on their way to salvation, the issue of the Eucharist became the centerpiece of Bohemian Reformation. In the 1390s, this teaching on the Eucharist aimed at the deeper christianization of the laity and the refutation of their superstitious

²⁵ A concise discussion of "devotio moderna" can be found in Manfred Gerwing, *Malogranatum oder der dreifache Weg zur Vollkommenheit. Ein Beitrag zur Spiritualität des Spätmittelalters*, Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum 57 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1986); Manfred Gerwing, "Die sogenannte Devotio moderna," in *Jan Hus. Zwischen Zeiten, Völkern, Konfessionen. Vorträge des internationalen Symposions in Bayreuth vom 22. bis 26. September 1993*, ed. Ferdinand Seibt, Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum 85 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997), 49–58. More recently, a new approach has been applied to this area: see Pavlína Rychterová, "Konzepte der religiösen Erziehung der Laien im spätmittelalterlichen Böhmen. Einige Überlegungen zur Debatte über die sog. böhmische Devotio moderna," in *Kirchliche Reformimpulse des 14./15. Jahrhunderts in Ostmitteleuropa*, ed. Winfried Eberhard and Franz Machilek, Forschungen und Quellen zur Kirchen- und Kulturgeschichte Ostdeutschlands 36 (Cologne: Böhlau, 2006), 219–237.

²⁶ Jaroslav V. Polc, "Vita coniugale e comunione quotidiana dei laici. Questione disputata a Praga alla fine del sec. XIV," *Lateranum* 42 (1976): 203–238; Pavel Černuška, ed., *Jindřich z Bitterfeldu. Eucharistické texty* [Henry of Bitterfeld: Eucharistic Texts], *Pontes pragenses* 44 (Brno: L. Marek, 2006), 127–132.

beliefs.²⁷ The church tried to accommodate the naturalistically conceived faith of the laity by sacralizing daily ritual behaviour, in a process that was far removed from religious orthodoxy and the theological theses of scholars.

The consent of the archbishop's synod to daily communion for the laity was but the swan song of the Prague reform circle. In the early 15th century, there was no one left in Prague with the desire to seek common ground with the new generation of Czechs who were newly emerging from the university. From the 1390s, this group enjoyed sponsorship support from members of the royal court and the Prague burghers, with the result that they became increasingly set apart from the previously uniform university body.²⁸ This new generation of Bohemian reformers, led in the early phase by the theology professors Stephen of Pálec and Stanislav of Znojmo, came up with a "new" program that criticized the profane way of life led by the clergy and consistently rallied against superstitious practices. This program had support from the new archbishop, Zbyněk Zajíc of Házmburk, whose theological education was minimal.²⁹ However, his aristocratic awareness was significant, and so was his effort to play a distinct role in the conflict between the ruler and the nobility. In addition to criticizing the life of the clergy, the reformers placed great emphasis on philosophical speculation, an importance that was increasingly reflected in theological issues as well as in practical, religious, and legal life. The question of catechesis initially did not play any important role. For Hus, just as for Stephen of Pálec or Stanislav of Znojmo, Prague University—taking part in disputes and arguing against nominalist masters of the three nations or the conservatives from the Metropolitan Chapter—was their life, while the world of parish clergy outside of Prague remained practically

²⁷ František Šmahel, "Stärker als der Glaube: Magie, Aberglaube und Zauber in der Epoche des Hussitismus," *Bohemia – Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der böhmischen Länder: A Journal of History and Civilisation in East Central Europe* 32, no. 2 (1991): 316–337.

²⁸ Nodl, *Dekret*, 125–133; Jiří Stočes, *Pražské univerzitní národy do roku 1409* [Prague University Nations before 1409] (Prague: Karolinum, 2010), 127–134.

²⁹ Martin Nodl, "Słynaça cudami góra Blanik: transformacja mitu," in *Sacrum pogańskie – sacrum chrześcijańskie. Kontynuacja miejsc kultu we wczesnośredniowiecznej Europie Środkowej*, ed. Krzysztof Bracha and Czesław Hadamik (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2010), 167–171.

alien to them. Their view of reform was closely linked to secular power, represented by royal courtiers who saw the possibility of consolidating their power through close cooperation with the reformist circle and who, in the last years before the outbreak of the revolution, also saw the possibility of strengthening their own financial situation at the expense of secularized religious institutions.³⁰

The Bohemian reform movement took on a new aspect when Hus had to retire to the countryside in the face of his interdict. It was at this point that he realized the extent of the chasm between university education and theological speculation on the one hand, and life among poorly educated priests and the laity that were entrusted to them on the other. It was for these latter individuals that he began to write interpretations of the basic tenants of faith and preaching manuals in the Czech language, which were filled with the ideas of reforming basic religious practices in the parishes.³¹ He also gave new thought to a new, horizontally arranged church that would have Christ, not the pope, at its head.³² Today, of course, we can only speculate as to what form the Bohemian Reformation might have taken if Hus had not travelled

³⁰ See Jaroslav Čechura, "Sekularizace církevních statků v husitské revoluci a některé aspekty ekonomického a sociálního vývoje v Čechách v době pozdního středověku" [Secularization of Church's Estates during the Hussite Revolution and Some Aspects of Economic and Social Development in Late Medieval Bohemia], *Husitský Tábor* 9 (1986–1987): 91–100; Jaroslav Čechura, "Sekularizace církevních statků v západních Čechách v letech 1421–1454" [Secularization of Church's Estates in West Bohemia during the Years 1421–1454], *Časopis Národního muzea, řada historická* 165, nos. 1–4 (1996): 1–16.

³¹ The most recent study on Reformation preaching is that by Pavel Soukup, "„Ne verbum Dei in nobis suffocetur...“ Kommunikationstechniken von Predigern des frühen Hussitismus," *Bohemia: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der böhmischen Länder. A Journal of History and Civilisation in East Central Europe* 48, no. 1 (2008): 54–82; Pavel Soukup, "Die Predigt als Mittel religiöser Erneuerung: Böhmen um 1400," in *Böhmen und das Deutsche Reich. Ideen- und Kulturtransfer im Vergleich (13.–16. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Eva Schlotheuber and Hubertus Seibert, Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum 116 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2009), 235–264. Unfortunately, this article does not take German Reformation preaching in Bohemia into account.

³² For a concise summary of the ecclesiology of Hus see Alexander Patschovsky, "Ekklesologie bei Johannes Hus," in *Lebenslehren und Weltentwürfe im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit: Politik, Bildungen, Naturkunde, Theologie*, ed. Hartmut Boockmann, Bernd Moeller and Karl Stackmann, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse 3, Folge 179 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1989), 370–399; more recently Krzysztof Moskal, „*Aby lud był jedno...*“:

to Constance. He could not defend his opinions there, as they were in clear conflict with the accustomed and generally shared ecclesiological views of the time, nor could he mention his emphasis on the absolute poverty of the priesthood or promote his radical ideas about the equal punishment of mortal sins. This latter point in particular, which concerned people at all levels of society, including kings and prelates, and which could, under certain circumstances, relieve somebody from a post³³ of which they were not worthy, clearly interfered too much with the spheres of social power. Were it not for the burning of Hus in Constance, however, it is probable that Hussite theological concepts would not have taken on such a radical form, making the Bohemian reform effort into a unique religious movement that separated from the Catholic Church in the 1420s in almost everything save for the denial of apostolic succession and the conscious creation of a separate church. Such aims, however, were ultimately not achieved even by the Tábora religious community, although outwardly this group acted in a very independent manner for decades and had no intention of recognizing the superiority of Prague University as an arbiter in matters of faith.³⁴

The radicalization of opinions, which led to the denial of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, the rejection of sculptures and paintings as objects of idolatry, and even the rejection of purgatory and the intercession of saints³⁵ and indulgences, together with the simplification of ritual life, the abbreviation of sacramental form, and the desecration of the clergy and of churches and chapels, was not, in fact, the aim of Hus and his reform circle at all. However, the martyrdom of the leader of a religious community that was so difficult to define, and moreover through an

eklezjologia Jana Husa w trakcie De ecclesia, Prace Wydziału Teologicznego 135 (Lublin: Tow. Nauk. Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 2003).

³³ František Šmahel, *Husitská revoluce*, vol. 2, *Kořeny české reformace* [The Hussite Revolution, vol. 2.: The Roots of the Bohemian Reformation], Práce Historického ústavu Akademie věd České republiky. Opera Instituti historici Pragae, řada A, Monographia 9/2 (Prague: Historický ústav AV ČR, 1993), 69–86.

³⁴ Kejř, *Mistři*, 7.

³⁵ Ota Halama, *Otázka svatých v české reformaci. Její proměny od doby Karla IV. do doby České konfese* [The Question of Saints in the Bohemian Reformation: Its Changes from the Period of Charles IV Until the Time of the Bohemian Confession], *Pontes pragenses* 19 (Brno: L. Marek, 2002).

execution that was supported by the inimical attitude of the council, the pope, and the emperor towards the Kingdom of Bohemia, led to a backlash that was patriotically embraced by not only the nobility, but also the increasingly independent towns. This explosive situation led to the rallying of groups, setting off of defence mechanisms, and strengthening of the feelings of exclusivity that had already played a strong role among university intellectuals during the conflict of the 1409 Decree of Kutná Hora, as well as in the linguistic-ethnic character of the nascent Bohemian Reformation in its Hussite phase. Prague University quite logically took on the decisive role in the shaping of religious beliefs. From its first declaration of the lay chalice³⁶ as a shared platform, the university openly stood against all bans of spiritual power and began to promote the principle of confessionalization that pushed the Catholic minority into the position of a hostile and intolerable entity.

Prague University, represented by Jakoubek of Stržbro, thus somewhat surprisingly became the seat of radicalization for religious beliefs and opinions, a radicalization for which neither the rural environment nor the lay world were prepared. The emphasis on the de-ritualization of religious life in particular had the potential to lead to a loss of values with which few people could cope. The wave of chiliasm (millenarianism) that rolled over the countryside in 1419 was a conscious attempt on the part of radicals, who believed in the self-salvation of faith, to find the true path out of the current crisis.³⁷ The disenchantment that

³⁶ Jiří Kejř, "Deklarace pražské univerzity z 10. března 1417 o přijímání pod obojí a její historické pozadí" [Declaration of the University of Prague from 10 March 1417 on Communion Under Both Kinds and Its Historical Background], *Sborník historický* 8 (1961): 133–156; Václav Bok and Freimut Löser, "Der Widerruf des Peter von Uničov vor der Prager Universitätsgemeinde (1417)," in *Schriften im Umkreis mitteleuropäischer Universitäten um 1400. Lateinische und volkssprachige Texte aus Prag, Wien und Heidelberg: Unterschiede, Gemeinsamkeiten, Wechselbeziehungen*, ed. Fritz Peter Knapp, Jürgen Miethke and Manuela Niesner, Education and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 231–250.

³⁷ The most recent discussion of Taborite chiliasm is that of Howard Kaminsky, "Hussite Radicalism and the Origins of Tabor 1415–1418," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 10 (1956): 102–130; see also Howard Kaminsky, "Chiliasm and the Hussite Revolution," *Church History* 26, no. 1 (1957): 43–71; Alexander Patschovsky, "Der taboritische Chiliasmus," in *Häresie*, ed. Šmahel and Müller-Luckner, 169–195; Petr Čornej, "Potíže s adamity" [The Troubles with the Adamites], *Marginalia Historica: sborník prací Katedry dějin a didaktiky*

must have followed after the end of the world failed to take place may not have led to the disintegration of the movement, but it significantly strengthened the diversity of opinions that was so characteristic of the following period. As a memento of the failure of chiliasm, raging fanatic crowds roamed the country, believing that in a world in which sin had lost its disciplining function, everything was allowed and one's future fate depended on whether one belonged to a narrow community chosen by God. This on the one hand led to a split in the movement, but on the other hand reinforced the significance of secular power and the interference of secular groups, individuals or assemblies in religious issues that were previously considered to fall exclusively within the competence of the clergy.³⁸

A new phase in the genesis of the Bohemian Reformation started after the defeat of the radicals at Lipany in 1434, when negotiations began that led to the Compacts of Basel agreement in 1436. This agreement between the moderate Hussite party and the council provided a legal framework for the existence of a non-Catholic religious alternative—the Utraquist Church—in Bohemia. University scholars, unhappy with the way the situation was developing, tried to reverse this agreement and denounced all religious excesses.³⁹ The university, which was devoid of students during the revolution, thus step by step became a supporter of a return to pre-revolutionary religious practices, although the lay chalice was retained as an expression of the individuality of all factions in the Bohemian reform movement. Nonetheless, in the second half of the 15th century, Prague University's conservative approach gradually isolated it from contemporary religious-critical trends and closed its way to the new, philological-exegetical study of the Scripture that was ongoing amongst the reform-minded correspondent community

dějepisů Pedagogické fakulty Univerzity Karlovy 2 (1997): 33–63; Stanisław Bylina, *Na skraju lewicy husyckiej* (Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 2005), namely 16–89.

³⁸ A concise approach to the early phases of Hussitism, including a comprehensive analysis of source material, can be found in Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); Ferdinand Seibt, *Hussitica. Zur Struktur einer Revolution*, 2nd ed. Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 8 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1990).

³⁹ Kejř, *Mistři*, 65–78.

of humanist intellectuals.⁴⁰ As a consequence of their isolation, the humanistic movement significantly affected Moravian Catholic intellectuals, who were otherwise not particularly reform-minded, so they saw the coexistence of the Utraquist and Catholic Churches as wholly unacceptable; they were against all domestic reform ideas to the extent that they even condoned armed intervention against any religious heterodoxy.⁴¹ The growing tensions within Bohemia (and, to an extent, Moravia), where enclaves of Catholic towns and aristocrats sprung up, and where the land was repeatedly exposed to attacks by knights bearing crosses on their chests and was torn apart by clashes between the Hussite parties, unions, and factions, did not help developments during the early phase of the Bohemian Reformation.

Sources preserved from the 1420s and 1430s unfortunately do not allow us to answer the question of how religious and educational ideas were incorporated into the daily religious life of parish communities and churches. In fact, we do not know whether the reformers managed to achieve their goal of awakening faith—faith, the essence of which meant not only adhering to commandments necessary for salvation and thus avoiding mortal sin, but also true *living* faith, such as that preached by Hus, which could be experienced intimately and individually in the hearts of all believers. It seems, however (and it is quite a logical conclusion, given that there was little time), that there was little will or courage for a reform of the heart to take place alongside the clash of weapons, material danger, daily uncertainty, and the total internal exhaustion of the country.

The impression given to us by critics of religious life between the 1440s and 1460s indicates what we might term a kind of “hollowing”

⁴⁰ František Šmahel, *Humanismus v době poděbradské* [Humanism in the Era of George of Poděbrady], *Rozpravy ČSAV 73, řada věd společenských 6* (Prague: Československá akademie věd, 1963); František Šmahel, “Die Anfänge des Humanismus in Böhmen,” in *Humanismus und Renaissance in Ostmitteleuropa vor der Reformation*, ed. Winfried Eberhard and Alfred A. Strnad, *Forschungen und Quellen zur Kirchen- und Kulturgeschichte Ostdeutschlands 28* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1996), 189–214; Michal Svatoš, ed., *Dějiny Univerzity Karlovy, vol. 1, 1347/48–1622*, [History of Charles University, vol. 1] (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 1995), 205–240.

⁴¹ Ivo Hlobil and Eduard Petrů, *Humanismus a raná renesance na Moravě* [Humanism and Early Renaissance in Moravia] (Prague: Academia, 1992).

of faith. At this time, the Utraquist Church found itself in a sorry state. In the post-Hussite period, there was a major decline in the numbers of the clergy. The reasons were mainly due to the difficulty in receiving religious ordination. The lack of clergy was reflected in the increasing number of vacant parishes, which were taken over by Catholic clergy. Most rural believers, at least compared to the pre-Hussite period, now had to travel much further to see their parish priest, which inevitably led to a deterioration in terms of their daily communication with their ministers.⁴² As a result, no deepening of religious life could take place for several decades in the aftermath of the Battle of Lipany. Moreover, the priestly vocation itself had ceased to be attractive, even if only in terms of it providing an “easy” living, as benefice revenues fell sharply. For this reason, some Hussite priests began to seek out the same means of raising money (charging fees for baptisms, funerals, marriages, etc.) that had previously proved a thorn in the side of pre-Hussite reformers.

If we read criticisms of both priests and ordinary believers that were enunciated in sermons by the head of the Utraquist Church—the elected Archbishop Rokycana—in the mid-15th century, it is easy to imagine that no Hussite movement had ever taken place in the Bohemian lands.⁴³ According to Rokycana, priests had once again begun to indulge in games of dice, dancing, hunting, and living in concubinage; their only requirements for their believers were for them to pay duly for communion, together with the sanctification of sallow twigs, cross-buns, and sprinkling. Prostitutes re-settled in towns, and most believers once again spent their free time in taverns instead of going to church and living in harmony with the Scriptures. Priests led people to buy indulgences and gifts for the dead and discarded the laws of God. It was difficult, claimed Rokycana, to find a real Christian in Bohemia in the mid-15th century. Any agreement with the church, whether in the form of the Compacts and the Council of Basel, or contracts with

⁴² Josef Macek, *Víra a zbožnost Jagellonského věku* [Faith and Piety of the Jagiellonian Era], *Každodenní život* 9 (Prague: Argo, 2001), 41–159.

⁴³ Frederick G. Heymann, “John Rokycana – Church Reformer between Hus and Luther,” *Church History* 28, no. 3 (1959): 240–280; Stanisław Bylina, “La piété des laïcs à la lumière de Postilla tchèque de Jean de Rokycany,” in *Husitsví*, ed. Pánek, Polívka and Rejchrtová, 2: 601–610.

the Emperor Sigismund and his successors, led to sins not being punished and allowed the world to return to its old routines. The deep disappointment felt at the religious situation in Bohemia is evident from the writings of both Utraquist and Catholic authors. On both sides alike, people invoked times past, although the Catholics looked back to the golden age of Charles IV, while for the Utraquists, it was the time of Hus.

After all, was it not the case that the first phase of the Bohemian Reformation—at least in the form that it took during the Hussite revolution—led in particular to losing faith in validity of those taboos that had been imposed by the Catholic Church before the outbreak of the Hussite movement, and that were retained in the post-Hussite era by the Utraquist Church? Speculative Hussite thinkers regarded church teachings and orders as human inventions that had little in common with the life of the early Apostolic Church. But what were ordinary laymen supposed to believe, having been surrounded by several conflicting theological views for decades? The turbulent religious situation almost inevitably resulted in the manifestation of a wide range of different practices originating from the Utraquist environment by “amateur” theologians and sectarians in the mid-15th century.⁴⁴ We may know next to nothing about the real beliefs of the laity, just as we cannot assess their relationship with the Catholic or Utraquist clergy. One thing, however, is certain: the confusing denominational situation, fuelled by memories of sharp religious conflicts in the 1420s and 1430s, as well as the lack of Utraquist clergymen, led to sporadic appearances of non-conformist religious groups and individuals across the Bohemian countryside, whose variances in belief and perception of faith were primarily due to the impossibility of confronting and correcting religious beliefs of lay people by drawing on theological views supported by the church.

It is an entirely legitimate question to ask whether such a thing as an official position of the church or some generally accepted doctrine existed at all among the ranks of the Utraquists. And was the conviction

⁴⁴ Rudolf Urbánek, *České dějiny*, vol. 3/3, *Věk poděbradský* [Czech History, vol. 3/3. The Period of George of Poděbrady], Laichterův Výbor nejlepších spisů poučných 54 (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1930), 595–647.

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